HANS URS
VON BALTHASAR

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

I: SEEING THE FORM

IGNATIUS ◆ CROSSROAD

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Hans Urs von Balthasar

THE GLORY OF THE LORD: A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

By Hans Urs von Balthasar

VOLUMES OF THE COMPLETE WORK

Edited by Joseph Fessio, S.J., and John Riches

1. *Seeing the Form*
2. *Studies in Theological Style: Clerical Styles*
3. *Studies in Theological Style: Lay Styles*
4. *The Realm of Metaphysics in Antiquity*
5. *The Realm of Metaphysics in the Modern Age*
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THE GLORY
OF THE LORD

A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

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HANS URS VON BALTHASAR

VOLUME I: SEEING THE FORM

Translated by Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis
Edited by Joseph Fessio S.J. and John Riches

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Notes

La sombra que hace al alma la lámpara de la hermosura de Dios será otra hermosura al talle y propriedad de aquella hermosura de Dios. . . . Gusta la gloria de Dios en sombra de gloria que hace saber la propriedad y talle de la gloria de Dios.

JUAN DE LA CRUZ

Je puis bien aimer l’obscurité totale; mais si Dieu m’engage dans un état à demi obscur, ce peu d’obscurité qui y est me déplaît, parce que je n’y vois pas le mérite d’une entière obscurité. C’est un défaut, et une marque que je me fais une idole de l’obscurité, séparée de l’ordre de Dieu. Or il ne faut pas adorer que son ordre.

PASCAL

Wodurch sollen wir den erbitterten Geist der Schrift versöhnen? “Meynst du, dass ich Ochsenfleisch essen wolle und Blocksblut trinken?” Weder die dogmatische Gründlichkeit pharisäischer Orthodoxen, noch die dichterische Üppigkeit sadducäischer Freygeister wird die Sendung des Geistes erneuern, der die heiligen Menschen Gottes trieb (εὐϰαίϱως ἀϰαίϱως) zu reden und zu schreiben.

HAMANN

FOREWORD

We here attempt to develop a Christian theology in the light of the third transcendental, that is to say: to complement the vision of the true and the good with that of the beautiful (*pulchrum*). The introduction will show how impoverished Christian thinking has been by the growing loss of this perspective which once so strongly informed theology. It is not, therefore, our intent to yield to some whim and force theology into a little travelled side-road, but rather to restore theology to a main artery which it has abandoned. But this is in no sense to imply that the aesthetic perspective ought now to dominate theology in the place of the logical and the ethical. It is true, however, that the transcendentals are inseparable, and that neglecting one can only have a devastating effect on the others. In the name of our general concerns, therefore, we recommend that this attempt—and the present book neither can nor intends to be anything else—not be dismissed *a priori* as ‘aestheticism’, but that the reader first listen to what really is being argued for.

The first volume must make its way slowly toward our actual concerns in an introduction which deals both substantively and historically with the subject. Its main section then treats the question of theological knowledge first as concerning its subjective structure and then with regard to its presuppositions in the theological object. The fact that in this way many things come into view which are normally dealt with by so-called ‘fundamental theology’ should not give the impression that we are here developing a fundamental theology, which would be distinct from and even opposed to dogmatics. The very direction of our reflections will rather endeavour to convince the reader of the inseparability of both aspects of theology.

But even this does not yet appear to be enough to pave the way to our actual concern, which is the confrontation of beauty and revelation in dogmatic theology. As a way into this subject, the second volume provides an historical substantiation and demonstration that, at the same time, complements the first volume. This volume will not give a continuous history of theological aesthetics, such as Edgar de Bruyne has written for the Middle Ages, but rather a series of monographs on those who have most characteristically moulded theology from Irenaeus to the present time, a series offering a typology of the relationship between beauty and revelation. Formally, such a relationship is infinitely variable, but, taken as a whole, our view shows that there neither has been nor can be any intrinsically great and historically fruitful theology which has not been conceived and born under the constellation of the *kalon* and of *charis*.

The third volume will be devoted in the main to the confrontation between philosophical and theological aesthetics. This volume will have to work out thoroughly many things which in the first volume remained unsubstantiated. We will, therefore, have to: 1. examine the nature of 'glory' (as transcendental beauty) in the context of Western metaphysics (including its poetic, philosophic, and religious manifestations); 2. compare our results with 'glory' in both the Old and the New Testaments; and 3. sketch the manner in which our study leads on into an ecumenical theology (Byzantium—Rome—Wittenberg). By way of an appendix, we will also have to consider the question of Christian art.

If all beauty is objectively located at the intersection of two moments which Thomas calls *species* and *lumen* ('form' and 'splendour'), then the encounter of these is characterized by the two moments of beholding and of being enraptured. The doctrine of the beholding and perceiving (*Wahrnehmen*[1]) of the beautiful ('aesthetics' in the sense of the *Critique of Pure Reason*) and the doctrine of the enrapturing power of the beautiful are complementarily structured, since no one can really behold who has not also already been enraptured, and no one can be enraptured who has not already perceived. This holds equally for the theological relationship between faith and grace, since, in giving itself, faith apprehends the form of revelation, while grace has from the outset transported the believer up into God's world. For this reason the first and third volumes of this work constantly refer back to one another.

In order to maintain the right balance, a 'theological aesthetics' should be followed by a 'theological dramatics' and a 'theological logic'. While the first of these has as its object primarily the perception of the divine self-manifestation, the 'dramatics' would have as primary object the content of this perception—which is God's dealings with man—and the 'logic' would define as its object the divine (or more exactly: the human-divine, and therefore already theological!) *manner of expressing* God's activity. Only then would the *pulchrum* appear in its rightful place within the total ordered structure, namely as the manner in which God's goodness (*bonum*) gives itself and is expressed by God and understood by man as the truth (*verum*). It was not in already articulated sayings that God gave the first commandment of faith to Abraham. What Abraham perceived was the truth of a divine *deed* on his behalf, a deed which became interpreted as a human saying perhaps only centuries later. What we are saying here is not the same as Faust's and Fichte's 'in the beginning was the Deed'—since the drama between

God and man is itself already *logos*, meaning, word—but in the sense of a word that happens, a word that possesses one dimension more than the word that is witness.

The overall scope of the present work naturally remains all too Mediterranean. The inclusion of other cultures, especially that of Asia, would have been important and fruitful. But the author's education has not allowed for such an expansion, and a superficial presentation of such material would have been dilettantism. May those qualified come to complete the present fragment.

Hans Urs von Balthasar

PREFACE

The publication in English of the first part of von Balthasar's theological trilogy perhaps justifies a short note on the history of its translation. For many years those interested in the dissemination of Father von Balthasar's ideas had tried in vain to find a publisher willing to underwrite this massive venture. In 1978, at the suggestion of Father Noel O'Donaghue, Dr. Geoffrey Green of T. & T. Clark agreed to look at the possibilities, and approached the present English editor, John Riches. Surprise at being approached by a publisher interested in the undertaking was compounded by the discovery that another American publishing house set up by Father J. Fessio, Ignatius Press, was already engaged in translating the work. Agreement was quickly reached that T. & T. Clark would publish in association with Ignatius Press under the general joint-editorship of Joseph Fessio and John Riches.

An American translator, Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis, had already been found for Volume I. John Riches undertook the detailed editing of this translation. In the United Kingdom a strong team of younger theologians, Anglican and Roman Catholic, was soon recruited and this has meant that the publication of the complete work of 'Herrlichkeit' is expected by 1985. It is expected that with the publication of this most extended of von Balthasar's works, English-speaking readers will now be able to gain a more informed understanding of the true richness and the breadth of penetration of his theology.

John Riches
Glasgow, 1982

I. INTRODUCTION

1. POINT OF DEPARTURE AND CONCERNS

Beginning is a problem not only for the thinking person, the philosopher, a problem that remains with him and determines all his subsequent steps; the beginning is also a primal decision which includes all later ones for the person whose life is based on response and decision. God’s truth is, indeed, great enough to allow an infinity of approaches and entryways. And it is also free enough subsequently to expand the horizons of one who has chosen too narrow a starting point and to help him to his feet. Whoever confronts the whole truth—not only man’s truth and that of the world, but the truth of a God who bestows himself on man, the truth not only of the historical Gospel and of the Church that preserves it, but the truth of the growing Kingdom of God both as it now is in the fulness of God’s creation and also in the weakness of the grain that dies in me and in all my brothers, in the night of our present and in the uncertainty of our future: whoever, I say, confronts *such* wholeness of truth desires to choose as his first word one which he will not have to take back, one which he will not afterwards have to correct with violence, but one which is broad enough to foster and include all words to follow, and clear enough to penetrate all the others with its light.

The word with which we embark on this first volume of a series of theological studies is a word with which the philosophical person does not begin, but rather concludes. It is a word that has never possessed a permanent place or an authentic voice in the concert of the exact sciences, and, when it *is* chosen as a subject for discussion, appears to betray in him who chooses it an idle amateur among such very busy experts. It is, finally, a word from which religion, and theology in particular, have taken their leave and distanced themselves in modern times by a vigorous drawing of the boundaries. In short, this word is untimely in three different senses, and bearing it as one’s treasure will not win one anyone’s favours; one rather risks finding oneself outside everyone’s camp. Yet if the philosopher cannot begin with this word, but can at best conclude with it (always assuming that he has not forgotten it under way), should not the Christian for this very reason perhaps take it as *his* first word? And since the exact sciences no longer have any time to spare for it (nor does theology, in so far as it increasingly strives to follow the method of the exact sciences and to envelope itself in their atmosphere), precisely for this reason is it perhaps high time to break through *this* kind of exactness, which can only pertain to one particular sector of reality, in order to bring the truth of the whole again into view—truth as a transcendental property of Being, truth which is no abstraction, rather the living bond between God and the world. And finally: since religion in our modern period has renounced that word, it would not be idle to investigate at least this once what countenance (if we can still speak of a 'countenance') such a denuded religion may exhibit.

Beauty is the word that shall be our first. Beauty is the last thing which the thinking intellect dares to approach, since only it dances as an uncontained splendour around the double constellation of the true and the good and their inseparable relation to one another. Beauty is the disinterested one, without which the ancient world refused to understand itself, a word which both imperceptibly and yet unmistakably has bid farewell to our new world, a world of interests, leaving it to its own avarice and sadness. No longer loved or fostered by religion, beauty is lifted from its face as a mask, and its absence exposes features on that face which threaten to become incomprehensible to man. We no longer dare to believe in beauty and we make of it a mere appearance in order the more easily to dispose of it. Our situation today shows that beauty demands for itself at least as much courage and decision as do truth and goodness, and she will not allow herself to be separated and banned from her two sisters without taking them along with herself in an act of mysterious vengeance. We can be sure that whoever sneers at her name as if she were the ornament of a bourgeois past—whether he admits it or not—can no longer pray and soon will no longer be able to love. The nineteenth century still held on with passionate frenzy to the fleeing garments of beauty, which are the contours of the ancient world as it dissolves: 'Helena embraces Faust, her body vanishes, and only her robe and veil remain in his arms. . . . Helena's garments dissolve into clouds, enveloping Faust. He is raised on high and floats away with the cloud' (*Faust*, II, Act 3). The world, formerly penetrated by God's light, now becomes but an appearance and a dream—the Romantic vision—and soon thereafter nothing but music. But where the cloud disperses, naked matter remains as an indigestible symbol of fear and anguish. Since nothing else remains, and yet *something* must be embraced, twentieth-century man is urged to enter this impossible marriage with matter, a union which finally spoils all man's taste for love. But man cannot bear to live with the object of his impotence, that which remains permanently unmastered. He must either deny it or conceal it in the silence of death.

In a world without beauty—even if people cannot dispense with the word and constantly have it on the tip of their tongues in order to abuse it—in a world which is perhaps not wholly without beauty, but which can no longer see it or reckon with it: in such a world the good also loses its attractiveness, the self-evidence of why it must be carried out. Man stands before the good and asks himself why *it* must be done and not rather its alternative, evil. For this, too, is a possibility, and even the more exciting one: Why not investigate Satan's depths? In a world that no longer has enough confidence in itself to affirm the beautiful, the proofs of the truth have lost their cogency. In other words, syllogisms may still dutifully clatter away like rotary presses or computers which infallibly spew out an exact number of answers by the minute. But the logic of these answers is itself a mechanism which no longer captivates anyone. The very conclusions are no longer conclusive. And if this is how the transcendentals fare because one of them has been banished, what will happen with Being itself? Thomas described Being (*das Sein*) as a 'sure light' for that which exists (*das Seiende*). Will this light not necessarily die out where the very language of light has been forgotten and the mystery of Being is no longer allowed to express itself? What remains is then a mere lump of existence which, even if it claims for itself the freedom proper to spirits, nevertheless remains totally dark and incomprehensible even to itself. The witness borne by Being becomes untrustworthy for the person who can no longer read the language of beauty.

Those words which attempt to convey the beautiful gravitate, first of all, toward the mystery of form (*Gestalt*) or of figure (*Gebilde*). Formosus ('beautiful') comes from *forma* ('shape') and *speciosus* ('comely') from *species* ('likeness'). But this is to raise the question of the 'great radiance from within' which transforms *species* into *speciosa*: the question of *splendour*. We are confronted simultaneously with both the figure and that which shines forth from the figure, making it into a worthy, a love-worthy thing. Similarly we are confronted with both the gathering and uniting of that which had been indifferently scattered—its gathering into the service of the one thing which now manifests and expresses itself—*and* the outpouring, self-utterance of the one who was able to fashion by himself such a body of expression: by *himself*, I say, meaning 'on his own initiative', and therefore with pre-eminence, freedom, sovereignty, out of his own interior space, particularity, and essence. Again, we are brought face to face with both interiority and its communication, the soul and its body, free discourse governed by laws and clarity of language.

Such, in short, is the primal phenomenon. Whoever insists that he can neither see it nor read it, or whoever cannot accept it, but rather seeks to 'break it up' critically into supposedly prior components,[1] that person falls into the void and, what is worse, he falls into what is opposed to the true and the good. The original of beauty lies not in a disembodied spirit which looks about for a field of expression and, finding one, adjusts it to its own purposes as one would set up a typewriter and begin typing, afterwards to abandon it. Nor is it a spiritless body which somehow ‘throws itself together’ through an inexplicable play of material forces (‘impulses’ would already be too strong), only to fall apart again soon after. Even Plato went behind the primal phenomenon by conceiving of a soul that fell into matter only as a second movement in its existence. This is understandable, since Plato thought he could salvage the unity of what dissolves in death only by locating such unity within a wholly separate (ab-stract and ab-solute) realm of the spirit. Thus in order to uphold the freedom and dignity of the spirit, Plato reduced that which was original to the status of the derivative. In so doing, he became the father of all who have put *allegory* (i.e. discourse about something else) in the place of *symbol* (i.e. a true sign), and also the father of all those who adopt a wholly superfluous and only apparently scientific attitude in order to investigate psychologically how the soul can break out of its interiority and enter the so-called ‘exterior world’, and what the alleged ‘reasons’ for such a migration might be. Aristotle remained loyal to the phenomenon as such; for him, man and world appeared in their given forms. But Aristotle’s limitations also become apparent in his inability either to understand or to construct a promise of human wholeness beyond life on earth. Greek tragedy was the cry of transient existence as it came up against this limit. Only God’s gift from the New Earth and the Flesh that rises to eternal life can quench this question and prevent the reversion to an intensified Platonism which has had such grievous consequences even for Christian theology.

The freedom of the spirit that is at home in itself, therefore, is simultaneous with the ‘keyboard’, which it has appropriated and which allows the spirit self-expression. Such simultaneity is possible because it is the spirit’s native condition always to have gone outside itself in order to be with another. This ability can only exist in a tension between deliberate choice and spontaneity between a firm rootedness in its own particular field of expression and despite this the spontaneous ability to emerge from the inner depths and to appear in the windows of the specific, individual response. As we proceed from plant to animal to man, we witness a deepening of this interiority, and, at the same time, along with the continuing organic bonds to a body, a deepening in the freedom of the expressive play of forms. We are not speaking here only of mimicry or physiognomics. Through his body, man is in the world. As he expresses himself, he acts and intervenes responsibly in the general situation. He inscribes his deeds indelibly upon the book of history, which, whether he likes it or not, henceforth bears his imprint permanently. Here, at the very latest, man must realize that he is not lord over himself. Neither does he rule his own being in freedom so as to confer form upon himself, nor is he free in his communication. As body, man is a being whose condition it is always to be communicated; indeed, he regains himself only on account of having been communicated. For this reason, man as a whole is not an archetype of Being and of Spirit, rather their image; he is not the primal word, but a response; he is not a speaker, but an expression governed by the laws of beauty, laws which man cannot impose on himself. As a totality of spirit and body, man must make himself into God's mirror and seek to attain to that transcendance and radiance that must be found in the world's substance if it is indeed God's image and likeness—his word and gesture, action and drama. This is the simple reason why man's being, even in its origin, is already form, form which does not curtail the spirit and its freedom but which is identical with them.

When beauty becomes a form which is no longer understood as being identical with Being, spirit, and freedom, we have again entered an age of aestheticism, and realists will then be right in objecting to this kind of beauty. They go about demolishing what has rotted from within, but they cannot replace the power of Being which resides in the conferring of form. But so long as the form remains true—which is to say living, efficacious form—it is a body animated by the spirit, a body whose meaning and whose principle of unity are dictated and imposed by the spirit. The level at which form makes its appearance transcends itself interiorly, or better, it does not so much or so obviously transcend itself as the spirit which is immanent in it manifests itself radiantly through it. Borrowing from Kant, Schiller has described the double dialectic of this sunrise of the spirit's splendour in the beauty of form. At dawn, heaven and earth are still as one. Earthly things are transfigured and become celestial, while the light of heaven has not yet appeared in all its particularity. Such is the charm of *youth*, in which the spirit plays in the body unselfconsciously. When the sun climbs to the very zenith of midday, heaven and earth are fully separated, but that which is earthly enters heaven's bright light to the extent that the spirit's sovereign freedom scorches and shatters the instrument and the medium of its appearing, and by this destruction proclaims its lordship. This is the age of *dignity*. The second dialectic is directed by the same impetus. Out of an existence fully governed by the aesthetic principle there breaks forth the ethical on account of the spirit's stronger radiance. But the ethical does not then question the legitimacy of beauty, rather does it reveal itself as beauty's inner coordinate axis, which enables beauty to unfold to its full dimensionality as a transcendental attribute of Being. For Schiller, it is precisely the aesthetic which makes the stage a moral institution. Likewise, for Origen, the moral meaning of revelation is not to be found *alongside* its mystical meaning: the spiritual light proceeding from revelation's depths. For Origen, the 'moral meaning' refers to the urgency with which such light penetrates the beholder’s very heart, in a manner described by Rilke in his ‘Archaic Torso of Apollo’: ‘There is no place in it which does not see you. You must change your life.’ Only the form that stands within this spiritual space—whether the space has been fully crystallized or is only now beginning to define itself—only such form is genuine form, and only it can wholly claim for itself the name of beauty. And, because in this world the spirit is forever confronted by a decision between the abyss of heaven and of hell, the beauty of any form must remain in the twilight of the question as to which of the two masters’ glory such form radiates. Nor will the beholder’s spirit, enjoying a mysterious empathy with the spirit of what he beholds, remain without influence upon the efficacious reality of the beautiful—whether as the spirit of an individual or as the spirit (*Geist*) and demon (*Ungeist*) of an epoch. Works of art can die as a result of being looked at by too many dull (*geistlos*) eyes, and even the radiance of holiness can, in a way, become blunted when it encounters nothing but hollow indifference. But this remains but an external offence to beauty which may be rectified by purifying the heart and by exhuming what has been buried under ruins. Hölderlin exclaimed in this vein: ‘Go down, beauteous Sun. They paid but little heed to thee; they knew thee not, thou holy one. . . . For me thou graciously go’st down and up, O Light! And my eyes surely recognize thee, Splendour!’ And even if works of art should die, even if the ‘holy Sun’ itself should die, how could the highest beauty die if it were true that its form had attained a living immortality?

What is a person without the form that shapes him, the form that surrounds him inexorably like a coat of armour and which nonetheless is the very thing that bestows suppleness on him and which makes him free of all uncertainty and all paralyzing fears, free for himself and his highest possibilities? What is a person without this? What is a person without a life-form, that is to say, without a form which he has chosen for his life, a form into which and through which to pour out his life, so that his life becomes the soul of the form and the form becomes the expression of his soul? For this is no extraneous form, but rather so intimate a one that it is greatly rewarding to identify oneself with it. Nor is it a forcibly imposed form, rather one which has been bestowed from within and has been freely chosen. Nor, finally, is it an arbitrary form, rather that uniquely personal one which constitutes the very law of the individual. Whoever shatters this form by ignoring it is unworthy of the beauty of Being, and he will be banished from the splendour of solid reality as one who has not passed the test. Thus, while physically he remains alive, such a person decays to expressionlessness and sterility, is like the dry wood which is gathered in the Gospel for burning. But if man is to live in an original form, that form has first to be sighted. One must possess a spiritual eye capable of perceiving (*wahrnehmen*) the forms of existence with awe. (What a word: ‘Perception’ [*Wahr-nehmung*]! And philosophy has twisted it to mean precisely the opposite of what it says: ‘the seeing of what is true!’) We are not speaking here of isolated little ‘acts’ by which, as with a needle, a person can pierce through the desolation of his everyday life, of his sham existence, to reach the Absolute. . . . This will not salvage his lost dignity. We speak, rather, of a life-form which is determined—and, therefore, able—to bestow nobility upon a person’s everyday life itself. To repeat: for this, eyes are needed that are able to perceive the spiritual form. There are ages which are so deeply in love with the primal forms of existence that they seek to express these in all spheres of life and to reflect them, for instance, in the forms of rank and class in society, which for a brief moment in history can express a sublime truth, but which then become hollow and restrictive. *What* these forms intended to express, however, is something which may not be dispensed with if man is not to fall into an undifferentiatedness in which everything is so wholly indifferent (*das Gleichgültige*) that in the end it is of no consequence (*gleichgültig*) whether it is defined as matter or as spirit.

There have been ages of representation in which it was natural to experience the *kalokagathon* (the ‘beautiful-and-good’), so much so that the temptation was always at hand to slide back from the primal form into the derived forms—so rich was the abundance of forms offered. When these secondary forms come to decay and are regarded with suspicion as belonging to an ideology, then it is both easier and more difficult to find one’s way back to the origins of form. It is more difficult because our eyes lose their acumen for form and we become accustomed to read things by starting from the bottom and working our way up, rather than by working from the whole to the parts. Our multi-faceted glance is, indeed, suited to the fragmentary and the quantitative: we are the world’s and the soul’s analysts and no longer have a vision for wholeness. For this reason, psychology (in the contemporary sense of that term) has taken the place of philosophy. For this reason, too, we no longer credit man with the ability to achieve form, whether metaphysically or ethically. But in this valueless openness, the way back to primal form has perhaps been cleared, at least for some. The primal form is not a form among others, but a form which is identical with existence, a form beyond ‘open’ and ‘closed’, beyond ‘I’ and ‘Thou’ (since it, and it alone, encompasses both), a form which is even beyond autonomy and heteronomy since it unites God and man in an unimaginable intimacy.

And there have been ages in which beauty seems to be everywhere because of the abundance of the forms produced. In such ages, beauty envelops and lets its light play on existence on all sides and heightens its self-assurance; indeed there is a sense in which it demands that man pursue the good by compelling him to be true to the living content whose external forms he represents. There have also been ages, however, in which man feels himself to be so humiliated through the disfigurement and the denial of form, ages in which man feels himself to have been so disfigured *along with* the forms, that he daily experiences the temptation to despair of the dignity of existence and to break off all association with a world which disowns and destroys its own nature as image. The challenge can appear nearly inhuman that we should find our way from this echoless void to the image which the primal Maker of Images has created for us. And, indeed, such a challenge is perhaps only possible for the Christian, and the image which is intended and which, in spite of everything, *can* be constructed is invisible to the world at first for a time. The image could be that of the Gospel's Humiliated Fool, an image which captivates no one and which nevertheless in a later age breaks forth radiantly from its hidden centre in order to impress itself on the world—as has often been the case. If this holds for our time, then the decisive factor, our 'first word', states that only the few who (as often before) bear the weight of the whole on their shoulders, will receive eyes to behold the primal form of man-in-existence, and that their courage to embrace this primal form will raise everything else into the light along with itself: the true, the good, and the beautiful.

Our first principle must always be the indissolubility of form, and our second the fact that such form is determined by many antecedent conditions. If form is broken down into subdivisions and auxiliary parts for the sake of explanation, this is unfortunately a sign that the true form has not been perceived as such at all. What man is in his totality cannot be 'explained' in terms of the process by which he has become what he is. It makes no difference whether the attempt at 'explanation' takes as its starting-point man's evolutionary pre-history in the realm of plant and animal existence, or the hereditary history of man's ancestors, or the conditioning forces of the cosmos, or, finally, man's own life-history—the elements of his subconscious, or the variety of his shocks, traumas, and instinctual motives. All these dimensions produce material which is then subsumed by the form of man. And, since such material in itself consists of heterogeneous and relatively unnecessary elements, analysis can somehow again extract it from the form without harm. Truly, it would not be worthwhile being human if man were but the amalgamation of such 'material', if the one thing necessary, the irreplaceable pearl, were not a reality for the sake of which we would sell everything else. This precious 'pearl' must have been espied in the first place by an eye that recognizes value, an eye which, being enthralled by the beauty of this unique form, dismisses all else as ‘rubbish’ in order to acquire the one thing (Mt 13.46, Phil 3.8) which alone is worthy of claiming our life unconditionally, the one thing which lends value to whatever we might be by allowing us to participate in its own intrinsic worth. We can already see on the basis of this brief simile how Gospel and form are ‘wed’ to one another. For, where in the world can we find something so precious that for it we are prepared without reservation to abandon all else? And surely this unique thing could not be a formless absolute that in the end inexorably dissolves the form of the spiritual ‘I’ from within. In this sense, we can say that, when all genuine worldly forms are questioned and discounted, responsibility for that form really lies in the hands of Christians.

What could be stronger than marriage, or what shapes any particular life-form more profoundly than does marriage? And marriage is only true to itself if it is a kind of bracket that both transcends and contains all an individual’s cravings to ‘break out’ of its bonds and to assert himself. Marriage is that indissoluble reality which confronts with an iron hand all existence’s tendencies to disintegrate, and it compels the faltering person to grow, beyond himself, into real love by modelling his life on the form enjoined. When they make their promises, the spouses are not relying on themselves—the shifting songs of their own freedom—but rather on the form that chooses them because they have chosen it, the form to which they have committed themselves in their act as persons. As persons, the spouses entrust themselves not only to the beloved ‘thou’ and to the biological laws of fertility and family; they entrust themselves foremost to a form with which they can wholly identify themselves even in the deepest aspects of their personality because this form extends through all the levels of life—from its biological roots up to the very heights of grace and of life in the Holy Spirit. And now, suddenly, all fruitfulness, all freedom is discovered within the form itself, and the life of a married person can henceforth be understood only in terms of this interior mystery (as Claudel has shown powerfully in his ‘Fifth Ode’), which mystery is no longer accessible from the profane sphere of the general. But what are we to say of the person that ignores this form and tramples it underfoot, then to enter into relationships answerable only to his own psychology’s principle of ‘this far and no further’? He is but quicksand, doomed to certain barrenness. The form of marriage, too, from which derives the beauty of human existence, is today more than ever entrusted to the care of Christians.

For, to be a Christian is precisely a form. How could it be otherwise, since being a Christian is a grace, a possibility of existence opened up to us by God’s act of justification, by the God-Man’s act of redemption? This is not the formless, general possibility of an alleged freedom, but the exact possibility, appointed by God for every individual in his existence as a member of Christ's body, in his task within the body, in his mission, his charism, his Christian service to the Church and to the world. Considered in all its dimensions, what could be more holistic, indissoluble, and at the same time more clearly contoured than this form of being a Christian? This form transcends the questionableness of men's own choices and self-evaluation. It transcends, too, the uncertainty and melancholy that are, at bottom, inherent in most life-forms for the simple reason that something entirely different could have been chosen and that what was intended and striven after was never actually attained. But the Christian form is structurally a part of the miracle of the forgiveness of sins, of justification, of holiness, the miracle that transfigures and ennobles the whole sphere of being and which in itself guarantees that a spiritual form will thrive as the greatest of beauties. The image of existence is here illuminated by the archetype of Christ, and set to work by the free might of the Creator Spirit with all the sovereignty of one who need not destroy the natural in order to achieve his supernatural goal. For this reason, however, it is clear that in any age—and most especially in our own—the Christian will realise his mission only if he truly *becomes* this form which has been willed and instituted by Christ. The exterior of this form must express and reflect its interior to the world in a credible manner, and the interior must be confirmed, justified, and made love-worthy in its radiant beauty through the truth of the exterior that manifests it. When it is achieved, Christian form is the most beautiful thing that may be found in the human realm. The simple Christian knows this as he loves his saints among other reasons because the resplendent image of their life is so love-worthy and engaging. But the spiritual force necessary to have an eye for a saint's life is by no means to be taken for granted, and in our time our eyes (like those of Rilke's 'Panther' as he paces his cage) seem to be 'so tired from endlessly counting the bars' that even these most sublime figures of human existence can hardly snatch us from our lethargy.

It is from this standpoint that we must look to our supreme object: the form of divine revelation in salvation-history, leading to Christ and deriving from him. Here, again, a new and sharper vision is required, and there is little hope that we will receive and use such eyes unless we have to some extent learned to see essential forms with our old ones. The supernatural is not there in order to supply that part of our natural capacities we have failed to develop. *Gratia perficit naturam, non supplet.* The same Christian centuries which masterfully knew how to read the natural world's language of forms were the very same ones which possessed eyes trained, first, to perceive the formal quality of revelation by the aid of grace and its illumination and, second (and only then!), to interpret revelation. In fact, God’s Incarnation perfects the whole ontology and aesthetics of created Being. The Incarnation uses created Being at a new depth as a language and a means of expression for the divine Being and essence. Although ever since Luther we have become accustomed to call the Bible ‘God’s Word’, it is not Sacred Scripture which is God’s original language and self-expression, but rather Jesus Christ. As One and Unique, and yet as one who is to be understood only in the context of mankind’s entire history and in the context of the whole created cosmos, Jesus is the Word, the Image, the Expression and the Exegesis of God. Jesus bears witness to God as a man, by using the whole expressional apparatus of human existence from birth to death, including all the stages of life, all the states in life, the solitary and the social situations. He *is* what he expresses—namely, God—but he is not whom he expresses—namely, the Father. This incomparable paradox stands as the fountainhead of the Christian aesthetic, and therefore of all aesthetics! How greatly therefore the power of sight is demanded and presupposed at this point of origin! Surely the Jews were blind at the decisive point, although otherwise they may well have seen in Christ all kinds of correct and important things. And surely we can say, too, that the believing Christian who follows after Christ is perceptive at the same decisive point. But one point alone is not sufficient. The privileged ‘moment’ will always exist when a person falls to his knees to adore the One who says to him: ‘I who am speaking with you—I am He!’ But the Good News cannot be reduced to such moments, since these would readily absorb all else into themselves. There are also the surfaces, time and space, and all those human factors disseminated within them and which essentially belong to what John calls ‘remaining’: the commerce and familiarity with habits and opinions, reaching to what cannot be weighed or measured: a real *life-form*. The spiritual eyes of the disciples were indeed held in check as long as he had not died and risen from the dead, and they required a certain distance not only somehow to ‘believe’ the divine content of Christ’s reality, but to ‘see’ it in its self-evidence. And yet, this content was already to be found expressed in the man Jesus, and, for all its abstraction and contemplation, the retrospective remembering and *anamnesis* of what has been seen—the *conversio ad phantasma (verissimum!*)—constitutes the basis of understanding anything. He himself had told them as much beforehand, and the distance which they were to gain was not only the viewer’s natural act of stepping back before a picture, but the very condition for the coming of the Holy Spirit, who was first to impart to them the contemplative glance of faith. The image takes shape in them together with the coming of the Spirit. Now they see the proportions not only in Christ himself, for they never understood the divine in him as something naked, but rather always as they contemplate the relationship between what is human and visible about him and what is divine and invisible. They see the proportions, rather, in the manner in which Christ is both related to and distinct from the background of salvation-history and of the created cosmos as a whole. They see the form constituted by the Old and New Testaments together. They see here the unique proportion of promise and fulfilment, and the manner in which this proportion itself reveals a gradation of subforms and how it opens up its depths by presenting a multidimensionality peculiar to itself. Or are we of the opinion that there is no connection between natural and Christian proportions, and, therefore, no connection between the ability to see either of them?

It was of this image, seen with the eyes of faith and of faith’s insight, that the eye-witnesses rendered, first, an oral and then a written testimony. And, just as the Holy Spirit was in their eyes so that the image should spring into view, so, too, was he in their mouth and in their pen so that the likeness (*Nachbild*) which they drew up of the original image (*Ur-Bild*) should correspond to the vision which God’s Holy Spirit himself possesses of God’s self-representation in the flesh. We must, then, repeat that Scripture is not the Word itself, but rather the Spirit’s testimony concerning the Word, which springs from an indissoluble bond and marriage between the Spirit and those eyewitnesses who were originally invited and admitted to the vision. With such an understanding of Scripture, we can say further that its testimony possesses an inner form which is canonical simply by being such a form, and for this reason we can ‘go behind’ this form only at the risk of losing both image and Spirit conjointly. Only the final result of the historical developments which lie behind a text—a history never to be adequately reconstructed—may be said to be inspired, not the bits and scraps which philological analysis thinks it can tear loose from the finished totality in order, as it were, to steal up to the form from behind in the hope of enticing it to betray its mystery by exposing its development. Does it not make one suspicious when Biblical philology’s first move in its search for an ‘understanding’ of its texts is to dissect their form into sources, psychological motivations, and the sociological effects of milieu, even before the form has been really contemplated and read for its meaning *as* form? For we can be sure of one thing: we can never again recapture the living totality of form once it has been dissected and sawed into pieces, no matter how informative the conclusions which this anatomy may bring to light. Anatomy can be practiced only on a dead body, since it is opposed to the movement of life and seeks to pass from the whole to its parts and elements. It is not impossible that certain relations within the canonical form itself may occasionally call for and justify such a procedure. But one should first ask whether such attempts to work back ‘scientifically’ to real or alleged sources are not most useful when they once again demonstrate the indivisibility of the definitively expressed Word. With respect to our scholars, may we not credit the Holy Spirit with a little divine humour, a little divine irony? And would it be wholly erroneous to find some connection between this divine irony and humour and the Gospel's four-fold form? This would suggest that the unique and divine plasticity of the living, incarnate Word could not be witnessed to other than through this system of perspectives which, although it cannot be further synthesized, compensates for this by offering a stereoscopic vista. And the divine irony would further suggest that the main fruits to be gathered from the very unfruitfulness and failure of the scientific experiment would be the ever clearer exigency of returning to the one thing necessary. We must return to the primary contemplation of what is *really* said, really presented to us, really meant. Regardless of how distasteful this may be to some, we must stress that, in the Christian realm, such contemplation exactly corresponds to the aesthetic contemplation that steadily and patiently beholds those forms which either nature or art offers to its view. Inspiration in its totality is to be grasped only in the form, never in psychology and biography. And, therefore, if any kind of Biblical philology is to be fruitful, it must have its point of departure in form and must lead back to it. Only 'Scripture' itself possesses the power and the authority to point authentically to the highest figure that has ever walked upon the earth, a figure in keeping with whose sovereignty it is to create for himself a body by which to express himself. But a body is itself a 'field', and it requires another 'field' in which to expand, a field part of whose form it must already be if it is to stand in contrast to it. Christ's existence and his teachings would not be a comprehensible form if it were not for his rootedness in a salvation-history that leads up to him. Both in his union with this history and in his relief from it, Christ becomes for us the image that reveals the invisible God. Even Scripture is not an isolated book, but rather is embedded in the context of everything created, established, and effected by Christ—the total reality constituted by his work and activity in the world. Only in this context is the form of Scripture perceivable.

Only that which has form can snatch one up into a state of rapture. Only through form can the lightning-bolt of eternal beauty flash. There is a moment in which the bursting light of spirit as it makes its appearance completely drenches external form in its rays. From the manner and the measure in which this happens we know whether we are in the presence of 'sensual' or of 'spiritual' beauty, in the presence of graceful charm or of interior grandeur. But without form, in any event, a person will not be captivated and transported. To be transported, moreover, belongs to the very origin of Christianity. The Apostles were transported by what they saw, heard, and touched—by everything manifested in the form. John especially, but also the others, never tire of describing in ever new ways how Jesus' figure stands out in his encounters and conversations; how, as the contours of his uniqueness emerge, suddenly and in an indescribable manner the ray of the Unconditional breaks through, casting a person down to adoration and transforming him into a believer and a follower.

How cowardly a flight from the world would the Apostles' act of forsaking all things in order to follow Christ be if it were not moved by the folly of that enthusiasm which even Plato knew in his own way, and which every person knows who for the sake of beauty gladly becomes a fool without giving it a second thought! How could one hope to understand the least thing about Paul if one did not first acknowledge the fact that in Damascus he had seen the highest beauty, just as the prophets had seen it in the visions that called them forth? That vision then led Paul to sell all else for the sake of the one pearl—to sell all worldly and divine wisdom, all privileges within God's Holy People—in order to perform his ministry with joy as a 'poor man of Yahweh'. Both the person who is transported by natural beauty and the one snatched up by the beauty of Christ must appear to the world to be fools, and the world will attempt to explain their state in terms of psychological or even physiological laws (Acts 2.13). But *they* know what they have seen, and they care not one farthing what people may say. They suffer because of their love, and it is only the fact that they have been inflamed by the most sublime of beauties—a beauty crowned with thorns and crucified—that justifies their sharing in that suffering. It is easy to note the differences between the person affected by natural beauty and the one seized by the beauty of Christ; it is less easy to see what they have in common without reducing their experiences to psychological categories. For at this point one must have seen the same thing as they if one is to understand them, and this, therefore, is the point where a certain esotericism is unavoidable and where the proofs for the truth contemplated necessarily bear the character of a ritual initiation, as the *Symposium* showed long ago. Even so truly a 'church of the people' as the Catholic Church does not abolish genuine esotericism. The secret path of the saints is never denied to one who is really willing to follow it. But who in the crowd troubles himself over such a path?

2. THE AESTHETIC MEASURE

As a first attempt to survey the scope of our inquiry, we proceeded from below, without heeding the warning sounded when we crossed the boundary between the realm of nature and that of grace—the boundary between philosophy and theology. The form of the beautiful appeared to us to be so transcendent in itself that it glided with perfect continuity from the natural into the supernatural world. *Charis* refers to the attractive 'charm' of the beautiful, but it also means 'grace'. '*Charis* is poured out upon your lips,' sings the nuptial psalm (44.3). We believe that what is beautiful in this world—being spirit as it makes its appearance—possesses a total dimension that also calls for moral decision. If this is so, then from the beautiful the way must also lead into the religious dimension which itself includes man's definitive answer to the question about God and, indeed, his answer to the question God poses to *him*. It will be objected that the Word which comes from God places everything human under judgment, no matter how transcendent this human reality may be in itself. Such judgment must not necessarily mean condemnation, but may well be more of a saving act of taking up and transfiguring what is human. But, in any case, the judgment is above all a free declaration on the part of God, not to be eschewed by worldly beings, especially when they are in danger of forgetting the sovereignty of God's freedom of judgment. Crossing these boundaries so forgetfully, however, belongs to the essence of the beautiful and of aesthetics almost as a necessity. More than either metaphysics or ethics, aesthetics tends toward an immanental self-transfiguration on the part of the world, even if it is only for the moment when the beautiful first catches the eye. And an aesthetic sensibility and its standards will come into play precisely where metaphysics and ethics attempt to achieve a final reconciliation and harmony. Revelation must unmask these incursions by judging them and directing them to their rightful place, and theology will obediently reflect the judgment passed by revelation.

But does this judgment imply for aesthetics nothing but a limitation, perhaps even the demolition of the bridge between natural and supernatural beauty? Let us first grant that our former approach from below was, on the whole, not incorrect, since the moment does exist in which the spirit that beams forth from within and that is fashioning a form for itself must submit, as 'spiritual matter' (ὕλη νοητή), to a higher shaping hand in order to find its own interior law which is to be expressed; and that this in no way violates its spiritual autonomy, but is rather what makes it possible for the spirit to attain such autonomy in the first place. Let us also grant that in the phenomenon of inspiration there exists a moment which the heathen has always sensed but which only the Christian can grasp with all the preciseness of faith. This is the moment when one's own inspiration mysteriously passes over into inspiration through the genius, the *daimon*, or the indwelling god, a moment when the 'spirit that contains the god' (*en-thusiasmos*) obeys a superior command which as such implies form and is able to impose form. If all this is granted, then an inner analogy between both forms or stages of beauty ought not to be immediately dismissed. It must, then, be one of our axioms that from inspiration as a principle of self-formation and self-determination to inspiration as the state of being indwelt by a higher spirit there exists a genuine connecting step. In Christian language we may say that this step leads on into the realm of faith—faith in a supremely personal and freely sovereign Spirit-God. It is a matter of faith that we should not simply give ourselves over to God mystically, as to an Absolute that transcends all worldly forms and relativizes them, not only as to a primal Ground that destroys all of these forms, but that we should at the same time entrust ourselves with the confidence of faith to the *Creator Spiritus*, to the Spirit who from the beginning is a Creator and who, in the end, aims not at a Hindu dissolution of the world through mystical dance, but at creative form, regardless of how much in the form of man and of the world remains to be burnt away as dross. Such creative form, then, is God's work, and the work of man only in so far as he makes himself available to the divine action without opposition, acceptingly, allowing God to act, concurring in his work.

Such 'art' becomes visible in the Christian sphere in the life-forms of the chosen. In its exact sense, prophetic existence is the existence of a person who in faith has been divested of any intent to give himself shape, who makes himself available as matter for the divine action. From Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the charismatic Judges, the Prophets and the Martyrs of faith, all the way to the forerunner and to the 'Handmaid of the Lord', in whom the feminine and bridal plasticity of the Daughter of Zion is totally recapitulated and who presents to us the highest paradigm of what is meant by the 'art of God'and by 'well-structured sanctity': in each of these cases we confront life in the Holy Spirit, hidden life which is inconspicuous, and yet *so* conspicuous that its situations, scenes, and encounters receive a sharp, unmistakable profile and exert an archetypal power over the whole history of faith. This is the opposite of what would be expected if a limited individual surrendered himself wholly—to the very core of his person—to that which is essentially Unbounded and Unformed. What we perceive here is a new spiritual form, chiselled on the very stone of existence, a form which unmistakably derives from the form of God's Incarnation. Now, admittedly the divine principle of form must in many ways stand in sharp contrast to the beauty of this world. This contrast notwithstanding, however, if God's will to give form really aims at man as God truly wants to shape him—aims, that is, at the perfecting of that work begun by God's 'hands' in the Garden of Eden—then it appears impossible to deny that there exists an analogy between God's work of formation and the shaping forces of nature and of man as they generate and give birth.

We can post as many question marks and warning signs as we will all along the length and breadth of this analogy, but they will only apply to the ever-present possibility of misusing the analogy, and not to its rightful use. Misuse of the analogy consists in simply subjugating and subordinating God’s revelation with its own form, to the laws not only of metaphysics and of private, social, and sociological ethics but also of this-worldly aesthetics, instead of respecting the sovereignty which is manifested clearly enough in God’s work. Such misuse occurs the more frequently and extravagantly in aesthetics because worldly aesthetics appears more engaging and compelling than worldly metaphysics or ethics, which both remain inherently problematical. Most people dare not make strong affirmations about the ultimate nature of the world’s essence or about the ultimate justice of human actions. But all those who have been once affected inwardly by the worldly beauty of either nature, or of a person’s life, or of art, will surely not insist that they have no genuine idea of what beauty is. The beautiful brings with it a self-evidence that en-lightens without mediation. This is why, when we approach God’s revelation with the category of the beautiful, we quite spontaneously bring this category with us in its this-worldly form. It is only when such a this-worldly aesthetics does not fit revelation’s transcendent form that we suddenly come to an astonished halt and conscientiously decline to continue on that path. At that point, the application to the sphere of revelation of what we think and know to be beauty will seem to us either a merely ‘rhapsodic’, unchecked use of the beautiful, which at best betrays a naïve enthusiasm—a misunderstanding which may perhaps be tolerated because of its edifying effects—*or*, what basically amounts to the same thing, we will forbid ourselves every kind of falsifying and minimizing application of aesthetic categories out of reverence for God’s Word, for its awesomeness and its, literally, in-comparable pre-eminence.

There may well have been an historical *kairos*, as Gerhard Nebel felt justified in believing, when human art and Christian revelation met in an encounter which saw the creation of icons, basilicas and Romanesque cathedrals, sculptures and paintings. But since then too many misunderstandings and too many terrible things have occurred for us still to be in a position to insist more on the similarity of the two spheres than on their dissimilarity. Man’s habit of calling beautiful only what strikes *him* as such appears insurmountable, at least on earth. And therefore, at least practically speaking, it seems both advisable and necessary to steer clear of the theological application of aesthetic concepts. A theology that makes use of such concepts will sooner or later cease to be a ‘theological aesthetics’—that is, the attempt to do aesthetics at the level and with the methods of theology—and deteriorate into an ‘aesthetic theology’ by betraying and selling out theological substance to the current viewpoints of an inner-worldly theory of beauty.

Regardless of how conspicuously the warning signals against such dangers may be posted—and in this realm they must be written in bold print—the element of danger must not be here allowed to prejudice our theoretical reflections in advance. Even a dangerous road remains a road, perhaps one requiring special equipment and expertise, but one which does not for all that become impassable. The prior theoretical decision which must be made is the following: Are we objectively justified in restricting the beautiful to the area of inner-worldly relationships between ‘matter and form’, between ‘that which appears and the appearance itself’, justified in restricting it to the psychic states of imagination and empathy which are certainly required for the perception and production of such expressional relationships? *Or*: May we not think of the beautiful as one of the transcendental attributes of Being as such, and thereby ascribe to the beautiful the same range of application and the same inwardly analogous form that we ascribe to the one, the true, the good? The traditional theology of the Church Fathers and even that of high Scholasticism did this unhesitatingly, prompted by a double impulse. First, they possessed a theology of creation which, likewise unhesitatingly, attributed creation’s aesthetic values *eminenter* to the creating principle itself. Second, they had a theology of redemption and of creation’s perfecting which ascribed to God’s highest work the eminent sum of all of creation’s values, particularly as concerns the eschatological form of God’s work. But this form already begins with the Lord’s Resurrection, which for its part pours out its ‘sublime splendour’ (*kâbôd, doxa, gloria*) over the whole sphere of the Church and of the bestowal of grace. Should this not prompt us to question those theologies which view the veiled form of the economy of the Cross as the only form appropriate for understanding the whole course of salvation-history? Many Fathers, particularly Augustine, were deeply concerned with this question. For the time being, however, we are not concerned with whether they dealt with the problem in the right way. The moot point at the moment is to determine the angle from which to approach our problem, not the particular details of the methodology to be followed. For the reasons mentioned, the Fathers regarded beauty as a transcendental and did theology accordingly. This presupposition left a most profound imprint on the manner and content of their theologizing, since a theology of beauty may be elaborated only in a beautiful manner. The particular nature of one’s subject-matter must be reflected first of all in the particular nature of one’s method. This holds for the commentaries on the creation and paradise narratives of Theophilus, Irenaeus, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, and Anastasius of Sinai. It also holds for the understanding of *conservatio* as the enduring presence and eventual incarnation of the divine Word in his creation, as we see in Clement, Origen, Methodius, Athanasius, Jerome, Victorinus, and Augustine. And, finally, it may also be said of the economy of the flesh and of the Cross as represented by Ignatius, Hermas, Tertullian, Gregory of Nazianzen, Anthony, Cassian, and Benedict. The happy congruence of subject-matter and methodology is particularly true of the Fathers' doctrine of contemplation, from Origen to Evagrius, Macarius, and Augustine, and down to Gregory the Great and Maximus the Confessor, all of whom teach an inward and upward ascent that reaches the point where the eternal light transfigures the still veiled earthly forms of salvation. Contemplation here is the flashing anticipation of eschatological illumination, the presaging vision of transparent glory in the form of the Servant. But there are also those Fathers who see the beauty of salvation-history radiating objectively through the veiled form. In this way, Origen sees the Spirit blazing through the letter. Irenaeus recognizes God's highest art in the *oikonomia*: the rightful sequence of the epochs within salvation-history. Cyprian and Hilary see the splendour of love in the moral as well as sacramental and institutional unity of the Church. Leo the Great sees the highest harmony in the choral dance of the Church's feasts, and Evagrius sees the eternal light shining through the purified soul that knows God. Whatever the particular aspects each Father may select and whatever the method he may follow, they are all at one in the explicit recognition and emphasis they give to the aesthetic moment within contemplation, a contemplation indeed that is attentive to just this moment.

Such contemplation, which necessarily contains within itself an 'enthusiastic' moment, is all too often and too easily traced back to the unwarranted influence of Hellenistic spiritual attitudes,[2] and those who dismiss contemplation as a 'Hellenistic corruption of the Gospel' rejoice that our more modern theology has rid itself of this 'foreign intrusion'. A more serious objection comes from those who point to the anti-artistic currents running through the whole of the Patristic period and breaking out openly in Byzantium's iconoclastic controversies from the time of the Edict of Emperor Leo III (730) to the establishing of the 'Feast of Orthodoxy' under Theodora II (843). We cannot say that the theological arguments proposed in favor of icons always sound very convincing. One such argument draws on Basil the Great's theology of the Trinity, especially on its doctrine concerning the Son's character as image or likeness and the necessary relationship and distinction between original image (*Urbild*) and its likeness (*Abbild*).[3] Another argument follows Denys the Areopagite in affirming the necessity of religious symbols for sense-endowed humanity (Denys the

Areopagite, who is, after all, the father of the strictest negative theology). Still another of these arguments says that by despising the image one also despises what is being imaged. A fourth argument gives Christ's Incarnation as the basis for the cult of images, since God's humanity in Christ excludes every kind of Docetism. A final and especially unconvincing argument conceives of a mysterious 'indwelling' of the original reality in its image, and then goes on to point to the miracles occurring in and through icons by reason of their *acheiropoiia*—their 'having fallen from Heaven', their origin as 'not having been made by hands'. All of these justifications scarcely measure up to the Old Testament's ban on images, a ban which was never expressly revoked in the New Testament, or to the marked restraint and dearth of images of the early Christian period. By contrast, we are given much food for thought by the argument of the iconoclast Constantine V, which says that a merely human representation of Christ—unavoidable, since the divine side of his being remains irrepresentable—constitutes an assault upon Christology and must eventually lead to Nestorianism. Constantine's argument is valid at least by way of a permanent warning against allowing the Image of himself that God made to appear in the world—the Image that is his Son—to be extended without any critical distance whatever into other images which, regardless of all their religious relevance, nonetheless belong to the sphere of aesthetics. In this way iconoclasm may be seen as a corrective to Patristic theology, one which must always come into consideration not, of course, simply as a thesis, but precisely as a warning corrective, particularly when it takes milder forms in the course of the Church's history. In a more moderate form, iconoclasm played a role in the Carolingian period and in the Cistercian reform and its sharp reaction against Romanesque extravagances, to say nothing of its role in the Reformation. Even today it is again making itself felt in church architecture and in every realm of church art.

Nevertheless, even such a historical reminder cannot go beyond a theoretical and practical call to the constant vigilance required to keep the transcendental beauty of revelation from slipping back into equality with an inner-worldly natural beauty.

Before we broach the question of whether the Fathers spoke adequately concerning the beauty of revelation, and also the question of what form such a discourse would properly have to take, we must, by way of preamble, briefly consider Sacred Scripture, the very source of theology, which, if not in its entirety, for the most part is a poetical book. Here we ought not to insist greatly on the Bible's external poetic form, since weighty historical arguments could be produced against the theological import of such a form. For instance, it could be argued that the greater part of the Biblical writings derive from an age and a cultural context in which prose in the later sense (such as that of the Greek historians) does not yet even exist. At this time, not only are songs, hymns, parables, Wisdom sayings, cultic formulas, and prophetic discourse the ordinary manner of handing down a tradition, but so too are juridical pronouncements and poetically sophisticated historical saga, legend, story, and so forth, all of which in the earliest times were governed primarily by mnemotechnical needs. The poetical character of Scripture would, accordingly, have to be interpreted historically in the first place, something which would have surprised neither Hamann nor Herder or their disciples. According to them, poetry was mankind's first and oldest language and expressive form, and the Bible must therefore be considered to be the most reliable and 'most ancient document of the human race'. Another consideration is more serious. We see that, in the general historical sequence and in the divisions of the Hebrew Bible, the 'writings' follow the 'Law' and the 'Prophets' as a third category. Among the writings we have the Psalms, Job, Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes, and, in the canon of the Catholic Church, we also have Ben-Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon. In this third group of writings there emerges spontaneously an unmistakable aesthetic element which is not consciously present in the first two groups. But here it emerges in the context of the objective stance of the 'wise man' as he meditates on the dramatic religious-political history which the Heptateuch, with its appended books, and also the Prophets—wholly integrated into the foregoing histories—unfurl before the beholder. Doubtless the contemplation of the Wisdom literature belongs to a late period for which the powerful drama of the earlier heroic phase and the tragic events of the ripe middle period have definitively entered 'the past'. And we may add that Hellenistic influences surely awakened and fostered the contemplative attitude, as well as the sense for aesthetic values that comes with it. From the Protestant side, one may look somewhat deprecatingly on the documents of this period, even though important ones have been kept in the Protestant canon. From the Jewish side, a Martin Buber may consider them, in so far as they were written in Greek, as but an insignificant addendum to Scripture. Nevertheless, they form an organic part of the canon of the Catholic Church and she, therefore, considers them to be inspired in an unqualified sense. Indeed, because of the contemplative 'caesura' which these books insert between the great action of the Old Testament and the coming action of the New, the Church treasures them as a wholly indispensable link in the economy of revelation.

In the Wisdom books, the Holy Spirit of Scripture reflects on himself. But he takes not only the deeds of the past as the object of his praise (Wis 10-19; Sir 44-50), but also the splendour of natural creation (Wis 13; Sir 42.15-43; Pss 8, 104, etc.; Job 38f.), the conditions and attitudes of mortal man (Eccl., Job), and above all Wisdom herself, who is conscious of 'praising herself' explicitly (Prov 8.12f.; Sir 24.1f.). The self-contemplation of Sophia is 'glorious praise' (*Rühmung*), and, therefore, in its own way it is just as prophetic and poetical as God's revelation in history, nature, and human life, which she likewise extols. And here the claim that the poetic form of the first two sections of the Old Testament can be explained in purely historical and cultural terms is no longer tenable. This argument now in retrospect becomes questionable. The specifically Biblical form of inspired contemplation casts an aesthetic light backwards (and also forwards) over salvation-history, a light that allows the unique and supernatural dimensions of the 'Law' and the 'Prophets' to shine forth along with their natural poetic form. We are not dealing here with a feeble, belated, and romantic transfiguration of a long-past and heroic 'golden era'. We are witnessing the radiant drawing out into consciousness of the aesthetic dimension which is inherent in this unique dramatic action, a dimension which is the proper object of a theological aesthetics.

'God needs prophets in order to make himself known, and all prophets are necessarily artists. What a prophet has to say can never be said in prose.'[4] But if all prophets are artists, then surely not all artists are prophets, although all of them may be such in another, more general sense. Thus, the analogy between natural and supernatural aesthetics again emerges, an analogy which gives the divine Spirit the freedom of space to place all human forms of expression at the service of *his* kind of poetics. Scholars are right in their concern for the different literary genres in Scripture and in paying due regard to the general principles of these genres in their interpretations of the texts. But this activity by no means exhausts the question concerning the particular poetics of Scripture. In fact, this question may really be raised only when the other more general considerations have been concluded, and when for the interpretation of *this* inspiration—a particular inspiration, even though it is integrated into the general forms of inspiration—the interpreter himself enjoys an inspiration in accordance with the inspiration of his subject, analogous to the way the divine Sophia interprets and praises herself in the Wisdom books. We must, then, always see clearly where the competence of the philological and archaeological method really lies and where it must be complemented and even surpassed by a special method suited to the uniqueness of its object. The Fathers frequently exhibit this second element, while the first is often painfully absent; among modern scholars the first element may be found either with or without the second.

The problem may, indeed, be further sharpened by again relativizing historically the complementarity of Biblical sophiology and the sophiology of the Patristic and classical scholastic periods. One would, in this case, relate them both to the common cultural atmosphere of late antiquity, an influence extending at most to the outgoing Middle Ages and which must be expurgated from both the Bible and the history of theology by means of de-mythologization, in a determined effort to transcend it. But we will then ask: Transcend it in favour of what? In favour, perhaps, of a Harnackian 'essence of Christianity' or of a Bultmannian 'understanding of existence'? But note that from the sophiology of the late Old Testament connecting lines lead directly to Paul, to the author of the Letter to the Hebrews, and to John, all of whom exhibit with regard to Jesus' life and sufferings a transfiguring, contemplative stance which is similar to the stance of the Wisdom books with regard to the Law and the Prophets. The two late groups in either Testament are in many ways connected by a subterranean bond, a current of Biblical *'gnosis'* which is steeped in the same diffuse atmosphere of late antiquity as are Philo, the early Gnostic mystery texts, hermetic literature, and the beginnings of what would eventually produce Alexandrian Christianity. To excise all this from Scriptural revelation would mean abandoning the historical setting of the Biblical revelation, and would leave only a certain moralism which was non-historical and, therefore, however existential, ultimately ineffective.

3. THE ELIMINATION OF AESTHETICS FROM THEOLOGY: PROTESTANT VERSION

And yet from the very start the Protestant Reformation embarked on just such an operation which it has pursued ever since. Luther began by making the doctrine of justification the very axis of Biblical revelation—the doctrine of justification, that is, as portrayed in Galatians and Romans. He then continued by projecting this axis back into the Old Testament, the Old Testament primarily as conceived in these two letters, a view which is probably the most historically conditioned, most specifically late-Jewish aspect of all Paul's thought. The choice of this axis was based on not only Luther's personal experience of grace, but stemmed also from his polemical intention to attack everything in Catholicism which—if Kierkegaard's term had already been coined—could be resumed under the heading of the 'aesthetic' emasculation and dulling of the sharp cutting-edge of God's Word. It appeared to Luther that the Death-and-Resurrection dialectic of the Christ-event had been replaced by the non-dialectical schemata of Neo-

Platonic aesthetic metaphysics. According to Luther, such ‘aesthetic’ theologizing saw the world merely as the ‘appearance’ of the ‘non-appearing’ God, as a series of stages through which creation approached the Deity ontologically, ethically, and mystically. Life in such a view culminated in the intellectual act of contemplating the supratemporal world of the Ideas. Man was regarded as consisting essentially of soul, and of body almost accidentally. A harmonious analogy between nature and grace was made the all-encompassing principle of Being, a principle called into question only by Augustine. But, in the Reformers’ opinion, even Augustine was abandoned by the Middle Ages at the decisive point—abandoned in favour of an analogising semi-Pelagianism that one-sidedly brought the Neo-Platonic Augustine back to life, an Augustine then powerfully reinforced by the doctrines of Denys the Areopagite, who came to dominate both Scholasticism and mysticism.

In the face of all this, Luther wanted to recover the Bible’s most important pronouncements, namely: 1) the free sovereignty of the Creator God, whose unfathomable decision to create the world may neither be deduced from or explained by any theory of Ideas, any form of emanation (even of the most subtle kind), any heavenly hierarchies, or any connecting analogies; 2) the even less penetrable turning, through grace, of the saving and redeeming God to the sinner who had turned away from him, and this through Christ’s descent to the very heart of rejection and God-forsakenness, from which turning flows forth a salvation that may be grasped only by an act of totally blind surrender in trust; 3) in all of this, the *absconditas Dei sub contrario*—God’s absolute veiledness, not only in his predestination, not only in his creation, his historical providence, his Incarnation, but, beyond all of this, his veiledness as he enters the sphere of the sinner’s rejection of God, the ‘exchange’ (Rom 1.23,25) of God’s incorruptible splendour and glory for the blasphemous image of the idols. God responds to this unholy ‘exchange’ by ‘abandoning’ man, who had turned away from God, to the most abject perversion (1.26f.), but only then—as the Bridegroom-in-blood of the whore Jerusalem (Ezek 16) and because of his love for her—to take upon himself all her perdition and to restore to her her comely form as his immaculate Bride by means of this inscrutable mystery of love. This mystery is the purpose of the Incarnation; it is then only in the light of this mystery that the Incarnation can be grasped, or rather believed, as the Word’s descent into the Flesh. If we turn things around and ‘philosophize’ about the ‘analogy’ and interior compatibility of flesh and spirit, man and God, then the Mystery of the Cross becomes a mere function of such philosophizing, its true scandal removed (Gal 5.1). In this light, we can understand Luther’s attack on the ‘whore’ Reason, which aesthetically attempts to achieve a harmony between divinity and humanity: ‘If it were a matter of harmonizing, then we wouldn’t keep a single article of faith.’ But can we make God’s ways harmonize with each other? ‘My dear fellow! If God is almighty, how can one make sense out of the fact that he doesn’t punish evil, but rather lets it happen? Either he mustn’t be able to punish and resist every evil, or he mustn’t want to do it. If he doesn’t want to punish it, then surely he’s a rogue; but if he cannot punish it, then he’s not almighty as God ought to be. And now make sense out of this: the highest Wisdom behaves as if it were ignorance, and the highest Might as if it were impotent. You won’t find even a Turk who could make sense out of that! And this is why wise people . . . come to the logical conclusion that there is no God at all.’ And so, ‘the paradox (*Widerspiel*) seems’ to be ‘that there is nothing weaker than his power, nothing more inglorious than his justice, nothing more foolish than his wisdom. When this is preached it is called “heresy”, as you yourselves see. If it is said that only he is just, immediately we come with our works and demand that *they* be considered just, so that Christ and his Kingdom always remain subject to us. All this is done so that the Kingdom that we teach will remain a Kingdom of faith. He is, we are told, the true God, the highest wisdom, power, and justice, but he is these things in such a way that I am not able to see, touch, or grasp him. We hear this every day and we let ourselves think that it is an easy skill to conceive of God in this way. We may think this when we hear it, but when it comes to trying it out and practising it in our heart, then the skill becomes very demanding indeed.’ Let only ‘your heart say: “You have done this and that—you are a sinner.” Then sin, death, the law, and hell will all crash down upon you. Now where is your skill?’ (*Sermon 8 after Trinity*; Torgau, 1531). All the disciples betrayed their crucified Lord, and on the day of Easter ‘they all sit together as if in hell, with an evil conscience and great fear. . . . Then Christ the Lord comes to them in his love as if he were coming into hell, and says: “You are my brothers!”. . . . Our hearts cannot comprehend this’ (*Sermon on Easter Wednesday*; Wittenberg, 1531).

No harmonising, no skill, no comprehension is permitted. Every form which man tries to impose on revelation in order to achieve an overview that makes comprehension possible—for this is presupposed in beauty—every such form must disintegrate in the face of the ‘contradiction’, the concealment of everything divine under its opposite, the concealment, that is, of all proportions and analogies between God and man in dialectic. This dialectic now places us at a final crossroads. We may decide, on the one hand, that the dialectic is to be understood as the exuberant outpouring of the Gospel’s nuptial love, a love which, in the ‘blessed despair’ of a wholly self-surrendering faith, places all human skill and art at the disposal of the one divine Art. With such a surrender the divine Art can accomplish *sub contrario* (!) what man obstinately and vainly tries to achieve both *sub recto* and *sub contrario*. This is how a Richard of St. Victor understood the dialectic when he said of the ultimate vision of God that it ‘contradicts every kind of human reasoning’ (*Benjamin major* 4. 8) and that God’s mysteries, both in themselves and in the Incarnation, ‘not only transcend the nervous confines of reason’s subtleties, but show them to be utter foolishness’ (*ibid.*, 4. 18). On the other hand—and this is our other alternative—the dialectic may be wrenched loose from the mystery of the love which generates it and be expanded to the proportions of a negation, a cold methodological protest. Once this occurs, the dialectic will necessarily bear the indelible mark of Cain which is basically what transforms evangelism into Protestantism. The negation starts out as an admonition, the warning of a *correctio fraterna*, only to become a fundamental rejection of the other in schism. And the negation will then have to live with a self-perpetuating double curse: first, the splintering Protestantisms following one another in rapid succession will hardly ever be able to find their way back to Luther’s original intuition. (How could they, since the thread of tradition has been severed once for all?) And, second, the many sects will forever have to oscillate between irreconcilable extremes since the dialectic has been turned into a manipulable method.

In terms of our present concerns, the ‘either / or’ of this crossroads is, on the one hand, the radical elimination of aesthetics from theology, and, on the other, a paradoxical ‘aestheticization’ of theology which would again logically bring about a new and sweeping iconoclastic controversy. The elimination of aesthetics may take the form of the old orthodoxy battling against those forms of religion that express (*sich aussern*) and externalise themselves (*sich veräussern*)—from Melanchthon’s *justitia mere imputativa* to the wholesale rejection of all human ‘vessels’ and ‘figures’ of grace in Christian liturgy and ceremonies in favour of the pure ‘interiority’ of faith, a faith which then, nevertheless, somehow sees the work of redemption again as something of a total image and surveys and grasps it as such. Aesthetics may likewise be removed from theology by means of a ‘dialectical system’ which would conceive of God as exteriorizing himself in nothingness and in that which is his opposite, a God who, therefore, contains his nothingness and his opposite within himself. Jakob Böhme, Schelling, and Hegel elaborated such a view (in a misuse of the mystical tradition). In this way, the Protestant principle unwittingly gives birth again to the old Neo-Platonic *theoria*, which, by means of an aesthetic overview of the whole, is able to reconcile in God himself the final contradictions, now intensified to the extremes of heaven and hell as required by the Christian vision.

No wonder that first Hamann and then Kierkegaard call a halt at this point! By appealing to Luther (and, in Hamann's case, by appealing expressly to the Church Fathers as well), they reject *this* kind of aesthetics from the realm of faith. To enlightened aestheticising reason Hamann opposes this Lutheran formula: 'Let us now hear the sum total of the newest aesthetics, which is also the oldest: Fear God and give Him the honour, for the time of his judgement has come. Adore Him who has made heaven and earth, the sea and all rushing springs.' This formula contains Hamann's *aesthetica in nuce*, since under its guidance he (and, indeed, he alone in the Protestant world) finds a secret way back to the Patristic theology of the nuptial relation between God and the world.[5] But no one else followed him on his way back to the Fathers. His vision was neglected by German idealism in its entirety, which rather took the road of Hamann's unfaithful disciple Herder, leading to Hegel by way of Schleiermacher. At this late stage, and in spite of the earlier and deeper insight of the second volume of *Either / Or*, Kierkegaard can no longer achieve a meeting of religion and aesthetics. He is impelled to use the concept of 'the aesthetic' to stake out and define a basic attitude which, for the Christian, is unacceptable. The original 'harmony' after which he had strived—the 'equilibrium' between the aesthetic and the ethical—yields in *Stages on Life's Way* to an inexorable succession in which the 'apostle' and the 'martyr of truth' are sharply distinguished from the 'genius', thereby eradicating from theology all traces of an aesthetic attitude. The enthusiastic impulse which undoubtedly exists in Kierkegaard is employed by him to delineate all the more clearly the distance and total difference existing between the *agape* of Christ and his followers, on the one hand, and human *eros*, on the other. At the same time, this enthusiastic disjunction robs man, as it were from within, of all joy in the aesthetic (see the *Discourses on Love*).

As a theologian, Kierkegaard passed judgment in advance on the renewed dominance of the aesthetic element in the liberal theology of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with their heavy dependence on Schleiermacher and Hegel. Moreover, this was the age in which, for the first time in intellectual history, aesthetics, now sharply distinguished from both logic and ethics, was given a particular value of its own. Many were to proclaim aesthetics, so understood, to be the supreme value of any worldview. After early moves in this direction by Schiller, Schelling, Goethe, and by early German and classical English Romanticism, we first find the view fully developed in Schopenhauer, and then in F. T. Vischer, in the Hegelian Schasler, and to a certain extent in Jakob Burckhardt and the two warring brothers, Strauss and Nietzsche. This process of insulating the aesthetic from logic and ethics (as opposed to its total integration within the one, the true, and the good in the Greeks and in earlier theology) must always be kept in mind if we are to understand rightly the banishment of the aesthetic from the realm of theology by Kierkegaard and the more recent Catholic and Protestant theology which is dependent on him. In France we witness the same drama. Leon Bloy, for instance, in his reaction against the aesthetic Catholicism of Barbey d'Aurevilly and of Huysmans, explodes into the inimitable crudities of his unmasking style. And, with no knowledge of Kierkegaard, Maurice Blondel, in his first *Action* (1891), takes the internal contradiction involved in the aesthetic attitude to life as the starting-point of his argument. In an authentically Kierkegaardian fashion, he then presses on to the 'option' of a religious and positively Christian decision which is henceforth to be the basis and justification of all thought. Psychoanalysis as a philosophy of life then comes along to make the spiritual situation still more critical by proposing, among other things, that Kierkegaard's religious philosophy is but a compensating superstructure erected by him over a basically aesthetic attitude which he could never master. In different ways, Thust, Walter Rehm, and Adorno are proponents of this view. For our enquiry, it makes no difference basically whether the religious principle (along with the 'anguish' allegedly inherent in it) is considered an ideological protuberance of the aesthetic, or whether the aesthetic is seen as the form which above all is exclusive, opposed to the religious. The determining factor in those who follow Kierkegaard consciously or unconsciously is the opposition they sense between the two realms. The word 'aesthetic' automatically flows from the pens of both Protestant and Catholic writers when they want to describe an attitude which, in the last analysis, they find to be frivolous, merely curious and self-indulgent. And for the champions of an aesthetic world-view, the exact reverse is true: the ethico-religious in general and, in particular that which is positively Christian, is precisely what either clouds or simply destroys the 'right' attitude to life.

Kierkegaard's categories are those of inwardness and religious subjectivity, and they were constructed as a conscious antithesis to Hegel's 'objective spirit'. This antagonism, however, is not a thoroughgoing one, since Hegel's 'spirit' *de facto* includes many Kierkegaardian attributes and could *de jure* include many more. Kierkegaard and Hegel, moreover, are united by the fact that they both take the spirit as point of departure, a choice which forces them both equally to take an anti-dogmatic stance. The result is that all those thinkers who have wanted to interpret Christian reality as an objective historical 'process', intertwined with the historical and cultural directions of the spirit have followed in Hegel's footsteps. On the other hand all those have followed Kierkegaard who, in their protest against the Hegelians, have regarded Christian reality as a process of personal inwardness centered on the decision of the act of faith. The speculative Neo-Hegelianism of the nineteenth century has come to a double end in the twentieth. Nothing could stop historical speculation from becoming the kind of so-called ‘exact historical research’ which today, along with its philological, archaeological, and cultural-historical annexes, constitutes the greater part of Biblical studies. Towards the end of the First World War, however, this kind of research was forced to make way quite dramatically for the irruption of Kiekegaard, which was contemporaneous with Karl Barth’s own irruption and that of the personalistic groups around Scheler, E. Brunner, and Martin Buber.

We will later come to discuss Biblical scientism. But it is already obvious that this approach has not been and will never be the force that restores to theology its lost aesthetic element. The Kierkegaard revival in various ways had an anti-aesthetic effect on theology. Brunner is a good instance of this. In practice, he develops Kierkegaard’s polemical schema of opposites into a methodological theological opposition between contemplative ‘mysticism’ and prophetic and Biblical faith in the Word (see his *Mysticism and the Word*). Unlike Heiler, who in his chrestomathy on prayer can include in a general typology of prayer both forms, Brunner pits them emphatically against one another. On one side, he groups Schleiermacherian and Catholic types of theology; on the other, genuine Protestant theology. But Bultmann is the best example of this mentality. As he employs it, Biblical scientism dissolves any and every possible form of revelation which is objectivised and historically perceptible. We witness instead a retreat into the absolute and formless inwardness of the decision of faith, achieved through the awareness of the existential *pro me* of the Lord’s Death and Resurrection. In all that Bultmann writes there is a deep seriousness which comes from his subjective sense of having been seized, in his case, of having been gripped by Christ. But this is a gravity which, alas, is full of anguish because of its total lack of imagery and form: a real dead-end for Protestantism.

Here we must acknowledge the great service rendered to theology by Karl Barth of having recognized the imminent danger of shipwreck and of having, unaided, put the helm hard over. Barth overcame the either / or between Hegel and Kierkegaard in two ways. Following Hegel, he saw the need for an objectively normed and objectively formed dogmatics, one to which he then himself proceeded to give shape. And yet, following Kierkegaard, he gave to this dogmatics as its content the personal faith-relationship (mediated in the God-Man Jesus Christ) between the revealed creator and redeemer God and man, both as he turns away from God and as he re-turns to him. To be sure, Barth always remains opposed to all institutional aspects of Christianity; for this reason, the form given by him to dogmatics has never been able to take root undialectically in the visible reality of the Church. This form remains actualistic and energetic, and yet it was intended and presented as the *real form* of God's objective act of revelation. Such an intention and manner of presentation both justifies and logically compels Barth, at the conclusion of his treatment of the doctrine of the divine perfections, to restore to God the attribute of 'beauty' for the first time in the history of Protestant theology.

Let us note that, contrary to Kierkegaard's concept of aesthetics, Barth arrives at the content of 'beauty' in a purely theological manner, namely, by contemplating the data of Scripture, especially God's 'glory' (*Herrlichkeit*), for whose interpretation 'beauty' appears to him indispensable as 'auxiliary concept'. It is really 'by contemplating' that Barth arrives at this realization, for he writes: 'Could we speak of "perception", could we speak of "revelation", if in the end we had to do only with an object—an object with neither form nor shape?' Must we not establish more than just the *factum brutum* of God's glory in his revelation? Must not rather the question be raised: 'To what extent is the light of God's self-revelation really light, and therefore enlightening? To what extent is God convincing and persuasive in that he is present to himself and to others?' (*Dogmatics* II/1, pp. 732f.). This is the precise point at which Barth goes beyond the naked *pistis* of a Melanchthon to arrive at a *gnosis* inherent to faith itself and comprising its own interior spiritual dimension. Thus he can say of God that he is beautiful, 'beautiful in a manner proper to him and to him alone, beautiful as the unattainable Primal Beauty, but. . . , precisely for this reason, beautiful not only as a fact, not only as a force, but rather: as a fact and as a force in the manner in which he asserts himself as the one who arouses *pleasure* (*Wohlgefallen*), creates desire (*Begehren*) for himself, and rewards with *delight* (*Genuss*). . . , the one who as God is both *lovely* and *loveworthy*.'[6] Barth is here very conscious of hearkening 'back to the Church's preReformation tradition'. He makes reference to Augustine's *Confessions* and to the Areopagite, regrets that 'the Reformation and Protestant orthodoxy have wholly ignored' this concept. And Barth points out that 'not even Schleiermacher, from whom we should have expected much in this area, made any significant contribution.' But neither the fact that more recent Catholic theology again takes the concept of beauty seriously, nor the fact that the liberal Protestant tradition misuses it, keep Barth from re-introducing it in *his* theology, albeit with evident care and precautions. 'Much too much would have to be deleted,' he continues, 'which in the Bible is clearly and loudly proclaimed, if we were to attempt to deny the legitimacy of the concept of beauty because of some ultra-puritanical earnestness concerning sin.' And if the very form of his glory—which mere thought can never simply banish—consists ‘not only in awe, thankfulness, admiration, and submission’, but also in joy, pleasure, and delight in God and in his splendour, ‘if the form of his glory is determined precisely by his ability to transport us to joy, and further determined by that joyous rapture itself’: how could we *then* possibly dispense with the concept of the beautiful? ‘Whenever one tries to see and express the matter differently, the proclamation of God’s glory (with the best will in the world and with the greatest earnestness and zeal) will always, even if ever so discreetly, and yet perhaps very dangerously, have something joyless, lustreless and humourless about it—not to say something boring and, finally, unconvincing and unpersuasive. It is here a question of form; and if revelation’s quality of beaming forth joy is not adequately appreciated, where exactly then—so important is this question of form!—would be the gladness of the Glad Tidings?’ (*ibid*., p. 739).

In the case of revelation, however, form cannot be separated from content. And so, in conclusion, Barth follows Anselm in calling theology the ‘most beautiful of the sciences’ because of its object, and he demonstrates the beauty of theology by enumerating the beauty of its contents: 1) The contemplation of God’s being, imparting a delight impossible to repress, reveals that the *form*—the fashion and manner—in which God is perfect *is itself perfect*, is perfect form, for is it not ‘that wonderful, perpetually puzzling and perpetually clear unity of identity and non-identity, simplicity and multiplicity, interiority and exteriority, a unity of God himself and the fulness of what he is as God’? 2) The contemplation of the Trinity reveals that here Hegel’s principles of truth and beauty are fulfilled and more than fulfilled as the identity of identity and non-identity, ‘of movement and peace’. ‘Strictly speaking, it is this that makes God’s power and sovereignty enlightening, convincing, and persuasive.’ Once we deny God’s threefoldness, ‘we immediately are left with a lustreless and joyless (and also humourless!)—in short, an uncomely God.’ 3) Theology finally exhibits its beauty in its contemplation of the Incarnation. As a preliminary, we see that the eternal Son, as the image of the Father, already ‘within the Trinity represents God’s beauty in a particular manner’. This reaches its culmination when, as true man, the Son makes the image a reality and incorporates created man into it by ‘the exchange of *locus* and predicates’ that takes place between the Redeemer and the redeemed. God’s Incarnation does not occur ‘through tension, dialectic, paradox, and contradiction. It is not God, but rather the errors of our manner of thinking about God that are to be blamed if we conceive of the Incarnation in such a way.’ We must, rather, look for guidance in the reality of the Chalcedonian formula ‘unmixed and unchanged, but also inseparable and undivided’ (pp. 741-749). And this leads on to Barth’s last point: To the unity of his humiliation and exaltation, God brings his own form and proper beauty. Isaiah's phrase, 'He had neither form nor beauty', determines the precise locus from which God's unique beauty radiates: 'If we seek Christ's beauty in a glory which is not that of the Crucified, we are doomed to seek in vain.' 'In this self-revelation, God's beauty embraces death as well as life, fear as well as joy, what we call 'ugly' as well as what we call 'beautiful' (p. 750).

At this point, too, Barth's dogmatics represents a decisive breakthrough. If his call to return to pre-Reformation theology inspires such trust, it is because he claims for his theology only those elements of Patristic and Scholastic thought which can be justified from revelation itself and which, accordingly, are not suspect of any undue Platonizing. In any event, we must not fail to note that Barth was aware that the delineations of an authentic theological aesthetics which he offered had no roots within the realm of Protestant theology, and that, in order to give such a theological aesthetics a home within his own theology, Barth himself had to cut his actualism back sufficiently to make room alongside it for the concept of authentic objective form. In addition, it was perhaps necessary to let the first stage of Barth's thought die away—a phase whose inner form lay in the overpowering and uncompromising rhetoric of Luther and the Reformation with its emphasis on the scandal and offence of the Gospel—in order to await the second stage, which as interior form attained the tranquil, attentive contemplation (*theoria*) of revelation which from volume to volume of the *Dogmatics* increasingly withdraws from polemics and concentrates its efforts on making positive statements. We can leave aside the question whether Barth in this way does justice to Luther's most profound concerns, whether he is as justified as Luther in concluding his section on the beauty of God and his revelation with an evocation of the Song of Solomon. It is more important to establish the fact that, at least for the time being, Barth with his contemplation of the objective revelation has not succeeded in really shaping and transforming Protestant theology. Up to the present, and very probably for a long time to come, Protestant theology continues in dutiful subservience to Bultmann's dualism of criticism, on the one hand, and existential, imageless inwardness, on the other.

Contemporary Protestant theology nowhere deals with the beautiful as a theological category. For the time being, the only question posed by Protestants is that concerning the relationship between revelation and this-worldly beauty—certainly a justified question, but not a sufficient one. To this question one significant Protestant voice has offered a highly original answer.

4. A PROTESTANT THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

Although its roots lay deep in Scripture, Luther’s approach was actualistic and, therefore, basically anti-contemplative. He had wanted to penetrate to the heart of the event of redemption—to the very act whereby the Redeemer takes my sins upon himself as he passes through the hell of God-forsakenness and enters into the very heart of sin. The unfathomable happening whereby my guilt passes over to him—the ‘lightning-flash’ of such an exchange—could be expressed only in the paradox of the *Simul* (*justus et peccator*). This event could not and must not be allowed to gain any breadth or permanence in the world. The hiddenness *sub contraria specie*, ‘under a form which contradicts our thought and comprehension’ (*Lecture on the Letter to the Romans*, 1515-1516, on 8.26), transforms God, even in his mercy, into the hidden God which Calvin then radicalizes into the God of double predestination, the God of whom we can have absolutely no image or vision. Only an hypostasis of the believers’ consciousness of their election can produce the single image acceptable to Calvin. This hypostasized image of election then allows the believer something like a ‘contemplative’ state in which he can rest. But such a construction is contradictory and, as Karl Barth has strikingly shown, it is wholly foreign to Biblical revelation. And so we are left only with Luther’s *exaiphnĕs*, the lightning-like event which excludes every kind of contemplative vision. Thus it was only logical that Protestantism should exclude the genuinely contemplative and aesthetic books of Scripture from its canon, even though the exclusion was not radical enough. From among the remaining books, the Protestant instinct focussed on those which are particularly actualistic, such as Galatians and Romans, while the Pauline contemplation of the letters from captivity has always been suspected of being in some way inauthentic. Only the *theologia crucis*—the theology of God’s mercy under the ‘alien form’ of the most merciless of judgments—was seen by Luther to be acceptable in the present age. And he over-hastily identified the *theologia gloriae* with the theology of the coming age and its vision—as if the concept of *doxa* (kâbôd, gloria) were not, already in this age, a fundamental concept of the economy of both the Old and the New Testaments. But the Lutheran congregation also sings: ‘See the splendour of inward Christian lives!’ The banished *doxa* makes a mighty comeback in Pietism and Idealism. We have only to think of the late Fichte.

In our time, *Gerhard Nebel* has attempted to develop a fundamentally Protestant aesthetics in his book *The Event of the Beautiful*.[7] Nebel writes the work in the hope that the concept of ‘ “event”. . . might play in a Biblical

Reformation ontology . . . the same role that “substance” plays in Thomistic-Aristotelian metaphysics’ (p. 17). ‘The beautiful demands of man a confrontation. . . . The aesthetic is transformed into the beautiful when the object is consumed in the flame of the event. To be beautiful is, therefore, the act in which the beautiful offers itself as a sacrifice to itself and, therefore, to Another, to a higher Being’ (p. 19). For the Greeks, the beautiful meant the presence of God, but not as a static presence, since his epiphany was always something of a ‘breakthrough, a caesura, a hammer-blow, a transformation’. For this reason the statement may be ventured: ‘Hellas stood under the same God as we—under the same wrath, even if perhaps not under the same grace. . . . Because the triune God was also the Lord of the Hellenes, we are able to understand their tragedy, their temples and their philosophy. Nor can the continuing attraction of Greek art be dismissed simply by appealing to the otherness of God’ (p. 22). In the course of his enquiry, Nebel expressly opposes to the ‘static analogy of being’ what he calls an ‘analogy of event’: the possibility that the true God of grace could, in his freedom, make an appearance within beauty’s genuine quality as event. Such ‘analogy of event’ contains for theology and aesthetics the same inherent (analogous) protest against either of them becoming transmuted into science and theory. Even the analogy itself cannot be made use of. Neither the statement that ‘Yahweh appears in the beautiful’ nor that ‘Apollo can sustain and heal’ (p. 31) is valid. The beautiful can never stand as a bridge on its own, since in itself, like everything else, it stands under wrath. But this also means that the beautiful cannot from its own resources offer itself and man a closed world in which restlessness finds peace (p. 33). Myth, which is part of beauty, opens up the realm of the ‘powers’, but it is only through God that we can discern whether they belong to the ‘prince of this world’ or whether they are transparent to ‘the One who overcomes the world’. Or, to put it in another way, myth opens up the realm of ‘Being’, which for the Greeks, and also for Heidegger, is ‘full of divine powers’, but which stands in the same ambiguity of being either a transparency of the living God or the idolatrous image that disfigures him. Genuine beauty, moreover, is always a ‘favour’—something freely given: ‘If we see man as the author of the beautiful . . . we lapse into the mainstream of modern titanism. . . . We forget that we can be free only when as servants we are the recipients of favour’ (p. 48). The interpretation of the beautiful must spiral upwards, toward the divinely-wrought event. If we cling to what is below, we will possess the beautiful only in its aesthetic ‘fallenness’. The ‘polarities’ of form and matter, shape and content, make sense only in the realm of handmade artifacts; Aristotle ‘develops his conceptions on the model of the artisan. The question of form and matter can be discarded because, once we confine the problem to them, we soon experience the tedium of a metaphysics of substance' (p. 53) and, aesthetically, the boredom of academic canons: 'artistry, the museum, Hellenism'. The beautiful has its native atmosphere in the tragic myth, in the strife of the gods—from Troy and Thebes all the way to Worms!—and even in the myth-less form of tragic human existence. The beautiful may take refuge (*sich flüchten*) and seem almost to disappear (*sich verflüchtigen*) in a mystical 'All and Nothing'; it may become an 'abstract infinity' and fascinate aesthetes under the form of 'religion'; but the 'peace' attained in this way will be only a compensation and not a 'victory'. The Greek *agon* may belong to the worldly form of beauty, but at the same time we must affirm that 'the beautiful brings into the foreground the cosmos' background of peace' (p. 79). The beautiful can be the divine epiphany of that peace, although this does not imply that this peace is thereby bestowed immediately and actually. Why should Christ not condescend to put on mythical masks, including the mask of the beautiful? 'The sap of myth overflows into this super-myth,' and this 'opens up the possibility of Christian art. The beautiful can be put at the service of Christ, however, only because the god of myths is more than himself. . . . In fact, it belongs to the fulness of beauty to be more than beautiful' (pp. 82-83). Of the consciousness of guilt that begins to emerge in Greek tragedy, Nebel says (this, interestingly, was also Hamann's view) 'that Apollo can become a mask for Yahweh': 'Once we recognise this, we cannot help re-stating the question of natural theology—or better, of the theology of creation—from this perspective' (pp. 110-111). Why is the beautiful both 'the quiet *and* the sorrow of the gods' (Rehm)? Sorrow haunts the blissful quiet of Olympus because the gods long to be mortal, to be human. In the beautiful, man not only transfigures himself and becomes as the gods, but the gods too show their need of man in a mysterious exchange that Plato's Diotima describes in the *Symposium*. 'Man is the mood of God, and surely this is not only a feeling of jubilation, but also a dread of the end, a sorrowing over man's transitoriness' (p. 114). Once this circle is closed, the beautiful becomes autarchic: the creature deifies itself in demonic fashion and the beautiful becomes the very 'manifestation of the god of this world' (p. 129). But if the circle remains open, as in the age of Christian art, then it can serve for the manifestation of the living God, who came down as Saviour to let man share his divine nature.

In Israel, art never succeeds. 'Architecture', observes Nebel, is but the 'sign of a wound in Israel's relationship with God'. The Temple immediately becomes the sanctuary of idols. But, as an anticipation of the Incarnation, Israel did have the angel of Yahweh—himself 'an event consisting of purest fire, always conveying or announcing things at the edge of men's conceiving and casting the person he addressed down on his face'. To be sure, by contrast with the epiphanies of the Greek gods, the event of Yahweh's manifestation in his angel is not something demanded by his nature; it stems from a freedom expressed in the prohibition of images. Yahweh remains surrounded by darkness, and the hero Samson is the demolisher of the mythical 'pillars': the night of the East against the light of the West (pp. 129-134). The Bible certainly contains 'poetry of the highest sort', poetry with great lyrical and epic-mythical force. But if we look in the Bible for poetry—and find it—by our very quest we fail to encounter God's Word. 'And yet!. . .' (p. 137): We do have the splendour of creation and of Paradise, and something of this glory shines through again in all historical revelation. 'There is a distant similarity between those who are struck by Yahweh and by Apollo, but it is a similarity such as we find affirmed by cautious proponents of the *analogia entis*: for here the extent of what God and his creatures have in common is so limited and that which separates them is so overwhelming that the gulf between Reformation theology and Thomism is closed' (p. 139). In the chapter entitled *'Analogia Pulchri'*, Nebel attempts to build a narrow bridge. He rejects the *analogia entis* particularly in our time, in which, he believes, 'Being' has become an irreplaceable magical word 'as the up-dated, non-mythical vestige of myth'. Even when the 'Scholastic banalities concerning the *ens formale*' are avoided and Being is conceived of as plenitude, as 'the God who pours himself out in epiphanies', as 'the power that ceaselessly becomes event, the infinite power that both makes itself finite and retrieves itself from the finite—even in this case (says Nebel), rare enough in our day, the Being of Being can be Non-Being, just as much as Being, provided, of course, that we are judging from the standpoint of Christian faith'.[8] Must we, therefore, also subscribe unconditionally to Nebel's following statement? He affirms: 'Being is not itself the Source (*Ursprung*), but the issue of the Source (*Entsprungenes*). It is not divine but creaturely, not holy and whole (*heilig*) but maimed. . . . If this fulness of Being which embraces both event and form were unbroken Being, then Israel would be a lie, and if it were naked Non-Being, then Greek culture and civilization would be a deception not worth bothering about' (p. 146). Despite the fact that Nebel here proceeds with such care to avoid 'inadmissible contaminations', he still concludes too brusquely from its commixture with Nothingness that Being must have an exclusively 'creaturely' character. Even Thomas Aquinas would not have come to such an easy conclusion. By virtue of their existence within this Being that emanates from God and which enables them to share in God's absolute Being, creatures are the unforgettable and inescapable locus of his (hidden) manifestations. Once this is accepted, Nebel's statement can then be seen to be true at an even deeper level: 'The *daimon* of the beautiful must be brought into relation with the triune God.

It must be given its place within the Bible. We cannot spare ourselves such an integration by appealing to the ready-made argument that theology and philosophy are simply different, that God belongs to theology, since he is only to be grasped by faith, and that Being belongs to philosophy since it may be attained by the efforts of our thought. . . . If we are in earnest, we will see that the truth is one, just as God is one and Adam is one' (p. 148).

We must, therefore, make room for the *daimon* that irrupts in the event of the beautiful. What exactly is this *daimon*? 'Reality cannot be exhausted either mythically or Biblically merely with the double affirmation of man's interior space and of the exteriority of the creating and redeeming God. The phenomena compel us to establish the existence of an intermediate realm proper to the *daimon* of the beautiful, a realm which for centuries now has been progressively restricted, suppressed, and finally even denied. The history of the modern world lies just as much in the ruination and abolition of this daimonic *intermundium* as it does in the de-Christianization of public life and culture.' 'Yahweh's jealousy and Israel's history would be incomprehensible if the *baalim* were mere phantoms.' What would be the meaning of Elijah's struggle, or of Jesus' acts of exorcism, or of Paul's real acceptance of cosmic forces, if all of this were but subjective imaginings? And surely we must include 'Rilke's obviously incredible angel' in such a world of *daimons*?

Nebel avoids the trap of identifying the *daimon* with the Christian *demon*, a trap into which the Church Fathers not infrequently fell in the heat of their polemical situation. Nebel recognises that the beauty both of nature and of art makes a claim to wholeness and thereby discloses the wholeness of Being—yes, the *wholeness* of it, but only as the goodness of God's most excellent work.

> "And he saw that it was good." God's splendid pleasure in the work of his hands: Should not the beautiful be the *modus* of creation, forever prompting God to self-satisfaction? Should not the beauty of the beautiful be that in his creatures which gives God reason for self-acclaim? Should Gods affirmation of his creation not be repeated in us in the event of the beautiful. . . without this in the least negating the corruption of our being or our dependence on Christ's redemptive deed? . . . . Is not our every encounter with the beautiful . . . tantamount to an assent to creation, either bestowed on us or drawn from us?

And now Nebel proceeds finely along strict Lutheran lines:

> In his encounter with the beautiful, as in every manifestation of love, man enters God's situation, but not the situation of the achievement of his own, but as a gift of God. . . . In the work of art, man witnesses to creation's well-wrought structure as it encounters him. But the work of art is by no means . . . itself an instance of integral, well-wrought creation, since it is not beyond the fall into which every creature plunges. Art, however, reminds us of creation's "golden purity" and of God's applause for himself.

‘Creation’ is here ‘understood as an act and the result of that act’. Creation, that is, is seen as the event in its result. By “well-wrought” he means not the final structure as, say, nature’s being meaningfully ordered to man. He means something far deeper, something like God’s ‘surprise’ and

> amazement at the power of Being, the highly concentrated and tense density of Being, the smiling confidence, as it were, of what a minute before had been nothing. We could almost say that the beautiful is a result of the divine might as it goes beyond the strictly required measure, and that, accordingly, the beautiful constitutes a super-abundance, a mere by-product. However: We may not suppose that God calls into being anything but what will cause him joy. Something of God’s own splendour passes over into his creatures (pp. 149 -156).

Everything that still remains to be said can in no way weaken these fundamental affirmations. To be sure, God ‘repents’ of his creation, and this ‘repentance’ is henceforth impressed on the world as part of its character. Splendour and glory are proper to Paradise, and Paradise is no more. We have an eschatological hope for the New Heaven and the New Earth. But daimonic beauty is concerned with the present moment, with making it eternal. Daimonic beauty, therefore, conflicts with the beauty acceptable to faith, which can be only protological or eschatological. But is there only conflict and opposition between daimonic beauty and faith, or may we not also say that, ‘unlike faith, Paradise is a powerful force in all men in so far as they are men. . . . Moreover, while faith has been forged onto an historical fact, the beautiful is not required to squeeze through such a narrow pass.’ Shall we say that God bestows the beautiful only as Creator, and not as the God of the covenant and of faithfulness? ‘And yet we see that a rudiment of the covenant may be discovered in the beautiful, provided our gaze is informed by the vision of faith. The beautiful is creation in its wholesome integrity, and such creation was intended to be the locus for the covenant between Yahweh and Adam. Where the co-ordinates of myth intersect, the vertical points to the covenant, to the divine Thou’ (pp. 158-159). The beautiful, in this case, would be seen ‘not as salvation (*das Heil*), but as wholeness (*das Heile*). . . , as that density which enlightens, conferring peace and authenticity of existence: in a word, as the purity and freedom from anxiety of a passage from Mozart’. But even on such a view, the beautiful is conceived not as a *state*, but as an *event*: as the revelation of the paradisal and eschatological possibilities present in the midst of a sinful world. ‘This is why poetry never constitutes a world in itself, but rather is always an irruption into the world of prose’ (pp. 160-161).

In reality, we are not redeemed by momentary flashes of the paradisal element, rather by the ‘solid, diamond-hard historical *fact*, by its crassness and lethalness. In its extremity, this fact is death itself. But death must be undergone, and the fact of the Resurrection, undiluted by any mythical conception, must be set up over against the fact of death. Like Hamann, Nebel locates language, beyond the merely poetical and mythical sphere, in the sphere of the facticity of historical revelation. Through language, man ventures forth to obedience and disobedience. Here we encounter something definitive, and this is why the fact of revelation, constituted by God's Word and man's answer, remains permanently unsurpassable. Nothing beautiful, on the other hand, is unsurpassable. 'By its very nature and purpose, every beautiful thing points away from itself to some other beauty, since, if we remain too long with one thing, its depth soon vanishes. . . . As is always the case in the mythical sphere, the time of first encounter has a peculiar dignity about it, a special power to open up depths. But, by staring at the beautiful, we conceal it.' But, 'the very sense of language is prayer' (pp. 171-174). The feast of beauty takes us only as far as the threshold, then it must 'become extinguished so that the terrible and tremendous may occur': the dying and the rising with Christ. At most, the feast can again resume as the ministry that proclaims this tremendous event. And here Nebel can infuse a Christian instead of the usual mythical sense into Rilke's phrase: 'For beauty is nothing but the beginning of the terrible.' The criterion of Christian art is now seen to be whether, in the *analogia* eventus pulchri et Christi, the event of the beautiful becomes a pointer to the event of Christ. It goes without saying that there can be no simple recipe for getting this right. Neither distortion nor elegance, neither Romanticism nor Classicism, neither poetry and music as temporal arts nor sculpture, painting, and architecture as spatial arts can claim a fundamental pre-eminence. Beyond this, it remains true that 'style is a matter of historical destiny' and does not reside within the sphere of an individual's choice. In Christian antiquity and in the Middle Ages, accordingly, there may have been 'styles of proclamation'. But 'if we want to glorify Christ crucified in a later age, we are thrown back on the styles of Neo-Paganism, or rather (since this too has gone into decline), we have to adopt the styles of the wilderness.' The art of proclamation can be no more reconstructed than can the 'Empire' or a demolished cathedral (pp. 195-196).

What is to tell us, however, that in the desert of our boredom and of our anguished emptiness God can no longer make events occur—make them come to pass from the outside and from above, freely disposing of things and carrying us off in the blink of an eye? Who is to tell us that mankind, even as it swears right and left by its varieties of Hegelianism, progressivism, and success—despite all the historical demonstrations of the 'world spirit'—could not suddenly be gripped by the Spirit of God and then be transported home to that which alone merits the name of ‘Time’, the event that comes impetuously to claim us for itself (p. 253)?

It is significant that Gerhard Nebel concludes by consigning the beautiful to the region of ‘intoxication’ and dreams. While Idealism had preferred to speak of the ‘imagination’, these newer and stronger concepts bear the stamp of Nietzsche, George, and Freud.

> Dreams belong to the night, and it is no coincidence that man sleeps and dreams at night. Every night we lose our relationship to Christ, bestowed on us during the day. We leave it behind and step into the realm of irresponsibility and myth, of horrible plights or of unsuspected pleasures. Without dreams we could not experience the beautiful,. . . nor could we survive without paying the honour due to the nocturnal and chthonic aspects of creation. Night and earth are honoured when they are allowed to stand in polar tension against day and heaven. In creation, however, the night and all nocturnal forces are what was passed over and left to lie excluded at God’s left hand. . . . The beautiful knows nothing of fact; it knows only polarity and balance. It cannot, therefore, acknowledge night’s disadvantage in creation. The *daimon* of the beautiful is intent on bringing night and woman into a position which creation has denied them. The beautiful is a celebration of the night and it attempts to exalt that which is weaker by the standards of creation. We know not whether to take fright at the arrogance that wars against the Creator’s designs or to extol the gallantry of the beautiful (pp. 304-309).

Nebel’s theological aesthetics is, by a long way, the best that the Lutheran tradition could produce without denying itself. His work dwarfs all the timid attempts at dealing with the terrible duel to the death between Christ and Apollo (or Dionysos), attempts that squeamishly skirt the conflict rather than see it through. This is an instance when we ought least of all to ignore the ‘corrective’ which, according to Kierkegaard, Protestantism supplies to the Catholic Church. And, it must be said, in this aesthetics, as in Luther’s theology, we should also pay careful attention to the positive emphases. We will be forced to part company with them only when their fraternal warning becomes a door-slamming, separatist negation. It is evident that, from the standpoint of Protestantism, beauty has to be transferred wholly to the sphere of event. For from the Protestant perspective, any kind of regularity, of immanence which is seen as a perduring, inherent *qualitas*, as Being-in-repose, as *habitus*, as something that can be manipulated, is already by that very fact identified with demonic corruption. In this sense, we can understand Nebel’s endless invectives against the bourgeois and snobbish manipulation of beauty and art proper to the museum. We can understand, too, his introduction of analogy (with due emphasis on the greater dissimilarity) into the event of worldly and divine revelation. He even rejects Thomas’ characterization of beauty as *splendour* for being too static. Perhaps this ‘No!’ is more like Karl Barth’s than like Luther’s, not only a post-Scholastic negation but also a post-Liberal one which was bound to have its effects on ecclesiology and even on Christology.

But the theological and Biblical seriousness of this exploration of the question of beauty ought to serve as an example for the Catholic inquirer, even though he will develop differently the interior dimensions of the beautiful—as it shines forth from revelation—due to his differently structured concept of revelation, Incarnation, and Church. It is not coincidental, for instance, that Nebel nowhere speaks either of Christ's character as image or, therefore, of the trinitarian depth of revelation. Nor is it surprising that Nebel automatically consigns all Marian elements to the category of the mythical and the chthonic, a sphere in which without question he also places Dante's Beatrice.

Our real purpose here, however, is not to place a Protestant and a Catholic aesthetics side by side as varieties of Christian aesthetics. This is not why we have surveyed Nebel's analysis of 'event' in this introductory chapter. We have done so to show how, in spite of all his efforts to escape from categories of his time, Nebel remains caught up and (pre-)determined by them. To be sure, Nebel contrasts genuine beauty with the Kierkegaardian concept of the aesthetic which he sees as a hollow decadent form. But then, in a most unambiguous way, he proceeds to set up a polarity between even genuine beauty and the reality of God's revelation, restricting all possible contents of beauty to the sphere of creation. Here the beautiful is at home, and its structure may be determined by reference to man's natural and creaturely experience of beauty. The structure of the beautiful comprises the following elements: the irruption of the *daimon*, of 'the' god, of the mythical world within the dialectic of the gods' peace and their sorrow, in the realm of 'intoxication' and dreams. The culminating age of beauty was Greece, or, at any event, pre-Christian and extra-Biblical cultures. It is only through God's 'favour' and the 'favour' of his Christ that something like the entry of mythical beauty into the sphere of Christendom was possible. Such beauty is the blazing forth of the primal, protological, and eschatological splendour of creation even in this age of death, in which redeemed man is admitted to participation in God's act of praising himself in his creation.[9]

Outside this frame of reference, a truly great Protestant aesthetics dealing with Biblical revelation has never been possible. Hamann himself, whom we will discuss later on, by and large follows this model. So does the Kierkegaard of *Either/Or* and the Karl Barth who, in Mozart, can hear redeemed creation and liberated man as they pour out their praise. And all of them warn us against overstepping the established boundaries, saying that, if we attempt this nonetheless, we are doomed either to naïve banalities or to irrelevant abstractions.

But, with his usual openness, Nebel makes the following confession:

> Whoever lays store by wide horizons, finely proportioned spaces, heroic lives, manners, the brilliance and abundance of forms, by the retreat into a mythical world will feel repelled by Protestantism. Luther destroyed the golden chambers of myth and set up an indigent hut in their place. Whoever loves beauty will, like Winckelmann, freeze in the barns of the Reformation and go over to Rome. I admit that I, too, have been overwhelmed at times by Winckelmann's longing, and I wrote this book in order to come to terms with it (p. 188).

Should we not ask, however, whether Winckelmann really did 'go over to Rome'? And should we not, further, ask whether restricting the beautiful to the sphere of tragic myth—a restriction which then logically leads to a tragic opposition between this mythical world and Christ's revelation—does not forever fix the mythical as a hermetically closed category, precisely in opposition to revelation?

The assumption throughout is that the world of the beautiful originally belongs to man, and that it is he who determines its content and boundaries. The native country of the beautiful would then be the world or, at most, 'Being' itself, but only in so far as Being is not divine but 'creaturely'. In scholastic terms, therefore, we would say that beauty is an attribute of 'predicated' and not of 'transcendental Being'. In this event, the decision has implicitly been taken that beauty is not a 'transcendental' like oneness, truth, and goodness, or, what amounts to the same thing, that beauty need not be predicated of God in its proper sense. But if beauty is conceived of transcendentally, then its definition must be derived from God himself. Furthermore, what we know to be most proper to God—his self-revelation in history and in the Incarnation—must now become for us the very apex and archetype of beauty in the world, whether men see it or not. Such was the mind of the Church Fathers, indeed of all great Catholic theology, and it remains to be proven whether in this the Fathers and the mainstream of Catholic tradition were acting under a Hellenistic, extra-Biblical influence, thereby surrendering to a 'foreign god'. Is it really only a matter of metaphor when theology contemplates and describes as *ars divina* the divine *oikonomia* that begins with the creation, unfolds throughout the salvation-history of the Old and the New Covenants, and is consummated in the Resurrection? Can we here speak of God's 'art' only 'improperly', in a perhaps dangerous application of images from the human realm? Or should we not rather consider this 'art' of God's to be precisely the transcendent archetype of all worldly and human beauty?

This is more than a purely verbal dispute, as is proven by the effects produced by the elimination of aesthetics from theology and from the whole Christian life. As we have shown, such elimination has meant, broadly, the expulsion of contemplation from the act of faith, the exclusion of ‘seeing’ from ‘hearing’, the removal of the *inchoatio visionis* from the *fides*, and the relegation of the Christian to the old age which is passing away, while all elements of *doxa* and the *theologoumena* related to it are placed in the new age which is accessible only in hope. A final effect is the destruction of the figure of salvation which to the eyes of faith results from the constellation of both Testaments: the Patristic *latet-patet* that does again attain to sharp contours in Luther’s manner of relating the ‘law’ and the ‘Gospel’, but not without suffering great losses in its self-evidence as an image.

It is here that our initial decisions are taken. We will have to set them out more fully at the end of the introduction. Before we do this, however, we must pursue to their conclusion the themes already raised.

5. THE ELIMINATION OF AESTHETICS FROM THEOLOGY: CATHOLIC VERSION

Theology is the only science which can have transcendental beauty as its object, provided, that is, we may posit such an object in the first place. A philosophy which is specifically distinguished from theology in the narrower sense can envisage the absolute only as *principium et finis mundi*—as the limiting concept of a worldly ontology—and can, consequently, make only the most formal statements about it. But such a sharp contradistinction was introduced late in Christian times (Augustine still knows nothing of it), and is wholly without basis either before or outside the Biblical era. In Greece, philosophy is one with theology. Affirmations concerning the beauty of God or the gods and the radiant energy of the divine sphere, of the world of ideas, the cosmic Logos, and the spiritual light emanating from the One, are meant both theologically and philosophically, and there is no possibility of separating the two senses. Man philosophises in a transport of awe, illumined by the light of eternal Being as it shines forth in the world.

Once the Word of the living and free God resounds in the realm of history, however, sooner or later a distinction has to be made. Here we see Paul take the first step when he declares that all are without excuse who could not find this living God from the evidence of the created world, and that the gods previously discovered or invented (*gefunden-erfunden*) had been perverse substitutions of mere non-entities or even of demons for the true God. Subsequently, complementing Paul, Justin takes a line of thought which could have also been derived from the Apostle, when he affirms that, while the heathen can possess fragments of revelation, the Biblical revelation contains the Logos in its entirety. Thus it is allowed that pagan philosophical theology can have as its driving force, side by side with a perverse fanaticism, a genuine enthusiasm, if one that seeks to go beyond itself, and which, as it matures, may become inwardly transparent to Biblical revelation or which may be made to acquire a Christian transparency.

We face an entirely different situation when the wholly abstract and ahistorical question is asked as to how far human understanding can go without positive revelation. This is a problem which was raised sharply only with the rise of modern rationalism. For the Christian, such a statement of the problem remains abstract and purely theoretical, and this has the immediate practical result that philosophy, understood in this way, is for the Christian a science that lacks the driving force of enthusiasm. Philosophical *thaumazein* can be at work and illumine the inner eye only when its object is the single most love-worthy ultimate reality—when, in a word, *eros* can break through to the point where it issues in theological utterance. Pre-Christian theology is fulfilled by being absorbed into Christian theology. But even if it should be humiliated and reduced to being the ‘forecourt’ of theology, pre-Christian theology cannot be impelled by any but the theological *eros*, which gives it an orientation beyond itself.

In Anselm, the *intelligere* always remains wholly at the service of the *credere*, even if he brackets the *credere* methodologically in order to allow the act of *intelligere* room to unfold. For the most part, we could say that Thomas Aquinas does not differ essentially from Anselm, since for him, too, the normative tradition of thought remains the integrated philosophical and theological method common to both the Platonic-Aristotelian and the Augustinian-Dionysian streams. We can say the same of Nicholas of Cusa, whose mode of thought is influenced by the speculative unity of Proclus and the mystical unity of Eckhart. Only with Descartes does philosophy become dependent on the scientific ideal of the rising natural sciences, thereby beginning its rift with theology. And only from this point onwards do philosophers become eager to experiment with the question of what reason can accomplish without the aid of revelation and what the possibilities are for a pure nature without grace.

Only the greatest thinkers of the time still attempt to bridge the widening gap between the two pillars with a daring arch that reaches from the newest mathematical physics all the way to theology, an arch which compels the two disciplines to regain their congruence, their harmony, and even their identity. In Pascal we confront a *congruence* that overarches all abysses. In him, the strongest diastasis between geometric truth and the truth of the heart only serves to sharpen the goad that prods the thinking and believing person (of whom Pascal is the best example) to bring both poles to unity in himself. Pascal is the man of inner chasms and oppositions *par excellence*. In him, not only is the shudder of fear caused by exterior, quantitative abysses overridden, but, at a much deeper level, the irreconcilable contradictions of his being are transcended by the all-embracing cosmic law of the God-Man Christ, who brings everything into unity. With Leibniz, on the other hand, we encounter a *harmony* of the two disciplines. He expressly couples together not only the moral and the mathematical-physical aspects of the universe, but the latter with the theological aspects as well. He does this by taking Augustine's *pondus amoris* very seriously and, consequently, by establishing a unity between the quantifiable pull of gravity and the free love-force of spiritual entelechy, a unity even between the free creative act of the free God and the necessity of producing the best possible world, a necessity which bears on God's wisdom in its goodness: The more 'real' and 'pregnant' an idea is in God, the more it presses on into existence.[10] This 'law of harmony' spans even the abyss between 'the physical realm of nature and the moral realm of grace, that is, the abyss between God, considered as architect of the machinery of the cosmos, and God considered as monarch of the divine kingdom of spirits'.[11] Leibniz bridges the abyss with his intermediary concept of 'power', a concept which he says is equivalent to the entelechy of the ancients, and he rightly reproaches the Cartesians for paying no heed to this category. Indeed, by starting off with Descartes one could arrive only at Spinoza's unmediated unity of 'geometry' and 'spirit'. Spinoza, in fact, and not Leibniz, was to serve subsequent thinkers (from Herder to Hegel) as the model of a theology that can also embrace philosophy. But the overextended *identity* of this model is rightly suspected of atheism (Jacobi) and is abandoned by serious theologians. Against Hegel, Staudenmaier again held up the figure of John Scotus Eriugena, whom he considered to be the father of speculation in the West, and by so doing he hoped to shake the foundations of Hegelianism. Deutinger, on the contrary, following Drey, tried to demonstrate the theological (really Augustinian) roots of all idealistic systems, and so to elevate theology to the rank of all-embracing authority. But his efforts proved fruitless, since, from an historically understood illuminism, they necessarily led (by way of Molitor's *Philosophy of History* and then Bautain) to a traditionalism that destroys all philosophy. The eventual condemnation of such traditionalism was inevitable. The other possibility, equally close at hand, was the rationalism of Hermes, likewise condemned, which came to consider the act of faith which is the foundation of all reason, as part of the natural structure of reason, a position already taken by strict philosophical idealism.

The middle of the last century then saw the end of all those great theological systems which still followed the great examples we have cited and clung in spite of all to the model of the ancient unity between philosophy and theology, bypassing the modern understanding of ‘faith’ and ‘knowledge’. This is also the time at which the Hegelian ‘centre’ falls apart into a materialistic left and a spiritualistic right, the point after which theology is both declared and declares itself to be a ‘specialization’ among others. Catholic theology was, it is true, still to produce and, indeed, still today produces great achievements. Nevertheless, apart from the substance of faith which continues to be handed down, Catholic theology, too, came to be characterized to a large extent by the ideal of specialization which has led it to claim its place among the other ‘fields’ of today’s academic world, an arrangement which theology is increasingly ready to accept. But in accepting this, it also accepts the dire consequences of the fact that ever since Luther and Jansen, on the one hand, and Descartes, on the other, theology has defined itself by contrast with philosophy, in spite of all the efforts to the contrary which we have just reviewed. The distinction is formulated at its deadliest by Lessing, when he says that theology is a science of ‘accidental historical truths’, while philosophy deals with ‘necessary truths of reason’. There is no doubt that Christianity is a religion bound to historical facts. But it is a totally different matter to assert that theological facts are ‘accidental historical truths’ and that Christianity, therefore, may be subsumed under the historical sciences. With their conception of the Logos of history, the Fathers and High Scholasticism would never have accepted such a view. Nowadays, however, the emphasis of both general interest and of research has been transferred to the historical aspect of theology, and this shift profoundly affects all theology’s individual disciplines. Fundamental theology seeks to prove the authentic historicity of God’s revelation in Christ, and it attempts to secure, by means of historically demonstrable characteristics (*notae*), the Church’s prerogative to interpret revelation. The study of the ‘sources’ of revelation, and particularly Biblical studies with all its annexes, has become strictly historical to an almost unacceptable degree and, at least for a time, has seized the lead in theology, even over dogmatics. Many ‘Scriptural proofs’ must now remain in suspension until Biblical studies have decided what the meaning and applicability of the texts might be. Dogmatics itself is practised ever more strongly as history of dogma. Theological ethics is losing its all too philosophical character and is now understood to be the historical encounter with the Word of God in an ever-changing historical situation. In addition, Catholic understanding of the Bible today adopts with relish the categories of Protestant Biblical criticism and, in so doing, distinguishes sharply the atemporal thought of the Greeks from the temporal thought of the Hebrews. The result is that much in the New Testament and in the early Church instead of being attributed as previously to Hellenistic influence is now traced back to the Judaic tradition.

Historical theological research is scientifically exact research as presently understood in the ‘human sciences’ (*Geisteswissenschaft*), not as in the natural sciences. But such research can establish only what Augustine calls the *historia* and Origen the *littera*. The properly theological dimension, however, begins only with the *intellectus* (Augustine), the *spiritus* (Origen), the content of revelation, precisely God’s theo-logy discerned in and through human history: what the ancients call the *sensus spiritualis* and the *intellectus fidei*, which can indeed be fostered by a comprehensive understanding of history, but which can in no way be extracted from history by ‘exact scientific method’ (*exaktwissenschaftlich*). This we can see from the fact that, in spite of their very imperfect understanding of the *littera*, the ancients, by contrast with the moderns, had in many regards a far deeper knowledge of the *spiritus*. True theology begins only at the point where ‘exact historical science’ passes over into the science of faith proper—a ‘science’ which presupposes the act of faith as its locus of understanding. To regard such theology as a genuine science is fully in accord with St. Thomas.[12] But, St. Thomas, however, attributed the character of a ‘science’ to theology, only in virtue of a concept of science which is unique and only analogously the equivalent of the other sciences, including philosophy. Theology’s exceptional position is seen by him to be founded on its participation through grace—directly in the personal act of faith but mediately by virtue of the authentic pattern of faith presented by the Church—in the intuitive saving knowledge of God himself and of the Church Triumphant. Only in this dimension is the vision of the distinctively theological ‘form’ and its specific beauty possible. Only here can that act be accomplished which the Augustinian tradition describes as *fruitio*: the act which alone can open up the theological content of such ‘form’ and which, in particular, constitutes an eschatological anticipation that occurs within faith and is demanded by faith.

Few among today’s ‘exact’ Biblical scholars, however, make any room at all in their Biblical science for the *fruitio* of the *sensus spiritualis*, to say nothing of assigning to it the place of honour. I say ‘place of honour’ because this act is the central act of theology as a science. According to an unformulated but generally accepted opinion, this act is either banished from ‘scientific’ theology into the realm of unscientific ‘spirituality’, or it must remain suspended until ‘exact’ research has passed its more or less definitive judgment concerning the historical meanings and contexts of the *littera*.

There have, of course, been various reactions against an exaggerated scientism of the *littera*, reactions which key in to the great and unmistakable exegetical tradition of all ages.[13] In these cases, echoes of the ancient traditions of theological aesthetics have been preserved; but such works remain marginal. We are entitled to expect the investigation of the 'letter' to contribute much to a future 'science of faith'. But this does not alter the fact that we have not yet begun to make use of these new insights for faith. In fact, we may say that, as far as real theological work is concerned, we are still getting our breath back. In the interim, our task must be to draw for dogmatics whatever conclusions are possible from the new findings. At the same time, we should foster the fertile aspects of historical science, while containing its tendency to usurp unlawful territory.

If this tendency were to be given full rein, the authentic concept of theology as a science would perforce transfer its centre imperceptibly down to the level of the other sciences. This would inevitably result in a new Judaism in which only the 'doctors of the law' could interpret God's Word reliably, while the 'simple man' (*'am ha-arez*) would at best remain a dilettante in his understanding of the faith.

But perhaps we may voice once more our suspicion that, judged by today's scientific ideals, nearly all the truly great and historically influential Christian theologies have been dilettantish, fashioned as they were by 'amateurs' (lovers!) and 'enthusiasts'. Or are we to insist that the Fathers of the Church reached the apex of theology only when they conformed more or less with the requirements of modern exactness and expressed themselves in polemical definitions, but not when they indulged in free rhapsodies, 'confessions', and 'enarrations', as was so often the case? Although there were indeed some Fathers who could combine both styles (such as Gregory of Nazianzen in his dogmatic discourses), more often the styles are found separately, and, when weighed on the scales, the rich substance—the inner sanctum of theology, so to speak—lies rather on the side of rhapsody than on the form of discourse which externalizes itself in distinctions and definitions. Is Ignatius of Antioch a theologian? Is Origen a theologian in his homilies and commentaries? Is Ambrose in his interpretation of Luke? And Augustine in his non-polemical writings? And the Victorines? And Rupert von Deutz? Bonaventure in his shorter writings? And what are we to make of Denys the Areopagite's hierarchies, or of John of the Cross, the Doctor of the Church?

On the other hand, however, we may ask what the Chalcedonian formula with all its precision, achieved at such pains, might be if not a point of departure, a methodological and heuristic principle for a Christology that must then be developed from it? And would it not be true to say of the greater number of the

Church’s canons and definitions that they are not so much themselves theology as the solid guidelines that point the way for elaborating a theology, the guidelines that form the basis for a correct understanding and interpretation of the divine revelation? The same holds on another level for that form of theology that develops according to a strict scholarly (scholastic) form, based on a principle of its own and yet drawing on the scientific form of the other sciences. In this case, we have only to remind ourselves that the transition from the scholarly to the free spiritual form must be fluid—assuming, that is, that the transition from the *habitus fidei vivae* to the unfolding, self-bestowing *donum Spiritus Sancti intelligentiae et scientiae* can also only be an imperceptible one. The point here is not that the *habitus acquisitus scientiae* ought to be left behind and transcended by a *habitus infusus* and the *donum Spiritus*. The point is that these latter ought to be allowed to develop and unfold in the very midst of the most stringent scientific form. Only in this way can the shaping power and the genius of the human spirit, for their part, be transformed by the shaping power of the Holy Spirit. The work of Aquinas, and also that of Anselm, Bonaventure, and Albert the Great, radiates the beauty of a human power of shaping and structuring which has been supernaturally in-formed in this manner. It makes no difference whether or not they are expressly speaking of the beautiful, or even whether or not they are conscious of the aesthetic moment as they methodologically order and elucidate their material. Native human intelligence and the historical *kairos* apart, they would not enjoy such a shaping power nor, therefore, such an overpowering historical influence, if their talents had not themselves been transformed through and through by the Spirit’s shaping power: if, that is to say, these theologians were not in a Christian sense ecstatics, had not been caught up and drawn into the unity of enthusiasm and holiness.

This is not to deny that this *habitus*, which alone is proportionate to the theological object, can also be at work in the (preliminary) field of exact historical research as understood in the human sciences. Not only *can* the infused *habitus* be at work here; in the long run, it *must* be active in this field if the work is to bear theological fruit. Even when the neutral results of Christian or non-Christian research (excavations, papyrus finds, and so on) influence our image of revelation—even then, as the *spolia Aegyptiorum* that now become the possession of God’s Holy People, these results have to be submitted to the form of theological thinking if they are to be theologically relevant. They have, that is, to be submitted to that particular *eros* of theological enquiry which, although related intrinsically to the *eros* of human enquiry, cannot be identified with it, since what gives it life is not primarily the inspiration of the *daimon* but rather of the Holy Spirit.

6. FROM AN AESTHETIC THEOLOGY TO A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

In order to gain a more precise notion of what the concerns of a *theological aesthetics* may be, we shall have to distinguish it carefully from that with which at first we might be led to confuse it, namely, an *aesthetic theology*. The word ‘aesthetic’, in the latter expression, will inevitably be understood in the worldly, limited, and, therefore, pejorative sense. Even a glance at the whole tenor of the Bible will confirm our suspicion not only that ‘aesthetic’, in this sense, is not one of the supreme Biblical values, but that it cannot seriously be considered as a Biblical value at all.

The endeavour to understand the Scriptures as a whole in terms of the concept ‘art’ (and, therefore, of a beauty of human proportions) may be given its place within intellectual history almost *a priori*. It can be located in the period which marks the demise of the great attempts to see Biblical revelation once again within the total form of a theology that organically includes philosophy (Nicholas of Cusa, Marsilio Ficino, Böhme, Leibniz, Spinoza, Schelling), a demise brought about by their lateness in the history of the West and by the ever-growing autonomy of the sciences and of philosophy. At this point, the *pulchrum*, too, is lifted from the unreflected position within a totality which it had enjoyed from the days of the Greeks and is made into a separate ‘object’ with a separate science of its own. This transformation can be detected as early as the Renaissance, but later on it emerges in full force with Bruno and Shaftesbury to produce a great impact on Germany.

In the age of German Idealism, an attempt had to be made to bring together the theory of beauty, which by now had become self-conscious, with Christian revelation, and, beyond this, to identify the two if at all possible. The drive to achieve such a reconciliation derived, on the one hand, from the humanistic (hellenic-asiatic) sense of tradition which wanted to preserve the Christian reality as one of the lasting possessions of mankind’s heritage. At the same time, others set out very consciously to provide the Christian religion with new garments thus making it again presentable and relevant after it had been denuded by the iconoclasm of Luther and Calvin and had had to take refuge in naked pietistic interiority. The confrontation of the Bible with an aesthetics which had become so self-conscious served, if for nothing else, at least to bring about a crisis. The question now has to be faced whether the aesthetic element, which in Idealism and Romanticism appears as wholly secularized, could not be purified and salvaged by a consideration of its historical origins, or: whether now the only alternative left is to abandon the aesthetic totally, a way which we have investigated in the previous sections on the elimination of aesthetics from theology. That a theology deprived of aesthetics is far from satisfactory should have become obvious by now. And so we must ask which way is to be taken. Should we go the way of Karl Barth, who rediscovers the inner beauty of theology and revelation itself? Or (and this is perhaps implicitly included in Barth's position), may it not be that we have a real and inescapable obligation to probe the possibility of there being a genuine relationship between theological beauty and the beauty of the world and—in spite of all the dangers inherent in such an undertaking—to probe the feasibility of a genuine encounter between divine revelation and antiquity?

At the threshold of modern times there stands a uniquely tragic figure in the history of the question that engages us here. I say 'tragic' because in this figure all lines seem to converge—the concerns of strict Lutheranism, of classical education and culture, and of the construction of a theological aesthetics that would embrace them both in a genuine encounter—and yet, despite these convergences he remains a figure out of joint with his times. *Johann Georg Hamann*, whom we will consider at length in our typology of theological aesthetics, was alone in seeing that the real problem was how to construct a theory of beauty (*Aesthetica in nuce*) in such a way that, in it, the total aspiration of worldly and pagan beauty is fulfilled while all glory is at the same time given to God in Jesus Christ. Hamann's unremitting consideration of this problem is more than just the unmastered coming together in him of two different orientations in intellectual history, which is how Unger and his school understood him. It is more than a problem of character, which is how his contemporaries, and Goethe in particular, branded his concerns. It is also far more than what Kierkegaard not only strived after, but actually achieved for Christian thought in his existential dialectic between the aesthetic-religious and the ethical-religious. Kierkegaard stands at the end of Idealism. He had known Schelling and Hegel and can, therefore, react to them only in a polemical fashion. Hamann stands at the beginning of Idealism, a point at which all hopes are still permitted. If his literary gifts and style had been different, he could have become the intellectual and spiritual father of his age. He could also have inculcated into this age in an authentic manner that synthesis which it strived after in every way it could and which in nearly every way it failed to achieve. With the relentless sword of his thought, Hamann warded off the false synthesis that entrapped all of his friends, who then became his intellectual enemies: Shaftesbury and Hume; Lessing; Mendelssohn; Kant; J. A. Starck; finally, his friend Herder, who had become for him the embodied hope for the future; and, last of all, Jacobi, who so greatly disappointed him. By then it was too late for Hamann to put down new roots again in Catholic Munster. The struggle against the Enlightenment and the liberation achieved by Klopstock and the Sturm und Drang movement opened up an initial horizon. Now the beautiful could be regarded as being the primal nature of the world itself, in its sensualness and even in all its sensuousness and eroticism. Man may be said to be closest to God when he creates life. But the Christian both knows and feels that nature has been alienated from its origin. God’s Word no longer speaks through all beings, and where a veil lies over God’s face the splendour of nature is also veiled. What we are used to calling ‘aesthetic’ is as tinged with the vanity and unreality of original sin as is (enlightened) reason. Only Christ and God’s Word in him in the form of suffering (the hiddenness *sub contrario*), the historical word of Scripture reveals anew God’s glory. Both Judaism and paganism are oriented towards this Word, and it brings them both to fulfilment by revealing, through the mystery of its own lowliness, the primal splendour of the love of a God who humiliates himself. This is the true *coincidentia oppositorum* that enkindles not only faith, but also the enthusiasm proper to it: ‘One and the same proof both of the most glorious majesty and the most radical self-emptying! One and the same wonder exhibits, on the one hand, such infinite stillness that God seems equated with nothingness and one must either conscientiously deny his existence or be no more than adumb ox. But, on the other hand, this same wonder possesses such infinite power that it fulfils all things and one is at a loss as to how to escape the intimate ardour of its activity.’[14] Hamann sees *glory as kenosis* as being proper not only to the God who became Man, but even before that to the Creator who, by creating, penetrates into nothingness—proper, also, to the Holy Spirit, who conceals himself ‘under all kinds of rags and tatters’,[15] ‘under the rubbish’[16] of the letter of Scripture, in such a way that ‘truly enlightened and enthusiastic eyes are needed—a friend’s eyes, armed with jealousy, the eyes of a confidant and of a lover too’—so as to ‘recognize the rays of heavenly splendour dressed in such a disguise. . . . What is sublime in Caesar’s style is its casualness.’[17] Hamann learned to find the *sheblimini* (‘Sit at my right hand’: i.e. the ‘exaltation’ or ‘transfiguration’) in Golgotha. Only thus can he speak in all seriousness of the ‘aesthetic obedience of the Cross.’[18] For Hamann, the folly of the Cross is manifested vicariously, as it were, in the folly of the Pythian priestess,[19] in the foolishness and ignorance of Socrates,[20] and in the ‘*moron* of Homer’s gods’, which is precisely the ‘wonder-ful aspect of Homer’s muse’.[21] Now, it is in the folly of the cross that Hamann finds access to the primal beauty of our existence,[22] to the archetypal power of the genuine, creating Word, and, finally, access to the innermost, mysterious core of all reality: the bridal unity of Christ, the God-Logos, with his fallen and dismembered Body which, in death, he again takes home to himself: ‘The unity of the Head, as well as the disjunction of the Body . . . is the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven from its genesis to the apocalypse. It is the focal point of all parables and types in the entire universe—the *histoire generale* and the *chronique scandaleuse* of all ages.’[23]

But to whom could Hamaan have sold such an aesthetics at that late hour? Everyone respected him; no one understood his concerns. His light was extinguished, not only by being outshone by the brilliance of Weimar, then entering its own noonday—the Weimar for which his only disciple, Herder, had deserted him: his light was extinguished in himself, in the smothering darkness of his own expression, which became increasingly more compressed and compacted to the point of incomprehensibility. The times abandoned him, and another century and a half was required until Ebner, Buber, and Haecker rediscovered his theology of language. The times belonged to his disciple, whose theory of language Hamaan had corrected with biting irony, treating it as if it were no more than a schoolboy composition.[24]

Johann Gottfried Herder was a poet and a theologian. As a philosopher, however, he attempted to produce the indispensable bridge between poetry and theology: namely, a philosophy of nature and history and a religious psychology. He was a poet primarily because of his religious sensibility and enthusiasm, and he sought to be a true theologian by exercising his vocation as an original poet. Both theoretically and in their historical origins, poetry and theology perfectly coincide. Only by taking this point of identity as one’s point of departure will one understand what individuality, poetry, and theology really are. Herder’s enemy is the Enlightenment, arid reason with its dead concepts. Such ‘reason’ kills the soul, which in its living essence consists of feeling, sensibility, the will, and deed. Later on, this arch-enemy will be resurrected in modified form by the classicism of a Weimar that parted company with Herder and by the formalism of Kant, who was the subject of Herder’s last attacks. Herder’s ‘soul’ already is defined by the indivisible unity of a surging ‘force’ and the ‘image’ that it pours forth. By taking up Herder’s thoughts and expressions and elaborating them philosophically, Idealism and Romanticism (Fichte, Friedrich Schlegel, Schleiermacher, Schelling, Görres, the Grimm brothers, and countless others after them) came to celebrate this unity as the ‘(power of) imagination’ (*Einbildungskraft*). This is the equipment with which Herder approaches the

Bible. Over the course of his life (from the ‘Song to Cyrus’, written when he was eighteen years old, to the Old Testament and the Apocalypse and, finally, to the last writings on the Synoptics, on John, and on the spirit of Christianity), Herder interpreted the Bible almost in its entirety. Throughout his work, he always had two basic principles before him: The first of these is that the Bible—whose oldest sections are at the same time the ‘oldest charter of mankind’—is, as a whole, poetry, and may, therefore, be reconstructed only as a world of images. And, second, as the most ancient and at the same time purest document of mankind, the Bible stands in sharp contrast with all other human religion and poetry which have derived from it. Many influences may be detected as feeding into these simple theses. A Rousseauistic optimism about natural origins is allied to a Christian Spinozism for which closeness to nature means closeness to God. Further influences are: a philologist’s and archaeologist’s joy of discovery at the finds in the Near East; the work of the English bishop, Robert Lowth, *De sacra poesi Hebraeorum* (1768), edited and commented by Michaelis, of Gottingen, a work which Herder never tires of mentioning; the influence of Hamann, and so on. But it was left to Herder’s genius to draw all this together and to establish the standpoint that was to determine the course of theology and, to a great extent, also of poetry for a whole century.

For Herder, man is the image and the likeness of God: that is the goal of the poem of creation. As man and woman, the human being is ‘a moving image’.[25] How should man understand himself other than in images through which he can flow forth and represent himself—if, indeed, God’s Holy Spirit animates man by its inspiration? In the image man can then see, at the same time, his own self and his eternal origin: in his imaged ‘I’ he can see the absolute divine ‘I’. Allegorism is, for Herder, itself a form of deadly rationalism, since behind the image it seeks for a second, hidden meaning. Speaking of the Apocalypse, for instance, he says it is ‘an old wives’ tale to believe that a special key is needed’ to unlock its meaning, or that ‘the key has been lost.’ ‘I know of not a single mystical or typical saying in the entire book’. The *images* say it all, and these derive from the Spirit and mean to be seen and interpreted in the Spirit. The first rule of the interpreter must be ‘not to explain anything which does not speak itself, not to make an image mean what it does not mean . . . in itself. To this end, we see that in the whole book only the contours have been drawn. The only thing we see is the context from which the image was taken and the forms it puts on in order to be understood.’[26] The angel of the Apocalypse ‘neither speaks nor conceals, but merely points in images (*sēmanei*). The images must, therefore, have had meaning and been intelligible in themselves.’[27] True exegesis means: to move to the point where the image (*das Bild*), in the Spirit, becomes transparent of him who made the image (*der Bildende*), and this ‘maker of images’ is God and man in unity. For such exegesis historical expertise is, of course, needed; but to a far greater extent there is required the divining power of imaginative reconstruction (*Nachvollzug*)—that youth of the heart which is able to feel at one with the historical and eternal youth of mankind. We may say that the dimension of the inspiring and revealing Spirit is ‘supernatural’, and rightly so, since it opens up our path to God. But of what could images possibly speak if not of man—of man in his true essence as primal image, as image that has been plunged in the darkness of guilt and again made radiant by grace? The first part of the *Alteste Urkunde*, the interpretation of the creation narrative, remains the crowning point of Herder’s exegesis. The sequence of the seven days of creation (with the emergence of light before the sun, with the first tenuous contours distinguishing light and dark, heaven and earth, and all creatures of the air, the water, and the land) is understood by Herder as God’s manner of ‘teaching us under the dawn’, as ‘the image of the coming day’ from the first flicker of light to the sun’s zenith: ‘God’s most ancient and most glorious revelation appears to you each morning as a fact, as God’s great work in nature!. . . Ordering and separating! Magnificence! Sublimity! both begun and completed . . . the tender face of the Godhead! Revelation! The apparition of what was unseen!’[28] And, at the same time, ‘God in nature’. ‘But what is creation?’ Creation is not primarily the ‘thronging of individual and isolated creatures’; it is that whole which is God’s living self-expression and his ‘hymn’, the ‘daily morning song’ which glorifies him and in which he glorifies himself. ‘Light is the first thing: his revelation, in which everything else can be seen and understood as that which it truly is: God’s apparition.’ A ‘philosophy of beholding, of the power of conviction of the sign and of experience’ is more important and closer to our origins (*ursprünglicher*) than any ‘demonstration’, which can only remain ‘an interchange of words and of the relations between certain concepts’. ‘Conviction and certainty must be found either in the things themselves—. . . in the integral, untouched feeling of the depths within the things themselves—or nowhere at all.’ ‘As it reveals itself, the human soul sees images! Are these images? Are they things? Is the soul dreaming or is all of this outside of it? And what does “outside of it” mean? What does it mean “to be a thing”? Existence! Presence! Who can point out, who can teach or explain these things?—The light! Light which, as model, is the most revealing demonstration of God. . . . Light is the language that proceeds from the throne of God!’[29] ‘Image and sensibility (*Empfindung*)’[30] correspond to one another at the primal level, just as abstract thought and its expression—the arbitrary letter—correspond to each other at the fallen level of alienation. But the power of inspiration is capable of reading again the original ‘natural-supernatural’ hieroglyph through the alienating forms of ‘philosophy’ and ‘philology’. Even the mythical world of Southwest Asia, from the *Zend Avesta* all the way to Egypt and Greece—the intricate complex to which Herder gives the name of original ‘*gnosis*’—is for him already derivative in comparison with the tranquil simplicity and truth of the Bible, whose historical and, at the same time, ‘natural’ language of images would, in the spirit of Herder, have to be characterized as being the origin of all myth and, indeed, as being both primal myth and super-myth.[31] For, in revelation (*Offenbarung*), God is really manifest (*offenbar*), while myth remains ‘a dance perpetually circling around the altar of the unknown God.’ ‘Revelation’ is ‘re-vealed (i.e. “un-veiled”) mystery’, and the Bible knows of no other kind of mystery.[32] However, re-velation (*Enthullung*) only occurs through signs, in the Incarnation by means of which God became man. This is why Christ is the summit and quintessence of all revelation (*Offenbarung*)—of God’s revelation as well as man’s. Man, in turn, is himself the quintessence of creation’s character as image, and it is for this reason that Christ calls himself the ‘Son of Man’, ‘meaning by this a simple and pure man. Purified of all dross, his religion can only be termed a religion of purest human goodness, a religion for man’—humanness itself.[33] The Bible calls Christ the ‘splendour, the luminous image of God’s glory’, and by this is meant ‘the special character (*Gepräge*) of the thing that is imaged’. And the other terms for Christ—‘*Logos*, *Eikon*, *Apaugasma*, *Hyios*, *Protogonos*, *Monogenes*’—all mean the same thing: namely, that the Godhead has now expressed itself purely and simply.

> The spark of divinity, the inner ‘I’, never quite becomes a wholly living thing for us. The fatherly Godhead who educates us as children, therefore, condescended to us. He (who is incomprehensible) condescended, in order to make himself comprehensible by coming down to us (who are but flickering shadows). How could he do this other than by dealing with humans in a human way? Yes, in an Image of our own images! And the Godhead did not choose a likeness other than ourselves, neither from the things in heaven above nor on earth below. It chose that which is most intimately understood, that which is holiest, most spiritual, most effective and deepest: It chose God’s own image in the human soul—Thought! Word! Will! Deed! Love!

(We see here now, even before *Faust*, Herder is attempting to translate the word *Logos* ‘into his beloved German’.) ‘This interior power to image and to represent is indeed divine; it is God’s name in us. Without it everything looked at externally is dead and barren; but in it is to be found the cosmos, the invisible and eternal power of the Creator of which the senses provide only a likeness, a foretaste and a paradigm.'[34] Christ's whole life as a man—his actions, his preaching, his suffering, his Resurrection—is a pure expression of God. Christ's life is the highest form of religious 'sculpture'; it consists not only of image and word, but exhibits a tangible corporeality as well.[35] We may here remark parenthetically how, for Herder, the transition from Christ to Winckelmann and to Greece in general always appears to be possible without further ado, in contrast to Goethe and, especially, to Schiller. We note too how Herder always integrates Greek philosophy and religion into the wider context of Near Eastern cultures, a perspective which then enables him to operate beyond the tensions between Jewish and Greek culture and between Christianity and Hellenism. Herder knows nothing of 'aesthetic melancholy'. He sees only a process whereby that which is relatively concealed is illumined and becomes relatively revealed. Mankind—its history and its religion—can only be one, regardless of climatic and national diversity, precisely in order to remain loyal to its *truth as image*. (Even Judaism does not escape from this principle!) Read correctly, however, the Bible is the manifestation of all the beauty and truth scattered throughout humanity. Not only is the Bible this for Herder: it is also *nothing but* this. When Herder reads the Bible, even the miracle and Resurrection narratives in the New Testament, he refuses to see in it anything but the highest possibilities of man as such. For him, the Resurrection narratives are the proclamation of man's eternity and immortality, a proclamation which necessarily has had to be cast in a particular historical form, which is to say: 'mythically'. As a spirit, man has triumphed over time and over death, which in the Old Testament is mythically imaged as *sheol*.[36] The particular miracle is but the universal miracle become image. Thus above all the miracle of the Spirit's bestowal at Pentecost, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, enthusiasm and inspiration, are all but the manifestation of what is naturally proper to the human spirit, or, in any event, the manifestation of what *ought* to be and *could* be proper to man. In his *Spirit of Christianity*, Herder develops the concept of *pneuma* in Scripture in all its breadth, a theme which Schleiermacher, Möhler, and Staudenmaier imitated him in exploring. In this, Herder pays particular attention to the organic inter-connectedness of divine inspiration and man's capacity to be inspired. He rejects 'the base mentality of darker times' which supposed that 'a person driven by the Spirit should be like the pipe of an organ through which the wind blows—a hollow machine deprived of all its own thoughts.'[37] To such 'de-spiriting' is then attributed all manner of Christian self-alienation: allegorism and *gnosis*, dogmatism, sacramentalism, and scholasticism, but also orthodox Protestant Biblicism and a subjectivistic fanaticism that distorts true enthusiasm in the opposite sense. But with Shaftesbury, and against the ‘Enlightened’, Herder adamantly insists that,

> without a passionate enthusiasm (*Begeisterung*), there would have been neither Christ, nor the Apostles, nor Christianity itself. . . . What we praise in Socrates—that he called philosophy down from heaven to the earth—holds still more of Christ with regard to religion. When he taught men to acknowledge God as the Father of their race, when he taught them to activate the divinity of their own nature and to love each other as brothers: was not Christ’s enthusiasm in these instances purely human? . . . Thus the words “indwelling”, “inspiration”, “breath”, are gently restored to their true sense. . . which is that, since it is through men that the Godhead bestowed the noblest benefits on men, he also gave them to be born as men with excellent endowments, with superior powers: men of God. . . . No wild and stormy upheaval is to be found here, rather an awakening, a fostering, an impulse, an instruction. . . . The support which they enjoyed stretched from the most joyful kind of enthusiasm to the calmest diligence and the wisest reflectiveness. The power of God worked *through their spirit*.[38]

When on the Feast of Pentecost everyone hears disciples speak in his own native tongue, this means that they are speaking with that authenticity of the human spirit which can never be possessed by a person who has received neither spirit nor genius.[39] An essay entitled ‘Enthusiasm, Illumination, and Revelation’ develops this identity between fundamental Biblical concepts and natural concepts, and therefore, again, the identity between art (or culture) and religion. Hence Goethe at all periods of his development could find again in Herder *his* ‘confession of faith’ and could declare himself to be, in Herder’s sense of the term, ‘perhaps the only true Christian’. The amphibolies of the late work *God* are well-known, a work in which Herder turns his back on Jacobi and declares himself for Spinoza—a Spinoza, of course, that he has brought into harmony with his own understanding of Christianity. Herder’s ambiguities in this work are but one expression of the great amphiboly between pantheism and Christianity that pervades the whole age, from Fichte and Schelling to Hegel: the fluid identification of the natural and the supernatural which both ‘humanized’ Christianity and failed to hear its true message. And we must ask ourselves at this point whether, instead of these aesthetic harmonies, we would not prefer to hear the trenchant antitheses of a Schiller and, later, of a Marx and a Kierkegaard. . . .

A second example, one which we can examine more briefly, is *Rene de Chateaubriand*. His *Genie du Christianisme* (1802) derives from spiritual and intellectual sources similar to those which produced Herder’s aesthetic Christianity: the struggle against Voltairian enlightenment, for the rehabilitation of feeling and the imagination. Chateaubriand’s main work was repeatedly translated into German. In the sixty-six-volume edition of his complete works (1827-1838) it appeared as *Genius des Christentums*, but elsewhere it also bore the titles *Geist des Christentums* and *Die Schönheiten des Christentums* (1803, 1828, 1844, 1856, 1857).[40] But, while Herder and German classical and Romantic idealism after him posit an identity (no matter how variously understood) between aesthetic humanism and Christianity, Chateaubriand, as a Catholic, must preserve the difference in levels (*Gefälle*) between Christian revelation and beauty. Geniality is not itself the heart of Christianity, rather the worldly expression through which Christianity manifests itself in culture. And it is not only possible, but also permitted and desirable, to find one's way from this expression back to the essence of Christianity. In other words, Chateaubriand is not, like Herder, an aesthetic theologian, but an aesthetic apologist, and for an entire century the outpourings of Church apologetics in France will take him as their model. Only the great Christian literary figures—Bloy and Péguy, Claudel and Bernanos, and *not* clerical writers—would bring about drastic changes in this area.

Like Herder, Chateaubriand takes his stance in human wholeness. Enough of petty dogmatic and rationalistic-apologetical squabbles! Why not simply see what *is*? Why not see what has radiated out into history from the presence within it of the Christian mystery? Why not recognize the essential reality by its fruits? Why not approach Christianity where it has become incarnate in culture? Admittedly, this is possible only for the person who grasps the fact of Christianity from the very depths and fulness of his being as subject, with a heart that longs to believe, to hope, and to love. Christianity may, of course, be considered in two ways. We first have 'Christianity in itself (*proprement dit*), namely, its dogmas, its doctrine, and its cult. Under "cult" also come its works of charity and its moral and political institutions.' Besides this view, we also have Christianity's radiant force, which Chateaubriand calls 'the poetics of the Christian reality',—'or the effect of this religion on poetry, the fine arts, eloquence, history, philosophy, and literature in general. This influence leads us to consider the transformations brought about by Christianity in human passions and the development of the human spirit.' This distinction, however, does not reveal the plan of the work, but only the difference of levels on which it is based. The standpoint of the *Genie*, from beginning to end, remains the lower plane: the criterion of truth (of both divine and total human truth, as well as of supernatural and natural truth) is *beauty*—not only beauty's harmoniousness with man as such, but the harmony that beauty and only beauty produces and develops in man.

> An apology of Christianity in which we would show the reader nothing but the beauty of this religion: Could such an apology prove erroneous if what it means to demonstrate—both in that which is closest to us and in those things farthest from us—is the ubiquitousness of God's majesty, the marvels of Providence, the effect, attraction, and benefits of the dogmas, doctrine, and cult of Jesus Christ?[41]

Chateaubriand enumerates a long series of writers who have anticipated him in this method, from Justin, Arnobius, Lactantius, Origen, and Augustine to Pascal, François de Sales, and Fénélon. 'Would Ambrose have been able to present the Church with St. Augustine if he had not employed all the attractions of the art of preaching? And how was Augustine himself able to soar up to the "City of God" other than on the wings of the imagination?' 'The poetical apology for religion reaches uninterruptedly from Julian's time to our own.' Chateaubriand here makes reference to Fleury's *De grandiloquentia et suavitate Psalmorum* and to Lowth's *De sacra poesi Hebraeorum*. And the Song of Solomon (which Hamann and Herder had also translated!) is quoted as being God's own defence of this method. It is Chateaubriand's intent '*de porter un grand coup au coeur et de frapper vivement l'imagination*'.[42] This he does in four books, of which the first and the last transfer our focus of concern from *poésie* to the particular form of Christianity, in order to discover the immanent poetics proper to Christianity. The two middle books proceed in the reverse, from Christianity to poetry and the cultural effects of religion. Both viewpoints are defined with the greatest rigour.

The first book shows the beauty (*charme*) of the Christian mysteries, the appropriateness of the supernatural for human nature. Redemption, Incarnation, the sacraments, faith, hope, love, the moral law, the doctrine of man's fallen state, the prospect of eternal life: all of these exactly correspond to what nature of itself requires without itself being able to provide it.

The second book immediately proceeds to consider Christian poetry, and proves that it is precisely Christianity which has led to the highest poetical inspiration. Among many others, Dante, Tasso, Milton, and Racine demonstrate the fruitfulness of Christian dogmas. In Christianity the passions are not exterminated, but rather ennobled, the mysteries of Christianity nourish the human need for the miraculous just as much and even more than does the pagan world of myths.

The third book shows the effect of Christianity on music, painting, architecture, philosophy, the natural and moral sciences, history, and eloquence, and concludes with a hymn to the 'harmonies of the Christian religion'.

The fourth book ascends again to the forms through which the Church manifests itself in the world. It then breaks into a veritable rhapsody on the liturgy and all its decorative embellishments: the cycle of feasts, the Ritual of the

Dead, the monumental graves. The book concludes by extolling the clergy, the missions, the orders of chivalry, and, finally, the whole beneficial effect which the visible Church has had on humanity.

In order to appraise Chateaubriand’s work correctly, we must first set aside everything in his book which is conditioned by the Romantic ambience of the times and by the author’s own amateurish maladroitness (something which Chateaubriand senses himself), his lapses in good taste. Once we get beyond all this and are able to perceive Chateaubriand’s basic conception, we will have to say that while in this work an important perspective has been sensed, it has nevertheless been sensed only to be misunderstood. The standard of beauty by which revelation and the Church are measured in the first and fourth books is the standard of beauty of the other two books—a criterion and a measure of this-worldly, human, and cultural beauty, appropriate for the effects of Christianity but not valid for the essence of Christianity itself. The ‘beauty’ which is supposed to serve as criterion for the latter is set too low by Chateaubriand. In his work, the world of revelation does not bring with itself its own criterion and its own beauty, a criterion and a beauty *by which* man, the world, and culture could measure themselves. The point of reference lies, at best, in the harmony *between* nature and supernature, but for the most part it is to be found *in* nature, in its own satisfaction and development. Chateaubriand’s points of view are all correct and possible in a Christian sense, but they are not sufficient. For this reason, an apologetics based solely on them bypasses the central concerns of Christianity and cannot be effective in the long run, as history was to prove almost at once. But we must add, particularly with regard to France, that Chateaubriand’s suggestions ought to have been taken more deeply to heart and that the delicate and somewhat hazy intuitions that stirred him ought to have been brought more energetically to the light. Instead, France plunged for a full half-century into a religious-political integralism which was hopeless and sterile in a way quite different from Chateaubriand’s own unfruitfulness. Such an integralism could only be superseded by an equally unprincipled laicism which was to deaden the heart of the nation.

More than either Herder or Chateaubriand, it was the inspired theologian from Lucerne, *Alois Gügler*, who brought Romantic aesthetic theology to its perfection. Gügler, who died all too young, was the leader of the Romantic school in Lucerne, which anticipated the flourishing of Romanticism in Tubingen by a decade. He had been a disciple of Sailer and of Zimmer in Landshut. Himself a poet and an admirer of Herder, he took up the latter’s insights and in his principal work, *The Sacred Art; or, the Art of the Hebrews* (1814-

1836),[43] endowed Herder’s theology with ‘the single feature on which the perfection of the statue depended’, a feature which Herder was himself unable to provide ‘because of a certain unbelief on his part’ (I, Vorrede, pp. v—vi). This is the objective that Gügler announces in the first volume, which is where he stands most strongly under Herder’s spell. Later on, the influence of Fichte, Novalis, Schelling, Baader, and, last of all, of Molitor and Daub eclipses that of Herder even as Gügler grows in his own knowledge of exegesis. But, though in many ways he later deepened his point of departure in Herder, Gügler never rejected it.

The basic structure of *The Sacred Art* is simple. God’s revelation in his creation is natural as to its results, but supernatural and miraculous as to its divine depth. To the sensorium (*Gemüt*) or sensitivity that perceives this holy depth—a depth in which God is present in all beings and in which he manifests himself—the world appears as God’s impassioning and enrapturing work of art. In their art, all peoples bear some witness to this primal experience. But, while in these the divine light becomes refracted into colours, only the Hebrews were able to preserve for themselves the greatest transparency for the light (I, p. 12f.). The ‘national element’ in them never became distanced from its source and origin (I, p. 35). Man is a horizon between an interior world of mystery (which, with Novalis, Gugler initially calls the ‘holy night’; I, pp. 30, 301, 310) and the exterior sphere of the senses—the ‘day-world’. In this ‘day-world’, spirit, reason, and understanding reign supreme, while ‘fantasy, freedom, and conscience’ constitute the point through which the ‘unfathomable soul’ (*das unergrundliche Gemut*) enters into the world of light (I, p. 85). Phantasy is the ‘middle point’, ‘the truly genial faculty’ (I, p. 86) standing between ‘worshipful piety, seclusion, and an orientation to eternity’ and a ‘moral activity directed towards the world outside’ (II, pp. 170-172). Only the Hebrews did not misuse fantasy by externalising and profaning their interior worship with flat images of the day. Only they were able to persevere in the sanctuary of an ‘adoring silence’ (I, p. 298).

Now, it may well be that all art, particularly the highest art of all peoples, is religious, which is to say that it seeks to communicate the experience of the holy (I, p. 34). But, in most instances, such art has in some way ‘dammed up the flow of the divine river, producing ‘stagnant lakes’ and even ‘gloomy swamps’ and ‘works of putrefaction’ and ‘desiccation’ (I, pp. 38-39; V, p. 105). God is there, but either as an ‘unmoved rock in the depths of nature’ (I, p. 45) or fragmented into the many facets of ‘mythology’ (I, p. 78), which is the proper medium of worldly beauty, that beauty which the Greeks developed to its height (II, p. 78). Mythology represents for Gugler ‘the pervasive falling away from pure infinity and the thoroughgoing deification of nature and of man’ (I, p. 143; III, p. 47), and in it only sporadic ‘flashes of lightning’ can still break through from the true source (I, p. 97). In Promethean fashion, the ‘holy eternal fire . . . was brought down into the realm of the senses’ (I, p. 92). With all its ‘innumerable allegorical cosmogonies’ (I, p. 274), Gnosticism is but a consequence and a variant of the mythical world-view. This is why Paul says that the pagans did not want to acknowledge the revealed God, but rather ‘turned him into and confused him with nature’ (IV, p. 134). Like Hamann and Herder, Gügler also sees Greek culture as being wholly oriented toward the East—as a branch on the trunk of the Orient (I, pp. 27, 122, 141-150). And it is his view that if the East had already turned religion into *gnosis*, then Greek externalising of religion in sensuous art and philosophy was but a variation of Eastern religion and not a properly Western characteristic to be contrasted with the introversion of the East.

What gives Gügler’s theology its decisive character is that he sees the relationship between Biblical revelation and extra-Biblical art as being a relationship between what is original and what is already in decline, between the proper order of reality and a progressive alienation from that reality. Genuine inspiration and enthusiasm, therefore, is that bestowed by the Holy Spirit—prophetic inspiration as opposed to the decadent forms of clairvoyance and the like.[44] In the same way, the only genuine miracle is the Biblical miracle, as opposed to the decadent forms of white and black magic (II, pp. 267f.), and true ‘wisdom’ is that of the Wisdom Books, as opposed to man’s decadent forms of self-reflection in ‘philosophy’ (III, pp. 139-295). The advantages of such a conception are, first of all, the ‘redeemability’ of all that is outside the Bible as it is taken into the reality of revelation in Christ; second, the consequent applicability (albeit with all caution) of the universal phenomena of life, nature, and history to our interpretation of revelation properly so called; and, third, the avoidance of an isolationist historical ‘positivism’ of Biblical revelation in favour of a view of the relationship to God that sees it as having been already established in the very essence of all created reason and nature, even though its presence and reality have somehow been ‘buried alive’. Gügler naturally stresses the historical element very strongly: true prophecy means fulness of time, conferring meaning within duration as such, while the myths presuppose and reveal a time which is both cyclical and empty (IV, pp. 162-185, esp. 168-169; II, pp. 78-93). But for Gügler, just as for Herder, history means primarily the diversification of human totality and even a ‘dynamic totality’ (II, p. 73; III, p. 23; IV, Prologue, p. xix). History, in this view, is not very different from the essence of the work of art, which always means to be ‘visible totality’. Hebrew history, furthermore, is simply seen to be the truth and manifestness of *all* of history (II, p. 83), just as Christianity is the adequate and real fulfillment of all religion (II, pp. 162, 198). The Bible itself describes an arc between the departure and the return. Genesis is the childhood of man, never wholly lost, which flashes through history time and again (III, p. 247). Exodus is man's adolescence, the time of the great miracles when everything appears to the now reflective consciousness as an explicit wonder, while for the child a wonder is still the natural course of things (III, pp. 267-300). Law, sacrifices, and prophecy represent a consciousness which is both adult and fragmented, while the New Covenant and the Age of the Church can progressively dispense with particular miracles, since, in its fulfilment, everything has again become 'substantial wonder' and the division between what *is* and what *should* be has, in Christ, been fundamentally bridged (III, pp. 298-299; IV, pp. 178f.; V, pp. 206-208). This fulness at the same time fulfills both history and nature; it does not, as does the Enlightenment, make positive historical facts merely superfluous, rather it re-constitutes them as 'transfigured history', as we can already see in Hebraic poetry and wisdom (I, p. 349). All prophecy demands a vision of history's totality (I, pp. 364-365), but even the Law must be historical and prophetic if it is to be an expression of the divine, eternal Law (II, p. 79). This is why Hebraic nationalism as a whole, as opposed to all the closed nationalisms of the pagans, must be open to the totality of historical salvation, which means a nationhood oriented to the Church (II, pp. 80, 159).

From this perspective we can clearly see what art means for Gügler, what holy (Biblical) art can and must be in his opinion, and, therefore, what is demanded by the interpretation of holy art (exegesis).

In the atmosphere of Romanticism, art is understood as being the expression of an interior feeling of infiniteness and as the exteriorization of the experience of God in the affections. In the atmosphere of Idealism, on the other hand, art is seen as the total dependence of the finite 'I' on the infinite 'I'. 'All true awareness', writes Gügler, 'is comprehended in the divine awareness; moreover, art produces such awareness in a real manner only by awaking and developing it in those spirits which slumber in the human soul. For this reason, then, the works of art come to be included among the divine creations' (I, p. 66). Primary importance is given by Gügler to the interior infinity of feeling and receptiveness, since 'the river banks are much too narrow' for the waves of the stream of life 'to be able to spend their force fully on its surface' (I, p. 80). In music, the process of 'ordering and dissolving' goes on uninterruptedly; and this is why music is 'so close to the Highest that it must be regarded as the first and last of all arts' (I, p. 113). For this reason, too, 'a genuine theory of art must depict the general disposition of artists. This interior disposition is, indeed, present in a living way in their works, but, precisely in order to safeguard the integrity of the life presented in these works, the artists' conceptual foundations appear in them in a veiled form' (I, p. 42). A genuine theory of art is the conscious exteriorization of the inner fulness in the 'form' which must, of course, never be lacking, since art may only be found where a 'living entity' mediates between pure life and lived life (I, pp. 61-62, 72). But form is the language of the 'spirit', and our ultimate concern is for what is actually being mediated, even though the mediating agent may be permanently present. Education (*Bildung*) does not come about through the amassing of materials; it is the growing process of being in-formed by the primal form or archetype (*Urbild*) itself. 'Erudition' is, literally, the process whereby 'a person strives to extract or to draw out (*eruieren*) spiritual and divine life from all the hidden places where it lies concealed. In this way, man is 'filled, animated, and "made erudite" by the divine life he extracts' (I, p. 54). Art's fruitful womb is the soul's attunedness to God (*die Gestimmtheit des Gemütes*). This 'being attuned' means that

> man is encompassed and determined by God. In so far as it passes over into consciousness, this state of being determined by God will then be seen to be a sensorium that perceives divine things, a living commerce between God and man, a real *spiritual* equating of the two, or a "tuning". . . . This "tuning" (*Stimmung*) is . . . the living process whereby the tuner (*der Bestimmende*) and the tuned (*der Bestimmte*) are made equal. To be so tuned means, then, that the relationship of a thing to its element has been raised to the level of actuality and effectiveness. When the relationships of a string of the instrument to the different resonances of the air have been established in being by tightening the string, and so forth, then the string is tuned.

This is how God brought creation into accord (*Stimmen*) with himself, and this, too, is the only way in which 'otherwise mute creation received a voice (*Stimme*) and a language'. So man has been tuned by God's breath to reflect and express the attuned-ness (*Gestimmtheit*) of matter and spirit, nature and God. 'History is the never-fading tuning (*Stimmung*) of all nature and life in search of eternal harmony. . . . The compatibility and relationship between the eternal being of things and their cycle of birth and death . . . can be conceived only in terms of this tuning (*Stimmung*)' (II, pp. 177-180). All this reaches its perfection in the Christian revelation of the Trinity: 'The Father appears as the force that draws us, Christ as the medium, and the Spirit in us is God's very tuning of us itself' (*ibid*., p. 197). The 'anointing' that the Spirit pours over us is 'like a divine instinct' which 'opens up and transfigures everything' for the Christian. It is like a 'sweetness which, once tasted, never allows us to look back: the bride's longing for the Lamb which constantly grows louder and more urgent'. All historical revelation has this as its goal: the touching of the very core of man, the interior 'world of mankind's heart by the divine tuning'. With this theory, Gügler throws a great arch, from the spiritual *harmonia* of Pythagorean

Platonism to the ardent intimacy of religious Romanticism (Schleiermacher). In so doing, he also brings to bear the essential themes of Catholic spirituality, for instance, from the *Theotimus* of François de Sales.

For the 'art of the Hebrews', the result of this theory of art is that, precisely because they are so close to the interior and divine (night-)world, they are not bent upon the exteriorization of fantasy or upon the full development (*Aus-Bildung*) of symbols. Their art is necessarily and consciously inchoative, 'their language ever remains caught up in the pangs of lively creativity.' 'The Hebrew never quite dares to venture outside his silent centre—the affective soul (*Gemüt*). His painting and his music remain awkward and subordinate to his art of language as an appendix and decoration' (I, p. 338). But this 'indigence on the part of the Hebrews' (I, p. 336) is but a proof of the fact that this people 'never wholly abandoned the realm of the infinite' (I, p. 283). 'The Hebrews held fast to the undetermined Source in their innermost hearts, and they sought to prevent all over-hastiness in the course of mankind's life and education.' 'If they are to reach the sublime peak of nobility that is proper to them, architecture, sculpture, and painting already presuppose a divine or sublime reality which has been perceived and defined at least in a negative manner' (I, pp. 331-333). In other words, the optimal measure of worldly art is not the optimal measure of divine revelation. If, for instance, we decide that Greek art is the paragon of art, then 'holy art' must be regarded either as a *super-art* or as a kind of *pre-art* which necessarily remains at the rudimentary stage from which art, properly so called, will subsequently emerge. In this connection, Gügler, along with Herder, gives Biblical aesthetics as a whole a protological orientation, that is to say, he orients it to its genesis—the origin which has either been lost or preserved in some way. This is why, at least in the first volumes, the relationship remains unclear between Christianity and what F. Schlegel and Hegel call 'romantic' art, by this meaning post-Christian, Western art. The affinity of this art of infinity and spiritual wholeness with Christian reality in its perfection is, indeed, clear. God's perfect Incarnation in Christ and the raising (*Aufhebung*) of history and of the hidden presence of eternity into the holy Kingdom of the Church are certainly the perfection of God's art. But the exact relationship of God's art to the post-Christian art of mankind remains unclear (I, pp. 211-213, 302, 308, 368f.). This all the more because, especially in the last volumes as he develops his position, Gugler sees the relationship between the Old and the New Covenants as being one of promise and fulfilment. This relationship, however, is understood Platonically as being a relationship of *word* (coming essentially from the outside and from above) to *light* (which breaks forth primarily from within; IV, pp. 123, 148f.). In this manner, Christ appears as a 'word of light' (IV, p. 133), even as an interior 'food of light' (IV, p. 149), while the prophetic 'elucidation' (*Erklären*) of the Old Covenant leads, by its very essence, to the 'transfiguration' (*Verklären*) of the New Testament (IV, p. 119; V, p. 238) to a 'theology of Tabor' (IV, p. 142).

From this, it is easy to see what exegesis can and must be. Exegesis is the progressive returning of everything history has formed back to the original Light (IV, p. 141) and the interpretation of it by reference to this origin. Such exegesis is possible only from the perspective of a total overview of salvation-history and of all God's revelation (IV, pp. xix—xxi, 128-129), an overview too of Christ's totality (V, pp. 190f.) and above all, of a living interior contemplation of the divine life—a disposition which is simply assumed (I, pp. 24, 49, 314). The interpretation of art presupposes an awareness of what art is. The point of access to the artist's genuine inspiration must be an inspiration akin to the artist's (I, p. 41). Scholarly enquiry must become contemplation (I, p. 315). But it is indeed the scholar's business 'to dust off the old statue, the painting of heaven and of earth, before the adequate contemplation and the interior enjoyment of these can begin' (I, p. 19). Gügler had harsh words to say about theology's lack of spirit: 'The multiplication of conceptual distinctions has led to the emergence of the different theological sciences from the total life of the divine in mankind and these sciences have grown strong. . . . They have lost sight of the universal and have been cut off from the living root. . . . How many manuals of dogmatic and moral theology could we pick up without finding in them any inkling of religion? How far histories of the Church are from the heavenly flame that should penetrate everything with its light! In our many theologies, we find everything except what their name calls for. They resemble the dead heaps of stones that were left over after the destruction of the holy Temple. The soul which God fills has shut itself off, and those who have the key of knowledge, instead of going into the soul, clutter the entrance to it with all kinds of vain trifles' (I, pp. 322-323). After the excessively poetical prologue to the first volume, Gugler was himself increasingly concerned to match up to the seriousness of scholarly investigation. To this end, he strove always to elucidate Scripture's central ideas in the light of the totality of revelation and, particularly, in the light of the relationship between the Old and the New Covenants.

The limitations and dangers of his method are not only his, but those of his age. There are two that are interrelated. The first of these dangers and limitations is the Neo-Platonic and Idealist philosophy of identity in the manner of a Fichte and a Schelling, which, in spite of all the precautions taken, may always be detected in the background of Gügler's train of thought, particularly in the later volumes. This philosophy refers to the original identity of 'light and eye' (IV, p.

155f.), of object and subject (V, p. 165), of truth and knowledge (V, p. 196), all of this intensified to the extreme of something like a total Christ-*gnosis*: from the ‘thought of light that established all beings absolutely’ to the ‘language and perception of light’ (‘He saw that it was good’); from the ‘creation of time’ to the ‘flesh of light’ for the fallen world in the *kenosis* of the Word and back to a ‘full transfiguration’ (V, pp. 241-242). Intimately related to such philosophical monism is the typically Romantic equation of the nature / spirit relationship with the relationship between nature and supernature (grace, revelation).[45] In Gugler, this equation takes the form of a certain Augustinian illuminism. The created spirit, according to this illuminism, is nothing but an eye (IV, p. 132) or an ear (V, pp. 70-71). Its real content is a light and a word that come from God. In the same sense (and here Gugler certainly hits upon something both profound and accurate), predestination—God’s primal idea of each human being—is equated with true freedom and self-determination (V, pp. 42, 125). Furthermore, in true Romantic fashion, nature is without any mediation taken to be the ‘Body of Christ’, and its mysterious forces are entrusted to a ‘divine magic’ (the word is very cautiously used) in the context of some kind of ‘total sacramentality’.

Even if it remains fragmentary, Gügler’s theology belongs to the most significant achievements of Catholic Romanticism. Gügler’s work announces powerfully the aesthetic concerns of theology, while being unable to carry this interest through to a successful conclusion. This is due, first, to Gügler’s early death, then to the fact that publication of his work was spread over a period of twenty years, and, at an interior level, to the fluctuating nature of Gügler’s thought which led him from Herder to Idealist theosophy by way of Romantic poetry. Finally responsible was the fact that Gügler never achieved a very clear definition of his underlying concept of art. In particular, while he makes it perfectly clear that he is using it analogously, he fails to provide an adequate account of his analogical method. Nor was this possible on the basis of the schema of Romantic categories. The collapse of Idealist Catholic theology during the period of the solemn condemnations in the middle of the last century saw too the disappearance from view of Gügler’s concerns. Even if they knew of Gügler’s concerns, our contemporaries would dismiss them with the same quick irony as they do Herder and Chateaubriand. And yet, these concerns rightly persist and must again be brought to life even if, admittedly, this must be done in a different way.

Romantic theology ultimately failed because of a deep theological inadequacy, namely, that it did not sufficiently distinguish between creation and revelation, or, to formulate it in the terms of our enquiry, we can say that Romantic theology foundered on a kind of aesthetic and religious monism. Then, around the middle of the last century, Romantic theology succumbed to the crushing blows of Neo-Thomism and of official condemnations. On the other side of this ‘demarcation-line’ a new world began. After the few trenchant dissociations necessary to every beginning, this ‘new world’ again took its bearings from the basic intuitions of the common Tradition. Just as Idealism had its roots in Plotinus and Augustine, so, too, did Thomism itself, at least when it sought to grow beyond strict scholastic requirements and develop a universal perspective. This was true of *Matthias Joseph Scheeben*, the greatest German theologian to-date since the time of Romanticism. Scheeben brought the Thomism of the schools to Germany from Rome, but he expounded it in a way which made it possible for the concerns of the previous age to come to life again, even if in a different form.

As with the other theologians we have reviewed, we here introduce Scheeben only by way of an example and as a milestone. In Catholic theology, Scheeben signals the turning from an Idealist, aesthetic theology to a theology which, to begin with at least, is meant to be strictly positive and ‘scientific’ even in its speculation. But Scheeben’s aesthetic inclinations were so strong and penetrating that he too gave this theological ‘science’ a thoroughly aesthetic shape both as regards its form and its contents. In this way, Scheeben did us the service of replacing the ‘aesthetic theology’ of Romanticism with the outlines of a methodically founded ‘theological aesthetics’. We can only regret the fact that Scheeben’s method is based on a primary negation which we will examine first. Historically, we can understand this limitation and even see that it could not be avoided. Moreover, it was not *this* limitation which prevented the aesthetic element of Scheeben’s theology from being sufficiently innovative and influential.

Scheeben’s work unfolds consistently and steadily from his *Natur und Gnade* (1861, along with his new edition of Casini’s *Quid est homo* in 1862), through his *Herrlichkeiten der göttlichen Gnade* (1862), to the *Mysterien des Christentums* (1865) and the unfinished *Dogmatik* (I, 1873; II, 1878-1880; III, 1882-18 87).[46] Now and then, throughout the development of this work, some changes are made in content, but even this occurs only in order to maintain the course taken with greater exactness. Scheeben’s basic intuition is very simple. A negative, polemical thesis serves as its foundation and as the springboard from which to attain a total religious-aesthetic outlook.

As against Romantic theology, Scheeben defends with unrelenting sharpness the separation between nature and supernature, a defence supported by a comprehensive use of heresiology. In the first place, says Scheeben, supernature is not a moment in nature by which God brings it to perfection, a complement to nature which causes nature to pass from potency to act, or a medicine that ‘cures’ nature of the disease of having its back to God by making it con-vert to him. Nor can nature claim to ‘strive positively’ after supernature or assert ‘certain rights to it’. This would constitute ‘an internal contradiction’ (N, II, § 2, p. 49). All connecting lines that could naturally lead from below into the Realm above are severed by Scheeben. To achieve this end, which was also served by his new edition of Casini, Scheeben established a closed realm of *natura pura*, free of conceptual contradictions, a realm intended as a ‘self-enclosed order of life’ (*ibid*., pp. 53-54; *cf*. D. III, § 177, p. 462). The Resurrection of the Flesh is a mystery of Christ and, therefore, strictly supernatural. Consequently, a purely natural anthropology may be constructed only in such a way that man’s moral and religious ‘transfiguration’ is conceived (Platonically) as a gradual extrication of the spirit from its material subjection, with the consequent affirmation of man’s natural death: ‘For the spirit in so far as its activity is limited (by its association with the body) such transfiguration is indeed in a certain sense unnatural. If the spirit can become free in no other manner, then it must attain to *its* natural perfection by the dissolution of the total nature’ (N, II, § 1, p. 40). ‘In this respect, the natural state of the soul that has been separated from the body—released from it as from a dark shell—and which can now expand its spiritual powers fully, may be said already to be a state of transfiguration’ (M, § 92, pp. 629-630). Such a passage makes clear why Scheeben does not content himself with the adjective ‘supernatural’ but introduces of necessity the substantive ‘supernature’ into theological language (N, I, § 4, pp. 21f.). All appearances must be destroyed that might make of grace simply a modal ‘supplement’ to nature. The world of grace is the world of God himself in so far as he reveals himself to created nature, thereby granting it a share in his own substance and nature. The creature partakes of this nature ‘as of a second, higher nature, as it were, or as of a supernature’ (N, III, § 1, pp. 63-64). Grace bestows on us not only a new external dignity, but . . . in some way it gives us the beginning of ‘a new substance’ (N, III, § 2, p. 76), ‘a new, higher nature’ (H, I, § 10, p. 38), which ‘pulls us free from the limitations of nature’. Man takes ‘a new step on the ladder of beings’ (*ibid*., pp. 39-40). God’s revelation of himself, according to Scheeben, means the transporting of man from his own immanent and finite sphere into the divine, transcendental, and infinite sphere, an experience such as is portrayed, for instance, by the well-known Renaissance woodcut which shows a man piercing the sphere of the world with his head and gaping with astonishment at the mysteries beyond the world.

The *Glories of Divine Grace* (which is the very telling title of the second book, a panegyric) are the quintessence of beauty because they are ‘supernatural’. This word occurs incessantly in Scheeben’s early writings, often in every line. Since the ‘glories of grace’ are the glories of God himself, they are infinitely superior and more sublime (*erhaben*) than natural beauty and dignity. For the creature, this substantial superiority (*Erhabenheit*) means an ‘elevation’ (*Erhebung*) which is both ontological and experiential and aesthetic. ‘The *beauty*. . . of the Catholic faith lies precisely in the fact that, in the mysteries of grace, it displays before us an immeasurably exalted *elevation* of our nature’ (H. ‘Vorwort’, p. 1). We constantly encounter the expression ‘how much the more’ that denotes this going beyond nature. But here it is not only a matter of the upward movement. The content of this ‘supernature’ is also at stake. The mysteries of grace are ‘not merely particular truths which lie beyond the natural order. They are a stupendous order all its own, a higher celestial world, a mystical cosmos’ (D, I, § 4, n. 33) which, ‘in its beauty and brilliance, infinitely surpasses everything that reason can attain in its highest flight’ (M, I, § 4, p. 16). It is ‘like stars that together form a marvellous system of their own’ (*ibid*, p. 19) and which ‘intensify and illumine each other reciprocally and join together to make a marvellous system’ (M, XV, § 104, p. 707). This beauty is God’s substantial beauty itself, a beauty described by Scheeben in a chapter on the doctrine of God (D, I, § 85, pp. 589f.). Scheeben is fond of speaking of this beauty in the same breath as the divine ‘goodness’ (as *kalokagathia*). As the object of the divine pleasure, God’s beauty is described by Scheeben as being God’s ‘dignity’ and ‘holiness’, and in its appearance it is described as the divine ‘glory’ (D, I, § 104, pp. 733f.). It is, further, the beauty created by God’s substantial beauty as it communicates and pours itself out, for God’s beauty creates the beautiful things which he wishes to love (H, II, § 9, p. 105). The created beauty is the object of God’s glance; but, in the present, we can only believe in such beauty, not see it. By ‘transposing our eye’ to God’s point of view, however, we can even now begin to see it, and, in eternity, we will behold this beauty openly with God (M, XI, § 104, p. 172). Theology is ‘the dawn of the light of contemplation’ (M, XI, § 108, p. 731). And Sacred Scripture itself, which shows us this supernatural cosmos in a veiled way, is ‘a work of art objectively placed before man’s eyes: a painting and a drama of divine wisdom.’ A genuinely theological exegesis which is inspired by the Holy Spirit and which keeps Scripture’s integrity in sight leads us further than a ‘purely philological consideration’, although we must also avoid ‘confusing the poetry of the Holy Spirit with human poetry, so as not to turn into mere fictions the facts contained in the literal sense (D, I, § 17, n. 240-244). Finally, for the person who has the vision of faith, the world as a whole is ‘the expression of a divine idea. . . , an artistic idea,. . . the imitative execution (*Nachbildung*) of the ideal that God himself is'. In this way, 'both in its wholeness and in its parts, the world is a likeness (*Abbild*) of God's beauty and glory' (D, II, § 134, n. 119f.; *cf*. § 144, n. 281). It is not the world, however, but 'the organic and practical workings of faith's mysteries' that Scheeben describes 'with amazing architectonic dexterity' (Grabmann; N, 'Einleitung', p. XXIX), and, in so doing, Scheeben invites the reader to consider God's plan of the world 'as a work of creative, universal architectonics' (D, III, § 268, n. 1385). It is the 'attraction of the mystery' which should 'fill us with inexpressible delight' (M, I, § i, p. 4). Our wonderment should be directed to the creature which has been transfigured by grace, above all others to Christ and Mary. We must begin from above, from the heights, in order then to see how the divine beauty gradually penetrates and elevates all depths of reality. Thus it should not surprise us to learn that Scheeben had begun as a writer with the book *Marienblüten* (Marian Blossoms, 1860), and that, even in the midst of his work on dogma at the end of his life and stimulated by A. von Thimus' profound work, *Die harmonikale Symbolik des Altertums* (*The Harmonic Symbolism of Antiquity,* 1868-1876), he busied himself with number mysticism and with music, and even started on a work entitled *Die Zahlengesetze der Harmonik in Ton, Licht und Kosmos* (*The Numerical Laws of Harmony in Sound, Light, and the Cosmos*; N, 'Einleitung', p. xxxv).

The initial antithesis directed against the Romantic confusion of nature and supernature results, first of all, in a certain sealing off of the supernatural cosmos of mysteries. The 'dark side' of these mysteries consists precisely in the fact that everything in them can be described only in terms of 'light in light'. The enthusiasm for such a closed world produces a merely abstract edification which in the *Glories* soon becomes wearisome.[47] Grace is seen here from above, at first without reference to the Church and the sacraments—regarded as the beauty of the soul in itself with nothing of the deadly drama of real existence. Scheeben's enthusiastic portrayals of virginity also make a slightly dualistic impression (H, III, § 9, p. 271; D, I, § 122, n. 1019f. and *passim*), like so many things in this age of *émigration intérieure*.

Nevertheless, Scheeben was able to make up in a second round for the losses incurred in the first. If we survey his work as a totality we have to be thankful for the initial clarity of his conceptual distinctions which later allows him to proceed without the least danger to treat of the very profound interpenetration of both realms, a task on which he had already embarked at the conclusion of his book *Nature and Grace* and which from that point on becomes increasingly important. As soon as Scheeben passes from formal considerations to the content of the mysteries, we see that the creature's 'elevation' into God occurs as a result of a preceding descent and ingress on God's part, an interpenetration of nature and grace which receives from Scheeben the name of ‘marriage’ from the very beginning. As he proceeds he introduces and develops the concept in every aspect of dogmatic theology. His theology thus becomes one great doctrine of *eros*, to an extent that far surpasses anything attained in this respect by past theology. To faith, God is Trinity, an interior fruitfulness that pours itself out. In Christ’s hypostatic union, it pours itself out into the creation which had been prepared for just this. Made ready *by* Christ’s grace *for* Christ’s grace, moreover, creation reaches its epitome in Mary’s bridal motherhood. This is the centre from which every aspect of the Church and of Christianity must be interpreted, down to the very nature of the world and of formal ontology. God’s plan for the world is the ‘glorification’ and ‘transfiguration’ of nature in its servanthood (*Dienstbarkeit*). Theology therefore, is not out to demolish philosophy and its concepts, but to ‘transfigure’ them (M, XI, § 106, p. 728; § 108, p. 746). Though we cannot simply affirm the Scotist view that Christ would have become man even without the fall, nevertheless God’s espousal of the world in Christ must never be conceived as a mere ‘means to the end’ (of redemption). God’s ‘marriage’ with the world is, rather, the ‘highest idea’ (M, V, § 62, p. 388), the ‘point of departure and criterion’ of the ‘supernatural organism’ (M, IX, § 92, p. 633). For every creature this is the supernatural, freely given ‘ideal’, an ideal which is necessary because it is really conferred, an ideal which is the ‘principle and goal’ of all participation in God (N, IV, p. 195).

The uniqueness of Scheeben’s conception consists in the fact that the vision of faith allows him to grasp certain fundamental laws of Being in such a vital manner that he is then able to illumine faith’s mystery from the standpoint of ontology. Moreover, he does this by avoiding in theology every formalistic application of philosophical concepts; rather, he ‘transfigures’ these concepts in the way we have discussed. Consequently, he refuses, for instance, to countenance the theologically mostly sterile opposition between ‘physical’ and ‘moral’ such as is debated by Banezians and Molinists, because what he saw in the vision of faith cautioned him against such a statement of the question. He can, therefore, silence both the critics who object to his thinking too much in images—an ‘obvious’ philosophical deficiency (Preface to D, II, § 2, pp. x—xi)—and those critics who hold his all too marked harmonizing tendencies against him. His very real achievements allow him to maintain, untroubled by such criticisms, the thesis that true theological aesthetics proves itself to be such precisely through its sober and consistent loyalty to its subject-matter (*Sachgerechtigkeit*): ‘A scientific elucidation carried out in the spirit of Sacred Scripture and of Tradition brings to light ideas which are not only more solid and better grounded but, precisely because they are such, are also much more beautiful and sublime than all the aspirations which pious feelings can muster' (Preface to D, III, § i, pp. vi—vii).

At the heart of Scheeben's understanding of things lies the notion of the 'in-formation' of nature by grace, nature thus being considered to behave as *materia*. This in-formation, however, is understood as a divine 'begetting' in the 'womb' of nature. Matter-and-form, a philosophical pair of concepts, is deepened and 'transfigured' by Scheeben into the bride / bridegroom relationship. Such a relationship is already found in the natural relationship of spirit and body and in their fusing together to form *one* being. As opposed to 'pure creation', the engendering and shaping power from above needs the 'womb of matter' which is to be elevated and spiritualized; and the spirit itself needs this 'womb' in order to reveal its engendering life-force (D, III, § 241a, n. 809f.). Scheeben is aware of the limits of the spirit-body / man-woman analogy. But for him it is important that Paul uses this analogy not to establish the autonomy of two human hypostases, but in the sense of the sexual difference between that which engenders from above and that which conceives, bears, and gives birth from below. Such an understanding of the analogy is presupposed in order that the creaturely 'likeness' (*Abbild*) might correspond to the supernatural archetype (*Urbild*) Christ / Mary, Christ / Church, and, in Christ himself, to the relationship between his two natures. All of this means that it is not the relations of persons separated from their physical aspect that are decisive; decisive, rather, are precisely the 'physical' relationships which 'carry' the personal relationships ontically. And these 'physical' relationships—mediated, to be sure, by the personal aspect—are then 'transfigured' and raised to their highest truth in the relationship between nature and grace.

This principle may also be developed by starting from the top with the doctrine of God and of the Trinity and working down.

> The more profound concept of sanctity rests on the fact that the proper life of the will in its innermost power and fulness of energy does not simply consist of orienting and directing the will to that which is objectively good and beautiful on the basis of a certain acknowledgement of the worth of the objectively good and beautiful and with the aim of conforming the will to them. Rather the proper life of the will consists in its. . . *transformation into* the objectively good and beautiful, a transformation which, in the case of our will, appears to be partly the root and source . . . of its striving, but partly also the goal and perfection of this . . . striving. Such transformation would appear to be as it were the very soul or *forma* of all of the will's further activity. In other words, the life of the will consists of love in so far as love, being a delight in that which is objectively good and beautiful, binds the lover to this object, steeping him in it and moulding him into it. Love so penetrates and fills the lover with the object of his love that lover and object as it were grow together, and the objectively good and beautiful is like a principle immanent in the lover himself, impelling him to act and strive and making him overflow with joy and bliss. (D, I, § 104, n. 657)

This principle provides the key to Scheeben's doctrine of grace and faith. Actual grace is more than just a (moral) 'invitation and encouragement' on the part of the object, nor is it a mere 'physical impulsion'. Actual grace is what Thomas, following Augustine, describes as *pondus* (an image related to the Biblical *kâbôd* and *gloria*, as Scheeben significantly points out): it is the 'dynamic and energetic or drastic and elastic' influence (D, III, § 288, n. 135) which moves 'the will as an energy and a "fertilization" immanent in the will's deepest recesses—a *forma*, a *spiritus*, and a *virtus voluntatis* that proceed from the inside to the exterior' (*ibid*., n. 139). Grace is an 'ethico-genetic' influence, a description which 'points to an analogy between grace and begetting' and 'teaches us from the outset to think of the inspiration of the affections and of the whole interior disposition of the *liberum arbitrium* on the analogy of the fructifying seed or of the enkindling spark', as opposed to the notion of a moral efficacy which merely disposes, or of a physical efficacy which merely 'runs parallel' to natural inclinations in an artificial manner (*ibid*., n. 141). 'In the realm of grace, the Fathers know of no divine activity other than in the form of *illuminatio* and *inspiratio*.' The two doctrines Scheeben rejects fall short of Patristic doctrine because the interior and physical aspect may be conceived only personally, and the personal aspect may be conceived only physically. Turning to the (supernatural) object means to have already been touched and moved from within by its life. And the will can only proceed to its decisions (as a 'partitive, generative function') if it has first assumed a 'conceptive' and feminine attitude with regard to grace (D, III, § 288, n. 155).

The analysis of the act of faith also proceeds along these lines. As early as Scheeben's first book we can read: 'If, in the matter of what is owed to divine truth, the spirit follows not only the judgment of reason but the light and pull of divine truth itself, surrendering to this truth and becoming united to it, then the spirit is truly and immediately founded upon divine truth as such' (N, III, § 5, p. 145; *cf*. M, X, § 105, p. 721). His dogmatics finds a basis for this structure in the act of natural faith itself, which exhibits a logic very different from that of a conclusion drawn by reason. The logic of the act of natural faith derives from the esteem accorded the dignity of the person speaking and from our desire to model ourselves on this person in trust. To this, supernatural faith adds the 'power of attraction which the object exerts on reason by means of the light of grace', a light which already contains the judgement of trust-worthiness (*Glaubwürdigkeit*) and which, therefore, already constitutes the 'seed and impulse, or the running start,. . . the paving of the way, and initiation' of the very assent of faith (D, I, § 38, n. 648-651; *cf*. 691). For Scheeben this structure is the foundation for true 'transcendental knowledge' (*ibid*., n. 717). It, too, again exhibits the character of a ‘marriage with God’, in so far as the grace proper to faith is (in the of baptism) infused into the neophyte as into the womb of an incipient grace of faith; and his natural insight and willingness, already prepared and opened up by grace, are then ‘transfigured’ by the anointing of the Holy Spirit (*ibid*., n. 796-801). The bridal relationship between faith and a reason which is fructified by faith as in conception then becomes the basis for the whole theological enterprise. Not only must reason be elevated in order for it to think within the province of faith; ‘faith itself can in no way develop and display its content without the aid of reason; this is why faith must place its content in the womb of reason, there to foster it and allow it to grow’ (M, XI, § 109, p. 758f.; D, I, § 53, n. 993). This elevation and fructification is, again, both ontic and personal-spiritual, the latter denoting the illumination and living inspiration of reason. For Scheeben, such illumination and inspiration of reason is the *conditio sine qua non* of a true theology (M, XI, § 108, esp. 746; D, I, § 54, n. 997f.), just as the Spirit, illuminating and inspiring in an ever-actual manner, is the soul of Scripture, Tradition, and the Church (D, I, § 16, n. 225f.). And so, in the last analysis, Christian ‘wisdom’ is seen to have a Marian character, just as Mariology has a ‘sapiential’ character (M, XI, § 109, p. 760f.; D, III, § 274, n. 1541f.).

Grace and faith are thus but forms of the expression of God’s central *conubium* with mankind (and, through it, with the whole world) in the Incarnation, which has among its conditions the mystery of Mary’s maternal womb. In his Christology, Scheeben greatly emphasizes the Patristic analogy of the organic union of body and soul, and he rejects as misleading the Scholastic description of Christ’s humanity as being an *instrumentum conjunctum* (D, III, § 253, n. 1097; *cf*. 1083). At the same time, he again uses the analogy of ‘marriage’ to describe the ‘participation of Christ’s humanity—organically founded and efficacious—in God’s own power and efficacy’. This analogy is then extended also to the efficacy of the Sacraments. The Scholastic formula for the Incarnation has been a cautious and rather bald one: *terminatio substantialis per hypostasim Verbi*. In order to enhance this formulation, Scheeben reintroduced the older concept of the *informatio* of humanity by the divine Word, since this description of the Incarnation seemed to him to be ‘more plastic and, at the same time, deeper and richer’ than the Scholastic one, *informatio* being understood as a ‘reciprocal’ ‘insubsistence’ (D, II, § 223, n. 396-401). As far as Christ’s human nature is concerned, this means that its ‘natural’ reality has a wholly ‘supernatural’ foundation. And for Christ’s total person the reverse holds: the supernatural miracle of two natures constituting one person is ‘natural’ in the sense that in this union all nature’s organic, moral, and matrimonial relationships find their highest form and fulfilment and indeed their ultimate ground. Furthermore, on account of every creature's association with Christ as Head, all such relationships also attain their proper locus and point of reference in creation from the union of two natures in Christ (D, III, § 239, n. 717g; D, II, § 224, n. 430f.). At this point, we witness a total healing of the sharp fracture with which Scheeben's theology had begun. Some readers, particularly Protestants, will even be of the opinion that Scheeben's analogies with nature have now been given undue weight and been raised to the function of absolute paradigms for the unifications brought about by grace. In this context it is significant that, in his theological anthropology, Scheeben—alone among modern theologians—exercises meticulous care in his treatment of the sexual analogy in relation to nature and supernature, emphasizing as much as possible the truly personal fatherhood and motherhood of the engendering human being with regard to the child engendered;[48] this in order to allow the physical-organic and the ethical-personal aspects to interpenetrate as perfectly as possible both at the level of nature and of supernature. And if, in the realm of nature, the 'physical' appears as inferior (that which man has in common with animals), and the 'moral' as superior—that which is proper to man—this apparent or real order of things is transformed (*aufgehoben*) by supernature when it underscores the 'physical' character of *eros* (D, II, § 240b, n. 756-760; § 244, n. 878, n. 906). The proof of this is provided by the constant interrelation of the three aspects of the one *conubium*: God / humanity, Christ / Mary, two natures in one Christ, from which derived all other aspects of doctrine concerning the Church, redemption, justification, and grace.

Let us note one last feature. Scheeben proposes a Christian theology of sacrifice which strongly rejects the Baroque theory of 'destruction' and returns to the wholly personal and spiritual concept of sacrifice of the Fathers, especially of Augustine. In this, too, Scheeben brings Romantic theology to perfection. The sense of sacrifice is not destruction, but 'transfiguration' through love: the outpouring of the *gloria Dei* over the whole substance of the creature, which by sacrificing and surrendering itself makes room in itself for the divine fire. Hence we have the genial idea whereby in Christ's Resurrection Scheeben sees God's descending and consuming fire. By the same token, he posits the Cross and the Resurrection (and, therefore, Christ's whole eternal transfigured existence in heaven) as two phases of the one single and redeeming act of sacrifice. In this way he also finds a new approach to the elucidation of the 'sacrifice' of the Mass (D, III, § 270, n. 1421; § 271, n. 1472-1475, 1482; § 272, n. 1499-1507). By seeing the Cross itself as a 'glorious splendour', with its splendour flooding every aspect of the Incarnation with its rays, and by considering the Cross to be not a ‘means’, but a ‘representation’ of God’s love and essence (M, v, § 64, pp. 410-415), Scheeben’s theology takes a thoroughly Johannine turn, and his doctrine of the ‘marriage’ between God and man reveals thereby its properly Biblical roots. It is a theology of the divine *eros* which transfigures itself, drawing humanity into this process. In this way, it is truly and in the highest sense and degree a theology of the ‘glories of divine grace’, which is the title of one of his main works. ‘Glory’ (*Herrlichkeit*) here has the sense of God’s power to illumine, the sense of the ‘lordliness’ (*Herr* = ‘Lord’) with which God takes to himself the creature’s ‘womb’ in order to fructify it. It also points to the sense in which God’s goal and purpose is absolutely contained in himself and requires nothing external for its realisation, so that by contrast with natural sexual union whose fruit is independent of the parents, God is his own father, mother and child, all in one.

In Scheeben, this fire of *eros* tends to consume everything in sight. Theologically, it is of great significance that he dares to make the luminous mystery of predetermination the summary of all other mysteries: ‘Predestination means sheer light’ (M, X, § 103, pp. 701f.). Scheeben’s total theological picture, conceived as it is in the spirit of the Greek Fathers, is completed when he describes the irreducible core of hell as being a ‘negative transfiguration’ (M, IX, § 97, pp. 661f.), and even more when he demonstrates from Scripture the universal tendency of redemption, ‘whereas a truly restrictive expression never occurs’ (D, III, § 266, n. 1351).

The only thing that we can take exception to in Scheeben is a certain ahistoricity in his theological design. This trait is intimately connected with the polemical and negative impulse with which he began. His standpoint is grace, which means that the sin and fallenness of worldly existence are seen to be realities only very indirectly. The instant that humanity is elevated as a bride to be united with and transfigured in God, it will naturally appear in the image of Mary. But this *conubium* has as its background the harlotry of Sion, the Bride, whom Ezekiel brands precisely as the *magna meretrix* (Ezek 16) and in comparison with whom the two sinful sisters, Samaria (heresy) and Sodom (accursed paganism), will appear justified. This aspect of revelation, which is Biblical, Patristic, and again Lutheran, is lacking in Scheeben. How could we, however, understand the ‘beauty’ of the Cross without the abysmal darkness into which the Crucified plunges?

Scheeben is here only meant to be representative of the way in which an (all too) ‘aesthetic’ theology, which originated in Herder and then dominated Romanticism, may possibly be refined and made credible as a theological aesthetics. By this we mean a theology which does not primarily work with the extra-theological categories of a worldly philosophical aesthetics (above all poetry), but which develops its theory of beauty from the data of revelation itself with genuinely theological methods. It is, therefore, not necessary that, as generally occurs in our century, theology renounce aesthetics, whether unconsciously or consciously, whether out of weakness or forgetfulness or even a false scientific attitude. For if it were, theology would have to give up a good part—if not the best part—of itself.

7. THE TASK AND THE STRUCTURE OF A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

From everything we have reviewed, it now becomes possible to determine tentatively what the task and structure of a theological aesthetics should be. We now know in what direction its object is to be sought and in what way the investigation of this object is to be carried out. But we also know the ways in which such an inquiry may by no means be undertaken. We are, then, both spurred on and warned.

Our point of departure was very much a layman’s insight into the beautiful. For the present, however, it would be incorrect for us to go beyond this unreflected concept lest we should prejudice our inquiry either philosophically or theologically. We may, however, without prejudice distinguish and relate to each other, albeit in a very preliminary way, two elements in the beautiful which have traditionally controlled every aesthetic and which, with Thomas Aquinas, we could term *species* (or *forma*) and *lumen* (or *splendor*)—form (*Gestalt*) and splendour (*Glanz*). As form, the beautiful can be materially grasped and even subjected to numerical calculation as a relationship of numbers, harmony, and the laws of Being. Protestant aesthetics has wholly misunderstood this dimension and even denounced it as heretical, locating then the total essence of beauty in the event in which the light irrupts. Admittedly, form would not be beautiful unless it were fundamentally a sign and appearing of a depth and a fulness that, in themselves and in an abstract sense, remain beyond both our reach and our vision. In this way, the soul manifests itself in the body in various degrees of relationship which Kant and Schiller have described in a strict sense as beauty and as ‘the sublime’ in the sense of gracefulness and dignity. In this way, too, the Spirit appears in history in a concealed manner; and, in a manner still more concealed due to his infinite freedom and superiority to the world, God manifests himself in his creation and in the order of salvation. Psychologically, the effect of beautiful forms on the soul may be described in a great variety of ways. But a true grasp of this effect will not be attained unless one brings to bear logical and ethical concepts, concepts of truth and value: in a word, concepts drawn from a comprehensive doctrine of Being. The form as it appears to us is beautiful only because the delight that it arouses in us is founded upon the fact that, in it, the truth and goodness of the depths of reality itself are manifested and bestowed, and this manifestation and bestowal reveal themselves to us as being something infinitely and inexhaustibly valuable and fascinating. The appearance of the form, as revelation of the depths, is an indissoluble union of two things. It is the real presence of the depths, of the whole of reality, *and* it is a real pointing beyond itself to these depths. In different periods of intellectual history, to be sure, one or the other of these aspects may be emphasized: on the one hand, classical perfection (*Vollendung*: the form which contains the depths), on the other, Romantic boundlessness, infinity (*Unendlichkeit*: the form that transcends itself by pointing beyond to the depths). Be this as it may, however, both aspects are inseparable from one another, and together they constitute the fundamental configuraton of Being. We 'behold' the form; but, if we really behold it, it is not as a detached form, rather in its unity with the depths that make their appearance in it. We see form as the splendour, as the glory of Being. We are 'enraptured' by our contemplation of these depths and are 'transported' to them. But, so long as we are dealing with the beautiful, this never happens in such a way that we leave the (horizontal) form behind us in order to plunge (vertically) into the naked depths.

When it comes to confronting this structure, (in which we encounter all Being both objectively and subjectively), with the contents of Christian theology, it should be clear from the outset that there can be no question of a univocal transposition and application of categories. This must be so because the living God is neither an 'existent' (subordinate to Being) nor 'Being' itself, as it manifests and reveals itself essentially in everything that makes its appearance in form. Protestant theology, therefore, has been wholly right consistently to reject the application to Biblical revelation of the schema inherited from pre-Christian, and especially Greek, philosophy, a schema that distinguished between a 'ground of Being' and an 'appearance of Being'. But we have already shown elsewhere[49] that this schema exhibits different analogical gradations even in the worldly realm, since the expressions of a free spirit (namely, as word and creative deed) are structured differently from those of organic and sub-spiritual nature, and yet they are not thereby excluded from the schema. But, again to use the analogy in a supereminent sense, what is the creation, reconciliation, and redemption effected by the triune God if not his revelation in and to the world and man? Not a deed that would leave its doer in the background unknown and untouched, but a genuine self-representation on his part, a genuine unfolding of himself in the worldly stuff of nature, man, and history—an event which in a supereminent sense may be called an ‘appearance’ or ‘epiphany’. *Quia per incarnati Verbi mysterium nova mentis nostrae oculis lux tuae claritatis infulsit: ut dum visibiliter Deum cognoscimus, per hunc in invisibilium amorem rapiamur*[50] (Christmas Preface). We should note that in this classical text there is no express reference to ‘faith’, but to the two things which implicitly contain it:

1. to the ‘eyes of our mind’ which are struck by a ‘new light’ from God which then enables them to know visibly—contemplatively (*visibiliter*): an object which is actually ‘God’, but God as ‘mediated’ (*per*) by the ‘sacramental form of the mystery’ (*mysterium*) of the ‘enfleshed Word’.
2. to a ‘mediating’ (second *per*) vision which occasions a ‘rapture’ and a ‘transport’ (*rapiamur*) to an ‘eros-love’ (*amor*) for those ‘things unseen’ (*invisibilia*) which had announced themselves by appearing in the visibleness and revelation of the Incarnation.

In the first point, the emphasis is given to a certain seeing, looking, or ‘beholding’, and not to any ‘hearing’ or ‘believing’. ‘Hearing’ is present only implicitly in the reference to the ‘Word’ become man, just as ‘believing’ is implied in that what is seen is the mystery that points to the invisible God. But the all-encompassing act that contains within itself the hearing and the believing is a *perception* (*Wahrnehmung*), in the strong sense of a ‘taking to oneself’ (*nehmen*)[51] of something true (*Wahres*) which is offering itself. For this particular perception of truth, of course, a ‘new light’ is expressly required which illumines this particular form, a light which at the same time breaks forth from within the form itself. In this way, the ‘new light’ will at the same time make seeing the form possible and be itself seen along with the form. The *splendour* of the mystery which offers itself in such a way cannot, for this reason, be equated with the other kinds of aesthetic radiance which we encounter in the world. This does not mean, however, that that mysterious *splendour* and this aesthetic radiance are beyond any and every comparison. That we are at all able to speak here of ‘seeing’ (and not exclusively and categorically of ‘hearing’) shows that, in spite of all concealment, there *is* nonetheless something to be seen and grasped (*cognoscimus*). It shows, therefore, that man is not merely addressed in a total mystery, as if he were compelled to accept obediently in blind and naked faith something hidden from him, but that something is ‘offered’ to man by God, indeed offered in such a way that man can see it, understand it, make it his own, and live from it in keeping with his human nature.

It is only on this condition that man himself can truly realize what is described in the second point, rather than merely let it *be realized* in him in a passive way. For it is not said explicitly that the *mysterium Christi*, being the *lux tuae claritatis*, is the appearance of God’s *amor invisibilis*. This is rather presupposed, while the text goes on straight away to speak of the event whereby man is transported because of having seen the *Deus invisibilis* in a human way. There is a good reason why the word used here is *amor* (ἔρως) and not *caritas*. For what is at stake here is the movement effected by seeing what God has shown. This is a movement of the entire person, leading away from himself through the vision towards the invisible God, a movement, furthermore, which the word ‘faith’ describes only imperfectly, although it is in this movement that faith has its proper ‘setting in life’ (*Sitz im Leben*). The transport of the soul, however, must here again be understood in a strictly theological way. In other words, it must be understood not as a merely psychological response to something beautiful in a worldly sense which has been encountered through vision, but as the movement of man’s whole being away from himself and towards God through Christ, a movement founded on the divine light of grace in the mystery of Christ. But the whole truth of this mystery is that the movement which God (who is the object that is seen in Christ and who enraptures man) effects in man (even in his unwillingness and recalcitrance, due to sin) is co-effected willingly by man through his Christian *eros* and, indeed, on account of the fact that the divine Spirit en-thuses and in-spires man to collaboration.

We ought at this point to recall the Areopagite’s apology for employing the word *eros* in Christian theology, as well as his emphatic protestation that he is not using it ‘in contradiction to Sacred Scripture’. In the opinion of Denys, *eros* captures the sense of the transport of man’s being as such far better than does *agape*, and this constitutes for Denys an aesthetic as well as a soteriological statement. For man’s transport to God does not stop at the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic κινοῦν ὡς ἐρώμενον but grounds the latter in an antecedent and condescending divine *ekstasis* in which God is drawn out of himself by *eros* into creation, revelation, and Incarnation. But we must listen to the whole passage:

> And the divine Eros also brings rapture, not allowing them that are touched by it to belong to themselves, but only to the objects of their love. . . . And hence the great Paul, constrained by the divine Eros, and having received a share in its ecstatic power, says, with inspired utterance: ‘I live, and yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me.’ These are the words of a true lover, of one who (as he himself states) was beside himself (out of his senses!) and unto God (2 Cor 5. 13), not possessing a life of his own (2 Cor 5. 15) but the life of his Beloved, a life surrounded on all sides by an ardent

> love. And we must dare to affirm (for this is the truth) that the Creator of the Universe himself, in his beautiful and good Eros towards the Universe, is, through his excessive erotic Goodness, transported outside of himself, in his providential activities towards all things that have being, and is overcome by the sweet spell of Goodness, Love, and Eros. In this manner, he is drawn from his transcendent throne above all things to dwell within the heart of all things in accordance with his super-essential and ecstatic power whereby he nonetheless does not leave himself behind. This is why those who know about God call him 'zealous', because he is vehement in his manifold and beneficent Eros towards all beings, and he spurs them on to search for him zealously with a yearning eros, thus showing himself zealous for love inasmuch as the things that are desired are considered worthy of zeal and inasmuch as he allows himself to be affected by the zeal of all beings for which he cares. In short, both to possess eros and to love erotically belong to everything Good and Beautiful, and eros has its primal roots in the Beautiful and the Good: eros exists and comes into being only through the Beautiful and the Good.[52]

Delete from this text, if you will, everything which appears too Neo-Platonic. One will nonetheless have to acknowledge that its substance is genuinely Biblical and consistent with the most authentic covenant-theology of either Testament, a theology that sees the jealous and consuming love of the divine Bridegroom doing its work in his bride in order to raise her up, invite her, and bring her home to the very same answering love. All divine revelation is impregnated with an element of 'enthusiasm' (in the theological sense). Nothing can be done for the person who cannot detect such an element in the Prophets and the 'teachers of wisdom', in Paul and in John, to mention only these. Nor can anything be done for the person who persists in denying the fact that all of this quenches and more than fulfils the human longing for love and beauty, a longing which, previous to and outside the sphere of revelation, exhausted itself in impotent and distorted sketches of such a desperately needed and yet unimaginable fulfilment. For how else are we to understand both the religious and aesthetic enthusiasms of extra-Biblical religions with all their empty systems of divine epiphanies and avatars? Quite apart from the distortions and confusions inherent to them, these systems would otherwise remain at the stage of ineffective rhetoric which is the most man's religious *eros* can attain to once one excludes God's redemptive grace. Only the mysteries and sacraments of Christ's revelation effect what they signify (*Trid. Can. de sacr*., 6-8; Dz. 849-851).

Because God actually effects that which he reveals in the sign, and because in God's order of salvation Plato's idealistic *imago-metaphysics* and Aristotle's realistic *causa-et-finis* metaphysics actually come together on a higher plane, we can never approach Christian *eros* and Christian beauty from a merely Platonic tradition and expect to interpret them adequately. The enthusiasm which is inherent to the Christian faith is not merely idealistic; it is, rather, an enthusiasm which derives from and is appropriate to actual, realistic Being. This is why

God’s Word constantly brings the false kind of enthusiasm which hovers about suspended on aestheticist and idealistic proleptical illusions back down to the level of sobriety and truth (1 Thess 5.6-8; 1 Pet 1.13; 4.7; 2 Tim 4.5; Mt 24.42; 25.13; 26.41; Rev 3.2f.; 16.15; etc.). But the Word calls us no less persistently out of the profanity of a worldly life to a ‘pneumatic’ existence spent ‘in spiritual psalms, hymns, odes, singing through grace to God in your hearts’ (Col 3.16)—in a word, to that world of prayer in which the Colossians are admonished ‘to be watchful in thanksgiving’ (4.2). The ‘glory’ of Christian transfiguration is in no way less resplendent than the transfiguring glory of worldly beauty, but the fact is that the glory of Christ unites splendour and radiance with solid reality, as we see pre-eminently in the Resurrection and its anticipation through faith in Christian life.

As Karl Barth has rightly seen, this law extends to the inclusion in Christian beauty of even the Cross and everything else which a worldly aesthetics (even of a realistic kind) discards as no longer bearable. This inclusiveness is not only of the type proposed by a Platonic theory of beauty, which knows how to employ the shadows and the contradictions as stylistic elements of art; it embraces the most abysmal ugliness of sin and hell by virtue of the condescension of divine love, which has brought even sin and hell into that divine art for which there is no human analogue.

The conclusion to be drawn from all this is that, just as we can never attain to the living God in any way except through his Son become man, but in this Son we can really attain to God in himself, so, too, we ought never to speak of God’s beauty without reference to the form and manner of appearing which he exhibits in salvation-history. The beauty and glory which are proper to God may be inferred and ‘read’ off from God’s epiphany and its incomprehensible glory which is worthy of God himself. But in trying to perceive God’s own beauty and glory from the beauty of his manner of appearing, we must neither simply *equate* the two—since we are to be transported *per hunc (Deum visibilem*) in invisibilium amorem—nor ought we to attempt to discover God’s beauty by a mere causal inference from the beauty of God’s epiphany, for such an inference would *leave this epiphany behind*. We must, rather, make good our *excessus* to God himself with a *theologia negativa* which never detaches itself from its basis in a *theologia positiva*: dum *visibiliter cognoscimus*. When later on we analyse the Areopagite and John of the Cross—the two theologians who relied most consistently on the apophatic method—we will see that they never divorced it from the cataphatic approach. They could exalt the vertical to such a degree only because they never let go of the horizontal. For this reason they can be considered the two most decidedly aesthetic theologians of Christian history.

God’s attribute of beauty can certainly also be examined in the context of a doctrine of the divine attributes. Besides examining God’s beauty as manifested by God’s actions in his creation, his beauty would also be deduced from the harmony of his essential attributes, and particularly from the Trinity. But such a doctrine of God and the Trinity really speaks to us only when and as long as the θεολογία, a does not become detached from the οἰϰονομία, but rather lets its every formulation and stage of reflection be accompanied and supported by the latter’s vivid discernibility.

If this is so, then theological aesthetics must properly be developed in two phases, which are:

1. *The theory of vision* (or fundamental theology): ‘aesthetics’ in the Kantian sense as a theory about the perception of the form of God’s self-revelation.

2. *The theory of rapture* (or dogmatic theology): ‘aesthetics’ as a theory about the incarnation of God’s glory and the consequent elevation of man to participate in that glory.

Using the concept ‘aesthetics’ in this double sense might appear to be a playful fancy. But a little reflection will dispell such an impression, since no theological perception is possible outside the *lux tuae claritatis* and outside the grace that allows us to see, a grace which already belongs objectively to rapture and which subjectively may be said at least to initiate man’s transport to God. In theology, there are no ‘bare facts’ which, in the name of an alleged objectivity of detachment, disinterestedness and impartiality, one could establish like any other worldly facts, without oneself being (both objectively and subjectively) gripped so as to participate in the divine nature (*participatio divinae naturae*). For the object with which we are concerned is man’s participation in God which, from God’s perspective, is actualized as ‘revelation’ (culminating in Christ’s Godmanhood) and which, from man’s perspective, is actualized as ‘faith’ (culminating in participation in Christ’s Godmanhood). This double and reciprocal *ekstasis*—God’s ‘venturing forth’ to man and man’s to God—constitutes the very content of dogmatics, which may thus rightly be presented as a theory of rapture: the *admirabile commercium et conubium* between God and man in Christ as Head and Body.

If this is correct, then it has far-reaching methodological implications. For it would follow that fundamental theology and dogmatic theology—the theory of vision and the theory of rapture—are, in the last analysis, inseparable. To be sure, there is a road which the human spirit takes as it seeks for the Christian truth (*intellectus quaerens fidem*), and this search may be fostered by variously showing and making visible in an appropriate way the form of God’s revelation, which conceals itself from the eyes of the world and of history *sub contrario,* as

Luther has it. As we have said, however, this road itself already stands in the rays of the divine light, a light which, in an objective sense, makes the form visible and which, in a subjective sense, clarifies and illumines the searching spirit, thus training it in an act and a *habitus* which will become perfect faith once the vision has itself been perfected. In ‘dogmatics’, moreover, this developing (*wachsende*) and now adult (*erwachsene*) faith continues to grow (*wachst*) as a *fides quaerens intellectum*. But this continued growth is not to be thought of as a leap from the *praeambula fidei* of fundamental theology and the evidence it provides, as from a springboard which is then left behind—a leap to pure fiducial faith. Rather, the facts of revelation are perceived initially in the light of grace, and faith grows in such a way that it allows the self-evidence of these facts—an evidence that itself was ‘enrapturing’ from the outset—to continue to unfold according to its own laws and principles. In this manner, through the growth of the mysteries of faith, for which I can provide no evidence of my own, the image in which God initially appeared and illumined me deepens and acquires traits that reveal new and even deeper aspects of its rightness. What I cannot verify in itself (*in propriis causis*) may nevertheless be verified indirectly in the understanding of faith by the manner in which it is reflected and echoed in the form of revelation. Although he can elsewhere distinguish very clearly between ‘faith’ and ‘vision’, Paul, in the *locus classicus* of his theological aesthetics, nevertheless speaks of a ‘vision of the Lord’s splendour with unveiled face’, through which ‘we are transformed into the same image’ (2 Cor 3. 18). Paul thus unites vision and rapture as a single process.

We shall have to keep the unity constantly in mind as we deal separately in what follows with fundamental theology and dogmatic theology. Apologetics secretly (though knowingly, to be sure) carries with it all dogmatic theology as it sets out to convey and to make plausible to one who does not yet believe the image of divine revelation. This image really becomes plausible, however, only for the person who sees the true contours of its total form dawn before the eyes of his spirit. As dogmatic reflection progresses, such a person will still have frequently to correct, clarify, and focus these contours. But he ought not to and must not for a single moment abandon them.

II. THE SUBJECTIVE EVIDENCE

A. THE LIGHT OF FAITH

1. PISTIS AND GNOSIS

The two great theologies which conclude the New Testament corpus—the Pauline and the Johannine—have given rise to an interpretation of Christian existence primarily in terms of faith, so much so that, in the subsequent tradition, to be a Christian and to be a believer are simply synonymous. Such an equation presupposes that faith does not primarily mean the subjective act of faith (*fides qua*), but that faith always includes the whole substance toward which this act is directed (*fides quae*), by which the act can be understood and justified. This orientation to the objective content of faith is found as early as Paul (Rom 10.8; Gal 1.23; 3.2, 5; 6.10; etc.); what it does is to bring out something which also runs through the Old Testament: that the act of faith is dependent on God's antecedent revelation, which both promises and fulfils. This turning to the objective, precisely in Paul and John, thus refers not simply to one isolated human act among others, but rather to that total disposition, that total condition wherein man, through the power of grace, responds to God's revelatory address.

In the Old Testament, the human modes of response to God were first expressed by different concepts in a roundabout and inclusory manner. These concepts gradually came to converge on the central notion of 'faith' as a response to God, a faith which listens, obeys, yields, hopes, and trusts.[1] It is characteristic of this concept, which expresses the correct total attitude of man, that from the outset it is associated with and directly implies in a most unproblematic manner the concept of the knowledge and the recognition of God. It is associated with it because God's giving himself to be recognised and man's familiar and intimate knowledge of God, which is based upon that gift, are the condition for man's being able to trust God and to deliver himself over to him with fidelity, in faith and in hope. And the concept of faith itself implies the concept of the knowledge of God because the element of experience (which is founded primarily on God's historical leading of his people through grace, and only secondarily on the individual's personal experience of piety—since the latter is rooted in the former) in this knowledge already includes the act of faith within itself so positively that the refusal of faith can automatically be considered hard-heartedness, open infidelity and 'adultery'. God wants to be recognised; he must be known. This is why the Prophets (especially Hosea) insist on an immediate acknowledgement of God, on a realisation of his reality. This is why they point to the demands and promises of the Covenant as signs of his presence to the people. And yet, they promise fulness of realisation only for the Messianic era, when God will turn all hearts toward himself and infuse into them a sense for his reality. In keeping with the double character of the eschatological promise, this can happen both by God's judgment (through which the obdurate are to 'experience God's might in their own bodies and thus come to understanding and recognition'[2]) or by his saving acts of redemption—his fidelity which men can now experience for themselves. It is to this that the theodicy of the Psalms always points. The faith which the Psalms demand, in the sense of endurance and perseverance, is founded on an experiential knowledge of God's fidelity and justice which is anticipated with certainty and which can, therefore, be called 'knowledge' in the full sense of the word: 'I know that Yahweh takes up the cause of the wretched and the rights of the poor' (Ps 140.13); 'I know that God is at my side' (Ps 56.10); 'Now I know that God helps his anointed' (Ps 20.7); 'Yes, I know that Yahweh is great, that our Lord surpasses all gods' (Ps 135.5); 'I know that your judgments are just and that you have humbled me in faithfulness' (Ps 119.75).[3] Here it is in the end of no account whether the trust of faith is founded wholly on the historical Covenant (given in the midst of God's saving deeds during the wandering in the desert), or whether, within that Covenant, it rests on a personal experience of having been saved, or whether very simply, hovering between these types of experience, it is founded on the promise of God seized and clung to even in the darkness of suffering (as in Job 19.25: 'I know that my advocate lives').

In the Synoptics, faith is predominantly something in which the disciple of Jesus is trained and which is mediated to him by the one who can himself perform it perfectly and supremely: once again, this 'training' is in man's act of total self-surrender to God, an act in which every promise will be fulfilled experientially. Much in Jesus' education in faith is simply an encouragement to embark on the venture of letting go of self, as if he meant to say: 'Give me your hand and you'll see it can be done. Do not reflect (for this is being "two-souled"), do not doubt (for this is being "of little faith"); just hand yourself over!' In this Jesus is less the object of faith (this comes only with John) than the one with whom, through whom, and in whom one can accomplish the act. The miracles which he performs or has his disciples perform, the certainty of being heard which he promises prayers made in faith, the equally certain failure experienced by the unbeliever (like Peter when he sinks into the waves, or the disciples who do not believe the women’s announcement of the Resurrection)—all these may be regarded as special graces of the Messianic era, as a leaping over (while the Bridegroom is present) the night-filled period of perseverance and visionless prayer. But because of the interconnectedness of faith and experienced fulfilment, it is nevertheless characteristic of all Christian faith.

No more than the Old does the New Testament shy away from uniting ‘faith’ and ‘knowing’ in one and the same total human act—on one condition, that is, which is directed against gnosticism: that increase of ‘knowledge’ should not weaken faith, but, on the contrary, strengthen it. There can be no question of a believer, on earth, ever outgrowing an attitude of faith; but, through a deeper knowledge of God and his revelation in Christ, he can only grow the more deeply in his faith.

And yet, for Paul man can understand himself only when he believes, which is to say only when he knows himself to be pilgrimaging from his justification by Christ’s death and Resurrection to Christ’s return. And yet the fact that existence is thus suspended between these two points does not in any way lead Paul to question the certainty and reliability of his Christian knowledge, which he desires to share with all believers. No one speaks more uninhibitedly of ‘knowing’ where the ‘mysteries of faith’ are involved: ‘If we die with Christ, so too do we trust (= believe) that we shall also live with him, knowing that the Christ who has been raised from the dead dies no more’ (Rom 6.8f.); ‘knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also’ (2 Cor 4.14); ‘We know that, if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we will receive a house built by God’ (2 Cor 5.1), and so forth. Now, this is a dialectical knowledge about the love of Christ, which surpasses all knowledge (Eph 3.19), a knowledge that one knows nothing, except that by loving God one is known by God (1 Cor 8.2f.). None of this means that there is not also a genuine Christian knowledge (1 Cor 8.7), a science and a wisdom (1 Cor 2.6f.; 12.8) that comes from the Spirit of God and of Christ dwelling within us. Paul constantly refers to the knowledge of salvation which he takes for granted in those he addresses: they know what Paul has proclaimed to them as certain truth, but they also know what knowledge of faith the Spirit opens up in them. The latter knowledge possesses the same certainty which Christian hope has for Paul, a certainty based not on the human understanding’s own power of conviction, but on the manifest evidence of divine truth. In other words, this certainty is founded not on having grasped, but on having been grasped.[4]

In John, faith and knowledge are almost more intimately and inseparably intertwined. Although he speaks of ‘signs’ (σημεῖα) from which faith can ‘read’ its own rightness, these signs are for him to such an extent the immediate epiphany of the thing itself—Christ's divinity—that the faith resulting from the σημεῖον is for him tantamount to a 'vision' of Christ's glory and of God's glory in Christ. But this 'vision' never leaves faith behind, but only deepens it. Both aspects can, therefore, simply be placed alongside each other: 'We believe and know that you are the holy one of God!' (Jn 6.69). Or faith can appear as being the initiation and the way to Christian knowledge: 'Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him: If you abide in my word . . . you will know the truth' (8.31f.). 'If you do not want to believe me, then believe the works, that you may know once and for all that the Father is in me and I am in the Father' (10.38). Or, conversely, faith can proceed from knowledge, which makes just as much sense, since the knowledge of Christ's divinity engenders an attitude of adoring acceptance of everything that proceeds from him. 'Now we know that you know all things, . . . and this is why we believe that you have come forth from God' (16.30). 'They have recognised that I have come forth from you, and they have believed' (17.8). 'We have known and have believed the love which God has for us' (1 Jn 4.16). All of this is, for John, grounded in the trinitarian relationship. Whoever receives Jesus' witness in truth—that is to say, as it is—*sees* that Jesus does not 'seek his own honour', does not 'speak of himself' or 'on his own authority', that it is, therefore, God to whom Jesus is pointing and who bears witness to himself in the witness of Jesus. The relationship between Father and Son—*that* is the truth, and it goes without saying that one can get an insight into it only if one is oneself 'from God', if one does not 'seek one's own honour' and 'abides' in the 'truth' which is the Word of God which both testifies and is testified to (8.13-58). Here the circumincession of *pistis* and *gnosis* becomes fully manifest, because it is only through faith in Christ's divinity that one can gain access to this sphere of truth within the Godhead, in which one learns to see and understand the very essence of truth. But this truth is known as something which essentially redounds to the glory of God and which presupposes the renunciation of one's own honour and of the evidence which is based on oneself. Thus in John Jesus can equally say, both: 'Believe in God and believe in me!' and 'If you knew me, you would also know the Father; henceforth you do know him and have seen him. . . . He who sees me, sees the Father' (14.1,7,9). This is seeing and knowing precisely in the Johannine and not the Judaic sense (*cf* 6.30): it is a vision of glory (1.14 etc.) which in faith can only be progressive: 'Do you believe?. . . You shall see greater things than these' (1.50).[5]

It is not here our concern to develop the theological relationship between pistis and gnosis in detail, nor to establish the essence of gnosis in the Old and New Testaments in order to guard against the kinds of misunderstandings to which it may easily give rise. For the time being, it will suffice if we secure for gnosis the place which belongs to it in virtue of its outstanding importance and certainty. The texts show clearly that Biblical gnosis does not, or, at least, does not only, lie in the 'fore-court' of faith, in the sense of the *praeambula fidei*, which cast a sufficient natural or even supernatural light for men to venture on the act of faith. Precisely in Paul and John such an interpretation would overlook the essential—the interior understanding of faith, the insight into the mystery of faith itself. All the texts, including those from Wisdom literature, make it evident that such an insight cannot be meant to be understood rationalistically, in the sense of a progressive or even asymptotically approximated substitution of gnosis for pistis. But, on the other hand, the formula *fides quaerens intellectum* does not fully correspond to what we find in the Scriptures. Here we do not find the gnosis of faith presented as searching and tentative (which would make it somehow uncertain), but rather as solid and all-encompassing at bottom, a knowledge which needs no further instruction so long as it remains faithful to the principle which enlightens it (1 Jn 2.20,27). The *quaerens* remains, and rightly, because faith interiorly strives away from the believer on into the light of God and to the evidence to be found in God alone; but the *quaerens* must be complemented by an *inveniens* which is compatible with the earthly state of the believer.

The theology of the great Alexandrians devoted itself particularly to restoring this Biblical gnosis, by which *pistis* is perfected to its place of honour. Louis Bouyer has recently shown how little innovation the Alexandrians made in this respect and how uninterrupted the chain is that leads to them starting with the Apostolic Fathers and passing through Justin and Irenaeus.[6] With the Alexandrians we can filter out all secondary harmonies that have their origin in what was perhaps too exaggerated a terminological dependence on Greek philosophy and mysticism. Our only interest is the Biblical concerns which they preserved. Both Clement and Origen see the perfect Christian as a gnostic who, in the Gospel sense, 'understands' his faith interiorly. This understanding is not a luxury for the intellectually gifted, but rather corresponds to an imperative contained objectively within the act of faith. The contrast between 'pistics' and 'gnostics' is basically that between, on the one hand, the Christian who, by 'bare faith' (ψιλὴ πίστις), relates in a purely external manner to the content of faith (who, therefore, does not progress beyond a faith based solely on authority, which primarily means obedience to the ecclesial kerygma), and, on the other hand, the Christian who energetically strives to appropriate interiorly what he believes and, in so doing, sees the essential content of faith unfold before his vision (0erogia). The gnostic Christian does not outgrow the proclamation of the

Church, but in the kerygma he finds, revealing himself, the Logos, who, in the most comprehensive sense, ‘enlightens’ the believer ever more clearly and, indeed, draws him, as John was drawn, to his breast ever more intimately and unites him interiorly with himself (*Commentary on John* 32.20-21). In his humanity and its symbolic character, the Logos then lets the light of the divine nature with its truth and beauty (τὸ ἴδιον κάλλος: *ibid*. 10.12)—the very glory of the Father—illumine the gnostic ever more brightly. To say that for the gnostic the earthly veil enveloping revelation has become transparent means equally that in the letter he sees the Spirit, in the Old he sees the New Testament, and in the latter the promised eternity; in Jesus’ humanity he sees his divinity, and in the Son, through the Spirit, he sees the Father. What is here involved is, therefore, nothing other than the turning of faith to its own interior authenticity,[7] as faith in a proposition (‘belief that Christ’) becomes faith in a person (‘believing Christ’).

In Clement it is the same. Christ appears as the pedagogue and teacher who leads men to the Father, and *pistis* entrusts itself to him in order to be led to the light through pure grace, and yet also through ζήτησις—the efforts of thought, ascesis and love. True to Johannine theology, this light is bestowed objectively in the illumining grace of baptism or in the ‘anointing by the Spirit’; but it must be developed by the believer in himself as Christ leads him by the hand. Faith is the foundation, gnosis is the edifice built upon it. The former is the Alpha, the latter the Omega (Strom. VII. 55.5; III, 41.1). The interior movement of faith to *gnosis* is justified by reference to the Trinity: ‘There is no *gnosis* without *pistis*, and there is no *pistis* without *gnosis*, just as there is no Father without the Son’ (V. 1.3; I. 326. 8f.). Thus, Clement rejects both the heretical *gnosis* (which strives to go beyond the Son to a knowledge of the Father) and the comfortable faith of the churchly ‘*pistics*’ (who think that the Son’s kerygma suffices). Truly to find the Father in the Son is to open up the sphere of absolute trinitarian truth, and of the knowledge in which we grow more deeply the more we entrust ourselves to the Son in faith and allow ourselves to be drawn into his innermost disposition. Christ turns to men, and says: ‘I give you the Logos, the *gnosis* of God; I give myself wholly to you. For I am he, and this is what God wills. The Son is the accord and harmony of the Father. . . . You are images, but not wholly similar images; and I want to bring you back to the primal image, in order that you may become like me. I want to anoint you with the oil of faith which will deliver you from corruptibility and show you unveiled the very form of justice which leads you up to God’ (Protr. 120.3-5).

Alexandrian theology of *gnosis* can be misinterpreted in two ways. First of all, it can be construed as ‘knowing’ in the modern sense: either in the Hegelian sense of an elevation ‘to the idea of the absolute’, or in the theological sense of a ‘rational exposition of faith’. Both senses are excluded by Scriptural usage, nor was either the intention of the Alexandrians.[8] Or Alexandrian theology of *gnosis* could also be misinterpreted to mean experience of God in the narrower mystical sense, which would do justice neither to the universal character of *gnosis* in Scripture nor to the intention of the Alexandrians—unless we understand ‘mysticism’ (as sometimes happens today) in so general a sense that it embraces any actualisation of the truth of faith by a living faith which is afire with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Both in John and Paul as well as in Clement and Origen, the *gnosis* of faith can be clarified by the concept of θεωϱία, meaning steadfast, illumining contemplation—provided θεωϱία is taken along with its theological prerequisites: incorporation into Christ through faith and sacraments; participation in the Holy Spirit, who introduces us to the fulness of truth; revelatory will of the heavenly Father, who through Word and Spirit already now, within the veil of faith, wants to grant us a share in his own triune truth.

From these first considerations we can already see how unsatisfactory those theologies are which, by a process of abstract isolation, disengage the Christian act of faith from all elements of insight and understanding and then proceed to analyse it in this purified form. Such a disengagement is a disincarnating of the act of faith from the real context of a man’s life and spiritual development in which he encounters God. It can only lead to a super-naturalistic rationalism which will always fail to achieve a synthesis in spite of all subsequent efforts to recapture the element of *gnosis* and again to assign it a place within the *analysis fidei*. The theological current which sought to structure the act of faith in this abstract manner was an understandable and certainly justified reaction to the simplifications of Romanticism and Idealism. These schools (not only in their liberal Protestant, but also in their Catholic form) based all (natural) *ratio* on a (supernatural?) light, whether the light of the intuition of God, or of immediate perception, or of religious feeling and faith understood in a corresponding way. Thus, between faith and (absolute or religious) knowing in the sense of theology and philosophy there came to exist only a difference of degree. Modernism developed Idealist simplifications even further on the basis of psychology, sociology and a philosophy of life, and thus provoked an even stronger reaction.

The clear elaboration of the abstract structural elements in supernatural Christian faith has subsequently become such an unchallenged part of theology’s storehouse that without any risk we can today venture to reintegrate those elements into the total meaning of faith in Scripture. Such an integration is not only of theological and theoretical interest; it is a vital question for Christianity today, which can only commend itself to the surrounding world if it first regards itself as being worthy of belief. And it will only do this if faith, for Christians, does not first and last mean ‘holding certain propositions to be true’ which are incomprehensible to human reason and must be accepted only out of obedience to authority. While fully upholding the transcendence of divine revelation—nay, precisely because of it—faith must bring man to an understanding of what God is in truth, and in so doing it will also (coincidentally, as it were) bring him to an understanding of himself. Idealist thinking lacked the personal categories of Scripture, which prevent God’s knowledge from becoming human knowledge by a total omission of God’s gift of himself in revelation and which always remind man of his creatureliness and interiorly make him understand why it is that he can receive God’s truth and appropriate it to himself only through obedient humility and the distance of faith. In so far as God’s revelation appears as his free favour, which merits the name *gratia* not only by its exterior gratuitousness but by its interior quality, and in so far as for John and the Alexandrians in an eminent way, but also for Paul, the content of this self-revelation of God’s bears the name *of doxa* (majestic glory, *kâbôd*), to that extent the analogy suggests itself between aesthetic and theological revealed reality and its reception. This, then, already means that the element of authority, on which theological faith is based as its ultimate motive and formal object, must possess a wholly peculiar colouring attributable to God alone, and this quality clearly distinguishes the divine authority even from the ecclesial authority which proclaims and exacts it. The divine authority belongs to the divine *doxa* as it manifests itself; indeed, authority and *doxa* are but one in so far as in both of them God’s divinity approaches the believer. In this sense we can say that such a revelation of glory needs no justification but itself: God’s Logos is the identity of God’s free Word and of God’s Reason; and, if the believer cannot at times penetrate the inner reasonableness of the free Word, nevertheless, from the sole fact that it is God speaking, he knows directly that his Word is Reason itself. Every aspect of this Word, moreover, which encounters the believer, every part of it which he grasps, is wholly bathed in the light of this divine reason and must needs reflect it. The mystery of God proclaimed by the Church is his *doxa* become visible, and a beam of it, to be sure, falls on the ecclesial authority and proclamation, authenticating them. But the divine mystery, being the very glory of God, at the same time is majestically exalted above the serving office which mediates it: ‘We do not proclaim ourselves, but Christ Jesus as the Kyrios, and ourselves as your slaves for the sake of Jesus. For the God who has said: “Let the light shine forth out of the darkness”—he it is that has shone in our hearts (of slaves), in order (through us) to make shine forth the *gnosis* of God’s *doxa*, which lies on the face of Christ’ (2 Cor 4.5f.).

In this respect ecclesial authority is incorporated as one element in that glorious authority which as a whole manifests itself as divine. On this basis it is possible to offer an account of the act of faith which takes ecclesial authority as its guide. For, as we know, the act of faith is the total attitude of concrete man toward God (and toward the Church only for the sake of God), man's answer to God's wholly personal turning toward man. The witness which God bears to himself in Jesus Christ—incarnate God who died on the cross and rose from the grave—and which is identical with the witness of Christ's life, is for God of a qualitatively different kind than the official witness that the Church's kerygma bears to this triune witness. It is by the latter that man's faith must be tested and justified.

2. DELINEATING THE FORM OF FAITH

We started our enquiry by positing a unity between seeing (knowing) and believing, and this is something which will require more detailed exposition. Nevertheless, what we have already seen is enough to establish the existence of this unity in such a way that attempts to undermine it by further definition of the terms cannot be admitted. Hence, if one proposes a more limited meaning of the terms 'knowing' and 'seeing' such that faith is now incompatible with it and by definition excludes it (knowledge being defined as *resolutio in principia evidentia intellectus*), then even though such a definition may be of quite fundamental importance in clarifying what faith is, it will have nothing to do with *the* knowing and *the* seeing which in Scripture are attributed to faith itself. If, *per contra*, faith is presented as nothing but the acceptance of truth on the basis of authoritative witness, then, even though in less obvious a way, our understanding of the unity of faith and knowledge will be similarly prejudiced unless the acceptance of such witness is shown to be properly understood as itself a kind of knowledge instead of being regarded as merely an act which requires a certain preliminary knowledge (*praeambula fidei*) as its possibility and basis.

To offer an account of the act whereby man responds and corresponds to the divine revelation means further that one has to render intelligible in a manner appropriate to its object the ultimately right, total attitude of man to God. This, therefore, excludes two extremes. The first extreme is to portray this act as a paradox or a dialectical contradiction which destroys all human intellectual modes and in which the only valid guide is the *credo quia absurdum*, in the sense that faith can be understood only as the death of all human logic (this seen as the repetition of the death on the cross of the divine Logos himself, who rises only as the Crucified). Here the death of logic can be understood either in Kierkegaard's subjective, existential sense or in Hegel's objective sense, which makes the death of the Logos to be the very law of being and which, consequently, dissolves faith into pure (Johannine) gnosis. The other excluded extreme would be to make man's ultimate attitude intelligible in terms of worldly and natural thought-categories: this is the rationalistic *resolutio* (analysis) *fidei* into a 'scientifically' comprehensible structure. If Christian faith is man's ultimate attitude as brought about and shaped by the object of revelation, then it follows that this attitude is as unfathomable to natural reason as the very mystery of God in Christ. A thoroughgoing *analysis* of faith is, therefore, a contradiction in terms, since it would annul precisely the act which it seeks to posit. Faith-analysis is just as impossible as psychoanalysis—so long, that is, as by *psyche* we mean that depth of man and his destiny where man stands before God himself and where he can understand and explain himself only in the light of the Word which God speaks to him. These two excluded extremes, moreover, always coincide in the end, both objectively and historically: the dialectic of contradiction becomes a higher rational knowing, and this in turn must disguise itself in at least a dialectic of existence if it is not to degenerate into a mystery-less rationalistic flatness.

Man's ultimate attitude in response to God's self-revelation can stand only in the most intimate connection with that other ultimate attitude of man which is the philosophic. This connection is by nature much more intimate than it appears to be from a glance at the armistices and non-aggression pacts concluded between 'philosophy' and 'theology' within the Christian *universitas litterarum*. In this context, theology clearly takes over functions which in the pre- and non-Christian world belonged to philosophy. To be sure, there is equally in the non-Christian world a tension between the field of myth and that of the *logos*. Myth represents positive revelation coming from the divine; the *logos* turns the critical light of thought onto this positively, and either assimilates it interiorly or rejects it as an uncritical preliminary stage. But Plato's attitude toward myth is much less simple than this. The least that it shows is that religious philosophy, if it understands itself, cannot dispense with the concept of revelation, whether it takes the myth of the self-revealing God as such seriously in a philosophical sense or strips it of its mythical manner of expression in order to retain a 'philosophical revelation' and an answering 'philosophical faith'. On the whole, nevertheless, philosophy and theology outside the Christian world constitute a perfect, even if volatile, unity, and this could not be otherwise, if as a philosopher one considers that there cannot be two ultimate truths about the world and man, nor, therefore, two ultimate attitudes of man toward the final reality.

The moment in history when philosophy begins to detach itself through self-revelation from mythical revelation marks a deepening of human understanding which was decisive for human history: man realizes that in myth (through which the divine assumed at first a positive shape for him) or behind myth he is touching the horizon of the unconditional—he realizes that in the existent (which could also be different than it is) he is touching Being itself in all its universality and necessity. This moment is critical: the 'gods of Greece' threaten to pale before the fascination of the Idea and the Concept; philosophy threatens to impose itself as the enlightened religion of the wise. But if for the moment we leave the historical aspect of this crisis to one side (and it was a crisis which gained a much greater relevance because of the appearance of Christianity) and concentrate on the substantive question itself, then we will see there is no reason to go beyond the unity of myth and *logos*, which Plato upheld and which was taken up again and further developed in the German world by Holderlin, Schelling, and Heidegger. The attempt to go beyond Plato's unity might possibly take two different directions. First, in a Christian sense, Biblical revelation, as the sole valid manifestation of God, would put an end to all myths and, at the same time, take over every revelatory function which philosophy (continuing the mythical function) had still allowed to Being itself. Or, in a rationalistic sense, philosophy would in itself put an end to the mythical by dissolving it allegorically into mere illustrative material, as the Neo-Platonists did, without allowing Being as such a true revelatory character: Being becomes the classificatory concept for all encountered existents. Since historically speaking the road to the rationalization of reality (the elimination from it of all traces of revelation) had already been trod by the Greeks themselves, Christian thought took to this easier road with predilection. In so doing, it made a neat distribution of competencies between theology and philosophy, but at the price that philosophy, now deprived of the power and position of its real task, was debased to being an arsenal of concepts for theology: for it was to theology that the final, decisive insight into reality now fell. Man can neither subjectively achieve two ultimate attitudes, nor can he objectively manage to keep apart two sciences of the ultimate. The danger of this parallelism is equally great for both sides: for philosophy, whose *eros* can be a living principle only so long as it can strive for the unconditionally Ultimate, True, Good, and Beautiful, and which necessarily atrophies into formalism when its power and legitimacy to do this are contested; and for theology, which, once it loses from within itself a genuine doctrine of wisdom, is reduced to the level of a positivistic science of the historical facts of revelation: that is to say to a doctrine of a particular existent whose absolute distinctiveness from all other existents can scarcely still be made evident. Christian revelation will, it is true, empty the myths of the ‘world’s archons’ of all power, replacing them with the glory of God’s true epiphany, just as the distance between myth and Biblical revelation can be so emphasized that its original meaning and content is reversed. But this does not alter the fact that Biblical revelation occurs in the same formal anthropological *locus* where the mythopoeic imagination designed its images of the eternal. And, to be sure, the living God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will likewise exhaust all philosophical theories about God, world and man even to the reversal of their meaning and content; but this too occurs precisely at the point where man once looked out over the last horizon of Being, the point where he struggled with the meaning of that ultimate reality which gives meaning to all existence.

In other words, the formal object of theology (and, therefore, also of the act of faith) lies at the very heart of the formal object of philosophy (along with the mythology which belongs to it). Out of those mysterious depths the formal object of theology breaks forth as the self-revelation of the mystery of Being itself; such a revelation cannot be deduced from what the creaturely understanding of itself can read of the mystery of Being, nor, even in the manifestness of the mystery of God, can such revelation be grasped by this intellect without the divine illumination of grace. Nevertheless, the self-revelation of God, who is absolute Being, can only be the fulfilment of man’s entire philosophical-mythological questioning as well. As such it is an answer to men’s questions which comes to us in God’s revealing Word (who becomes history and flesh) and which is, therefore, to be heard in a particular existent. But it is no less a Word from God, an intelligence concerning Being itself and thus, at the same time, philosophy. As the highest personal authority of the self-revealing God (to whom ‘every created intellect is wholly subject’ as to its Lord, Vatic. I, Dz. 1789), this intelligence challenges man essentially in his act of faith and brings philosophical knowledge, along with its *eros, to its interior goal*.

Once this much is granted—and the greatest Christian thinkers (including Origen, Augustine, Anselm and Thomas Aquinas) consistently understand the *intellectus fidei* as including this interior completion of the philosophical act in theology—then we may indeed make a clear distinction methodologically between the field of what man can attain on the basis of the light of his own reason and what has become accessible to him on the basis of revelation alone. This will be necessary, but will no longer lead to that dangerous paralysis and barrenness of both forms of knowledge which is otherwise unavoidable. And the theological vision of Being which remains bound to ‘myth’ (that is, to the existing form of revelation in Biblical salvation-history) as its *locus* of insight will then remind man the philosopher that ultimate knowledge cannot, for him, lie in turning away from that which is concretely finite (a movement which seems so natural!), but in turning towards the phenomenal existent (*conversio ad phantasma*) as the only place where the mystery of Being will shine forth for him who himself exists bodily and spiritually. The theological vision of Being will do still more: because of that final securing of reality which the believer who encounters God in Christ experiences, the theological vision makes it possible for the first time for the philosophical act of encounter with Being to occur in all its depth. It is only the man who has encountered the living God in the particular form of revelation chosen by him who can really find God in all things and, thus, who can truly and constantly philosophise. And, because it is the declaration of eternal life for the world, this form of revelation gains universal significance and determines all aspects of the formal object of philosophy. The correctness of such an integrated vision can also be seen from the philosophianic or contemplative attitude of faith which has its beginnings in the Bible, where it emerges in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and, in the New Testament, is realised especially in Paul and John: God's Word is itself shot through with human contemplation, which contains within itself the truly philosophical act. No wonder, then, if all Christian theology claims to be a contemplating reflection of faith, which does not, however, proceed in an exclusively or primarily abstracting manner, but on the contrary (through the 'gifts of the Holy Spirit') experiences and perceives the meaning of Being hidden in the concreteness of revelation.

It is only now that we have clarified the relationship between the two formal objects that we can correctly raise the question of the lineaments of Christian faith. Let us start with the aporetic statement that God, the very ground of Being, reveals himself once and for all in a positive-historical, spatio-temporal form. Philosophy has the tendency to relativise mythical (relative) once-ness, and to perceive God's Being uniformly through *all* existents. Theology checks this tendency by absolutising the mythical tendency. For, to the unity, singularity and once-ness of God in the interior disclosure of his person theology conjoins the singularity and uniqueness of a (salvation-) history and, finally, of one single person within this history. The mystery of I-Thou within the Godhead must find its epiphany in an I-Thou mystery between God and man; in this way, myth is both fulfilled and surpassed.

This Christian form of revelation may then be 'read' in two ways. According to the first of these, we may see in it the historical signs and the manifestations of an acting God. These signs are witnesses of the highest personal urgency which of themselves prove themselves to be signs of God, and which mean to be read and understood as such: Israel’s Covenant-history, the charismatic leadership of the prophets, the miracles and prophecies, and finally Christ as the fulfiller beyond all expectation. The signs are understood; what they point and witness to is believed: the invisible divine mysteries behind the signs (the redemption of the world through the Cross and Resurrection, the Eucharist and the sacraments, eschatology, above all the mystery of the triune God). The signs, being legible, testify to this and demand this faith. In their credibility they each support themselves and each other reciprocally. Whoever distrusts their demonstration of the divine authority speaking through them would be acting contrary to the laws of human discernment, both of theoretical reason (which has here received evidence of credibility) and of practical reason (which orders that one should entrust oneself to a trustworthy witness). Thus understood, the rationality of faith rests totally on the persuasive character of the revelatory signs, their power to convince man’s reason: the credibility of the witnesses is verifiable, as is the imperative to believe a credible witness. But in this way the divine witness becomes one (exceptional) case among others; the divine quality does not leap into prominence, neither on the side of insight or vision nor on the side of faith. This is an anthropological theory of faith which dispenses with the philosophical dimension, the faith-theory of positive theology as developed primarily by the Baroque scholasticism and Neo-Scholasticism of the Jesuits.

But there is another way of ‘reading’ the form of revelation, one which from the start focusses attention on the formal object of faith: God’s eternal truth as he is in himself and as he witnesses to himself in revelation. But this eternal truth is the inwardness of absolute Being, the mystery of its life and love which is the manifestation of the depth of philosophy’s formal object. This is why this theory of faith tends to build on the foundation, first, of the spiritual subject’s cognitive dynamism and, second, on the luminous and illuminating character proper to absolute Being. Such a view explains what is specifically Christian by raising it above the valid object of philosophy, and, so far as it embraces historical facts by integrating them into the final dynamism of cognition. Here we encounter Alexandrian and Augustinian illuminism. Being is light, and this light is its Word (Logos) which shines into the mind, a Word that is already received by the natural creaturely intellect as a kind of grace and revelation: practically all that is then needed to extract the theology of faith from philosophy is to translate the general philosophical theory of knowledge into the Christian trinitarian mode, and to see Christ as the redeeming illuminator of the mind and revealer of the Father. For all the important differences which divide Thomas Aquinas and Augustine on particular issues they nevertheless both agree as to the two foundations of theology. In the first place, for both the dynamism of the cognitive spirit is determined by its innermost disposition to press on to the vision of God, so much so that God’s self-revelation and the elevation and grace required for the perception of his inner mysteries appear as the final stage in the perfecting of the structure of the created mind. And, secondly, they both see God’s active deed of self-revelation as the bestowal of the innermost light of Being: faith endows the mind with a new light (*lumen fidei*) which does not yet allow what is thus revealed to be seen in its own first principles, but which becomes comprehensible only when it is seen as the beginning of just such a vision (*inchoatio visionis beatae*). We must also include in this second approach those modern theologians (Blondel, Scheuer, Maréchal, Rousselot) who in a moderate way take their departure from the subjective dynamism of cognition and act, and who then argue to the interior appropriateness and reasonableness of the transcendent faith-act, made possible by the light of grace, from the ‘restless heart’ of man, from its need and emptiness (Masure), and from its unlimited expectations. This view is taken to extremes in Modernism, which dissolves the objective facts of revelation into mere functions of the interior subjective dynamism of revelation between God and the soul, and which regards these facts as valid for the believer only in so far and as long as they effectively support and foster this dynamism. The advantage of this view over the former lies in the fact that, in it, what is positive history appears from the first to be integrated into the overall exchange between the self-revealing God and the believing soul. The appearance of externality and heteronomy is removed. The act of faith, in its very roots, is both ‘supernatural’ (because sustained by the light of grace) and ‘natural’ (as the perfect fulfilment of all spiritual aspirations); both founded objectively upon God’s revelatory act and established subjectively and existentially, since everything now is construed in terms of the spirit’s dynamic orientation to its formal object. The question remains whether on such a view the objective foundation of the specifically Christian fact is as successful as the subjective foundation, and whether this whole orientation is not constantly threatened by a secret and, occasionally, even by an open bondage to philosophy which makes the internal standard of the striving spirit, even where it is conceived only as ‘emptiness’ or ‘void’, as *cor inquietum, potentia oboedientialis,* and so on, nevertheless to be somehow the measure of revelation itself. The darkness of faith, its dependence on God’s authority, may indeed still be affirmed; but such a faith is by nature impelled toward experience, toward an anticipatory mystical vision which already half enjoys the light of the eschatological *visio beata*. This is basically the path followed by Garrigou-Lagrange in his transposition from Thomas to John of the Cross. But, in a different sense, this is also the way of Origen and the Augustine of the early religious writings, since in them all the historical-positive aspects of revelation from the outset tend to dissolve (spiritually and allegorically) into the elements of an enlightened Christian supernatural ‘philosophy’.

Each of these approaches grasps but one side of Christian faith, and of the insight and vision which belongs to it. For the first of these, insight rests on the evidential force of the credibility of the signs of revelation, which demand and elicit the act of faith. (This evidence may either be incorporated into the act of faith or remain outside it, in such a way that faith must base itself solely on the authority of the witness.) For the second approach, insight rests essentially on the foundations of faith itself: faith perceives God’s light, mediated, to be sure, by signs and witnesses, and yet even now with that secret immediacy which will one day emerge openly in the eternal vision. In the first approach God’s historical witnesses do not really stand within the light of divine Being: they merely point to it. In the second approach they become so transparent to this light that in the sign only the signified is of interest, and in the historical only that which is valid for eternity.

These two tendencies ought to be brought together; but this can occur only if they are purged of a common deficiency. Both are wont to call the historical facts of revelation ‘signs’, and to think of them as ‘pointers’ (quite capable ones, to be sure) to something mysterious which lies behind them and which must be believed. For, so the argument goes, if the mystery were visible as such in the signs themselves, then faith would be abolished. This concept of ‘sign’ can, if at all, be justified only so long as God’s revelation is considered under the aspect of its truth and goodness. Faith must be true, that is, it must be given to the true and real revelation of the God who, because of his own truthfulness (*veracitas*) possesses true authority and can endow the apostolic and ecclesial witnesses of this his authority with sufficient marks of truthfulness and, therefore, of credibility. What such thinking about the truth still lacks (especially since the interior truth of what is believed may not yet be manifested to the believer) is made up for by the aspect of goodness. *Mihi adhaerere Deo bonum est*: in an Augustinian and Thomistic sense, the creature experiences its innermost fulfilment and the quieting of its unrest when, in a transcending manner, it abandons itself to the gravitational pull of its love for God (a love which is established in the very foundation of its nature: *amor pondus*), and, borne by God’s grace, becomes perfected by the self-surrender to God of its loving faith. From Augustine to Bernard, Bonaventure and Thomas, this love, rooted in nature and borne by grace, is seen to be the innermost light of Being itself, since even Thomas, the Aristotelian, knows the *cognitio per inclinationem et connaturalitatem* which in a spiritual being bespeaks the luminous rightness of its striving.

But with both these ways we still remain within a parallelism of ostensive sign and signified interior light. This dualism can be abolished only by introducing as well the thought-forms and categories of the beautiful. The beautiful is above all a *form*, and the light does not fall on this form from above and from outside, rather it breaks forth from the form's interior. *Species* and *lumen* in beauty are one, if the *species* truly merits that name (which does not designate any form whatever, but pleasing, radiant form). Visible form not only 'points' to an invisible, unfathomable mystery; form is the apparition of this mystery, and reveals it while, naturally, at the same time protecting and veiling it. Both natural and artistic form has an exterior which appears and an interior depth, both of which, however, are not separable in the form itself. The content (*Gehalt*) does not lie behind the form (*Gestalt*), but within it. Whoever is not capable of seeing and 'reading' the form will, by the same token, fail to perceive the content. Whoever is not illumined by the form will see no light in the content either.

We must here understand that, by thus appealing to aesthetic reason (in union with theoretical and practical reason), we are not taking sides with 'Greek' thought as opposed to Hebraic and Biblical thought. The perception of form is a universal human phenomenon, and we are not here concerned with giving precedence to one manner of perception over others—to (Greek) seeing over (allegedly Hebraic) hearing; we will have to deal with this later. For the time being, we are concerned only with the phenomenon of form and of its perception in the most general sense. Seen in this way, Israel's Covenant- and salvation-history, both globally and in its details, will be seen to have at least as impressive a form as a Greek myth, to say nothing of the form of Christ and of his divine and human existence and mission. Nor is it now our concern to ask in what (epistemological) manner form is perceived—what, for instance, the significance of 'intuition' is for human perception. It is enough to accept that the aesthetic 'seeing of form' is a fact beyond reasonable doubt.

For the moment the essential thing is to realize that, without aesthetic knowledge, neither theoretical nor practical reason can attain to their total completion. If the *verum* lacks that *splendor* which for Thomas is the distinctive mark of the beautiful, then the knowledge of truth remains both pragmatic and formalistic. The only concern of such knowledge will then merely be the verification of correct facts and laws, whether the latter are laws of being or laws of thought, categories and ideas. But if the *bonum* lacks that *voluptas* which for Augustine is the mark of its beauty, then the relationship to the good remains both utilitarian and hedonistic: in this case the good will involve merely the satisfaction of a need by means of some value or object, whether it is founded objectively on the thing itself giving satisfaction or subjectively on the person seeking it. Only the apprehension of an expressive form in the thing can give it that depth-dimension between its ground and its manifestation which, as the real *locus* of beauty, now also opens up the ontological *locus* of the truth of being, and frees the striver, allowing him to achieve the spiritual distance that makes a beauty rich in form desirable in its being-in-itself (and not only in its being-for-me), and only thus worth striving after. This is what Kant somewhat misleadingly calls the ‘disinterestedness of the beautiful’: the evidence that here an essential depth has risen up into the appearance, has appeared *to me*, and that I can neither reduce this appearing form theoretically into a mere fact or a ruling principle—and thus gain control over it—, nor can I through my efforts acquire it for personal use. In the luminous form of the beautiful the being of the existent becomes perceivable as nowhere else, and this is why an aesthetic element must be associated with all spiritual perception as with all spiritual striving. The quality of ‘being-in-itself’ which belongs to the beautiful, the demand the beautiful itself makes to be allowed to be what it is, the demand, therefore, that we renounce our attempts to control and manipulate it, in order truly to be able to be happy by enjoying it: all of this is, in the natural realm, the foundation and foreshadowing of what in the realm of revelation and grace will be the attitude of faith.

These preliminary conclusions bring us straight to the very centre of Christian revelation—the Word of God become flesh, Jesus Christ, God and man—and so we are led unreservedly to affirm that here we have a true form placed before the sight of man. Whatever else we might say about God’s hiddenness, his ‘guising’ (Luther), his ‘incognito’ (Kierkegaard) in Christ—we will have to deal with this later—the fundamental thing is that here we have before us a genuine, ‘legible’ form, and not merely a sign or an assemblage of signs. Christ can work and produce signs (σημεῖα), and these signs will stand in a significant relationship to him. But he himself is more and other than merely a sign. It is not as if one could, by means of rational inquiry and argument, recognize him to be a (perfect? religious? inspired?) man and then, following the pointers provided by this rational knowledge, move to the conclusion that he is God’s Son and himself God. The witness of the Gospels, and John’s in particular, has it rather this way: Christ is recognized in his form only when his form has been seen and understood to be the form of the God-man, and this, of course, at once demands and already presupposes faith in his divinity. The figure which Jesus presents to the beholder is such that it can be ‘read’ as a figure at all only when what appears of him is . . . what should we say here: ‘seen as’ or is it ‘believed to be’ the emergence of the personal (triune) depths of God? Provisionally, then, we can say that just as a natural form—a flower, for instance—can be seen for what it is only when it is perceived and ‘received’ as the appearance of a certain depth of life, so, too, Jesus’ form can be seen for what it is only when it is grasped and accepted as the appearance of a divine depth transcending all worldly nature. Moreover, in view of the nature of the reality involved, the human beholder can be brought to such perception only by the grace of God, that is, by a participation in this same depth that makes him proportionate to the wholly new dimension of a form-phenomenon which comprises within itself both God and world.

Christian thought has always known that Jesus Christ is the central form of revelation, around which all other elements in the revelation of our salvation crystallize and are grouped. But this centrality of Christ’s figure has not perhaps been heeded emphatically enough in teaching about faith. According to Schiller, beauty is ‘freedom in its appearing’ (*erscheinende Freiheit*), a phrase which also permits and indeed demands interpretation in an ontic sense. The freedom, however, that appears in Christ is that of the God whom nothing can compel, who is absolute and sufficient in himself, but who nonetheless, of his free graciousness, binds himself to his creature in the hypostatic union forever and indissolubly, with the purpose of making his appearance and offering himself to view in the creature. The God whom we know now and for all eternity is Emmanuel, God with us and for us, the God who shows and bestows himself: because he shows and bestows *himself*, we can know this God not only ‘economically’ from the outside, but may also possess him ‘theologically’ from within and just as he is. Consequently, we are not proclaiming a new doctrine when we say that this God who reveals himself in Christ is not only the material total object of theology, but also the formal object and motive of faith; we are but taking the *auctoritas Dei revelantis* in all its indissoluble concrete reality. To the God who witnesses to himself and in whom we believe there belong not only the divinity of Jesus Christ but, equally, his humanity. In the one Christ the Father renders witness to himself through the Holy Spirit, and the one Christ, in the indivisible form he sets before us, witnesses to the Father in the Holy Spirit. Here, too, content and form are inseparable.

‘Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.’ And anyone who in whatever way attempts to come to God bypassing Christ is not true to the witness of the Trinity and, therefore, to faith itself. In Jesus’ finitude, and in everything that is given with and which pertains to his form, we hold the infinite. As we pass through Jesus’ finitude and enter into its depths we encounter and find the Infinite, or rather, we are transported and found by the Infinite. Indeed, through the mysterious dialectic whereby Jesus’ external, spatially and temporally conditioned finitude is transcended (which is the condition for the coming of the Holy Spirit), but transcended in such a way that it is replaced by the ‘eternal finitude’ of Jesus’ resurrected flesh, all that is interior, invisible, spiritual and divine becomes accessible to us. If there were no such thing as the resurrection of the flesh, then the truth would lie with gnosticism and every form of idealism down to Schopenhauer and Hegel, for whom the finite must literally perish if it is to become spiritual and infinite. But the resurrection of the flesh vindicates the poets in a definitive sense: the aesthetic scheme of things, which allows us to possess the infinite within the finitude of form (however it is seen, understood or grasped spiritually) is right. The decision, therefore, lies between the conflicting parties of myth and revelation.

3. ELEMENTS OF THE FORM OF FAITH

We shall be well-advised, then, to look again more deeply at the elements contained in faith seen thus as the theological act of perception. This time we will proceed in the opposite order following the order of the ontic foundations of faith. This is at the same time the trinitarian order of things, since ‘no one comes to me unless the Father draws him’ (Jn 6.44), and it is only the Father’s light shed on the Son that leads the believer into the unitive encounter with him which is the work of the Holy Spirit. In these considerations also we must keep in the front of our minds the interpenetration of philosophy and theology (in the first stage), of myth and revelation (in the second), and of the Christian and non-Christian experience of God (‘mysticism’). For the time being we are considering all of this from the point of view of subjective evidence, that is, of the evidential force of the form of revelation as it impinges on the believing subject; we must wait until later to deal with the objective form of revelation. Since, however, the subjective is totally dependent on the objective evidence, many things will have to remain provisional until we deal with the latter thematically

a. God’s Witness in Us

‘If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; and such is God’s testimony, that he has given for his Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. He who does not believe God, has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne to his Son’

(1 Jn 5.9-10).

God’s testimony is here described as both interior and external. It witnesses to Christ as Son of God, and thus is external: it is the verification by God of Christ’s witness to God. But in so far as God’s witness is greater than men’s, it is interior to the believer himself and, to the extent that he believes, it becomes identical with his faith. Faith is the light of God becoming luminous in man, for, in his triune intimacy, God is known only by God. This was the sense in which the Fathers and High Scholasticism spoke of the *lumen fidei,* and the first thing we must deal with is this light, in which we believe God and which constitutes the innermost ground (*causa, motivum, fundamentum*) of our faith. We must take this subject first because, although God’s witness in itself is, to be sure, indivisible and unified, and his light, kindled in the hearts of men, centrally illumines the incarnate Son, it can nevertheless happen that this illumined object is, in fact, not sighted, without the interior light necessarily becoming extinguished for all that. It could be the case (God alone can distinguish here) that God’s true light also falls upon figures of the human imagination (myths) and speculation (philosophies), and that this light can lead through them and their partial truth to the God of revelation.

God’s light, which ‘shines in our hearts’ (2 Cor 4.6), shines so that we may know the Son; but it also shines through him who makes the radiance of this light possible by dying in the world God’s death of love and by purging through his atonement the darkness in our hearts. Thus is it portrayed in John’s prologue. It is God’s light as ‘life’, ‘grace’, ‘truth’, all of which are housed in the Son and come ‘into the world’ through the Son, who, being God’s ‘Word’, is ‘with God’ and is ‘God’. To ‘receive’ him means both to receive God’s ‘Word’ (faith) and to become ‘God’s children’ after being admitted to God’s ‘life, grace and truth’, that is, having been ‘born of God’. Both these things constitute ‘seeing the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father’.

All this is certainly not speaking of faith as a merely ‘ontological’ process, that is to say, of the elevation of the selfsame personal reality from the ‘natural’ to the ‘supernatural’ order, as those theologians of the faith-act like to represent it who, on the one hand, simply transfer the psychology of the purely human belief in testimony onto Christian faith and, on the other hand (quite logically from the act of faith) exclude the certain rational grounds of credibility itself and consign them to its ‘forecourt’. Thomas Aquinas rightly derives the specification of human acts from their formal object, which means here that Christian faith, being God’s witness in us, can be understood only as the answer to this interior and intimate self-witnessing of the God who opens up the secrets of his Heart as he gives himself to humanity. This is a first and most formal affirmation, and one which must precede all those particular modalities which are related to man’s concrete condition: his sinful turning away from God, his blindness and obstinacy, and finally, those things which grace works in him—his conversion, his breaking, his humbling and his exaltation. Faith is participation in the free self-disclosure of God’s interior life and light, just as the spiritual nature of the creature means participation in the unveiledness of all reality, which in one way or another must also include the divine reality. The created spirit does not ‘deduce’ this reality (in which God is included in whatever way) from indications and logical premises; as spirit, it is from the very start already set in the light of this reality, at the same time thinking from within it and directing its thought toward it. With Claudel we can say that, within this intuitive knowledge of being, God is ‘given in the mode of absence’: *super omnia quae praeter ipsum sunt et concipi possunt, ineffabiliter excelsus* (Dz 1782). But given to the spirit he nonetheless is as *omnium principium et finis* (Dz 1785). When the spirit attains to real Being it necessarily touches God, the source and ground of all Being. The spirit’s horizon is not confined to worldly being (*ens univocum*), but extends to absolute Being (*ens analogum*), and only in this light can it think, will, and love; only in this light of Being does it possess language as the power to know and to name existents. Otherwise no proof of God could ever be formulated, or be in any way conclusive, even if such a proof can lead no further than this highest light of Being and its transcendental attributes, and not into the very Heart of God, who can disclose his inner Being only in freedom. Now, Being is not an existent and object-like reality, but rather the *locus* where all that is existent can become luminous object, because in the light of Being everything is seen, without this light ever itself being turned into something given or brought to a standstill. For this very reason, the philosophic act connotes for existent, thinking man both a boundless felicity, a final grounding, and a threat to his whole existence, which can conceive of itself only as infinite. In the single word *ekstasis Heidegger* found, already joined, the two necessarily connected aspects of the philosophic act: the dread (*Ent-setzen*) and fear of the finite spirit that, by thinking, discovers in itself the opening up of infinity, and the rapture (*Ent-zücken*) at sighting the fulness of this fountain which bestows itself and gathers men into itself.

It is only here in the innermost sanctum of the spirit that the deeper and higher light of the self-disclosing God can shine out of the light of Being. And this dispels the philosopher’s objection that with the rise of Christian theology there has been a regress from Being back to the existent. Being itself here unveils its final countenance, which for us receives the name of trinitarian love; only with this final mystery does light fall at last on that other mystery: why there is Being at all and why it enters our horizon as light and truth and goodness and beauty. The philosophic act (which every person, however implicitly, makes) now confronts in the depth of Being the still deeper depth of the divine light. By the mere fact of disclosing itself, this deepest of depths exhibits its freedom. If the existent can be free, how could the very wellspring of Being be freedomless? The very fact that its free light reveals itself already means that it must free the person in whom such radiance appears to participate in the divine freedom. This light bestows on him the freedom to answer and, along with it, the possibility of rejection: it effects belief in the believer and leaves him the freedom of unbelief. This is the possibility of 'making God out to be a liar'. The act of faith, which fulfils and surpasses the philosophic act, is no longer dependent on the dialectic of *ekstasis*, because when Being is confronted as love the threat which infinity poses to finitude vanishes. In his incarnation God has taken this threat on himself. The finite spirit's giving of itself into the abyss of this love, because it lives from this same love, is indeed a renunciation of all finite securities—even spiritual ones—but it occurs within that handing over of self which is free from anxiety regarding its destiny in God.

Looking back from the stand-point of Christian faith we can, in an analogous sense, also speak of that ecstatic opening up of the spirit to the light of Being as 'faith'. And, in fact, the philosophy of late antiquity (represented by Philo, Plotinus, Proclus, Denys and Maximus) spoke of the act which surpasses all knowledge of the existent and confronts absolute Being as *pistis*. With Jaspers we can speak of this act, which gains all things only by letting go of all things, as 'philosophic faith', something Lao Tzu knew particularly well.[9] The difference between this and Christian faith emerges most clearly when God's light falls upon historical myth (or concept) or upon historical revelation. Philosophic faith from the outset takes a necessarily critical stance towards every finite mythical form. But Christian faith rediscovers its own light in the form of Christian revelation, or acquires it from this form in the first place. And yet the mature Aquinas does not hesitate to compare, even in Christian faith, the relationship between external historical revelation and the interior illumination of grace to that between the senses and reason. It is not simply that the latter is 'empty' for him without the senses, but rather, in the fulness of unity, it contains what has burgeoned through the senses:

> *Sic patet, quod fides ex duabus partibus est ex Deo, scilicet ex parte interioris luminis, quod inducit ad assensum, et ex parte eorum, quae exterius proponuntur, quae ex divina revelatione initium sumpserunt; et haec se habent ad cognitionem fidei sicut accepta per sensum ad cognitionem principiorum. . . . Unde sicut cognitio principiorum accipitur a sensu, et tamen lumen, quo principia cognoscuntu, est innatum, ita fides est ex auditu, et tamen habitus fidei est infusus* (Boet De Trin., q 3

> a I ad 4).

The young Thomas exaggerated this comparison, borrowed from twelfth-century tradition,[10] in a Platonizing way by saying that 'the articles of faith enlighten' the believer and theology 'directly (*per se noti*) through the light of faith', in the same way that 'the natural principles of understanding are by nature innate. . . . The science (of theology) develops from these principles and also includes the universal (natural) principles. It possesses no means to prove them, but only to defend them against detractors, just as no artist can prove the axioms of his art' (Sent, prol q I a 3 q Ia 2 ad 2). But Thomas would soon (3 Sent d 24 a 2 sol I ad 2) and then regularly correct himself by stating that the comparison of the two lights is only an analogy, since the articles of faith cannot exhibit their internal evidence, which only God knows. Nevertheless, in keeping with its essence, the light of faith remains for him a habituation, an assimilation, a participation in the vision of himself which God has, and this imparts to the light of faith that peculiar certainty which transcends all earthly sciences.

The same view is expressed earlier by Albert when he distinguishes between a 'certainty of interior insight' and a 'certainty *secundum pietatem*'. The latter

> is above *ratio* and draws its certainty not from the principles of reason, but rather from a light which resembles the First Truth. It is simple and, so to speak, opens the eyes to the vision of the First Truth. . . . This is the certainty that derives from the light of faith, which suffuses consciousness and convinces one affectively of the truth of what is to be believed. . . . And thus, a saint who is also a mathematician would rather deny that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles than deny the truth of faith.[11]

Thomas continues the same ontic-intellectual explanation of this knowledge by means of the distinction between *affectus* and *pietas*, which he received from the tradition of Augustine and Bernard. This is not at all a question of irrational feeling, not even of feeling as understood by Schleiermacher and late Modernism, nor a question of mere 'religious sensibility, but of something far deeper'[12]: the ontological empowering of the human spirit by *quoddam spirituale esse* (Virt comm, a 10c) to grasp the interior mysteries of God. Time and again Thomas speaks of the growth of an intellectual relation and proportion to these mysteries which is fundamental not only for their perception but even for the very desire to strive for them (Ver, q 14 a 2; ia 2ae q 16 a 4c). For natural wisdom, as the earthly form of bliss, the self-evident principles of reason are, consequently, implanted in man as the seed of contemplative and active wisdom. But the blessedness of eternal life is implanted in us in the first place by the infused light of faith, in so far as this light is understood comprehensively to mean the attitude that contains both hope and love and, indeed, already presupposes hope and love as the impulse of the heart (3 d 23 q 2 a 5 ad 4). Love will then be seen to be the first to open its eyes, the first to want to believe everything about him which the Beloved offers her. Faith is the dark *inchoatio visionis*. Together with love and hope, faith constitutes the conscious side of grace in so far as grace is the ontological assimilation to God's being. Faith knows in its own way because of a *connaturalitas,* an essential kinship, which Thomas himself and, even more emphatically, Eckhart portray as the gracious insertion of the creature into the trinitarian act of begetting and giving birth ('*co-naissance*' with the Son from the Father). For Thomas, neither Christian doctrine nor the miracles that attest to it would say anything to man without the *interior instinctus et attractus doctrinae* (In John, c 614 n 7; c 151 5 n 5; In Rom, c 816), which he also calls *inspiratio interna* and *experimentum*. This is but a new formulation of the Augustinian *trahi* (being drawn by love's gravitational pull), which for Thomas now becomes the gravitational pull of Being itself.

The ontological ascendancy God enjoys in the heart and spirit of man precludes faith being defined in terms of a *desiderium naturale intellectus* or any postulate of reason which would be to 'measure' the divine by the human (*cf*. 2a 2ae q 7 a 2 ad 2). It is not that we demand grace in virtue of our peculiar dynamism; it is grace which both claims and expropriates us. The ascendancy of grace in us is what compels us, and it is also what bestows absolute authority on God in us. Considered in this first aspect, fundamental to all others, the *auctoritas Dei revelantis* is revelation as it witnesses to itself in us. We never could or should believe an historical existent on the basis of divine testimony if we did not believe it by virtue of the witness of God's being to itself which shines out for us in the interior light of grace. The Son of God, who in history witnesses to God and is witnessed to by God, convinces us only because we have God's witness in ourselves: 'That man is drawn to God who delights in truth, who delights in blessedness, who delights in justice, who delights in life eternal, for all these things are Christ' (Augustine, In Joh, tr 26, c 9 n 4; likewise Origen in the first book of his Commentary on John). In the light of God's revelation, man is set squarely before God's nature as God, and God's infinite ascendancy—the sovereignty of the divine nature—strikes him with the force of the greatest immediacy. What is here metaphorically called the 'light of Being' (in its divine depth) can, therefore, also receive from Augustine the name of 'Word'. We speak of the enlightening instruction of the *Magister interior,* which is the theological *a priori*serving as foundation for all other instruction from outside, whether from the sphere of the Church or of history. This is the *sensorium*, conferred in revelation itself, which perceives what revelation means, not in the general but in the unique sense of God becoming manifest. In his dialogue with Plotinus, Augustine goes on to place the primary stress on the heart’s humility, which is the first thing which the divine Word of Light teaches and effects in his beholder and listener. If we can speak here of an ‘aesthetic’ experience of the awesome glory of divine being, we still do not mean it in the sense of a mere perception or a delightful vision. What is implied here from the very beginning is our wholesale submission to the sovereignty of this Word and Light, and only this submission can demonstrate our connaturality with God, effected by grace. The Christian theologian and every Christian who pursues his faith spiritually will, therefore, have a zeal and passion for God’s divinity (*Quis ut Deus*?) as their innermost attitude to the vision, rather than simply pressing on to vision and to blissful repose. In the theological *a priori*, knowledge about the quality of the divine is found imbedded in the attitude of faith toward the sovereign Light. This attitude is expressed in the fact that the receiver is *a priori* ready to consider and recognise that every command issuing from the Light in its incomprehensible freedom is an expression of the deepest necessity on the part of the Light. In this highest authoritative quality of the light of revelation is rooted—more deeply than we usually assume—everything in theology which is treated under the head of *intellectus fidei* and of the *convenientia* of individual dogmas and of the dogmas in their interrelatedness. In the last analysis, this is not a vague ‘appropriateness’ which would also leave room for other diametrically opposed solutions; rather, it is the recognition that in the apparently non-necessary elements of revelation’s historical data there is also revealed the rightness of the divine dispositions and decisions as the expression of the divine Being itself. Leaving open other possibilities, which are always God’s prerogative *de potentia absoluta*, is in this context but faith’s act of homage to the divine freedom, which is manifested together with the divine necessity; but such openness is in no way a calling into question of the theological necessity.

This state of things is best explained by analogy with aesthetic judgment, which registers with admiration the aesthetic necessity in the free creations of art: that they must be just so and not otherwise. Could not Bach have equally chosen a different third theme for a triple fugue, and have interwoven it with the other two in just as necessary a manner? We may answer yes in order to pay greater tribute to Bach’s genius. But, aesthetically speaking, that would mean nothing. The study of aesthetic necessity starts with the strict givenness of the completed work. We are not yet speaking here of God’s work in creation, reconciliation and redemption. But if we are to speak of it correctly later on, we must from the start register the quality of our encounter with the self-revealing

God. This quality derives from the very being of God, and cannot simply be ‘read off’ or deduced from the existent aspects of his work within world and history. God’s being, which is the sustaining depth of all creaturely being, can manifest itself essentially not only or primarily in the spiritual creature’s encounter with the existent, viz. in sense perception and in rational judgment; God’s being can encounter us centrally only from within the *a priori* of spiritual being itself—as the deepening of the spiritual being worked by grace. It is the light of Being that enables us to know all existents, though we never behold Being itself as an object; at the same time, however, we *do* behold Being in everything existent, since anything we know can be known only in the light of Being and from the viewpoint of Being. And this light is both deepened and elevated in the *lumen fidei* as Origen, Augustine, and Thomas understood it. It is not as if it were already the vision of the thing itself—an intuition of God and the divine mysteries, or an inner understanding of why the object of faith must be as it is and not otherwise: such an intuition is reserved for eternal life. Nevertheless, through grace eternal life has already begun and, thus, a faith which abandons itself to the light is already now *quaedam inchoatio visionis*. It is this alone which makes it possible for the believer to submit to an external authority. For, correctly understood, the infused *lumen fidei* in him, to whose illumination he submits, is not any more ‘heteronomous’ than the light of rational nature, which is innate in him: for even this light (as *lumen intellectus agentis*) is not properly speaking man’s own light, but rather his openness to the light of Being itself which illumines him.

A number of points follow from this, all of which must be duly considered at the beginning of our theological work.

1. It follows for the internal development of *theology* that this light, and no other, must control and give evidence of itself in every branch of theological speculation no matter how detailed. This is possible only so long as the Christian thinker continually renews, in a living way, his own primal act of *a priori* faith—that obedient surrender to the radiant light in which alone by faith and not by vision he partakes in the wisdom of the self-revealing God. The more obediently he thinks, the more accurately will he see. Because the light of faith proportions his whole being as a man (including, therefore, his intellect) in such a way that it can receive the Mystery, he may be said to think correctly when, by virtue of the proportioning light of faith, he conforms the proportions of his own thought and work to the proportions of the object of faith which are determined by God. These proportions are not simply aesthetic relations within the creaturely form of revelation, and even less aesthetic relations found in human thought as it imposes order on discrete experience. Rather, they are the expression of a

sublime relationship God has to himself, the dynamic identity of the trinitarian light. This light, which is the formal object of theology, must make itself visible in all of theology’s material developments and articulations. Only then do we have a guarantee that a natural (philosophical) intellect can feel itself affected by theology and the revelation it brings.

2. Such *gnosis* which grows out of *pistis* is pre-eminently a matter for the Christian saint, who has made the deep-rooted act of faith and obedience to God’s inner light the norm of his whole existence. This is why the ‘theology of the saints’ will develop above all in the direction in which the *lumen fidei* unfolds and takes concrete form. Augustine and Bernard usually describe this dimension with the categories of the voluntative and the affective, as opposed to the purely intellectual and the theoretical, but this is only partly accurate. What an older theology so designated, for want of other categories, may be more correctly understood using the more central categories of the existential and the personal, which allow one to see the act of faith at its roots as the attitude and behaviour of the *total* person as determined by God and his revelation of grace. If we retain the disjunction between will and intellect, then in the psychology of faith, will appears as that element which compensates for the lack of sufficient intellectual evidence (Gardeil), which is an unsatisfactory state of affairs where both faculties are concerned. Only when by ‘will’ and ‘affect’ we understand the engagement of the person in all his depth—only then does intellectual faith become a genuine answer to God’s disclosure of his depth as person; for God too does not primarily communicate ‘truths’ about himself, but rather bestows *himself* as absolute truth and love. This is why the deepening and revitalisation of the person which occurs within the act of faith (as a living act which includes love and hope) has been described by Thomas, along with the whole tradition, as the unfolding of the living Spirit of God in the spirit of man. The ‘gifts of the Holy Spirit’, bestowed seminally by grace, lead the believer to an ever deeper awareness and experience both of the presence within him of God’s being and of the depth of the divine truth, goodness, and beauty in the mystery of God. This experience is usually referred to as Christian *mysticism*, in the most general sense of the term. Elsewhere[13] I have shown that this mysticism is not yet identical with the ecclesial charisms (particular vocations and gifts), though these normally presuppose the development of ‘mysticism’ in its general sense. While particular charismatic vocations of individuals within the community can in no way be derived from the general grace of faith, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and even infused contemplation in all its forms and degrees, basically refer to nothing more than the unfolding of the light of faith, love and hope, infused from the outset along with grace.

In developing the notion of *raisons du coeur*, Pascal continued in the same direction as Augustine and Bernard, while at the same time he began to give this tradition more a personal than an affective bent. What he calls ‘heart’ is the central organ of the person, something which is not contrasted with the intellect but which serves as common foundation both for the intellect and all other particular faculties. Newman perfected this tradition by understanding the central act of ‘realisation’ not in an anti-intellectualistic sense but as the deepening of a merely notional apprehension into an experiential apperception by the whole person. After all that has been said, it should be evident that precisely the ever deeper experience of the eternally incomprehensible God leads the believer into a special Christian *gnosis*, one, however, which by the same token becomes an ever more central *pistis*—an ever more total surrender to the ever stronger ascendancy of the free and sovereign God, indeed (as John of the Cross conceives it) an ever more radical abandonment of all our private, natural evidence and reasons for belief into the hands of God’s undivided and singular evidence.

3. In the camp of liberal theology, and of the psychology and philosophy of religion, the theory of the *lumen fidei* confronts the concept of the *religious a priori*. This concept need not be rejected; it must only be understood correctly. There is a natural religious *a priori*, given with the essence of the creature as such, which coincides with its ability to understand all existents in the light of Being, which is analogous to and points to God. Provided it does not get caught up in detailed analysis of partial aspects of Being, natural ontology is very largely always also a form of natural theology. When we spoke of a theological *a priori*, however, we did not mean this, but rather the ontological and epistemological elevation and illumination of this *a priori* by the light of the interior fullness of God’s life as he reveals himself. But this manifestation of God does not dawn only on those who expressly call themselves Christians, but basically on all men. This is so because all are called to the vision of God in eternal life and, therefore, however secretly, all are placed by God’s grace in an interior relationship to this light of revelation. Therefore, many aspects of what in non-Christian spheres is called the ‘religious *a priori*’ and is described in religious experiences must, in fact, be shot through with elements of grace. Scientific verifications cannot determine to what extent this applies either in general or in specific cases, and it is thus possible that in this area philosophy claims many things as its proper object which secretly cross over into the realm of theology; and that in consequence, religious philosophy claims to dispense with Christianity by regarding its specific data as but one instance of the universal manifestation of God in all men and all history. As a matter of fact, as

Christians we may not only freely admit but ought to expect that that interior religious light which falls from God-seeking souls on the historical forms of non-Biblical religions may be the same light that shines in the hearts of believers. Why should a mythical religion, a religious-philosophical system, or a mystical path to finding God, struck by this interior light, not be able to reflect it back to the person who has the light in himself? Why should he not be brought closer to God by means of such images and forms, which in themselves stem from man? And what is more: Why could the founders of religions, religious reformers, poets, thinkers, and mystics not have conceived their religious achievements (whether of a personal or a social nature) at least in part under the influence of this theological, aprioristic light? Christian thought has here no serious objection to raise. We could even go so far as to discover in the constructions of non-Christian religion, philosophy and art elements which more or less explicitly indicate an attitude of obedience toward the light of the self-revealing God. These constructions are distinct from the Christian reality in the sense that, even though they could be the testimonies of religious persons—even, latently, of believers—they nonetheless cannot be God's immediate self-witness in historical form and, pre-eminently, in Christ, who, *as* a historical form, demands faith for himself: this is something which no religious founder or thinker or artist could ever or will ever do as long as he understands himself to be obedient to the eternal Light. Only the founder's or thinker's disciples will, in accordance with the laws of the mythical imagination, introduce such a faith-element into the myth their master had created. Likewise, the pointer to the divine light which the wise man, teacher, or mystagogue was able to give by virtue of his own experience will be reinterpreted by his disciples as a pointer to his own person. We must consider, moreover, what a difficult subjective judgment it is to distinguish an aesthetic inspiration, with its compulsion to form, from a religious inspiration and its compulsion to issue commands and take up the task of renewal, and we must also remember that it is even harder to distinguish the inspiring element of a religious experience of universal Being from the immediate experience of God. With this in mind, we must make allowances for the great religious originators in so far as they considered themselves to be vessels of revelation, prophets, and chosen ones, and even 'incarnations' of the divine Light. And with the multitudes that followed them we must be similarly indulgent: Why should they not, through the religious configurations which have been fashioned from the divine Light, find a way to that same Light which they feel within themselves confusedly and amorphously? In the great 'rites controversy' concerning Malabarese and Chinese usages and religious concepts, what was at stake among the Christian missionaries was not mere externalities, but precisely the question under consideration here. The name of ‘natural religion’ was being given in oversimplified fashion to the forms of religion that were encountered. Natural religions they were, judging from their external form; but even as such it seemed that one could ‘baptise’ some of their most essential elements.

Such ‘baptisms’ have been constantly repeated throughout Christian intellectual history, but in their regard we should consider several things:

1. The expressive form of God’s genuine light can become excessively obscured, and often only a glimmer of it breaks through, while much of the rest must be attributed to the sinner’s perverted heart, his pride and his lust.

2. The sheer delight in myth and its aesthetically self-contained form can smother God’s light.

3. The crowning luminosity experienced with some forms can also derive from the ungodly spirit of this world and of the underworld.

4. Precisely at the point where man ought to submerge himself in an attitude of pure self-surrender and abandonment toward God, the whole enterprise still somehow retains the character of a technique that is learned and mastered; in this manner, the place of redemption by God is taken by a titanic kind of self-redemption.

5. Figures and forms which were originally designed with the purest of intentions can be pressed into service by spiritual and worldly powers and given quite different values. And, above all:

6. An originally pure intuition of the self-bestowing divine Light may be incorporated into a purely natural schema which lies below the level of the intuition itself, with the result, for instance, that in order to cross over to the divine sphere the creature must abandon its own limits—and, therefore, itself—with the consequence that God, the Limitless, by the very fact that he *is*, now comes to signify the annihilation and the death of all worldly limits and forms. The number of such obfuscations of the inspiring light is endless, and to those who have confronted the Christian form they suggest strongly how greatly the divine light of faith remains internally related to a divine form of revelation; this so that on the plane of revelation the light of faith and the form of revelation may together constitute that synthesis which according to Aquinas corresponds, on the plane of natural perception, to the encounter of the senses and the light of the intellect. If the ontological light of the active intellect can become objectified only by turning to the phantasm, God’s supreme light can become objectified only when it falls, not on any random worldly phenomenon (not even the depository where the soul gathers up its interior experience), but on *the* phenomenon which God’s light has fashioned for itself in order truly to make its

appearance *there* and not elsewhere. Such a ‘form of forms’ will have to justify its privileged character. As God’s own appearance, it will have to stand in sharp contrast to all other creations of the religious imagination, no matter how sublime and enrapturing these may be. God himself will have to assign it a distinctive place in the theatre of appearances, and this not only by himself shaping this form into an objectively unassailable and unmistakeable figure, but by creating out of it and its surrounding forms a total configuration, which is both inconceivable and irreducible. The witness which God gives of his Son is embodied not only by Christ himself, but also by the salvation-history and redemptive *kairos* which lead to Christ and flow out from him.

By being that historical existent who, in his (human) positivity, makes present the Being of God for the world in an unsurpassable manner, Christ becomes the measure, both in judgment and in redemption, of all other religious forms in mankind. This judgment and this redemption are internal to him, and secured by virtue of his very existence. He himself does not judge: he redeems; but the very fact that he is there means judgment for all worldly forms (Jn 3.17-19; 5.29f.; 8.15f.; 12.47f.).

b. God’s Witness in History

It is in the cosmos of natural kinds that the fulness of the Being of the world must needs unfold and manifest itself, and man is the being in which this fulness becomes fulfilled and comes into its own. This is precisely the reason why God’s absolute fulness of Being can choose man as the being and the vessel in which to reveal his own inner fulness to the world. God’s ‘turning to the creature as phenomenon’ (*conversio Dei ad phantasma creaturae*) is so emphatically the very meaning of the interior perfection of all life and all form in the world that this ‘turning’ or *conversio* is necessarily anticipated in all attempts at a religious conception of the world. The locus of its actual realisation remains beyond reach because it is beyond the power of human imagination to arrive at it. Both myths and philosophies limit themselves to God’s ‘manifestations’ within the sphere of the world and of mankind, or else the world and man are themselves devalued to the status of a mere ‘manifestation’ of God. The union of the infinite and the finite can, at most, be presented dialectically as a self-abolishing process. For faith, this union becomes earnest reality only when in the Infinite and the One there is revealed the mystery of the Trinity, and this is revealed at the point, and only there, where what is impossible in worldly terms is done by God. In the form of Christ offered to us, the interior light of grace and faith confronts its only valid verification, because here and only here a form becomes visible in which everything makes sense for the light that beholds it; but it is evident that only God can make it make sense, and therefore it is only the light of faith that can confirm that it does make sense.

The revelation of Biblical salvation-history is a form set before mankind's eyes, implanted in the midst of mankind's historical evolution: it is a form which every passer-by must perceive, a sphinxlike, divine enigma which he must decipher. The contour-lines have been drawn with such mastery that not the smallest detail can be altered. The weights have been poised in such a way that their balance extends to infinity, and they resist any displacement. God's art in the midst of history is irreproachable, and any criticism of his masterpiece immediately rebounds on the faultfinder. The mere light of reason clearly does not suffice to illumine this work, and it can be irrefutably established that anyone who seeks to comprehend it with this light cannot do it justice. But the light of God which faith has *sees* the form as it is, and, indeed, it can demonstrate that the evidence of the thing's rightness emerges from the thing itself and sheds its light outwards from it. In this light it can be proven that here what is involved is not at all a projection of the mythopoeic religious imagination, but rather the masterpiece of the divine fantasy, which puts all human fantasy to naught.

The decisive thing is that this form presents itself as the revelation of the inner depth of God. What is more, it does this essentially not by means of verbal claims (which could possibly have been composed and put in its mouth subsequently by disciples eager to deify their master), but by the very shape of its existence, by the impeccable mutual reflection between word and existence and therein, at a deeper level, by the irrefutable and yet indissoluble unity of the active-passive testimony: the witness the Son bears to the Father and, *through it*, the one the Father bears to the Son. By holding this figure before men, and in full consciousness of what he is doing, Christ dares to proclaim that the individual existence which he is, is at the same time the valid expression and the word of God's very Being: 'Whoever believes in me believes not in me, but in him who sent me; and whoever sees me sees him who sent me' (Jn 12.44-45). Since we are now dealing with the evidential force of the form on the subject we ought not for the time being to speak of the proclamation contained in this form. What is important for our present purpose is to point out that the evidence of the light of faith shines forth from the object of faith as objective evidence.

Not that it is the power of the interior light which provides the historical form with the necessary 'backbone' to stand upright. It is, by contrast, myth which lives from the power of those who invent it and believe in it, and thus constitutes what is perhaps a wholly justified objectivation of religious-aesthetic passion. It is not man’s love for God that has set before itself an image of God so as to be able by this means to love God better: the image offers itself as something that could not have been invented by man—an image that can be read and understood and, therefore, believed only as an invention of God’s love.

The central question of so-called ‘apologetics’ or ‘fundamental theology’ is, thus, the question of perceiving form—an aesthetic problem. To have ignored this fact has stunted the growth of this branch of theology over the past hundred years. For fundamental theology, the heart of the matter should be the question: ‘How does God’s revelation confront man in history? How is it perceived?’ But under the influence of a modern rationalistic concept of science, the question shifted ever more from its proper centre to the margin, to be re-stated in this manner: ‘Here we encounter a man who claims to be God, and who, on the basis of this claim, demands that we should believe many truths he utters which cannot be verified by reason. What basis acceptable to reason can we give to his authoritative claims?’ Anyone asking the question in this way has really already forfeited an answer, because he is at once enmeshed in an insoluble dilemma. On the one hand, he can believe on the basis of sufficient rational certainty; but then he is not believing on the basis of divine authority, and his faith is not Christian faith. Or, on the other hand, he can achieve faith by renouncing all rational certainty and believing on the basis of mere probability; but then his faith is not really rational. This is the kind of apologetics that distinguishes between a *content* to be believed which remains opaque to reason and the *‘signs’* that plead for the rightness of this content, signs which, alas, prove either too much or too little. How strange it is that such an apologetics does not see the form which God so conspicuously sets before us. . . . For Christ cannot be considered one ‘sign’ among other signs (at least not as understood in this kind of apologetics); the dimmest idea of what a form is should serve as warning against such leveling.

Nor does it help in any significant way to bring in the perspective of the good in order to escape the dilemmas posed by this way of putting the question. To be sure, the older theology of the Church Fathers and of scholasticism invoked the good, but always within their total vision and not in the denuded form in which the good appears in modern times. Augustine, for instance, says that we believe in Christ because he both is and brings us goodness itself, and that by clinging to Christ we attain to light and happiness. Likewise, Thomas bases faith on the *appetitus boni repromissi*—that ‘being drawn’ by the good which is man’s absolute fulfilment (De ver. 14, a. 1). This opens up the dimension of the existential: the truth of revelation is verified by human existence as it comes to its own truth and its own proper condition through its leaving behind a state of corruption. And yet this does not necessarily force us to say that this perspective is subjective and that it makes revelation to be a function of the believing self. Such a danger, it is true, is never far off when the existential dimension is played off against the ‘historical-critical’ dimension (which occurs when the modern scientific concept of truth is accepted for theology) and the result is a ‘Christ of faith’ versus an ‘historical Jesus’. This tragic dialectic, into which Protestant theology has largely fallen, lacks exactly the same thing as the rationalistic school of Catholic apologetics: namely, the dimension of aesthetic contemplation. The figure which confronts us in Holy Scripture is more and more dissected in ‘historical-critical’ fashion until all that is left of what was once a living organism is a dead heap of flesh, blood and bones. In the field of theology this means at every step the same inability to perceive form which a mechanistic biology and psychology reveal with regard to the unitive phenomenon of a living being. Nothing expresses more unequivocally the profound failure of these theologies than their deeply anguished, joyless and cheerless tone: torn between knowing and believing, they are no longer able to *see* anything, nor can they, therefore, be convincing in any visible way. Both tendencies remain fettered by Kantian formalism, for which nothing exists but the ‘material’ of the senses which is then ordered and assimilated by categorical forms or by ideas.

In contrast to all this, Pierre Rousselot took a great step forward when in 1910 he began to develop his theory concerning the ‘eyes of faith’.[14] The catchword ‘eyes’, chosen for the title of Rousselot’s articles, is borrowed from the Fathers, particularly Augustine, and hearkens back to the Biblical conception of faith. In itself the word indicates that there is something there for faith to see and, indeed, that Christian faith essentially consists in an ability to see what God chooses to show and which cannot be seen without faith. Behind Rousselot there stand both Thomas Aquinas[15] and Blondel with their conception of the spirit’s dynamism, opening out to the fulness of Being. Only because of an antecedent knowledge of Being can man think rationally and will and love freely. The spirit that knows Being always knows and loves more than he can contain in logical formulas and proofs: the spirit is active, synthetic power that goes straight to the real and that transcends all merely conceptual forms even as it posits them. If it is a matter of interpreting God’s supernatural revelation in history from the available signs, then the spirit searching for meaning requires a higher light of grace in order to synthesise the signs. If the spirit is to see and understand the facts as indicators of revelation, then it must receive as well the faculty to see what the signs are intended to express: it must include in anticipatory fashion that point of convergence which makes the signs comprehensible. Allowing that this point of convergence is supernatural and that it lies in the sphere of the properly divine, then it is clear that the spirit searching for the meaning of these signs will totally (not merely partly) fail to find it as long as it seeks for the point of unity in the realm of the natural. It will simply not be able to decipher the significance of the signs. The light of grace comes to the aid of this natural inability; it strengthens and deepens the power of sight. It does not provide new clues or compensate for the inadequacy of the ‘scientific’ arguments; rather, it bestows vision and makes the eye proportionate to what is being shown. Under the influence of Newman, whom he much admired, and his *illative sense*, Rousselot liked to characterize his method as induction. As in Newman, so too in Rousselot: from the convergence of the evidence the conclusion results as something suddenly seen. Just as in the inductive process the universal law is suddenly seen in a particular case or in a group of cases, so too do the signs of revelation crystallise about a centre which becomes visible in the light of faith. The act of faith is, thus, rational precisely at the moment that it is made truly as an act *of faith*. The extent to which an individual believer can justify his vision rationally and reflectively is secondary. The act of faith does not derive its central rationality from a previous exercise of naked reason: this could not be the case, since its rationality really emerges only in the act of faith itself. This whole dynamism can occur only within man’s total orientation toward God, that is to say, within an existential framework that engages reason no less than the will, freedom or love. Grace converts man and enables him to tread this existential path to God, and grace confers on such a wayfarer a sense for God and his revelation in history. The interior light of faith and the external historical revelation confront, recognise, and strengthen one another. For Rousselot it is important that the active synthesis of the signs of revelation and the light that makes them possible are both really inscribed in the *appetitus entis*. This means that what is seen in Christ can be essentially ‘read’ and understood both from the spirit’s perspective of self-realisation in its striving toward God as he is in himself, but also, by the same token, as the genuine expression of divine Being.

The lasting influence of Rousselot’s breakthrough is familiar to us. Although many aspects of his total construction have been improved upon and given a different emphasis, his model has become authoritative.[16] In this context we should merely note that, even though moving in the right direction, Rousselot, in his manner of expression and thought-habits, still remains too close to the Kantianism he is trying to surpass. He, too, speaks of ‘signs’ instead of ‘form’. For him, too, the synthetic power remains onesidedly a part of the subjective dynamism, borne by grace. He does not sufficiently attribute this synthesis to the efficacy of the objective evidence of the form of revelation. It is, indeed, right to say that this objective evidence can enlighten only a spirit prepared for and proportionate to it, and to assert that the subjective conditions of the possibility of such illumination can be described in Kantian categories. But the active-constructive synthetic power ought not to be overestimated to the detriment of God's own power, which expresses and imposes itself in its historical witness. In the Gospel, the strength of the disciples' belief is wholly borne and effected by the person of Jesus, the locus of revelation. Here we no longer detect the slightest trace of a creative, myth-projecting capacity on the part of man. The discoverability of the objective, synthetic point is reduced to nil, while Jesus' non-inventability, his overwhelming originality has become infinite and of itself demands assent and effects submission.

We stand here at the opposite pole from the modernistic tendency which, as we have said, represents an exaggeration of the subjective-existential light of faith, as described by Thomas. In no way can it be said (as it might perhaps appear for a moment even with Thomas) that the articles of faith provide, so to speak, only the 'material element' (just as the sensual provides material for the spirit to process), while the light of faith potentially and implicitly contains within itself the whole substance of faith, which it brings forth with the articles of faith acting as a catalyst. It is much truer to say that the readiness of the interior light is wholly oriented toward the objective form of revelation (toward *this* form, be it noted, and not toward the fully formulated individual tenets of dogma) so as to arrive at its content. For modernism, dogmas are but crystallised forms of the existential faith-relationship to God, forms of vital religious intuitions and needs, valid as long as they foster the existential reality, but harmful once the life has gone out of them and they have stiffened into dead formulae. This process of stiffening can be posited in this way only because the life that generated the forms is sought for in the religious subject himself, while this life is also thought of as having produced the dogmas, just as the mythopoeic religious fantasy has invented forms of religion and, after exhausting them, has transcended them and left them behind. A theology that demands that demythologisation of the Gospel presupposes in its ideology that whatever there is of form in the Gospel possesses the same limited structure as the mythical form of any other man-made religion: thus, the content of revelation that lies concealed behind the mythical form possesses just as hidden a subjective evidence as that of the believing subject, and, therefore, the hidden subject which is believed in will always be on the verge of itself turning into the subject that does the believing, thus vanishing within it. The whole orientation of modernism's vitalistic philosophy and the outlook of Protestant existential theology are both children of one and the same spirit and century.

Reflection on the aesthetic act can help us further here, provided we grasp it in all its breadth and depth. At first, the science of art may appear to be a material collection of those things that generally pass for beautiful, while the subjective judgment of taste on what is beautiful seems subject to the most extreme variations. The young especially experience this subjective aspect with particular intensity and tend to generalise it. Since they have not yet acquired objective criteria for the evaluation of works of art, and because they have not yet learned to distinguish by seeing and listening, they compensate with the 'enthusiasm' proper to their age. They find themselves in or transport themselves to a state of mind, an interior 'vibration', which transfigures nature, art, friendship and love in their sight, and which communicates the experience of the beautiful like a drug whose effect, as experience shows, quickly disappears. People who cling to this view of the subjective nature of taste's judgment have remained immature adolescents. By developing his soul according to the images of the objectively beautiful, the maturing person gradually learns to acquire the art of discrimination, that is, the art of perceiving what is beautiful in itself. In the process of their development, the subjective elements of perception (which, doubtless, include state of mind and fantasy) more and more pass into the service of objective perception. Even in the case of a masterpiece, the mature observer of art can without difficulty give an objective and largely conceptual basis for his judgment. This is why the *Einbildungskraft* ('imagination') which primarily projects from within toward the exterior, ought rather to be called *Ausbildungskraft* ('power-to-externalise-images'), whereas the process of *Ausbildung* ('education', 'formation', 'development'), in which the objective content of images is assimilated from the outside toward the interior, ought rather to be called *Einbildung* ('imaging' or 'imagining', that is, interiorising external images).

The philosophical view of things, too, seems to be strongest at an early age because of youth's impulse toward totality of vision: this is natural, because it is in one's youth that the eye first perceives in all its freshness the emerging wonder of Being. But, while preserving its youthful *thaumazein*, the philosophical vision must slowly move away from its all-encompassing feeling and be trained in the disciplined contemplation of the Being of existents. Because the light of faith as the ability to encounter God's divineness is, on the one hand, bestowed and infused as grace, but, on the other hand, is infused into the spirit's central *a priori* and, therefore, is a thing which basically conforms to human structure and, as such, acts within the context of the sensual in its perception of reality: for these reasons we can say that the believer indeed possesses in advance the fundamental possibility of believing which has been implanted in him; but this possibility does not exempt him from the human effort of searching with a probing gaze for the correct form of what he is to believe and, having found it, from the effort of integrating it existentially into his very self. The synthetic power of the active 'faculty' of believing (as *habitus* and *virtus fidei*) does not reside primarily in the believer himself, but in God, who indwells him even as he reveals himself and in whose light and act the believer participates. The believer experiences this alien reality precisely in his encounter with the form of faith in history, in which God for the first time really confronts him as concrete reality. For the Christian, the power that in the first place makes his synthesising act possible resides in Jesus Christ ('a power went out from him. . . .'), in whom the Christian can believe only in such a way that Jesus Christ helps his unbelief. It is not that Christ simply facilitates the *initium fidei* by his prompting; rather he bestows faith on the believer in such a way that the centre permanently remains in Christ—and not only the centre of the object, without which the act could not come to be, but also the centre of the act, without which the object could never be attained. God can be known only by God. Faith, along with love and hope, is infused divine life in us, which cannot be detached from God's eternal life (as in the order of creation), but which draws back and incorporates into this life the creature that had become detached. We can now finally see with total clarity that the aspect of act (what we have called the 'theological *a priori*' of the light of faith) and the aspect of object (beholding Christ as the epiphany of God) can, indeed, be distinguished, but never divorced from one another. Every person outside Christianity who receives a share in this interior light of faith receives it only by the objective mediation of Christ's atoning life, death and Resurrection. In the same way, and indeed *a fortiori*, every believing Christian becomes conscious of his faith (even subjectively) and is secured in it only as he gazes on Christ Jesus. As long as he continues to treat 'his' faith as his own possibility, he still does not believe at all, but is perhaps still debating whether he ought to risk the leap of faith. He will dare take this leap only when the evidential force of Jesus' credibility as the very appearance of God so gains ground over the believer's own 'possibility' that what in him cannot attain to full realisation finally becomes real event by his self-abandonment to Jesus Christ, who alone can help his unbelief. For these reasons, it is not permissible simply to exclude this objective structure of faith, which for every Christian belongs to the very content of faith, from the analysis of faith's conscious aspect, in order then to describe this aspect as a purely psychological process.

It can be objected that the light of faith is itself a mystery of faith, since it is a participation in the divine nature and truth, an ontic elevation of man and an orientation to the very vision of God; that, therefore, the light of faith penetrates not at all or very inadequately into the sphere of consciousness. (This has been the objection especially of the Jesuit school, against Thomas' foundation of faith in the light of faith.) The answer from the Augustinian-Thomistic perspective would have to be based on the analogy between the light of reason and the light of faith, and would assert that the *lumen fidei* (in the same way as the light of the *intellectus agens*) as such never can nor will become objectified, but that it shines forth only in the realisation of either the act of faith or the act of knowledge when it is objectively oriented. But this is where faith and knowledge part ways. In the act of knowledge what shines forth at the *conversio ad phantasma* is the light of being, an 'aptitude' possessed by the *intellectus agens* as such. But in man's turning to Christ what shines forth is not man's own aptitude for faith, but rather Christ's aptitude to give to the inept a share in his own light and power. The light of being envelops both subject and object, and, in the act of cognition, it becomes the overarching identity between the two. The light of faith stems from the object which, revealing itself to the subject, draws it out beyond itself (otherwise it would not be faith) into the sphere of the object. We must here beware of vitalistic comparisons, which suggest that, in the act of faith, subject and object 'float' together in a common medium of 'divine life'. We must, rather, never lose from sight the permanent onesidedness, fundamental to the process of Christian revelation, of God's act whereby he grants us participation in his being, which is his act in Jesus Christ, who can be approached only with personal categories. This should not be interpreted in the extreme extrinsicist Protestant sense, as if faith and the justification proper to it remain 'external' to man and can be 'imputed' to him only juridically. The participation bestowed by God, rather, is highly efficacious; God achieves what he will, just as he achieved it in the miracles of the Gospel: the blind really see, the deaf really hear, the dead really rise and live. But he who is spiritually dead rises to the life of God in him. 'In him' here means that he lives, but only by virtue of the fact that God lives in him. He lives subjectively because the objective God, who he is not, lives in him.

What convinces man about this objective nature of faith is that God appears to him externally, in history. The believer cannot dissolve this objective form by assimilating it into himself in an interior, existential sense, nor can he ever succeed in rarefying the Jesus of history into a mere Christ of faith. For these reasons, by exercising himself in extroversion to God's historical form, he must allow himself to be initiated to the fundamental extroversion of faith's attitude toward God. This is not in any way to suggest that he should take an 'historical-critical' stance with regard to the historical form, and then a pietistic-interiorist stance with regard to faith's content. For the Jesus of history is, precisely, not a mere sign, but a form, and, indeed, *the* definitive and determinant form of God in the world, one which is distinguished from all other worldly forms and aesthetic images by the fact that Jesus' form is the Primal Image—the Archetype itself—that 'has life in itself' (Jn 5.26); and that, solely in itself and through itself, communicates to the partaker the Being here in question. We should never tire of reminding ourselves that, from a Christian standpoint, there is no possibility of distinguishing between God's act of revelation and the content of this revelation, for this revelation is inseparably both the interior life of God and the form of Jesus Christ. For the Word of God is *both* the divinity which expresses and reveals itself in the Trinity's eternity and in the economy of time *and* the man Jesus Christ, who is the Incarnation of that divinity. He is Word as 'flesh', a 'flesh' which in its human totality and in the life-figure in which it exists is the concrete presentation of this Word.

But we must take care not to characterise this state of affairs as a pure paradox for reason, thus locating the nucleus of Christianity in pure invisibility. The perception of inner-worldly spiritual form offers us an analogy which is all the more significant as the self-transcendence of man which occurs in it is already necessarily penetrated by a hidden religious and even theological *a priori*. That is to say that in this respect such self-transcendence is not simply unknown to man. Let us take the example of a youth who is greatly enthused by the teachings of Lao Tzu. To experience such enthusiasm he must already have grasped something of those teachings, at least by intuition. A grammatical understanding of the sayings is not enough. Insight begins concurrently at either extreme, with the almost irrational and very interior experience of being touched and with an external exaltation expressed in his mood: both things derive from what Kierkegaard has called the 'aesthetic stage'. If, after being stimulated in this way, he truly wants to make the doctrine his own, he will next attempt to go beyond mere empathy in order to recreate in himself the truth that is presented. To accomplish this, he will have to some extent to take it on trust, a trust which derives not only from what he has already grasped of it by means of the constructive power of his imagination and intellect but from his person. He understands that, in order to understand, he must recreate the truth in himself in a living manner. This is how he becomes a 'disciple'. He commits himself and entrusts himself to the 'way'. And he will soon come to a fork in the road, having to choose one of two courses. On the one hand, he may understand the doctrine as a release of his own potentialities, and the master as a Socratic midwife who helps him attain to his own real self. Genius, of whatever order, will then be seen as the highest realisation of the human nature which all, including the disciple, fully hold in common, and, as he stands in wonderment before this work of genius, he will be overpowered by the exalted feeling of being human, and exclaim: ‘How marvellous we are!’ Or, on the contrary, he may recognise in the master’s doctrine what is by nature superior to him, what he is lacking, the thing which exposes him in all his impotence, and he will then expect from the master and his teaching powers not available to him. Just in such a way, many Hindu seekers for wisdom are convinced that it is only by the mediation of *a guru*, whose higher powers they cannot and will not dispense with, that they will be able to attain to the reality held out by their teacher’s doctrine. In this case it is not only a question of changing one’s life at the instance of an external nudge or the stimulation of another’s example. The objective now is to transcend oneself through the power of the master and of his teachings and in conjunction with these. Now Kierkegaard, as we know, orders the stages of existence in such a way that from the aesthetic and romantic anticipation of totality we move on to the ethical stage, where the subject seriously grapples with existence and learns, on the one hand, the self-transcending fidelity of matrimony, and, on the other, the fact that no one can represent the individual before God (Socrates can be only a ‘midwife’). In the religious stage, where total solitude with God prevails, the individual finally confronts Jesus Christ. But it is significant that from these stages there is wanting the analogy before indicated, and, as a consequence, also the essential form-quality of Christianity is lacking. On the decisive point there can be only opposition between Socrates and Christ, because Socrates can only point to a truth which he is not, while Christ *is* the truth and, therefore, can of himself communicate it. In his *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten Hamann* had, by contrast, elaborated the positive analogy between Socrates and Christ. Because through his faith and love Socrates—perfectly and to the point of folly—subordinated his existence to the *daimon* within him, he can be an intimation of Christ: he points to the divine by himself being a highway for the divine. The same could be said of Buddha or Lao Tzu. It is from their lived doctrine that Zen developed, the essence of which is to give practical training in how to transcend one’s own consciousness, how to make the finite spirit a vessel of the infinite Spirit—a flute through which inspiration wafts—, how to educate the spirit to renounce its own designs in order that the infinite designs may be realised through it. Obviously, we here enter an extremely dangerous twilight zone which everywhere hovers about the concrete historical forms of such doctrines and practices. For when doctrine (first in the master, then in the disciple) becomes a technique, there is present a self-destroying paradox: intentional effort is exercised to achieve the repression of all intention, which, with or without a teacher, amounts to a self-motivated storming of the realm of grace. In Hofmannsthal we read:

> Cherub and haughty lord our spirit is—
> Dwells not in us, but in some upper star
> Appoints his chair and leaves us fatherless:
>
> Yet He is fire within our deepest core—
> So I divined when the same dream I found—
> And holds great converse with those fires afar,
>
> And lives in me as I live in my hand.

Here the *daimon* remains, precisely, ‘our spirit’, and the poem bears the significant title ‘A Dream of Great Magic’.[17] Nonetheless, this ambiguity clings to our parable only as a matter of fact and not necessarily, and we here present it as a real parable and not as a middle stage on the path to Christianity. The point of the parable, and this goes beyond Kierkegaard, is that it belongs to the very form of human existence, and is therefore inwardly appropriate and comprehensible to man, for him to commit his own existence to the following of a person (and a teaching) which to him appear to be transparent to God. We mean this not only in the usual manner in which the analogy is formulated, namely, that one subscribes to the doctrine of a man who describes that way of salvation which has proved itself beneficial and effective for him. Rather, we understand the analogy in the real sense that the doctrine only points to the nature of the ‘saint’ as filled by God and as bearing God within him, the ‘saint’ who, as such, becomes for his disciples a kind of sacrament. Even philosophy cannot dismiss *a limine* the possibility that absolute Being can become visible in one privileged existent, without, if it so dismisses it, either falling below the level of (‘natural’) religion or dissolving that possibility in a scholastic, rationalistic manner. Porphyry perceived such a possibility in his teacher, Plotinus, and affirmed it even in his own thought, albeit with the tendency (so stigmatised by Augustine) to let the ‘sacramental’ degenerate into the ‘theurgic’. This borderline case of natural religion demands from Christians the keenest discernment of spirits; but discernment presupposes, besides its No, also a possible Yes.

How can *this* figure of faith still be distinguished from the Christian figure? By the Word of God, by God’s witness in Christ Jesus; by the quality of this Word as one which bears witness to itself; by the fact that it cannot be mistaken for anything else, of which we will treat later on; by the fact that here it is not the case of a man ‘transparent to God’ who proclaims the wisdom he has learned, but that from this man’s mouth divine authority speaks in the I-form. It would not be difficult to prove that, through such usurpation, the ‘God-filled’ subject would contradict himself and be untrue to his religious experience. The form presenting itself in Jesus, then, is structurally a fundamentally different one. At the point of closest similarity we find the sharpest distinction. The man who is placed before the phenomenon of Christ *sees* both things at the same time—the proximity and the distance. These belong to the contour of this figure, and they are utterly visible to the unprejudiced glance. If a person lacks such a vision, then some other person who does see can demonstrate exactly where it is that the person in question has failed to see the object. He will show that the other is expressing a ‘view’ (*Ansicht*) concerning Christ precisely because he lacks the ‘sight’ (*Sicht*) to see him. When one fixes one’s glance on the figure of Christ, can one really place him next to Buddha and Socrates as another ‘teacher of wisdom’? One should do this only if at the same time one realises the much greater distance that separates him from them.

The analogy with the disciple of Lao Tzu can also help to disarm a related objection. Seeing a form, so the argument goes, presupposes that we can gain an overall sight of the form. Its contour, its relief, the relationship between its proportions and its weights, its colours and its sounds—all of this must be displayed equally before the perceiving sense-organ and the spiritual faculty. For instance, if in a musical motif one single sound remains inaudible, a judgment about this ‘sound-figure’ immediately becomes impossible. How, then, can we speak of the ‘form of Christ’ when most things about him—the essential: his divinity and all the mysteries connected with it—remain hidden and unfathomable in their internal depths of meaning?

We must begin by replying that the first and pre-eminent intention of the self-revealing God is, precisely, really to reveal himself, really to become comprehensible to the world as far as is possible. If his first intention were to make those who believe in him assent to a number of impenetrable truths, this would surely be unworthy of God and it would contradict the very concept of revelation. To be sure, if God is to become manifest in his nature as God, then a necessary part of this manifestation is his eternal incomprehensibility: *si comprehendis,* non est Deus. But here ‘incomprehensibility’ does not mean a negative determination of what one does not know, but rather a positive and almost ‘seen’ and understood property of him whom one knows. The more a great work of art is known and grasped, the more concretely are we dazzled by its ‘ungraspable’ genius. We never outgrow something which we acknowledge to stand above us by its very nature. And this will in no way be different for us even when we contemplate God in the beatific vision, since then we will *see* that God is forever the greater.

Even the figure of a person whom we love and know well permanently remains for us too wonderful to exhaust by description, and, if we truly are lovers, we would be incensed if someone offered an account of the loved person which resolved all mysteries about him. How well we think we understand Goethe, for instance, when his figure is evoked before our mind's eye, and yet, at the same time, how well we know the great mystery which envelops him. . . . How much more must this hold for the figure in whom God wills to bare himself to us! We do not deceive ourselves (because God does not want to deceive us) if we think and assert that we can interpret correctly the contours of this figure—that we understand what this figure is meant to express. He has himself sufficiently given us to understand that his figure is comprehensible, and he has invited men to grapple with it earnestly with the purpose of understanding it. He has offered himself to the gaze of mankind from every possible angle, and this gesture of self-disclosure, which nevertheless has nothing in common with self-advertisement, was part of his fundamental mission to manifest and explain God to man (Jn 1.18). A surprising thing: nowhere does Jesus demand of his disciples that they believe things which are simply inaccessible to their understanding. In his existence they are to find an entry even to God's trinitarian nature. Even the Resurrection of the flesh is intended to become plausible for them by the mediation of Jesus' whole glory, and that not only on Tabor or in the apparitions of the resurrected Lord. Even the wholly unapparent mystery of the Eucharist is now to be perceived by them as most fitting, indeed as a 'necessity of faith' (in Anselm's sense), beheld at the point where his promises, his conduct as Good Shepherd, and his voluntary sacrificial death all converge. Later on we will discuss the relationship between the invisible mysteries and those which can be beheld through faith in Christ. For the time being, however, let us only say that, for the invisible mysteries, faith's assent is required only in so far as they stand in organic continuity with the perceived form of revelation, since thus these mysteries find a place of indirect spiritual visibility within that perceived figure.

With Christ it is not as if in his mystery only certain isolated aspects became disclosed, while others (and supposedly greater ones) simply remained in the dark. He wants to make both himself and the Father known, not partially but entirely, which means in the essential articulations of divine Being. The disciples might not, for the time being, grasp many things; but the Holy Spirit of the Father will initiate them into *all* of truth (Jn 16.1 3). They might understand nothing at the foot of the Cross, but afterwards they do, when there is communicated to them the Spirit who fathoms all things, even the depths of divinity (1 Cor 2.10). By virtue of this anointing with the Spirit, the disciples come to ‘know all things’: they have been ‘taught concerning all things’ and ‘need no further instruction’ (1 Jn 2.20, 27). By virtue of the anointing they will, for instance, be able to discern whether a spirit comes from God or not. Although a Christian cannot ‘see’ the Holy Spirit, he is able to ascertain with compelling evidence that a saint does and says certain things and words in the Holy Spirit, and in this he can distinguish the Holy Spirit from a merely natural or demonic spirit.

This is to say that a genuine perception of form is possible even in the knowledge of faith, which does not openly behold God’s mysteries in themselves. Within this perception we can distinguish two elements which belong together: the apprehension of a wholly unique quality, to be ascribed particularly to the supernatural origin of the light of faith, and the apprehension of an interior rightness (which is precisely where this quality of uniqueness proves and manifests itself), that is, of the objective, demonstrable beauty of all proportions. Although the relationships within this form are intertwined with unprecedented complexity, nevertheless it continually opens out to our gaze: we always find our ground again since one aspect of the form always points to and supports the others. We can choose a few of its dimensions almost at random. For instance: the relationship, in Jesus, between him and the Father; the distance of the man, the nearness and unity of the Son; the relationship between lord and servant, exaltation and humiliation: of exaltation in humiliation and humility in exaltation; the ever-new relationship between promise and fulfilment and, through it, of judgment and grace, rejection and election; the relationship between master and disciple, which is one of total redemptive representation by Christ through grace, and yet, also one of co-presence and of being taken into account with Christ in the redemption through grace; the meaning of an innocence which does not become distanced, but rather takes all guilt upon itself; the relationship between a justice that puts all things in their place and calls them by their right name and a mercy that takes everything from its place and gives it a radically greater value; the relationship between joy and suffering, between freedom from care and asceticism; the meaning of history, which both obediently fulfils and is itself triumphantly transcended. . . . We will come to see that these relationships and meanings come together to build but one faultless and yet effortless equilibrium: they had all been harmonised into a sovereign unity before we ever perceived them. The strange aprioristic certainty dawns on us that in this cosmos of revelation we can always press forward with our investigations and discover new connections and proportions, but that, nevertheless, we will nowhere find any sort of inconsistency, any lack of balance or any miscalculation. The believer not only believes this; he knows it unconditionally. He has read this from the phenomenon before him, and Jesus himself consciously evoked this perspective: ‘Which of you can convict me of any sin?’ (Jn 8.46). Of a sin: of one insufficiency or one objective structural error which would bring to nought his claim to being the revealer of the Father.

Here we can and must bring up again the question of the *praeambula fidei*. Is the form we have described in this manner perceived before (*prae*) the act of faith occurs? Or does it suffice to say that the rightness of what is perceived is contained in the act of faith itself as an inner-logical prerequisite for the self-surrender of faith? The Apostles are doubtless right when they say that they believe because they have recognised and because they know (Jn 16.30); but ‘not flesh and blood’ has revealed this to them, ‘but my Father in heaven’ (Mt 16.17). The temporal *prae* must be understood dynamically: it is the incipient understanding of the form of revelation, a form which cannot be overlooked by natural-historical man since it presents a constant stumbling-block for him that demands explanation. Natural reason can confirm a great number of the proportions and harmonies we have described, even though at this preliminary stage the only unquestionable fact is that here ‘something real is happening’, wherever the real key to the puzzle may actually lie. Moreover, reason will confirm that here ‘religious things are happening’: God is at stake, and it is evident that Jesus is truly pious and not a man who, by his statements about himself and by his sayings, is guilty of *hybris*. The re-presentation or re-duplication of the form of revelation in the human spirit is sketchy, inchoate, and finally imperfectible. By its very essence, this re-presentation cannot be concluded. And so the spirit must venture the solution of faith γυμναστικῶς, that is, by exercising itself like an athlete through hypothetical questioning: What shape would the figure take once it is assented to in a Christian manner? Would the form then exhibit its full transparency? Would everything then concur harmoniously? Is there perhaps no other hypothesis at all that would solve our calculations? Reason cannot insert the keystone unless it itself provide it through the act of faith. Reason cannot contemplate the phenomenon as it were from the outside and the inside at the same time. To want to see the stained-glass window from the inside is already to believe. Superficially considered, this faith can appear to the spirit accustomed to psychological deductions to be its own achievement. But once it truly realises the act of faith, the spirit immediately understands that this act is grace—a being drawn by God, an overcoming of its own impotence by the power of Christ, an overcoming also of all subjective, self-projective anticipations of human thought and imagination by the wholly different clarity and evidence that stems from the thing itself.

c. Witness, Exterior and Interior

There is a moment when the interior light of the ‘eyes of faith’ becomes one with the exterior light that shines from Christ, and this occurs because man’s thirst, as he strives and seeks after God, is quenched as he finds repose in the revealed form of the Son: ‘We have found. . . .’ (Jn 1.45). ‘To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God’ (Jn 6.68f.). He who can show us the Father ‘satisfies us’ (Jn 14.8). The Apostle’s remark, true as it is, remains naïve because unconsciously it is still a Jewish demand for signs, while the revealed form has long fulfilled and more than fulfilled every demand: a superabundant light beams forth from it before which every subjective kind of seeking must lay down its arms: ‘ “You are looking at him: he who is speaking with you is he.” “I believe, Lord,” the man cried out, and fell down before him’ (Jn 9.37f.). Man’s thirst is stilled where God manifests himself through the man Christ, where man’s giving of himself is surpassed by the divine acceptance, and where the witness that man gives through faith is taken up by the witness that God gives to himself in Christ and which, henceforth, is the ‘greater witness’ which God ‘gives to his Son’ in the heart of the believer (1 Jn 5.9f.) and which ‘shines’ there (2 Cor 4.6).

The believer cannot consider his answer to the light of God’s witness to be a second, autonomous word existing alongside Christ’s word, even though it is true that the believer never yet felt himself taken so seriously as a person and so fulfilled as when he spoke this word. He knows that both he and the word of faith he gives in reply are taken up into the trinitarian witness (Jn 5.36f.; 8.16ff.). The moment he begins to see with the eyes of faith he knows that, at a deeper level, he is one seen by God (Jn 1.46ff.; 1 Cor 8.3; 13.12; Gal 4.9; Phil 3.12). The moment he commits himself to this his greatest act, he knows that he is one who is ‘enacted’ by God (Eph 2.10; Jn 6.29). Here we ought to discuss the *fides Christi*,[18] that is, the archetypal covenant-fidelity which in Christ God shows to man and which, in Christ as the revealed form, is manifested as man’s highest covenant-fidelity towards God. This is a stance of such boundless self-surrender and such obedient willingness (‘I always do what is pleasing to him,’ Jn 8.29) that the Father’s good pleasure can become manifested in it in unlimited fashion (Mt 17.5). This is why Christ, as the reciprocal witness between Father and Son, *is* the subsisting covenant, and the believer who speaks his Yes into this reciprocal Yes discovers himself to have been already present within the object of his faith. He finds his own light of faith as a reality within the light of Christ, a reality, significantly, not in a mythical projection and objectivation, but rather in the archetypal character (*Urbildlichkeit*) which alone makes possible the believer's own faith as an image (*Nachbild*) of itself. This once again demonstrates that for him the light of faith has its source in the object of faith alone and that this light is the witness which is transmitted to the believer and by means of which God witnesses to himself in Christ.

The encounter of the subject and object of faith must, consequently, be first of all described in personal categories, but these must then immediately become transpersonal, since the object is resolvable only in the light of the trinitarian relationships.

Theology has always seen clearly that, in its very vitality, the self-surrender of faith is rooted in love. ('Dead faith' is a residue, the result of the dissolution of faith and, as such, inadequate as a model for faith.) 'What does it mean to believe in him? To love while believing, to give oneself to him while believing, to enter into him while believing, and to be incorporated into his members' (Augustine, *In John*, tr. 29. 6). 'He believes in Christ who loves Christ, for, if one believes without hope or love, one might believe that Christ exists but one does not believe in Christ' (*Serm*, 144.2). The heart of faith is the encounter of person with person, just as Abraham, as the father of all believers, encountered God and clung to him over and above every rite and dogma, by the simple surrender of his whole being, by the offering of all plans and all human certainties and, in the sacrifice of Isaac, by giving up every imagined insight into the ways and promises of God. The rest comes later, as Paul will show, and still has to be seen in the context of that first encounter (Rom 4). This encounter is the simplest thing imaginable, since it neither consists of parts nor is it difficult and complicated. Nothing is simpler for man than the act of love, which in this case can indeed dispense with every precaution and care since the self-surrender to the person one adores is at the same time self-surrender to the promise of eternal bliss and, as such, is an act which could never be surpassed by a greater or a better. When one's beloved is none other than God, the ego's experience of losing the ground under its feet as a result of genuine love is none other than the beatific shudder of self-surrender which every believer is basically disposed to experience and which the mystic actually experiences already here on earth. This is the experience of leaving one's own house in a dark night, and of the arrow that burns like lightning through the very heart and bores deep into the centre of the ego, there to implant the Thou.[19]

All theoretical and practical difficulties of faith as an intellectual act are solved once the deeper level of love is reached. But not *any* love is here meant, as, for instance, that between two humans, which must become demonic if it is absolutised, as the case of a finite creature surrendering both himself and his eternal salvation to another finite creature, but in an infinite manner. Nor even do we mean the philosophical love of the creature for God, a love which Thomas portrays as an ontological gravitational pull like that of the part for the whole or of the finite for the infinite. Outside Christianity there is no way of understanding how this supremacy of the whole does not necessarily entail the shattering of finite form through an act by which personal consciousness surrenders and sacrifices itself like a drop that is lost in the ocean of Nirvana. The level of love we allude to can only be that of Christian love, which is founded on Christ's hypostatic union and which joins together what in human terms is eternally incompatible: love for one existent is conjoined with love for Being itself. The manifestness of Being as absolute is revealed to us as substantial love by the existent that is the man Christ—the man Christ whom we love. In this way worldly Being, too, is revealed as having an interior structure likewise founded on love, as Augustine tried to demonstrate in the second part of his *De Trinitate*. In this manner, the philosophical act of intellectual-ecstatic eros that Plotinus directs to Primal Being is fulfilled in the Christian act of love by being elevated and incorporated into the Trinity's Being-as-Love. Philosophical love according to nature is stifled and almost choked by spite, isolation, and despair as a result of the cosmic fall through sin. But such natural love is not only restored by the love of God appearing in Christ, not only authenticated in its mortal risk and freed of all suspiciousness: through Christ's trinitarian form natural philosophical love is transcended in a sense which structurally is just as unique and philosophically unattainable as is the hypostatic union itself, which is the foundation of the Christian believer. Philosophically, the act whereby the finite person entrusts himself to the infinite light of Being can indeed possess the character of infinite recognition and trust manifested toward the maternal-protective power of nature and toward the mystery of the ground of Being, which in incomprehensible goodness and beauty sheds its light in and over all beings. This act is awesome and the greatest Christian thinkers have always recognised it despite its rejection as heresy by others more apologetically motivated. But such an act can never become an act of personal love. Between the personal love of two finite beings and the love shown the ground of Being, which both is the foundation of all beings and remains incomprehensibly superior to them, there can at best be established only a kind of monistic-pantheistic connection which must then be regarded as the most positive attainable conception of natural, philosophical religion and mysticism. As

Christians it is too easy for us to say that pantheism is false. In so doing we overlook the fact that what Christians have to say is not something *less* than pantheism as a systematic conception, but that it must take the step *beyond* pantheism which can be prompted only by God's free revelation and which delivers the pantheistic conception from its interior contradiction.

A Christianity which interprets the personal love between God and man in Christ exclusively on the model of worldly-personal love between existents would sink below the level of pantheism. Such a vulgarisation of Christianity made Scheler require a synthesis between the God of metaphysics and that of personal religion: 'The true God is not as empty and stiff as the God of metaphysics. The true God is not as narrow and living as the God of mere faith.'[20] But, in a genuine Christian sense, there should be no such thing as this 'mere faith', because even in faith's contemplation of the form of Christ there is necessarily revealed to every believer (whether implicitly or explicitly) that the eternal Father in his relation to the Son—the trinitarian God who reveals himself in the Son—is not an 'existent' who, along with creatures, falls univocally under the category of personality: it becomes obvious to the believer that the analogy's ever greater dissimilarity also cuts through the concept of person. Even the simplest formulation of the mystery of trinitarian Being makes this sufficiently evident, and this mystery retains its force within every individual aspect of Christology: it does not allow us to consider the divine person in which God and man are hypostatically united as in some sense 'detaching' itself from the essential unity of the Trinity during the span of its earthly existence. 'I and the Father are one. Whoever sees me, sees the Father.' And though we must not in turn interpret this in modalist fashion (in the relation of persons between Christ and the Father in the Holy Spirit there is truly revealed a clear personal relationship within the divine life), what is shown to us is that the limitless and all-embracing breadth of the trinitarian Father has replaced and far surpassed the compass of the philosophico-mystical Ungrounded Principle. To be sure, many who have grasped this difficulty have too quickly sought to clothe their answer in Neo-Platonist concepts—from Origen and Marius Victorinus, Scotus Eriugena and Eckhart, to Nicolas of Cusa's *De non aliud* and *De dato patris luminum*, and, finally, down to Bohme and Hegel. But this can in no way diminish the legitimate urgency of grasping truly and immediately, within faith's personal love-encounter, the ultimate transpersonal and trinitarian reality. The pantheistic *Tat tvam asi*,[21] which identifies subject and object in their depths, can be resolved only by virtue of the unity between God and man in the Son, who is both the *ars divina mundi* and the quintessence of actual creation (see

Book III of Nicolas of Cusa’s *Docta Ignorantia*), and by virtue of the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from this incarnate Son in his unity with the Father. The Holy Spirit is, in identity, *both* the Spirit of God’s objective revelation in Christ and of the objectivation of the existential Christ-form in the form of the Church —her offices, charisms and sacraments—*and* the Spirit of Christian subjectivity as faith, hope, and love, and it is in this Spirit alone that we can say *‘Kyrios Jesus’* (1 Cor 12.13). This identity—not the immediate identity of the believer with Christ, since faith makes just the opposite obvious—the identity of the Spirit dwelling in Christ and shining forth from him with the Spirit who opens up the recalcitrant sinner so as to unite him, against his sinful will and beyond it, with Christ and, in Christ, with the Father: this identity of God’s Spirit, uniting subject and object (whether it is understood more as the work of the person of the Spirit or of the whole trinitarian spiritual God), is the very foundational possibility which cannot be absent from any conscious and psychological act of faith and which cannot be excluded from the consciousness of the act of faith as being unimportant or irrelevant. ‘In your light we see light.’

The extent to which God’s transpersonal and trinitarian work of revelation respects and perfects the creature’s personality is shown by the fact that freedom is apportioned to the Holy Spirit. Precisely at the moment when he unites man with Christ, the Holy Spirit bestows freedom on him: he elevates man’s restricted, creaturely freedom to the level of a liberated, mighty, divine freedom, in order then to entrust this grace-gift of freedom to the believer as a freedom truly his own and truly to be exercised by him. For this reason, in such a handing over of freedom there is the moment when the human assent is awaited, the moment when the individual can also refuse this assent and instead choose unbelief. In revelation, seeing and being seen are realised by both sides wholly without compulsion. Just as Jesus as God freely gives himself to whom he wills to be seen (and, after the Resurrection, this extends also to his transfigured humanity), so, too, does he give to the person standing before him the freedom of seeing him.

This aspect of revelation, to be sure, holds mysteries far deeper that cannot here be discussed further. The individual, for instance, does not stand before revelation as an isolated entity, and if, as we have said, this individual sees himself and his assent really prefigured and vicariously represented by Christ, then this holds in still greater measure for the Church’s social reality as the Bride of Christ: her free consent to the bridal union can be presupposed only in so far as it is immediately taken up into a greater reality. This is what occurs in the consenting function of real vicarious representation of all those who believe with love, with Mary at their head as mother and bride. These implications, stemming from the consent of every believing Christian, are so necessary and they so condition even his simplest act of faith that their demonstration by church dogmatics coincides precisely with the theological analysis of the conditions for the possibility of theological knowledge itself. In this sense, dogmatics may be described as the act of faith coming to understand itself. In so far as the content of the *kerygma*, precisely as the doctrine of the Easter event, is nothing other than the transposition into words of Jesus, the Word made flesh who dies and rises for us, and in so far as faith is nothing but the believer's whole existence as buried and as rising along with this Word of God, then the fully understood act of faith, by its very essence, presupposes dogmatics in order to understand itself. But such dogmatics is not an analysis that the believer himself elaborates on the basis of his own subjectivity: as a participation in Jesus' historical life, death and Resurrection, faith always derives from the object of faith and, therefore, faith, even in its subjective dimension, can be understood only by an objective representation of its object. Now, this relationship of the believing subject to the object of faith, in order to be understood, must include the social aspect: mankind as a whole and the Church, consisting of a variety of members. In the same way, this relationship presupposes the identity of the Holy Spirit as the foundational medium for the community of life, death and resurrection, and this medium can be neither infrapersonal nor interpersonal (neither of these could be a foundation for participation), but only trinitarian and transpersonal. The subjective act of faith, which could never have constructed the trinitarian mystery by its own self-reflection, at once acknowledges this mystery, perceived within the objective *kerygma*, as being the ultimate condition for faith's own possibility and, indeed, as the ultimate ground of meaning for the reality of faith. All other conditions—the incarnation of the Word, his death and Resurrection, the Church, its structures, the Christian life—are but means that make possible the trinitarian depth and breadth of faith. All other conditions are contained within the movement and the event of the Lord's death and Resurrection; the trinitarian aspect alone encompasses every event of salvation-history as its essential ground and goal. To use an aesthetic analogy: every beautiful form is perceived as the expression, frangible within space and time, of a more than temporal beauty, and this supratemporal beauty is able both to contain and to vindicate the death of the beautiful, because death, too, belongs to the form in which immortal beauty becomes manifest, and it is dying which in the end truly impresses immortal beauty upon the spirit that contemplates it.

d. Form and Sign

The form of Jesus Christ does not stand in isolation before the gaze of the believer. On the contrary: in an inextricable manner, Christ's form is imbedded into a context of truths which constitute the content of Jesus' preaching and which, in a variety of ways, situate this preaching both historically and dogmatically. It is equally placed within a context of events which partly condition Jesus' historical person and which are partly conditioned and prompted by it; it is a context of mediating ecclesial realities which claim to have been caused by him and whose intention is to lead men back to him as their proper origin. The form of Jesus offers itself to view only within these contexts, which for the eyes of faith are not separable from himself since they stand in a most intimate ontological connection with the form that is beheld. A statue can be placed anywhere; a symphony can be performed in any concert-hall; a poem of Goethe's can be understood and enjoyed without any knowledge of its biographical context. The form of Jesus, however, cannot be detached from the place in space and time in which it stands. He is what he is only by fulfiling, on the one hand, all the promises that point to him, and, on the other, by himself making promises which he will at some time fulfil. To the horizontal power with which he encompasses all time and rules all space 'even to the ends of the earth', centering world history on himself, there corresponds the vertical power with which he makes the Father visible and with which he makes present, in his witness concerning the Father, the Father's witness to him. This double, crosslike pattern, in which his form reaches out beyond itself and which is precisely what makes him to be what he is, demands that a person who sees him come to understand him within this spiritual space which he has encompassed.

1. There are signs all about him. These either point to him (such as the existence of the People of Israel with its prophetic and messianic understanding of itself) and, as such, find their meaning in him, or they derive from him (such as his own words concerning his own power and mystery) and depend exclusively on him for their power as signs and for their credibility. The signs that point to him prophetically do not need to be believed, since whoever really sees will likewise perceive their congruence with his form. The signs that derive from him, on the other hand, are of two kinds. First, there are the miracles that, as such, are manifest signs (σῃμεῖα) of his divine power and which make that power visible, provided they are really read as signs of his *divine* power and the beholding eye is clear and sharp enough to detect the objective, unequivocal conections. Then there are the words by which he expresses invisible realities which must be believed in the narrower and stricter sense since, precisely, they can be verified for us only by *his* word.

In the Christian faith, therefore, not everything may be treated as belonging to the same level or as operating according to the same model. Rather, we have to distinguish clearly between faith in Christ as the messenger, the delegate, the Son of God, and faith in those words of his which express unverifiable mysteries (such as the Eucharist) and which we receive from him in faith because we, as the disciples say, have known with faith or have believed with certain knowledge that he is the Son of God who has words of eternal life. These two things do not stand on an equal footing. The first faith is the one which contains everything that follows; it is that act of beholding the form of Jesus which at the same instant both achieves insight and is overpowered by what is incomprehensibly greater: it achieves the insight that it is to this man that we must accord full credit regarding his love, his hope and his reliability in keeping his own word. One may isolate, if one likes, the abstract elements in this unified personal act and order them into a logical progression; but by so doing no definitive clarification will have been attained. The power of the act lies in the unity of the elements, a unity in which the light of recognition (‘You are the one!’) at once elicits the light of loving surrender (‘Rabboni!’). In this latter light, along with the recognition of his absolute superiority in the realm of truth, goodness, and beauty, there is already included that spiritual credit which we usually call ‘faith’ in the narrower sense.

We believe the mysteries of which he speaks precisely because he is who he is, because what we must see in order to be able to believe has been sufficiently made visible in his form and figure. Indeed, he sees to it that none of his mysteries remain wholly invisible, that, because of its connection with his visible figure, each of these mysteries also enters the realm of visibility in some manner. This is true, above all, of the mystery of his divine, trinitarian origin. The theophany of the baptism at the Jordan and that on Mount Tabor are the manifestation, through his bodily visibility, of his dignity as eternal Son of God, of his relationship to the Father, whose voice is heard and points to him, and of his relationship to the Spirit, who descends upon him or envelops him with light as God’s *doxa*. But what here is manifested to eye and ear in a special form becomes, for one who has eyes to see, just as apparent through Jesus’ everyday form: the witness of his life and words cannot be read correctly unless his relationship to Father and Spirit is seen as the essence of what Christ’s witness manifests. For the perception of this relationship he expressly demands, not only faith, but also the power to see proper to the eyes of the spirit. The *ratio theologica* could deduce this truth even from the hypostatic union: if this person who is here living as a man among men is a divine person, and if the divine persons are identical in their essence, then it is impossible that at the incarnation of the one (and only the one!) person the others do not somehow enter the realm of visibility *concomitanter*. In the same way, we cannot say that the fulness of the Spirit present in the Church, or in a given saint or charismatic, is an object only of faith and not also of perception, regardless of whether this fulness of the Spirit is expressed by miraculous deeds of a directly physical or moral nature or 'only' by ordinary behaviour, in the life-form of an individual or of the Church as a whole. No one can deny that something of this special presence of the Spirit becomes detectible and visible, and it is likewise evident that in this the Holy Spirit's presence is ascertained not substantially but through his effects. A third observation is that, in order truly to perceive him as the Holy Spirit—and not as some other human spirit endowed with 'higher', occult faculties—one must possess a certain specific knowledge of the Holy Spirit. The question is, rather, whether the person who has recognised him in his effects does not truly know, perceive, and see him in these effects as he does in his unmistakable manifestations, and, indeed, whether in the perception of total form he does not have the evidence (or at least can have it) that this form could not be understood other than through this presupposition. The gift of the discernment of spirits, which is the appropriate organ of perception for the Spirit, does not stop short at suppositions or mere probabilities, nor is it primarily a gift bestowed solely on the chosen few (1 Cor 12.10). Rather, it is the faculty, given with the maturity of faith (Heb 5.14), which enables one to read the manifestations of the Spirit objectively, as they are in themselves.

The other realm which remains closed to earthly man as such is the New Aeon of the Resurrection. But, in Christ, even this becomes more than just a mere object of faith: in Christ, this new age, too, enters the sphere of visibility. This can be described as pure grace, because we would have had to believe his Resurrection on the basis of his promise even if on the third day he had ascended immediately to the Father, without appearing to the disciples during forty days, and later on also to Paul. The manifestation of the New Aeon in the midst of the Old (and, thus, the interior participation of the Old in the New) is not solely a matter of faith, which from certain 'signs' (light phenomena, for instance) can conclude that it is probable that Christ has risen. As the Resurrection accounts portray it, what is involved is the objective perception of his visible presence, which, to be sure, by its new ontological mode, brings with it a new kind of evidential force. This new evidentiality is no longer fragmentary, insufficient for human capacities; rather, it is a superabundant evidence that stretches the human faculties to breaking point and which can be perceived by man in its manner of being in glory only because grace accommodates man's limited being to that evidence. This alone can explain why the disciples not only respond with doubt and unbelief to the women's tidings of Resurrection (Mk 16.11, 13, 14; Lk

24.11), but that they ‘doubt’ the reality of Christ even when he is bodily present before them (Mt 28. 17): ‘They were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit’ (Lk 24.37). Indeed, ‘for sheer joy and astonishment they still could not believe’ (Lk 24.41) in the evidence of the hands and the feet they were seeing and touching, so that he is compelled to eat their own food ahead of them in order thus to ‘tone down’, as it were, the excessive clarity of the evidence, transposing it to the level of their power of comprehension. But once they have finally assented to the manifestly visible, audible, tactile evidence before them, this assent which has been wrested from their spirit comes to be termed ‘faith’. This is the fulness of that faith in himself which Christ has already consistently demanded, a faith which to Christ had seemed to be no more of a ‘risk’ or an excessive ‘imposition’ on man than the faith which he now expects to receive as the Risen One. Note well that ‘faith’ is the word still used even with regard to the apparitions of the risen Christ. This is clear proof of the fact that the disciples’ faith before the Resurrection (as well as the faith of those to whom it is not given to see the risen Christ corporeally, but have to believe on the basis of the apostolic witness) is no mere assenting to the probability of a proposition, but rather the same loving surrender of one’s own person, along with its evidence, into the hands of the divine Person who possesses and encompasses within himself the gravitational center of all evidence.

This holds fundamentally, too, for all the mysteries which lie between Christ’s divine origin and his eschatological glory, and with these it is even less necessary that we men comprehend their inner manner of occurrence, since it ought to be sufficient for us to entrust ourselves to his word. They all derive their measure of visibility from Christ’s total form; they belong to the expression of this form, and they both receive light from it and, in turn, shed a new and deeper light on that form. Such is the mystery of the Eucharist, whose interior realisation no one is capable of ‘seeing’. How can earthly eating and drinking among brothers become, not only a ‘parable’ but a vessel which truly contains a *manducatio spiritualis*: such an invisible happening nonetheless stands at the point of intersection of several lines, which, taking their departure from more evident points, demonstrate to faith that their meeting point is ‘right’ and wholly appropriate and, further, they confer on that point of intersection a theological necessity which in the end appears indispensable. Something similar can be said of baptism and the other sacraments, particularly penance. All the sacraments have their initial, visible life-form in the earthly form of Christ’s mission itself. They are distilled from herbs, as it were, which we first held physically in our hands. If afterwards we are no longer able to perceive sensually in the distilled essence the herbs’ original form, nevertheless we do know whence the essence is derived: indeed, from its fragrance and taste we clearly see it betray its origin. The person who has been able to see and read the Cross not as a purely material event, but as the fulfilment of Christ’s whole interior life-form, will find it quite a natural and almost an expected thing that the result of this event—in which the world’s guilt has been borne, atoned for and erased—should now also be applied by an efficacious sacramental sign to the sinner who enters into and confesses the redemption through the Cross.

The reciprocity, mutual adjustment and concordance among the mysteries demand the contemplation of faith, which, where it assumes technical and rational conceptual form becomes the *ratio theologica*. It is the task of this *ratio* to bear witness to the inner harmony of the mysteries, to their necessity, always presupposing the sovereign freedom of God’s revelation. The beauty of theology lies in its allowing this inner harmony of the forms in which divine truth makes its appearance to shine forth, and this beauty has always enraptured theology’s greatest figures. But in this spiritual intuition and contemplation we ought not to overlook the analogy of the forms of evidence which we previously demonstrated. We should not give the impression that what is involved here is a merely functional beauty, solely constituted by and shining from the *relationships* among points which, in themselves, are mysterious and invisible. The central form of evidence, on which all else depends, is the perception of Jesus Christ’s objective form as God, a form which is not ‘believed’ but rather ‘seen’, however much we continue believing in Christ. From this form there shines forth God’s objective glory; it is the definitive *kâbôd* which is sent out and called to overshadow the tabernacle of the entire creation. All the harmonies discovered by theological enquiry radiate from this glory, and, in so far as they are objectively and scientifically grounded, bear witness to that glory.

2. What is true of the mysteries which we believe by relying on Christ’s word is true in greater measure of the two ‘signs’ of Christ’s person and mission which apologetics treats as having a special position: miracles and prophecies. For this reason, what needs saying about them has in fact already been said.

They both cut straight across the contrast that is made between apologetics and dogmatics; they possess their true unity only as these two are held together and, therefore, render questionable any sharp distinction between them. In so far as they draw the outsider’s attention to the form of Christ, and in so far as they, as exterior signs, call attention to the form’s interior ‘harmony’, they belong to apologetics or fundamental theology, which must show the objective paths to the reality of revelation. But in so far as the whole interior connection between form and sign, that is to say, in so far as the true form of the sign can be perceived only when the connection is read and understood in the sense of revelation itself, which is to say already within the context of faith, to that extent both of them belong to dogmatic theology, as especially John underlines in his theology of the σῃμεῖα, and as is also made clear by the Synoptics’ repeated expressions about the ‘seeing and yet not seeing’. In this way, everything in the form of Christ which moves from the centre of apperception to the periphery is both a concession on God’s part to those standing outside and also something which makes access to the central mystery more difficult, for it brings with it the danger of non-recognition and scandal, since everything parabolic can be interpreted correctly only from its proper centre. For the person who believes ‘from the centre’, Christ’s miracles are not primarily a subjective facilitation of faith—something he scarcely needs; they are, rather, the light of a glory which, already seen spiritually, is now poured out on the realm of the senses as well. Such a person has no difficulty interpreting the miracle in the sense meant by the Lord: he has learned how to read correctly, and he does not cling to the written sign but rather, through the sign, is able to read the spiritual content. Whoever has to rely on the sign if he is to find his way to the centre stands at the crossroads of faith: either he must entrust himself to light that irrupts from the centre and, going straight through the sign, plunge into the light, or, stopping short at the sign, he will fail to see both the sign and the centre.

Augustine, among others, developed the analogy of ‘reading’ in a most vivid manner: ‘Our Lord Jesus Christ intended us to understand spiritually all those things he did physically. He did not work miracles for the sake of miracles, but rather so that what he did would appear to be marvellous to those who saw it, and true to those who understood it. If someone, not knowing how to read, looks at the beautifully executed handwriting in a book, he may indeed praise the writer’s hand and admire the beauty of the letters, but he will not know what these letters mean or what they point to. He praises with his eyes but does not understand with his spirit. Someone else, on the other hand, both praises the work of art and understands its sense: he is the one who not only sees (anyone can do this), but who also reads, which can be done only if one has learned how. . . . Such should we become in the school of Christ.’[22] Learning how to read is not learning to conjecture what the letters mean, but coming to know their meaning with certainty.

This is why Thomas speaks repeatedly of an evidential force of the signs, which for him is objective even though, at the same time, the light of faith is required, at least for fallen man, for the perception of this objective reality. This qualification is made in view of the statement of the Epistle of James that says that even the demons believe and tremble. According to Thomas, the devil possesses a stronger natural understanding, which compels him to submit to the evidence before him and ‘read’ the divinity of Christ in his signs: *daemonum fides est quodammodo coacta ex signorum evidentia,. . . coguntur ad credendum ex perspicacitate naturalis intellectus*.[23] Thus, they do not ‘believe willingly’ (*non voluntate assentiunt*), ‘but because of the compelling evidence of the signs, in which the truth of what believers believe is demonstrated (*convincitur*), even though those signs do not manifest what is believed in such a way that we could say the demons have a direct contemplation (*visionem*) of the things believed.’[24] But human knowledge is not intuitive and comes about in a way which is not any less certain for being symbolical: the truth becomes visible in the signs alone; at this level, however, the truth is not judged by the natural intellect, but rather is rendered intelligible by the light of faith in its correct relationship to the revealing God. It is precisely Thomas, the Aristotelian, who will lay much stress on the function of the sensual signs as a *certum experimentum* for the fact that God has spoken.[25] For him, therefore, it is one of the essential functions of theology to rehearse descriptively all the *prodigia* of historical revelation.[26] On the other hand, however, Thomas has no intention of making the nature of the signs wholly autonomous for apologetical purposes, as if all by themselves they could produce a proof of the truth of revelation and impose on man a kind of natural evidence. In Thomas, as in Augustine, the signs become cognitive elements only in their relation to the intelligible aspect discovered in them, that is, in their relation to the supernatural, spiritual revelation which requires the light of faith to be perceived. Thus, along with Blondel, we can speak of miracle as an ‘expressive sign’ (*symbole expressif*),[27] the more so because, for Thomas, the genuine miracle is always a sign of God’s supernatural operation and self-witness,[28] and the nexus between God and the mystery of faith, which cannot for the time being consist in truth becoming intrinsically evident, is established *per argumentum divinae virtutis*.[29] The experience of divine power and sovereignty, however, is always an encounter with the real and living God, who witnesses to himself as being unrepeatable and unique. This experience, therefore, cannot be measured by a merely natural idea of God, if its claim to credibility is to be upheld. If it is to be understood at all, such an experience must be seen in its relation to the act of God’s living and historical self-witness in his revelation. ‘And if apologetics cannot treat of the facts of revelation without giving some justification of the concept of revelation at least externally and in general, apologetics will certainly not venture to construct such a concept of revelation from rational ideas or from a contemplation of essences. Especially since it is oriented to the historical facts of revelation, apologetics will have to abide by the real historical claim of Christianity to be the divine revelation.’[30]

As a sign of the living God, a miracle always possesses a spiritual, divine sense, whereas, when read exclusively in its mere material unusualness, it will at best point to hidden praeternatural causes. The miracles of Jesus, however, or miracles worked in the name of Jesus, bear within themselves—in the happening itself and in its whole spiritual context—an evident connection with the truth of God. Their credibility is neither the content of the act of faith, nor does it lie this side of faith, in the realm of pure reason alone. The credibility of miracles 'appears simply as a companion of the act of revelation that takes place in the sign: *ipsa credibilitias revelationis sese revelantis, ut credibilitas, non revelatur, sed manifestatur*.'[31]

The same holds for prophecies pointing to Christ. Later on we will deal with these more in detail; but here we can only briefly indicate their proper place within revelation. Nowhere else perhaps does theological reason have to be so aesthetic as in considering the relationship between the Old and the New Testament: nowhere else does it so have to exercise its faculty for detecting proportion, measure of proximity and distance, balance, centre of gravity, preponderance of motifs. . . . An older apologetics, which already has its genesis in the New Testament and which soon begins to develop in writings such as the *Letter of Barnabas* and Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, stops short at the literal level of prophecy in a way that today in the light of Old Testament Biblical research no longer appears to us cogent. Even if it be true that Jesus consciously took up and 'fulfilled' certain Old Testament passages, nevertheless it is often questionable whether the 'fulfilled' text objectively, in itself—not to say subjectively, in the mind of the writer—possesses an interior relationship to the coming Messiah. At the most we can point to a certain harmony between the Old and the New Testament which, in a general and all-encompassing way, is the theological presupposition for the application of individual texts—a harmony emphasised by all deeper Biblical theology, particularly since Origen. It is not the texts which conclusively prove the presence of the harmony: the texts become transparent and intelligible *because* of the existing harmony.[32] Old and New Testaments come together to compose the total form of revelation. In this form, the Old Testament's broad world of images unfolds, by way of prefigurement, the compressed fulfilment of the New Testament. The Old puts all its energy into pointing forward to the New, but at the same time it merges positively into its own fulfilment in the New. This total figure is, at one and the same time, absolutely accommodated to the form of the world and of man (since it communicates, within time, the unity of the divine truth and reality, making these pedagogically accessible by means of analogies and approximations) *and* absolutely divine (since only God can invent and produce from above analogies and approximations for his own vertical revelation). This is why the total structure, Old-New Testament, acquires such an eminent character as sign: it can be read historically, and yet it is only theologically and in faith that it can truly be understood.

But here we ought not to think that all the Old Testament does is to provide the New with an arsenal of analogies and typical situations—a collection of tubes of paint which the divine painter uses to produce his masterpiece, an alphabet or a lexicon with which the divine poet constructs his poem. The unity lies at a much deeper level, at the point where the Old Testament, in its very basis and in all its phases, is an interior progress toward Christ and, at the decisive moment, an encounter with Christ in the dialectic of election and rejection: this is the place, consequently, where the Old Testament, interiorly and from the divine perspective, is already secretly required and shaped by the New, down to the dialectic of election and rejection interior to the Old Testament.[33] But, again, it cannot be said that this historical form, in which revelation is ordered, is itself revealed as far as its content is concerned: it ‘appears’ along with and at the same time as revelation and is a form of its incarnation in the world and in man, which is to say the form of its entrance into and dissemination within the space of history. Whoever dissects the historical aspect of revelation by means of the ‘historical-critical’ method, in order to be left with the content that fills revelation as sole interior kernel, will in turn have no eyes to perceive the beauty and the evidence peculiar to this form. But for the person who can see it constitutes such a moment of light that the greatest contemplatives among the theologians never tired of gazing at this form so as to marvel, in its historical horizontality, at the Word descending vertically from God. This evidential power can so mesmerise its admirer that there is a danger that he may forget the existential drama which belongs to salvation-history—the tragic clash between the two Testaments—in his delight in its purely aesthetic contemplation. For no well-wrought image has been placed in the Bible solely for the sake of aesthetic contemplation: images and analogies are there to kindle life and decision (1 Cor 10.6-13).

This is already true of the way in which the Lord himself exhorts men to read Moses and the Prophets in his own light (Jn 5. 39f.); all faith in the Old Testament is a training for faith in Christ (Acts 7, Heb 11), and, therefore, it is only Christ who is the key to the puzzles of the ancient Scripture (Acts 8.26f.). Such a vision is, in an especially emphatic sense, a *videre in speculo et aenigmate* (1 Cor 13.12), while turning one’s gaze away from the images to look to Christ’s truth is a ‘beholding, with unveiled face, the splendour of the Lord’ (2

Cor 3. 18), although even this direct vision is still a ‘looking in the mirror’ compared to the vision promised for the end of time. The reciprocal reflections between Old and New Testament give the mirror the greatest transparency, because promise and fulfilment confirm and clarify one another in a crescendo that cannot be rationally deciphered. For this reason, many an older exegete often explained the transformation of the Christian into the image of the Lord ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν (ibid.) as meaning the transition from the glory of one Testament to the glory of the other.

3. The last point, namely the relationship between ‘ecclesial faith’ and faith in Christ, must also be treated in terms of the same understanding of the relationship between sign and form. Here especial care should be exercised lest faith in signs should obscure God’s form of revelation as it becomes visible to the believer. In her official representatives—the Apostles and their successors—Christ’s Church has been commissioned to proclaim Christ’s doctrine to all peoples authoritatively, and in the end Christ’s doctrine is nothing other than the doctrine about Christ, who is the quintessence of the law and of the truth of God. This proclamation, this *kerygma*, is the normal way for men to come into contact with the form of revelation: *fides ex auditu, auditus autem per verbum Christi* (Rom 10.17). Paul’s words here are not altogether unambiguous: judging from the context, *auditus* here seems to designate the Apostles’ preaching—the word which resounds within the Church (*cf.* 10.14f.); but, as the act of hearing, it further refers to the Word of Christ itself, attained through the preaching. *Per verbum Christi* can mean that the preaching is done because of Christ’s command or by means of Christ’s Word, so that Christ’s Word is either the cause or the content of the preaching. But in either case it is clear that it is not the preaching itself that is believed, but, through it, the Word of Christ, which is what is heard through the *kerygma*, whether directly or indirectly. Even though the Church is thus officially entrusted with the proclamation, the believer nevertheless does not believe in the Church but, rather, accepts her authoritative witness concerning Christ in order to believe in Christ with the support of this accredited witness. Nowhere do the messengers of the faith demand that the believers make an act of faith in them: for, both in the Old and in the New Testament, faith means to subject oneself wholly—intellect, will, and heart—to the God who has already totally given himself to us. The battle which the Apostle fights to ‘punish every disobedience’ and to ‘destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought of reason captive to obey Christ’: this battle is not waged with the ‘power of the flesh’ but with ‘power unto God’ (2 Cor 10.3ff.). This means that the Church, in her representatives, subjects no one to herself, but rather to God, to whom alone the

act of faith can properly be directed. The authority bestowed on the Apostles and their successors stems directly from Christ and is derived from Christ's own authority. Nevertheless, the witness borne by the Apostles and their successors possesses only an ostensive, transitory character, and it is *solely* as a transitory witness that it can be incorporated in the content of what must be believed. In so far as this content is the total form of Christ, it also includes the commission given by Christ to the Apostles and the total visible-invisible reality that is the Church founded by him and proceeding from him. It is in this sense that we are to understand the *Credo Ecclesiam* of the Apostles' Creed, not in the sense that the Church represents Christ and that it is to her as proper subject that the act of faith is directed. As we have just noted, such a view is contradicted by the purely official character of the proclaimer and of the proclamation itself, while the act of faith is essentially existential, that is to say, it requires the believer to surrender his total reality as a sacrifice of obedience.

For this reason, everything which the Church's *magisterium* elaborates into an infallible proclamation of dogmas and definitions in the form of conceptual and verbal interpretations and formulations of doctrine can be only a means of presenting to men God's revelation in Christ the more deeply and clearly, thus making it a light in men's hearts. The individual 'articles of faith' in their verbal and conceptual form which are normative in the Church are paths by which faith reaches the person of Christ and, through him, the triune personal God.[34] The mediation of the ecclesial *magisterium* and of the external signs of credibility constitutes but a 'condition'; the sole authentic motive for Christian faith is God's uncreated act of revelation, the internal Word of God, with which the believer's spirit comes into living contact in a most simple act which unites him directly with the Primal Truth (*Urwahrheit*).[35]

The conceptual and verbal form of the ecclesial dogma ought always to take the form of God's Word as its archetype (*Urbild*), and it does this by receiving upon itself the impress of the interior proportions of God's Word, by not admitting into its doctrine and proclamation any proportions other than those already given. In the same way, the primal form (*Urgestalt*) that emerges from God's darkness remains a solitary one and can be truly understood only in connection with this background. This means that the primal form can never be adequately and exhaustively reproduced by any rational construction (*Gebilde*), such as a confession of faith consisting of propositions or a manual of dogma. In the form of the Biblical revelation, the ever-greater Being of God can be apprehended as that form is perceived; this cannot be said in the same way of the derived image of revelation which the Church elaborates as dogma (*das *kirchlich-dogmatische Nachbild*), at least not when the latter is taken, not as an index pointing to revelation, but as an autonomous form (*Eigengestalt*) in its own right.

The same thing could be stated in a different way. We would, thus, say that the ecclesial *magisterium* can represent Christ's truth only from the standpoint of doctrine and not of life, while in Christ doctrine and life are identical. This identity is unique in its very essence because it depends directly on the hypostatic union. In so far as the Church is made up of human beings, she can imitate that unique identity only by means of a dualism. Thus we have, on the one hand, the infallible doctrine residing in the apostolic office of Peter, and, on the other, the holiness of life within the (Marian) Church of the saints. Even though, in the Church, both re-presentations of Christ are intimately bound up with one another and exist only as continually oriented toward and pointing to one another, nevertheless, neither of them can replace the other and claim solely for itself the re-presentation of the whole Christ. The teaching Church can set forth the truth; she cannot force believers to accept it in their hearts. With regard to the form of revelation which the Church holds out, the individual is free to obey or not to obey.

The official, authoritative *kerygma* remains a pointer to revelation. Therefore, the believer does not actually believe in propositions of faith, but in what these express and in everything that the living God is in Christ Jesus. For this reason, it is possible that an authentic faith can reach the living God even through insufficiently formulated, or even, in certain cases, erroneous propositions of faith, if God so disposes. The believer's intention is directed towards God, and God's grace can complete whatever aspect of the accurate and objective form of revelation remains obscured, through no fault of his own, for a person within or outside the Church or even Christianity. God's unmediated manifestness in Christ and also in his Church is one thing: the adequate verbal formulation of this manifestation through Christ himself and through his Church, is quite another.[36] It is thus conceivable that a person could reach, not only God, but the true reality of his revelation in Christ and in the essence of the Church even while holding, through no fault of his own, the erroneous opinion that the official formulation in dogma is not an adequate expression of this reality. In order to sustain such a dissociation he would, naturally, have to ignore totally—and again through no fault of his own, as can be the case, for instance, in Protestantism—the intrinsic nexus which exists between the word of revelation and its ecclesially binding expression.

If the ecclesial office of authority is primarily one of 'service' or 'ministry' and, therefore, a pointer to the Lord of the Church, then the ecclesial life that comes from Christ in the Holy Spirit is not only a personal, but, at the same time, a social life, a community of love, oriented toward the Head and nourished by the interchange between the members of the one Body. This interior life of the Church is, as a totality, again a pointer to the fountain of this life—the fulness of Christ and of God in Christ. But, because this divine life is truly lived and expressed in the life of the Church, the Church, as the ‘Body of Christ’, participates intimately in the ‘formedness’ of Christ, and the living, divine Spirit, who expresses himself in this life, becomes more immediately ‘visible’ and conspicuous than in the mere *magisterium* as such, in spite of the fact that both things emphatically belong together. But while the *magisterium* essentially exercises a function of service toward the social body of the Church, this body is not subordinate to the *magisterium* in equal measure: the body is subordinate to its Head, and to the *magisterium* only in so far as such subordination gives concrete expression to the Lord’s obedience in love. The *magisterium* is a means; the life of the Church is an end. And, in turn, it is the end of the Church’s life to embody ever more in the world the form of the Son, to the glorification of the Father, and to make visible the Son’s form to a world that does not believe. Thus, the individual Christian, as a member of the Church, really comes under the law of Christ’s form: he is to embody for the world the evidence of the ‘rightness’ (*Richtigkeit*) of Christ’s truth, which has dawned on him first of all, and this he will do as far as possible (in the ‘analogy of faith’) with the aid of the grace of holiness and mission which has been bestowed on him.

Here we must remember that all Christian grace is grace according to the Christ-form; it derives from the hypostatic union and participates, precisely as grace, in something of this union’s archetypal form: in Christ the Son we, too, become sons of God, and in his brotherhood with us we become brothers to one another according to his model. This means that something of the mystery of the hypostatic union can and must be made visible in concrete form to the world through a Christian life lived in an exemplary way. It goes without saying that this will succeed only when, in the sense of faith and in the obedience of faith, we avoid every ethical or mystical confusion between the member and the Head, every identification that abolishes the distance between them. Such avoidance is readily possible through the continual contemplation of the objective form of revelation, to which the subjective light of faith, hope, and love constantly refers the Christian. The authentic saint is always the one who confuses himself the least with Christ and who, therefore, can most convincingly be transparent to Christ.

At the end of this chapter on the light of faith, the reader will ask himself the question whether we have confined ourselves to our theme or whether we have not, rather, anticipated our later theme concerning the object of faith in a way which raises serious questions. But it is impossible to speak of Christian faith other than by dealing with both light and form (*lumen et species*) at the same time. It is true that the possibility exists—and we have acknowledged it—that the light of faith may fall on an object not fully adequate to this light and that, by means of such an object (but leaving aside all its inadequacies), the light of faith may indeed attain its proper goal to some extent. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the light of faith is only externally determined by its object. It is rather determined in an interior sense by its adequate object, not only because Christ has, by his suffering, earned us our access to the Father, but, more deeply, because Christ, as divine Son become man and as both the Word and Light of the Father, effects our faith, love, and hope in God by his presence and by his Holy Spirit in us. For this reason, the light of faith cannot for a moment be thought of or even experienced as a merely immanent reality in our soul, but solely as the radiance resulting from the presence in us of a *lumen increatum,* a *gratia increata,* without our ever being able to abstract from God's Incarnation when considering this light and this grace. Now, if this light and this grace possess the form of Christ, then what is luminous about them is also determined by the objective form, and there is no possibility, for reasons of religious interiority, of dismantling this synthesis instituted by God. What God has spoken to me interiorly as his illumining and grace-bearing Word possesses, not by chance but essentially, the form which Jesus Christ himself has in the public forum of history, even if his truth, as objective form, becomes visible only to the eyes of faith. It is impossible to dissect the objective Christ into a form, whose sole property it is to 'appear' externally, and a formless light which is what remains for the religious interiority. The whole mystery of Christianity, that which distinguishes it radically from every other religious project, is that the form does not stand in opposition to infinite light, for the reason that God has himself instituted and confirmed such form. And although, being finite and worldly, this form must die just as every other beautiful thing on earth must die, nevertheless it does not go down into the realm of formlessness, leaving behind an infinite tragic longing, but, rather, it rises up to God *as* form, as the form which now, in God himself, has definitively become one with the divine Word and Light which God has intended for and bestowed upon the world. The form itself must participate in the process of death and Resurrection, and thus it becomes coextensive with God's Light-Word. This makes the Christian principle the superabundant and unsurpassable principle of every aesthetics; Christianity becomes *the* aesthetic religion *par excellence*.

Such a structure calls, in the first place, for a radical objectivity: in the subject himself the light of faith is truly a light only if man looks away from himself and, renouncing his own evidence, entrusts himself to the Source that, as a result of grace, stands wide-open before him. But he is capable of achieving such interior self-transcendence perfectly and without a secret mystical identification, only if he recognises the Source of the Light in the form of Jesus Christ, as this form reveals itself to him within the sphere of the Church. Interior self-renunciation (*Entselbstung*, literally 'unselving') has not only its effect, but its basis and constant verification in self-renunciation for the purpose of serving the world—serving the historical Christ, whom I encounter through the Church and in her, and, if I have understood the Gospel, also in every neighbour and in every situation in the world. This objectivism, which is proper to the Catholic principle (as opposed to Protestant interiority and every form of non-Christian mysticism), is the result of taking seriously the *ekstasis* of love, its going out of itself: only in this way can man achieve an act of serious love which corresponds to God's own act of taking love seriously—the act of the divine Eros which goes out of itself in order to become man and die on the Cross for the world (Denys, *Div. Nom.*, IV, 13). The only enthusiasm to be taken seriously is filled with that God who is no other than he who loved the world so much that he preferred it to his only Son. The power of an enthusiasm that shatters all fetters reaches its end and proper goal, not when it tears all forms to shreds in Dionysian fashion or dances them away in the manner of the Hindus—thus finding in death itself its final shackle—but when it can transvaluate death itself into life and shattering force. To do this the Christian need not wait until his physical death, but must begin his work at once; already in baptism he has died radically and had risen unto God, and he then spends the rest of his life training himself in this reality and living it out. In so doing he will experience the fact (and this concept of 'Christian experience' will be the subject of our next chapter) that his worldly form does indeed decay and pass away, but that the light of Christ bestows on him a Christ-like form ever anew. As a human being with body and soul he is, through Christ, hidden and safe in God.

The God who becomes man in order to die and to rise is the only glory of God's that is manifested in the world; Christ is God's total *doxa*, which dwells within him 'corporeally' (Col 2.9), and from Christ's indissoluble form his glory sheds its light on the cosmos. Thus, this radiance must be, inseparably, both a spiritual light and a structured form: inseparably, Holy Spirit and ecclesial norm. Both of these, in their unity, mediate Christ, who mediates God; but no one of these three centres can, for all that, be regarded as the 'intermediary' in a legal sense: for the Spirit is Christ's and the Father's in unity, and the Church is

Christ's Body in unity, and Christ himself is one in essence with the Father. To be sure, only faith, through its light, is able to discover this radiant transparency of God's manifestation in Christ and in the Church. Where, for other unenlightened eyes, there seem to stand intermediary figures as obstacles, there precisely it is that faith perceives its own light within the form of revelation. Indeed, stated more fully and exactly: it is precisely in looking at the form of revelation that faith becomes luminous to itself and understands the genuine *ekstasis* of love demanded by God: 'In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins' (1 Jn 4.10). This is precisely the light that God has implanted in the world and that is capable of awakening in me faith in God. And if God, in anticipation, infused into me a longing for true love, so as to draw me to it (Jn 6.44), he did this only that I might recognise it when it emerges before my eyes in corporeal form. The light of faith is an echo of God's love, which, in the fidelity of the man Christ went 'to the very limits' of love. In this way, Christ did not annul everything in the Old Testament that depended on law and on form; rather, his achievement was to make these things transparent to the light of love and to live them as the expression of the Old Testament's covenant-fidelity (*fides* in the fullest sense), now brought to perfection.[37] In this sense, the *fides quae* of the Christian is the *fides qua* of Christ as he faces the Father, and even the Christian's *fides qua* lives from the radiance of this light of Christ, which we can characterise as the Christian's archetypal *fides* and which shapes the totality of his form by making the whole man into an adequate answer to God's Word.

B. THE EXPERIENCE OF FAITH

1. EXPERIENCE AND MEDIATION

a. Theological Analysis of Existence

What we have just said now makes it possible to go on and raise, with full theological justification—*sine ira et studio*—, the question of the experience of faith. Regardless how problematic the concept of experience has become in the history of theology, in heresiology, in Catholic and Protestant theology and, finally, in polemical theology, it nevertheless remains indispensable when faith is understood as the encounter of the whole person with God. And it is precisely the whole man that God desires to have before him. He wants for his Word the response of the whole man. God wants man not only with his intellect (which would, in any case, have to be sacrificed to a truth which is not self-evident), but, from the outset, also with his will; he wants man not only with his soul, but also and equally with his body. With regard to faith it is always good to impress upon oneself the fact that the faith of the New Testament, in this connection also, must not fall behind but, rather, surpass the faith of the Old Testament. For this reason, here too the *fides ex auditu* (*praedicantium*) is not the exclusive model for faith (the ‘ex’ expresses only the manner of access to faith); such an absolute model is to be found only in the act of existence of Jesus Christ himself, through which he wanted to become, and in fact did become, the ἀϱχηγὸς ϰαὶ τελειωτὴς τῆς πίστεως (Heb 12.2).

It is possible that the analysis of the ‘light of faith’, taken from the theological tradition, could in itself still give the impression that in faith we are dealing with a particular and isolated act of man, an act which, moreover, because of its specific ‘supernaturality’, can only be characterised when seen from below in primarily negative terms, in terms that is of the ‘opacity’ of the object of faith. This is an impression which we have constantly tried to dispel in the previous section; and now, by further introducing the concept of experience, we intend to eliminate this false notion altogether. And indeed the theme of the present work can be seen through to the end only if this concept is sustained in the theological realm. For whatever else is true, the beautiful requires the reaction of the whole man, even though it is initially perceived by means of only one or more sense-faculties. In the end, however, all our senses are engaged when the interior space of a beautiful musical composition or painting opens itself to us and captivates us: the whole person then enters into a state of vibration and becomes responsive space, the ‘sounding box’ of the event of beauty occurring within him. This all the more so where human eros is concerned, and yet more in the encounter with the divine eros! And yet in the latter case what is involved is not at all ‘vibrations of cosmic sympathy’, but rather the transport of a divine συμ-πάθεια, effected and given shape by God. And it becomes clear at once that faith in the full Christian sense can be nothing other than this: to make the whole man a space that responds to the divine content. Faith attunes man to this sound; it confers on man the ability to react precisely to this divine experiment, preparing him to be a violin that receives just this touch of the bow, to serve as material for just this house to be built, to provide the rhyme for just this verse being composed. This was the reaction already envisaged when the Covenant was made on Sinai: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’ In the New Covenant it cannot, therefore, be a *cura posterior*, whereas, by contrast, the concern of the former Covenant would have been to produce a docile intellect which accepts a faith that proposes and holds as true a certain number of dogmas. The first concern is also the last: how man can come to correspond totally to God according to the archetype of Christ and in imitation of him.

With this the whole splendour and the whole difficulty of the Christian experience of faith lie open before us. If faith is the attunement and adaptation of the whole of existence to God, then we could just as well call faith obedience, for such indeed it is. But let us not forget the strict obedience exacted even by worldly beauty both from the creating artist and from the re-creating admirer who contemplates and enjoys it. The artist has an idea which must be realised and which accepts no excuses until the creator has expended his last energies in the service of this coming-into-reality. Service of the beautiful can constitute the hardest kind of asceticism, and so it has always been with the greatest creators. But all the vital acts of renunciation demanded by the inexorable Muse were directed by the enrapturing impulse to help her enter visibility by engaging all one’s psychic and bodily powers in the task. Like many others before them, Spitteler (in his *Prometheus*) and Claudel (in his *La Muse qui est la Grace*) developed the analogy between aesthetic creation and religious faith. In faith, however, man is at one and the same time artist and artifact. Thus, obedience is not opposed to the beautiful. The work of art itself corresponds in strictest fashion to a law that Georg Simmel has called the ‘law of individuality’, which really is a law and not mere roving freedom. This law exacts its necessity from itself, and subjects to it each of its parts. The fact that this law is not imposed on the individual from without, but is developed from the deepest centre of his being, does not simply eliminate its character as law in favour of a total autonomy. Thus, natural beauty as found in individual forms obeys a generic and a universal life which manifests itself and takes form through the individual form. And even the total life of the cosmos (as *Natura naturans* ET *naturata*) is not simply autonomous, but copies the highest divine and archetypal ideas. In this way, even in the natural realm, to which man also belongs in so far as he possesses natural and spiritual beauty and is a creating spirit, we find no absolute autonomy, since even in the realm of free creation the law of gradation, that relates the ideal and the real, freedom and obligation, exercises its power.

This is the more true when the realm of archetypes—the world of ideas, which is the *Logos* of God—becomes man and, along with the archetype of man, represents in himself the archetype of the entire cosmos as well. The only thing that can correspond to his (literally) ‘trans-porting’ beauty, a beauty, moreover, which exacts imitation, is a pliancy of the whole man which places one’s entire existence at his disposal as malleable material to be shaped into his image. However, the archetype which, in Christ, came forth from God cannot, by definition, be unearthed from the depths of man, not even by the most penetrating analysis, neither as a ‘lost image which must be restored’ (Plotinus) nor as a ‘hidden archetype which must be made conscious’ (Jung). No matter where such long-buried human ideals are dug up and then displayed in mankind’s museums after having been thoroughly cleansed and restored, in no case will they be the image which the free God has sent out from himself into the world: ‘This is my beloved Son. Listen to him!’ The experience of human totality and human depths is not, therefore, the way which opens up to the Christian experience of faith, even though this human depth and totality is subsequently put at the service of the Christian experience and, what is more, has already been incorporated by God himself into the image of the man Christ. If experience—and we will return to this—even in a worldly sense is not a *state* but an *event* (and the very form of the word points to this with the prefix ex-[38]), it follows that it is not man’s entry (*Einfahren*) into himself, into his best and highest possibilities, which can become an experience (*Erfahrung*), but, rather, it is his act of entering into the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who is naturally inaccessible to him, which becomes the experience that alone can claim for itself his undivided obedience.[39]

At the outset, then, we can raise the question on which theologians have placed such stress: Can a person know anything about his own faith? Or, in other words: Can (Christian) faith be an object of experience? Augustine unreservedly answered in the affirmative: the believer knows that, in Christ, he has recognised and assented to the Son of God. ‘If there is faith in us, we will see him’ (De Trin. 13c 1 n. 3). And Thomas, too, followed Augustine in this: within human reason, faith is *ut forma intelligibilis* (Ver. 8, 3 ad 7), *per interiorem actum cordis. Nullus enim fidem se habere scit, nisi per hoc quod se credere percipit* (Ia 87, 2 ad i). But what they both here point to is a psychological datum. For Augustine, the other data of consciousness are in like manner perceived directly by the interior vision, and Thomas confirms this accordingly (for instance, a *habitus* is perceived by its acts). And so theologians in fact went on to ask: Is what is recognised here more than a psychological fact, more than something belonging to human nature? Is it something specifically supernatural, something effected by God? In the post-Cartesian context in which this question was asked, a certain hesitation in answering is understandable. For Suarez and many of his followers (particularly of the Jesuit school, which sharply separates psychological-natural objects from supernatural ones, which cannot be experienced) reflection on the act of faith can attain only to a conjectural certainty. The tendency is here very strong to affirm that Christian faith cannot be known, but must itself likewise be believed. Only a palpable submission to the Church’s rule of faith guarantees the presence of a solid, though external, criterion. Such minimalism, however, does not in turn appear to correspond sufficiently to the Church’s own faith-consciousness, as, for instance, when from an adult neophyte, about to be baptised, the Church expects a confession of faith as an undisputable fact and reality. Immediately following the confession of faith, this same faith is, in the sacrament, definitively established, brought to completion and made to be interiorly luminous (φωτισμός).

In our context, such a question is far from idle because it shows clearly the relationship between faith and experience. The way to a solution is indicated by the fact that Thomas, who rejects an experiential certainty of our being in a state of grace, must logically limit the certainty of faith to the *fides informis*,[40] to which he adds the natural certainty found in submission to the Church’s norm of faith. Although here something is said that is beyond what Suarez would admit—namely, the *donum infusum*—nevertheless the way for a double limitation is opened. Both the will’s psychological act of believing what the Church presents as dogma and the *donum infusum* as such constitute but the point of departure for what Old and New Testaments call ‘faith’ in the fullest sense. The neophyte’s confession of faith, too, which humanly speaking is entirely sincere, is only the entry into a living relationship in the covenant with God; only life itself will demonstrate whether the person takes this covenant seriously, and whether to his own truth and will he seriously prefers the truth of God, which is expressed in God’s will and law. The Prophets frequently enough proved to the people of Israel, who presumed that for the most part they existed in a covenant-relationship with God, that in their actual existence they had broken the fidelity and faith of that Covenant. In this sense, the (psychological) testing of faith remains questionable both initially and also later on: for who can say to himself that he is living in accordance with the law of the Covenant, which in the New Testament is Christ himself? In other words, even if I knew that *God* had granted me faith as an infused gift, I could never be certain that *I* had received this faith in the manner God expects of me. But the second point is more important: if faith is the freely given participation in the perfect covenant-fidelity of Jesus Christ, then this faith does not really belong to me in its origin and in its centre, but to God in Christ. He is the mother-plant, so to speak, and I am only a shoot from it, and I cannot clasp faith’s supernatural reality to myself as if it were something belonging to me as a possession. In faith and through it, rather, I am made open and dispossessed of self. The ‘psychological’ element of which I could become certain is the least interesting and characteristic side of faith. The important thing is the movement away from myself, the preference of what is other and greater, and precisely the person who has been expropriated for God does not want to become fully secure with regard to this Other and Greater.

Seen from this perspective, Christian experience can mean only the progressive growth of one’s own existence into Christ’s existence, on the basis of Christ’s continuing action in taking shape in the believer: ‘until Christ has taken shape in you’ (Gal 4.19).

This can, in the first place, be observed and ascertained on a purely human level: for instance, any disciple whatsoever trains and adapts himself to his master’s manner of thinking, and growing in this way he has the living experience of what it is to exist within this manner of thought and life. But once it has been determined that the point in Christ Jesus which explains his life-form does not lie within the purely human sphere and structure, but that everything about him rings true only when one accepts his own presupposition of being the Son of God: then the initiation of our life into this supernatural form becomes, at the same time, an initiation (and, therefore, an experience) within the realm of God’s own reality, and hence it finally becomes the process by which this reality takes shape in the believer. However, the rightness of the form of revelation, initially ‘seen’ in faith—the form to which the believer surrenders and entrusts himself—is *confirmed within this existence of self-surrender as being true and correct, and this gives the believer a new form of Christian certitude which can be called ‘Christian experience’.*

The classical text for this is 2 Cor 13.3-9, which speaks of the *experimentum* of the truth of faith, in the double sense of ‘test of endurance’ and of ‘proof ‘(δοϰιμή). The Corinthians seek a proof for the fact that God’s Spirit is really speaking through Paul; Paul appears to them to be too much a ‘weakling’ (10.10) for this. Paul threatens to come to them with God’s condemnation, which would demonstrate and prove God’s power in him, if they do not beforehand bring themselves to see and understand the mystery of his having been authentically tested in the faith, and they can do this only if they themselves can pass the test as true believers. To do this, however, means to understand the mystery of Christ in faith: he is the one who ‘lives in the power of God’ precisely because ‘he was crucified in weakness’; and, furthermore, it means acknowledging this mystery to be normative for the existence both of Paul and of the community. The whole power of Paul’s manner of proof lies in the fact that he ‘does not commend himself’, which means that he does not ‘measure himself’ by his own standard or ‘compare himself’ with himself (10.12). In other words, the point is that Paul does not develop his proof on the psychological level: it cannot be conducted at this level because here it would risk turning into a ‘boasting beyond limit’ on the part of the religious subject, and it would thus prove to be the opposite of faith. ‘For it is not the man who commends himself that stands the test, but the man whom the Lord commends’ (by making him conform fully to himself, his weakness, and his strength: 10.18). In this sense, Paul did not commend himself as such, but himself only as a ‘servant of God’ with a total destiny (‘through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments’, and so on) which demonstrates the extent to which the form of Christ has become a reality in his life.

This much granted, it is not difficult to understand 2 Cor 13.3 ff.:

> You desire proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful in you. For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. Thus, we too are weak in him, but in dealing with you we are vivified with him by the power of God. Examine yourselves, to see whether you are holding to your faith. Test yourselves! Or have you not experienced the fact that Jesus Christ is [mighty and living] in you? Then, indeed, you would fail to meet the test! At the very least, I hope you will [by all means] experience the fact that we have not failed the test [that is to say, when Paul comes to them with the threatened condemnation from God and they will have to experience in their own bodies Christ’s power in him]. But we pray that God may spare you this dire pass—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. . . . For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong.

In this way, for Paul the experience of faith is a conclusive proof as long as it proceeds from faith and is conducted on the standard of faith: it is a living demonstration of the rightness of the fundamental premise that in the believer’s weakness Christ can show himself to be strong. And this does not simply mean that as the feeble creature ‘decreases’ the strong God can ‘increase’ in it; what is meant is that in this process the fundamental law of Christ becomes implanted in man: to be strong in God through weakness. One last thought is necessary for the full power of the proof as intended by Paul. Christ shows himself to be ‘strong’ in Paul by the fact that he has appointed Paul to his apostolic office. It is his office which is the strong element in Paul because by subordinating his life to his office, Paul does not serve himself but rather Christ’s mandate and, therefore, Christ himself. But Paul does not divorce his office from the living, pneumatic power of Christ in the Church: the ‘mere office’, the judgment which he could by all rights exercise in Corinth, is mentioned only as a threat and as a possibility whose enforcement Paul reserves for the most extreme cases.

From this perspective the whole theological analysis of Christian existence could be developed in all its rich interconnections and gradations, but we would always have to return to the point from which we had taken our departure: Christian existence is *demonstrated* and proven as an existence that ‘rings true’ because it is an existence in faith, which is to say in the continuous act of surrender to him who has first surrendered himself for us. Turning away from self is the very foundation of faith and, thus, also the goal of what is to be proven; this is why the highest Christian experience and gnosis can never surpass this faith, but only strengthen it and demonstrate its rightness. There is no possibility here that this analysis of existence could imperceptibly turn into a closed-off ‘understanding of self’ from which Christ, the actual object of faith, could then be excluded, secretly and innocuously, to be replaced, at most, by an ‘historical (*historisch*) Jesus’ who would be a purely historical (*geschichtlich*) ‘occasion’ for this existence.[41] The whole power of the proof lies, rather, in the principle ‘It is not I that live, but Christ lives in me’—in the objective, unsurpassable fact that the whole sphere of the ego has been overridden by the sphere of Christ: ‘That I may know him and [experience in myself] the power of *his* Resurrection and become a partaker in *his* body, receiving the very form of *his* death, and if (εἴ πως) possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I run after it so as to grasp it, because Christ Jesus has already grasped me’ (Phil 3.10ff.).

Everything is poised in the suspension resulting from having let go of self, in an existence lived as uninterrupted flight to the goal. The person ‘impelled’ by the Spirit (Rom 8.14) can no longer be judged from the standpoint which he has abandoned (1 Cor 2.14f.): he cannot even judge himself any more (2 Cor 4.3). The logical consequences of this for the formulation of Christian experience are very far-reaching; they bear directly on the problem of Christian hope, which cannot be solved by a static approach. Bergson’s problem emerges here again at the theological level: the flight itself cannot be caught in a series of static frames as in a film, however fast these may succeed one another. The goal of salvation is *grasped* in flight, because the flight can be understood only through its goal; but it is grasped only *in flight* and not in itself, and, therefore, it cannot be translated into a static ‘certainty of salvation’. ‘I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my salvation, *in keeping with* my eager expectation and hope that I shall not be at all ashamed, but with the triumphant trust that now as always Christ will assert himself gloriously in my body, whether by life or by death’ (Phil 1.19f.). We could call this statement an expression of ‘certainty of salvation’, but one which is neither personal in a private sense (since being dispossessed into apostleship, Paul is no longer a private person but an *anima ecclesiastica*), nor simply totalitarian (in the sense of a systematic doctrine of *apokatastasis*): it is a certainty in flight, guaranteed by the Holy Spirit who buoys up the flyer because the latter, as a pneumatic, has entrusted and delivered himself over to the Spirit. And even this self-abandonment is never a deed and an accomplishment of the person, but his permitting the condition of already having been retrieved by Christ.

This is experience in the most all-inclusive sense of the word: insight acquired by travelling to a place.[42] This experience can be acquired in no way other than by having it, and only he can have it who surrenders himself to the movement of the journey: the person who actualises his faith and exists as a believer. Here lies the transition from the ‘psychic’, who has the Spirit only ‘theoretically’ but does not actualise it, to the ‘pneumatic’ who makes room for the Spirit in himself. The former does not ‘receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because a discerning judgment about them can only be made spiritually’ (1 Cor 2.14). This is why dogma (that is, the doctrine concerning Christ as the Son of God who dies and rises for us and in us) can be developed only on the model of the pneumatic and can be understood in its total truth only by him. Christian dogmatics unfolds in the medium of faith, and for Paul this means a faith lived in one’s existence: here is to be found the proof of dogma, its coherence, as well as its objective intelligibility and its subjective comprehensibility. In this sense, experience naturally does not have the least thing in common with ‘feeling’ (in Schleiermacher’s sense) or with modern irrationality, because that towards which existence is ‘travelling’ and has always ‘travelled’ (or *been made* to travel!) through God’s grace is the objective, trinitarian reality of God, who has ‘first’ (see Rom 5.8) had mercy on us.

But if dogma becomes demonstrable, and is in fact demonstrated, within the sphere of pneumatic existence, then the ‘perfect’ Christian is also the perfect proof of the truth of Christianity: in the Christian’s existential transparency, Christianity becomes comprehensible both in itself and to the world and itself exhibits a spiritual transparency. The saint is the apology for the Christian religion. He is holy, however, because he allows Christ to live in him, and it is in Christ that he ‘glories’. For a closed anthropological ethics there will always be something scandalous about the openness with which Paul demonstrates the nature of Christian sanctity by pointing to himself (with the ultimate aim of demonstrating the dogmatic truth) and with which he undertakes, before the Church and before the whole world, an analysis of his own existence. But such openness is nothing other than the precisely and obediently reflected splendour, at the ecclesial level, of Christ’s unique claim to be in himself, in his living existence, the truth of God. This apparent *hybris* can be resolved only in a Christian sense, by the fact that Christ ‘seeks not his own honour, but the honour of him who sent him’, and it is not himself that Paul demonstrates, but rather the existence of Christ within Paul’s life, which life has become wholly identified with his office and his ministry. By the fact that he exhibits in himself what existence in the Christian office is (an existence wholly bound up within the vocation, from his mother’s womb, to be an apostle of Christ), even Paul’s self-awareness and his insight into his own uniqueness belong to the manner in which he follows Christ. It is a matter of vocation *as* office, expropriation *as* function.[43]

The distinctive factor in Paul’s Christian experience is, doubtless, rooted in the vision at Damascus, which he was convinced added him to the number of the first apostles. And yet, we ought not to be concerned for the time being with this peculiarity in his experience because what it, at most, contributes to Paul’s self-understanding is that it legitimises his claim to be an apostle. As far as Christian existence is concerned, however, it in no way raises him above the level of other Christians. The archetypal vision of Christ has its place somehow among the charisms (*quosdam autem apostolos*), which differentiate according to its functions a possession of the Spirit that is common to all. But the experiential character as such is not proper to this differentiation, but is the common possession of the whole Church. This shared element can be called ‘faith’, but it can also be called ‘possession of the Spirit’, and, because the Spirit is the Spirit of God and of Christ, it can also be called ‘love’. From the standpoint of love (1 Cor 13) the charisms are criticised, ordered, rendered intelligible, just as everything functional and ministerial in the Church is to be measured by the Christ-life lived by Christians. It is love that believes and hopes (1 Cor 13.7). Love is the central characteristic of the flight between the Old and the New Aeon, between the old man who dies daily and the new man who daily rises in and for Christ. Love alone mediates gnosis, the authentic Christian gnosis (1 Cor 8.1ff.). Because love 'edifies', through it there arises the edifice which alone is worth knowing and which, in turn, cannot be recognised by anything other than by love. But this love does not have knowledge of itself or of its own work, but of the fulness of Christ (Eph 4.13, 16).

Nevertheless, the flight away from self to God is not a 'forgetting of self' (Phil 3. 13) in the sense that man thereby loses himself. Rather, in the experience of the Spirit there is bestowed on man the deepest possible experience of himself: for the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of revelation which illuminates the human spirit, in which it is immanent, by telling man what he is. In its cry from the spirit ('Abba, Father!'), 'the Spirit itself testifies to our spirit that we are children of God', and from this living witness Paul draws the implication: 'If children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ' (Rom 8.17). Here too, then, within the most interior Christian consciousness, we see dogma developing out of experience, an experience which is not at all a psychological experience (in the sense of liberal or modernistic theology), but one which is a 'dogmatic' experience from the outset since the witness which the Spirit speaks to us in our interior can never be interpreted as a soliloquy on the part of the child of God. For the fact that we are children of God is attested to by the Spirit in us only at the same time that he shows us the condition from which we have come: we have been delivered from slavery to sin and to the devil, from a state of decay induced by a world which is itself decayed, a world out of which (and this is the most evident thing!) we could never have delivered ourselves. Indeed, we could not even ascribe to ourselves the power of the longing to escape from this state of decay: it is the Spirit who, from within man and the world, groans to God with unspeakable sighs and, by so doing, first of all makes man and his world aware of their fallenness and decay. It is possible that this interior dialogue of the Spirit could appear to approach too closely the Hegelian dialectic between finite and infinite spirit, though one which attributes to this dialectic (which nonetheless remains a dialectic between identical spirits) a certain personal and dialogical character; the impression could thus arise that this dialogue serves as basis for a pure theology of experience. In this case, however, our dependency on the historical Christ, dead and risen, would always remain in force: Christ's claim to be the *Kyrios* cannot be interchanged for anything else, and for Paul this claim is not distinguishable by one hair's breadth from the claim of the 'historical Jesus'.

Looking back from this vantage-point, we must put a large question-mark against anything which passes for an analysis of religious existence outside Christianity. Such analysis will necessarily lack the objective ground which makes possible and illuminates the religious character of existence as a 'flight', and, therefore, it will also fail to achieve a proper self-understanding of such an experience of having been cast into the world (*Geworfenheit*). Such an analysis could be relevant only if it occurred within a constantly sustained abstraction, a condition that renounces all ultimate interpretation—something which could hardly be required of it precisely since it is a *philosophical* analysis. On the other hand, elements from such analyses can be useful for a theology of Christian experience to the extent that this theology can judge those elements (1 Cor 2.15): whether as a characterisation of the existence unto death of the Old Aeon, along with all its experiences and values, or to show how the death of Christ effects a 'silencing' of this world's powers which is manifested at least indirectly in all existence. Thus, every instance of 'self-consciousness' on the part of man in fact contains some (theological) points of contact for the Christian message. As a matter of fact, everything which the Epistle to the Romans says about the sinner's condition and his self-condemnation (chs. 1-3, ch. 7) is said on the basis of both a very strong theological *a priori* and of an unmasking of the universal human conscience. Something very similar occurs, for instance, when, in his *City of God*, Augustine puts the 'city of the world' under blinding theological lights, and yet conducts his analysis relying almost entirely on quotations from Roman writers.

b. The Experience of the Logos

If we pass from Paul to John, who constitutes the second classical instance of a New Testament theology of experience, we leave a spiritual world which is impetuous and agitated almost in a violent sense and enter the calm of what 'abides'. Paul's fundamental experience is that of being snatched up by Christ's *dynamis* from one aeon and being transferred to the other. Paul overwhelms us because he has himself been overwhelmed. Damascus is a flash of lightning and remains such for the rest of the Apostle's life. John, on the other hand, has been marked out ever since his first meeting with Jesus at the Jordan: ' "Come and see!" And they went along and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day' (1.39). To be sure, John too is one transported by love; but he is so profoundly at rest in this movement that, for him, it becomes the very presence of eternity—'fulfilled eschatology'. It is impossible to overlook the parallel to the aesthetic mode of experience if we consider the statement at the beginning of the First Epistle, a passage which formulates concisely what has occurred in the Gospel: 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life. . . .’ (1 Jn 1.1).

After so many clarifications, we do not need again to repeat the warning against taking the word and the concept ‘aesthetic’ in a devalued modern sense emptied of meaning. Nor need we insist on the danger of taking as a solid foundation the inner-worldly, philosophical structure of the aesthetic and of measuring theological realities by it without any transposition. Rather, we are presuming that the reader has been disposed to accept both of these correctives and that he remains mindful of them. What we can now say is that, in general, and particularly in the First Epistle, Johannine theology is aesthetic, and this in two respects. In the first place, for John the divine glory appears ‘in the flesh’ within one individual, absolutely privileged, finite form, and no philosophical, religious, or mystical possibility is foreseen that could in any sense surpass, spiritualise or otherwise refine this form. Secondly, in this form absolute Being itself makes its appearance. We cannot here avoid the philosophical term ‘Being’ because it alone gives full weight to the inner-worldly, aesthetic phenomenon, and because the Johannine affirmation concerning Christ and God occurs, theologically speaking, precisely in the same locus where the philosophico-mythical affirmation concerning the human experience of the world and God takes place. To say this is not in any way to hint at historical ‘influences’ on John, whether gnostic or derived from the philosophico-religious systems of Hellenistic thought; rather, such ‘influences’ would appear to be highly questionable. And even if such a stimulus did come to John from gnostic speculations (which he certainly was aware of since he rejects them), what it did was to provoke in him a very different kind of affirmation. As against gnostic aestheticism, which delighted in ‘bottomless fables’ and did not take God’s Incarnation seriously—indeed, found it a total impossibility given the gnostic world-view—we have the affirmation of God’s taking on a definitive form in man, an event which, to the degrading game with all that belongs to the senses, juxtaposes the unsurpassable seriousness of a *sensatio* of the divine beauty. The numerous paradoxes of the Johannine theology of experience, which cannot be resolved by rational means, are all the expression, not of a dialectic of concepts, but of a reposing in the (supra-philosophical) contemplation of Being in the beloved Thou, which is at once God and man and which is worthy of all possible believing and adoring love. In this Thou God is visible and present; in him all the heart’s unrest due to sin is transcended. Because he surrenders his life for his own, his existence is a love that atones for everything, brings everything to rest and transfigures it with eternal light.

The aesthetic experience is the union of the greatest possible concreteness of the individual form and the greatest possible universality of its meaning or of the epiphany within it of the mystery of Being. The most powerful experience of it outside of Christianity, furthermore, connects this epiphany with place and time, with a *kairos*, a happening: in the appearance of a god the divine has approached men and become manifest to them. John does not dissociate himself from this *kairos*: he himself has lived and experienced it, and he wants to proclaim it and witness to it in order to bring into communion with this *kairos* all who have not heard or seen or touched. For the *kairos* remains the universally valid norm, and ‘every spirit’ which does not ‘confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh . . . is not of God’ (1 Jn 4.2f.).

In the first place, we can and must say that in the Christian understanding of the *kairos* all impersonal or only half-personal categories of myth and philosophy have become wholly personal. The meaning of the verbs φανεϱοῦν, φανεϱοῦσθαι (‘to shine forth’, ‘to reveal or re-present oneself’), which John so likes to use, is far-removed from any merely ontological interpretation and has been transposed into the sphere of a personal self-manifestation on the part of the eternal and loving God: the Son’s becoming man *is* the love of the Father, indeed, of the whole God, now become manifest. For, as he gives his life for the world, the Son is God’s love at work fully expressing itself (1 Jn 4.9f.). The very form in flesh and blood, therefore, is, as such, the pure light of divine love pouring itself out: in Christ the *species* and the *lumen* coincide—as manifest, personal love. But what is most peculiar to John is that he does not stop at the personal aspect, but rather identifies it with the ontological aspect. This self-diffusing love is *the* Light, *the* Truth, and both of these refer to the same thing: the reality which, to its very foundation, is transparent both to itself and to all who come to behold it. This aspect of Biblical revelation emerges in its definitive form only with John. John’s categories of the ‘knowledge of God’ must, indeed, be traced back to Old Testament forms of thought;[44] but within the covenant-relationship the person of Yahweh so emphatically remains ‘the Other’ that he was permanently conceived of as ‘he who is absolutely’, but not as the one who occupies the locus of Being. Hegel pointed to this and saw in it the new and definitive character of the New Testament: in the Incarnation God is, at the same time, Himself and his Self’s Other, and it is only in this way that God reveals himself as absolute Being. This is what John saw, and he firmly came to grasp it in his contemplation of the Son of God; but, precisely because he understood the revelation of Being as personal, he drew back from going beyond the form to attain an absolute knowledge as Hegel did later. For John, a love that believes is itself unsurpassable gnosis. What philosophical ontology sees as the immanence of Being in every existent (while accepting that there is a permanent ontological difference) remains for John the free, gracious, loving indwelling of

God in man and, based upon it, of man in God. R. Schnackenburg has rightly stressed the central importance of ‘formulas of reciprocal immanence’ in John (1 Jn 3.24; 4.13, 15f.; Jn 14.20; 17.21, 23, 26), for which ‘no real parallels can be produced from non-Christian literature.’[45] Neither Jewish piety nor the piety of Hellenistic philosophy offer any models for these formulas in John, nor does even gnosticism. John is not ‘mystical’, if by this one understands extraordinary experiences of union with God, since for him this union is open to all men. ‘On the other hand, such an intimate reciprocal union with Christ takes place that we could indeed speak of a “mysticism of Being”.’[46]

Now we can see the so-called Johannine dualism of light and darkness in a new light. For, if this unity of the ontological and the personal is preserved, then we cannot at bottom speak of two ‘realms’ (in the extreme sense of Persian Manichaeanism); but, rather, good and evil relate to one another as Being and Non-Being, or more exactly, as the Being (of man) in the Being (of God)—and outside that Being. This vantage-point should make us stop seeing in such a negative light the Fathers’ borrowing of a Neo-Platonic ontology for their interpretation of the Biblical reality, as usually happens in Protestant quarters. St. John’s ‘darkness’ is, in actual fact, an existence lived in total withdrawal from God’s light, life and love. The devil’s personality as the leader of a counter-kingdom hardly features in John: the ‘spirit’ of opposition to God decides that the ‘anointing of the divine Spirit’, the ‘seed’ of God in man and the consequent ‘being begotten of God’ will be replaced by the self-sufficient, self-deifying emptiness of an ego that ‘seeks its own glory’.

Like Paul, the Christian lives an existence in faith, faith being understood as a living handing over of self to God. For John, such self-surrender to the incarnate Beloved is simply one and the same thing as love. Faith underscores the movement of self-renunciation in this love, the movement whereby the Beloved himself, along with all his being and mentality, become one’s very own law. For this reason, in John the act of continual contemplation of the Beloved is inextricably an ‘aesthetic’ and an ‘ethical’ act: to see him as he *is* not only presupposes the readiness to renounce everything of one’s own, but actually requires such readiness at every instant. Seen with the eyes of faith, bliss and sacrificial self-abandonment are identical. This is precisely why the act of faith can be described and maintained only by means of the paradox which it also exhibits in John. On the one hand, what is inalienable is kept inalienably; on the other hand, one must be held in suspense in the constant danger of not being oneself able to guarantee ‘abiding’ in the Beloved. At the foundation of the act of faith, as understood by John, there lies, even at the psychological level, the irresolvable paradox of knowing oneself (as love) in the movement towards the Beloved (a knowledge which includes the experience of God and of self) and, yet, of not being allowed to reflect upon oneself, for such a looking in the mirror of the self would incur the loss of love. For ‘truth’, as John understands it, is to be found in the unconditional abandonment of what is one’s own for the sake of the Beloved. Such truth, therefore, does not reside merely in the supratemporal validity of a ‘proposition’; rather, it touches the supratemporal itself existentially—the eternity of God, in which it participates by making room for it within itself. Hence, a faith that loves is an experience of the eternal. And, thus, the loss of such a faith becomes an insoluble riddle. When a loss of this kind involves others, we can say: ‘They were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us’ (1 Jn 2.19). But, when we ourselves are concerned, recourse can be had only to the urgent exhortation to ‘abide’. ‘*If* what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father’ (1 Jn 2.24): what has been heard is the Son’s command to love, which is entrusted to the believer’s free movement of love; but this command *is* the Son himself and, therefore, possesses eternity and gives a share in eternity to the act which embraces him, the Son.

The ethical component in this warning ought not to make us forget the aesthetic aspect of loving contemplation. In the experience of worldly beauty the moment is eternity. The form, containing eternity, of the beautiful object communicates something of its supratemporality to the condition of the person who experiences it in contemplation. Nevertheless, the ‘sorrow of the gods’ (*Göttertrauer*) wafts about the beautiful form, for it must die, and the state of being blissfully enraptured always includes a knowledge of its tragic contradiction: both the act and the object contain within themselves the death that contradicts their very content. In John there can be no talk of the ‘sorrow of the gods’, for the Beloved who dies dies out of love; his death is not a limitation, but the mighty expression of his love (Jn 10.18). Therefore, the believer does not contain death in himself as ‘anguish’ (as with worldly beauty) but, rather, if he really believes, he has already left anguish behind (1 Jn 4.17f.). And yet there remains a certain trembling on the part of a freedom that surrenders itself—a tremor over whether it is really giving itself, over whether it has really taken the law of the Beloved upon itself, over whether it has attained to a faith that is love. . . . John approves of this form of anguish, but, contrary to the Gnostics, he requires the confession of sins and exhorts his children not to sin, to beware of idols, to love not in words but in deed and in truth (1 Jn 1.8; 2.1; 5.21; 3.18). But in spite of this, John seeks to calm this incipient unrest of the heart by outbidding it, for ‘whenever our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything' (1 Jn 3.20; *cf*. Jn 21.17).

But this quieting of the heart by the fact that God is greater nevertheless has as its premise that we have pledged ourselves to the law of love. It is not as simple as saying that God, who is not bound to any relation and who is from the outset unattainable makes it his (one-sided) task to establish the correct relationship with man. If this were all that was to be said, then Christian experience would be nothing other than what, since Luther, has been called in many different variations the 'experience of grace' (at the same time as personal sinfulness remains) and 'certainty of salvation' (within and because of one's state of being totally lost). Then the only criterion of true experience is the consciousness of having received grace. John would admit such a formulation only in connection with his own central criterion: 'Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth. *By this* we shall know that we are of the truth, and can reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything', namely this above all: that we love him, that is, that we *want* to love him in spite of our failures (1 Jn 3.18ff.). This is why Jean Mouroux is right to stress again and again the structured, composite character of Christian experience, which can never be fastened onto a single content or state, a sensual or spiritual perception, a feeling or a particular experience: Christian experience, rather, implies a progressive entrance of the believing person into the total reality of faith and the progressive 'realisation' of this reality. Pascal, Kierkegaard, and Newman understood Christian experience in no other way. The best justification for this are the criteria of experience that in John continually circle around each other, always pointing one to the other. And the impossibility of ordering John's different aspects at the theoretico-theological level into a manageable system (although each aspect can in itself be rigorously demonstrated from the form of revelation) points us in the direction of another level of synthesis, that of Christian experience as the fruit of a faith lived in obedience to God.

This, the level of experience, is even in ordinary life the realm where all life's irreconcilable aspects become integrated. The recalcitrance and drudgery of everyday existence induce us to flee into a sphere of illusion where we think we are going to come face to face with the beautiful in distilled form. And yet we know that it is only the overcoming of workaday rigours and perseverance in them that will hew out the precious stone which has to emerge from the rough block of our existence. The really beautiful shines from the place where the real has itself acquired form, where the seductive opposition between illusion and disillusion has been transcended. The totality of existence remains a mystery, but one the form of whose appearance is not a strange enigma for the experienced person who has been tested by existence; for him it is a luminous space which he has embraced. By having experienced existence the person who has thus become wise now understands something of the mystery of Being.

Here, too, philosophy (this time as 'philosophy of life') in John becomes transparent to a Christian gnosis. The fact that the man wise in a worldly sense does not shy away from speaking about the law of Being, to which he submits and molds himself, throws light on why John, as lover, speaks so much about law and command, since for him 'pliancy' (or submissiveness) is a criterion for love. That it is 'law' follows necessarily from our sinfulness: law is the stern countenance which love shows the person who does not yet possess it. For John does not know any command other than love's, which integrates all the commandments. It is with such a presupposition as this that we must listen to these words: 'By this we may be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He who says "I know him" but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God [as God's love for man and man's love for God] is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in him: he who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked' (1 Jn 2.3-6). This is a 'walking after' him in the course of which the following of God's commandment imperceptibly becomes transformed into a following of Christ's existence. But the point is that Christ is not another 'existent', but the very appearance of Being itself. For this reason the 'commandment' can go forth only from Being—from the Father himself. 'This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who keep his commandments abide in him, and he in them' (1 Jn 3.23f.). Christ is the visibleness of the Father, and my brother is the visibleness of Christ;this is why Christian brotherly love is the proof through experience of the fact that we love God (1 Jn 4.20f.). But this ascending movement rests on a movement of descent and may even be said to be its completion: the person who loves comes from God toward his brother: he is 'born of God' (1 Jn 2.29; 3.9; 4.7; 5.1, 4, 18) and, through grace, together with the Son, he descends as a perfect fruit from the generative ground of the Father's Being. This is why he has the Spirit. 'By this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us' (1 Jn 3.24), but we possess and know this Spirit only in so far as we recognise the Son as the form of God, and we do this only if we walk according to his commandment, which is to say only if we grant him the ascendancy in us in deed. This 'in so far' is then proposed by John as an infallible criterion: the person anointed with the Spirit is free of error and knows all things (1 Jn 2.20, 27). In order to complete the picture only one more dimension is needed—the sacramental, which for John remains most intimately bound to Jesus' corporeality in spite of all his ecclesiological realism. Water and blood are the bodily aspect of the Spirit that flows forth from Jesus; they constitute the ontic aspect, adapted to man, of that reciprocal interpenetration of Being which makes the relationship between Christ and the Church an extension of the trinitarian ontic-personal Being-in-one-another (Jn 17).

Such a thought-structure puts Johannine experience beyond both 'eschatology' and 'mysticism'. Biblical mysticism can never intend to abolish the eschatological boundary between the aeons and by definition, it remains a mysticism proper to the state of faith. Conversely, John's interpretation of revelation (Christ as the appearance of absolute Being as such) transcends any view which sees it as a mere prelude to the future return of Christ. Such a forward movement is not abolished, because faith awaits and hopes for this return (1 Jn 2.28; 4.17), but it is 'overtaken' by the certainty of 'already having' what we ask for (1 Jn 5.15), of 'already possessing eternal life' (1 Jn 5.13), of 'already having overcome the world' (1 Jn 5.4f.). This is, in fact, the only possibility within a form of thought which understands faith not primarily in the negative sense of a 'not yet', but primarily in the positive sense of an opening up and abandonment of self into the hands of a truth which is both present and absolute—a faith which, furthermore, is unhesitatingly described as a certain knowledge: 'We know that we have been brought out of death into life' (1 Jn 3.14). 'We know that he hears us' (1 Jn 5.14). 'We know that anyone born of God does not sin' (1 Jn 5. 18). 'We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is the truth; and we are in him who is the truth, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life' (1 Jn 5.20).

c. Christian Attunement

Christian experience was seen as being able to be determined from two directions. First of all, it can be grasped in relation to a totality of life which integrates within itself all the individual acts of faith, love, and also of feeling, and such integration then allows the truthfulness of what is believed to emerge and come to prevail. But, because the attitude of faith in its integrity means a readiness for and an openness to another form which actively approaches us from the side of God, Christian experience can also be viewed in terms of the power peculiar to what is believed which impresses itself upon the believer. Only this power can explain the transformation that takes place in the believing person and his total condition which results from it. Such was the structure of the existential proof for Christianity in Paul, whose existence is understandable only as the *phanerosis* (2 Cor 4.2) of Christ's death and Resurrection, and likewise in John, in whom what is believed and what is experienced determine Christian existence by exerting an indissolubly reciprocal influence. The first element alone cannot provide a conclusive proof because, in a Christian sense, it cannot be isolated for its own sake (as a pure 'psychological' experience of existence) and because—even though unbelief constantly attempts to prove the contrary—the first element of integrating totality cannot be made comprehensible without the second element, namely the power of the object of faith. This is why the 'psychics', according to Paul, can never understand what belongs to the spirit, while the 'pneumatics' understand everything and are judged by no one, even though they are constantly being condemned by the 'psychics' as faulty existences which seem to lack precisely that element which is, in fact, the blind spot in the eye of the 'psychic': *in iis qui pereunt est opertum* (2 Cor 4.3).

Both elements connote totality—both the believer's offering of himself to God and the impressing of the Christ-form by God upon the believer. A person does not stake his life for *one* article of faith, but for Jesus Christ and his indivisible truth, which shines forth from each individual article. And God does not impress upon the believer only one trait of his Son's, but rather his indivisible essential image, even though this image appears in each soul differentiated by personal and charismatic particulars. Constant contemplation of the whole Christ, through the Holy Spirit, transforms the beholder as a whole into the image of Christ (2 Cor 3. 18). This holistic encounter from the outset both transcends every individual act of self-giving which springs from faith, hope and love and grounds it in a totality of both the subject and the object, in such a way that we are here both entitled and compelled to speak of a Christian 'attunement' to or 'consonance' with God. In saying this, as is here evident, we are not referring primarily to a 'feeling' considered as a third act which is mostly below the level of spirit and distinct from the spiritual acts of the intellect and the will (we refer here to acts of the emotions, of the affectivity, of the irrational sensibility: greed, hate, joy, and fear), but primarily to the heart of human wholeness, where all man's faculties (*potentiae*) appear rooted in the unity of his *forma substantialis*, regardless whether these faculties are of a spiritual, a sensitive, or a vegetative kind.

This is not the place to develop a speculative psychological theory of the soul, even though to do so would be important for our present questions. Distinguishing the soul's faculties from one another and from the soul itself should not make us forget their reciprocal compenetration, and the way in which they are themselves penetrated by the soul which acts and suffers through them.

Indeed distinctions of this kind, such as are drawn by Thomas Aquinas, should always be ventured only for the sake of the better understanding of the underlying unity. What is termed ‘feeling’, in contradistinction to intellect and will, lies neither ‘beside’ nor ‘beneath’ the spiritual faculties. This is evident already from the fact that animals are not men from whom intellect and will have been removed; rather, animals exhibit a totality analogous to man’s, but one which has not advanced to the degree of spiritual reflection attained by man—the bud of a water-lily, so to speak, that has remained below water-level. In man we can distinguish between, on the one hand, predominantly sub-spiritual acts or states (whether the specific acts of the sense organs or those of the *sensus communis*, or the acts and states of the soul’s total disposition) and, on the other hand, acts that predominantly belong to the whole person and into which the expressions of the sensitive-vegetative sphere are incorporated without however being able to lay claim to a monopoly of feeling over all else. Otherwise, feeling and disposition would be primarily subhuman and we could no longer understand why Sacred Scripture characterises the ‘heart’ and even the ‘bowels’ (σπλάγχνα, from which is derived σπλαγχνίζεσθαι, ‘to have mercy’) as the seat both of man’s deepest personal reactions and of God’s own most profound attitude with regard to the world. It is not by means of one isolated faculty that man is open, in knowledge and in love, to the Thou, to things and to God: it is *as a whole* (through all his faculties) that man is attuned to total reality, and no one has shown this more profoundly and more thoroughly than Thomas Aquinas.

According to Thomas, what is involved here is an attunement to Being as a whole, and this ontological disposition is, in the living and sentient being, an *a priori* concordance (*consensus* as *cum-sentire*, ‘to feel with’, here prior to the *assentire*, ‘to assent to’). In the animal this occurs instinctively, but in man this accord is from the outset bound up with a certain spiritual delectation (Ia IIae 15, ic and ad 3). The inclination to the ‘thing itself’ (*inclinatio ad rem ipsam*), evoked by a most intimate kinship with it, is characterised as a ‘feeling’ or ‘sensing’—an experiential contact—in so far as the feeler is by his nature attuned to what is felt and, therefore, as-sents and con-sents to it (*accipit nomen sensus, quasi experientiam quandam sumens de re cui inhaeret, inquantum complacet sibi in ea. Ibid.*, c). This ontological concordance, therefore, and the affirmation and joy in Being which are implied by it, lie at a much deeper level than the *delectatio* which naturally accompanies all the individual spiritual acts which are ordered to their proper object and which proceed from the storehouse of that primal and original consonance, whether this natural *delectatio* consists of spiritual or of sensuous delight and joy, depending on its specific acts and their objects.

Such attunement to Being on the part of the feeling and experiencing subject is, consequently, also prior to the distinction between active and passive experience: in the reciprocity which is founded on openness to reality there is contained both the receptivity to extraneous impression and the ex-pressing of the self onto the extraneous. Thus, the fundamental act of feeling (the ‘primal feeling’) consists of the consent (*con-sensus*) both to suffer extraneous impressions and to act upon the extraneous, and both of these are equally the cause of primal joy. By comparison with this most profound level of reality, the opposition between (joyful) desire and defensive fear is itself secondary: for this opposition has to do with particular existents, with particular proportions or disproportions between subject and object; it does not directly touch the relationship to Being (in its particular instances). But God is not a particular existent; rather, he reveals himself out of and within the depths of Being, which in its totality points to God as to its ground. For this reason what has been said above applies first of all to God, in a way which is, of course, conditioned by the analogy of Being between God and the creature: the creature is radically ordered to God, who does not need the creature in order to be, and the creature gives its assent to God and to whatever God, in his freedom, may mete out to it. The creature is ontologically resonant to God and for God; it is this in its totality and prior to any differentiation of its faculties into spiritual and sensuous, active and passive. At no level can God be considered a creature, nor does he possess a common Being with creatures. This is why this primal attunement to him is not an intuition in the epistemological sense, nor is it the result of a purely logical inference from the finite to the infinite. The non-fixability of this primal experience is but the noetic reflection of the ontic indeterminateness of Being in its totality over against God. Being as such, and everything it entails, continually directs us to the inaccessible Fount.

The multiple aberrations of the theology of experience and of life derive in every case from the fact that feeling is too exclusively thought of as an isolated act alongside the intellect and the will, and too little understood as the integration of the person’s whole life. Consequently, the criteria for the God-relationship are based too exclusively on individual emotional states and pay little attention to the event by which man’s total constitution and disposition, which are the foundation for everything else, can be experienced in and through individual emotional states. The Scriptural arguments that oppose a pure theology of feeling lie ready to hand; but the very same arguments can equally be applied to defeat a theology that would attempt to establish man’s rightful relationship to God simply on isolated acts of faith and love, instead of anchoring it within man’s total disposition towards the living God.

Now, true to his nature as God, and especially in his historical revelation, God possesses the full initiative in the creature's relationship to him. It is God who says who he is and how one should properly relate to him. For these reasons, in the creature's primary aprioristic structure, which the grace of revelation then draws out to light and brings to its own full reality, passivity has precedence over activity. But this passivity, if it is rightly understood, will be seen to be that of a being which from the outset is active in its very receptivity, but a being whose fundamental act consists precisely in its ability to receive. However, the verb 'to feel' and the noun 'feeing' are used indifferently to refer either to an active or a passive attitude and, therefore, even in the expression the 'absolute feeling of dependency' (*schlechthiniges Abhängigkeitsgefühl*), the decisive factor does not emerge. For this reason it is better to use the words 'to apprehend' and 'apprehension' because these convey more exactly the notion of having been touched from the outside and from above.[47] Once again, as the creature's permanent and most interior disposition, this 'apprehending' is not an isolated act having a place alongside other acts, and this is why it can in no way be excluded from the acts of reason, since it is their foundation and very possibility. The relationship to the creature's essential foundation (which, as such, is an assent to Being and to God and, therefore, constitutes ontological joy) will have to be the criterion for all 'discernment of spirits' whenever religious and Christian 'feeling' is involved. The question is always as follows: Does the joy of an act (or the sadness of an act) positively point to the joy of Being? Or, no matter how seductively an act may strongly and obviously be experienced as an act of joy, could it not in reality be an act that veils and clouds the joy of Being?

Since our main concern here is theology, these preliminary considerations will have to suffice.[48] We now proceed to the distinctively Christian fact. This fact is that God, in the form of his Son, has sacrificed himself to the world, and that he bestows the Holy Spirit on those whom he has chosen and who respond to his call, in such a way that they are enabled to understand and apprehend all that belongs to the Son and to the entire triune God. As a result, religious experience acquires two dimensions that are intimately related and which delimit religious experience in a new way. Along with the ontic order that orients man and the form of revelation to one another, the grace of the Holy Spirit creates the faculty that can apprehend this form, the faculty that can relish it and find its joy in it, that can understand it and sense its interior truth and rightness. Supported in this manner, however, man can and must consciously take his stance before the form of revelation and its storehouse of mysteries: he must accustom himself to live within it, and he must attune his whole person to it. Both things, the ontic and the experiential dimensions, go together, and (as we have said in connection with the light of faith) this unity henceforth deepens the ‘in-formation’ of the whole person, thereby allowing the aesthetic side of Christian experience truly to emerge. Before the beautiful—no, not really *before* but *within* the beautiful—the whole person quivers. He not only ‘finds’ the beautiful moving; rather, he experiences himself as being moved and possessed by it. The more total this experience is, the less does a person seek and enjoy only the delight that comes through the senses or even through any act of his own; the less also does he reflect on his own acts and states. Such a person has been taken up wholesale into the reality of the beautiful and is now fully subordinate to it, determined by it, animated by it. In so far as such experiences are sublime moments and elevations of existence and are also experienced and valued as such; in so far as the beautiful, as such, exercises its function of total integration and can be made intelligible only as the completion of the edifice comprised of the transcendental attributes of Being: to this extent it borders on the religious, as mythical religion proves at all its levels and as Christian revelation can overwhelmingly demonstrate by the fact that it fulfils and surpasses all myths. By contrast with all philosophical and mythical religious schemata, appeal is here made not only to man’s interior sensibility. Rather, this sensibility is seen within the context of the total human *elan*—not only in connection with man’s spiritual nature, but also in the essential connection with man’s organic and corporeal nature—and this not as a ‘concession’ to the multitude who cannot soar to purely spiritual experiences, but as the perfecting of the divine work of creation, which designed man to be an indissoluble unity of body and soul and which desires to bring him to perfection as such.

1. Let us begin with the action of grace, which is both an ontological elevation and transformation of man and the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in him. Supernatural participation in the divine nature creates (this is only another word for it) a new connaturality of the soul with divine things, and this con-naturality, in turn, as a modification of the purely natural relationship between God and the creature, is immediately translated into a new inclination and readiness. Not that the creature’s ontological advancement to the sphere of God is, as such, adequately transmitted to the creature’s consciousness; rather the structure of human thought remains the same, but the stand-point of the whole person’s being—from which one thinks, wills, and perceives—has been changed. The effects on the sphere of consciousness are indirect and successive, corresponding to the readiness with which the free person assents to this new inclination which

has been bestowed upon him and made available to him, the readiness with which he allows this inclination to take root in him and permits it to have its effects on the clearly perceived and psychologically graspable personal sphere. Thus, no sharp line can be drawn where the infused virtues with their vital centre in *caritas*, begin to unfold consciously as the 'gifts of the Holy Spirit'. Ontologically, these gifts are already contained in the gift of grace itself and in the new inclination and readiness that are bestowed with it. But it is up to the believer and the lover to allow this inclination to gain an ever increasing ascendancy in his life of faith.

In the theology of the Church Fathers both these acts fundamentally coincide: man's conversion to God and the entrance into the faith of the Church through baptism. When one turns away from one's fallenness in and to the world, in order now to contemplate the divine values, love awakens, and this love in turn confers a new ability to see God and his infinite love. The story of Augustine's conversion is the story of a sensibility that exchanges a fleshly for a divine love: 'For every person that turns to God, the delight (*delectatio*) and the pleasures (*deliciae*) are transformed: for they are not withdrawn, but rather interchanged.'[49] The Fathers sensed intuitively that this transformation does not occur primarily by a striving on the part of man, but by a decisive and free act on the part of God. For this reason, the Fathers saw that the sacramental acts of baptism and Eucharist, while of course primarily ontic, were also in addition noetic: being a 'new birth', baptism is at the same time an 'illumination', and the Eucharist is a union with Christ which at the same time is an 'intoxication'.[50] Even when the dimension of consciousness develops in apparent independence of the sacramental dimension, the former is the complement of the latter when understood in a Christian sense. What is more, the conscious aspect is indebted to the sacramental aspect as to its very foundation, in the same way as the Holy Spirit, who unfolds his Spirit in man, is the Spirit of Christ in the Church and operates in the individual as being an ecclesial member of Christ.

The love which is infused in man by the Holy Spirit present within him bestows on man the sensorium with which to perceive God, bestows also the taste for God and, so to speak, an understanding for God's own taste. We mention this as yet without reference to the doctrine of the individual 'spiritual senses', to be discussed later. Here we simply speak of the participation of man's entire sensitivity in the manner in which God himself experiences the divine. The central concept for this is the theological principle of *sapientia* as an experience of the *sapor divinus*, something that has come to us from the Fathers (Cyprian, Origen, Macarius, Diadochus, Augustine) and which was then developed particularly by the Bernardine school. This new sensorium is infused into the natural sensorium and yet is not one with it: for all that it is bestowed on man *as his own* (and increasingly so as he is the more unselved), it equally is his only as a gift. This is a consciousness into which man must gradually be initiated by the Spirit himself by means of an alternation of ‘consolation’ and ‘desolation’ through which he is to learn experientially not to attribute to himself the gift of the Spirit and, above all, to learn to transfer this gift more and more from the realm of the senses to the very centre of the person, there to immerse himself. What we speak of here, then, is a transformation of feeling which takes place under the permanent norm of a passive readiness to participate in the Holy Spirit’s own manner of feeling.

Thomas describes the gifts as follows: the Spirit steers the experience, and his gift is the *dispositio* that makes one be fully docile to his guidance. The gifts are in us *ab inspiratione divina*; they are an *instinctus divinus* and also an *instinctus interior* which makes us be guided by a principle higher than our own reason (Ia IIae. 68. 1 c). But this higher reality is not something foreign to us, for by its inspiration it awakens and inclines our own deepest love to the absolute Love that comes to meet us from the depths of Being itself, a Love that addresses each of us personally: *Spiritus Sanctus sic nos ad agendum inclinat, ut nos voluntarie agere faciat, inquantum nos amatores Dei instituit* (C. Gent. IV. 22). The inspiration, therefore, descends upon believing man from the heights of the absolute as the absolute genius which is essentially superior to man in every respect. And yet, at the same time, the inspiration rises from man’s own most intimate depths: it is the person himself who loves and tastes God, and not an alien principle that does this through the person. As Paul says, such a person is one ‘impelled by the Spirit’ (Rom 8.4; Gal 5.18) and, as such, is not ‘under the law’; but this is so because the Spirit, which cannot be captured by any law and which ‘blows where it wills’ (Jn 3.8), is a ‘Spirit of sonship’ which makes us ‘children of God’ and thus incorporates us into the divine law of the Son of God (Rom 8.14f.). The Son, in turn, into whom we are incorporated and with whom we become co-heirs of the Father, is the incarnate Son who suffers, rises up and lives on in the Church, and we receive his Spirit only if we enter into the form of his revelation. Once again, all aspirations of a natural aesthetics are here fulfilled and more than fulfilled: this is the inviolate circle of the beautiful that arises between the inspiration from above (and from within) and the attachment to the form from which the light of inspiration must come forth if we are to recognise as beautiful what we have beheld. Already in a natural aesthetics the process of artistic creativity (and in some sense also its ‘repetition’ in the enjoyment of art) is founded upon a mysterious obedience: in the last analysis, the inspired artist does not follow his own idea, but rather allows something ungraspable to cast its rays upon him. To art belongs not only the master’s skill—the ability to translate a vision into sensual form—but also the ability not to obstruct either the illumining action of the idea or, so to speak, the idea’s ‘generation’ and ‘incarnation’ in the mind of the artist. Externally the artist may choose to appear haughty, but interiorly he must be a humbly receptive womb for the ‘conception’. Only if he knows how to be quiet will the *anima* sing in him.

The concept of attunement (*Stimmung*) embraces both the aesthetic and the theological elements. An existence is envisaged which is like an instrument tuned by the Spirit: at the breath of the Spirit, the instrument like the Aeolian harp rings out in tune. This is an attunement (*Gestimmtsein*) which is a concordance (*Ubereinstimmung*) with the rhythm of God himself, and therefore an assent (*Zustimmung*) not only to God’s Being, but to his free act of willing which is always being breathed by God upon man. And finally in virtue of this pliancy it is the order (*das Stimmen*) within man himself—his Augustinian *rectitudo*—which make him to be himself the work of the divine Artist. But the instrument has no need to bother himself about this.

2. This attunement to God is not immediate, but mediated in two respects. First, man does not see God directly, but through the medium of his own intentional human acts. And, second, on his own initiative God has chosen to use the mediation of the creaturely in order to express himself by becoming man. The first item constitutes a limitation much regretted by a mysticism that strives upwards to attain immediacy; but this viewpoint often overlooks the fact that God himself has transformed the sense of this limitation by having converted and continuing to convert its obstructing aspects for the Christian into a means of furtherance and transmission (as the wire transmits the current). God has become man, and he will never again lay aside this humanity; the Son’s humanity, and everything in the reality of the Church and of the cosmos that flows forth and will eternally flow forth from it, will forever be our open access to the Father. The Spirit of sonship and of the seven gifts is, in a definitive sense, the Spirit not only of the Father, but also of the Son who became man and of his bride, the Church. The *filioque* here shows its full bearing within the sphere of aesthetic theology. The ‘formless’ Father is not the terminus of all the world’s ways in the sense that, after reaching him, the ‘formed’ Son has been surpassed. In the resurrected Christ, with him and through him, we receive that Spirit which is breathed forth by both the Father and the Son.

The Church, moreover, is formed by the Son from the blood of his heart and the thoughts of his heart. Even in her visible aspects, the Church is the work of the Son’s hands, regardless of how tainted and dusty she may become in her contact with sinners. The word of Scripture and the form of the sacraments, both administered by the Church, are not only light from the light of Christ, but form from the form of Christ. In the Church, light and form are inseparable, even if their present structure and connection hold only for the Church’s period of sojourn in the world. The vessels that enclose their precious and eternal content derive, in the last analysis, from the same Inventor who provided the content. In so doing he may have made use of as many time-conditioned elements as he deemed fit (he did, after all, become man!); and yet, he has the power to confer a universal historical relevance upon what is strictly situated within one moment of history.

This demands that the Christian be attuned not only to God, but equally to Christ and to the Church. Our feeling and our experience of God have their correct measure in Christ’s own feeling and experience of God, in the manner that he himself allowed God to apportion *his* experience of God, the manner in which he allowed himself to have experience which was determined and filtered through obedience. Ἔμαθεν ἀφ’ ὧν ἔπαθεν τὴν ὑπαϰοήν: he learned obedience through what he suffered (Heb 5.8), but he suffered it also out of obedience, in order that it might become something experienced and learned by man. The measure of nearness to God and distance from God apportioned to him by God was determined in a soteriological sense: such an apportioned experience already possesses a form, and it is this spiritual form which determines everything material about his life and about the institution that grows from the centre of his life.

It is from this reality that Christian feeling receives its christological measure, as given by Paul: *Hoc sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Jesu*. What is here involved is not only an objectless and intentionless disposition (*Stimmung*), but rather a deliberate attunement of self (*sich-Einstimmen*) to the accord (*Stimmen*) existing between Christ and his mandate from the Father, in the context of salvation-history’s assent (*Zu-stimmung*), which the Holy Spirit *is* in Christ and effects in him. We speak, therefore, primarily of an empathy (*Mitfühlen*) with the Son who renounces the form of God and chooses the form of humiliation; we speak of a sense for the path taken by Christ which leads him to the Cross; we speak of a sensorium for Christ’s ‘instinct of obedience’ which, in him, needs no human justification since, like a very precise translation, this instinct gives expression to an eternal love for the Father which is in keeping with Christ’s nature as God. Nowhere but here will man find a way in to the ‘feeling’ of God. And this is not intended as a goal for exceptional times or for times of intensive spiritual training, found side by side with the more normal longer periods of relaxation when one is allowed 'just to be human'. This model is meant to be the Christian's normal disposition and 'pitch' (*Gestimmtheit*). And, what is even more difficult: this normal disposition does not exist in a purely human opposition to the disposition of the joyful and trusting ascent to God, but rather—as improbable as this may sound—the two coincide fundamentally. This christological unity of dispositions may then be attuned in a variety of ways in the believing person: times of predominant suffering may alternate with times of predominant joy; times of consolation with times of desolation; times of felt nearness to God with times of felt distance from God; times of exuberance with times of dejection. All of these are but variations of the Christian's one fundamental disposition, which derives its real—and not only its supposed or contrived—unity from the disposition of Christ.

Now, the disposition of Christ is the disposition of one who has become expropriated for God and for man: his subjectivity coincides with his mission (this is the truth of the 'functional Christology' of Karl Barth and Oscar Cullmann). There is in him no unaffected residue of subjectivity which has not been assumed into his task as redeemer: everything down to the foundation of his person has been put at the disposal of his ministry and made available for his work. For this reason, in him the exalted feeling of his filial mission can coincide with the most extreme feeling of humiliation of the servant of Yahweh. None of this can be accounted for or made credible by purely psychological reasoning, because it attains to (even psychological) transparency only in the light of the *assumptio humanae naturae in personam divinam*. This is why the Christian who has been expropriated to become a member of Christ is not even himself in a position to understand his Christian disposition by means of human psychology, much less to explain it to others. When he begins to come to grips with his expropriation, he can only marvel at how his most intimate condition and disposition have in fact been transposed to a sphere which to him is unknown and unaccustomed.[51] His innermost disposition, which until then had seemed to him to be the most private thing a person possesses, can henceforth be conceivable to him only in light of the dogma of God's Incarnation. But this dogma is precisely not an external 'other' over against the Christian; the Christian has been incorporated into the dogma down to the very foundation of his self and in every fibre and vibration of his sensibility: to be sure, it is 'he' who still lives, but he is no longer an autonomous ego since Christ has begun to live in him. And, of course, this holds not merely for his total disposition, but just as much for his acts of knowing and willing; otherwise, the transition from the seventh to the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans with its abruptness and its scorn of all psychology would be simply incomprehensible.

Even more emphatically than the communication of all human disposition with Being as a whole, the new Christian sensibility lies beyond activity and passivity. That this sensibility is primarily passive has to do with its supernatural character: it is a feeling that is bestowed as gift, and therefore more the impressing of a superior human and divine feeling *upon* the believer than his spontaneous reproducing of such a feeling. But the same Holy Spirit who generates this impression in the soul is antecedently present within it to welcome the impression and help it to become the ex-pression of the soul itself. And this divinely active nature of the Spirit in his immanence is itself, in turn, the expression of his divine particularity as the third Person: it is the Spirit's special property to overarch all seemingly unbridgeable chasms and oppositions (between person and person). The Spirit does this as the one Spirit of two Persons, as the passive procession which expresses and *is* God's highest activity, as that ungraspable Third and Perfecter who lies 'beyond' the Logos and the whole sphere of the Logos. Nevertheless, he is Spirit and Radiance only in the transfiguring whirlpool of love of the mystery of the divine expression which lies between Father and Son, Ground and Image. The disposition which the Spirit is and which he bestows plays, eternally and inexhaustibly, about this form of the divine love: it emerges perpetually from within it and plunges back into it again.

But if the Church is the body and the bride of Christ, then her own disposition[52] can be only an outflow and a reflection of Christ's and, in so far as she is Christ's prolongation into the world and the means by which he unites and incorporates the world to himself, her own disposition is but a fluid transition which has no law or particular significance of its own. One can, for this reason, demand of Christ's members that their minds should be determined by a *sentire cum Ecclesia*, but, by definition, this must be identical with *hoc sentire quod et in Christo Jesu*. The feeling of the Church has its measure in the feeling of Christ and, therefore, feeling with the Church also has its measure there. To the extent that the Church is the objective reality that transcends the individual subject, even, that is, the believer who has received grace, we are justified in postulating the self-transcendence and self-denial of the individual as he is taken up into the Church's manner of feeling. The Church is the canon not only in external things and regulations, but equally in internal operations. We must here note, however, that the identity of the objective and the subjective elements in the Church must be sought where it really exists: namely, not in the average views of the mass of sinners that populates the Church, but rather where, according to the Church's prayer, the *forma Christi* best comes to prevail and best becomes impressed on the form of the Church—in Mary, in the saints, in all those who have consciously made their own form to wane so as to yield the primacy in themselves to the form of the Church: *ut per haec sacrosancta mysteria in Illius inveniamur forma, in quo tecum est nostra substantia* (Secret of the First Christmas Mass). The being-in-God of our substance occurs in the form of Christ, and the realisation of this reciprocal indwelling is the holiness of a Church that has become a reality and the transformation of the individual soul into an *anima ecclesiastica*. And this, in turn, means nothing other than the progressive expropriation of the self that reaches to the most intimately personal level: it reaches the extreme that the individual receives (in the *analogia fidei*, Rom 12.6) precisely what is most personal to him (his charism) as apportioned by something which is more than personal. What is precisely his most intimate love-relationship bursts to become a participation in the one canonical love-relationship between God and the world: the bridal mystery between the ‘Lamb that was slain’ and the ‘bride of the Lamb’ (Rev 13.8; 19.7). No matter how strongly and urgently the individual lover may feel and know himself to be called, addressed, chosen, and overwhelmed by God’s grace, one of the chief criteria for the authenticity of his feelings will be his expropriation into the totality of the Church and, through her, of the world, even within the mystery (*arcanum*) of the divine eros. Just as for Christ himself (Mt 25.40) and for his disciples (1 Cor 13; 1 Jn 3.17; 4.20 etc.) love of neighbour is the essential criterion for the love of God, so too does love of neighbour have to find its model in the ecclesial love of Christ’s members for one another and in the primacy given to the total perspective over the individual’s point of view. This criterion proves itself even in the separation from the world of the contemplative cloister: here the believer can only offer himself to the divine Bridegroom in a manner which embraces fully his own attitude and disposition by letting himself be robbed of every privilege of personal intimacy by this God, wholly and always anew, for the sake of the Church and of the world, so that, as Carmel understands it in the sense of the great Teresa and of the little Thérèse, he may do his ‘work as love in the heart of the Church, my Mother’.

d. Remarks on the History and Criticism of Christian Experience

The reality of the experience of faith has determined the history of Christian spirituality in ever new ways, but it has also frequently driven spirituality to extremes from which the ecclesial magisterium has had to take its distance. This critique of the extremes is not a rejection of the concern itself, but, so to speak, only a part, now become audible, of the continuous and silent self-criticism of the concept of Christian experience—a criticism which is already part and parcel of the inner dialectic of the concept itself. For here we can be concerned only with an experience *of faith*, which is to say only with the experiencing of something which is essentially hidden and which is present only through mediation, and this fact characterises not only the 'initial' or the 'average' experience of faith, but all faith-experience, even the mystical.

Experience of faith, moreover, implies that the object of faith offers itself precisely when and in so far as the person renounces his own ability to grasp and to comprehend, and surrenders and delivers himself over to what is to be believed. This is why the believer cannot desire, without contradiction, to register this self-surrender as such in a psychological manner, not even in the unique case in which the 'object'—God himself in his revelational self-surrender—wants to indwell both the person that surrenders and his act of faith. And if God's revelation is, further, mediated by the Incarnation of the Son and his presence through grace in the Church, the believer, in his surrender to the Church and to the Son, cannot, in turn, so wish to live, feel and experience the subjectivity of the Church and of the Son as if it were his own. The believer has already given his own subjectivity up to the Church and to Christ, not in order to find himself again magnified in them, but in order to place himself—with all his understanding, willing and experiencing—at the disposal of that Greater Thing which he is not. And if here it is again true that the Church and Christ are not simply that other which stands over against one, but rather the all-encompassing reality into which the individual is incorporated, then—even without as yet making any reference to Cross and death—the individual cannot make the claim or nourish the expectation that the experience had by that which is all-encompassing and whole will coincide with the experience of him who is only a part of the whole. But it must be noted that, in the unique case of the revelation in Christ in the Church, no comparison really applies, not even that of the 'part and the whole' (or of the 'member and the body'). And the analogy between the divine person (who contains in himself and brings with himself the tri-personal divine life) and the human person who surrenders to him in love and in faith, is wholly incomparable. Now, by 'act of faith' and surrender what is meant in the Bible and in reality is an act of self-surrendering love to God. For this reason, it is not erroneous to say that the lover in all things renounces what is his own and desires to clear all available space in himself for the beloved; the lover, therefore, embraces as his own the experience which is the beloved's and, on the contrary, he no longer desires to have *within himself* what a non-lover would call 'his own experience', but to have it only *in the beloved*. Nor, again, is it erroneous to say that, in a Christian sense, the believer can have 'objective' experiences in Christ and in the Church which need not be consciously perceived by him in a subjective and psychological sense. These experiences have already been ‘consigned’ by the believer to Christ and to the Church in a manner similar to that in which the form of God, which belonged to the Son as his very own, was ‘consigned’ to the Father during the time of his pilgrimage in the form of a slave. This objectivism based on love as a renunciation of self-enjoyment is the opposite of an objectivism based on insufficient love and on a deficient readiness of faith. Love’s objectivism is the result of a determined attitude of faith which is taken seriously by God and stripped of all guarantees which are rooted in the subject.

If this is true, then such an objectivism of faith is precisely not something for beginners, nor for those who hesitate in their uncertainty, but for those who are practised and experienced in faith and in love’s renunciation: such objectivism belongs to this experience and is, in a certain way, sustained and understood by it. By contrast to the consolations of beginners in faith and love, this objectivism is the ‘solid food’ of the mature. The structure of the Biblical experience of God is here once again demonstrated, and within a new dialectic. And it is the Biblical experience of God that we will take as our starting-point when we now consider the historical dialectic of the experience of faith.

In Scripture

For man in the Old Testament, the only possible encounter with God is one which involves the whole person. The Jew does not distinguish here between spirit and sensibility, soul and body. He is approached and summoned by God as a whole person, and it is as a whole person that he must answer. In this positive or negative, successful or mistaken answer, he experiences God as either gracious or wrathful. To be sure, only the positive answer is intended by God, since he desires the Covenant and unification with man: ‘to know God’, therefore, has all the spiritual-bodily urgency and intimacy of the relationship between a man and his wife. This is a knowledge of life, of presence and intimate exchange, and not an enquiring speculation into the being of God and the content of his decrees. But since the Covenant with God is inevadable, a person in covenant with him has a choice only between a positive and a negative experience. If he does not want to experience God’s grace, he will come to know God’s wrath under the form of a curse which will have its effect on his entire existence in the direst manner (Lev 26.14-40; Deut 28.15-68), in just as palpable and felt a manner as the promised blessings. Both the good and the dire promises always conclude with the same refrain: 'Then you will know that I am Yahweh' (Is 60.16; Ez 6.7; 13.14;16.23; *cf* Ps 59.14 and all of Ps 107). These are signs both of salvation and of perdition, and through his bodily experience of them man comes to know God's might and God's dealings with him. What at first was the experience of the people as a whole (which individuals, such as Korah and his followers, represented as types) becomes individualised in the course of time. The sufferings of a Jeremiah are very perceptible and evident signs of his election and mission. The sufferings of Job can be understood only as God's very special manner of working out his salvation and not, as his friends see it according to the general wisdom of the world, as a case of someone having to make reparation for his sins. It would be too simple to dismiss as the 'childhood phase' of religion everything in the Old Testament that is perceived by the senses and which is characteristic of the Jew's whole relationship to God, and to see all this as superseded by the spiritualising mode of the New Testament. The best aspects of it are not surpassable: these are the earnestness and also the joy of the whole man's encounter with God, of his seeing, hearing and touching God as, for instance, in the psalms. Here the pious believer encounters God in the temple on Mount Zion, and on his long pilgrimage and ascent to the sanctuary he already rejoices anticipating and longing for this wholly concrete encounter.

At this point we will make a parenthetical remark that is important for what will follow. There are in the Bible—both in the Old and in the New Testament—numerous encounters with the God of revelation which we will deal with in the next chapter and which we will call archetypal. These are theophanies in which God is experienced with the senses in a purely human manner—in natural phenomena, in dreams and prophetic or apocalyptic visions, in angelic apparitions, in miracles of many kinds. These are forms of seeing God which Jesus opposes to the God-experience of faith in his reproach to Thomas: 'Blessed are they who do not see and yet believe.' These archetypal encounters with God are not what is meant here, or, if they are, then only to the extent that they conform to the other forms of encounter. But, in anticipation, we can already recall the fact that the 'eye-witnesses' understood their experiences of God to be of a kind that did not separate them from the community of faith, but rather which bound them to it the more intimately. Their special gift was given them only to establish firmly and nourish the total experience of God and heighten its 'visibleness', a feature which this experience does not simply dispense with. In this respect, the theophany-experiences can here be included as an integral part of Biblical religion. The transitions are fluid, and it is quite possible—and not at all abnormal—that the people's faith-experiences occurred in such an irrefutably concrete way that their subsequent literary expression (based on stories handed down by tradition) constructed out of them a sense-perceived theophany.

In the New Testament things are somewhat different, and this for two reasons. God has now appeared in a man and, since part of what it is to perceive a man is that one sees, hears, and touches him, those who had to do with him may be said to have seen, heard, and touched the Word of life. It is customary to consign this experience to the category of extraordinary eyewitness, a privilege not enjoyed later on. Nevertheless, Jesus Christ remains the way to the Father precisely as one who has become man and, therefore, this seeing, hearing, and touching must unconditionally form part of the normal faith-relationship with him. The First Epistle of John, through its ‘eye-witness’, invites the next generation into the communion of faith, and, in so doing, it in no way establishes a distance between this second generation and the eye-witnesses, but rather introduces them into an experience which is the same as far as faith is concerned.

The second characteristic is the assimilation of the experience of faith into the fundamental experience of the Word become man—an experience of renunciation, of obedience and of suffering, a vicarious ‘tasting of death’ (Heb 2.9). In this way, the interior conformation of his ‘brothers’ (2.11f., 17) and ‘children’ (2.13f.) to his own experience will occur through suffering, which is precisely the basic meaning of the Biblical concept of experience used here: πειϱάζειν means ‘to (at)tempt’ in the double sense of ‘making the attempt’ (and, therefore, to ‘test’, ‘prove’, ‘examine’) and of ‘leading into temptation’ (into a situation of trial). Thus, the one who has been tempted is one (ap)proved, and Jesus ‘can help those who are being tempted (tested) because he himself has suffered and has been tempted (and, thus, tested)’ (Heb 2.18; cf. 4.15). In the following of Christ, therefore, the believer will primarily have to be intent on the experiment (πεῖϱα, Heb 11.36) of suffering.

But this distinctively Christian (and, behind it, distinctively Biblical) characteristic must not make us forget that every religious experience of mankind unites the double human and superhuman elements, and that the Biblical concept of experience quite expressly picks up this double element. On the one hand, a human dimension is present here: experience is then the result of having lived long or suffered intensely. Only he has knowledge who has struggled through something; he has learned what reality is. Ever since Aeschylus, the play of words between μάθος and πάθος runs through Greek literature.[53] It points above all to the necessity of suffering for man’s education: only he has true knowledge who has gained experience at his own expense. Into this primary meaning there is then introduced a second, religious-mystical sense, which is contained already in Aristotle’s famous statement concerning initiation into the mysteries: τοὺς τελουμένους οὐ μαθεῖν δεῖ ἀλλὰ παθεῖν[54] and which again is found later on in Denys' θεῖα παθεῖν.[55] Philo, who influenced the Epistle to the Hebrews in many ways, is familiar with both meanings: the natural knowledge that comes through experience and mystical knowledge, which the following passage illustrates: 'God bestows heavenly wisdom from above on those spirits which are well-ordered and which are eager for contemplation. And by seeing, tasting, and feeling in a strong way, they acquire knowledge of what they experience (ἔμαθον μὲν ὁ ἔπαθον), but they do not know whence it derives these.'[56] We must not forget how much of the Old Testament's experience of God enters into the background of such Philonic formulas. But, whether outside Biblical revelation or in the Old Testament or in Philo, both sides of human experience—the inner-worldly, pedagogical aspect and the religious or mystical aspect of faith—do not simply stand over against one another wholly unrelated. The statement of Sirach, ὃς οὐϰ ἐπειϱάθη ὀλίγα οἶδεν, 'he who has not been tempted (who is inexperienced) knows few things' (34.10), if one thinks of Job, will be seen to embrace both realms.

This saying deserves all the more thought because it could subsequently be applied to Christ, the one tested by suffering (Heb 5.8). The meaning here cannot be that Christ, who is portrayed as the radiance of God's glory and as sublime over all the angels, was to attain perfection only through a pedagogic suffering, nor that he had to participate in a mystical initiation (for the author speaks of τελείωσις, 2.10; 5.9). Nevertheless, 'it was fitting for him' (ἔπϱεπεν αὐτῷ) to be consecrated as redeemer in no way other than by his experience of suffering, in order that, from the heart of the communion of human experience, he might present his brethren to the Father and 'lead them back to glory'. This is the full experience that the Son of God had to have, the experience of being human to the point of standing 'under the spell and the anguish of death'. As God he must *suffer* man and *learn* man, so that, together with him and led by him (ἀϱχηγός, 2.10), man might experience God through his own suffering. But, even though the direction of the experience here seems to be reversed, nevertheless it is common to both God and man at a deeper level, because the Son of God, by means of this 'having to experience', places himself precisely under the law that applies to man and under the common lot of 'flesh and blood' (2.13).

Now the structure of Christian experience becomes transparent and may be summarised in two syllogisms:

1. Only through the experience of suffering does man acquire true knowledge of God and of himself. Christ, moreover, is true man. Therefore, he too acquires knowledge of God and man through the experience of suffering.

2. Christ is exemplary man (ἀρχηγός), also in his experience. Christ’s exemplary experience becomes a law for whoever follows after him. Therefore, when he comes to know God and himself through the experience of suffering, the follower of Christ experiences something of Christ’s own experience.

The dialectic between reversed experience (because Christ, who is God, learns what is human, and man learns what is divine) and experience in the same direction (because only a creature can learn something it does not yet know) will run through the history of Christian experience. In so doing, however, it will again and again demonstrate the fact that even the most vital and profound Christian experience cannot simply be understood with the categories of psychology, and this is so because Christ himself is the primary subject, and man participates in Christ’s archetypal experience only by being raised outside of himself through sharing in grace and faith and, besides, by virtue of the inversion discussed above.

In the Fathers

Experience lies at the centre of Saint *Irenaeus’* theology. It is primarily the experience of the Old Testament extended to the whole order of salvation. Not only does experience tell man what it is to be with God or to be far from God (that it is infinitely better to be with God); greatest emphasis goes to a second aspect that reveals the pedagogical thinking of the Greeks: it is the great grace of the economy of salvation to establish man firmly in the new experience of the nearness of God by having him experience the remoteness of God. Note well that the experience that man has in his own body is that of good and evil, and that, for Irenaeus, the experience of God is mediated by this experience of self.

> Man has received experience of good and evil. It is good to obey God, and to believe in him, and to keep his commandment, and this is the life of man. Contrariwise, it is evil not to obey God, and this is the death of man. Since God, therefore, gave to man such large-mindedness, man came to know both the good of obedience and the evil of disobedience, that the eye of the spirit, receiving its own experience of both, may with judgment make choice of the better things, and that it may never become indolent or neglectful of God’s command; and, perceiving in his own body that it is an evil thing which deprives him of life, man may never even attempt it. . . . Wherefore he was endowed with a double perception which mediates the experience of both things, that he may make choice of the better things with understanding. But how, if he had no knowledge of the contrary, could he have had insight into that which is good? For the perception of facts is surer and less open to doubt than the mere surmise based on opinion. For just as the tongue receives experience of sweet and bitter by means of tasting, and the eye discriminates between black and white by means of vision, and the ear recognises the distinctions of sound by hearing; so also does the spirit, receiving through the experience of the opposite an insight into what is good, become more tenacious in its preservation

> and in obedience to God. . . . But if anyone does shun the knowledge of both these kinds of things and the experience of this twofold perception, he unawares kills the human being in himself (*C. Haer*. IV, 39, i).

Irenaeus’ fundamental thought is then developed in all directions. Man’s essence is to *experience*, that is to say, by contrast to the natural perfection of the gnostics, which is given from the outset, to be a person in the temporal process of becoming, one in need of God, one who receives and is therefore a believer (IV. 20. 6; IV. ii. 2; IV. 38. i): ‘Thus does man advance forward slowly and softly, and he is elevated up to the Perfect, that is, he attains closest proximity to the Immutable’ (IV. 38. 3). ‘Man is fashioned into his image and likeness after he has attained the experience of good and evil’ (IV. 38. 5). The last experience which he must make is that of death and of the end, so that, ‘attaining to the resurrection from the dead, he may experience in his own body what it is that he is being freed from, and so he may always remain thankful to God for the gift of incorruptibility. . . . Thus he will come to know himself in his mortality and impotence and, having been instructed, he will perceive how great God is. For the glory of man is God’ (III. 20. 2). The experience of grace, moreover, is bestowed on us only because Christ ‘endured all things for our sake, so that we, having been educated by all of this, may in the future act with all prudence’ (IV. 37. 7): without the experience of sin and of death that Christ had we never would have attained to the experience of life in God (III. 18. 7; III. 19. i). ‘He became the Son of Man that he might accustom man to receive God and that he might accustom God to dwell in man’ (III. 20. 2).

The peculiarly bold feature of Irenaeus, which is something that leads from the Biblical experience of God to the coming difficulty of spiritual theology, is his ‘systematic’ interpretation of the Bible’s twofold eschatological promise as an experience with two phases which occur one after the other in time. This interpretation derives both from the Biblical and the Greek thought that man really possesses only what he has experienced—and here ‘experience’ once again connotes *both* the slow and laborious appropriation, in time, of what God is in truth (for man), *and* the experience of this truth about God.

It must here suffice merely to indicate the two roads that were forged in the Patristic Age from this point. Both roads, philosophically speaking, are variations of Platonism—the only great metaphysics which asserted its form in the Patristic period, and particularly in the Alexandria of Origen. It was *Origen* who pointed to the first road when, in the *Peri Archon*, he gave an account in Neo-Platonic terms of the experience of an existence removed from God. He derives this existence from the dissatisfaction with God, anterior to the world, experienced by the spirits living in unity with the divine Logos (κόρος τῆς θεῖας ἀγάπης καὶ θεωρίας, II. 8. 3, according to the Second Anathema of 543): as a result of this cooling the spirit then developed into an 'individual soul'. It logically follows from this that every time one is touched by divine grace a remembrance of that lost origin is awakened, something like an experience of what was in the beginning and what will be again in the end. After this, it is a question of theological taste to what extent the Platonic element is allowed to dominate, that is, to what extent the spiritual experience of grace on the way of purification and illumination, in the process of the soul's interiorisation and unification through contemplation, is understood and, thus, presented as the restored experience of self on the part of man's true spiritual being, which awakens from self-forgetfulness and insensibility. In Origen himself, his whole attention is captured by the objective word of Scripture. On the other hand, the praxis of Christian life takes place within the pale of confession (*martyrion*) and of the understanding of the Word (*gnosis*), so that little room remains for a theology of experience.

Things are different in the (Origenistic) monastic theology of *Evagrius*, in which the interest is directed to the gradual approximation to God and the realisation of the unmediated (ἀμέσως) vision of God in prayer and contemplation. For him, prayer is *the* theological act par excellence (De *Oratione*, ch. 60, 83-84, 86).[57] But this act is the extrication of the spirit alienated from God from its sensual nature, and its restoration to its full and bright transparency in God. Thus, what is involved here is not an *ekstasis* to a Thou, but an *enstasis* to the God present within the spirit, by transcending all sensual and spiritual forms which are found in the memory or which are conjured up by the demon. Because the negation of the sensual leads to the positing of the spiritual, Evagrius can praise the sensorium (αἴσθησις) for the spiritual (*op. cit*., cs. 28 and 41) and equate 'spiritual sensibility' with *apatheia* (Cent. Gnost., I, 37).[58] But, because the one who prays strives to go beyond all forms and every definable state, he can at the same time praise 'perfect *anaisthesia*', or 'feelinglessness' (*De Orat*., 120), as the highest state of prayer. For the light of God, in which we see everything that has form, is itself formless (*ibid*., 67.72; *Cent*., I, 35), and only he who has been wholly freed from form can behold the face of the Father (*De Orat*., 114). In this way, Evagrius can take up Origen's doctrine of the five spiritual senses and, as in the *Mirror for Nuns*, praise the virginal eyes that will see the Lord, the virginal ears that hear his Word, the virginal mouth that kisses the Bridegroom, the virginal hands that embrace him (55).[59] And yet, at the same time, he can transcend every sensual and even spiritual perception for the sake of that pure primal Light that is above all certainty (πληϱοφοϱία, *De Orat.*, 80) and consolation (*ibid.*, 93) and constitutes the blessedness beyond all joy (*ibid.*, last chapter—153). And yet, on the other hand, how easily this technique of defence against all disturbances and diabolical illusions, executed with dazzling intelligence, can lead precisely to a sophisticated practice of self-observation and experimentation with oneself, is shown by the chapters from the *Praktikos* that deal with the 'eight vicious thoughts'![60]

From this point the transition to the second road is near to hand. One needs only to interpret the Platonic conception of the fall of the spirit into the soul (as a change in its 'state' or ϰατάστασις, as Evagrius says) in the sense that the same spirit 'perceives' or 'feels' spiritually what it perceives and feels sensually in its fallen state, and we have the other interpretation. Here, too, the spiritual act of experiencing can be contrasted with the sensual and passible act of experiencing in such a way that they mutually exclude one another. Nonetheless, the fact that both modes of experience-bound feeling are rooted in the same spiritual subject creates an analogy and a transition which quite approximates the (likewise Origenistic) doctrine of the 'spiritual senses'. Man, however, will learn how to distinguish sensual from spiritual feeling only through manifold spiritual experience. For this reason, in this school the doctrine of the discernment of spirits, based on the experiences and perceptions themselves, will be given a central position. Two classics of the theology of experience dominate this school of thought: the author of the *Macarius Homilies* (whom Dorries has thought to identify as Symeon of Mesopotamia, though probably for insufficient reasons[61]) and Diadochus of Photice. The first of these, a towering figure in the history of spirituality, will have to detain us at some length. It is not our concern here to enter into the intricacies of the literary problem so as to clarify it; but, even before we have a critical edition of the whole corpus of his writings (of which Dorries has already provided us with a succinct appraisal), it is not impossible to offer a reliable theological judgment concerning the world-view of this great unknown, not least since Werner Jaeger demonstrated the lines that lead to him from Gregory of Nyssa.[62]

Pseudo-Macarius stands out in sharp relief against the background of an enthusiastic-spiritualistic movement which was inclined to heresy and was summarily condemned by an ecclesiastical synod (that of Side, about 390) on the basis of certain propositions (and fragments of sentences) taken greatly out of context. In exactly the same way, Bonaventure was later to stand out against the background of the Franciscan spirituals, Eckhart against the background of a mounting tide of pantheism, and Fenelon against the background of Molinistic quietism. In his very personal and subtle doctrine there is nothing that could not be interpreted in an orthodox sense, but many things which were in fact misinterpreted given the vulgarisations of his surroundings (against which he clearly declares himself). The movement that was condemned at Side deserved it. But, read in context and rightly understood, the propositions of Macarius that were brought forth on this occasion, vulgarised and deformed, will be seen not to have deserved it. Two observations must serve to sketch the situation for us: 1. 'Vulgar' Messalianism has a Gnostic-Manichaean background: two (positive) powers—God-Light and Satan-Darkness—rule in the soul and fight for it. Whoever possesses the holy Pneuma (through baptism, renunciation of the world, and constant prayer) belongs to the Kingdom of Light. Macarius responds to this with a genuinely Platonic-Alexandrian global vision: the soul, alienated from God by sin and fallen into a state of darkness, is returned to the glory of the light by the Son of God who comes down for this purpose. For the time being this occurs interiorly and spiritually, in the *eschaton* it also occurs corporeally. 2. 'Vulgar' Messalianism tends towards an experience of the Pneuma which is physical and static. Macarius combats this incessantly in all his writings, and this from the heart of his manifestly authentic and very nuanced mystical experience. Macarius' mystical experience exhibits the following characteristics: a) It admits the possible and even frequently renewed fall of a person endowed with the Spirit who has had the 'experience' of the Spirit. b) It thus in no way regards an isolated experience of the Spirit as a criterion for being solidly grounded in the good, but it rather demands a constant battle through prayer and mortification in order that the good in us may be helped to victory. c) It regards as wholly real the interior (mystical) prayer-experiences both of participating in a sphere of total salvation and of being set back again into a sphere of concupiscence. d) In a few rare cases, it holds the victory (i.e. the uprooting of all concupiscence) as possible already here below, but this victory, like every partial victory, is to be ascribed solely to the grace of God, which alone can crown man's incessant struggle with success.

The dogmatic presupposition of this spirituality is the Origenistic and Evagrian adage ὁ λόγος παχύνεται, later reduced to a formula by Gregory of Nazianzen and commented on by Maximus the Confessor: 'the divine Logos', which in itself is pure weightless light, 'becomes condensed' and materialised, takes on worldly weight, opacity, corporealness, and sensitivity.[63] But, while for the more radical Origenists this 'condensation' (Incarnation) of the Logos is only an occasion for man to join him on the way to spiritualisation, for Macarius this event whereby God participates in the realm of the senses in Christ is the positive expression of his love: through the sensual, we are to come to know God’s spiritual love.

> In his goodness the unbounded and unfathomable God made himself small (ἐσμίϰϱυνεν). He clothed himself with the members of this body and gathered himself up from all the expanses of his inaccessible glory. Because of his kindness and his friendship towards man, he transformed himself (μεταμοϱφούμενος) and took on flesh. He mingles[64] with holy, believing souls who are pleasing to him and, according to the statement of Paul, he becomes “one spirit” with them (1 Cor 6.17): soul, so to speak, becomes soul, essence becomes essence, so that the soul can walk in newness of life and come to perceive (αἰσθέσθαι[65]) immortal life.

If the Logos was able to create out of nothing, how much easier is it for him to condescend and transform himself into anything he will. ‘He makes himself corporeal for holy souls in so far as they can grasp him, so that the invisible may be seen by them and the impalpable may be touched according to the soul’s delicate nature. They are to taste his sweetness and by their very experience (αὐτῇ πείϱα) realise, to their bliss, the loveliness of the inexpressible ecstasy of his light. When he so wills he becomes fire, which consumes every evil passion coming to the soul from the outside for it is written: “Our God is a consuming fire” (Heb 12.29). When he so wills he becomes an inexpressible, ineffable calm, so that the soul will refresh itself in the repose of God. When he so wills he becomes a joy and a peace that sustain and protect the soul’ (*Homilies* 4. 10f.). He himself is ‘the heavenly Jerusalem, the City of Light’. For Macarius, the Kingdom of God and the Church consist entirely of the graces flowing from the unity of Christ. All of this may sound pre-Monophysite, but it is only Alexandrian, and in Macarius it acquires the new note of ‘true experience and perception’ (4. 12) which makes him describe Christianity so enthusiastically as ‘real food and drink’ (4. 12; 12. 14-17; 14. 3f-; 17. 13).

As probably nowhere else in all Eastern theology, this ‘experience’ of Christ is primarily an experience of the Passion, a lived stigmatisation: ‘To some the sign of the Cross appeared as a splendour of light, and it impressed itself on the interior man’ (8. 3). Indeed: the person truly chosen to receive the very form of Christ is one ‘who considers himself to be the most outcast among all sinners. This thought is implanted in him as if it were a part of his nature. The more he penetrates into the knowledge of God, the more ignorant does he consider himself to be’ (16. 12; cf. D 227ff.). He attains to humility as it ought to be only through being despised, persecuted, and scorned, just as the Lord humbled himself in the midst of all (26. 25). Thus, self-abasement is not only the imitation of the God who condescends in a manner beyond all understanding (‘Just as neither the higher nor the lower worlds can grasp the greatness of God and his incomprehensible Being, so neither can the heavenly nor the earthly worlds comprehend the smallness of God and the manner in which he has made himself small', 32. 7): it is the mystery of the vulnerable Heart of God ('When Adam fell, it can be said that God wept at the sight of Adam. . . . When Adam died in the presence of God, the Creator wept over him, and angels, powers, heaven, and earth mourned his fall', 30. 7. 'As a farmer grieves over an empty field, so does the Lord mourn an empty heart which brings forth no fruit', 32. 11). The older phrase 'to sadden grace', which goes back to Eph 4.30 (*cf Diognetus*, 11. 7), is used frequently (4. 27).

For Macarius, as we see, human-sensual religious experience and sensibility rest on an antecedent foundation determined by the theology of revelation: religious experience is the sensorium with which the soul perceives God, an instrument restored by grace and steeled by the suffering of God in Christ. As many texts show, this is the essentially bridal mystery of reciprocal empathy. To be sure, the bride is wounded (5. 5f.), but only on account of the wounds of the Bridegroom. In this way, all the great images provided by the theological tradition are here applied in a personal and existential sense. The image of Christ's descent into hell, for instance, in order to return the lost Adam and his whole race to heaven, is applied to the individual: he himself is hell and, far from God, he experiences himself to be such. 'Your heart is a burial chamber and a grave.' The torrent of hell flows in you; you are 'submerged in the waves; you have drowned and are dead', and Christ is the diver that comes to take you up from your own depths (11. 10ff.). Something similar is done with the great theological image of the exodus out of Egypt and through the desert: 'These are mysteries of the soul which truly occur in the person who strives to go into the Promised Land: he has been redeemed from the kingdom of death, has received the pledge from God and comes to share in the Holy Spirit' (*Homilies* 47. 14). Likewise the raising of Lazarus: 'Recognise interiorly that you bear within yourself the same wounds, the same stench of putrefaction, the same darkness. For all of us are children of a darkened race. . . . He alone came and cured the incurable wound in our soul' (30. 8). Likewise the story of Paradise: 'Pay close attention to your heart, and there too you will find a paradise: the Word of the Lord; your delight in it: the partaking of the Holy Spirit; the serpent: concupiscence writhing about. . . .' (D 94).

It is an Alexandrian characteristic, and one which is dogmatically incontestable, to view the spiritual creature as called by grace to the vision of God and as therefore having a choice only between dwelling in the sphere of God or in the sphere of godlessness, which is demonic. Both these things, moreover, are an experience of man as a whole, and, starting from this affirmation, Macarius has a tendency to emphasise greatly the conscious aspects of the life of grace. And, even if he sees in baptism an objective, non-experienced initial grace (D 236), he tends to regard it only as the point of departure, as it were, for the gradually intensifying experiences of grace (D 263f.; 309f.). In the same way, he regards the bare word of salvation as the indispensable beginning of all salvific activity (D 732). Grace is a challenge to one's total existence: the truth of one's faith hangs on whether a person loves God in deed (D 226) more than the world and whether he seeks the Kingdom of God first (*Homilies* 48.1ff.). The second letter offers a choice between defining Christianity according to its pure form or—and this is impossible!—according to its average realisation. Now, the pure form is (in true Cappadocian style!) man's absolute effort to correspond to grace, and, without there being any apparent proportion, this effort receives from above—from God's absolute freedom—the answer that will raise it up. Thus, the man who prays has a twofold 'experience': that God becomes palpable in his grace, and that there exists no relationship between man's effort and his perception of God. To be sure, he experiences a transport into the sphere of God and of total purity (*Homilies* 8. 3); he receives a 'foretaste of God and yet can again be oppressed by the adversary' (16. 3): consolation should not make one carefree. 'Farmers who have acquired experience from long practice are not wholly carefree when they have an abundant harvest. They brace themselves for times of hunger and want. And when they suffer hunger and want they do not, on the other hand, abandon hope. For they know that things will again be different. So it is also in the spiritual life' (16. 3). The alternation of consolation and desolation, of rapture and seeming rejection, is God's great educative process by which he seeks to detach us from our desire to hold on to what we have. What is demanded of us is the struggle, the fidelity, the effort ever directed towards God (*Homilies* 4. 5; 31. 3). And if the true Christians' consciousness of being the last of sinners seems to them to be ineradicably implanted in their very flesh, this too is a grace and God can on his own dispose things differently. The souls who are

> considered worthy only of a little grace and who receive only a little drop from the abyssal ocean, perceive that they . . . are astonished at God's unexpected and strange manner of acting. . . . Grace illuminates them and brings them peace. . . . After a short time, however, everything changes in such a way that [the same person] really views himself as the greatest sinner among all men. Then again at other moments he appears to himself to be a powerful ruler or a mighty friend of the King. And yet again at other times he has the impression of being weak and poor as a beggar. Then your reason is totally nonplussed as to why things are now this way and now that. . . . Trust God as your guide. Let your soul continue in communion with God, just as a bride enjoys communion with her bridegroom (*Homilies* 38. 4f.).

What Manichaeism takes to be two realms is in reality the two aeons between which redeemed man sways. In his heart—and not only ‘according to his knowledge, but in deed and in truth’—he has already risen with Christ and has been glorified and experiences something of the heavenly Kingdom. But this interior glory will burst forth exteriorly only in the *eschaton*. He has an unshakeable trust, a certainty (*plērophoria*) and a ‘taste’ (14. 2f. and *passim*), so much so that when he does enter heaven he will not at all feel like a stranger, but will find himself quite at home (17. 3). And yet, he does not have a certainty of salvation (16. 12); and, if he does consider himself definitively saved, this will only be to his perdition (15. 37f.; 16. 12; 27. 6; D 84). His most authentic experience is this: that he ought not to rely on his own experience and that he must allow himself to be educated to the ‘correct combination of mildness and severity, wisdom and discernment, word and deed, total trust in the Lord and mistrust in oneself’ (16. 9). Thus, his experience is both supernatural (he perceives the divine) and natural (through this perception he learns to rely on God and not on his perceptions, cf. 29. 6).

‘Not his action, but his longing builds man up to be the Church’ (D 96). He himself cannot gather up his heart which is strewn over the face of the world; only the incarnate Logos can do it, and the unity thus bestowed is not man himself, but the Church (24. 2; 43. 1; 36. 1f.). Christ *is* the unity (as Logos and as Origenistic world of ideas), and if the soul clings to him in perfect love it becomes a partaker in that unity. Therefore, this soul is also the true pneumatic Church, whose visible form, although it cannot be bypassed, nevertheless remains bound to multiplicity. For Macarius (D 260f. as for the *Liber Graduum*, *h* 14, Kmosko, pp. 325f.), the earthly Church is the ‘symbol’ of the heavenly. For it, as for Christology, the principle holds that the sensual image that appears is the occasion of and the passageway to the true spiritual essence.

If we now turn to *Diadochus of Photice* we will see that the horizon narrows, and this for three reasons. First of all, Diadochus is a strict Chalcedonian. He was one of the subscribers to the definition of 451, and this for him rules out any possibility of using a Christology of metamorphosis as a basis for his theology of experience. Secondly, even though he is closely associated to monastic circles and is strongly influenced by Evagrius, he is a bishop. As such, he places decided emphasis on the objective grace of baptism, which fundamentally delivers the soul from the domination of the devil and makes it a dwelling-place for God—hence his tenacious polemic against the thesis of vulgarised Messalianism that says that the soul can at the same time be both the abode of God and of the demons. Thirdly, the ‘experience’ of God, of which he speaks on each page of his *One Hundred Gnostic Chapters*,[66] is clearly his own personal mystical experience. No less than his disciples and the Messalians, Diadochus regards such mystical experience as the way to the perfect love of God and to the experiential vision of God, which are but the ‘normal’ developments of a vital Christian life. But, at the same time, one has the impression that this experience is a unique and extraordinary gift of grace. With his subtle observations concerning the ‘spirits’ and their discernment, Diadochus appears to be more orthodox than the often adventurous speculations of Macarius. And yet, in Diadochus we are closer to the total absorption of ‘faith’ into the experience of faith. He comes dangerously close to subscribing to the Messalian principle that says that the greater the experience, the greater the grace.[67] One can exonerate Diadochus by pointing to the inseparability between experiential mysticism proper and the ordinary spiritual ‘experience’ of believers and then interpret this ordinary experience in the sense of Newman’s ‘realised assents’, and this is supported by many a feature in Diadochus’ thought: an authentic, living faith is measured by its degree of realisation (c. 20); ‘whoever is not active in love does not have even the faith he seems to have’ (21). But, in this way even baptism is but a starting-point: it restores the (objective) ‘image’ of God, while the (subjective) ‘likeness’ comes only through conscious ‘realisation’ ἐν πολλῇ αἰσθήσει, just as a painter sketches an image and only afterwards supplies the colours which will complete the portrait’s perfect likeness (89). According to Diadochus, ‘at baptism grace hides in the depths of the *nous*, and its presence is concealed even from the ability of the *nous* to perceive.’ But then, to the extent that the soul advances, God’s gift ‘communicates its sweetness to the spirit’ (77). Now, this is precisely what Macarius also had said.

The point of contention between the two, which Diadochus so strongly stresses and which could make their polemic appear to be a ‘battle between true and false mysticism in the fifth century’,[68] is not so much to be found where one might want to look for it: in the opposition between the objective faith of the Church and the subjective experience of faith. Rather, we should seek their real difference in the fact that Macarius personifies a spirituality corresponding to his Alexandrian dogmatics, while Diadochus must reconcile a thoroughly Alexandrian spirituality (which emphasises the element of experience even more than Evagrius and Macarius: the Fathers know of no other spirituality!) with a Chalcedonian dogmatics for which it is ill-fitted. Chalcedon is strictly adhered to (*Sermo* 3. 5, 6): the ‘density of the human nature’ (πυϰνότης) and its ‘truth’ may not ‘be altered’ by the ‘irradiation’ of the Godhead. But there can no longer be any question of the divine nature having become ‘condensed’ so as to become perceptible to the senses.[69] With Chalcedon, man receives his own *physis* and his own spiritual centre. He is no longer a spirit ‘grown cold’ which has fallen from the gnostic *plērôma* of primitive Christology, a spirit whose Christian experience coincides with its re-ascending to the ‘higher Jerusalem’ of universal unity in the Logos, as we find in Macarius’ conception of the soul and of the Church. Here lies the true difference between them. For Macarius, the authentic (mystical) realisation of the grace of baptism is an ascent out of the *regio dissimilitudinis*—which is also the region of contrariety, of the *dyas* and of *dipsychia*, of the ‘both-and’ and, therefore, of the inimical co-existence of God and devil—into the region of ever greater unity through love, which is the quintessence of all God’s gifts (*charisma maximum*), and which ordinarily is attainable here below only fleetingly and not as a permanent condition (something the Messalians strove to achieve). In Diadochus the mystical experience is the same, but his image of man is different. This is why he so likes to speak of the|3d0og (of the heart, of the soul, of the spirit), of the depth of nature into which the grace of baptism descends (77) in order to dwell as sole inhabitant (80), ‘so that Satan is no longer able to remain in the soul’s depths’ (82). For this, too, Diadochus has a ‘proof from experience’: ‘this is why we feel our longing for God welling up, so to say, from the innermost depths of our heart’ (79), while the demonically perverted will in us can only ‘float by like dark clouds over the regions of our heart’ (81). The person who, through prayer, keeps the depths of the heart pure will be able to purge away, with an intense feeling, all the filth that covers the surface of the soul’ (59). This prayer is the ‘Jesus prayer’, which consists in keeping continually awake in me the memory of God (μνήμη occurs very frequently) by that ‘work’ which corresponds to the ‘spirit’s need for activity’ and which keeps it enthralled (59). It is above all the realisation of the cry of ‘Abba, Father!’ that, through his grace, the Holy Spirit utters in us—a ‘crying out along with the Spirit’, a ‘holding on to grace itself’, just as the small child clings to his mother as she speaks to him (61, with reference to Rom 8. 15, 26). Thus, as long as the believer holds fast to the thoughtful remembrance (*anamneesis, memoria*) of God and keeps it watchful by clinging to it in the face of all temptations, this remembering realises the immediacy to the ‘Ground’ both in a Platonic and in a Christian sense. In this way, the Spirit of God is at the centre and everything contrary to God has been banished to the periphery. Diado-chus also expressed this knowledge in a second and rather unsatisfactory way when he interpreted the dualism in Romans 7 between the carnal and the spiritual man anthropologically as a dualism between ‘soul’ and ‘body’. (The Messalians referred to this passage in Romans with great relish.) Expelled from the depths of the soul, the demon retains some power over man on account of the bodily passions (τὰ πάθη, 82). ‘Through the exhalations of the body, so to speak, he makes rise up in the spirit the lustful miasma of irrational pleasures' (76). 'Flesh', therefore, means 'body' (82, at the end); the body thus becomes the seat of concupiscence, and, as in Augustine, man stands between two kinds of *delectatio*, the sensual and the spiritual (82). The devil, then, makes himself present in the spirit by means of the body which the soul inhabits: the place of the 'theological' κρᾶσις between the two principles of good and evil, envisioned by the Messalians (for which the aid of the Stoic theory of the κρᾶσις δι' ὅλων had to be enlisted, combined with the Neoplatonic-Origenistic-Cappadocian analogy of the immaculate light which is present even in filthy places), is here taken by the 'anthropological' σύγκρασις of soul and body, which explains and mediates the unity of the two principles (83). To be sure, in company with Scripture and with Evagrius, Diadochus knows that this twofoldness (66. 86f.) stems from an original fall (ῥοπή 88, ὄλισθος 29) which has introduced into us a 'double knowledge' and a 'double sensation' (24, 25, 29, 44, 55, 56). The five bodily senses are not evil; rather, their multiplicity corresponds to the body's needs. But, on the other hand, the soul has but one sense of spiritual sensation which is oriented to God and his love, and this sense was split by Adam's disobedience into a double pleasure, one higher and the other lower (29). 'Feeling (αἴσθησις) is an exact tasting by the spirit of the things that are perceived' (30). Something of this original feeling for God is given to the believer at the beginning of his spiritual life to set him on his way, so that ἐν πάσῃ αἰσθήσει καὶ πληροφορίᾳ, with an all embracing feeling of bliss in the sweetness of God, he may acquire an exact knowledge (εἰδέναι ἐν ἀκριβεῖ ἐπιγνώσει) of the prize of victory which is promised to the believer throughout all the efforts of self-denial (90).

This is the place where the paramount doctrine of the discernment of spirits comes to the fore, and it operates simultaneously at several different levels. The 'sense for spirits' effects: 1) an experiential knowledge of the opposition between the divine and the demonic spirit; 2) man's experience of himself; 3) the experience of God's ways and his manner of educating man. What Diadochus has to say in this connection is classical and has not subsequently been surpassed, not even by the 'rules for the discernment of spirits' of the Ignatian *Exercises*. With Evagrius as teacher, it is evident that Diadochus has nevertheless drawn everything essential from his own experience. From Macarius he has taken the general characterisation of the two *pneumata* or 'winds' (c. 75; cf. Macarius, *Homilies* 2. 3f.) and their different manner of blowing: the north wind is gentle and brings calm, fine weather; the south wind is heavy and brings occluding clouds and 'demonic fogs'. After this introduction to his 'doctrine of spirits', Diadochus begins his polemic against the Messalians' view of the co-existence in the soul of the two πϱόσωπα (c. 76f.). We must indeed ask what exactly πϱόσωπον means in Macarius. He uses the concept to describe the two ‘elements’ of nature and grace, of the Old and New Covenant (PG 34. 737A), the two ‘aspects’ of the Church (as a gathering of believers and a gathering of individual souls: 756A), the two ‘aspects’ of all things (one divine and one human: 681 A); elsewhere it simply means ‘example’ (640A, 792A). It is, therefore, improbable that in the two passages to which objection was made (628B and 684D)[70] the word should suddenly mean ‘persons’. The translation ‘two parties’ or ‘two factors’ gets the sense.[71] It is the spirits of Augustine’s two Cities (*Homilies* 17. 4) which struggle for the same soul: *cupiditas* and *caritas*. Diadochus begins with a simple rhythm: experience of consolation (in the beginner), of desolation (in the struggles of the advanced), of consolation (in the perfect). In the middle period one uses violence on oneself (*agere contra*, force oneself to love, act as if one possessed love, persevere in the memory of the love that was once experienced but now is not felt, and so forth: c. 90, 93). Thus, between an ‘introductory joy’ and a ‘perfected joy’ there is a ‘sadness dear to God’. The soul would never enter into the struggles in which it is ‘tested’ if an initial joy did not summon it (c. 60). With this, the whole difference between the first and the perfected experience of joy is already expressed: the first joy is an initial experience of the Ground of Being, but still not by far its full realisation, comparable to the winter sun, which warms those exposed to it only on one side (88). This is why that first joy can easily be imitated by the evil enemy, especially if the soul reflects upon it and glories ‘in the experience (πεῖϱα) of its own sense of perception (αἴσθησις)’ (33): the transition from spiritual to sensual pleasure here is imperceptible. For this reason, the soul must be steeled by the withdrawal of feeling, which can be of two kinds: withdrawal on the basis of infidelity or as a pedagogical measure (87): the difference between both experiences and the manner of behaviour are presented in a clear and subtle way. The soul must be taught, by an alternation of consolation and desolation, to transfer its joy more and more from the periphery to its innermost depths—must be taught to establish itself in ‘hope’ (69) which lies at a provisional point midway between the periphery and the depths. The consolations become interiorised (73). Chapter 85 then expands the threefold schema to a fivefold schema and recapitulates Diadochus’ entire theology of experience:

1. The first step (baptism) is the unfelt grace which ‘hides its own presence’.

2. ‘When the whole man turns (converts) to the Lord, grace manifests its presence to the heart by an ineffable feeling.’

3. ‘Then grace again permits the soul to regress by allowing the devil’s darts

to reach the soul’s most profound sensibility, so that it will seek God with greater fervour and humility.’

4. If the person is then obedient to grace and if he prays unceasingly to the Lord, ‘the fire of grace extends outward to the exterior senses’, and the temptations can no longer penetrate to the centre of the person.

5. When the fighter has finally become thoroughly poor, ‘then grace illuminates his whole nature by a perception of the depths.’ But even then temptations can always be permitted in order that (as Macarius also says) the impression might not be given that ‘our freedom has been wholly subjected to the bonds of grace’, and also so that ‘the person will always continue to make progress in spiritual experience (πεῖϱα)’. Thus, even *apatheia* is described, not as a state beyond all temptation, but as a state of invincibility to temptation (98).

This then gets to the heart of the matter: the way of spiritual experience goes from an indefinite feeling of presence (ἄϱϱητός τις αἴσθησις παϱουσίας, as Gregory of Nyssa had said before), via dramatic intermediary steps, to an experience of the depths (βαθύτεϱα αἴσθησις) which must be purified, tested and freed of dross both by the experiences of the night imposed by God and by the more human experiences of alternating spirits and moods. Diadochus understands this way of the faithful Christian *eros* (14, 19, 74) as a new martyrdom turned inwards (90, 94). His theology of experience, which includes many other splendid features which we have not discussed, constitutes one of the high points of Patristic literature. Without parting company with orthodoxy, Diadochus already anticipated the questions and solutions later posed by hesychasm.[72]

Only one more name will now be mentioned in conclusion, that of *Maximus the Confessor*. His position is partly determined by Evagrius, who for him is more the theologian and mystic of the direct ascent over all forms to the formlessness of God than the keen mystical psychologist of experience. But his position is even more strongly influenced by Denys, for whom the Godhead is found beyond all human experience (οὐδὲ αἰσθάνεται οὔτε αἰσθητή ἐστιν: *Myst. Theol*. 4). Thinking more powerfully in terms of dogmatic content than do Evagrius or Diadochus, Maximus is less concerned with an immediate experience of the divine presence and consolation than he is with the total movement of temporal existence beyond itself, towards the aeon of eternity which is its final goal and in which it again rejoins its own origin.

Within this theological experience of the whole of existence Maximus can indeed speak of πεῖϱα: there is a πεῖϱα of the sensibility which man should not have had (*Q. ad Thal*. 412C); a πεῖϱα of the good which strengthens man more than plain faith (*ibid*., 280D, 281B) and which teaches him to discern what is right (*ibid*., 252D; *cf*. 256A, 257C, 621C; *Cent. Gnost*. 1.22; 1092BC; *Ambigua*: PG 91. 1085A); finally, a mystical πεῖϱα beyond all νόησις (PG 91. 9A; 657C; 660B; 676B; 680C), a μαϰαϱία τοῦ Λόγου ἁφή (*Ambigua*, 1132C). On the other hand, Maximus can also speak of spiritual αἰσθητήϱια (*Q. ad Thal*. 36; 90. 381B), of αἴσθησις νοεϱά (*Exp. Or. dom*. 90. 877C), of αἴσθησις θεῖα (precisely during participation in the liturgy: *Mystag*. 700B, in spite of 704A and C), and he proposes a mystical paradox: τῆς ὑπὲϱ αἴσθησιν μυστιϰῶς αἰσθήσεται γνώσεως (*Cent*. Gnost. 2. 74; 90. 1160A).

Nevertheless, in a concluding text all of this is found under the heading of οἰϰονομία. There is twofold religious knowledge. The first kind is a ‘relationship to’ (σχετιϰός) which must make use of the mediation of concepts and thoughts, and this knowledge is appropriate to the earthly life and arouses in man the longing (ἔφεσις) for unmediated possession. The other kind of knowledge is ‘a realisation in unmediated experience which is beyond all concepts and thought’ and, as such, it is ‘fulness of perception’ (μόνῃ τῇ πείϱᾳ ϰατ’ ἐνέϱγειαν . . . ὅλη αἴσθησις) which surpasses all concepts. For conceptual thought and unmediated experience are mutually exclusive (*Q. ad Thal*. 60; PG 90. 621C-623B).

The experiential dimension in Maximus depends on the seriousness with which faith is taken. Faith without deeds and without love is only a sham. But the person who keeps Christ’s commandments receives Christ within himself and allows Christ to live in him—since, according to Origen, Christ is himself his own commandment (*Lib. Ascet*. 34; PG 90. 940B). But if Christ lives in the soul, then, along with him, there are also found hidden there all treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and ‘these become manifest to the heart in the measure that an individual has been purified by keeping the commandments’ (*Cap. de Carit*. IV. 70). And this, then, is what is meant by seeing God (*ibid*., 72). Whoever sells everything earthly, whoever no longer has any hatred in himself to oppose to love, ‘that person sees Christ, who dwells in him by the grace of holy baptism’ (*ibid*., 73; *cf*. 76f.). It is not on this, however, that the emphasis is placed, but rather on the spirit’s return home to its supra-mundane origin, a return which is the constant goal of all striving through praxis and gnosis. Mystical experience is the coming-into-consciousness and the emergence of this transcendence of the spirit, a transcendence that bears within itself all that is immanent and which in an unknowable manner (ἀγνώστως) casts itself (πϱοσβολή) at the unknowable God. This is an Areopagitic trait. But Maximus, who always thinks constructively, takes his Alexandrian inheritance up into this ascent by unifying the soul’s faculties and acts in progressive syntheses of the theoretical and practical reason, and by bringing this (now surpassed) dualism of the created spirit closer to the intradivine unity of the true and the good (*Mystag*. 5; PG 91, 673-680).[73]

Henceforth, the history of Byzantine mysticism will be a pendulum swinging between the Origenistic and Macarian motifs (faith must become an interior light and a realised experience) and the Areopagitic motifs (God is unexperienceable; faith is, at most, man's all-inclusive act in which he transcends all his knowledge and feeling). As late as Gregory Palamas both motifs are still to be found existing alongside each other.[74]

In the Middle Ages

It is not here possible to do more than to rough in a few lines. The Middle Ages reconstructed the Fathers' theology of experience on its own account. And in two respects it went beyond the Fathers: in its exploration of the dogmatic implications of the subject and in its critical delimiting of it.[75] These two tasks have yet to be concluded, as is demonstrated by Jean Mouroux's book and by the continuing controversy over the nature of Christian mysticism. A. Leonard deplores the fact that the 'authentically experiential aspect of theology has been little developed because of the exaggerations of which Protestantism, Modernism and the sects have been guilty'.[76]

Even though *Augustine* seems consciously to avoid the word *experientia*, his theology bears the strong stamp of experience, as does that of all great converts from Paul to Newman. The *Confessions*, among other things, are the narrative of the existential reverberation of Christian truth in his soul. This echo, moreover, sets up sympathetic vibrations in Augustine's own innermost religious disposition, which first expressed its brokenness in Manichaeism, then its infinite longing for purification and illumination and the encounter with the highest beauty in NeoPlatonism, and which finally found superabundant fulfilment in the countenance of the Incarnate and humiliated Son of God. Even the preliminary Manichaean and Neo-Platonic stages interest Augustine much more for their existential than their theoretical and dogmatic import. He is less interested in whether Plotinus is right than in whether he, Augustine, can realise Plotinus' ecstasy. This is why, even later, he will always understand the Platonic elements in his own theory of knowledge in an existential sense: God's irradiating light is for him a revelation of the personal Word and, thus, an address, an utterance.[77] Paul Ludwig Landsberg is, thus, right[78] when he states that ‘spiritual sensibility’ in Augustine is not simply something demanded of him by the tradition but, rather, the necessary expression of an original religious experience. To be sure, Augustine is here dependent on Plato’s unmediated vision of truth (*Republic* 7); and yet, on the crucial points, Augustine is actually negating and surpassing this position. For he is not at all concerned with the contemplation of ideas, but rather with the experience of a most vital reality, and this experience requires for its expression that to the eye of the soul (*oculus mentis*) there be added the ear of the soul and the touch of the soul. The sensual leaps forth where the Christian principle can be expressed only anti-Platonically.

With *Gregory the Great* we are already on the way to the medieval doctrine of the spiritual senses. Gregory carries on the tradition both of the Greeks (which he had from Cassian) and of Augustine. In faith which is set in the old aeon he sees a transparency to the contemplative experience of God in the new aeon: through wisdom and the gifts of the Spirit, the soul tastes the sweetness of God. All of this is found within a dynamic theology of longing as he experiences his exile here below and the homeland above which has yet to be reached.[79]

In *Anselm* we find at first the same apportioning of faith (conceptual knowledge) to this world and experience (*experientia*)[80] to the beyond, as in the decisive passage in Maximus. But then he proceeds along the lines of monastic theology: ‘Whoever does not believe will experience (*experietur*) nothing, and whoever has not experienced anything will also perceive nothing. As high as experience towers over hearsay, so high does the knowledge of an experienced person surpass the knowledge of the hearer.’ One should not, therefore, begin one’s search until on the firm basis of faith one has attained a proven pattern of moral behavior (*gravitas morum*) and tested wisdom (*sapientia*).[81]

With *Bernard* and his school this *sapientia*, as the ‘truth savoured through experience’, becomes the very core of all of spiritual theology. *Est enim sapiens cui quaecumque sapiunt prout sunt*.[82] This sentence, later repeated innumerable times, is the foundation of what, for Bernard, is normal Christian spirituality, which for him is wholly based on the principles of the First Epistle of John: God is love, and for this reason the possession of love is the presupposition for the knowledge of God. But only God is capable of giving love: it is the Holy Spirit’s gift of grace.[83] The Cistercian theory of love as a principle of knowledge, which later became so famous, has here its origin, and it cannot be claimed that this theory adds anything to what John had said. Love as lived faith is for us here below the organ for the vision of God which takes the place of vision face to face. The vision of God has its truth and its confirmation in fraternal love, and it produces the *fiducia* (= παϱϱησία, πληϱοφοϱία) which is so essential for

Bernard and his disciples. This being the ‘normal’ way, so to speak, for the loving Christian, the word *experientia*, while not sharply distinguished from *fiducia*, is reserved for the rarer moments of mystical encounter with God, particularly in the *Commentary on the Song of Songs*: it is a *breve momentum et experimentum rarum*.[84] But it is only experience which allows us to understand the meaning of the text; to the unexperienced it will say nothing.[85] *Nec scientia, sed conscientia comprehendit*.[86] Gilson has with full reason set Bernard’s theology of experience in its Patristic context—from Origen and Gregory of Nyssa to Maximus and Augustine—as the self-knowledge of the spirit belonging to God, as the realisation of its ‘likeness’ to God over and beyond man’s merely natural and sacramental character as God’s ‘image’, as an ascent out of the *regio dissimilitudinis* and into the heavenly homeland of the spirit, and as the *excessus* and *ekstasis* of creaturely love to divine love.

Bernard’s friend, *William of St. Thierry*, is the classical proponent of medieval theology of experience. His creative energy is manifested by the fact that he seeks to combine in strict unity both sources of his formation—the Greek Fathers and Augus tine. His anthropology (*De natura corporis et animae*[87]) is, as regards the speculative doctrine of the soul, constructed from excerpts from Gregory of Nyssa’s *De hominis opificio*, which he knew through Scotus Eriugena’s translation, and excerpts from the *De statu animae* of Claudianus Mamertus, who conveys Augustine’s trinitarian theory of the soul. It is precisely in the combination of these sources that William’s decisive contribution emerges. According to the Greeks, the baptised soul which strives to realise in itself the transition from being God’s ‘image’ to being his ‘likeness’, is capable of beholding God’s primal, uncreated Light within its, the soul’s, own interiority, within the light that has been bestowed and created within it. To be sure, Gregory of Nyssa does not at all understand this vision as being static; rather, it is realised only through the longing of a love that is constantly going out of itself to find the infinite beauty. This is a feature that determines everything in Denys, for whom the ‘nonvision’ of *ekstasis* is the only vision possible. In Augustine, however, the soul is an image of the Trinity in its very structure—memory (as the foundation), intellect, and will (love). In the baptised, the Holy Spirit becomes infused, along with grace, into the soul as the gift of the Father and of the Son: the archetype (*Urbild*) enters the image (*Abbild*). Thus, the soul’s understanding of itself (as the soul of a Christian believer, naturally) can become an understanding of its own quality as image (*Abbildlichkeit*), precisely to the extent that the Holy Spirit becomes the very ‘soul’ of the soul’s self-transcending longing for God. When, through the indwelling of God’s

Spirit, the gravitational pull (*Schwergewicht*) of love in the soul becomes God’s preponderance (*Ubergewicht*) within it, then the *ekstasis* of love becomes the soul’s feeling of God’s presence within it. William’s conclusion, which represents his own contribution, clinches his argument: the trinitarian Spirit is infused, by grace, into the trinitarian soul’s ‘willing-striving-loving’, and it is this which sustains all knowledge of the Logos and constitutes the ground of the creature. Only in this way can we understand at the level of speculation why, in William, love can be said to be the principle that underlies the knowledge of God. For Gregory of Nyssa (as also for Denys) the structure we have described cannot fundamentally be surpassed even by the *visio beata* in heaven;[88] for William this is, at least, the structure of the knowledge of God on earth.

> The soul is conscious of somehow being the image of its Creator. It is also conscious of the fact that it is his image when it acknowledges the illumining light in him and the illumined light in itself. And there is more. The three things that it finds within itself—memory, intellect, and will—appear to it somehow to constitute the image of the supreme Tri-unity. . . . In its fully developed activity, each of these three faculties includes the others. . . . The soul, moreover, is conscious of the fact that these realities, these relationships constitute its real being. And here the voice of God begins to resound in its ears. Truth radiates in it, and with great attention it perceives the Word of the Lord: ‘I and the Father’ and my love ‘are’ not three, but ‘one’—one single God. And you likewise, reasonable spirit, intellect and love of yourself: you are but one human being, created in the image of your Creator. . . . Come closer to the form that gives you form. . . . Its shape will become all the more deeply impressed into your substance as a greater preponderance of love will have made you adhere to that shape. . . . To strive after God means to fashion oneself after him. However, what the soul brings to its God derives not from itself, but from him who draws it to himself. O truly blessed soul! When it prays it is not itself which is praying, but the Holy Spirit who prays in its stead, as the Apostle says, and the Spirit makes his unspeakable sighs to be heard in the soul. When it speaks, it is again the Spirit speaking, and through it he makes words be heard which have a hidden sense. . . . God is the life of the soul, just as the soul is the life of the body; he is its breath, and the soul sighs only after him, as the body sighs for air.[89]

For these reasons, William has placed ‘feeling’ (*sentire*) and ‘tasting’ (*gustare*) at the centre of his spiritual doctrine. For him, too, *sapientia* consists in finding a taste for God, and its seat is the *mens* or νοῦς, the innermost ground of the soul. With the tasting of God comes the vision of God: *gustate et videte* (Ps 33.9). This is then developed in a christological and ecclesial sense:

> The Body of Christ is the universal Church, both of the Old and the New Testaments. In the ‘head’ of this Body—its uppermost and oldest part—there are four senses: the eyes [which are the Angels because of the depth of their vision], the ears [which are the Patriarchs in whom we see obedience radiate], the nose [the Prophets, who smelled from afar the things to come], and the sense of touch, which is the commonly shared sense [of the people]. Before the arrival of the Mediator these senses languished because one sense was still lacking—the sense of taste, without which the Body could not live. . . . This sense produces that blissful sensation which the soul feels in its very foundations. This

> special feeling, proper only to taste, allows the soul to distinguish between the sensations it receives. . . . Now the sense of taste is located where the head is connected to the body, and this is the place of him who, through his Incarnation, was placed ‘a little lower’ than the Angels, than Moses and Elias, than the Patriarchs and the Prophets. . . . It is Christ who has ‘tasted all things’ and, thus, made them savoury for us, by reason of the interior taste of his divinity—that *sapor* through which he became *sapientia* for us (1 Cor 1.30). Because he possesses life in himself and communicates it to the Body, he has been the author of joy both for himself and for the Angels, . . . and, together with life, he has ‘infused joy into the Body.’

Christ bestows this taste on us by interpreting for us the Scriptures and the mysteries (sacraments) of God.

> We do not only understand these mysteries: we touch them, probe them, so to speak, with the hand of experience; and this can happen only through a sort of sense of consciousness (*sensus conscientiae*) and through a well-trained experience (*experientia*) which understands (*intelligentis*) and, what is more, reads in its own interior (*intus in seipsa legentis*), feeling God’s goodness and power.[90]

The variations on this theme are almost endless, especially in the *Commentary on the Song of Songs*; and yet, the basic thought always remains the same. For William, it is an *inspirata experientia*,[91] one which, as it feels God, offers a supreme certainty (*per sensum certissimae experientiae*)[92] and which, therefore, to the extent that this is possible for faith here below, already contains the vision of God. In this process, understanding passes over into love and love into understanding.[93] ‘See, he stands before the door!’ exults the bride. ‘ “See!” refers to the tasting.’ The wall is what still separates, namely, sin, but ‘in my God I jump over the wall’ (Ps 17.30).[94] For the love with which the bride loves is already the Beloved: ‘*Amor ipse, hoc est quod Tu es: Spiritus Sanctus tuus, o Pater, qui a te procedit et Filio, cum quo tu et Filius unum es. Cui cum meretur affici amori, amor humanus divinus quodammodo affiitur*.’[95]

We do not here need to follow any further the development of the doctrine of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and of the ‘wisdom that savours’: the road would lead us to the other Cistercians, to the Victorines, to Rupert of Deutz, Adam Scotus and Hildegard of Bingen. The texts are legion; in their vitality and in the fantasy of their ever-new formulations, they witness to the fact that we find ourselves here in the very sanctuary of medieval piety. Everywhere these texts speak of joy, of the certainty of faith, of an abandonment to God’s love which trusts because it has experienced, of a ‘certain sweetness of the divine inspiration’,[96] an ‘anticipated tasting of the divine sweetness’,[97] an introduction to the heavenly vision by means of the wisdom that savours.

Nevertheless, it is evident that the criterion of subjective evidence cannot hold its own for long when it is taken out of the context of the monastic and contemplative life and placed in the cool and rational air of the schools and their atmosphere of distinctions. Landgraf has vividly described this process of decay, and it is significant that he does this by tracing through the development of the idea of the ‘knowability of one’s own state of grace’.[98] With Abelard there is a turning to psychology: it is one’s own conscience that tells one whether one is a slave or a son. In Bernard, on the contrary, there is a rejection of all certainty; there are only indirect signs. In Peter Cantor (commenting on 1 Jn 4.7) we see the attempt to distinguish between a *certitudo viae* and a *certitudo patriae*; the former is, indeed, a *cognitio per experientiam*, which is certain, to be sure, but which is yet only conjectured and cannot be further explained. Stephen Langton distinguishes the *conscientia notitiae* from a *conscientia experientiae* (or *sentire experimento*), which is not ‘real knowledge’ but mediates only a probable knowledge. Elsewhere in Langton we read that, at the beginning of love, no one knows whether he has it, and, as it grows, one can know about this love *per experientiam*; and yet, says Langton, it would be more correct to say that real knowledge can come only through private revelation. Godfrey of Poitiers equates *experiri* with *conjecturari* or *vehementer opinari*. Many may have feelings of consolation, but these do not all necessarily come from the Holy Spirit. For Praepositinus, ‘knowledge’ here means ‘faith’. But, on the other hand, he, no more than Peter of Capua and the circle around Odo of Ourscamp, would not deny that at the highest degree of *caritas* a *perfectio certitudinis* is possible which casts out fear. J. Auer has traced the history of this problem further.[99] The Franciscans mediate between monastic and scholastic theology in the sense that they reject a speculative knowledge and certainty but, in turn, affirm an affective knowledge and certainty which, however, are not infallible. Albert and Thomas, on the other hand, reject every immediate experience of the state of grace without a special revelation; only indirectly and through certain signs can the state of grace be supposed to exist.

It is important to notice that the discussion has here been totally shifted and concentrated on the *I*, while the objective evidence of Christian truth has been disregarded. By its predominantly negative decision, scholasticism rejected in advance the Protestant concentration of the evidence on the subjective certainty of salvation. The way the question was put, furthermore, slipped on to the psychological plane and, thus, experience itself was conceived directly and statically in a way which no longer takes into account or even sees the lively totality of Christian experience in Macarius and Diadochus. Both not only *would* have given, but in fact *did* give a resounding No! to the question as stated by early and high scholasticism.

The wider horizon still remains open in the theology of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as developed with equal devotion by Dominicans, Franciscans, and secular theologians. Now, in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, the gifts were most popularly considered to be dispositions and aids given with baptism and infused together with the virtues—dispositions and aids from which the Christian life of the virtues then developed. But Thomas reverses this order. Even though he, too, considers the gifts to be already given in essence with grace, he makes their activation and actualisation dependent on the progress and degree of development of the virtues. This shift is characteristic. A certain Platonising trend of thought will conceive the gifts as *aptitudines receptionum a fonte gratiae*—as the passivity with regard to God infused by baptism: *Sapere enim et degustare spirituales delicias ac sapores magis est recipere ac influi quam efflui, similiter et intelligere spiritualia ac divina (intelligere inquam intellectu qui est donum) magis videtur illuminari sive lumen recipere quam lumen hujusmodi intellectu agere vel effluere* (William of Auvergne).[100] 'Mystical experience', therefore, basically begins at baptism. Thomas, however, separates mystical experience from baptism by introducing the sphere of the activity proper to the created spirit, and he thus makes room for an autonomous and even Christian psychology. It is only from the latter that he develops, slowly and carefully, the sphere of the 'gifts' as the sphere of 'mysticism', as a new adaptation of the finite spirit to the inspiration of the infinite Spirit.[101] This adaptation, moreover, is fundamentally necessary to salvation,[102] even if its development and perfecting remain open as it were upwards, in the direction of mystical experiences.

In this way Thomas established a balance between monastic and scholastic theology, but, in so doing, he assigned a very definite place to experience as a criterion, which at the high points of its history—in Diadochus and William of St. Thierry—had seemed to absorb all else in itself: according to Thomas, the place of experience is that of a Christian love that has gone through trials and has been confirmed. In the theologians of experience we have mentioned, the element of experience threatened to swallow up the whole of objective dogmatics and the act of faith oriented towards it, something which had not been the case in John, who is the very archetype of a Christian theology of experience. The 'beauty' of God that enraptured these theologians and whose flame they felt burning in themselves cannot be measured by this flame itself, even when it is experienced as a burning and insatiable longing (ἔφεσις). This is why already Maximus was perfectly right to subsume the dualism between a yearning love and faith in the supreme synthesis of a Christian attitude. Moreover, a

Platonising theology of experience has the tendency to make the objective image of God’s appearance in salvation-history, with Christ as its centre, become too quickly a transparency of the ‘formless’ light of divine glory; it has the tendency to dwell too much on the interior experience of how the Holy Spirit takes over command in one’s own spirit and to pay too little attention to the historical form of God’s glory, on which every interior spirit remains dependent. Against this absorption of the objective evidence by the interior experience (which to this day remains the tragedy of Protestantism), the Catholic theology of experience has forged three weapons.

1. In the first place we must take note of the care with which Thomas uses the concepts *experimentum* and *quasi-experimentum*, and of the breadth of the meaning he allows these. For him, wisdom as a gift of the Spirit is founded upon an ontological kinship of the child of God with God. Here he invokes the Areopagite’s saying: *patiendo divina didicit divina*, and the Apostle’s: ‘The anointing will teach you all things.’ ‘Wisdom has in itself a certain self-sufficiency of knowledge, so that it possesses within itself a certainty concerning great and marvellous things which are unknown to others, and it can judge all things. . . . This sufficiency derives, in some, from research and learning, coupled with a liveliness of intellect. . . . But in others it derives from a certain kinship with the divine’,[103] from a certain *compassio sive connaturalitas* through which the Christian who lives his faith understands the things of God even without having learned them.[104] This is perfected in the theology of the *missiones*, that is, of the sending of the divine persons of the Son and of the Holy Spirit into the soul of the grace-filled person, who thereby acquires a participation through grace in the life of the Trinity. ‘Just as the Holy Spirit penetrates invisibly into the human spirit through the gift of love, so, too, the Son through the gift of wisdom, whereby he himself becomes manifested to us as the goal of our return to God.’ This relationship to the Son and to the Spirit does not have to become conscious in an actual sense; a *cognitio habitualis* suffices, ‘even though the gift received is in itself sufficient to lead (*sufficienter ductivum*) to a knowledge of the Person that is coming’.[105] For, in this whole context, Thomas distinguishes God’s gifts at the creature’s going forth from God (these are the gifts of nature) from God’s gifts at the creature’s return to God (these are the gifts of grace)—gifts by which the trinitarian God is to be grasped by man as he is in himself. At this point, the relation of the creature to the divine person is one of possessing and holding. ‘A divine person can only be possessed by us either for full enjoyment (*ad fructum perfectum*)—and this occurs in

heavenly glory—or according to an imperfect enjoyment, as occurs with sanctifying grace, or, more exactly, by means of what unites us with the person we are to enjoy. . . . This is why the Holy Spirit is called the "pledge of our inheritance". . . and knowledge of him is, therefore, *quasi experimentalis*.'[106] The same is said of the Son: whoever receives him with love as the Word of God, to him the Son is sent so as to be 'known and perceived; for perception connotes a certain experimental knowledge'.[107] Thus, Thomas does not shy away from speaking about an 'affective or experiential knowledge of the divine goodness and will' whereby a person 'experiences (*experitur*) in himself the taste of divine sweetness and pleasure in the divine will'.[108] At this point we should, as well, repeat everything we have said concerning the act of faith as founded on connaturality.[109] But it is even more important to note that here Thomas is but completing, in the supernatural realm, his theory of natural being and knowledge, since for him all knowledge presupposes an ultimate connaturality between knower and known, and this not only where worldly beings are involved but also as between God and creature.[110] Christian experience confirms the axiom *gratia supponit et elevat naturam*, even while preserving the radical newness of divine revelation. From this starting-point modern theologians can also develop a theory of Christian experience.[111]

2. A particular trait of the scholastic theology of the gifts must still receive special mention: the relationship of the gifts to the total corporeal-spiritual object. This trait was to be found earlier in Diadochus (and, in his own way, even in Gregory of Nyssa), when he describes in poetic words the 'divinisation' even of the irascible and concupiscible elements—the manner in which these are made useful by the love of God: it was on such a chariot [of passions] that Elijah rode up to heaven! (c. 62; for the ἐπιθυμία, see *Visio* R 18[112]). For John of Salisbury (*De septem septenis*) all the powers of the soul, even the imagination, are divinely in-formed by the seven gifts.[113] At the beginning of his *Summa*, Praepositinus describes his theory of the gifts brilliantly when he portrays them as the seven winds on which God 'rides' into the soul and over which he alone has power. And so Praepositinus sees the *ratio* as being informed by 'wisdom' and 'understanding', the irascible and concupiscible soul as informed by 'counsel' and 'knowledge', and the affections by 'fortitude', 'piety' and 'fear'.[114] For Philip the Chancellor, these *passiones* participate in the gifts to the extent that they are anchored in the spiritual soul: *gustare* belongs to the desiring faculty, *adhaerere* to the 'wrathful' faculty, *cognoscere* to the rational soul—and all three of them together constitute the *experimentum*. William of Auvergne

concludes that the gifts of the Holy Spirit make all things transparent to God—even the external things of this world; for this reason, one comes to recognise their religious significance both in nature and in art. Even the invisible powers of the sacraments somehow become experienceable, and all ecclesial institutions, their ministers and ceremonies, the parables and the prophecies—all reveal their divine meaning.[115] This is important, because in this way the total structure of Christian perception becomes visible: it is the whole man who has to respond to the whole form of revelation as it appears within the whole of the created world, and it is God who empowers him to give such a response.

3. Christian experience (*experientia*) had been situated by Macarius, Diadochus, Gregory, Bernard, William and their followers in the realm of mysticism. Now, the extrication of Christian experience from this context, or, better, the delimitation of a mode of experience which is ‘mystical’ in the narrower sense over against the experience of ‘ordinary’ faith, could have resulted in the definitive separation of both spheres, with no element of experience at all being allowed to ‘ordinary faith’. Yet this did not happen until modern times. In spite of everything, the late Middle Ages and even Baroque spirituality still think from an undivided centre. What, in a more modern sense, is called ‘mystical’ experience, at that time was still viewed as the particular unfolding of the general and, so to speak, ‘normal’ experience of the Christian who is seriously seeking to live his faith. This holds not only for the spirituality that mystics like Suso and Tauler preached from the pulpit, but (with even greater influence) for the spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola, who, speaking out of what undoubtedly was a most intimate mystical experience and hearkening back to Evagrius, Diadochus, Cassian, and the Cistercians,[116] sets up his ‘rules for the discernment of spirits’ as criteria for every Christian who is ardently seeking for God’s will. What we have here is the experience of being ‘moved’ and ‘driven’ (*Exercises*, n. 6) by various spirits, an experience which, on the one hand, can to some extent be interpreted by considering the individual state, but which reveals its full meaning only when seen in a sequence of states directed towards a single goal, such as had been portrayed especially by Diadochus. In this respect the privileged weeks of the Exercises are to be considered as a kind of concentration of the whole of Christian existence. This is so because, first, what is involved is the decisive choice of life according to God’s will and, second, because the sequence of the four weeks represents a sketch, as it were, of the Christian’s path to perfection. For this reason, Ignatius assigns the ‘rules for discernment’ for beginners to the ‘first’ week, and to the ‘second’ week those for the advanced who already exhibit in part authentic mystical traits. Ignatius always kept awake

within himself—and desired for his followers—the particular Christian sensibility, which for him is, inseparably, both natural and grace-given; this is why he constantly prayed for the gift of tears, which he prized no less than the Desert Fathers. The ‘attunement’ of man to the mysteries of salvation plays the greatest of roles in the *Spiritual Exercises*: man’s disposition is to ‘correspond’ and be harmonised, and this correspondence must be prayed for (ns. 48, 55, 65, 193, 199, 203, 221); however, as far as possible, it must be created and acquired by man himself (74, 79, 80, 129, 195, 206, 229) so that, in his spiritual-sensual totality, man may come to experience and realise the contemplated mystery by ‘applying his five senses’ to it (121-125). Likewise, all experience (of any kind, whether of consolation or desolation) is regarded as a sign from God that must be attended to, ‘and one must be particularly attentive and persevere in repose when one has felt greater interior movements and greater spiritual relish’ (227), ‘for it is not much knowledge that satisfies the soul, but tasting and feeling things from within’ (2). This total attunement to revelation is subservient to the goal of coming to understand God’s being and will in order then to correspond to him. For this reason, we can no more speak here of a religion of feeling than we can of a rationalistic religion: the aim is that higher middle way which we can call ‘existential Christianity’,[117] and this is precisely the goal of our whole study.

Keeping to this higher middle way is difficult, and after an initial inclination toward the theology of experience (Francis Borgia, and later Baltazar Alvarez) the opposite tendency towards rationalism (Rodriguez) was hardly avoidable. Lallemant stressed with reserve, and Surin with passion, the inalienable rights of total experience, and they pointed to the courage necessary to persevere in it.

The critique of Christian experience has been conducted in the most pertinent way precisely by those who have had the deepest experience. From the greater breadth of their own experience they have been able to detect the provisional character of a more superficial experience. In this context, it is less important whether the fundamental experience was, as in John of the Cross, the transformation of one’s whole being into the living fire of love or, as in Francis de Sales, a quiet, expectant attitude that permeates all more superficial experiences of happiness or, as in Fenelon, that ascetical renunciation of all self-enjoyment, that finding of gratification in God alone, that state of indifference to which he wanted to give the name of *amour pur* and which he thus consciously linked with the ἀπάθεια of the Fathers.[118]

We can sum up this stage of our enquiry as follows. We have seen that the history of the Christian concept of experience took its departure from the unreflected unity between mystical experience and ‘ordinary’ experience. We have also seen that reflection on this unquestioned unity (which began seriously only in modern times) led to delimiting particular mystical phenomena within the experience of faith. Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to conclude that, because of this separating off of the particular from the general, the general has been robbed of all authentic Christian experience and could, therefore, be assigned to the realm of pure psychology. We can and must draw the boundary between, on the one hand, those who, as qualified witnesses, are mystics by vocation, and, on the other hand, the rest of believers. In this sense the Jesuit tendency, as represented by Poulain and Richtstätter, is quite justified. But in so doing we must not overlook the analogy, and even a certain continuity, that exists between both kinds of experience. Precisely because mystical experience remains an experience within faith and because faith in Christ is already a genuine and objective encounter of the whole man with the Incarnate God, there exists a ‘radical homogeneity’ between mystical experience and faith. Mystical experience is

> an experience which prolongs another experience by deepening, purifying, clarifying, transcending, and crowning it. . . . Only if the integral Christian experience can be shown, if not to initiate, then surely to prepare for mystical experience, can it be proven that the latter is not a degenerative phenomenon. Only if Christian experience does not stand over against mystical experience in heterogeneous fashion will authentic Christian living not be undervalued or mystical experience overvalued. This way of stating the question is of decisive importance. Despite all that is said in Scripture and the tradition of the Fathers, Christian experience has not been sufficiently investigated in itself because it was simply confounded with mystical experience; in consequence men sought either to rediscover in normal Christian life an experience of the mystical type (so the heretics) or to deny its existence (so the Catholics).

But, as Baroque spirituality has demonstrated, this last solution leads to a secret re-introduction—one which dogmatically is not sufficiently founded—of mystical elements into the piety of believers (discernment of spirits, discernment of vocations, role of experience in the theology of faith and of grace), and it also ‘leads to a casuistry of the spiritual life’ or to a ‘description of Christian life according to a mystical model, but one which is an impoverished imitation. The true value of the mystical superstructure will be clarified only when the sustaining foundation—integral Christian experience—has first been established.’[119] The full Christian experience, however, is not an individual experience which may be isolated from all else; it is, unconditionally, an experience within the context of the Church. It is ‘a personal history which is imbedded in the greater history of the Church—a spiritual becoming which is incarnate and is lived within the Church’s own process of becoming. It is the effort to develop what has been given, to discover what is hidden, the effort to attain to oneself by attaining, through the Church and within her, to the mystery of Christ, the Saviour.'[120]

This is precisely the point where the whole difficulty we have been examining is transcended, and we shall be able to return to it again only if it is first measured as a participation in an archetypal experience which, precisely, is not the 'mystical' experience (since this is not the foundation of ordinary Christian faith): the archetypal experience is the encounter with God of the Bible, which is what lays out the foundation and the condition for all Christian experience. This experience, too, is not an experience beyond faith; the 'eye-witnesses', precisely as such, are also archetypal witnesses of Christian faith. And it is because they are both things simultaneously—eye-witnesses and witnesses of faith—that they are, without question, the 'foundation' upon which all Christian faith is built (Eph 2.20).

2. ARCHETYPAL EXPERIENCE

a. The Archetype as Model

The Biblical experience of God in both the Old and the New Testaments is characterised as a whole by the fact that the essentially 'invisible' (Jn 1.18) and 'unapproachable' (1 Tim 6.16) God enters the sphere of creaturely visibleness, not by means of intermediary beings, but in himself. He who is formless takes form in the world and in history, and can be encountered and experienced by the whole man in this form which he himself has chosen and put on. This structure of Biblical revelation should neither be sold short nor overplayed. It could be sold short by the view that the God who reveals himself in creation and in salvation-history is not really God himself, but, rather, that, as the Gnostics held, he remains in his higher world and deals with creation only through intermediary beings. And it could be overplayed by the view that all that God has instituted for our salvation, culminating in his Incarnation, is in the end only something preliminary which must finally be transcended by either a mystical or an eschatologico-celestial immediacy that would surpass and make superfluous the form of salvation, or, put concretely, the humanity of Jesus Christ. This last danger is not so far removed from the Platonising currents of Christian spirituality as one would hope or want to believe: the impulsive search for an 'immediate' vision of God that would no longer be mediated by the Son of Man, that is, by the whole of God's form in the world, is the conscious or unconscious basis for many eschatological speculations. The attempt to construct a Christian theological aesthetics, however, stands or falls with the rejection of such tendencies. The perception of God, who is imperceivable in himself and yet has become perceivable through his free grace, is realised when God comes into the world and, yes, *becomes world*. His allowing us to participate in his Godhead, which is above the world, precisely in this and no other way, occurs not in a second process, but in the one and only process. This is the *admirabile commercium et conubium*. In God's condescendence lies man's exaltation. The Incarnation *is* the eschaton and, as such, is unsurpassable. Whoever strives to go beyond this, whoever deems that the Father is still not visible enough in the Son, has not given sufficient thought to the fact that the Father has revealed himself in the Son, the 'radiance of his glory and the expressive image (*Ausbild*) of his being', the 'total heir' not only of his historical revelation, but of his entire 'universe' (Heb 1.3). Nor has he sufficiently pondered the fact that, after this Word, who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Father has nothing further to communicate to the world, neither in the present aeon nor in the aeon to come. He has not considered that, as Irenaeus often repeats, the Son is *the* visibleness of *the* Invisible One, and that this paradox, with the simultaneity it expresses, remains the *non plus ultra* of revelation.

For this paradox there exists only the aesthetic analogy whereby the given form definitively remains the locus for the theophany of the gods. In this Schelling is right as against Hegel. But Irenaeus and Diadochus are also right as against every tendency to portray the *visio facialis* as something lying beyond the Incarnation.

> 'I shall be refreshed with the vision of your glory' (Ps 16.15). The Prophet speaks thus not because the divine nature itself has a definite face and form, but because in the form and in the glory of the Son the formless Father will reveal himself to us. For this is why it has pleased God to make his Logos enter the human form through the Incarnation—while he himself, to be sure (how could he not?) remained in his almighty glory—so that man, beholding the condensed form of that glorified flesh (for form sees form), might be enabled, after his purification is completed, to see the beauty of the Resurrection as it manifests God (Diadochus, *Visio* R 21).

The visibleness of the Father in the (transfigured) Son is, for (transfigured) man, no more 'indirect' than is, on a philosophical level, the contemplation of Being within the existent. To see Being elsewhere, to see it *as* an existent, would contradict the essence of cognition itself.

Working back from this eschatological point, God's total revelation to the world must be considered to be homogeneous from beginning to end, a revelation which substantially remains the same through all modal changes. The basis of all this is the revelation of the creation, which is neither surpassed nor made superfluous for all the revelation of grace and glory. To think otherwise would be to adopt a gnostic and Marcionite cast of mind; God then would contradict himself and as Redeemer would destroy what he had set up as Creator. The world is the stage which has been set up for the encounter of the whole God with the whole man—'stage' not as an empty space, but as the sphere of collaboration of the two-sided form which unites in the encounter. This is why the mighty, Incarnate Word is the 'total heir' through whom the universe is sustained, explained, and justified (Heb 1.3). By not crushing and surpassing the form of the world with his revelation, but, rather, by taking it up and perfecting it, God honours his creature, honours himself in it as its Creator: the Son honours the Father and the Father the Son. The christological form as such is, absolutely, the form of the encounter between God and man. This encounter bears the form of the Incarnation, already in the Old Testament and still in the Resurrection. For this reason (and not on account of a subjective theology of experience), this encounter also has the form of a totally human encounter with the God who has become man.

Christ, the full and perfect man, has in his own totality the experience of what God is. He is, with body and soul, the embodiment of this experience. And, as God-become-man who reveals God to man, Christ, even as God, has the experience of what man is:[121] man, that is to say, both as God wanted him to be and also as he at the same time recapitulates in himself everything living in the world which is forgetful of God. Men are invited and, in their own way, initiated into this highest archetypal experience. This archetype is both things at once: the inimitable and what must be imitated. It determines both itself and what is alien to itself, without both things being able to come under one common head. Thus, at the same time Christ determines both himself (what may and should be called his attitude towards God, or his *fides* in the Old Testament sense[122]) and the faith of his disciples. On the other hand, he determines the Christian faith which corresponds to this reciprocity between Christ and the Church, and the faith of the Old Testament which is oriented towards it. Finally, he determines the experience of God of both the Old and the New Aeons. The measure which is applied is the christological—the measure of God's Incarnation. This is why, for all the distance between man and God and for all the proximity of discipleship, what is at stake is man as a whole, his realisation beyond himself in the God-Man, who does not present to man an unreachable and eccentric possibility of being human, but, rather, the very measure whereby God measures man.

Because this Christ-measure is and remains God's measure, an overall view of the relationship between Christ and his disciples, Christ and the Church (and each individual within her), Christ and the Old Testament, is not possible. Such a view would again presuppose their subsumption under a common head. We can only accept this measure as we find ourselves measured by it. For our problem this means the following. Christ is the archetypal relationship of man to God, a relationship measured only by itself, and he is this as a true historical man. For this reason, Christ introduces into his archetypal manner of being a measure, a portion of the world and of world-history which we know as the sphere of the Biblical experience of God. This sphere, as the locus of the historical encounter with the God-Man (both as promised and as present), is a sphere that participates in the archetypal nature of Christ (merely participates, because the archetype of the God-Man can be participated in only as itself being unpartakable) which, as such, including Christ as centre, must become archetypally and, therefore, unpartakably exemplary for the sphere of Church history.[123] The levels of imitation appear in Paul, and here imitation at each step indicates the inviolable difference between levels; but it also indicates that the imitating level always imitates the *whole* of the imitated level. Thus, Jesus' archetypal experience of God is a 'super-faith' which is one with the vision of the Father. The God-experience of the disciples as eye-witnesses is an imitation which, indissolubly, consists of faith in Christ (and, with Christ, in God) and of a total human vision of Christ (and, in Christ, of the Father in the Holy Spirit). The Church's experience of God (and again, at a stage lower, the God-experience of each individual within her) is an imitating participation in this archetypal unity between faith and vision that we find in the eye-witnesses through the apostolic and ecclesial *kerygma*: 'That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life. . . , this we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ' (1 Jn 1.1ff.). Thus, it is not as simple as saying (Jn 20.29 notwithstanding) that the Apostles possessed actual vision in addition to their faith, while we have naked faith without the vision. Rather, at our own level and through the eyewitnesses' communication of their (relatively and dependently) archetypal experience, we imitate the total structure of their Christ-experience (and, hence, of their God-experience with Christ).

This becomes fully intelligible only when we consider the fact that the God-experience of the incarnate Son is the experience of the Mediator and, hence, an experience which must be mediated: taken in itself it is not and could not be finally comprehensible. In consequence, the God-experience of Christ's witnesses (to whom the Old Testament Prophets also belong) is not, in turn, comprehensible in itself, but only in their function as witnesses, as ones sent out to the Church and to the world, as the foundation on whose functional experience the existence in faith of the coming Church can be built up. Neither of the archetypal forms of the encounter with God are, properly, self-contained, no more than is the Old Testament form of that encounter. ‘Now these things happened to them as archetypal symbols (τυπικῶς), and they were written down for our instruction’ (1 Cor 10.11). ‘All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas,. . . all are yours; and you are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s’ (1 Cor 3.21ff.). The meaning of the archetypal experience is in each case inclusive. The measure of being included in the original Christ-experience is at the same time the measure of the apostolic mission: the more a person participates (*teilnimmt*), the more must he (and can he), in turn, communicate (*teilgeben*), not out of a gratuitous generosity, but in virtue of the intrinsic teleology of his experience. In this way there arises a lively unity of descent and ascent: ‘normal’ ecclesial faith can be understood only in an ascending movement as the participation in the archetypal faith of the Apostles and in the total structure of experience within the sphere of Sacred Scripture. But the faith of the Apostles can be understood only as a function of the faith of the Church: the testimony of the eyewitnesses finds its reason for being in the Church; for the sake of the Church the eye-witnesses were expropriated, to be made the ‘lowest of all’ and the ‘foundation’ (Eph 2.20), and they were thus put in the ‘last place’ (1 Cor 4.9). It is the law of the ‘Body of Christ’ that rules here between the ‘superior’ and the ‘lowermost’ members (1 Cor 12.21-26).

The testimony of the eye-witnesses must, thus, be considered from two perspectives. First of all, in itself. Here we have archetypal experience at different levels: Old Testament experience; Christ’s own experience of God; the experience of the Apostles and, in a privileged position, the experience of the Mother of the Lord; then the experience of the Church in so far as she is the bride and the body of Christ; finally, the experience of that special participation in the sphere of eye-witness to which the appearances to Paul make a sort of transition and which is constituted by the mystical vocations in the Church. The experiences of God in the Biblical sphere are an integral part of the objective form of faith. Neither the Prophets nor the Apostles are mere ‘extras’ in the cast; in their own place, they belong to God’s appearance in the world; and yet we cannot say that, for this reason, faith has itself as object. God’s exchanges and dialogue with man (who is always particular and non-interchangeable) within the human and historical situation of Jesus Christ can be understood and contemplated only historically and concretely in place and time, in the unrepeatability of my personal situation. It is theologically impossible, in the interests of a ‘universal’ concept, to abstract from the historical persons with whom the historical Christ associated.

Secondly, however, the testimony of the eye-witnesses must be considered from the viewpoint of the inclusion of ecclesial faith, that is, with consideration of the manner in which every Christian believer is represented in the situation of concrete and fully human encounter. Once again, this raises the question of the total human character of faith, practically speaking, that is, of the sensory character of faith. Do the bodily senses participate in Christian religious knowledge, for the reason that the objective form of faith is ‘God in the flesh’—something which, precisely, requires such a sensory encounter? The senses will have to be differentiated, and investigated with regard to their theological significance. What does it mean, for the life of faith, to ‘see’ in a Christian manner, to ‘hear’, ‘touch’, ‘taste’ in a Christian manner? While in the foregoing chapter we spoke of experience (αἴσθησις, πεῖϱα, *experimentum*) only in a general sense, we must now raise the question of the ‘spiritual senses’. Both viewpoints are central to a theological aesthetics. For the moment they can be dealt with only from the side of the subjective evidence (even if, as is evident, this cannot be done without constant reference to the object, all the more since in Christ subject and object coincide); nevertheless, the full range of the question will be revealed only when the objective evidence is treated thematically in the second part.

b. General Reflections on Archetypal Experience

It was, above all, Cajetan who emphasised the fact that an archetypal experience of the God who reveals himself is necessary for faith. This in a commentary on the passage where Saint Thomas says that a prophet ‘has supreme certainty concerning those things which the prophetic Spirit expressly infuses into him, and also concerning the fact that these things are revealed to him by God. . . . For if he did not have such certainty, then neither would the faith which is based on the pronouncements of the Prophets have any full certainty’ (IIa IIae 171, 5). Cajetan turns this into a general law of revelation:

> It is necessary for mankind—with that necessity of gentle disposing with which the divine wisdom orders all things—that some persons receive such a revelation from God concerning the things to be believed, that they possess a self-evident certainty (*quod certi fuerint evidenter*) that God has revealed these things, and that others may be taught by them as students are taught by their teachers. For it is natural for man to learn from other men. . . . Otherwise, the Church would not possess in herself any certainty about what ought to be believed—that is to say, if she did not have within herself any witnesses.[124]

If in Aquinas’ text certainty and faith are contrasted with one another, this corresponds to a concept of faith which has been scholastically defined. But if we were to speak the language of Scripture, then we would rather have to speak of an analogy of faith in the archetypal and the imitative experience of faith, an analogy whereby what is ‘evident’ in the eye-witness does not constrain his act of faith, but rather perfects it. The same thing occurs in the special case of mystical experience within the Church: even in its mystical heights it remains an experience of faith, one which lends to faith the transparency of vision. Into this law of analogy there can then be incorporated what Thomas posits as a fundamental principle: the assent of faith proceeds not *ex visione credentis, sed a visione ejus cui creditor*.[125] Here he is, first of all, thinking of God himself, and, at the most, of Christ and the Prophets; but we should think no less of the archetypal experience of the Apostles, and of the stamp they have left on the normative faith-experience of the Church as such. For this reason, the definition of faith of Heb 11.1 (*fides sperandarum substantia rerum argumentum non apparentium*) cannot simply be interpreted in a univocal sense, as is usually the case, all the less since ὑπόστασις and ἐλέγχος here can mean something far more concrete than is admitted by the scholastic definition of ecclesial faith, and since the ‘vision of faith’ of the Patriarchs and the Prophets which is described immediately afterwards belongs to the archetypal experience (Heb 11.27 says concerning Moses, the seer of God: τὸν ἀόϱατον ὡς ὁϱῶν ἐϰαϱτέϱησεν).

Tradition emerges here as the reality through which the archetypal experience is connected to the imitative experience—the reception of the substance of faith ‘by the followers and servants of the Logos, who were initiated without mediation (ἀμέσως) into the knowledge of the real’.[126] This immediacy means, above all, *sensoriness*, though it remains an open question which sense or senses in particular are involved in the appearance. Naturally, only the three named by the First Epistle of John—hearing, seeing, touching—have a pre-eminent rank. And if we set the sense of touch aside for the moment as being especially reserved for the experience of the Apostles, then we do not need to argue over whether precedence goes to hearing or seeing. We can only observe (following Rom 10.17: *fides ex auditu*) that hearing must be assigned particularly to imitative faith, while then seeing is more properly assigned to archetypal faith (as the word ‘eye-witness’ already implies). Furthermore, within archetypal experience we can assign hearing (in the Prophets, but also in the Law) predominantly to the Old Testament, and seeing (of the Word of the flesh) predominantly to the New Testament. Finally, in an all-inclusive view, we can ascribe hearing to earthly faith in its every form and seeing to realised ‘faith’ in the new aeon. But all these assignations have something precarious and inexact about them, and very often they are made on the basis of theological prejudices, the worst of which is (with Luther) to want to admit only the ear as a theological sense-organ, or another prejudice (here it is not clear whether this is based on ethnic or theological considerations!) which would assign ‘seeing’ to the Greek or even the pagan religious experience in general, while ‘hearing’ supposedly corresponds to the Biblical or the Semitic experience of God (forgetting that these two are themselves two separate entities). There is of course some truth in all these distinctions and separations, but a good deal more that is straightforwardly misleading. At this stage one point may be made: even if sight is the chief sense and expresses man’s innermost longing, nevertheless a living person is known primarily by his word. Thus, the revealed religion of the living God is a religion of the word, which does not preclude the fact that God’s becoming visible remains even in the Bible—from the Old to the New Testament, and from Jesus’ first appearance to his Second Coming—a fundamental human measure for the depth and integral completeness of revelation. Since we are here examining the sensoriness of archetypal experience in general, we will for the time being refer to the senses without distinction. The accent, naturally, falls on sight, which is at once, and by way of complement, joined by a hearing which is immediate and not mediated by tradition, and which is accompanied by the particular evidence of sensory touch in just as human and immediate a manner (as well as by the two last senses—smell and taste—to which the Church’s worship and the liturgical meal are especially related).

This allowed, we can now make three main points about the Biblical experience of God.

1. The witness of Scripture is that the God who reveals himself is perceived in a manner at once sensory and objective. For this and for all that will follow we here refer to the important and in its way unique study by Markus Barth entitled *Der Augenzeuge*[127] which, cutting imperturbably through all ‘interpretations’ and ‘hypotheses’, simply takes up the Biblical facts and interprets them as they mean to be interpreted. His first observation must not be overlooked: namely, that the God of the Bible is an invisible God, already in the Old Testament but even more in the New. No one has ever seen God (Jn 1.18; 6.46; 1 Jn 4.12); he dwells in inaccessible light (1 Tim 6.16) and cannot be seen (Col 1.15; 1 Tim 1.17; Heb n. 27). ‘But all these assertions are found in the context of the affirmation that this invisible God has appeared in Jesus Christ. The full import of God’s transcendence comes to light only on the basis of and in connection with his condescension.’[128] This, then, is not primarily a philosophical assertion,

but rather an affirmation of exact theology. Similarly, God’s holiness is not spoken of abstractly on the basis of his ‘otherness, his sovereignty over the world, his fearsomeness, etc.’, but in the context of his relationship with his creatures and, indeed, of his communicating what is unique about his holiness.[129] God’s invisibility and his visibleness in his historical revelation are not connected by a natural necessity that he reveal himself: such is the relation that exists in inner-worldly aesthetics and mythology between ‘ground’ and ‘form’. This general relation is surpassed in a singular and wholly underived manner, and only in this way does it yield the foundation for a theological aesthetics. But if we can speak of a *theological* aesthetics it is only because it is *on his own initiative* and independently of man’s particular anthropological structure that God takes form and allows himself to be seen, heard, and touched.

We see this demonstrated best of all in the manner in which the appearances of the risen Christ are portrayed: Jesus appears with a corporealness that runs counter to all possible attitudes, expectations, hopes, or fears of the disciples and which compels them to surrender. When their seeing and hearing do not suffice, they must, in addition, touch; and when even this is not sufficient to awaken their faith, they have to set food and drink before the Risen One, which he proceeds to eat before their eyes. Something similar occurs in the overpowering fulness of glory on Tabor, or with the dazzling light of the appearance outside Damascus, which outshines the midday sun and knocks Paul down from his horse and blinds him. The subjective conditions and states of mind, both in the Old and the New Testament, can vary greatly: perceptions by day or by night, when awake or while sleeping, in visions, nocturnal apparitions, dreams, ecstasies, or ‘in the spirit’: it is not the different states that are decisive—not even with the Prophets. Rather, everywhere ‘it is uniformly shown that the vision of the witness in question presupposes or is accompanied by an objective event from the side of God. . . , and that the experience is not to be thought of as a subjective imagining or as something produced by man.’[130] The proofs which those undergoing these experiences bring forth (and must bring forth) are of the most diverse kinds: accompanying miracles, fulfilled prophecies, the quality and authority of the Word of the Lord which they have to pass on; but this is not the important thing; what is important, rather, is the fact substantiated by both internal and external arguments, the fact to which their report gives expression; again the manner in which they report it corroborates authentically that what has been perceived is not something imagined, but something objective. God is acting on his own initiative. Compared to this, all considerations about the psychology of seeing, hearing, and perceiving are wholly secondary and trifling.[131] The manner of the description makes it clear that those giving the reports aim at ‘the greatest possible clarity, sobriety, and comprehensibility’, ‘by contrast with the complicated conceptual cosmos in which the gods of the mystery religions appear and are seen’.[132] It is precisely this sobriety which underscores the miraculous character of the self-manifestation of the invisible: man as such does nothing to bring it about; his situation is effected and determined by the object he perceives, and for this very reason the *ability* of certain persons to see or to hear is not a possibility which is grounded in themselves and which sets them apart. Moreover for the Apostles, all theophanous events surrounding Jesus are a simple consequence of his will, which freely chooses to gather them around himself, to be with them, and to have them partake of his own higher reality. The same holds for the visions of the Old Testament and of the Apocalypse, as well as for other experiences of God: the accent always falls on what is being shown. And if now and then there is some marginal comment concerning the feelings or attitude of a seer during his vision, this is portrayed exactly in the restrained proportion demanded by the objective event: such is the case with Isaiah’s feeling of impurity, when he must be purified with a glowing coal for the sake of his mission; so, too, the perplexity of Daniel, to whom the meaning of what he has seen must be explained; so, too, finally, the situation of the seer on Patmos, where he falls down as one dead only to be touched by the Logos, who says to him: ‘I was dead and now I live for all eternity’ (Rev 1.18).

This absolute determination (and, hence, also concordance) effected by the object of faith is an essential component of an aesthetics of revelation. In this we can see both an opposition to an inner-worldly aesthetics and a surpassing of it which perfects it, since the truly beautiful is not magically ‘conjured up’ from man’s emotive states, but, rather, surrenders itself on its own initiative with a graciousness that man cannot grasp. Here lies the ‘point of contact’ between natural and supernatural *charis*.

2. The second overall characteristic is that the Biblical perception of God cannot be spiritualised. Once again, this may be developed in relation to the most important of all perceptions—that of the risen Christ, with a view to which all earlier experiences of God had occurred. Everything depends on the effects of hearing, seeing and, especially, touching the Word of Life, all of which culminates with the placing of the fingers in the wound on the side: ‘A spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have’ (Lk 24.39). The crucial point is this ‘flesh and bones’; there is no lack of ‘spirit’ in other religious world-views. The distinctive Christian factor is that here we not only ‘start from’ the corporeal and

the sensory as from some religious material on which we can then perform the necessary abstractions; rather, we abide in the seeing, hearing, touching, the savouring and eating of this flesh and blood, which has borne and taken away the sin of the world. From Valentinus to Bultmann this flesh and blood has been spiritualised and demythologised. This has occurred, for one, in the name of the history of religions, which shows how the rough-hewn and naïve reports of theophanies in the Old Testament (a man waits on God at table, a man engages in a wrestling-match with God, for decades men follow the form of God as cloud and fire through the desert, and so on) gradually became spiritualised till one comes to the late Jewish view that God is and remains essentially invisible and cannot be seen even by the highest angels. Under a Christian label, this has occurred in the name of an economy of salvation which, with the Alexandrians, affirms that the Old Testament is characterised by sensory symbolic signs, while the New Testament transposes these to the level of spiritual truth. The order of salvation, so the argument continues, which was bound to space and time and the senses, has now been abolished, and this liberation of the Christian allegedly constitutes the true freedom of the Christian person. Or a rather similar move can be made in terms of ecclesial economy; this argument says that a provisional sensory perception was granted to the Apostles only in order that they themselves and, later on, the Christians who no longer perceive, should grow beyond that original perception into a faith that does not see and which no longer asks for any sign: ‘Do you believe because you have seen? Blessed are they who do not see and yet believe.’ For the Alexandrians and for all who adhere to them (and who, in the end, does not?), every corporeal element of the history of salvation is a ‘symbol’ for the Spirit; and the strength of this Platonising vision lies in its habit of sensing everywhere, through the form that appears, the reality of life and of spirit which reveals itself in it. In the organised Church, the Alexandrian vision sees the living organism of the heavenly Bride of Christ; in the material sacraments it sees the personal activity of the Logos; and in the letter of the Scripture, both of the Old and the New Testaments, it sees the divine Logos himself. But this Platonist aesthetics remains ambiguous, because within it we find, alongside the contemplation of the beautiful in its corporealness, the contrary tendency of an eros that ascends from all incarnate forms in order to attain to the ‘beautiful in itself’. As a result, in the Christian transposition of such an aesthetics quite frequently the anti-incarnational element has ‘asserted itself’, leading to a misuse of the statement just quoted and which Jesus directed to a Thomas who was clamoring for vision. Mystical theology, both as it stems from Evagrius and his followers and from the side of Augustine, has always striven towards a ‘vision’ of the formless God in his inaccessible light, and in clear terms has warned anyone training himself in *theoria* against all visions, auditions, and so forth, which possess form. For Evagrius, who holds the theory of extreme Origenism that everything with worldly form in fact represents a fall from the Primal Light, it is logical to consider every form which arises in contemplation as a deceptive tactic on the part of the demons. According to Diadochus, it is better to reject these forms even if perchance they should occasionally come from God (*Cent*. c. 36, 38), and this rule still holds good for Thomas, Eckhart, and even John of the Cross. It receives support from the Platonis-ing mystical psychology of Augustine,[133] who describes a three-stage progression both in natural and in supernatural perceptions: external-corporeal perceptions, interior perceptions of the fantasy, and purely spiritual perceptions. Here the greatest psychological interest, but also the greatest theological suspicion, is directed to the second realm—the seemingly inexhaustible fountainhead of deception which is man's imagination. Only the intuition of spiritual truth is considered reliable both by philosophy and by Christian theology, whether this intuition is the self-contemplation of the soul (as already in Evagrius) or the supernatural radiance of God's light in the light of the soul. In his treatise on prophecy, the Aristotelian Thomas defends himself as best he can against the unqualified ascendancy of this Platonising mystical theory[134] Nonetheless, the manner in which the whole theology of Christian mysticism has belittled the form of Biblical vision, taken as a whole, constitutes an alarming fact which is not to be overlooked. In view of this history, we ought not to marvel if the period of the de-fantasising of faith was succeeded by a radical period of the de-mythologising of all sensory God-experience in the Bible, a move which had its beginnings with the Reformers, was then taken up by Liberal and Idealist theology and finally perfected by existential theology. Referring to Bultmann's interpretation of Jesus' words to Thomas, Markus Barth rightly remarks:

> Bultmann's conception rests on the thesis that visible miracles (signs) are only a concession to man's weakness, and that the appearances of the risen Christ are, likewise, a concession to the weakness of the Apostles. But . . . even in the Old Testament the visible appearance of God [is] not something temporary—a means to an end or a mere concession—but rather. . . the fulfilment of Israel's ultimate and supreme hope.

If, in the story of Thomas, Bultmann sees 'a characteristic critique of the evaluation of the Easter events' which 'can claim only a symbolic value', then 'we must ask whether those who practise such de-mythologisation do not also declare the testimony of the resurrection and even the resurrection itself to be merely symbolic',[135] whether these are not being spiritualised into a purely existential event, whereby, in true gnostic and Alexandrian fashion, the corporeal and historical event is wholly being neglected. What is historical and real is sensory, whether it is perceived directly through the human senses or whether it is witnessed to as having been perceived. The *proton pseudos*, the ‘primal lie’, of theology and spirituality is the naïve or reflected equation (or confusion) of the human ‘spirit’ with the Holy Spirit, of ‘abstraction’ with the resurrection of the flesh, which corresponds to the tendency in Alexandrian theology to identify the Biblical ‘flesh’ with the Platonic ‘body’.

The archetypal God-experience of the Bible is more than a material metaphor for the higher experience of God which pertains to ‘pure faith’, where ‘pure’ connotes ‘purified from the sensory’. Even 2 Cor 5.16 must by no means be interpreted in this way, for ‘to know (or to judge) Christ according to the flesh’ is here used as precisely the opposite of the knowledge of him ‘who died and *rose* for us’, as the opposite of the ‘new creature’ that is not a pure spirit, but that has been determined and transformed by Christ in both body and soul. In the same way, Paul had been called, chosen, armed, and sent out by the risen Christ, and suddenly he saw himself transformed—along with the whole of his corporeal and historical existence—into a visible image of Christ. John, who concludes the theology of the New Testament, no longer even speaks of a spiritualistic misunderstanding. Even the vision of the Son’s pre-existence with the Father emerges only in function of his Incarnation. And John softens the strong contrast we find in the Synoptics and in Paul between mortal life before the Cross and glorious life after Easter: from the transfigured body of Christ he looks backwards to his mortal body and everywhere in it he already finds the glory of God. Suffering and death, the entrance of Light into darkness, the descent of the Love that endures to the end: this whole corporeal event is for John already the definitive culmination of revelation; it already discloses to him the glory of the God who has appeared in flesh, a glory which nothing can surpass.

Once again the comparison with inner-worldly aesthetics is suggested: sensory beauty is not surpassable. It is already spiritualised in itself, but in the measure to which the spirit has been corporealised within it. Between both realms there obtains analogy and not identity; but this is an interior analogy that has been effected by the reality itself.

3. Finally, the Biblical experience of God is always proleptic: it is a foretokening and an anticipation of an eschatological experience of God. Again in an analogous manner, this holds for the different levels of revelation, something which the Biblical theology of the Fathers realised very precisely. The Old

Testament experience of God as a whole lies within the framework of the promise to Israel of the End. Even after the entry into the Promised Land, even after the establishment of the Kingdom, even after the building of Solomon’s temple, even after the return from the Exile, this promise is further and further postponed, and it thus expands to dimensions that in the end make it impossible for the human imagination to reconcile all that promise’s individual aspects. Christ, ‘God with us’, the Incarnate Word, is the fulfilment of the unimaginable. God himself is seen, heard and touched by men; he associates with them in a human way, dies for them, and gives himself to them as their food and drink. All this is a fulfilled eschatology, and yet again it is not. In a manner which cannot be surpassed, or taken back, or voided of value, the Christ-event is fulfilled incomprehensibly and is brought back to itself: it is an anticipation of that which is eternal and definitive and which, as such, becomes a sensory presence during the forty days between Easter and the Ascension—now as the fulfilment of that total promise which encompasses both the Old Testament and the mortal life of Jesus, a promise which is the temporal economy that is set over against the eternal economy. Nevertheless, these forty days point ahead to two things. First, they anticipate the Kingdom of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus sends from the Father in a simultaneously visible and invisible way as he himself disappears as a sensory presence—the Holy Spirit, who will *be* the exegesis of the mortal-immortal ‘Head’ within the ‘Body’ of the Church and, thus, also the continuation and the perfecting of the Incarnation of the Word in mankind and in the cosmos. And, second, the forty days point to the Kingdom of the Father (1 Cor 15.24, 28), which will dawn with the ‘return’ and the ‘re-appearance’ both of the Son who is endowed with the radiance of the Father’s might and of his Bride, who comes down to earth from heaven ‘in the brilliance of God’s glory’ (Rev 21.11).

We may indeed say that, compared with the last epiphany, all earlier ones were a relative hiddenness, and that, also compared with each following epiphany, every preceding phase may be considered a concealment. Along this graduated path the higher revelation need not always be the more external, for there are roads that lead from the outside into the inner depths, from a random and profane manifestness to a visibleness that by its very nature presupposes an intimate group of chosen persons who have been made worthy of it. This is what we have in the experiences of Jesus in the Gospel that involve the three disciples (Mount Tabor and the Mount of Olives) and in the appearances of the risen Christ before the Twelve. But this interiorisation has its place within a perception which is both deeper in itself and understood more deeply and which, again, is oriented apostolically to the ecclesial kerygma and, eschatologically and proleptically, to the equivalent appearance of Jesus before ‘all the peoples of the earth’ (Rev 1.7).

What this eschatological and anticipatory character means is that the Biblical experiences of God enter with one another into a relationship of analogy which is comparable (but not identical) with the relationship, discussed in the previous section, between the archetypal Biblical sphere and the imitative ecclesial sphere. Old and New Testament, for instance, again relate to one another as the dependent image and the archetype which Israel’s teleology strives for, while the anticipation of the definitive vision in the forty days establishes a relationship which can no longer be grasped with the categories of archetype and image. Even if, seen from the standpoint of Christ, the form in which God appeared in the flesh has become definitive and insurpassable, yet, from the standpoint of the disciples receiving the experience, this definitive content, in spite of its total manifestness, still remains veiled from them because of the temporality of their senses. Finally, from this perspective, the ecclesial vision can be seen to occupy a central position between the Biblical and the eschatological vision, and it is this that Paul describes as the essence of the Church’s contemplation of the image of Christ, by which we are transformed into the same image, ‘from glory to glory’ (2 Cor 3. 18). For Paul, this contemplation of the image of Christ is both theoretical and practical: it is the im-pressing of the form upon the memory and the understanding (γνῶσις) of the believers, so that it will determine all the more deeply their life, which must come to bear the form of Christ. The relative invisibility of the Head has its ground in the divine economy, to the end that he might become visible in the body of the Church (‘it is good for you that I go’, Jn 16.7); the person who truly lives through Christ’s Holy Spirit sees Christ (‘the world will see me no more, but you will see me, because I live and you also live’, Jn 14.19).

This proleptic character of all perceptions of God in Holy Scripture should not lead us to conclude that these perceptions appear unsatisfactory to the person receiving them. We would, rather, have to affirm the contrary: if this perception can point ahead objectively it is because it is subjectively experienced to be more than fulfilling, and its superabundant character derives from the fact that, in this life, sinful man is and remains wholly inadequate for it. The many statements made concerning Moses’ dealings with Yahweh, in the different redactions and in the disharmonies these exhibit (Moses first deals with God as with a friend, face to face, as opposed to the rest of men, who see God only in visionary dreams or in prophetic enigmas; but then he sees him only ‘from behind’, concealed in the dark cloud, since no man can see the face of God. . . .), are precisely intended to express, not the unfulfilled nature of Moses’ vision of God, but to communicate, from different directions and from the standpoint of different theologies, the highest experience which grace can bestow on mortal man on earth. Something similar is true of Paul and his enraptured vision of ‘ineffable things’ (2 Cor 12.4), the character of which and the distinction of which from the eschatological vision have never been settled by Christian theology. In these and all other Biblical experiences of God, the element that impels the subject forward lies, precisely, in the superabundance of their content, as compared with man’s limited capacity to grasp it; and the longing which they awaken and leave behind is not the yearning for something more which would be something different, but the longing for the Always-More that resides in what has already been bestowed.

This third characteristic of archetypal Biblical aesthetics may, in this respect, also be compared with the perception of what is beautiful in the world. We cannot say that the difference between them lies in the fact that worldly beauty bestows a fulness that quenches the heart of the beholder and makes him repose in his vision, while the beauty of divine revelation causes a holy unrest in the person contemplating it which points beyond itself to something else, for instance, to the practical aspects of the Church’s life or to the Christian mission to one’s neighbour. Rather, a merely self-gratifying absorption of the beholder in what he beholds falls, even at the worldly level, below the threshold of true beauty. The experience of sublime beauty is overwhelming and can be enrapturing and crushing. The poverty and uncomeliness of eros were known to Plato. The true admirer of sublime feminine beauty willingly goes into banishment in the service of courtly love, in order to become worthier of the grace of restful possession. In all mythical beauty there is a moment of fear; in every act of grasping a sublime work of art there is experienced an unattainable majesty, and this experience is a part of aesthetic enjoyment and the dangerous locus where the magnificence of the beautiful demands for itself something like adoration. The author of the Book of Wisdom shows gentle forbearance for those who are overpowered by the world’s most sublime beauty (Wis 13.6f.). Eros contains a promise (described not only by pagans such as Shelley and Keats, but also by Christians such as Claudel) which is always pointing beyond the sentiment that sighs ‘Abide a while, thou art so beautiful!’ and which, therefore, if it is not transposed onto the Christian level, must condemn itself to eternal melancholy and self-consumption. This total structure of beauty can be redeemed only if the risen Lover is again met at the other side of death (and beyond all melancholy yearning for the Kingdom of Death, as portrayed by the Greek myths, but also by Mary Magdalen, Jn 20.11)—the risen Lover who does not disappoint with his blessed *Noli me tangere* and with his withdrawal at the Ascension, the Lover who leaves no shadow of sorrow behind him, but who snatches up the loving and adoring heart and carries it away with him: where your treasure, where your darling is, there also is your heart. Not a single shadow of melancholy darkens Christ's Ascension, and the visionlessness of the intervening period has something about it of the blissful transport of a lover for her beloved, something of the gladsome ecstasy of those who 'live no longer for themselves but for him who died and rose for their sake' (2 Cor 5. 15).

c. Jesus' Experience of God

If we wish to describe the testimony of the Biblical eyewitnesses, then we must concentrate above all on the hierarchies and the gradations which we find within the Bible. It is impossible to speak of Jesus' experience of God as if it were located between the experience of the Prophets and that of the Apostles: as 'standing over all' (Jn 3.31). Jesus' experience furnishes the form that conditions all other experiences, both before and after it. To speak of it means to speak of the unutterable reality which is behind and above all that is utterable and which is what gives the latter its utterability. It means to contemplate the mystery of the God-Man not in the margins, but in its very centre; and only from this centre may we venture to make utterances that are dogmatically balanced.

The Biblical statements on the subject, especially Saint John's affirmations, set Jesus' experience of God wholly apart from the God-experiences of all the others, even of grace-filled men who have received a mission. The fact that no one has ever seen God, except his only-begotten Son (Jn 1.18), is affirmed not without a certain irony towards Moses, who is mentioned in the previous verse and to whom is ascribed the highest of all God-experiences in the Old Testament. It is a question of origin, which at first sets aside all questions of analogy as less important:

> He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth belongs to the earth, and from the earth he speaks.
> He who comes from heaven is above all. He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony. He who receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true.
> For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for it is not by measure that he gives [him] his Spirit (Jn 3.31-34).

Here we must concentrate not so much on the word 'sent', for missions had been given also to the Prophets and to the Baptist, who is here speaking; rather, we must note the direction of Christ's 'coming', his origin from God and from heaven. Unlike prophetic persons, Jesus does not encounter a divine form of revelation. Because he comes from the Father, he himself *is* the form of God's revelation. He is this form as the one who ‘comes’ from the Father and, precisely for this reason, as the one who ‘returns’ to the Father (this return is perhaps already expressed in the accusative phrase εἰς τὸν κόλπον of Jn 1.18; see also 6.61f.; 8.14; 16.28). These two articulations of his coming and his going constitute the whole essence of the Son, and between them there is in reality, for John, no third period of repose where the Son has arrived and sojourns in the world, which we could properly speak about in isolation from the twofold movement we have noted. Then, too, John makes no statements about the Son’s condition ‘before’ and ‘after’ that are distinct from and that disregard this double movement; but the ‘coming from’ and the ‘going to’, naturally, always contain the eternity of the Son in the Father and with the Father and, therefore, also his divinity. All the statements, moreover, have as their thematic object the going forth of the Son from the Father as one sent (which presupposes his divinity); all of them focus on God’s manner of constituting the object of revelation and concentrate on what, by using aesthetic categories, we could call the objective relationship between ground and form, content and shape, idea and appearance—and, in so doing, we are fully aware of the fact that these categories provide only hints from below. Such an indication is intended to make one thing plain, namely, that we can speak of Jesus’ experience of God only in the context of the christological movement: his Incarnation and his reality as man are the result of his mandate as one sent from above, from the Father, and the proof for this will be found in the ‘Spirit’, *that* is to say in his return to the Father. The Spirit is not bestowed on him as on a being that first is a creature and derives ‘from the earth’; it is conferred ‘without measure’ on him as on the one who comes from above.

The statements concerning Jesus’ experience of God, therefore, should not be understood in the sense that, in his ‘exegesis’ of God (Jn 1.18), Jesus makes utterances about what he saw and heard in God ‘before’ his Incarnation; rather, he is speaking about what he, as the only one who comes from God, has experienced of God in his coming and in his going. These experiences, consequently, are inseparably divine and human. They are not first divine, only later to be translated into human terms: this would constitute the Platonic doctrine of pre-existence and *anamnesis*; but John comes from the Old Testament and not from Plato. And in the Old Testament things are so disposed that men encounter theophanies in which, in their own way, they see, hear, and touch God. But Jesus is the *theophany* itself, which now extends all the way to the Incarnation; and it is only for this reason that the God who is seen, heard, and touched in the man Jesus is, at the same time, the Man who sees, hears, and touches God. Contemplating man is drawn into the circular movement of a revelation that goes out from God and returns to him. This is the chief difference between the experience of God in the Old and in the New Testament, and it prompts John to assert that no one but Jesus has ever seen or heard God.[136]

Now, as the Word of the Father that has come to us, Jesus is a man with body and soul and with all the experience proper to man. From this it follows that two things are true. On the one hand, in the existence and experience of this man God 'puts himself into words' and interprets himself for us (Jn 1.18): in this man's hearing, seeing, touching, speaking, living, and suffering God associates intimately with man. And, on the other hand, by involvement in Jesus' hearing, seeing, touching, speaking, living, and suffering it is man who associates intimately with God. Something is being affirmed here both about God and about man—first about God and then about man. 'The question whether God wills to be and can be perceived by the senses—the question as to whether he is at all audible, visible, and palpable—is decided and answered by the fact that it is affirmed of Jesus Christ that he heard and saw the Father (God) (Jn 3.11, 32; 5.19; 6.46; 8.38). He is in the bosom of the Father (1.18). . . . In God, who is Spirit, there is found a hearing, a seeing, a being together; God himself hears himself, sees himself, and is one with himself. Quite apart from everything that a man supposedly or really heard, saw, and touched, the question concerning God's audibleness, visibleness, and corporeal unity is settled by the allusion to the unity between Father and Son' (M. Barth).[137] This unity between the Father and the Incarnate Son must include the divinity of the Son as the condition of its possibility, and it, therefore, constitutes a sensory experience which the divine person of the Son has of the Father—an experience which belongs to the self-utterance of the Father in his Incarnate Son. The christological experience of God thus presents two aspects: the *experientia Dei incarnati* as a subjective genitive,[138] and therefore posteriorly as an objective genitive. And the identity of these two aspects is a mystery of the hypostatic union: on this mystery, as on the ultimate foundation of revelation, rest all experiences of God derived from it and all faith in revelation. The dynamic character of Christ's human vision of God—that is, its functional character as mission—warns us against interpreting Christ's experience of God in an idealist sense as irrational feeling or supra-rational intuition. Even when he calls the will of the Father his 'food' (Jn 4.32) what is meant is not a self-gratifying contemplation which satisfies him; for immediately afterwards we read: 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work' (4.34). It is the same with his hearing (5.30; 14.24; 17.8), which has its measure in what the Son has to say to the world (8.26). Likewise with his seeing (8.38). It is always a hearing, speaking, and acting from God as the centre, in contrast to merely ‘speaking for oneself’ (5.30; 7.17; 12.40; 14.10), and this is itself a contrast which has clear roots in prophetic language.[139] But in the Jesus of John it is surpassed in so far as Jesus understands himself to *be* the Word that has gone forth. He is one with the Father (10.30); he always has the Father with him (8.20); and everything that the Father does is shown to him in order that he may likewise do it (5.17, 19).

More and more the man Jesus understands and learns to understand himself for what he is: as the Word of the Father directed to the world, in whose mission is contained the destiny of the grain of wheat, which is to die for the world and thus to bring forth fruit. And as he does so Jesus experiences God, not in an ‘objectivised’ vision which is separated from his own reality, but rather in his humility, which does not reflect on itself (and does not seek its own honour, 5.41f.), which opens itself up wholly to God and which in its own functionality experiences the reality of the God who sends him forth, disposes over him, and begets him eternally out of himself. This is why, for him, humility, poverty, and simplicity will always be the conditions for his being able to make others partakers of his experience of God (Mt 5.3-8; 6.22; 11.25, 29; Lk 11.34). But this impoverishment and self-emptying of the heart that beholds God should not, in the case of Christian discipleship, be understood in the general sense of the history of religions, namely, that the creature must annihilate itself in order to become a passageway for God. Rather, what is involved here is the coming-to-be of the fact that, beyond all these gradations, is rooted in the trinitarian mystery: that the permeability of Christ’s humanity is the expression of its *assumptio* by the Logos, which ‘annihilates’ itself (Phil 2.7) precisely in this humility and, revealing through it the glory of the Father, is witnessed to by the Father himself, is endowed with power, is honoured and glorified (8.50). For these reasons it has to be that Jesus’ experience of God, simultaneously, is the fruit of uttermost humility and has as its fruit the highest possible ‘self-consciousness’, provided we purify this concept of all the dross that can cling to it as a result of human self-reflection. All these statements, therefore, presuppose the trinitarian mystery: only this mystery keeps these assertions from foundering to the right or to the left—either in the direction of a pantheistic (Eutychian) mysticism in which self-consciousness and God-consciousness coincide, or in the direction of an Old Testament (Nestorian) schema in which Christ’s humanity could experience the indwelling Father and the inspiring Spirit only as other than itself.

Nevertheless, the Son allows us to partake in this absolutely singular experience of God, which stands ‘above all others’, and this is already demonstrated by the striking plural forms in Jn 3.11 and 9.4: ‘Truly, truly, I (!) say to you: we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen.’

‘We must work the works of him who sent us [variant: me], while it is day.’ Here Jesus is certainly not referring either to the Old Testament or to the Baptist: in the task given to him he can include only his chosen ones, and this is a task which is common both to himself and to the Church and which, therefore, also presupposes an understanding and a ‘seeing’ common to them both—in Jesus archetypally and in the disciples by way of imitation. This inclusive transition from the incommunicable (ἀμέθεϰτον) to its communication follows necessarily from the whole structure of Christ’s relationship to God: that such a structure exists is already grace, which in its very nature includes the communication of the unique. The transition lies in the fact that the man Christ sees God *as* one who is seen (sent) by God and that, therefore, whoever sees him sees the Father —provided that one sees him as he must be seen and as he intends to be seen: as the Word of the Father. This ability to see what he is in reality is (as became evident in our discussion of the analysis of faith) the vision, bestowed on man by grace, that everything human in Christ is a word, an image, a representation, and an expression of the Father; indeed, only when seen in this way can it be interiorly understood. At this point it suddenly becomes clear that the disciples’ eyewitness, fundamentally important as it is (because it involves a human seeing, hearing, and touching of a genuine humanity), nevertheless remains secondary because, even in the eyewitness, what gives the truly illuminating vision for what is here expressing itself is faith, which may also be possessed by the Christian who does not see Christ with the senses, on the basis of the apostolic witness. The question whether the sensory material on which this faith exercises its synthesising activity is directly present to the human senses, or whether it is elaborated by the narration of the eyewitnesses, is both relevant and irrelevant. We shall return to this later. For the time we continue with Christ’s archetypal vision of God.

The man Christ is, at one and the same time, a genuine human being and a human being who has been assumed into God. As genuine man he is not a superman, but rather the perfection of creatureliness in its proper ontological and cognitive distance from the Creator, the perfection also of the Old Testament covenant-relationship between the chosen people, the chosen individual, and the God of the Covenant. In this sense Christ possesses archetypal faith[140] and the hiddenness of the relation to God which it implies. This relationship is more drastically hidden because of Christ’s atoning assumption of the *conditio peccatoris,* which determines the existence of the Redeemer, not only during the days of the Passion but from the first moment of his Incarnation. But, as a man assumed into God, Christ necessarily participates in the self-consciousness of the eternal Son in his eternal procession from the Father and his return to him, and this becomes reflected in the human self-consciousness of Christ to the extent that he experiences this self-consciousness of the Son *interius intimo suo* and that he possesses it by opening himself to it. But because, in the third place, he is genuine man *only* as assumed man, he understands even his genuinely human experience of God as an expression and function of his divine person; just as, in turn, he becomes conscious of this divine person only in the functional movement of his mission, in such a way that the humility with which he opens himself to the divine is at the same time an expression of the divine will to *kenosis*. Accordingly, the God-Man's experience as creature is, as such, an expression and a function of his trinitarian experience. In other words, his experience of distance from God, which in him constitutes the archetypal *fides*, is as such the expression of God's experience of himself within the Trinity in the distance of distinction between Person and Person.[141]

A reflection of this in the Biblical experience of God is the mutuality of vision between God and man, which Augustine has summarized in the formula *videntem videre*. In the Old Testament, whoever has experienced a theophany or visited God in his temple in order to 'see' him, has first been seen by God. For man, 'to stand before the face of God' means both things. '*Panim* has not only the passive meaning of the "look" that one presents when one's countenance is radiant, ashamed, and so on; it also has the active meaning of the "gaze" that one directs at someone or something with a friendly, angry, or other attitude. . . . Therefore, to come before the face of God means to come before his gaze, to appear before him.'[142] Thus, Hagar describes God's appearance in the desert as that of a 'God of vision', and she interprets this name as meaning 'here have I looked after him who had espied me' (Gen 16.13). To recognise him only as he disappears ('to see from behind') is characteristic of the Old Testament (Jg 13.20f.; Ex 33. 18F.; 34.6f.; *cf*. Tob 12); it is against this background that we should understand Jesus' words to Nathanael (Jn 1.48-51) and Paul's corresponding statements (1 Cor 13.12; 8.3; 2 Cor 5.11; Phil 3.12): man's vision of God is like an echo of the antecedent and foundational event of being seen by God—so much an echo that man's longing to see God can come to rest in the consciousness of being seen by God and can renounce any self-vision which is divorced from this being-seen-by-God or rather, may come to understand that his vision of God is included in his being seen by God. In christological terms this universal Biblical structure at the very least means that the *visio immediata* which Christ has of the Father (that is, of God) may fluctuate between the mode of manifestness (which befits the Son as his 'glory') and the mode of 'concealment' (which befits the Servant of Yahweh in the hiddenness of his

Passion). Analogously to the manner of the just man in the Old Testament, who sees God during his pilgrimage to the Temple, the second mode here is derived from the first: a living faith is content to stand before the face of the God who sees, whether or not one sees him oneself.

Furthermore, it is significant that Jesus' statements about his own seeing and hearing God or 'divine things' always are put in the past-tense: he bears witness to what he has seen (Jn 3.11; 6.46; 8.38), what he has heard (8.26, 40), what the Father has taught him (8.28) and given him to do (12.49f.). This past form does not, in general, indicate an isolated pre-existence on Christ's part, but rather the fact that he, proclaiming the Word of the Father, is always coming *from* the vision of the Father, that he always has this vision 'at his back', as it were, while he is in the process of accomplishing his mission; and it also means, as was demonstrated previously, that he is always on his way back to the Father. As coming from the Father, he is always caught up in the act of the Word's Incarnation, in the transposition of vision into existence and of contemplation into action. As returning to the Father, he forever *is* an act of handing man over to God, he *is* obedience and the accomplishment of the New and eternal Covenant. He himself is this Covenant in his twofold movement from God to man and from man to God; for this reason Christ, at the very centre, *is* the covenant-experience. In other words, Christ is the experience of the perfect correspondence between God and man, which rests on God's free initiative and, therefore, always leaves to God the priority of vision.

By way of summary, we can now draw three conclusions concerning Jesus' archetypal experience of God in the context of those experiences which have been moulded by him.

1. As Word of God, Jesus bears witness to what he—as only Son resting in the bosom of the Father—has seen and heard of the Father and to what the Father has commissioned and taught to him. For this Word he demands the faith of men.

2. But he is the Word which has become flesh and is always becoming flesh. As such, he witnesses to what he says with himself—with his whole existence—so that the experience of God which he has had can, in turn, be repeated bodily, by virtue of his total bodily existence, by those persons who associate with him and believe in him. This existence understands itself functionally, as a ministry to the Word of God, a service to him who does not seek his own honour, a service even unto death on the Cross. For just this reason, the experience of this existence on the part of the eyewitnesses cannot be an object of self-gratifying contemplation, but can only be had through the imitation of discipleship, which means by being conformed to Christ's functional attitude: the role of the

eyewitnesses is directly and necessarily functionalised for the sake of the community of all believers; it is witness, and it is ‘blessed’ (Mt 13.16), only in terms of such witnessing. Nonetheless, in his association with Christ, man is truly seen, addressed, and touched sensorily in Christ by God himself, and so, in turn, he too can see, address, and touch God in Christ. ‘The perceivable Son who has been sent is not less truly or less genuinely God than is the Father: he is the true God in his revelation. Through Jesus Christ, the Father hears, sees, and touches man: he does this by hearing man’s prayer, by seeing him in his distress, and by allowing him to lie on his breast. Through Jesus Christ, on the other hand, the true God is heard, seen, and touched as God’s voice rings out audibly, as his glory is seen, and as man rests on Jesus’ breast and can be in him.’[143]

3. Jesus’ experience of God is offered to man as an experience which comes down from the Father (Jn 6.38), which has the heavenly glory both ‘at its back’ and proleptically ahead of it (Jn 17.5). Jesus’ experience of God, therefore, refers even believing man, according to his own *prolepsis*, to the imminent ascent to the Father (6.62; *cf* 3.12f.). Thus, an experience of God is communicated which does not come to rest in itself, but is dynamic and open-ended.

d. The Old Testament Experience of God

The experience of God in the Old Testament is under way to Christ: this is what is common to all its multiplicity, which cannot be reduced to any simple formula. Its multi-layeredness derives from the fact that, as the basis of the New and eternal Covenant, it must 1) in advance contain the structure of this New Covenant within itself in an implicit but complete form, including what concerns the experience of God in the Covenant; but it must also 2) retain its provisional character with regard to Christ. And this, in turn, implies two things: a) the Old Testament relates to the New in the same way as what is ‘fleshly’ relates to what is ‘spiritual’ and as the sensory *typos* relates to the supra-sensory *antitypos* (which, thus, surpasses the *typos*). But, in its progression, the Old Testament b) is nevertheless an ‘education’ and, thus, an ‘approximation’ to the fulfilment. In this almost inextricable dialectic a literary aspect is added to the theological which is intimately bound to the latter. The Old Testament experiences of God stretch from a period characterised by the mythical manner of experience and expression, through the relatively ‘enlightened’ time of the Kings (to which admittedly the Prophets and their experiential statements belong also), to the period of the apocalypses, in which, once again, it is usually only with difficulty that we can distinguish between a genuinely visionary experience and literary elaboration. In addition, many of the theophany-narratives, especially of the first period, seem to have undergone a marked literary evolution, and this in two directions: first, in the direction of a de-mythologisation and an adaptation to a later stage of faith in Yahweh in which we usually find in the same narrative various superimposed layers of religious experience; and second, in the almost reverse direction of a possible ‘sensualisation’ of certain religious experiences that originally were primarily ‘spiritual’, and this occurs by way of literary amplification and the addition of artistic detail, as in the exodus from Egypt, the wandering through the desert, and the conquest of the Promised Land. In other places it is also possible that originally literary motifs were incorporated into the historical context and, thus, raised to the level of existential testimonies of a total —and hence also sensual—encounter with God.

In the midst of all of these disparate viewpoints and criteria for judgment, a few things may nevertheless be affirmed with certainty.[144]

If the Old Testament experience of God was intended as the training of a chosen people for their encounter with God in human form, then this propaedeutic could not primarily and onesidedly have consisted in communicating as spiritualised as possible a concept of the living God, but rather a concept of him which, along with the true freedom of God, had to impress on man God’s total lordship over true historical man, who is inseparably corporeal and spiritual. For this reason, it is hardly advisable to start one-sidedly with the prohibition of images (whose historical reasons and origins have to date not been fully clarified); it would be better to observe how, slowly but ever more strongly, out of the immanent and nature-like image of God that dominates the religion of the Patriarchs, there begin to gleam the features of the living, free, and transcendent God. In this process, the sensory images are not rejected but incorporated. Even in the Psalms, Yahweh remains a God who dwells on high, who comes down to earth and again goes up; he remains the God who dwells within the great phenomena of nature, who conceals himself in the storm-clouds, speaks in the thunder, manifests himself in the lightning, comes riding on the winds, and makes his grace drop down in the dew and the rain. The theophanies in the so-called ‘aetiological legends’ of Genesis are carefully recorded as the sensory point of departure for the history of the people and its election; without God’s grandiose appearances in Exodus the ‘myth’ of the people would be unthinkable. Even if God who speaks from the cloud on Sinai is, to be sure, a God of the living word, of the mastering command, and of the unheard-of promise, nevertheless one cannot say that, on this account, ‘hearing the word’ is the sole foundation for this religion. At least as much is seen as is heard, and it is not so much ‘private revelations’ (as is chiefly the case in the stories of the

Patriarchs) that become the basis for the cult, but revelations to the whole people, even if these are apportioned to smaller groups of witnesses: Moses alone goes into the cloud for forty days and brings down the law of the Covenant; but he also climbs the holy mountain with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of Israel's elders in order there to bow in adoration, to contemplate the face of God, and to eat and drink before him (Ex 24.1-2, 9-11), that is, to celebrate the cultic meal of the Covenant. And from below, the whole people see the glory of Yahweh—a consuming flame over the peak of the mountain (24.17). Then, in the period of foundation, God lives habitually among the children of Israel in the visible pillar of cloud and of fire, and obedience to God is expressed equally in visibly following after him or remaining where they are, depending on whether the cloud rises above the tent, thus giving the signal to break camp, or itself remains still. What survives later on from this time of foundation is not a consuming nostalgia for the God who now no longer appears: rather, the visibleness of the cult in the visible Temple is experienced as being the validly equivalent prolongation of God's visibleness in the midst of the people. This must be understood literally: the wholly human association of the Old Testament men of piety with the present God of the Covenant (as for instance in many psalms) derives, without any essential break, from the primitive stage of religion with its naturelike experience of God'spresence in natural phenomena, tribal history, and the cult; but this primitive phase went through a process of deepening which can only be described very one-sidedly with the word 'spiritualisation', and which was a process leading to the Incarnation of God's Word. For such an encounter with God—characterised as it is by fulness of humanity and which, thus, is both sensory and spiritual—the 'ideology of the kings' hardly offers a satisfactory explanation; and, of course, an individualistic mysticism does so even less. The universal laws of cultic purity and impurity draw the whole of the Israelite's everyday life into his relationship with God: here one can no longer distinguish between a sacral and a profane sphere, because everything—even the sphere of sexuality, of the family, of sickness and death, and of the relationship with the members of one's tribe and with outsiders—appears as affected and regulated by the holiness of the present God of the Covenant. Nor can one derive all of this from the general concepts of *mana* and *tabu*, of the history of religions (they are the basis, but not the thing itself), nor can it simply be dismissed by viewing it in terms of its later development into a mere Pharisaic legalism. The living reality which is in the middle, between the beginning and the end, is something which points forward, with a peculiar urgency, to God's imminent Incarnation: it is a reality within which man as a whole is claimed by God for himself and is made a citizen of the Kingdom of

Heaven—a reality in which, therefore, for him even the slightest distinction between the sacral and the profane must cease to exist. All the writings of the New Testament will bear witness in the most varied ways to the total sacrality of Christian existence. In the Old Testament, the sacral, as it penetrates into everyday life, rests wholly on a grace instituted by God. No matter how many analogies may exist outside Israel for priestly legislation such as this—these analogies belong to the patrimony of categories found in any historical and social existence—in Israel everything stands under the sign of the God who disposes, pardons, and judges with sovereignty, the God who has no equal and in the light of whom alone Jesus Christ will be comprehensible. It is not the ‘palpability’ of the relationship to God that Christ will criticise in the Old Testament, but solely the magical and moralistic abuse of this God who has exposed himself to such misuse by entering into the Covenant with Israel the sinner. And his criticism will be sustained by that divine deed in which God, now really in a wholesale and unsurpassable manner, delivers himself bodily into the hands of sinners and into the hour of darkness and guarantees, with the very substance of his own body, that the sprinkling with the blood of the Covenant and the ritual meal of the Covenant will take place.

To this should be added a further consideration. The Old Testament is a time of revelation. It is not only the books that relate the revelation-experience of the people of Israel that, as canonical, are normative, but, quite particularly, also their content. For this reason, the great theophanies that were granted to individuals, such as Elijah and the Prophets of Scripture, are not private revelations, but, in the same sense as the Law and the words of God communicated by the Prophets, they are manifest to all Israel and binding for the Church. No matter how dramatically many of the Prophets struggled with the lack of faith and stubbornness of the people, no matter how greatly the legitimacy of their experiences of God was contested during their lifetime, these divine experiences had to be considered as universally binding as soon as their authenticity was proven. The great visionaries of the Old Testament were eyewitnesses to the God who was seen, heard, and touched in the same way as were the Apostles in the New. In the Old Testament there was no conclusion to the time of revelation, and thus someone could always again be chosen from the people to become such an eyewitness. And thus it follows that this ability to see the living God was always fundamentally possible in Israel and it, therefore, continually applied to all the people: it is the people as a whole that was God’s Covenant-partner, and the individuals who were permitted to see and hear him sensorily were representatives of the people. Israel’s archetypal experience of God, which is the foundation for the canonicity of the Old Testament writings even for the Church, is precisely for this reason an experience which, in its entirety, cannot be surpassed, even if it is ‘only’ typical when considered in relation to the experience of God in the New Testament.

This implies two things. First, it means that the great sensory visions of the Prophets could and had to be reckoned by the people as their own experiences of God. In this respect it means that there was ultimately no opposition between these unique moments when the Prophets penetrated into the reality above the world and the people’s habitual everyday experiences of God in the Law and in the cycle of feasts. The fact that these experiences were the experiences of individuals could only call to mind their proleptic character and whet the people’s sensibility for the often-repeated prophecy: ‘All flesh shall see God.’[145] All Israel’s different experiences of God find their unity in the coming of God: ‘The future determines the present. The God who is to come is proclaimed and adored as the God who has already come. The God who will appear and who will be seen is already doing before men’seyes works which manifest his might and his will, his glory and his grace’: Israel’s present experience of God is the anticipation of the experience which is to come.[146] In the last analysis, even the prohibition of images and the ever increasing awareness of God’s essential invisibility serve to keep this eschatological dimension open.

But this also implies that these great archetypal experiences of God, which in their structure are an anticipated Christology, are not, for all their proleptic character, to be classified as merely a lower stage which leads on up to Christian experience. Their very sensoriness and their celestial symbolism is something that cannot be surpassed by the New Testament; the seer of the Apocalypse was fully conscious of this. His visions may be distinguished from those of Ezekiel and Daniel by the fact that they are a ‘revelation through Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants [the Prophets of the primitive Church]’ (Rev 1.1). Nonetheless, the vision on Patmos is still the recapitulation of all the sensory experience of God in the Old Testament—the gathering up of this harvest, common to both Testaments, into the conclusion of Christian revelation. The symbols and images of the Apocalypse, with their unique importance in the history of the world, are not to be surpassed in the present aeon by even the most sublime experience of God, nor are they something which in the New Aeon of the Resurrection, of the new heaven and the new earth we will simply have left behind, since we will contemplate them in their eternal fulfilment for all eternity. This is why the prophet of the Apocalypse placed the Old and New Covenants on the same step before the throne of God: there is no hierarchy among the twenty-four elders, nor between the two witnesses, nor is there any sequence imposed on the names of the twelve tribes or of the twelve Apostles, which are written on the gates and on the foundation-stones of the heavenly Jerusalem.

The solidarity in their experience of God that, in Israel, unites the privileged seers of God with the ordinary people, belongs to the archetypal structure of Israel's experience of God. As such, this solidarity is not without consequences for the Church'sexperience of God in the New Testament. Considered from the standpoint of its canonicity (archetypicity), it is evident that this structure cannot simply be reproduced in the Church. Rather, in this regard, there are private revelations in the New Testament which, as such, are not canonical in the sense that they are not binding for the whole Church. We must also bear in mind that in the Old Testament there was no infallible official institution for the reason that historical revelation was still in process and no one could pass judgment on it by comprehending its totality. It is only logical, then, that private revelations in the Church should be subject to the approval of the magisterial and pastoral office. But here we must not forget that the hierarchy is a successor to the Apostles with respect to the authority of their office but not with respect to their archetypal role as eyewitnesses. This archetypal witness, therefore, is something which can be imitated only in its realisation by the whole Church, and, thus, here something of the archetypal structure of the Old Testament has been maintained (as was necessarily to be expected).

The Old Testament experience of God has myth at its back and, ahead of it, the Incarnation of God. In this way, this experience has behind it the inner-worldly, aesthetic relationship between 'ground' and 'form', and is moving towards the definitive form of theological aesthetics. The transition is a difficult, variegated process in which time and again equivocal elements must be replaced by counter-elements which themselves cannot yet be considered definitive. The messianic age is described in sensory fashion, and rightly so, for it will mean the Incarnation of God's Word and the resurrection of all flesh. But in the interim the manner of representing this sensory dimension must be de-sensorised and the sense for God's immateriality must be awakened. While the *Hymn to the Sun of Amenophis IV* remains wholly within the mythical realm, praising Ra as the unmediated appearance of God, Psalm 19 has learned to make the leap from the glory of God in the stars to his glory in the Law, which is a spiritual sun and challenges the whole man to an experience of another kind. The great hymn in praise of the Law (Ps 119) shows the extent to which this realisation has progressed: God's manifestness and presence in his word and in his commands has acquired a concreteness that claims man for itself not only along with his faith and his understanding, but even with his very senses. Here man sees, hears, touches, tastes, and savours the Word. At this point we are no longer very far from the Song of Songs in which eros, as it ascends towards spiritualisation, encounters the faith of the Covenant as it descends to become corporeal.

e. The Marian Experience of God

At the point where all roads meet which lead from the Old Testament to the New we encounter the Marian experience of God, at once so rich and so secret that it almost escapes description. But it is also so important that time and again it shines through as the background for what is manifest. In Mary, Zion passes over into the Church; in her, the Word passes over into flesh; in her, the Head passes over into the body. She is the place of superabundant fruitfulness.

The Incarnation of the Word occurs in the faith of the Virgin. She relies not so much on the appearance of the angel as wholly on his word, which is a Word from God. The future tense ‘thou wilt conceive contains a promise to Israel, and her maidenhood is the faith of Zion. The lightning-flash of the miracle has no counterpart in her human experience; this experience begins afterwards, as a temporal echo of that miracle. It begins with a blind sense of touch, with the bodily sensing of a presence (αἴσθησις παϱουσίας τινος, in the words of Gregory of Nyssa and of Diadochus)—the sense of touch as the fundamental, unerring sense—and this experience intensifies first within its own particular kind before it extends to embrace also the experience of seeing and hearing which comes with the birth. The gradual separation into two of the one natural consciousness of the body at that stage when the mother’s consciousness still embraces both bodies, is like an imitation, within the economy of salvation, of the mystery of the Trinity, and, no less, like an imitation (the first and closest imitation) of the mystery of the two natures in the one Person. The mother is still both herself and her child.

And her feeling of the child still wholly encompasses within itself her being felt by the child—just as the believer’s vision of God presupposed his being seen by God. Seen in the light of Mary’s simple experience of motherhood, which in her has become a function of the archetypal act of faith, all closed consciousness of self and all closed experience of self become problematic: the experience of self must open out, through faith, to an experience that encompasses both oneself and the other—oneself and the burgeoning Word of God, which at first seems to be growing in the self until in this growth it becomes evident that it is rather the other way around and that it is the self that is contained in the Word of God. And yet this reversal does not occur by virtue of any sudden break, because even the first phase was already a function of faith, which from the outset is God’s almighty Word in man; but at that stage faith was still not felt in all its true dimensions. This state of non-feeling is not a guilt which is gradually atoned for; it is nature, which is good in its radical otherness to God and which is intended to experience the goodness of God by submitting to the patient process of becoming (Irenaeus).

The experience of the *thou* both among men and between God and man grows up out of the realm of the body and the senses into the sphere of the spirit; but in such a way that an original relationship of spirit (man-wife relationship in marriage, or, in virginity, the assent of the virgin to God) is the prerequisite for this growth. Between the spiritual presupposition and the beginnings of the physical process comes the lightning-bolt of miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit (at the natural level, in the infusion of the immortal soul into the act of the parents, and, at the supernatural level, in the generation of the Word of God in the womb of the Virgin). This act of overshadowing by the Holy Spirit stands beyond the dichotomies of ‘physical’ and ‘personal’, of ‘corporeal’ and ‘spiritual’. For this reason, with the overshadowing of the Virgin begin the mysteries of the Mystical Body, which are above all mysteries of the Holy Spirit, generated in the womb of the virginal Church.

In other words, because of the physical connection between mother and child, fresh problems arise concerning the relationship between the experience of Mary, the experience of the Church, and the experience of each individual member of the Church. The Platonic relationship between an archetype (in the heaven of ideas) and a copy clearly distinguished from it becomes questionable. There is now a fluid transition from archetypal experience to imitative experience. This is so, first of all, because Mary’s faith, which is the basis for her experience of motherhood, remains the same as the faith of Abraham and the faith of all Christians. In the second place, this is so also because Mary, by bearing and giving birth to her Son, the Head of the Church, encloses all Christians within herself and brings them forth from herself along with their experience of faith, and this in a relationship with them which is somehow physical. The archetype, by its very nature, has a maternal form and under its ‘protective mantle’ it embraces the progeny that will imitate it. This is also where the proleptic element of all the experience of God in the Old Testament reaches its superabundant culmination: Mary’s physico-personal experience of the Child who is her God and her Redeemer is unreservedly open to Christianity. Mary’swhole experience, as it develops from its earliest beginnings, is an experience for others—for all. It is an expropriated experience for the benefit of all, the experience not only of being dispossessed of her Child (beginning when he was twelve years old, continuing through his public life, and culminating in his Passion and in the founding of the Church), but of being dispossessed of experience itself, as if the Mother must increasingly renounce everything vitally personal to her for the sake of the Church, in the end to be left like a plundered tree with nothing but her naked faith (‘Behold, there is your son!’). Progressively, every shade of personal intimacy is taken from her, to be increasingly applied to the good of the Church and of Christians, to be bestowed on these together with the grace of Christ, a grace which is both human and divine and which is, therefore, replete with Christ’s human experiences of God.

In an ecclesial sense, therefore, it is hardly surprising that, in Mary, believers possess experiences which they have not enjoyed personally, but which have been communicated to them by grace. If this applies to all the baptised, then especially so to those who, in imitation of the Mother of the Lord, have placed their lives as vessels exclusively at the disposal of the Word of God. Mary’s experience of God has her virginity as its foundation—her exclusive bodily and spiritual readiness for God. Thus, it is already an experience of God on the basis of an antecedent dispossession of a fundamental human experience. If this is the basis, then, in turn, it enters as an integral condition into the manner in which the Marian experience is apportioned in the Church. Here we have left far behind us the level of psychological criteria: the Christian does not find the measure of his Christian experience in what he may have personally experienced and suffered, but, far beyond this, in the extent to which he has made room in himself for the archetypal Christian experiences, among which Mary’sexperience of motherhood holds an important place.

The whole of Marian experience stands in a functional relationship to Christology and, hence, to ecclesiology; but this is where it can be seen most clearly that, within the sphere of revelation, the functional does not jeopardise or abolish the personal, but rather perfects it. A human mother, with all her maternal feelings and experiences, joys and especially sorrows, is taken into God’sservice in order to bear the mystery of the Incarnate God and the Redeemer of the world. Everything about her faith will, therefore, become incarnate in her natural and, at the same time, graced motherhood; everything will be drenched in the blood of human experience, down to the very foundations of the body, of the womb. The eyewitness of the Apostles, being male, cannot reach to these subterranean depths. It begins much later, when Christ is a grown man among men. The experience of the Church as Bride of Christ and, yes, as ever-new Mother of Christ (Mt 12.50), must reach more deeply, back to the secret beginnings of the Incarnation. But, because Mary is a human mother, these experiences of the Church need not have anything extravagant about them: they are brought into the Church in a wholly natural way.

The physical substratum of spiritual solidarity in the Church (which derives not only from the Eucharist, but also from the physical unity of Mother and Child) re-enforces a trait which we noted earlier in the Old Testament: the experience which one member has can be considered by the others as belonging to them. In Moses, the whole people was in the cloud. In Samson, Gideon, and Samuel the whole people was tested and confirmed in its faith. In Job and in the servant of Yahweh, the whole people recognises its own suffering through faith. It seems to each that somehow, in the best part of himself, he himself is Job, or the *‘ebed* (servant), or the singer of this or that psalm, expressing his own experience of faith. Ever since Mary laid the foundation for the Church, this solidarity of experience has become much tighter. It is now almost a matter of indifference whose lot it is to be graced with an archetypal experience: certainly, this person has been singled out in a privileged sense, but, precisely for this reason, he belongs all the more intimately to the community and to each individual within it. The despoiling and exploiting of saints in the Church is a general Catholic custom. And yet, this mystical communism is dependent on the fact that in the first place individuals receive things which are kept from the rest. It is not through the levelling-down of privileges (as Protestantism practised on Mary, while retaining and occasionally over-stressing the privileges of the Apostles) that the ‘Communion of Saints’ is built up and fostered, but rather by the distinguishing of different vocations, which only in their interconnectedness yield a qualitatively integrated unity.

The Marian experience of motherhood in the flesh, which is an experience of faith, as such remains unique, and is not, therefore, a reproducible mystery of grace. Nevertheless, this uniqueness is open to all. It is open from within, from the womb of the Church, whence Christ’s grace cannot radiate without traversing the experience of the womb. And it is also open from without, because this Marian experience condenses into a visible figure: in the figure of the mother, as God has shaped it in its destiny of faith, those who have eyes to see may ‘read’ the mystery of the experience. This ‘legibility’ (which becomes an occasion for the multiplicity of the portrayals of Mary) itself belongs to the archetypal nature of the Marian experience. This because Mary was intended to form an integral, indissoluble group of figures, as it were, with the Son who was to assume, before the whole world, a form for the eyes of faith.

f. The Apostles’ Eyewitness

The Apostles are the founders of the Church, officially chosen and called by the Lord, whose first function will be to be eyewitnesses. They are drawn into living community with the Messiah, a relationship in which they will enjoy with this man, who is ‘God among us’, a commerce that is fully human, that engages both their senses and their spirit. They are ‘those with him’ (Mk 5.40; *cf* 2.26; 14.67f.; 16.10; Mt 16.51, etc.), ‘those who accompany him’ (Acts 1.6, 21), ‘those around him’ (Lk 22.49, etc.). This is what they are, and they will grow more and more into this way of life in the course of Jesus’ life. They constitute the original cell of God’s community with man, which had been promised and is now being realised. All those coming after them who wish to have community with God must become a part of this original cell (1 Jn 1.3). There are many others who come to the Lord, only to go away again, many others who stay with him a while only then to leave him, or simply others who have a loose connection with him without any particular calling. By contrast, the Apostles enjoy a community with Jesus which has precise contours, a community which he has consciously established and maintained, which is founded on the definitive life-long renunciation of all else: it is something wholly formed, distinctive in shape. And yet it is not something magical imposed from above, since the son of perdition will indeed fall away; rather, it is the realisation of the covenant-partnership between God and man. Form is so dominant here that the gap left by Judas Iscariot is not filled by Paul, who had been called by the Lord in a most personal way, but rather by one who is offered by the Church to the Holy Spirit for his decision, one who is thus to complete the numerical form.

Eyewitness, in turn, has as such a fundamental form: it is an association with the Lord in his public life, in his Passion, and in his death which is the communal, human, and realistic experience of God which continues and fulfils the Old Testament’s promise of an earthly God-with-us. But this phase comes to an end with Jesus’ death; the Apostles’ senses, accustomed to his existence, now fall into the void; there is no longer anything there to see, to hear, to touch; the Apostles’ whole human experience breaks off with the *triduum mortis*, then to resume anew, without any traceable continuity, with Christ’s Resurrection, at a place whose distance from the point of disruption can be known and measured only by God; and now, during the forty days, the association with the Lord will be experienced with wholly new senses. The eyewitness of the Apostles draws all its force from this last phase, to be sure; otherwise they could hardly bear witness to anything more than an extraordinary man who was prophetically gifted and who performed miracles. But it draws its force not, indeed, solely from the witness of the Resurrection, but from the fact that the man who appeared to them was *the same* whom they had known previously from long association and whom they had seen suffer and die. Seeing him, hearing him, touching him, observing how he eats, the proof of the wounds: all of this receives its full significance only in that light.

The manner in which the Apostles, as believing Israelites, associated with the Lord on earth belongs fundamentally to the Old Testament. It is the Old Covenant experiencing the fulfilment of Israel (Lk 2.30ff.), and its senses are praised as blessed for this reason (Mt 12.16f.). Consequently, it is a seeing, a hearing, and a touching in the *krisis* which was peculiar to the Old Testament: to have eyes to see and yet not see, to have ears to hear and yet not hear; and yet, by a miracle of the Lord, they are delivered from their blindness, deafness, muteness, from this state of being bowed down to the ground, and they are raised up so as to perceive the glory of Israel. The disciples are, indeed, at first always obstinate and unreceptive like the people; they are lacking in understanding, of little faith, without the courage to believe, thirsting for miracles, ambitious, true representatives of their race. The form of the Word is a form which is appropriate in this situation even in an external sense: first of all, parables (‘without parables he did not speak to them’, Mt 13.34) which the people and the disciples ought to hear and understand, but which are nonetheless not understood; secondly, the parables find their exegesis in the miracle of apostolic grace: the objective Holy Spirit of the New Covenant, which is infused into the Holy Spirit subjectively promised to the Apostles. Here, too, we have the fulfilment of the form of the Word in the Old Testament: it is a word of scandal and judgment directed to the multitude—there is no other way in which the promise is given—and an esoteric word directed to the few, to those who belong to the ‘remnant’, who as such become ‘sealed signs in Israel’ (Is 8.16ff.). The seal is opened only by the risen Christ, and he thus releases the real understanding for the sense-bound parables of the didactic and prophetic phase and for the sensory mystery of suffering in the Passion and the death. Until Jesus’ death, the Spirit rests on him alone; he alone is ‘God-with-us’, even if the Apostles, by a lightning-flash of grace, do grasp something of the reality (Mt 16.17). It is only after he has breathed on them as the Risen One and, on the basis of their now common possession of the Spirit, after he has explained to them the Scriptures and his own destiny on earth, that they understand what they have seen, heard, and touched, and that they can now also bear witness to it.

This community of life on earth can, in retrospect, only be seen in a certain twilight. The Apostles understood within the limits of an Old Testament faith that had not yet been crucified and buried. But how were they supposed to understand what could only become comprehensible through death and Resurrection? To Peter Jesus says: ‘What I am doing you do not know now, but afterward you will understand.’ And to all: ‘Do you understand what I have done to you?’ (Jn 13.7, 12). And then referring not only to the betrayal, but also to the Eucharist related to it, and also to the feet-washing which is in turn related to the Eucharist: ‘I tell you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he’ (Jn 13.19). These references to past and future occur frequently in the Gospel (Jn 2.22; 7.39; 14.29; 16.4); they show that there is an element of analogy in the Apostles’ eyewitness which is essential for its credibility: the Apostles experienced things which they had to accept in their naked factualness, things whose real interpretation was to come only later. It is only subsequently that experience and understanding come together to form one convincing total picture; this is why the Apostles could only subsequently discover the other analogies between the Old and New Testaments and then incorporate them in their testimony. Their faith begins in the material and the external and then becomes interiorised, while Mary’s faith and her experience of faith begin in her innermost being and gradually attain external form.

In their earthly association with the Lord, the difficulty for the Apostles is not sensory experience, but rather a faith adequate to *this* faith-object and capable of perceiving it fully. They do indeed have senses, but not yet spiritual senses. In this they are a permanent archetype of the apostolic Church with her *fides ex auditu*, a Church which indeed manages the *auditus* but often enough stops there. Thus much depends, in the meantime, on this external presence and affirmation; and the Lord can interpret this ‘good will’ benevolently: ‘You are those who have continued with me in my trials’ (Lk 22.28), and in these πειϱασμοί of Christ the Apostles gain an initial and still wholly human experience (πεῖϱα) of faith: what it means to be with him. This experience becomes a Christian experience when, in the Passion, the Shepherd is slain and the flock is dispersed (Mt 26.31), whereby every purely human and allegedly Christian communion with him is unmasked: the Shepherd is slain, and the sheep are shown for what they are, as slaying wolves. It is only through this revealing, clarifying trial (πειϱασμός) that they will be reunited again in a new and definitive way. The Apostles were also, and especially, to bear witness to this fact and this experience: Peter to his betrayal, the others to their flight of denial, even John to his slumber during the temptation that decided everything.

But now, the analogy between the pre-Easter and the post-Easter testimony (comparable to the analogy between testimony in the Old and the New Testament) signifies the decisive step forward: the leaving behind of the old, which had served as basis, in order to become established in the new. *Paul* is the eyewitness of this step forward, since he not only had to defend his eyewitness arduously in itself, but his eyewitness in this matter against the privileges of the original Apostles. Whoever disregards the element of analogy in the Apostles' witness, will hold unswervingly to the testimony of the other Apostles and will with them consider Paul's credentials as an eyewitness to be secondary, if not altogether doubtful.[147] But his legitimacy stands under the protection of Scriptural inspiration and thus remains unassailable. This is of the highest theological interest. Paul's witness to the Resurrection dispenses with the 'analogy' between witness to Christ's earthly existence and witness to the Resurrection; he is a witness *only* to Jesus' Resurrection. For Paul, the identity of the risen Christ with the Jesus who suffered and died lies in the vitality exhibited by the *Kyrios*. Because he is the new man, he was also the old. If this holds for Paul and if it is to this that he witnesses, the same does not necessarily apply to the others. For Paul there is no other legitimation than that of his own turning from the Old to the New Covenant and to the new man, his *conversio morum*, the fact that in all things he shows himself to be a servant of God (2 Cor 6.4), the fact that his existence has been so transformed that it has become an incontestable mirroring of the image of Christ. Paul proves himself to be one who has seen essentially by letting himself be seen and by being, in fact, seen. He gives himself wholly over to seeing, hearing, and touching: by the grace of God, in him a Christian has been formed who is not a ghost, but who has flesh and bones. Paul cuts right through the analogy that runs across the testimony of Peter and the others, and this cannot be his work, since he himself is the work of the grace of the Risen One.

This means that, with such an archetypal experience, Paul straddles the boundary between the apostolic and the ecclesial era. He fights for his inclusion in the apostolic era, and the Lord himself gives the warrant for this inclusion; and yet his experience of Christ bears essential features of the ecclesial era, namely, that of private revelation and its confirmation by personal sanctity. He shares this transitional character with the whole period of the Acts of the Apostles: this is the period of archetypal Church history. This is certainly so, on the one hand, because this is the span of time in which Christ's original eyewitnesses lived; Protestant theology has always emphasised this aspect, and attempted to close the narrative of Acts off within itself as representing an archetypal age.[148] And yet Paul falls outside these limits, while still dominating in a central way the events in the Acts of the Apostles. For, on the other hand, this period of history is more than just the time-span in which the original eyewitnesses lived; it is the privileged space in which the Holy Spirit became visible, audible, and palpable: it is the expansion of the explosion that occurred on Pentecost. Paul is a witness to the *Kyrios* who is the Spirit (2 Cor 3.16f.). Alongside the Petrine and Jacobean proofs from tradition he places ‘the proof (or the demonstration) from Spirit and power’ (1 Cor 2.4), and he conducts this proof—which as such exhibits the structure of the coming history of the Church—in an exemplary form which is modelled on the proof given by the Johannine Christ of the truth of his own affirmations.[149]

The cogency of this proof lies in the trinitarian structure of grace. Paul’s existence and teaching must prove that, beyond the fleshly experience of the fleshly Christ, there is a pneumatic experience of him which does not ‘spiritualise’ him in the human sense, but rather shows him to be the one who has truly risen with his body. Freedom is the name which Paul gives to this experience; but freedom as he himself interprets it and as can only be correctly understood in this trinitarian light. It is the immense interior space of God himself which opens up (1 Cor 2.11), not only objectively in our dying and rising with Christ, but also subjectively, since the Spirit is given to us ‘that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God’ (1 Cor 2.12), gifts which fleshly man cannot fathom and which he rejects as folly since they can only be understood pneumatically. Lest it appear that this is simply an open invitation to enthusiasm, Paul insists that the Spirit who ‘impels’ the children of God (Rom 8.14) impels them solely according to the law and the command of Christ, which is to say according to Christ’s selfless, self-forgetting love. In this love the ‘Spirit’ manifests himself, inseparably, as the one who comes from and is sent by Christ and as the risen Son who in this Spirit reveals himself as *Kyrios*. This makes Christianity no longer now a religion bound to space and time, but a religion of the freedom of God himself, a freedom in which God’s whole manifestation in Christ has been, not watered-down, but rather spiritualised. This truth is so powerful that it does not keep Paul from asserting that the Incarnate and crucified Jesus is identical with this *Kyrios*, nor does it keep him from accepting and handing on the tradition of the Twelve, for instance, in what concerns the sacraments; but all this occurs now no longer at the level of a historicity which is fleshly and limited by time and space, but within the new dimension which has been opened up by the Resurrection and the Ascension. If the experience of the Twelve travels a path that runs from the depths to the heights—the path from ‘flesh’ to ‘spirit’—then Paul’s experience runs in a reverse direction: it is the Spirit which, as Spirit of love, builds up the Body of the Lord—the Church—in accordance with his command. The Christian authentication is real enough to call back all wayward enthusiasm into the order established by Christ and to channel a grace that blows where it will into the form of the charisms, which are dispensed and assigned to each by the risen

Lord and by the Spirit himself: this is a finiteness which derives from infinity.

Paul was too conscious of the uniqueness of his archetypal experience of Christ for him to see its continuation in the Church other than as a permanent model. But what in him is distinct from the experience of the first Apostles, namely, the mystical element, will continue in the Church in various degrees, thus establishing within the Church, at the appropriate level, something like an exemplary typology.

g. The Church and the Christian

The question in what sense we can ascribe an archetypal experience to the Church as such as contrasted with the individual Christian will, to a large extent, depend on the other question (which cannot be dealt with here[150]) in what sense the Church can be thought to be a subject. Now, such a subject cannot exist outside of or alongside the believers that constitute it; and so, we can explain the Church's quasi-personal unity only on the basis of the spiritual character of the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ and of God. For it is in virtue of this character that the Spirit unites individual persons by elevating them interiorly, to the extent that this spiritual character is poured out creatively from Christ's generative Passion (and Resurrection) over the creatureliness that stands over against it. For us, however, this ground for the Church's unity becomes concrete only in the Church's members, and, since certain of these members possess archetypal experiences which they deposit in the common treasury of the *Communio Sanctorum* for the common use, nothing keeps us from ascribing such an experience to the Church herself. The archetypal experience of individual members, however, is but a privileged participation in Christ's all-sustaining experience of God. And Christ makes the Church as a whole participate in this experience, uniting each member of the Church directly to himself and yet, at the same time, mediating between individual members and uniting them to himself through others. He is the sole author of all ecclesial works, and yet, at the same time, through the different charisms and at different levels, he bestows on the members of the Church the grace of being co-workers with him (2 Cor 2.7; 4.1).

The main question, therefore, is: In what manner is the archetypal Christian experience incorporated into the Church so that the members who are not graced with it can nevertheless participate in it? This question gives expression to one part of the proleptic character of all archetypal experience, while another part, together with all the other Christian and Biblical experiences, points forward to the Second Coming of the Lord. The question raised cannot be answered in one way only; rather it here becomes evident how multi-layered the Church's total reality is. At least four different relationships may be identified between Biblical and archetypal experience, on the one hand, and ordinary Christian experience in the Church, on the other; naturally, these relationships, in their total reality, thoroughly interpenetrate one another and constantly overlap, but they are presented by the New Testament separately as different modes of access. First, there is the eyewitness of the Twelve, of which Peter is representative and which is embodied in the Petrine tradition of the Church. Then there is the unique eyewitness of Paul, whose life-work and written legacy outstrip that of all the others (1 Cor 15.10) and flow into the Church in a current of tradition all its own. Thirdly, there is the equally special (ocular, aural, and tactile) witness of the Beloved Disciple, who at the same time is the conscious perfecter of Old Testament prophecy and who, through both these functions, lends the faith of the Church a particular colouration. Finally, at a level which is deeper and closer to the centre, there is the experience of the Lord's Mother, which wholly passes over into the Church and renders the Church fruitful.

Only when we see and abide by this fourfold tradition of archetypal experience in the Church in all its differentiation can we proceed to raise the other question which is implicit in it, namely, the question of what we are to make of mystical experience within the Church. This experience, too, on the one hand, participates in the Biblical archetypes, since it is its essence also to experience what the others 'only believe'. On the other hand, mystical experience does not attain to the dignity and authority of the Biblical archetypes of Old and New Testaments, from which it derives and by which it must be canonised, even though at the same time it is also an expression of the incalculable manner in which the Holy Spirit of Christ and of the Church freely distributes his graces.

1. *Petrine Tradition*. The manner in which the Petrine writings convey their eyewitness to the Church revolves around two central points: the kerygma and its realisation in Christian life.

As he nears his death (2 Pet 1.15), Peter is zealously concerned that those who would follow should not forget his witness. He is himself 'a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in his *doxa*, that is to be revealed' (1 Pet 5.1); but Peter, as an 'eyewitness', has already seen this glory proleptically on Tabor, where he 'clearly heard from heaven' the voice of the Father that spoke of the Son (2 Pet 1.17f.). For Peter, the earlier light of prophecy has wholly entered into this light; taken in itself, the prophetic light was a groping, as it were, for what was to come, given in view of the Church (1 Pet 1.11f.). But seen together with the vision on Tabor, the light of prophecy becomes ‘all the more reliable’ both for the Apostles and for the Church (2 Pet 1.19; *cf* 3.2), which receives it together with the apostolic kerygma. ‘What has now been announced to you by those who preached the good news to you through the Holy Spirit sent from heaven’, this is the truth by which the Church must abide, so much so that even ‘the angels long to look into these things’ (1 Pet 1.12), things which are not completed and surpassed by angelic revelation, for instance, but, on the contrary, things which fulfil the vision of the angels (*cf* Eph 3.10). By the power of the Spirit, Peter reports in his apostolic kerygma what he has seen, and the Church participates in his vision and experience by listening to this truth obediently.

Through obedience the community becomes a ‘flock’ (1 Pet 5.3), first a flock of the ‘elders’ and, through them, of the ‘supreme Shepherd’ (1 Pet 5.4): this is why the community’s obedience is a ‘consecration through obedience to the truth . . . of God’s Word’, which is the Gospel and which is to blossom in all as an ‘imperishable seed’, lived out in a tender love for the brethren (1 Pet 1.22-25) and in voluntary submission even to secular authority. Through the realisation of the kerygma in themselves they will become conformed to Christ’s own destiny, thus making of their life an existential priestly ministry (1 Pet 2.5, 9) and thereby making Christ visible to the world (1 Pet 2.12). The sacrament (of baptism) which they have received contains ontologically within itself Christ’s death and redemptive descent into hell (1 Pet 3. 18-22; 4.6); to realise its content means to break with sin and to suffer according to the flesh (1 Pet 4.1f.). For this reason, the archetype of Christ in Peter has a certain tendency to become a moral example or be reduced to such (1 Pet 2.21): the believer possesses the truth in its hierarchical proclamation; his firm conviction concerning this truth (2 Pet 1.12) leads to his alienation from the world (1 Pet 1.1, 17; 2.11) and to his unjust persecution (1 Pet 2.18f.; 3.9, 13-17; 4.12-19). But through this his destiny the believer ‘experiences’ his ‘annexation’ to Christ and his ‘inbuilding’ into him (1 Pet 2.4f.). All of this interconnectedness is evident and can even be made evident to others (1 Pet 3. 15). Christians should ‘arm themselves with the same thought’ (1 Pet 4.1) as was Christ’s when he suffered: for he bestows the same ‘hope’ for glory and, what is more, the ‘Spirit of glory’, invisible and unfelt, already now rests on suffering believers (1 Pet 4.13f.). The ‘tasting of the sweetness of the Lord’, mentioned in connection with conversion and baptism, is a reference to the psalms (34.9) and refers to the grace ofbeing a Christian which has been communicated to us.

Compared to the vision of the Apostles, the faith of the Church is decidedly non-visionary: ‘Without having seen him you love him; though you do not now see him you believe in him' (1 Pet 1.8). Because of this non-vision, 'unspeakable and transfigured joy' is promised to the faith of the Church. But Peter strives to be a good shepherd according to the Lord's command, and he exhorts the hierarchy to tend the flock with the attitude of Christ, the supreme Shepherd, and so to be a '*typos* for the flock', a model which impresses its form and makes the archetype visible. For doing this they are promised a crown of glory (1 Pet 5.2ff.). In preaching, what is at stake is 'arming, strengthening, fortifying, and confirming' the people on behalf of God (1 Pet 5.10). This is, strictly and exclusively, the perspective of the hierarchical tradition, which through kerygma and sacraments incorporates the Apostles' eyewitness into the Church, and which, for the rest, locates the actuality of Christ as archetype in the moral realisation of the proclaimed creed. In this, the Church is the fulfilment of the Old Testament's 'holy people', 'chosen race' and 'royal priesthood' (Ex 19.5f.; Is 43.20f.), in the consciousness that, previously being 'not-a-people', it has been chosen to be 'the People' (Hos 1.6-9; 2.3, 25). In the Petrine tradition, a certain absence of New Testament prophecy is compensated for by relying on apocryphal apocalyptic literature (2 Peter, Jude).

2. *Pauline Tradition*. While the Petrine eyewitness is conveyed to the Church and incorporated into it horizontally, at the level of history—the apostolic succession rests on the horizontal continuity (starting at Caesarea Philippi)—the Pauline eyewitness proceeds vertically 'from heaven' (Acts 22.6; 26.13), and his 'Gospel' comes through revelation from God without the mediation of any man (Gal 1.1, 11f.). Even if Paul in everything (including his own self-sacrifice: Acts 21) attempts to establish his links with the apostolic tradition of the Twelve and to preserve it by all available means, nonetheless he is 'foisted on' the original Apostles without having been chosen by them; his vertical intrusion precludes every possibility of the charism reserved for him being continued horizontally in the Church. The Pauline tradition, on the other hand, will mean the continued fostering of Paul's view of revelation; but, on the other hand, it will also mean the ever-new and unforeseen vertical irruption of new charisms in the history of the Church. In his (discontinuous) tradition are to be found the great charisms of mission which suddenly visit and fructify the Church, the great conversions (from Augustine to Newman), the great visions which are 'ineffable' in themselves (2 Cor 12.4) and yet are poured out over the Church in words inspired by the Spirit.

For Paul, the Church as a whole has a much more emphatically vertical extension and structure than for Peter. The Head appears to him from 'above'; he sees him articulating and ordering the Mystical Body from above, from where he ‘fills all things’ (Eph 4.10f.), and the Mystical Body grows upwards towards him, the perfect Man (Eph 4.13). However, this is not only a striving upwards, but already in a hidden way it is a state of being above now (Eph 2.6; Col 3.1ff.) which eschatologically has only to ‘appear’. Our mother is the ‘Jerusalem above; we are not children of the slave but of the free woman’ (Gal 4.26, 31). Whoever would cling merely to the horizontal succession coming from the Old Testament must keep the whole Law: he is separated from Christ and has forfeited grace (Gal 5.3f.). To keep the Law upwards, from below, is impossible, but whoever possesses the Spirit from above—love itself—has ‘fulfilled the whole Law’ (Gal 5.14).

While Peter exhorts his followers to be good shepherds and examples to the flock, Paul knows from the outset that he is a ‘spectacle’ for angels and men; in his existence may be plainly read what man is, seen from above; even as one who is crucified with Christ and who daily dies with him, he is in the eyes of all a living anticipation of the eschatological promise. He not only shows, he infuses his vision and his certainty of salvation into the Church; irresistibly he draws the community into his joy, his *parrhesia*, his zeal, his prayer, his catholic love. He works through contagion. Even when, in a Petrine sense, he had to distinguish between himself and the others, he acts as a binding force by receiving within himself and saying ‘we’ instead of ‘I’.[151] This is the identity, at once bestowed and striven for, between official apostleship and personal sanctity—sanctity *as* a charge that depersonalises and ecclesialises the person, the charge to be the light of the Church by consuming oneself for all. Because this is a pure grace, however, there is no reason why the Holy Spirit could not repeat such missions and special archetypal experiences during the course of the Church’s history. Even after Paul, such missions and experiences will naturally have submission to Peter as a sign of their authenticity, but they will derive no less from the ‘Jerusalem above’ and make it present to the senses by witness of word and of life.

The vertical Pauline Church received its first interpretation in the ‘Platonism’ of the Epistle to the Hebrews. We have come now, not to Mount Sinai (cf. Gal 4.24), ‘but to Mount Zion, to the *Civitas Dei Viventis*, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven’ (Heb 12:18, 22-23). It is from here that God’s Word now resounds, no longer as a temporal word but as definitive for all eternity, and its acceptance must, therefore, also be definitive (Heb 12.25f.). We must cling to the painful discipline of the ‘Father of spirits’ ‘so as to come to share in his holiness’; if we do not ‘withdraw’ from the grace of his discipline (Heb 12.9-10, 15), we will be following Jesus the High Priest ‘through the curtain of his flesh' (Heb 10.20) into the truth which is beyond the 'shadowy images' (Heb 8.5) and the 'symbols of the present time' (Heb 9.9). For the author of the Epistle, the curtain of Christ's flesh no longer conceals, as did the temple veil of the Old Testament; rather, in the place where Christ, 'by virtue of his eternal Spirit, has offered himself to God as a spotless sacrifice', there, in a Platonic-Christian contemplation, the heavenly is already seen in the events of the flesh. Even if we 'do not yet see everything in subjection to him, we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death' (Heb 2.8f.); thus, in Christ's humiliation and exaltation, we see the full dimension of the redemptive process, and ourselves taken up in it. We do indeed believe (Heb 11.1) and in this sense we do not yet see; but, at the same time, in the temporal shadows of the Old Testament we have learned to see the definitive eschatological archetype. To be sure, this gnosis is a permanent ethical demand that we urgently strive after Christ as his disciples. But, at the same time, it means becoming adults in the divine doctrine: it is the need for solid food that lies beyond the milk of infants; it is progress beyond merely listening to the kerygma, rather to its interior assimilation. As such, it is 'illumination', a 'tasting (γεύεσθαι) of the heavenly gift', a 'partaking of the holy Pneuma', a 'perceiving of the beauty of God's Word and of the powers of the age to come' (Heb 6.3-6). The beginner is still 'inexperienced' (ἄπειϱος) in true speech, but the one who has been perfected possesses 'well-trained perceptive faculties' (αἰσθητήϱια γεγυμνασμένα) to distinguish the beautiful from the ugly (Heb 5. 13 f.).

These 'spiritual senses', which will be taken up by Origen, are functions of a faith which has received vision and knowledge, a faith which can now read the form of revelation in the Bible—both vertically (the spiritual in the sensory) and horizontally (the New Testament in the Old). This transposition of Paul's thought will enjoy the greatest historical success; we may say that this is a kind of Pauline mysticism for everyone, one which by-passes the whole realm of special charisms and replaces them with a contemplation of revelation which is generally accessible and even strictly required of every Christian as he progresses. As in all the writings of the New Testament, this is never an aesthetic contemplation for its own sake: it is impelled by the zeal for a faith-filled discipleship and immediately leads to it. It is contemplation along the way of hasty pilgrimage to the great Sabbath rest, a contemplation fully conscious of its proleptic character (Heb 4.1-10).

3. The *Johannine tradition* is two-pronged depending on whether we are speaking of the Epistles or the Apocalypse. But, to the extent that from both of

these one total figure results, the Johannine conclusion to the New Testament constitutes something like a synthesis of the Petrine and Pauline elements: the earthly and the prophetic-heavenly tradition, along with contemplative vision, merge into one stream. In John, however, we find neither the Petrine contrast between the proclaimers who have seen and the hearers who have not seen, nor the Pauline contrast between the 'I' which imitates Christ and the others who imitate Paul. In John's Epistles there is only the immediate admittance of the 'we' that is addressed to the seeing community of the 'we' who speak. To be sure, later on the 'I' of the Apostle is singled out from this speaking 'we'; but this occurs only in order to integrate everyone more intimately into the common 'we'. And then, John also includes himself in the 'we' that is addressed when he censures or exhorts ('If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth', 1 Jn 1.6). John speaks from the standpoint of the clearly remembered direct vision of Jesus, and not, like the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who is not an eyewitness, from the standpoint of faith's contemplation. But John's direct vision is not, like Peter's eyewitness, purely historical, but in itself it is already contemplative, and on this basis his vision may flow over without any distance or alteration into the contemplation of faith of his followers. In John there is no need even for the 'spiritual senses'; here the opposition between corporeal and spiritual senses is unthinkable and superfluous, since from the very outset John has heard, seen, and touched the Word of Life with his bodily senses. John, who is par excellence the one who has been expropriated for love, simply confers his eyewitness on the whole Church, unaware of any problems this might cause, simply assuming that in love everything is possible, even the identification of others' eyes, ears, and hands with one's own. In a peculiar way he retains all his incomparable apostolic dignity within this *traditio*: above all, it is the dizzy exaltation of his love that elevates him from all others into the sphere of the archetype.

To this manner of communication (closely related to the Marian mode) there is joined the prophetic-apocalyptic dimension, which is in sharp contrast to it. This is a vision, not of what has occurred, but of what 'will soon come to pass'; it is a 'witness to the Word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ—to all that was shown in visions' (Rev 1.2) and it designates itself expressly as 'prophecy'. John addresses the community as a prophetic seer: not in the name of the Christ in whom Peter greets them, nor in the name of the Christ whom Paul has seen in Damascus, but, precisely, in the name of the Christ of the Apocalypse, the Ruler of the kings of the earth, who is preparing to come upon the clouds in union with his enthroned Father and the seven spirits who stand before his throne (Rev 1.4f., 7). This time John does not stand together with the original Apostles, but with his ‘brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus Christ. . . . For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy’ (Rev 19.10). The revealing Angel is only ‘a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book’ (Rev 22.9).

The revealer is the Angel, sent ‘by God, the Lord of the spirits of the prophets’ (Rev 22.6), sent ‘by Jesus to you [the prophets] with this testimony for the churches’ (Rev 22.16), sent from Jesus Christ to his servant, John (Rev 1.1). Even if the angelic world is thus engaged as a mediator, yet, in a mysterious way, it is also at the same time part of the revelation. John is to write down ‘the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and of the seven golden lampstands. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. To the angel of the church in Ephesus write’ (Rev 1.20-2.1). Within the context, these angels to whom he must successively write are in heaven in the hand of the Son of Man, whether one considers them the leaders of the earthly communities or not. And not only the heads of the seven communities (which are the Church) abide in heaven, but the communities themselves do, as the seven lampstands. As star-angels they doubtless ‘see’ God, and as lampstands they at least stand before his face and are seen by him. John’s prophetic vision is in this quite distinct from the ecstasy of Paul, who is transported from the earth to God to see the unspeakable. John, too, is transported in the Spirit (Rev 1.10), but in heaven he again finds the reality of earth, only from the perspective of heaven; in heaven he finds the reality of faith on earth, not only as a reality that is seen but as a reality that also sees. This reality, which in heaven openly is seen and sees, is what time and again is proclaimed as what is ‘soon to come’. Much of what John sees has its reality simultaneously in heaven and on earth. It is not merely something on earth which is observed and directed from heaven; it is something which in itself is enacted in heaven. A prophetic and visionary confirmation is here given to the dogmatic statement of the Epistles to the Galatians and to the Hebrews that we have not come into an earthly but a heavenly Church, into the City of the living God and his angels. A mysterious concreteness is here attained by the Pauline παϱϱησία—the ability to come and stand openly before God, the state of being ‘blessed with every pneumatic blessing in the heavenly places,. . . chosen that we should stand holy and blameless before his face’ (Eph 1.3f.), our existence as ‘members of the household’ of God (Eph 2.19).

The angels of the churches and the lampstands of the churches are part of the earthly Church that is to be found in heaven, there seen by God. This is the only way of understanding Mt 18.10: ‘See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my

Father who is in heaven', and, significantly enough, for this there are no Jewish parallels since, for contemporary Judaism, not even the highest angels could see the face of God (Strack-Billerbeck I, pp. 783f.). This is a distinctively New Testament statement. Of course, one can point to parallels in the history of religions according to which 'every person possesses in heaven a double for his earthly existence',[152] a belief to which Acts 12.15 doubtless alludes when the servant Rhoda does not open up the door to Peter, believing it was his angel. Van der Leeuw has provided us with analogies from all forms of religion—from the primitive forms of the 'external soul' to the Egyptian *Ka*, to the belief in *Doppelganger* and protective spirits, to the Platonic *anamnesis* and all the way to German mysticism and idealism.[153] But what interests us here are the Biblical statements. Christ's prophetic words: 'You will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man' (Jn 1.51), were indeed at times interpreted in this sense by showing parallels in rabbinic texts[154]: 'engraved in the heights' there is the 'heavenly image' of Jacob (Israel), while below Jacob is sleeping by the ladder in his earthly existence; 'ascending, the angels found his image, and descending they found him below, sleeping.' Thus, the angels mediated between the simultaneously heavenly and earthly reality of Israel. Applied to Jesus, John's words would then mean that what is promised to the disciples is the vision (ὄψεσθε) of the unification (ascending and descending) of Christ's heavenly glory with his fleshly form on earth. Whether or not one rejects this interpretation,[155] the Johannine Christology of pre-existence nonetheless points in this direction. But Matthew's statement, on the other hand, tends to indicate a vicarious vision on the part of the angel to whom is assigned the 'little one' on earth: the little ones are not to be despised because their reality rises up even to the open vision of God, which is implied in the vision already given them, even if they do not perceive it with their earthly consciousness. The inspiration and guidance that comes to them from the vision of their angel binds their existence below with their existence above, according to the Church's measure:

> Behold! Jerusalem and Zion embrace like two sisters, the one coming from Heaven
> And the other in Exile, washing in the river Khobar the linen used in sacrifices,
> And the earthly Church raises her tower-crowned head towards her royal Consort!. . .
> And, just as the sun's eruptions
> Reverberate on earth in the form of droughts and springtides,
> So, too, from the sublimest Angel who beholds Thee down to the pebble on the path, and from one end of Thy creation to the other,
> The continuum never ceases, not any more than from soul to body.
> The unspeakable soar of the Seraphim expands through the Nine orders of Spirits,. . .

> And among
> All Thy creatures and all the way to Thee there is a liquid bond[156]

The poet, here speaking in both a cosmic and an ecclesiological sense, borrows an image from Denys the Areopagite around which Erik Peterson also constructed his treatise *On the Angels*.[157] For him, too, the Church is essentially on her way from the earthly Jerusalem which she has left behind to the heavenly Polis. Her whole existence, her whole liturgy is the anticipation here below, through faith, of what the angels accomplish above through their vision: indeed, the Church does this together with the angels. According to Peterson, the meaning of the monk's 'angel-like' existence is to join, as far as possible, one's angel here on earth so as to share in his vision of God. For him, an angel is, in the last analysis, the very idea and instantiation of pure adoration and love, of the state in which one pours oneself out wholly in praise of God.[158] In the earthly Church, man lives on the longing to allow himself to be wholly shaped and inflamed by this pure form.

All this can serve as an illustration for a permanently mysterious connection between vision above and faith here below, something which (since we should not force the texts) we can at least call a 'prophetic' contact. Faith, as such, has its locus, its 'homeland', and its shelter within the vision of the angels in heaven, and the inspiration that comes to faith from this vision is both a kind of knowledge, entrusted to God, of the truthfulness, experience and understanding of the mystery, and a state of being instinctively guided by the good Spirit. Faith is not an object of ordinary intuition, but of Johannine-apocalyptic prophecy. According to John, this faith is a 'testimony', so much so that it approximates the martyrdom or 'witness' of blood. At the moment of his greatest suffering, Stephen sees heaven open and the Son of Man standing at God's right hand (Acts 7.56). His prophetic witness to the Church is a blood-witness for the Church. Something similar is in general the case in the Apocalypse. Here too John is anti-gnostic: he is not at all concerned with devaluing the Church's earthly form, not even with lowering its rank to that of a merely Platonic-symbolic regime; rather, John insists on the full incarnational unfolding of the earthly Church's reality, from the blood-witness to the crucified Jesus to the heavenly vision of his glory by the angels. This is what, as apocalyptic prophet, he inserts into the experience of the Church.

4. *Marian Tradition*. The threefold archetypal experience of Christ, which is conferred by the Apostles on the Church for its use, remains permanently sustained and undergirded by the Marian experience of Christ, which in its depth

and simplicity is quite beyond the power of words. But the Marian experience existed prior to the apostolic experience, and it thus wholly conditions it, for Mary, as Mother of the Head, is also Mother of the Body. It was already shown how greatly her womanly experience begins with the *tactus*—sensing by touching—and then unfolds from it only to return to it, to the point of developing a spiritual perception and sense of touch for all that pertains to her Son. Because of her immaculate nature, she always feels and senses that which is insurpassably truthful, which in the transition from faith into vision needs no corrective and which, consequently, even in its earthly concealment and constriction already possesses its definitive form. Here we discover almost an indifference with regard to heaven and earth, an overcoming also of the tension within the Church between the immaculate Church and the Church of sinners. Seldom has anyone spoken of this more sublimely than Charles Péguy in his *Tapisserie de Notre Dame*. He celebrates not only the Marian measure, but also the Christian's incorporation, through prayer, into this measure, which, by virtue of its total rightness, bestows every grace but cannot endure any violation of justice:

> Maitresse de la voie et du raccordement,
> O miroir de justice et de justesse d'âme,
> Vous seule vous savez, ô grande notre Dame,
> Ce que c'est que la halte et le recueillement. . . .[159]

Who is to say how this final rightness of the Christian answer to the Word of God, how this final accommodation in God's covenant with the world in Jesus Christ, this final concordance reached in Mary between the descending grace which calls to her and the ascending grace in her which answers the call, how this final gift of the Son to his Mother is made to flow out and to circulate throughout the Church? Who is to say how it comes through the Marian Church to each individual believer, all the more as he strives to shape his life as an imitation and an image in conformity with the Church's nature and commandments? Here what is most efficacious is what goes most unnoticed. At certain moments the believer may marvel at the fact that he really believes, that he can do it with such naturalness, that, in spite of all the dialectic he detects in his existence between his grace-filled and his sinful self, he does not for all that suffer from a hidden schizophrenia, but that, rather, everything can occur within a lived unity and a sheltered repose. He feels the grace that sustains him and forms him and keeps him together, and it could be that in the midst of this he becomes aware of the fact that this is not only a bestowed grace, but an answering grace, an assent with a definite shape that stems from the ancient Zion—indeed, from the first mysterious covenant-sacrifice which Abraham offered to Yah-weh in the night (Gen 15.7-21), a grace which all the Prophets' invectives presupposed as the horizon for a spotless covenant-fidelity, a grace described in sensory terms in the Song of Songs, raised to the level of the New Covenant by Paul's theology of marriage, a grace posited by John as perfect love and from the standpoint of which he thinks out Christian principles (1 Jn 2.5; 4.17f.). Where should a sinner find the confidence necessary to know himself as one incorporated into this perfection, which not only hovers above him as an unfulfilable law but holds him up maternally, which is not only bestowed on him by the grace of the divine Judge but is given him in actual reality as his very own, a perfection which he cannot ascribe to himself personally and to be admitted into which is, once again, a grace? Where is a sinner to find the necessary confidence if not from the immaculate Mother and Bride of the Lord, who is the gift that has been distributed throughout the whole Church? Here, too, nothing can be spiritualised, as if the external, visible, hierarchical Church were but a symbolic scaffolding in which such a grace cannot be found—as if one had then to grope one's way back to a spiritual Church in order there to find the Marian reality. For the mother's experience is bodily and spiritual, inseparably; it is even an experience which begins with the bodily and remains housed within it irrevocably. Because Mary is bodily the Mother of the Lord, the Bride-Church must be bodily and visible, and her visible sacraments and institutions must be an occasion for the spiritual experience of Christ and of God.

All four archetypal experiences converge in the Church. They do not hover over the Church as unattainable ideas, but, rather, each in its own way and by means of a real continuity and communication of what is peculiar to it, these archetypal experiences are the very foundation of the life-form of believing man. By virtue of the fact that all four of them converge in the Church, they at the same time allow the Old Testament form of experience to pass over into themselves. And in both respects—as archetypes of the New and the Old Testament—they remain proleptic *as* archetypes: in spite of all the ways in which the Old Testament expectation finds fulfilment in the New Covenant, in spite of the fulfilment of both Testaments in the Bride-Church that finally appears—a fulfilment that automatically makes all the bride's witnesses superfluous (Jn 3.29; 2 Cor 11.1)—all this remains provisional and points beyond itself to the eschatological vision.

We must now consider the particular character of this structure of Christian faith, which is founded upon and nourished by archetypal experiences, and which, grasping, yet does not grasp and which grasps most profoundly precisely by not grasping. We will do this by taking our lead from the concept of the 'spiritual senses', the paradox of which gives expression to the oscillating centre of the interim period between the Incarnation and the Second Coming and, at the same time, provides the synthesis between the last two chapters—that is, between spiritual 'experience' and archetypal 'sensation'. Being such an oscillating centre, these constitute the final word on the specificity of the subjective evidence with regard to the Christian object, and as such they are the warrant of one of the pillars upon which rests a Christian doctrine of perception.

3. THE SPIRITUAL SENSES

a. Aporetic of the Spiritual Senses

The whole range of questions concerning the subjective evidence of revelation culminates in a final central area of discussion in which the 'spiritual senses' are to be found. Faith appeared as the token of a total human vision and, indeed, as its hidden beginning, in the sense that God's human and sensory appearance in Christ could be reciprocated only by a hidden perception and response on the part of man. Furthermore, it was only in this way that the faith of the New Testament could fulfil that of the Old. Perception, as a fully human act of encounter, necessarily had not only to include the senses, but to emphasise them, for it is only through the senses and in them that man perceives and acquires a sensibility for the reality of the world and of Being. And, what is more, in Christianity God appears to man right in the midst of worldly reality. The centre of this act of encounter must, therefore, lie where the profane human senses, making possible the act of faith, become 'spiritual', and where faith becomes 'sensory' in order to be human. But is this not an impossibility or a play of words, since, on the one hand, sensibility cannot by definition perceive anything spiritual and since, on the other hand, when the object of faith is abandoned to the senses in this fashion, Christianity sinks to the level of a mythical religion? The archetypal experiences of the Biblical sphere (until now considered in themselves) prove the contrary, and their archetypal character simply demands the extension of their relevance to the Christian faith. Is it not, again, a sign of the weakness of this faith that it remains so bound to historical concreteness as not to be capable of the liberating rapture of spiritual, much less mystical abstraction? Here we must note that we should not speak simply of sensibility, but of 'spiritual' sensibility. Only thus does the paradox of the object of our inquiry emerge, a paradox which is especially evident when we speak of the Resurrection of Christ and of all flesh. In the Christian sphere, the death and the burial of God within this sensory world correspond to conceptual and mystical abstraction: man’s senses and his reason are equally affected by them, and ‘naked faith’ is in this respect a total death of natural man. But once the Christian has risen with Christ and ascended to the Father, then, with body and spirit, he has become a ‘spiritual man’ and henceforth—in so far as he is a believer—he has not only a spiritual intellect and will, but also a spiritual heart, a spiritual imagination and spiritual senses. It is obvious that we cannot treat this reality psychologically, but only theologically, since it is the subjective echo of the objective fact of faith, which as such is not subject to any worldly science. But it is just as obvious that, because it effects the real Christian person in the midst of the real historical order of his world and his salvation, this reality must also possess an authentic possibility of expression and its own peculiar evidence, always presupposing the presence of faith.

For man in his full reality, ‘experience’, as an immediate perception of reality, is to be found at both extremes of his being, so to speak: in the senses, which are wholly immersed in the worldly element that offers itself to them and flows in through them, and (for certain persons) in the mystical ground of the soul, which can perceive God’s presence directly without the mediation of discursive thought. The difficulty lies in the fact that these two extremes in man cannot be connected other than by that which separates them: by that centre of the spiritual person which as reason and freedom can only be attained and constituted by establishing a distance between abstract being and the being which is immersed, not only in the senses, but—in a different and unique way—also in God, who can be perceived not by self-identification with him but in the personal distance of adoration and spiritual childhood. The experience of the senses, however, appears to be hopelessly worldly, and mystical experience, on the contrary, hopelessly unworldly and non-sensory. It may be that the aesthetic experience (which, for instance, can produce a poetic work) gives the impression that it achieves an encounter and, indeed, an identity of both extremes within itself; but this can happen only by provisionally excluding and suspending in some way the centre which really exists in man, by anticipating in a dreamlike pre-existence what man’s religious potential to be whole in reality intends, longs, and hopes for. To accept this aesthetic experience as *the* model for Christian experience would mean reducing Christianity to the level of an aesthetic-mythical religion. Our only alternative, therefore, is to begin with the Christian reality itself, and to ask whether something like a ‘spiritual sensibility’, which would unite the apparently contradictory extremes, is possible and of what it consists. We can begin with the history of Christian spiritual theology, and ask of it whether it knows of such a thing as ‘spiritual sensibility’ and, if so, how we are to understand it.

The ‘spiritual senses’ were dealt with in an original fashion in three *loci classici* of this history, and from these privileged moments impulses went out that exerted great influence through the ages. Since these classical passages have been abundantly described, here a mere sketch will suffice. We will investigate only the manner in which the question was posed and the direction in which a solution was sought. Does this history offer us a way into the question which concerns us, or does it not?

1. It was *Origen* who, so to speak, ‘invented’ the doctrine of the ‘five spiritual senses’ and developed it in his own way on the basis of his Platonic-Biblical system. In this he had occasional followers in the Patristic period, but none of them ever again attained to his speculative power. A few trickles flowed into the Middle Ages, which, with its habit of systematising all scattered theological statements, admitted these also and somehow or other canalised them, until with Bonaventure this straitened water-course suddenly swells up again to become a mighty river. His synthesis, too, has its followers who are more copyists than anything else. The stream once again silts up. Only with the *Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola do we reach a third independent and fruitful treatment of the doctrine, which has continuing influence despite many unfavourable circumstances, not least the disputes among his interpreters.

Taking as his basis a few Scriptural texts (notably Prov 2.5 in the Septuagint version: αἴσθησιν θεῖαν εὑρήσεις, Heb 5.14: αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα, and some texts from the Song of Songs), Origen[160] constructed the doctrine that there exists ‘a general sense for the divine’ (θεῖα τις γενιϰῆ αἴσθησις) which is subdivided into several kinds (εἴδη): ‘a sense of sight to contemplate supernatural things such as the Cherubim and Seraphim; a sense of hearing which perceives voices that do not resound in the exterior air; a sense of taste that can savour the “bread that came down from heaven for the life of the world”; a sense of smell that perceives what Paul thus describes: “We are a fragrance of Christ for God”; and a sense of touch, whereby John says that he has “touched the Word of Life with his hands” ’ (*C. Cels*. I, 48; Koetschau 1.98).

There are, therefore, ‘two kinds of senses in us: the one kind is mortal, corruptible, human; the other kind is immortal, spiritual (*intellectuale*),. . . divine’. In this passage what Scripture calls the ‘heart’ is also reduced to the ‘spiritual': to see God with a pure heart means ‘to see him and know him in the spirit (*mente*)’ (Peri Archon I, i, 9; Koetschau 5, pp. 26f.). Such intellectualistic language should not mislead us into interpreting Origen in a rationalistic sense, nor indeed to interpret him mystically as did Evagrius. In the background, rather, there looms here that doctrine of the fall through sin according to which the soul, along with its sensibility, is the very spirit which fell from its heavenly union with God. Accordingly, the five individual sensory senses are but the fall and scattering into the material of an original and richly abundant capacity to perceive God and divine things. According to Origen, these divine things can never be reduced to a mystical unity without modes, but, rather, they possess a fulness and a glory that far transcend the lower fulness and glory, of which material multiplicity is only a distant reflection and likeness (*C. Cels*. 4. 74; Koetschau 1.344). If both sensibilities are thus, ontically as well as noetically, but different states (καταστάσεις) of the one and only sensibility, it nevertheless follows that, in a Platonic sense, they cannot both be actual at the same time: Adam's spiritual eye for God is closed by his fall through sin, while at that moment his sensory eye opens (*C. Cels*. 7. 39; Koetschau 2. 190).[161] And yet again we ought not to press this either / or, since we cannot simply systematize the Christian and Biblical Origen to make him conform with the Platonic Origen. The world and matter are not evil; only the free will can be evil. For this reason, the material state as a whole remains a good likeness and an indicator for the upward-striving spirit; and in Christ, in whose flesh there is nothing evil, the lower sensibility unqualifiedly points the way to the heavenly sensibility. To be sure, however, only he can see, hear, touch, taste and smell Christ whose spiritual senses, for their part, are alive: only he, that is, who is able to perceive Christ as the true Light, as the Word of the Father, as the Bread of Life, as the fragrant spikenard of the Bridegroom who hastens to come (*Cant. Comm*. 2; Baerens 8. 167f.; *ibid*. 1. Baerens 8, 103f.).

How should we interpret Origen? It will not do to go in the intellectual direction, because the distinguishing qualities of the 'spiritual senses' are manifestly far more than mere paraphrases for the act of 'spiritual' cognition. Nor can we go in the mystical direction, as Karl Rahner wants (supporting himself here with the inauthentic texts of the *Commentary on the Psalms*), because then the opposition between the specifically mystical mode of experience and that of an ordinary living faith would have to be explicated in a wholly different way. Even though the form of expression in which Origen clothes his concepts occasionally may be purely Platonic and dualistic, it nonetheless represents another sort of dualism, the Christian and Biblical dualism of Saint Paul when he distinguishes between the fleshly and the pneumatic man. And it is decisive that the object of the 'spiritual senses' is not the *Deus nudus*, but the whole of the 'upper world' which, in Christ, has descended to earth and manifests itself in the fulness of the cosmos of Sacred Scripture: this is where Origen's spiritual senses are openly exercised and it is from here, therefore, that they should be interpreted even if this again brings us back to our first question what they actually are.

In spite of an occasional mention of the spiritual organs and senses (*Cent*. 2. 80 and especially *Cent*. 3. 35), in Evagrius everything is absorbed into an inescapable mystical reduction to unity. And Diadochus, too, expressly allows for only *one* spiritual sense—the mystical sense for God.[162] But Origen's five senses again emerge in the Pseudo-Macarius,[163] who indeed takes up and gives his own account of many other Origenistic themes. Origen had repeatedly said that every Christian virtue contains two elements within itself: one more active and acquired, the other more passive and bestowed by grace from above, and, without at all interpreting this encounter in a Pelagian sense, for Origen nonetheless the 'infused' gift was God's answer to man's striving. Macarius takes up this idea and applies it to the senses: 'If the five spiritual senses (πέντε λογιϰαὶ αἰσθήεις) receive grace from above and the sanctification of the Spirit, then they truly are wise virgins. . . . But if they rely exclusively on their own nature, then they show themselves to be foolish and are proven to be children of the world' (*Hom*. 4. 7; PG 34. 477B). This text clearly shows that a dualistic interpretation is impossible: for it is the same senses which first are earthly and then become heavenly through the infusion of grace. We have here to do with a 'change and exchange of states (ϰατάστασις)' by virtue of imitating Christ, who 'came to change, transform, and renew our nature, to create anew and to mingle with his divine Spirit our soul, which had been laid waste by the passions following the first sin. He came to create a new *nous*, a new *psyche*, new eyes, new ears, a new spiritual tongue, in short, new men from those who believed in him' (*Hom*. 44.1; PG 34. 780A). It is in Christ's grace, therefore, in his dying and rising, that the 'old man' is created anew and that the old fleshly senses become spiritual.

2. The second, medieval phase[164] is characterised as a whole by the fact that—as scholastic psychology becomes more firmly based on philosophy—the spiritual senses are more and more unequivocally interpreted as the expression of the mystical and intuitive experience of God. Karl Rahner's second study shows clearly that this is the direction our river takes. In William of St. Thierry, the seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling of the soul that loves God is the expression for the experience of the presence of the hidden Beloved, who reveals himself in his *sapor* to *sapientia*. William will not say any more than we

presented in the chapter on Christian experience. The (Augustinian) *mens*, as apex of the soul (*principale mentis*, *caput animae*), is that innermost central capacity whereby we can touch and feel God and, above all, whereby we can, in dark immediacy, savour him in his exquisiteness. As later the great Teresa, so too William recognises a direct hearing of spiritual words from the Logos even at the highest stages of mysticism.[165] But, for William, all statements concerning the senses remain anchored to the Dionysian mystical psychology of 'knowing through unknowing', as it was interpreted by the circle around Bernard: 'In what concerns God, the sensorium of the spirit's foundation is love. It is through love that the spirit feels whatever of God it feels through the Spirit of life. But this Spirit is the Holy Spirit, and it is through him that every lover loves whatever is truly worthy of love' (*Spec. fid*. 390D-1A).[166]

For William of Auxerre there is essentially only one spiritual sense which in heaven refreshes itself with God (*sapere*), but this one sense can do this in various ways and, thus, different spiritual senses may be distinguished.[167] In Alexander of Hales the doctrine is incorporated into the edifice of scholastic psychology: the *sensus spiritualis* now totally becomes an *actus virtutis intellectivae* whose perceptive activity is described as a 'spiritual sense' by analogy with sensory perception and which, according to the manner that it grasps its object, may also be divided into five senses.[168] In Albert this interior sensory perception is understood from the mystical viewpoint,[169] and so it remains in *Bonaventure*. For him, the 'spiritual senses' are the acts of the human intellect and will as they grasp God in contemplation—acts which have been restored (*refecti*), facilitated (*expediti*) and brought to perfection (*perfecti*) by the triple infused *habitus* of the 'virtues', the 'gifts of the Holy Spirit' and the 'beatitudes'.[170] We should note here that the 'spiritual senses' do not constitute a second higher faculty alongside the corporeal senses. The more subtle divisions into intellect and will, theological virtues and infused gifts and beatitudes, are here of less interest than the assertion that the object of these spiritual acts of sensory experience is the Word of God in his economy, as *Verbum increatum* (hearing and seeing), *inspiratum* (smelling) and *incarnatum* (tasting and touching). Faithful to the Dionysian and Bernardian tradition, Bonaventure describes the act as the *ekstasis* of love (of the 'will') beyond all intellective and conceptual experiences of God, an act in which God is made out by sense in the encounter and in the unification of a dark immediacy. (In Bonaventure, this *ekstasis* is contrasted to the *raptus*, which is a momentary and wholly exceptional participation in the open vision of God such as Paul experienced, by contrast with Moses' experience in the dark cloud.)

With very slight alterations, Bonaventure’s conception is handed down through Hugo Ripelin[171] and the *Centiloquium*,[172] and developed at length by Rudolph of Biberach.[173] The doctrine lives on in Bernardine of Siena, Peter of Ailly, Gerson and Herpff,[174] but without any real vitality, since the tendency of mysticism toward a unity without modes runs directly counter to a diversification of the highest act and state into different modes of perception; and perhaps it also lacks vitality because the thorough-going systematizations of High Scholasticism are not convincing in the long run on account of their artificiality. Besides, in Albert and Bonaventure the ‘spiritual senses’ disappear into the inaccessible heights of contemplative mysticism, thus losing their general theological interest.

3. At the beginning of modern times we encounter the *Exercises* of *Ignatius of Loyola*. As is well known, on the evening of each day of meditation, the *Exercises* call for the retreatant to ‘apply his senses’ to the mystery of faith under consideration (Nrs. 121, 133, 227).[175] In the context of the *Exercises* this sort of prayer accomplishes two things.

First of all, a meditation mentioned more or less in passing not with the senses but on the senses: ‘If someone wishes to imitate Christ our Lord in the use of his senses, let him commend himself to His divine Majesty and consider each individual sense. Likewise if he wishes to imitate our Lady in the use of his senses.’ At its conclusion this exercise passes over into prayer to God and to Mary that they may grant the grace of this assimilation. For Ignatius this practice belongs not so much to prayer itself, but expressly to the preparatory exercises which are intended to elaborate the ‘form, manner, and training’ for prayer (238). The practice trains us ‘to use our senses in the image of the senses of the new Adam and the new Eve. . . . [It is] our surrender to the order of the incarnation’, ‘in relation to the manner in which, in the 5th Exercise of the ist Week, our senses are to go through the fire of hell (65-71), and in the 5th Exercise of the 1st Day of the 2nd Week, they are to be born anew into the “infinite sweetness and kindness of the Godhead”.’[176]

In the second place, the application of the senses effects the ‘composition of place’ (47) which precedes every meditation, that is, the sensory and imaginative representation of the mystery to be considered. This could be a concrete scene from the life of Jesus, and in this case one will actually sketch for oneself the spatial context of the event and make present the episode itself after it has been read: one will see the persons involved, hear them speak, and follow their actions. Or it could be a more abstract and universal truth, as for instance the state (κατάστασις) of being a sinner. In this instance, too, the ‘vision of the imagination’ is no less engaged: it will, for example, make present to itself ‘how my soul is imprisoned in this mortal body and how the whole person is as banished among irrational beasts in this earthly valley’ (47). Alongside this imaginative stance with regard to the object of salvation there is also an adaptation of the affections to the situation which we mentioned earlier and which consists in attuning oneself, with all one’s mental powers, including the sensory, to the particular affective atmosphere surrounding the object under consideration. This conscious and active self-attunement (74, 78ff., 130) has its passive counterpart in the second preparation for meditation—the prayer for the particular grace needed for *this* meditation, which is where the process of attunement by God belongs: ‘If the meditation deals with the resurrection, then you must pray for joy with the joyful Christ. If it deals with suffering, then you must pray for suffering, tears, and tortures with the tormented Christ’ (48). Here we see that the normal meditation is initially an external, imaginative act that involves looking, being present, and even entering into the drama. (The instructions for considering the Christmas mystery read: ‘I make myself into a worthless servant, just as if I were present there, a servant who marvels at [the holy Persons], contemplates them and serves them in their needs with the greatest possible devotion and reverence’, 114). But from the outset such a meditation is also, unconditionally, an interior realisation of the objective mystery of salvation which transforms even the sensory disposition, and this mystery possesses its exemplary subjective disposition in the holy Persons, especially in the Son of God and his Mother.

These two prescriptions that precede the ‘application of the senses’ in the *Exercises* effectively determine the theological meaning of this application. But let us first review the main texts. As has already been said, the ‘application of the senses’ occurs as the final exercise of the day, which began with more discursive meditations and then went on to repetitive meditations which, from all the material, selected and dwelled on those points ‘in which I felt greater consolation or desolation, or a greater sentiment in the (Holy) Spirit’ (62). This experiential ‘feeling’ (*sentir*) of the mystery of faith is what carries greatest weight for Ignatius, ‘for it is not much knowledge which fills the soul and satisfies it, but feeling and tasting things from within’ (2).[177] Everything is directed towards this realisation, and, since what must be realised is, objectively, God’s worldly and corporeal form, it cannot be realised—precisely in its full perfection—other than in a total human way, in the encounter of the corporeal sinner who has been granted grace with the God who has corporeally become man. In the 1st Week, the presence of sin (hell), which has become real in the whole man, must first be realised with all five senses: ‘With the eyes of the imagination I see the glowing fire. With my ears I hear the weeping and the howling and the shrieking. With the olfactory sense I smell smoke, sulphur, filth, and rotting things. With the sense of taste I taste bitter things, such as tears, sadness, and the worm of conscience. With the sense of touch I feel how the glowing fire envelops souls’ (66-70). And, correspondingly, at the end of the 1 st day of the 2nd Week, during which the Incarnation had been considered, we read the following: ‘With the eyes of the imagination we should here look at the persons. With our hearing we should perceive how they are speaking or could speak. With the senses of smell and taste we should smell and taste the infinite sweetness and loveliness of the Godhead. With our sense of touch we should embrace and kiss the place where these persons have set their foot and where they come to rest’ (122-12 5). At first sight we can see that in this ‘application of the senses’ a fact is being set forth for our acceptance which had not been theoretically founded: that this sensibility must become all-embracing, and extend from the concreteness of the simple happenings in the Gospel to a point where the Godhead itself becomes concrete by being experienced. This occurs negatively in the experience of the divine absence, which is a consuming sadness and a worm which devours from within, and positively in the divine presence, which is a sweetness and a fragrance.

The interpreters were confronted with this fact, and it is no wonder that they went in two opposite directions. The first school, starting with contemporaries and acquaintances of the Saint, who knew him as the great mystic, interpreted the ‘application of the senses’ according to Bonaventure, that is to say, mystically. Juan de Polanco interprets it as follows: beginners may practise the ‘application of the senses’ with the ordinary ‘senses of the imagination’, ‘but it can also be understood by the spiritual senses of the higher reason’, and it is in this way that the experienced will practise it. For clarification Polanco refers to Bonaventure’s *Itinerarium* and recapitulates its doctrine in detail.[178] Jeronimo Nadal does something similar.[179] In his well-known *Commentary on the Exercises*, Achille Gagliardi takes the application of the senses to be a higher form of prayer than discursive meditation, because it proceeds *per quemdam quasi intuitum illius [materiae] tanquam praesentis*.[180] Gagliardi stresses the act of re-presentation or ‘making present’: *est modus simillimus ipsimet reali praesentiae per sensus externos*. At the same time, however, he emphasizes the fact that this kind of re-presentation presupposes serious thoughtful meditation and, above all, love, which presses on to intimate knowledge and as such has the power to *rem quasi praesentem facere*.[181]

The official *Directorium* which General Aquaviva edited in 1599 takes the opposite direction. The ‘application of the senses’, it is here claimed, is an exercise to relieve tension in the evening; it is easy, especially for those endowed with imagination. But at the same time it served as a ‘slow initiation’ to higher forms of prayer. And the opposite is also true: ‘When the soul has already been sated with the knowledge of higher things and is aglow with piety, it likes to descend to things that may be known by the senses so as there to find its nourishment,. . . for even the tiniest thing excites it to love and consolation.’[182] In more recent times General Roothan has expressed similar views.[183] A certain historical justification cannot be denied to this interpretation, since it is certain that Ignatius did not draw on Bonaventure, but rather, as he himself relates, he became immersed in the *Life of Christ* of the German Carthusian, Ludolph of Saxony, in which he found the following:

> If you wish to derive fruit from these meditations, set aside all your worries and cares. With the affections of the heart make present to yourself, in a loving and delectable way, everything the Lord Jesus said and did, just as present as if you were hearing it with your ears and seeing it with your eyes. Then all of it becomes sweet because you are thinking of it and, what is more, tasting it with longing. And even when it is related in the past tense, you should consider it all as if it were occurring today. . . . Go into the Holy Land, kiss with a burning spirit the soil upon which the good Jesus stood. Make present to yourself how he spoke and went about with his disciples and with sinners, how he speaks and preaches, how he walks and rests, sleeps and watches, eats and performs miracles. Inscribe into your very heart his attitudes and his actions.[184]

But this text in Ludolph, in turn, is a quotation from the *Meditationes Vitae Christi* which circulated under Bonaventure’s name and which, in fact, reflect a naïve and deeply affective kind of medieval contemplation which became more and more widespread from the time of Bernard and Francis and which was given full reign in Bonaventure’s minor spiritual writings. Even though here the ‘spiritual senses’ are not explicitly mentioned, nevertheless something spiritual is attained with the corporeal senses and the imagination, something which clearly aims at making the mystery present, even if at a more modest level than that of actual mystical experience. In this way, the real problem of the spiritual senses is posed to Ignatius and, beyond him, to Bonaventure and the Middle Ages. In the interpretations of Ignatius the problem emerges as an either / or between the corporeal senses and the mystical sensibility, but both of these seem to be included by Ignatius and they certainly were to be found as living realities in the author of the *Exercises* himself, without their mutually suppressing or jeopardising one another. Something similar was true of Bonaventure and, as was shown, also of Origen. A mysticism of radical union is necessarily alien to the ‘spiritual senses’, but it is likewise alien to the Christian way as such. Spiritual senses, in the sense of Christian mysticism, presuppose devout bodily senses which are capable of undergoing Christian transformation by coming to resemble the sensibility of Christ and of Mary.

In a Christian sense, there is something like a centre which must be accepted as a fact even before it is fully understood speculatively. The reality of this centre may be evoked above all from the cadences of the Church’s greatest theologians. Here we offer a text from Augustine and another from Thomas which will stand as typical of many others. In the *Confessions* we read:

> But what do I love, O God, when I love Thee? Not the beauty of a body nor the rhythm of moving time. Not the splendour of the light, which is so dear to the eyes. Not the sweet melodies in the world of sounds of all kinds. Not the fragrance of flowers, balms and spices. Not manna and not honey; not the bodily members which are so treasured by carnal embrace. None of this do I love when I love my God. And yet I do love a light and a sound and a fragrance and a delicacy and an embrace, when I love my God, who is light and sound and fragrance and delicacy and embrace to my interior man. There my soul receives a radiance that no space can grasp; there something resounds which no time can take away; there something gives a fragrance which no wind can dissipate; there something is savoured which no satiety can make bitter; there something is embraced which can occasion no ennui. This is what I love when I love my God (X. 6).

While Augustine here speaks with God alone and does not expressly mention the figure of Christ, Thomas Aquinas gives the following commentary on the Christ-hymn of the Epistle to the Philippians:

> ‘Feel this (*hoc sentite*) in yourselves which is in Christ Jesus.’ He also says: Humble yourselves. He, therefore, says ‘feel’, meaning that we should grasp experientially (*experimento*) what occurred in Christ Jesus. Note, however that we are to feel this in five different ways, namely, by way of the five senses. First of all, we see his love so that, thus being illumined, we may put on his own form. ‘They will see the King with their eyes in his finery’ (Is 33. 17). ‘And we all, with unveiled face, behold the glory of the Lord’ (2 Cor 3. 18). Secondly, we hear his wisdom in order to be made blissful by it: ‘Blessed are your vassals! And blessed these your servants who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!’ (1 Kg 10.8). ‘He obeyed me when he heard me with his ears’ (Ps 17.45). Thirdly, we perceive the fragrance of the graces of his liberal goodness that we may hasten after him: ‘Draw me after you. We will run after the fragrance of your anointing oils’ (Cant 1.3). Fourthly, we taste the sweetness of his graciousness, that we may forevermore rejoice in God. ‘Taste and see the sweetness of the Lord!’ (Ps 33.9). Fifthly, we touch his power in order to be healed by it. ‘If I only touch the hem of his garment, I shall be healed’ (Mt. 9.11) (*In Phil.* 2.12).[185]

In order to justify these assertions, we must above all take the theological anthropology of the Bible seriously and persevere in it in spite of all the objections advanced by systematic philosophy. The Bible locates man’s ‘essence’ not primarily in what distinguishes him from other existing beings, but in his concrete and indivisible wholeness. It is an abstracting thought-process which first projects onto Being the conceptual laws of the distinction of species and specific difference. When this happens, the Platonic image of man automatically emerges and comes to dominate the whole of anthropology as a silent *a priori*, and this holds even for the Aristotelian and scholastic correctives to Platonism. We will now allow four influential thinkers of our time—a theologian, a religious phenomenologist, a philosopher, and a poet—to delineate for us the main concerns of a Christian anthropology.

b. The Spirit and the Senses

In his *Church Dogmatics* III/2 (1948), *Karl Barth* offers a thorough treatment of Biblical anthropology. The Biblical version of man must necessarily appear defective to the philosopher. It is apparently unsystematic but 'everywhere in their statements we have a much more fundamental and truly systematic treatment than appears at first sight' (433);[186] moreover, man is not examined 'in himself' (*an sich*), but, from the outset, in his 'vital act' and engagedness. Now, for Barth, these things are not only the strength, but the very warrant for the truth of Biblical anthropology. The Bible has no 'abstract interest in the rational nature of man, in his sensible and (in the narrower sense) rational perceptive capacity'. To pay an 'abstract attention' 'necessarily means inattention when measured by our task. . . . What interests the Bible, and therefore ourselves, in dealing with the matter' is the question concerning 'the man who meets his God and stands before his God, the man who finds God and to whom God is present' (402). Now this Biblical man is the one that has been found by God and has been chosen to be a partner of his Covenant, and he cannot understand himself except from this perspective. This relationship attains its final perfection in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, who is not only 'God with us' and 'Man for God' (55-71), but also 'Man for other Men' (203-222). In this archetypal 'being-for', Christ also reveals the 'essence' and the 'humanity' of man; that is, Christ reveals the natural constitution given to man by God at the creation which makes him 'capable of entering into covenant with God' (224) and which is 'already presupposed' for the partnership with God (223). In this 'correspondence and similarity' between the creation and the Covenant only one thing can be meant: man's situation of being-with-others, the 'I and Thou' which assumes a more specialised and corporeal form as 'man and woman', which in Gen 1.27 we see added immediately to the 'image and likeness' as an explicitation of it. In this way a preliminary decision has been made which increasingly establishes a critical distance between a Biblical anthropology and all modern humanisms since the Renaissance, including the humanism of Goethe and the great Idealists and the humanism of Nietzsche. Whenever an ‘essence’ of man is sought which is anterior to his being-with and even in opposition to it, then by this very fact one is already in the process of interchanging man and his Creator, and in this or some other manner, whether spiritualistically or materialistically, one is already raising the soul (the spirit) to being the creator of its own corporeal world (229-242). With Barth, then, we must profoundly deplore the fact that the Patristic and scholastic anthropology strayed away from this first of all Biblical premises concerning human reality and let itself be inspired by an abstract Greek concept of essence. ‘The humanity of each and every man consists in the determination of man’s being as a being with others, or rather with the other man’ (243).

‘I am as Thou art’: this does not mean, however, that the Thou is the cause or even the substance of the I, but, rather, that the I attains to itself only in its encounter with the Thou. The Being of man is ‘a being in which one man looks the other in the eye’ (250). We see the Thou with real bodily eyes, and indeed not as a thing but in all its exceptionalness and particularity as person in the midst of the cosmos. . . . The fundamental human sense of the eye and its act of seeing is precisely the fact that this happens thus, that this ‘other’ becomes visible to oneself as person and is seen by one as person. All seeing is inhuman if it does not comprise this kind of seeing. ‘But this is only the one half. When one man looks the other in the eye, it takes place automatically that he lets the other look him in the eye:. . . that man *himself* should be visible to the other person’ (250). ‘Being in encounter is Being in the openness of the one to the other and for the other’: this is the specifically human ‘moment’ (*Augen-blick* = a glance of the eyes), the reciprocal ‘dis-covery’, the ‘root-formation of all humanity’ (252). The same thing applies to hearing: ‘Being in encounter consists in the fact that there is mutual speech and hearing’ (252), and it is therefore a ‘linguistic event’: reciprocal expression and appeal in affirmation and demand, in making oneself heard and in oneself hearing.[187] The same, again, may be said of the reciprocal being-for-one-another of mutual assistance, of helping and letting oneself be helped. All three determinations are, inseparably, an event of the soul and of the body, and man is human to the extent that this occurs. ‘Humanity is not an ideal nor its exercise a virtue’ but nothing other than the realistic accomplishment of being human itself, of the ‘primitive factuality of our situation’ (264). Barth then develops all this magnificently when, as the final determination of this human event, he adds the whole quality and disposition expressed by the word ‘gladly’—that spontaneity and joy, that liberality and spiritual freedom (such as the Greeks knew, 282) in which, as in the ‘lesser mystery’ of the creation, is foreshadowed the ‘great mystery’ of divine grace in the Covenant between God and man (265).

Such a condition of ‘fellow-humanity’ (*Mitmenschlichkeit*) is fully concretised corporeally in the difference and in the for-one-another of man and woman (285-319). With seriousness and humour Barth demonstrates (290) how this essential truth has not been sufficiently accounted for by either ancient humanism, or the monastic humanism of the Middle Ages, or the humanism of modern times, which is limited to relation between males, despite all its eroticism. (The best image for this are the secularised scriptoria and monk’s cells of Goethe and Nietzsche.) He also shows how neither Gen 2.18f. nor the Song of Songs are concerned primarily with sexual relations and the begetting of children, but rather with the spiritual-corporeal being-together and being-for-one-another of man and woman. This, in turn, is the mystery that foreshadows the union of Yahweh and Israel, which is so prominently portrayed as a marriage-covenant (and then also as Israel’s adultery) and which is finally fulfilled in the relationship between Christ and the Church (301). This entire relationship is inseparably spiritual and corporeal, both as between persons and as between God and man, and this is developed in all directions on the basis of 1 Cor 6.12-20, 2 Cor 11.2f., 1 Cor 11.1-16 and Eph 5.22-33. We need not here rehearse every nuance of Barth’s anthropology, especially not that aspect of it which does not tolerate any relation (from the lower to the higher) between the social construct (*Bild*) and the revealed archetype of the Covenant. This doctrine, peculiar to Barth, need not detain us here because for him the total human image is founded on God’s covenantal intention, to such an extent that, outside this archetype, the properly human cannot, in the last analysis, either understand itself[188] or be made theologically comprehensible.[189] The exclusion of the philosophical dimension from Barth’s theology takes its toll in two respects: he fails to include the social element in the nature common to all men (and this nature is, indeed, more than mere ‘reciprocity’); and he fails also to include the religious element in the ‘all-embracing’ reality of Being, with the result that both our neighbour and God can be conceived only under the sign of ‘the other’. But these deficiencies are of little consequence for the analysis of man’s spiritual-corporeal nature, which is what concerns us and which now follows.

Neither the I-Thou relationship, nor the relationship between man and woman, nor that between God and Israel, nor between Christ and the Church, can be understood in a purely spiritual sense. What is at stake is always man as a spiritual-corporeal reality in the concrete process of living. This is evident in Jesus himself, the archetypal ‘whole man’, who does not ‘exist as the union of two parts or two “substances”, he is the one whole man, embodied soul and besouled body’. It is as such that he is

> born and lives, suffers, and dies and is raised again. Between His death and His resurrection there is a transformation,. . . but the body does not remain behind nor does the soul depart. As the same whole man, soul and body, He rises as He died. . . . There is no logic here which is not as such physics, no cure of souls which is not as such bound up with cure of bodies. The man who is called by Him and who takes his part in His way and work as a recipient and fellow-worker does not only receive something to consider and to will and to feel; he enters into bodily contact and fellowship. The man who comes to hear of the Kingdom of God comes also to taste it. He comes to eat and drink bodily, so that it again becomes apparent that in this bodily eating and drinking he has to do with nothing less than the hidden—in our terminology, “inner” or “spiritual”—savouring and tasting of the heavenly bread and the powers of the world to come. To believe in Him is to be on the way to the same whole manhood which is His own mystery (327f.).

Thus it makes no difference whether it is said that he delivered ‘himself for our sins’, or that he laid down ‘his soul’ as a ransom for many, or ‘his body’. His soul (or his ‘spirit’) lives fully, with all its freedom, in his senses and emotions; it is convulsed, made indignant, angry, sad, afflicted unto death and the life of his body until the very end, and still more in the Resurrection, fully participates in all the mysteries of his soul. Moreover, the hierarchy between soul and body is preserved: what is interior and superior lives and is expressed in what is inferior and exterior (332). For its part, this tranquil order rests on Christ’s possession of the Holy Spirit and is an expression of his having come from God and of his reposing in the Father’s mission. The hypostatic union is in him the supereminent archetype of the analogous order between soul and body.

Biblical man, too, has his corporeal-psychic totality in the fact that he receives the ‘Spirit’ (of Sonship) from God not as a state but as an event:[190] already the fact of being created (when God breathes the spirit into him) determines man and orients him toward the grace of the Covenant. The (Biblical) spirit is the dialogical principle which is bestowed on man from the outset, coming from God and therefore leading back to God. As such a being, man is corporeal and psychic, soul of his body, ‘heaven’ of his ‘earth’ (351f.), ‘representation of the whole created reality’ (352). The body is an inspirited frame, a world which opens out to the world, an organising soul which, since it exists in encounter, is not a soul for itself outside the body but which nonetheless, as the *soul* of the body, is a subject with freedom that reflects on itself (353, 374f.). But, for Barth, the soul does not lose its sensibility even in its reflection on itself. In scholastic terms, the soul cannot attain to *reflexio completa* (or *abstractio*) without a *conversio* (*per phantasma*) *ad rem*, and here the *res* is the other—God and neighbour. ‘This act in which my soul is at once subject and object [is] also wholly a corporeal act,’ for

> I do not exist without also being this material body. . . . Without having some command and making some use of them, I cannot be aware of objects different from myself. And without being aware of objects different from myself, I cannot distinguish myself from others as the object identical with myself, and cannot therefore recognise myself as a subject. . . . It may well be true that this act of knowledge is not seeing, hearing, or smelling or any perception communicated by my physical senses, but an inner experience of myself. Yet it is just as true that this experience . . . is also external and a moment in the history of my material body (375).

Hence we have the following radically anti-Platonic formula: ‘If the body is not organic body but purely material body when it is without soul, so the soul is not soul, but only the possibility of soul when it is without body’ (378). And this is proven biblically: it is not the body alone that dies, but man himself, which naturally does not mean that the ‘possibility of a soul’ (that is of a ‘besouling’ principle) becomes as nothing, no more than the matter of a corpse is nothing.

The total, living person is a free spiritual subject which exists with others in a material cosmos as a percipient being. ‘Perception is an undivided act, in which awareness makes thinking possible and thinking awareness.’ These two aspects do not at all simply correspond to soul and body. It is ‘certainly not only my body, but also my soul which has awareness, and it is certainly not only my soul but also my body which thinks. . . . The situation is rather that man as soul of his *body* is empowered for awareness, and as *soul* of his body for thought’ (400). But man has both of these things only in so far as he is a *spirit*, that is in so far as he has been created and called by God to partnership with God, and this means that in the two-fold-yet-single manner described, man perceives ‘God first and foremost, but because God, therefore and therewith another in general’ (400).

> Man may sense and think many things but fundamentally a perceiving man is the God-perceiving man. . . . Man perceives and receives into self-consciousness particular things—the action and inaction of his fellow men, the relations and events of nature and history, the outward and inward sides of the created world around him. But these are important and necessary for man, only because God does not usually meet him immediately but mediately in His works, deeds, and ordinances, and because the history of God’s traffic with him takes place in the sphere of the created world and of the world of objects distinct from God. . . . First and last and all the time his perception has properly only one object, of which everything else gives positive or negative witness. . . . God is the object and content in virtue of which and in relation to which his nature is a rational nature (402).

Here at last we may see where all these long quotations have been leading; and here it also becomes evident how Karl Barth differs on this matter from the viewpoint of his son, Markus Barth, which we examined earlier. To the latter, the most important aspect of sensory experiences of God and the Bible was the exceptional distinction of eye-witness, whereby the Old Testament Prophets, but particularly the Apostles of Christ, closed ranks with the God of revelation to form a group representing archetypal Biblical authority through experience. For

Karl Barth, on the other hand, the most significant aspect is not at all the exceptional nature of eye-witness, but rather the commonly shared human element, which is not primarily archetypal but exemplary:

> It is thus that the representative men of the Bible perceive. . . . As they obviously have the special capacity to perceive God and His witnesses, they also have the general capacity. . . . If there is also in the biblical sphere a purely general perception. . . these are deficiency phenomena, . . . an awareness and thinking which is basically darkened, false, and corrupt. Of course, this exists. Percipient man in the Bible is concretely sinful man, the man who would like to escape perception of God. . . (403).

He has eyes so as not to see and ears so as not to hear. But if he once perceives as he ought in the act of his ‘external perception’, then he encounters God and stands and walks before him. If he thinks as he ought then he allows to come into him also the God who, through perception, had announced himself to be there for him. Both things—sensory perception and spiritual thinking—are constantly considered in their unity. The perception of the representative persons in the Bible classifies them neither as ‘pure empiricists’ nor as ‘pure thinkers’. ‘They live wholly with their eyes and ears and at the same time in the faith of their hearts. They are always wholly and at the same time engaged in awareness and thought. It is for this reason that they are so seldom of use and of so little value from the standpoint of a pure empiricism or pure philosophy.’ The split between the senses and the spirit rests on sin. It makes the relationship of human perception to all its objects and contents both improper and abnormal.

> Man cannot change into a being to whom it is natural to perceive in this divided way. Nor can he prevent intending and missing unity, and reaching out for it, in all his dividedness. Biblical man, the prophet, and the apostle, reveal to us something of what natural perception is, for their awareness and thinking obviously take place in a single act. . . . We have only to consider what is meant by the context when the biblical ‘See’ is uttered, or what the Old Testament understands by a ‘seer’, or how comprehensive is the biblical ‘Hear’, which certainly speaks of an act of awareness effected by the bodily ear. . . . Where, then, is that which is purely of the soul or purely of the body? . . . When biblical man perceives, when he (*properly and normally*)[191] perceives God in all that he perceives. . . he is the open place in which God is present in His witnesses and takes up His habitation. His awareness then attains his goal and is itself a thinking. His body stands wholly at the service of his soul. His thinking arises from his awareness, and is itself simply a completed seeing and hearing (405f.).

The same relationship is again illustrated with regard to sensual desiring and spiritual willing (406-416): here, too, we find a distinction within a single undivided act; here, too, a single criterion governs both desire and will in the relationship with the living God who reveals himself, as Augustine’s ethics clearly requires. Whenever man

> desires, he begins to notice that he is unable to satisfy himself. . . . But here it becomes evident that genuine and proper desiring can only be desiring of God. . . . In the created world, man with all his neediness is always also the lord and master who knows how to make use of created things. Towards them he is not capable of genuine desiring—or only when he has apprehended that even in his desiring of created things he can first and last desire only their Creator. But in relation to the Creator, there is no self-satisfaction. . . . It may be thus seen that just because he can desire and love God he can desire and love in general. . . . In practice, he can and will always desire and love God Himself only in such another, in His witnesses, as the God who is active, visible, audible, and tangible in His works. . . . That is why everything that occurs between Him and man occurs with such realism. That is why the Bible speaks so anthropomorphically of God's speech and conduct, His coming and going, His action and inaction, His heart and eyes, His arms and hands and feet (412f.).

By such sensory perceiving and desiring man is raised above himself and becomes free for God and through God. We can thus understand why, in the Bible, soul and breath, soul and blood, can be so intimately related, why the soul can 'yearn' and 'be sated', 'hunger' and 'be refreshed' (377), why the 'flesh pines for the living God' or 'longs for him like arid land without water'. In the same way, human bones can 'tremble' or 'exult', the Prophets' bowels 'quiver', Job's entrails 'seethe without rest' and, in Lamentations, they 'burn'. The same thing explains why, even in the New Testament, the word 'bowels' means the same thing as 'mercy'. So, too, the 'heart' is made to be the very centre of man, and this naturally means the bodily heart as well, not only as the 'seat or centre of the spiritual and the psychic forces', but as the quintessence and crossroads of man's total corporeal and spiritual realities. ' "With all one's heart" is necessarily identical with "with all one's soul" and, thus, also with "with all your strength".'

> *Romano Guardini* faces the same question in his small book *Die Sinne und die religiose Erkenntnis* (*The Senses and Religious Knowledge*, 1950). But he speaks as a theologian only indirectly; his immediate focus is that of the religious phenomenologist and the critic of modern culture. On the latter plane he observes that the capacity for spiritual knowledge has 'largely been lost' to man in the course of cultural history. Seeing has become a matter of observing and verifying to which is afterwards added the activity of an abstract intellect as it orders and elaborates what is perceived (62).[192] Rilke's 'activity without image' is especially characteristic of our times; the life formed in accordance with nature's great images, with the natural symbols which shape existence, is becoming more and more alien and insubstantial for man because of technology. 'We no longer exist in images. Concepts have taken the place of images that can be contemplated. Machines have taken the place of embodied images, and segments of time the place of living rhythms.' There is talk of progress; 'but whoever looks beneath the surface knows what nonsense that is. Truly, if he follows this road man can only become sick because his interior being can

. . . live only on images' (63ff.). 'This dislocation into abstract conceptuality and sensualistic corporeality must be overcome so that the living human reality can again emerge' (73). Karl Barth had expressly pointed to the primitives' image of the world, in which ‘nothing is represented as totally material and nothing as purely spiritual’ and which ‘maintains or anticipates the vision’ which ‘was unfortunately lost by the so-called “higher” religious worldviews with their various abstractions’.[193] Guardini repeats this allusion to ‘primitive peoples, for whom all empirical affirmations are integrated with religious affirmations. . . . Only later is the ominous reversal achieved whereby cultural acts such as knowing, acting, and creating detach themselves from this context and the religious act becomes an act in itself. . . . What formerly had been the first datum now becomes a conclusion’ (35).

Guardini explains by reference to the eye what perception really ought to be. The eye is justified by what is to be seen, and this is not a chaos of ‘secondary sense-qualities’, but rather ‘forms’ which express themselves so as to be perceived.

> But form is not only corporeal. It means laws of proportion, a functional context, a developmental form, an essential image, value-figure—and all of this both spiritually and materially. The purely material thing does not exist; the body is from the outset determined spiritually. And this spiritual element is not subsequently added to the sensory datum, for instance by the work of the intellect; it is grasped by the eye at once, even if indeterminately and imperfectly at first.

The eye *sees* the life of plants in their kind of coloration, in the manner of their movements as brought about by air and contact. The eye *sees* the vitality of the animal. In man, it *sees* (and does not ‘infer’) the soul in its gestures, expressions and actions; indeed, it sees the soul even before the body, and the body only in the soul. ‘Seeing is an encounter with reality, and the eye is simply man himself as he can be confronted by reality in its forms which are related to the light’ (18-22). The eye is not only an instrument that the living man can use; it is man’s life itself. Man lives in his seeing just as he lives in his hearing, his

> speaking, his doing; and, thus, all the problems of his life return as he engages in seeing. . . . No theory of sight can be constructed which does not take into account the existence of man. And this will not prejudice subjectively the noetic state of things; on the contrary it is only in this way that it really emerges, and everything else is artificial.

On the one hand, when he considers objects, the beholder enters the ‘field of forces belonging to an entity’ which acts in its own way and which demands or compels decision, opposition or surrender. On the other hand, in and of himself the beholder is someone who, in his seeing, wants either to ‘dominate’ and ‘conquer’ or to serve and let himself be determined by the truth. There is a manner of approaching the world which is wholly controlled by the idea of ‘energy saving’ and whereby, from the outset, things are all brought under the same category, to be beheld accordingly.

Thus, the eye moves ‘from corporeal form all the way to that height to which Augustine refers when he speaks of the “eye of the soul”, which sees above itself the “unchanging light” of the idea’. (And the same holds good of all the human senses, for instance the hand’s action of grasping, 52f.) ‘The bodily eye, moreover, constitutes the material, so to speak, out of which the Holy Spirit means to create that eye which is to behold God “face to face” ’ (53). ‘The roots of the eye lie in the heart—in the innermost . . . stance adopted toward other persons and existence as a whole. Finally, the eye sees from the heart. This is what Augustine meant when he said that love alone is capable of seeing’ (33).

Now we can understand how, by referring to Rom 1.18f., Guardini can demand of the eye and the senses that they see and perceive God. It is not God’s unmediated essence that he means, but God’s eternal power and glory, which are expressed in his works. ‘It would seem that both rationalism and a certain narrow religiosity are afraid of this reality: the former, because it seeks to confine the religious within the non-binding sphere of ‘mere faith’; and the latter, because it is fearful of drawing God into the world’ (28). And yet, just as we clearly see that a tool found by chance is not an object of nature but something produced by man, so, too, does the religious eye see in things that they derive from God. To be sure, this ‘vision’, like ‘all sensory perception, is continually accompanied or shot through by a process of thinking that compares, distinguishes, orders, and illumines’, a process that may be described as a drawing of conclusions (30). But the more God of himself wills to appear, the further he advances from creation, through the Old Testament, toward the New Covenant, the more directly does he want to be understood and perceived in his epiphany by man in a fully human manner (41-47). In the Old Testament there are epiphanies which are out of the ordinary, but also such as belong to everyday life: the psalms are full of them and cannot be otherwise understood even by those who pray them today. Thus, in the New Covenant something parallel and, indeed, something superior may from the outset be expected. ‘What becomes of epiphanies once the Lord has returned to the Father?’ asks Guardini, and he answers only with a few select allusions: the face of the saint (such as Stephen, who in death sees the heavens open: ‘They saw that his face was like the face of an angel’, Acts 6.15), the power of the ecclesial kerygma in the Holy Spirit, the liturgy concerning which Christ expects that in its signs—bread and wine, the water of baptism, and others—we should recognise his presence. There is ‘nothing fanatical or miraculous’ intended in all this, ‘but rather something wholly normal—“normal”, of course, in the order of grace, which is precisely that of the incarnation’ (55). ‘It is a free decision of the Lord of the liturgy that the “sign” should be not only an indication, but also a revelation’ (59). In all this we ought never to forget that what we are dealing with here is basically the whole charismatic dimension which constitutes ‘an essential part of Christian existence’, thus being ‘normal’ in a Christian sense, while our fall into rationalistic cerebralism and monotony can in a Christian sense by no means be considered normal (60f.).[194]

In a brilliant diptych composed of two constructive surveys (*Wort und Bild*, 1952, and *Die Sinne und das Wort*, 1956), *Gustav Siewerth* has illuminated from a philosophical standpoint the network of relationships that we are concerned with here. His main purpose is to show how words are rooted in images—and, hence, to show the sensory basis of words—and to save them from being watered down by abstractions and being irresponsibly squandered at the hands of modernity. For Siewerth, this can be shown only by an examination of the event of the philosophical act itself.

The arc of cognition goes from the senses to the memory to the imagination, to the synthetic intellect (*logos*) and to reason: each of these acts is the basis for the next and is, in turn, itself grounded in it. The senses (Modern German *Sinne*, from the Old German *sin* = ‘way’, ‘road’) are the sphere that is open to the world.

> Openness is the essence of the senses. . . . Therefore, what the senses perceive or see does not prompt them to a renewed exercise of their awareness, because in their openness they are always alert and expecting some manifestation. Forms and sounds do not therefore, awaken sight and hearing,. . . but rather emerge as colours and tones within the open landscape of the eye, where sight is always seeing, and in the open sphere of hearing, where the ear is always hearing.[195]

‘This is why Thomas says that the senses do not “learn”, but act rather “as someone who had learned from the outset”.’[196] Whatever has light and colour emerges in the darkness of objectless seeing; whatever is sonorous emerges in the silence of objectless hearing. But the eye does not see its own seeing, but only the things themselves. ‘Thus, the seeing is always at the same time the object seen, and the senses are what is perceived in the openness of their “paths” to the world.’ The German ‘blicken’ (to look) is derived from ‘blinken’ to blink. ‘The look is the illumining lightning of an appearance. . . . “*Anschauung*” (perception) is both the act of seeing and the objectivity of what is perceived. . . . “*Ansehen*” (looking at, respect) refers both to my seeing and to the respect due to an important thing or person.’[197] This combination of subjective and objective aspects of perception holds also for the senses. ‘A sensation is both my feeling and what is offered to me in feeling. . . . The probing touch stimulates in its interior the life of an object always “in touch” with itself.’ And the same holds for smell and taste. As the ‘most spiritual of the senses’ (Thomas), the eye is wholly present to things, outside of itself ecstatically, and, as such, it is the crown of the ‘tree of the senses’. Touch (and, close to it, taste and smell) is the ‘root of the senses’ (Thomas) because, through it, what is living feels itself even as it feels other things. Hearing, finally, is the ‘centre or heart of sensory energy’, because within its open space of silence there enters both the ‘clamour’ that overcomes and captivates the hearer and the ‘sonority’ of ‘ordered harmony’ that ‘stirs up the hearing heart within itself’ and ‘bewitches it with the play of invisible beings’.[198]

But if we can call an ‘image of the world’ whatever comes to us on the road of the senses, this is only because ‘in each image an existent manifests itself to us.’ Essential forms shape themselves from and in the receptive foundation of matter; they develop and, as a formed image, have their existence in matter. As such, they ‘emerge’, ‘re-present themselves’ and ‘appear’, and for an individual being this constitutes both its ‘revealing’ and—since it is delivered over to something alien—its ‘veiling’ and appearance.[199] To this dimension of depth in what appears there corresponds, in the perceiver (*Wahrnehmender*), the intimate depth of memory that sustains the senses and which, preserving (*verwahrend*) within itself the images it has admitted, allows them to perdure (*währen*) and have their life (*gewahren*) within itself by becoming aware (*gewahren*) of them ‘from the memory of their origin’.[200] The images can become impressed on the potential of the space that contains them (the ‘imagination’), within which a world begins to take shape in the interplay between the image-power of vision and that of the object seen, in the recognition that remembers, in distinguishing what is different and in uniting it, in selection and reunification. ‘Our senses are essentially the open heart of man; they are the paths on which the heart’s willing love (*mögende Liebe*) confronts things and beings and thus comes to power and riches, that is, to an actualised capacity (*Vermögen*). This ready willingness (*Mögen*) is forever waiting to conceive through the essential and perduring character of Being, that is, of God, man and nature.’[201]

Such a proposition affirms two new things. First, the heart (in the openness of the senses) is itself in its own way an enveloping womb (just as the *materia* had been for essential forms). Secondly, true conception takes place only when Being itself is received.

‘Vision (sensory knowledge) has in itself moved out to the open and, thus, into that which is other. Awakened to itself by the light, vision has strayed from its origins and become “lost” in the other and, hence, in the exteriority of spatial extension. . . . It is a characteristic of space to be at the same time interior and exterior.’[202] ‘Space is the operation of the form of nature as it extends into what is other, especially the openness of nature and of a life that sees.’[203] Therefore, ‘to take something into oneself’ does not mean ‘to “make it subjective”, but rather to concentrate one’s vision on the depth of Being manifesting itself in the image. It means, in other words, to empty oneself out more deeply to the stream of light of the real. It means to receive the “ground and foundation” which is in Being itself.’[204] Vision, therefore, does not come as something ‘alien and external’ to a nature thus illuminated. Vision is itself the foundation of light and of Being. But this foundation, which was poured out as it unfolded, cannot be reached by following its reflection backwards, but rather as ‘the native light of the spirit, born from life and expectant of life’. And when ‘reality finds its way to itself, it becomes life that sees.’[205]

The images, however, may be gathered up (*logos*) and understood as the figure (*Gebild*) of essential depth (as *typos* = something ‘stamped with shape’) only in the primal light of Being. If in the senses the heart opened up to the world, now in the open heart reason opens up to Being. ‘Reason perceives Being, or better: Reason is the power of Being that subsists by ruling and from whose ground all beings and things proceeded; reason fills up the empty receptive perception of the spirit and brings it along with things into the light of truth. . . . Just as the senses see, hear, and feel in the openness of the world and the things in it, so, too, reason sees, hears, and feels in the foundation of Being, which rules, weaves, and breathes life. But reason’s synthesising perception is not something alongside the senses.’[206] ‘The primal light of the knowledge of Being is this ontological movement of the foundation of Being’—in which Being effects itself in the other by making itself possible, produces its totality in what are only parts and, in its forming activity, always gives rise to something similar to itself—‘in which the essential image is always seen in its foundational unity and is illumined by it’.[207] That neither reason nor Being are God is shown by the fact that Being always effects itself in the other and that, therefore, reason can perceive Being only by ‘gazing on nothingness’, whose ‘non-Being reason forms within itself. Being itself proceeds from the One that is nowhere to be demonstrated and is always on its way to this One, and the invisible origin shines only in the night of all images, in the ‘glance that mirrors’ (*speculatio*).[208]

The word (as the reality to which Siewerth is pointing) exists in a threefold equilibrium. In the first place, he speaks of an equilibrium between essence (and, within essence, of Being) which expresses itself in images and life which expresses itself in utterances (scream, call, gesture, and so on). The word is laden with this double depth, and it is only in the swaying between impression and expression, between the penetration of things into the knower and the exteriorisation of the knower into things, that the word is what it can and must be: the ‘shaper of meaning’ (*Sinn-bildend*).[209] As such, the word exists in an equilibrium between the efforts to circumscribe and order firmly a unified whole, on the one hand, and the ‘remembered depth’ of Being, on the other. Within this equilibrium, the word is at the same time indication (*verweisend*) and interpretation (*bedeutend*).[210] At this point it is most important to remember that hearing had previously been understood as the very centre of the tree of the senses, with vision being in the heights and tactile feeling in the depths. This means that both the ‘beheld’ image and the ‘felt’ life enter into the word, and that both these dimensions participate in the character of the word, necessarily and intimately.[211] Consequently, the word should not be exclusively related to hearing, nor the image to sight or sensation and touch exclusively related to the root-senses, and this does away with a host of false problems in theology (particularly Protestant theology). Within this poised relief, that stresses both indication and interpretation, the word is both the thing itself (just as the scream is ‘ontologically the manifested image of life as it announces itself in immediacy’[212]), and the image and sign that have entered the space of freedom and stand at its disposal. Freedom, therefore, can abuse the word in the most corrupting way,[213] especially when the images are no longer seen by man in relation to their foundation, but have become an essenceless kaleidoscope and lost all expressive power for the ‘ravaged heart’ without sensory energy.[214] But the freedom of the word which we touched on above already and forever envelops the essential images themselves as they arise, and this constitutes the beautiful. What appears is beautiful to the extent that the essential ground ‘unifies all parts around a centre and dominates, disposes, and plays in the multiplicity of the elements.’ ‘The beautiful is a radiance from the depths of Being. It is always a disposing that unifies within a freedom that breathes. The figure of nature possesses such “weaving” freedom only in the openness of its own landscape, in its coexistence with other essential images, or in the emergence of Being’s sovereignty.’[215]

Poised between exterior and interior, oscillating between representation and apparition,[216] the word must, in the third place, bear within itself this openness and coexistence. The last equilibrium to which Siewerth points in conclusion is that between the human and the divine word. The oscillating character of the human word as event, this repleteness in his being which is concentrated in the very centre of man—a fulness which can both succeed and fail—show how it is that God could reveal himself in word and as word, and finally in his Son, who is God’s Word and assumes the image and the face of a human being. Here there is no longer any question of holding up earthly images into the night of the imageless, but of the veritable ‘collision’ (*sym-bolon*) of eternity and time: Christ’s Word, which he speaks and which he is, lives in ‘the force of archetypal light and illumination’. The fact that we do not see this ‘collision’ here below ‘is rooted in the veiling of faith’. But on the day when we see face to face, our vision will receive nothing other than what is already now occurring before our veiled eyes.[217]

We cannot here consider *Paul Claudel’s* immense work in its entirety; we will focus on only one portion of it, and even this only to the extent that it completes our investigation. The programmatic book *L’Art Poétique* (1903-1904)[218] will remain in the background as seminal groundwork; we will concentrate on the essay ‘La Sensation du Divin’ (1933)[219]—the (sensory) ‘perception of the divine’—which develops in a more defined and rigorous manner the themes suggested by the earlier work. *L’Art Poetique* proceeds from the basic experience of creatureliness: existence as the reality of not being God, as the oscillation of relationships, as coexistence through abandonment to the other, as knowledge of the First Cause through one’s limits. The later essay, however, proceeds from the fundamental experience of conversion (1886), as the compelling claim made on one’s whole being by an order from God. But it is important to realise that, like all great converts, Claudel is not in the least interested in the distinction between nature and grace. He thinks from the standpoint of what Karl Barth called ‘the real man’. For this reason, Claudel’s ontological foundation already contains in itself the whole drama of distance from God (ontological flight) and nearness to God (the impossibility of being without God); the experience of the grace of conversion only intensifies and explicates what had been previously portrayed as an experience of Being.

Claudel sees something very positive in Denys’ statement that we know of God that he is and what he is not.[220] For we, who know that he is, are what he is not. We are ‘called to replace, to represent in one role or other him who is absolutely’. If, then, the foundation of our being is to be what he is not, it follows that we can only do this together, as an integral world, each of us in community even with regard to those who are ‘born together’, because each one is what all others are not. ‘God’s light must shine in perfect darkness.’[221] Claudel’s first tract had shown how, for creatures, their original and essential community with one another because of their common not-being-God is an ontological completion and, hence, also an ontological knowledge (*connaissance* from *co-naissance*). It had shown too how on the basis of Being and of finite essential form, there develop at the same time the sensation of being oneself and the sensation of the limitation of being alien, both of those taking shape as life, sensibility, reason, and conscience. In the second tract the application to God is made: God sees us in himself and, therefore, as beings that are seen, God calls us to vision. God calls us into being with a particular 'name', and, 'in order to respond to him, the soul makes use precisely of the word that had been directed to it.'[222] How should the soul not, after all, be capable 'of hearing something of this essential name which the divine Lover incessantly both whispers to her and demands from her'? The soul does it unconsciously, but it can also, in the end, do it consciously. 'And, for this, it does not have to exercise this or that sensory or spiritual organ; responding to the divine advances, it must itself dispose its being in a particular attitude.'[223] This attitude is the relinquishing of flight, the gladly acknowledged peace of the blissful humility of not being God, the light that invades the soul precisely from out of this darkness, the nourishment it receives from infinite Being, whose scent and tracks creatures can sense like a herd in the fog.

But there is more. In becoming man, has not God himself come over to the side of non-being, 'putting it on', so to speak, not exteriorly, but from within?

> In so doing, does he not bring all his rights along with him, and the fulness of his inheritance as a Son of equal rank with his Father? Will not the reality draw the title after itself, and will not the usage imply the right? Will not the inspiration require the respiration? Will the Word cease to be with God because it is with us? 'Whatever I see in my Father', says John (8.38), '*loquor*: that I speak.' Well, then, do it! Actualise in time what I bear witness to in the bottom of your being with words that cannot perish!. . . Will not the Heart of Jesus, poised between time and the Primal Ground, make itself for us the interpreter of eternity and the instrument of our resurrection, ever anew every moment?[224]

And, with reference to the Father, Claudel continues: 'Jacob, the supplanter', kneeling in his disguise before his blind father,

> is the divine thief who is secretly acting for us. *De facto* he is the second-born, but *de jure* he is the first. And when the Father addresses him: 'My Son!' he assumes responsibility for answering in us: '*Adsum!'* In order to deceive this Father, who has forgotten how to see and is now only capable of touching, he covered his hands with the hide of a strangled kid-goat. 'The hands, the hands', says the Patriarch twice, 'are Esau's, but the voice, the voice is Jacob's.' In this voice he perceives something like an echo of Abel's. This voice, which is the very breath of the Word. . . . The whole Bible is full of blind patriarchs, and there is no doubt that it was the news of his father's blindness that encouraged the prodigal son to turn his steps towards home.

This is the darkness of which Denys speaks, for 'it is darkness that abolishes boundaries.’ ‘In order to know Being, we have to bring our own being into a relationship with him which precedes the dawn—*Ante luciferum*.’[225]

The Eucharist, in particular, is the adaptation of our being to God by the descent of the Word into our senses, indeed, into our substance, which is something even below the senses. Not only does Spirit speak to spirit, but Flesh speaks to flesh. ‘Our flesh has ceased being an obstacle; it has become a means and a mediation. It has ceased being a veil to become a perception.’ It must, like it or not, learn to taste, to taste how God tastes—God himself, our means of sustenance, who has now become ‘accessible to our bodily organs’. Through the ‘sense of Christ’ (1 Cor 2.16) there is implanted in us the ‘sense for God’.[226]

After this introduction begins the examination of the sensory perception of God. Once again, the two premises are posited, one philosophical and one theological:

1. The body is a work of the soul, its expression and its extension in matter. Through the body the soul experiences the world and has a shaping effect upon the world.

> The senses are the product and the external form of our interior faculties and of that need which shapes the depths of our being in conformity to something outside us in order that we might perceive it and receive its impress. The correct way of coming to know the soul, therefore, is to consider the body and, from the external organs of perception, to draw conclusions as to the internally operating forces which use the senses and direct them after they have created them for themselves.[227]

2. The theological application follows in the next sentence.

> The incarnate Word willed to place himself in the hands of a greedy mob which, so to speak, harried him and held him in its power and reconnoitred him with every means at its disposal, according to the expression of Saint John: “What was from the beginning, what we heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have examined, what our hands have touched of the Word of Life.” Likewise, he willed in his compassion to do the very same for our interior senses, to make himself available to their grasp and hold himself in readiness for them. And he willed to become flesh not only for a short time and for a few men, but for all epochs and all men. Not Thomas alone, but an innumerable host of the deaf and the blind after him exclaims: ‘As for me, say what you will! Unless I touch him I will not believe!’ He did not come to let himself be grasped (*comprendre*) but to let himself be probed (*constater*). . . . He turns to our senses, that is, to the different forms of our interior sensibility (*sens intime*), to our sense for sense itself.[228]

Philosophically what was said was that it is the spirit-soul which hears, sees, and tastes; but in its nothingness and relativity it creates for itself the material organs necessary for perception. Nevertheless, the God who became man begins with the external senses and moves back to the interior senses, awakening in the world that deep sensorium for himself, the non-worldly one, which had been dulled by sin. Claudel’s approach presupposes that, through the correct use of the external senses, we can encounter God in everything in the world. It presupposes this even as it integrates it into the higher dimension that it seeks to demonstrate. Claudel, in fact, is not thinking (as is Bonaventure, in Rahner’s interpretation) of a naked mystical sense, so to speak. What the poet means is what his title says: he is thinking of a supernatural and, at the same time, sensory perceptive faculty that can sense the specific quality of the divine Essence because it is founded upon God’s Incarnation and upon the Eucharist. According to Claudel, man ought to resemble the book in the Apocalypse which is ‘written inside and out’,[229] or those symbolic animals, also found in John, ‘who are full of eyes inside and out’.[230]

Claudel often dealt with the subject of the sensory-spiritual olfactory sense.[231] Odour is for him the precious ‘essence’ distilled from a being’s self-consumption, the incense and therefore the anointing. Fragrance is what confers on Being a sign of its presence, its radiance, its intoxication in the ‘breaking of the ointment-jar’ of love. Sound is both a word spoken for faith from the darkness of an alien person and ‘the music of the divine harmony on the ground of our being’,[232] the musical score of life according to the divine calling, to be read from the sheet of our existence.[233]

Claudel deals in most detail with sight, to undo the impression that vision means only the objective consideration of a thing. In colours and varying shadows, light fights its way to the eye. The eye, for its part, is the finite spirit’s need to see transformed into an organ—the spark of light that God has infused into the spirit so that it will organise the darkness around itself into a living form.[234] Vision is inside and outside looking into one another in an encounter which is a struggle, a reciprocal influence. ‘We not only look at how the world exists; by seeing it we “exist it” ’[235] and are awakened by it to the form of light and of spirit, ‘so that man can realise in his very foundations all those possibilities of differentiation that are the expression of his person, and so that he may learn to let this his essential difference over all the things that surround him move over them as an instrument of knowledge (*co-naîssance*)’.[236]

God, however, is the quintessential seer; he creates by making beings emerge before his sight, ‘and what owes its being to vision is itself a corresponding vision and an eye turned to its cause. Every being, in fact, is in itself a particular translation of His creative glance, and the realisation in time of the form prescribed for its obedience, that is, for its operation, and of the symbol necessary for it to be significant. This form is the concrete expression and, at the same time, the means to knowledge which the particular being has of the general.’ Thus, everything that has form has its centre in the responding gaze which the creature directs at the creating gaze of God, and ‘our entire religious life is our *attention* to the particular *intention* God had when he called us into existence’[237] with that new name which he bestowed on us in his Son.

The poet describes the spiritual sense of touch first of all in the manner of the mystics, as the soul’s experience of being touched by God. But the creature as such (precisely when it would most like to escape from God’s hand) feels the pressure of this hand; and it is the creature which has received grace that, analogously to Mary, really feels how an ‘undesired lodger has moved in, one who does not hesitate to rearrange the chairs according to his taste, to drive nails into the walls and, if necessary, even to saw up the furniture when he is cold and needs a fire’. Thomas is allowed to touch this guest: ‘God opens himself up and guides the Apostle’s hand into the innermost junctures of his action and even to his throbbing heart.’[238]

The poet had spoken of taste at the very beginning, and he often comes back to it in his work at large in order to bring before the senses the particular and unique nature of the experience of another being—a beloved body, for instance. He reminds us of the taste (*sapor*) of the salt of wisdom, the taste of the Mother of the Lord, who is like the flame and the distillation of all creation, and who, in her soaring to God, communicates to us the taste of God himself.[239]

The agreement that emerges from four thinkers of such different temperament is striking. In his own way, each of them conceives man as a sensory-spiritual totality and understands man’s two distinctive functions from the standpoint of a common centre in which the living person stands in a relationship of contact and interchange with the real, living God. All four insist on justifying sensory knowledge preeminently by proceeding from the higher to the lower and from the interior to the exterior—regardless of the fact that, in themselves, the senses constitute the ‘exterior’ and the ‘inferior’ and, as such, are the empirical basis for all spiritual thinking and willing and the vehicle which sets these in motion. An important question is raised concerning the manner in which the specific qualities of the senses become differentiated from the soul’s unified capacity to sense, and concerning the reason why those qualities take on these forms, which are apparently wholly underived, and no others. But this question can be answered only by starting with what is given, by way of a careful process of ordering (as Siewerth especially has done) and by continually pointing upwards to the unity that had released these differences. ‘For a long time yet we shall be forbidden to go any further, to return to the wellsprings of sensory experience, to the “switchboard” or central exchange where is first elaborated that “wave” which is destined to nourish the different organs of the periphery.’[240] What is strange is how thoroughly a missing sense can be replaced by other more developed senses, and how, on the other hand, animals, with their senses, are capable of perceiving more, both in quantity and in focus.

From these analyses we would like to emphasize three points for the purposes of our inquiry:

1. It is with both body and soul that the living human being experiences the world and, consequently, also God. As Barth and Siewerth stress, man is not an isolated ‘soul’ which must work its way to reality by inferring it from phenomena. Man always finds himself within the real, and the most real reality is the Thou—his fellow-man and the God who created him and who is calling him. Both are present together; and even if, as a child of Adam, man is always fleeing from this encounter with God, fleeing into the abstractions of the spirit and into the spiritlessness of dulled senses, man cannot escape his hounding God who from the outset has tracked him down and brought him to a halt.

2. God brings man to a halt by confronting him through his Incarnation in the midst of the sphere of the senses. God confronts man as the neighbour that no one can avoid, and yet also as the Lord and Master before whom man must bow—precisely because man can see, touch, hear, and eat him. Flesh speaks to flesh; the Word chose this unmistakable language in order to overtake and encounter from below the sinner who had lost his spirit.

3. But this, the Word’s, flesh encounters man as God’s *exinanitio* or ‘self-emptying’. This Servant is comprehensible only as the Lord who came down for our sake. Everything about his sensibility and carnality breathes the Spirit, breathes too the Spirit’s humiliation. It is senses that perceive God’s humility sensually. It is senses that see what God had to do in order to become visible. It is senses that hear what God’s Word had to undertake in order to become audible to sensual ears. Thus, all the senses perceive the non-sensual sensually. This is why they are also ready to go through the death of the senses which essentially awaits everything sensual—ready to deny themselves (for they understand, yes, really understand, that God is The Supersensual!)—in order to let God be what he is in himself. But in the very midst of this self-renunciation they possess, in the phenomenon of the Incarnate God, the warrant of their own inconceivable resurrection.

The senses are the exteriorisation of the soul, and Christ is the exteriorisation of God. But if the soul exhibits its poverty in not being able to attain to itself except through what is other than itself, nevertheless it also demonstrates at the same time (and, in a hidden way, even earlier) that in the very outpouring of its indigence the soul is an image of the God who, according to Denys, has poured himself out outside himself through eros, even as Creator, the God who has proven this perfectly in the Incarnation. Hence, at a deeper level, the poverty of Being and of its sensibility reveals the sole treasure Being contains, which is nothing other than—love.

c. Mysticism within the Church

It is only at this point that we can properly treat of mysticism, the final experience of faith within the Church which is still in some way archetypal. This is not the place to discuss mysticism in detail; we intend only to define its position within systematic theology. A first approach to mystical experience was made when we discussed Pauline experience, which was seen as the transition from the eyewitness of the Twelve to so-called ‘private revelation’ which is continued within the sphere of the Church. But John too pointed us along the road since to those coming after him he entrusted his own particular eyewitness, without any emphatic distancing, inviting them to join him in his seeing, hearing, and touching. Notably in his apocalyptic experience John experienced and described himself as a New Testament prophet among the other prophets, his brothers. In Paul, too, the Church is seen as built on the foundation of the Apostles and of the New Testament prophets. The latter are naturally not simply conceived to be the continuation of Old Testament prophecy, but rather the qualified witnesses and signs of Christ’s new Holy Spirit, fully present and active throughout Christ’s Church.

It makes here little difference whether we assign or deny the name of ‘mysticism’ to charisms in the primitive Church; the name is not found in Scripture, and for this reason the real question is what content it is given when it is introduced into the vocabulary of the Church. It goes without saying that, *if* it is introduced, we have to assign to it a meaning derived from Christian theology and consonant with the Bible, a meaning which would necessarily have to set the term apart from its general usage in the history of religions. Certain analogies can, of course, exist between the general and the Christian meaning, but an absolute difference separates them in essential points. If such a presupposition is consciously maintained, then the use of the term is permissible within Christian theology.

First, a formal assertion to define our framework. The fact that revelation is concluded by the death of the last Apostle cannot mean that God’s revelatory activity—the eventful-ness of his self-disclosure—is a thing of the past and that all that is possible now is a retrospective reflection which elaborates the past revelation. One could almost affirm the contrary: that is, that the preparations are now over and that the main part of the drama can begin. The Spirit of the Father and the Son has been poured out over all the world, to the end that the Father's work of creation and the Son's work of reconciliation, both raised to the final trinitarian potency, can now show themselves to the world in their full form and impress themselves upon it with their full power. The Christ-form, to which the Old Testament and the Apostolic period belong, is historically unsurpassable; but, as we have seen many times, the Christ-form attains to its plastic fulness only through the dimension of the Holy Spirit—and this means also through the Church.

If this is true, then there is no reason why the Church's participation in the fulness of revelation, as it took shape in the Biblical period, should not also be a participation in the prophetic and charismatic experiences of Biblical man. It is the opposite which seems improbable, not to say contradictory. It is clear, however, that such participation can no longer be archetypal in the Biblical sense, since essentially and by definition it no longer moves within the second, but the third trinitarian dimension, namely, within the explicitation and interiorisation of the revelation of the Logos by the divine Spirit. But, within his infinite means of explicitation, this Spirit is free to make use also of the Biblical modes of archetypal experience in order to demonstrate in the Church of all centuries the continual reality of revelation—not as something past, but as something present.

From this very formal affirmation we can immediately draw our first concrete conclusion. The participation in the archetypal experiences of the Bible by those coming later must fundamentally be determined by two things. First, it is determined by the object participated in: this means that it will be a genuine ecclesial participation in the most varied forms of the experiential and sensory experience of God in the Bible, with all the breadth of prophetic and other Old Testament experiences, of earthly eyewitness in the New Testament, and also of the eyewitness of the Resurrection borne to the world, such as the Twelve, Paul, Stephen, and many others experienced it. But, second, it is determined by the participant himself: this means that it will be a participation in the Holy Spirit of the Church, which, understood in all her depth as the fulness of Christ, is an aspect of the perfected total archetype. For this reason, the participant's experience will be immanent to the Church and subject to her, and it must therefore be an experience in the *Holy Spirit*, in the sense of the New Testament whereby the Spirit is substantially the Spirit of the love of the Father and the Son.

This is what Paul means when, in addressing the Corinthians, he establishes all charisms in the New Testament on the foundation of differentiated membership in the Mystical Body (1 Cor 12) and, hence, on Christian love (1 Cor 13). Consequently, this is the reason why, in the Church, ‘merely’ functional charisms and prophecy neither can nor should any longer be adequately distinguished from ‘merely’ personal mysticism. In other words, a mysticism of the charisms should not be separated from a mysticism of the *Dona Spiritus Sancti*.[241] Indeed, we can now assert the following: the ‘mystically’ (charismatically) endowed member of the Church will be able and will have to make his special mission known and accepted in the Church precisely in the measure that he does not stand opposed to the Church (in the sense of the Biblical archetypes), but rather demonstrates that he is vitally integrated into the communion of love of all the members, this communion constituting the total ecclesial archetype. If this is so, then the fellow-members of this communion—and, among these, first of all the guiding members, that is, the clergy—have the duty of paying attention to the charismatic experiences of individual members and of using them in the whole Church—within the community and beyond it—according to the particular nature of each experience. Some experiences point outwards, and they should be recognised as such for them to have an effect. Other experiences point inwards; they exert their force and their effect even without being registered externally. But we cannot therefore simply assign the first of these to the realm of the charisms, while confining the latter simply to the realm of the *Dona Spiritus Sancti*. There are mystical *dona* (such as ‘knowledge’, ‘fortitude’, ‘counsel’) which are clearly intended to have an external effect as well, while there are charisms (such as participation in the Passion, resulting in the charisms of extraordinary intercession and vicarious suffering) that have a wholly or predominantly invisible efficacy. What really occurs here can be perceived only when one frees oneself from the dead hand of the distinctions of the schools and keeps one’s eyes fixed on the mutuality and interpenetration, which are far more important than the fact that conceptual distinctions can be made.

Only so can we also get away from the fateful move in these questions which has been customary since the time of the Fathers (as a reaction against Montanism), and particularly since Augustine, whereby everything having to do with the senses and the imagination in mystical experiences is held to be fundamentally questionable in the extreme. This has occurred not only when such experiences were taken abstractly in themselves and considered as detached from the background of ecclesial love which authenticates them: here the negative judgment must be justified. But the same attitude has prevailed even when they are judged within the sustaining context of the Church where they are rejected as being insignificant and dangerous, because they distract us from love and lead us to abuses. The inexorable teaching of John of the Cross on this subject is well known. What has happened here is that a prior decision has been made—against the charisms and for mysticism alone, against anything sensory in the ascent to God and unqualifiedly for the experience of God in the immediacy of ‘naked faith’. The charismatic would then have to reject everything sensory and imaginative, regardless of whether it has been merely contrived by man, inspired by the devil, or derived from God himself. The bond that connects ecclesial mysticism (the charisms) with its Biblical archetypes is here mercilessly severed, and there is retained only the mysticism of the *dona* of the Holy Spirit as third trinitarian dimension. But such radicalism has its nemesis in the fact that this mysticism wholly loses the ecclesial dimension of mission; it becomes essentially a mysticism of the individual, an experience between the believer and God alone which requires the violent measures just described if it is to be preserved in all its purity. This, however, yields the paradox that it is precisely the charisms (which supposedly can ‘function’ even without sanctifying grace and love) which require and maintain their basis in a love that serves selflessly, while a mysticism without ‘function’ and aiming solely at theological love stands in danger of degenerating into a private affair. Let us only add that the verdict passed by the tradition of Augustine and John of the Cross plays into the hands of all those who, as thorough sceptics or psychologists or as mere ‘practitioners’ of pastoral care, and in the name of ‘pure faith’ or of ‘plain common-sense’, would like to do away with all mystical elements in the Church as being an irrelevant private concern.

In terms of practical psychology, it is understandable that every precaution must be taken in view of the great damage caused by the opposite extreme of a naïve acceptance of all charisms. This attitude uncritically accepts as genuine every alleged or authentic vision, audition, stigmatisation, and so on; that is to say, it is taken as a raw fact with no integral connection with the total Church and broadcast as such. Against these abuses the great saints we have mentioned have rightly protested, for such an attitude again confuses the dimensions of Biblical revelation with those of the Church, and the result is an eventual sliding into areas that are subject not only to a general psychology of religion, but often even to magic.

After rejecting both kinds of degeneration, what remains as a centre of balance is the reciprocal tension existing between the charisms and the gifts of the Spirit, the latter being understood as the experiential perfecting and transcending of the vital theological virtues. On both sides (in so far as they are at all distinguishable) there are transitions from the ‘normal’ life of faith to a properly speaking mystical life. From the side of the ‘gifts’ this is generally understood and granted. Here we must only add what was said in the previous chapter concerning the spiritual senses: that the ecclesial experience of faith participates ‘normally’ in the Biblical archetypes; that the senses are transformed through the Christian’s death and resurrection; that a perception of God and of divine things by means of the total corporeal and psychic organism constitutes an archetypal (protological) ‘normalcy’, so to speak. A truly living Christian experience of faith includes (according to Ignatius of Loyola, for instance) a certain experience of both nearness to God and distance from God, of consolation and desolation, a sense for God’s will for me here and now, a *sapor* for the divine wisdom (Bernard), a *cognitio per connaturalitatem* (Thomas), and yet none of this need yet be given the name of ‘mysticism’ in the strong sense of the word. Along these paths breakthroughs to new depths of experience may take place which are perceived by the subject undergoing them as a qualitative leap; but this leap may in fact be occurring more on the psychological plane than at the much more decisive level of the objective life of grace. The genuine believer who has identified himself with the attitude of faith will, obeying the essence of what he is, not emphasise the elements of experience to the detriment of the central element of faith. As an attitude, faith is the surrender of one’s own experience to the experience of Christ, and Christ’s experience is one of kenotic humiliation and self-renunciation, a reality which, as we have seen, rests on the foundation of Christ’s hypostatic consciousness as Redeemer. For this reason, in ‘mysticism’ every deeper experience (*Erfahrung*) of God will be a deeper entering into (*Einfahren*) the ‘non-experience’ of faith, into the loving renunciation of experience, all the way into the depths of the ‘Dark Nights’ of John of the Cross, which constitute the real mystical training for the ultimate renunciations. But these ‘nights’ are precisely an ‘*experience* of non-experience’, or an experience of the negative, privative mode of experience, as a participation in the total archetypal experience of the Old and New Testaments. We must only take care not to raise the expressly mystical experiences of a John of the Cross to the status of a standard and model for every ecclesial experience of faith, nor to level out the analogies to be found along the paths of faith which God ordains for the Christian. The creative power of the Holy Spirit, which allows us to participate in the primal experience of Christ Jesus in different degrees and modalities, is, for its part, unlimited, and the love which ‘does not seek its own’, the love which, of all the Spirit’s gifts, is the ‘incomparably superior way’, always so arranges things that in following Christ the divine gifts are possessed more in the manner of a privation, of their being stored up in heaven, of their surrender for the sake of all others than by holding them in one’s own hands.

But the same thing cannot be said of the charisms—the other side that concerns us. For these are not for the individual to give away, but to administer them as gifts, as a function in the household of the Mystical Body. Here, too, there doubtless are ‘unmystical’, somehow natural charisms, of which Peter and Paul ennumerate a few, for instance, almsgiving and hospitality. Others belong to actual ecclesial offices and consist of the special means, given by the Spirit, which correspond to those offices. Others are charismatic in the strict sense, and it is these primarily that were at issue in Corinth. Their character as *gratis datum* is objective, as is stressed by the whole theological tradition, and even the person receiving them as a grace must himself see them only in terms of their social function. Now, such immediate participation by a member of the Church in the objective corpus of revelation can take many forms: it could be a sensory seeing, hearing, or touching of a part of the supernatural reality of revelation (and this is where stigmatisation and other forms of participation in the Lord’s Passion or in any other mystery of redemption have their place), or a knowledge of a particular aspect of the truth of revelation which is perhaps all too forgotten or too little regarded at present by the majority of the ecclesial community. Whatever the specific form of immediate participation, however, in every case it is not the individual undergoing the experience who is the goal of the divine action, but the Church as a whole, for here the grace of the charism stands in a functional relationship to the ecclesial task. And regardless of how personal the individual has felt his experience to be, he must nevertheless deprive himself of it for the sake of the Church; he must pass it on even if it will thereby appear to him to have been lost and even if this should at times seem to him to be a sort of profanation. His experience was as of one expropriated, and so, too, he must administer it as one expropriated.

This is the ecclesial manner in which mystical experience participates in the proleptic character of all archetypal experience of revelation. It has its origin essentially within the total sphere of the Church (as the fulness of Christ) and returns again to this total ecclesial sphere. The individual with his experience is ever an expropriated member of the whole and must feel and behave accordingly. Because of her high regard for charismatic grace (a regard which is justified but not without its dangers), the Church may single out for public honour an individual member, either during his lifetime or posthumously. But the charismatic must not be misled by this. Indeed, if he has understood and accepted Christ’s grace deeply enough, he will always look at such a show of honour as a misunderstanding, for grace was not intended at all for this member but for the Church as a whole, through the mediation of his service.

Ecclesial mysticism is proleptically oriented toward the totality of the Church. For this reason, it is also necessarily eschatological—an experiential realisation of the Jerusalem above, whose citizens we are and which will appear on the Last Day. In this respect, all mysticism, even the darkest mysticism of the Cross, is anticipatory glory, δόξα, transport to the beauty of the New Age. The dark night is conferred only as a grace between two experiences of consolation: an initial one, which is still superficial because it has not yet known death, and a second one which has been purified by suffering and made to conform to the Resurrection. The impotence of the Cross, as an ecclesial participation, is objectively always the expression of the superabundant might of Christ, to whom all *exousia* in heaven and on earth belong. This holds even for that strictly objective vision proper to the Prophets and to the Apocalypse which might be said to be a vision that merely observes and reports. This vision, too, is given by 'the faithful witness of Jesus Christ' 'to his servant John', to be communicated to the community, then to conclude in an eschatological vision of the glory of the victorious Lamb and of his Bride. The beauty of the New Age, of the heavenly world, which has been infused into the earthly world's economy of grace from the beginning and through all ages, and which at the end 'will have fermented the whole dough'—this beauty is offered to the mystic as a total human experience which possesses archetypal immediacy. This is not a naked and abstract celestial world, but the world of the Resurrection, a world that penetrates redeemed creation through and through with the power of the resurrected Son and brings it to rise up together with him.

In terms of objective theology, this provides the reason why ecclesial mysticism admits not only spiritual, but also sensory experiences. This dimension of the Resurrection runs directly against the grain of the temporal course of our history, and we cannot, therefore, possibly find a place for it within the system of the 'Old World'. But it does not follow that everything sensory within ecclesial mysticism must therefore be declared *a priori* to be 'purely subjective' and, hence, that the stigma of non-objectivity must, in the opinion of such a judge, be attached to this mysticism. The adaptation of the Christian senses of a believer on earth to the mysteries of the Kingdom of God remains for us a mystery, but it must not be dismissed *a priori* as being impossible. The apparitions of the risen Christ to the Apostles were objective, even if they were not capable of seeing the fulness of his glory. There is then in principle no reason why the same, in essence, may not be true of mystical visions. The decisive factor is that the object, on its own initiative, takes shape (*sich einbildet*) in the spirit and the senses of the mystic in a form that appropriately expresses and reveals it, and that, in so doing, the object can very well bring into play the mystic's own imagination (*Einbildungskraft* = 'power to create images'). The suspicions traditionally harboured against such objectivity derive (quite apart from precautionary measures stemming from pastoral concerns) from a Platonic presupposition that the divine world is 'purely spiritual' and can therefore express itself to us humans in sensory images only very inadequately and ambiguously. The risen Lord is free enough to express himself in an adequate, objective form, and to convey this form just as objectively to the persons meant to encounter him. All the same, the encounter of this expressive form with the Christian senses can have a stormy history: implied within the offer of the form is a demand to the senses to renounce all their accustomed objects in order to be conformed to the New Age, and this renunciation can be practised existentially in the 'dark night(s)' of Saint John of the Cross, with the result that the necessary proportioning of the mortal senses to their immortal object is intensified and sharpened.

And so we see the particular nature of ecclesial mysticism sufficiently situated within our present context. Such mysticism stands as a whole within the sphere of the manifold freedom of the Holy Spirit, who breathes forth his life, however, within the sphere of the Biblical and ecclesial tradition. For this mysticism there is no possible schema according to which the phenomena could be developed and classified. Each of them (we speak here only of authentic ones) falls down from heaven vertically. But, despite this comet-like character, they immediately blend into the landscape of tradition, there to lend new life to the Biblical message, to bridge over the supposed distances between the time of revelation and the present time, to act as a sign for the actuality and the loving proximity of the true World to this our visionless existence. Often an answer from heaven is given to the open questions of an epoch, questions that men cannot come to grips with. New seeds are thus implanted in the Church which will then develop fruitfully for centuries.

Nothing could be less true than the idea (particularly widespread today) that the time of the Church is a closed epoch of naked, visionless faith. This view, which stems from a pinched faith, goes on to say that the fewer the irruptions from the side of the New Age, the more wholesome, meritorious, and secure will be the unfolding of an existence in faith. If it is true that neither the Church nor the Christian should ever aspire to mystical graces—as if the form of revelation set before the eyes of the world did not suffice!—nevertheless it is just as true that God never limits himself minimalistically to only what is strictly sufficient, because the eternal Beauty always pours itself out in a superabundant irradiation that is beyond every demand and expectation.

d. Integration

If, by way of recapitulation, we now wish to see the individual elements of subjective theological perception in their interrelatedness, we must in the first place eschew any attempt to construct a system, whether openly or secretly. This not only because faith must remain faith and cannot become open vision, but above all because the self-revealing God remains sovereign in his every mode of manifestation and the Lord of that manifestation. Not only is the primary fact of his revelation, over against all created nature, a decision of his freedom; beyond this, every single element of this revelation retains this characteristic, no matter how clearly such a decision is seen to follow. Nowhere does theological aesthetics descend to the level of an inner-worldly aesthetics.

Just as man's original faith is his answer as evoked by the freedom of the self-revealing God, so it is also with everything about faith that bears the character of experience. It is always the free, gracious God who continues to deal with the people even after the sealing of the Covenant with Abraham and on Sinai. It is always the free, gracious Christ who continues to associate with his disciples and the people even after he has fully become man. With an ungraspable graciousness that is daily renewed, Christ does not utterly shrink away from an unbelieving and perverse generation (Mt 17.17); day after day he again confronts them and, even after his Resurrection, instead of returning to the invisible realm of the Father, he again offers himself to his disciples, who are incredulous for sheer joy. Thomas could have given his office as eyewitness as an excuse for his demand; but, when his wish is granted him, even he must collapse and acknowledge the pure freedom of grace. And in the Church things are not otherwise. We may not, in the interests of a pure actualism, cast doubts on the continual offer of Christ's presentation in the Mass, of his grace in the Sacraments, of his effective action in the preached word, but no more may we, in the interests of the element of continuity, obscure the other more important element of God's self-actualisation in the Church. Despite the general guarantee that the Apostles and their successors are authorised and competent to proclaim the teaching of Jesus, it is still always something of a miracle that the very eternal Word of God can become embodied in the stammering of men. The mere symbolism of the world of signs does not simply compel the event. Guardini often used to make the point with regard to the liturgy, and we know how emphatically Augustine—to say nothing of Origen—said this of the Eucharist. The same holds for private prayer: with what freedom the Lord comes and goes! How greatly God's whole manner of educating us through prayer is oriented precisely to imparting to the praying person this most important knowledge and experience: namely, that no achievement, no amount of training, no prescribed attitude can force God to come to us! But even here this freedom in no way stands in opposition to the simple guarantee of his grace. Because this grace is promised and given, the praying person ought indeed to trust even in aridity and in absence of experience. He must learn to pare away more and more the preliminary subjectivity of his states of mind, to be left with an ever purer faith. And yet, by the same token, this purification of subjective attitudes is the way in which he is to encounter the real Lord and God in a fully human manner and with less and less danger. God will enter precisely by the door which allows him full freedom of action.

Thus, all subjective evidence must remain exhaustively open to this freedom of the objective evidence of revelation. To be a recipient of revelation means more and more the act of renunciation which gives God the space in which to become incarnate and to offer himself as he will. Only in this way is the sphere of the ‘spiritual senses’ given its proper place, and only thus does the integration of the archetypal Biblical experience and the ‘ordinary’ experience of faith become possible. Even the archetypal experiences appear to us extremely varied: those of the Old Testament were different from those of the New, and in the Old Testament itself we saw a whole range of sensory presentations of God. In the New Testament we observed a process of simplification that reduced these to four fundamental types, all of which then converged and flowed into the Church’s treasury, whether individually or in combination. And the Holy Spirit is still free enough to create new and unheard-of marvels for each individual believer from the material of such exemplary experiences. For this reason, what here still remains to be said will be offered by way of open-ended hints that allow God all his freedom. We will simply juxtapose five standpoints.

1. If Christ is God’s epiphany in the world, then by the very nature of that epiphany, provision has been made to insure that this emergence of the divine glory does not occur only before a few chosen ones (while all others remain submerged in the darkness of a ‘naked faith’ in propositions), but precisely, really and truly, before the whole world. This is true even to the extent that the disciples that are sent out might almost be said to be only the rays which the sun sends out from its own brightness, so that what becomes visible in this radiance is not the ray itself but the one that radiates. If Christ is the image of all images, it is impossible that he should not affect all the world’s images by his presence, arranging them around himself. There is no such thing as an isolated image; every image appears against a background of fellow-images. It impresses and expresses itself upon the world. In its interior form it reveals its belonging to a

community of forms and its creative power to give shape to a world about itself. Goethe, for instance, brings with him a whole epoch which both influences him and is itself influenced by him. But what Christ brings with him is not primarily his historical environment, but the world of creation and of redemption as a whole. His form imparts to the things of the world the right distance (from him and each other) and the right proximity (to him and each other). The believer does not *believe* all of this; he *sees* it. He is allowed to see it when he believes and, in a definite, dark, and distorted way, even when he refuses to accept the evidence of faith. This his sensory environment, in which he lives and with which he is apparently wholly familiar, is through and through determined by the central image and event of Christ, so that, by a thousand open and hidden paths, his wholly real and corporeal sense-experiences bring him into contact with that central point. In this he stands in the same space and in the shared time of creation as the Prophets and the Apostles, and here it is almost a matter of indifference whether he possesses the sensory contemporaneity of the eyewitness: he stands in the world which has been determined and established by the appearance of God and which is oriented to that appearance. The reality of creation as a whole has become a monstrance of God’s real presence. The believer may complain about the darkness of faith and may even be disquieted by the image of revelation in its concealment and opacity. Nevertheless, he can in faith cling to what he is given to see: the displacement and magnetic reorienting of the images of the world by the image of God in their midst. Here palpable and manifest evidence can occur at any time and in ever-new ways. In this manner, however, the Lord of the images of the world always retains his freedom both to conceal himself among these images (as if he himself were a worldly image among other worldly images, and would thus be demanding a naked faith in himself) or then again to step out from among them and outshine all other worldly images, and this too would be perceived by faith, but by a faith that understands, experiences, and, to that extent, already sees.

2. But Christ is not distinct from other worldly contours as himself a bare and isolated configuration. To the individual he appears within the total image of the Church, which is the community of faith that both is now a living reality and that once lived as an historical reality. The Church is the more immediate space in which his form shines. Not only is the Church illuminated by him like the images of the world; rather, suffused by his light, the Church actively radiates him onto the world. This is something we will discuss in the second part of this inquiry. Here we are concerned primarily with the subjective integration. In this respect we must clarify the manner in which the Church, as a spiritual and

sensory reality, mediates really between the believer’s spiritual senses and the form of Christ. She does this as a single community of real human beings which has believed uninterruptedly, and already as such she sustains the individual. She does it, furthermore, as an apostolic community into which the archetypal experiences of the Prophets and the Apostles which have been incorporated as a ‘foundation’ (Eph 2.20): a real and vital relationship connects the contemporary experience of faith with the archetypal experience existing in the space of history. Paul and the mystics within the Church who have come after him, in so far as they are ecclesially accredited, constitute an even narrower chain which twines round the first, essential chain. But beneath this empirical continuity another more mysterious continuity holds sway which is no less evident to the Catholic believer: the continuity between Mary’s spiritual experiences in the body and the Church’s maternal experience. A mother explains the world to her child; she shows him what there is to be seen and how it should be regarded; she not only teaches him the words of the language, but infuses reality into each word so that the word will emerge from the image and lead back to it. In the same way the Church, basing herself first and last on the experience of the Lord’s Mother in the flesh, who was the Believer pure and simple, can teach her children the Word of God and communicate to them from the heart of her motherly and bridal experience not only its meaning, but its taste, its smell, and its whole incarnational concreteness. The terrible havoc which the ‘historical-critical method’ is today wreaking in the world of faith is possible only in a spiritual sphere from which the Church’s Marian dimension has been banished and which has, therefore, forsaken all spiritual senses and their ecclesial communication. This devastation is spreading not only over the whole theological realm; it is penetrating even the area of philosophy. Here the world is becoming imageless and valueless; it is a heap of ‘facts’ which no longer say anything and in which an equally imageless and formless naked existence is freezing and anguishing unto death. The philosophy and the theology of the image stand and fall together, and when the *image* of woman has vanished from the theological realm, an exclusively masculine, imageless conceptuality and thought-technique takes over, and then faith finds itself banished from the world and confined to the realm of the paradoxical and the absurd. What is at stake here is not the sentimental mediation of a Madonna cult, but the far deeper vision of the real uniqueness of the Bride of Christ as God’s People in the world, the vision of Mary’s really efficacious and archetypal significance—between Zion and the Church—for man’s adequate answer to the God who surrenders to him. As an individual, I can respond correctly only within the context of this unified and total answer: and this total answer is all-embracing and feminine and, for this reason, it is especially adapted to the sensory realm. She who is called blessed because of her faith has, through faith and in faith, attained to the inseparably unified experience of bridal motherhood.

3. Within the space of the Mother-Church, the features and gestures of Christ reach all believing generations as the sensory gestures of the liturgy, which includes both Sacrament and Word. This Word ever anew proves itself efficacious as what it is (1 Thess 2.13): not only as the Word of God, but as the Word of the Incarnate God, the Word which is substantiated by the flesh and blood of Christ. Christ's sensuous existence must necessarily accompany the appearance of his Word. And the Sacrament here is more than an Old Testament rite, even if here too we are dealing with an essentially symbolic reality: namely, the thing itself in a veiled form that reveals it. The unprecedented hardness and exacting nature of the corporeal form of the sacraments, which simply demand to be enacted, call forth not only naked faith, but also the equally hard historical truth to which they owe their origin. Those who realise this stand in no danger of a sacramental holiness-through-works, for the sensory character of the event confronts them directly with the event which is made present *hic et nunc* in the sacraments. The image compels them to enter into the act by revealing to them the act which both instituted the image and is contained in the image. It is here that the full weight of the sacrament lies and not, as many today understand it in aestheticist fashion, in the encounter between the sacramental symbols and the 'great archetypes of the psyche',[242] even though it may be quite true that the sacramental images as such are not indifferent, are not merely an 'ornament external to the mystery' or a 'temporary paedagogical expedient'. But, even if these images derive their symbolic language for man from the creation, in which God instructs man through essential images, nevertheless the correspondence between water and redemption, between oil and the Holy Spirit, between the laying on of hands and the conferring of the Spirit, derives its fittingness wholly from above, as instituted by the love of Christ, and this is shown even by the choice of images. Then, in maternal fashion, the Church can enhance this correspondence, adding fire and wax, the fragrance of incense and the gesture of kneeling, the colour of her vestments as a sensory and spiritual indication of mood, sounds to represent the all-penetrating harmony of the confession of faith. In these ways the Church moulds the κόσμος αἰσθητός in conformity to the κόσμος νοητός of the reality of faith. These enhancements remain variable; they in no way claim divine institution and, lying below the images instituted by God, they always need our experiential sensibility to direct them upwards into the sphere of the experience of faith. There should be no confusion here. And,

nevertheless, the Lord of the Church, as he reveals and makes himself present, remains free, if it so pleases him, to manifest himself and bring himself closer to man even through the aesthetic symbols and the ostensive images of the world.

4. There is *one* image, however, which stands wholly by itself and which is like no other image instituted by the Son of Man, who bore and atoned for the guilt of all men on the Cross: this is the image of the fellow-man we encounter. In his plight and guilt, our fellow-man as we encounter him is in every case our neighbour, and this neighbour of man's is Christ. In his neighbour man encounters his Redeemer with all his bodily senses, in just as concrete, unprecedented, and archetypal a manner as the Apostles when they 'found the Messiah' (Jn 1.41). Here all the loose threads of faith come together to form the perfect weave. For in faith I know that I have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and I know therefore that you equally have been redeemed and that in you faith compels me to see, to respect, and to anticipate in action the supremely real image which the triune God has of you. In our neighbour faith is at each instant tested through the senses, and, if it is authenticated as faith, it immediately receives its sensory corroboration. For, according to John, love that is practised contains the ability to demonstrate itself as the truth. But such love bears its proof in itself in sensory fashion only in so far as it understands itself to exist in obedience to the God who laid down his life for us. If it is love at all (and not a hidden egotism of whatever form), it bears within itself in sensory fashion the quintessence of dogmatics. In his love for his neighbour, the Christian definitively receives his Christian senses, which, of course, are none 'other' than his bodily senses, but these senses in so far as they have been formed according to the form of Christ. Whether or not Christ's historical form thereby becomes explicit to the lover is less important; love itself has this form within itself and communicates it. In a Christian sense, love is not 'act without image'; on the contrary, love is what creates image and bestows shape absolutely. Love is the creative power of God himself which has been infused into man by virtue of God's Incarnation. This is why, in the light of the divine ideas, love can read the world of forms and, in particular, man correctly. Outside of this light, man remains an incomprehensible and contradictory hieroglyph. Cross and Resurrection, understood as the love and the glory of God, bleeding to death and forsaken, render man decipherable.

5. After all that has been said, the question of the encounter with the Lord in prayer and contemplation should no longer disturb us. To his presence through faith there corresponds, in a most obvious and consistent fashion, his total

concrete presence. Here too he still has freedom to act as he will; no ‘application of the senses’ can compel his coming, but nor should it stop at the sensory facts in order to find its delight in them. The little which here occurs with full consciousness significantly enough stands in the pure service of love. And love does not want to ‘imagine’ or conjure up anything; it obeys only the reality of the Lord’s love. This was the point made by Marechal when he set out to show the convergence in one central point of both sides of the *applicatio sensuum*—the ordinary human fantasy and the mystics’ experience of being touched directly by God.[243] Hugo Rahner points us in a similar direction.[244] It is not necessary to determine at what psychological level the realisation of revelation as image is achieved in prayer. Both from the side of the Lord of prayer and from that of the person praying everything remains possible—from the greatest concreteness to the most subtle transparency. It is possible for images to be present only in order to be transcended and annulled, and for modes of sensory experience to be there only in order to be rejected and to be used as signals pointing to a suprasensory reality they themselves cannot convey. For our senses, together with images and thoughts, must die with Christ and descend to the underworld in order then to rise unto the Father in an unspeakable manner which is both sensory and suprasensory. ‘Then I heard without sounds, then I saw without light, then I smelled where no odour rose, then I tasted what was not there, then I felt where nothing was to be grasped’, says the bride of the Song of Songs in Eckhart.[245] These are not self-destroying paradoxes; it is, rather, the participation in a history whose content is God’s *kenosis* to the world and the world’s to God. And yet it is our own senses and, with them, our spirit, our whole person that, dying with Christ, rise unto the Father: *et in carne mea videbo Deum meum, quem visurus sum ego ipse, et oculi mei conspecturi sunt, et non alius*.[246]

III. THE OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE

A. THE NEED FOR AN OBJECTIVE FORM OF REVELATION

Everything said up to this point was intended to lead in to what now follows. To have anticipated our present concerns was not without its dangers. For if the subjective ability to experience finds the reason and justification for its existence in an experienceable object, then without this object that experiential ability can by no means be demonstrated in its totality nor indeed be made comprehensible. For this reason, in the course of our inquiry we have time and again pointed to this object by way of anticipation; but our object can be correctly understood only when it has been made visible in itself. Even our anthropological considerations did not have their meaning in themselves, as would be the case, for instance, if the religious object were limited to 'God in himself'. If we were to approach our object in this manner, then human understanding and human sensibility could possibly be discussed in connection with the apprehension of the object; but presumably they would be considered only in negative fashion, by showing their inadequacy and by striving in practice to eliminate them. In this view, the innermost or outermost 'apex of the soul' could perhaps be considered adequate, since this 'apex' would, in some ecstatic manner, correspond to the formlessness of the divine abyss. Such correspondence would best take place in a system of identities in which *Brahman* and *Atman* confront one another in their sameness; and from this point of identity a certain positive function could then be salvaged for the conceptual and sensory faculty, since even the world of multiplicity, the *regio dissimilitudinis*, could be understood only as the objective-subjective mode of appearing of what in itself is identical and one.

But if God is the infinitely free agent who, in his freedom, invents a world and, also in his freedom, creates that world; and if, on top of this, he is the triune God who in Jesus Christ becomes man, then there are three interconnected reasons why God's revelation must possess an objective form.

1. If God is infinitely free, if he is thus infinite subjectivity which can in no sense be identical with the human religious subject, then a revelation of God may occur ever so interiorly in the subject and, nonetheless, God will remain *interior intimo meo*. Even in his manifestness God remains transcendent and, therefore, he is not simply 'someone who is seen' but, rather, he is also always someone who, in man's interior vision and experience is believed, someone to

whom one must surrender much more unconditionally than a human I surrenders to a human Thou, since in this case there at least exists a communication in human nature and, therefore, the I somehow knows the Thou as something interior to itself. Such a communion in nature and personality does not exist between God and creature, and this is why even the most intimate self-disclosure of God in the soul has a ‘form’, even if it is spiritual: the form of experiences, sensations, illuminations, which as such are not the self-disclosing God himself. But this first standpoint remains abstract for us because, in the concrete, we have always already made some contact with God as we approach him through the worldly and material creation, knowing nothing of a pure communication between two interiorities.

2. If God has first of all revealed himself as a Creator, and if this creation is necessarily (and, therefore, in an objective sense, permanently and inalienably) a manifestation of God, it follows that this manifestation takes its form from the form of the world itself. It is the Being of things—and not something alongside it or behind it—which is the revelation of God’s eternal and omnipotent Being. Paul stated it with unsurpassable precision: ‘Whatever can be known about God is manifest in them, for God himself has revealed it to them. For since the creation of the world, what is invisible of God—I mean God’s eternal power and divinity—has become visible, intelligible through the things he has made’ (Rom 1. 19f.). τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, like τὰ ἀόϱατα αὐτοῦ later on, is not to be taken as referring to a ‘part’ of God or a partial aspect of God that may be isolated objectively, no more than are expressions like τὸ χϱηστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ (Rom 2.4), τὸ μωϱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ (1 Cor 1.25), and to τὸ δυνατὸν αύτοῦ (Rom 9.22). In each case God in his entirety is meant, seen from one particular standpoint. Thus, Paul is not saying that basically only one ‘part’ of God is knowable, or that only one aspect of him is ‘invisible’;rather, the ‘vision’ of the invisible God through the mediation of creatures allows us to ‘grasp’ his divine Being, different though it is from all creatures, and his eternal might, which is revealed in his act of creation.[1] This divinity of the Invisible, which radiates in the visibleness of Being of the world, is then immediately called ‘glory’ (*Herrlichkeit*) or ‘sublimeness’ (*Hehrlichkeit: Schlier*), δόξα, ‘God’s intransitoriness’ (1.23). To be sure, this is the glory of *God* and not of the world, since it is precisely such confusion that at once leads to the terrible fall which results from confusing God’s glory with the ‘likeness’ (ὁμοίωμα) of the ‘form’ (εἰϰών) ‘of transitory man and of birds and quadrupeds and reptiles’. The text does not specify the precise nature of the analogy between man or beast and their form, on the one hand, and that between cosmos and creating Godhead, on the other. But the answer is there implicitly: everything which is said of God—his

divinity, his eternal might and glory, his power as Creator—consistently underscores the ever-greater difference between him and creatures. However, this does not preclude God's δόξα from radiating and 'being seen' (ϰαθοϱᾶται) in and through the form of the world.

The revelation of the triune God in Christ is not simply, to be sure, the prolongation or the intensification of the revelation in the creation; but, in their essence, they are so far from contradicting one another that, considered from the standpoint of God's ultimate plan, the revelation in the creation is seen to have occurred for the sake of the revelation in Christ, serving as the preparation that made it possible. Beyond all creaturely hopes and expectations, moreover, the revelation in Christ was to bring together in one divine and human Head everything heavenly and earthly, which is thus endowed by grace with a crown the radiance of whose glory, belonging to the *Kyrios* of the world, was to shed its rays over the whole of creation. In this way the form of the world itself, which as such already was the revelation of the divine δόξα, in Christ and in the Holy Spirit poured out through him becomes a temple which, like the tabernacle and Solomon's edifice, harbours within and above itself the *kâbôd* of God.

3. Thus we see that the form of the revelation in Christ is in the first place characterised indirectly in its form-quality as the perfection of the form of the world. This occurs directly only when it comes to be seen in faith as the appearing of the triune God. The proper and most intimate form-quality of Christ's revelation comes to light only in Christ's divinity, that is to say, in the relationship in him between the two natures and, precisely in this connection, in his relationship to the Father in the Holy Spirit. Now, what makes its appearance in Christ in no way presents itself as a *phainomenon* of the One as opposed to the Many, but as the becoming visible and experienceable of the God who in himself is triune. The form of revelation, therefore, is not appearance as the limitation (πέϱας) of an infinite non-form (ἄπειϱον), but the appearance of an infinitely determined super-form. And, what is more important: the form of revelation does not present itself as an independent image of God, standing over against what is imaged, but as a unique, hypostatic union between archetype and image. In the form of revelation, what is image is of no interest in isolation and for itself (the man Jesus), but only in so far as in this image (Christ!) God portrays himself—indeed, in so far as this man himself is God. Qualitatively intensified, here again the statement applies to the effect that 'God's invisibleness has become visible for the rational spirit' (Rom 1.20), and, what is more, the intensification is so unprecedented that those who see and yet do not see are 'inexcusable' (Rom 1.20 = Jn 15.22). To be sure, reading this form is something as unique as the form itself. Nonetheless, if this form really is the

crowning recapitulation of everything in heaven and on earth, then it also is the form of all forms and the measure of all measures, just as for this reason it is the glory of all glories of creation as well.

Like all other words that are applied to Christ and his revelation, the word ‘form’ too must be used with care, which means that its abstract and general conceptual content must be held *in suspenso* in view of the uniqueness of this particular application. What is crucial here is not the word, but the thing itself, and it is this which we intend to clarify in what follows. The ‘thing’ in this case is one which presents itself as definitive, even if it emerges in different modes of appearance (as an active, suffering, dying man, and as a man who rose bodily in glory) and even if it is apprehended by perceiving man in different states—here by faith, hereafter by vision.

Instead of speaking of the ‘form of revelation’ we could also, with the same qualifications, speak of the ‘revelation-body’ in view of the fact that, on the one hand, ‘the whole *plērôma* of the Godhead dwells corporeally in Christ’ (σωματιϰῶς), that is to say, in the way that a spirit inhabits a body or that God’s Spirit of glory dwells in the old temple (Jesus speaks of ‘the temple of his body’, Jn 2.21); and, in view of the fact that, on the other hand, the Church is described as the Body of Christ (Eph 1.23; Col 1.18, 24) in so far as Christ’s fulness is fulfilled in her. And none of this can be understood in a purely figurative sense, since Christ’s corporeal body is and remains the point of union (Eph 2.16) while all other ‘religion’ compared with his corporality remains at best a ‘shadow’ (Col 2.17).

B. THE FORM OF REVELATION

1. AS FACT

The subjective unity of faith and vision in the Christian life would perforce remain incomprehensible if it could not be elucidated in terms of a unity in the objective revelation which demands and conditions it. It is a unity which is essentially unique and unrepeatable and which must necessarily remain such because the unique God can express himself in his ultimate totality and depth only once in a unique manner. The revelation of the Old Testament and, behind it, the rather different revelation of creation, could occur ‘many times’ and in ‘many ways’ because, after all, that revelation was only underway to the total ‘Word’ which ‘God has spoken to us at the end of days in his Son’. He could be ‘established as total heir’ because he not only possesses historical facticity as did the Old Testament revelations, but is at the same time ‘the mighty Word’ through which God ‘sustains the creation’. Thus, besides history itself, the Son inherits the essential ‘words’ of creatures, which are word only in virtue of his being the Word and which are the radiant glory of God only because he, the Son, is the ‘radiant splendour of his glory’ (ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης) and the ‘impression’ and ‘ex-pression’ of his reality as God (χαϱακτὴϱ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ). He could not be the point of intersection of all partial words of history and of all individual words of Being if he were merely either the ‘factual’ man Jesus or the supra-historical, all-sustaining Logos. That he is more than this is shown by the passage in Heb 1.1ff. that characterises him as the redeemer who ‘purifies’ the world ‘from its sins’ and who, for this reason, ‘has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high’. He is the point of intersection of historical words and of the words of Being precisely as the unity of eternal Son and temporal man.

As ‘radiance’ (actively as the act of radiating itself, or passively as what is radiated), ἀπαύγασμα has its origin first of all in the notion of the *logos* or *sophia*. The Book of Wisdom (7.25f.) makes this expression parallel to others: ‘She (wisdom) is the breath of the divine might, the purest emanation of the glory of the Almighty,. . . the radiance (reflection) of the eternal light, the immaculate mirror of the active God, an image of his excellence.’ The impersonality and fluidity of these comparisons receive from the illustrative term χαϱαϰτήϱ a certain stability and contour: the exact impress, the stamp of the seal, the facsimile of the original overcomes all suspicion of pantheism and implies a reciprocity of persons, but always in the sphere of the divine nature (ὑπόστασις). Both formulas—flowing radiance and impressed form—complement each other in giving expression to the mystery of the beautiful: the form that unites them both is the Primal Beauty, concerning which one does not yet know whether it is above or within the world. But here the text does not even admit a conceptual distinction: that man, who has been established as the total heir, is at the same time the one in whom God created the universe. He descends simultaneously from the ‘prophets’ and the ‘fathers’ and from the Father, whose ‘Son’ he is. As the ‘Word of Omnipotence’ he has always been the heir, and yet he is ‘appointed’ heir. He both possesses the ‘name’ and ‘obtains’ it (Heb 1.4). He is the one who is begotten in an eternal ‘today’ (v. 5) and who, therefore, does his work ‘only once’, ‘once and for all’ in time (ἐφάπαξ, 7.27; 9.12; 10.10). The decisive fact is that no separations and distinctions are made in the form of his radiance as to what he is as man and what he is as God; we have only the assertion that he can be the radiant expression of God which he is as man only because, as God, he is equal in substance to the Father in the bosom of the Trinity, and yet we can grasp this his eternal glory only because he receives it as man and is endowed with it.

The statements of Scripture never go beyond this assertion of his unity. All Johannine statements coincide with it, even the assertion concerning the ‘glory of the only Son from the Father’, which nonetheless becomes visible only in the ‘Word who is Flesh’ (*vidimus*, Jn 1.14), even the assertion concerning ‘the glory which I had with thee before the world was made’, for even this glory, being eternal, is the Father’s answer to his temporal glorification by the Son (Jn 17.5, 1). Biblically, a doctrine of the ‘Trinity in itself’ can be justified only as the (indispensable) background for the doctrine of the Incarnation. We do not need to prove that, for Paul, ‘Son of God’ *a fortiori* always means the Incarnate Word in whose light and glory God’s trinitarian fulness becomes present and fills redeemed creation with its glory. The ‘image’, the ‘splendour’ to which ‘we look in order to be transformed into the same image, from splendour to splendour’, radiates from the Incarnate Lord. He is the Spirit, he is the access to the Father and his ‘precise image’, and even the most intimate subjective ‘illumination’ of God ‘in our hearts’ occurs only in virtue of the fact that ‘the knowledge of the glory of God shines forth from the face of Christ’, or, what amounts to the same thing, in virtue of the fact that the ‘radiance of the Gospel’ is seen and understood ‘because of the glory of Christ’ (2 Cor 3.18-4.6).

And so it is fitting to remember in this context what we said earlier when we discussed the question of subjective evidence: in relation to the central phenomenon of revelation we can by no means speak of ‘signs’ which, according to their nature, point beyond themselves to something ‘signified’. Jesus the Man, in his visibleness, is not a sign pointing beyond himself to an invisible ‘Christ of faith’—whether this view is nuanced more in a Platonising Catholic sense or in a criticistic Protestant manner. The image and expression of God, according to the Biblical assertion, is the indivisible God-man: man, in so far as God radiates from him; God, in so far as he appears in the man Jesus. What is seen, heard, and touched is the ‘Word of Life’ (1 Jn 1.1), naturally not in contradistinction to the man Jesus, but precisely in the total structure which is the core and the nodule of all Johannine writings. This axis will be thrown off-center as soon as the relationship between *apaugasma* and *charackter* is shifted in favour of a consideration of final causes; in this event, the humanity of Christ is no longer the ‘expression’, but rather becomes the ‘instrument’—the *instrumentum conjunctum* or the *causa instrumentalis*—by means of which ‘someone else’ strives for and attains to ‘something else’. A similar distortion occurs when, on the basis of Platonic presuppositions, the world of matter is regarded as a concealment of the spiritual, and anything earthly as a concealment of the heavenly, and when in consequence what in the Gospel is truly the humiliation of God by his condescension to a human existence is no longer given its proper place within the Christian mystery for now: everything corporeal about Christ is simply regarded as an image that still conceals, and which stimulates us to seek and understand the spiritual element in him, and both things together become an occasion and a springboard from which we soar to the divine. Not only everything sacramental and institutional about the Church, but Christ’s whole humanity thus becomes all too clearly something for those ‘simple’ Christians who need material crutches, while the advanced and the perfect can dispense with the symbol, whose spiritual core they have been able to reach. A successive unveiling of the spiritual by stripping away all the surrounding layers of matter appears as the way of perfection, difficult to distinguish from an Asiatic or Neo-Platonic mysticism, and at the end we find the intuitive vision of the pure and absolute spirit, which is no longer moderated or mediated by any creaturely veil whatsoever. It can be argued that this Platonic and idealistic mode of expression is nothing more than a paraphrase of the words of Scripture that say that we ‘will see God as he is’ (1 Jn 3.2; Dz 1647), that we will see him no longer ‘in a mirror and in riddles’, but ‘face to face’ (1 Cor 13.12): *manifeste*, Dz 574; *clare*, Dz 693; *visione intuitiva, faciali, nulla mediante creatura in ratione objecti visi, immediate, nude, clare, aperte*, Dz 530. We must not, nevertheless, forget that the eschatological Jerusalm has no other temple but God *and the Lamb*, that it is not illuminated by sun or moon, but by the glory *of God*, ‘and its lamp was *the Lamb*’ (Rev 21.22f.). Moreover, the whole City is entrusted, not to God, but to the Lamb, and it ‘comes down in the splendour of God’s glory’ (21.9f.) only as the Bride of the Lamb. In its twelvefold structure it shows itself to have been entirely founded by the Lamb, and it shelters only those who ‘are written in the Lamb’s book of life’ (21.14; 21.27). And even when John speaks of the vision of God’s face and of God as the light of his worshippers, once again God is mentioned together with the Lamb, who sits together with him on the throne (22.1, 3ff.). The glory of God is nowhere, not for a single instant, separated from the Lamb, nor is the light of the Trinity divorced from the light of Christ, the Incarnate Son, in whom alone the cosmos is recapitulated and elevated to the rank of the bridal City. Thus, the definitive structure is none other than the one which is already now a reality, in spite of the transition from the *spes* to the *res*. This structure will necessarily be misunderstood if on earth the man Jesus is taken to be only a means to an end (*instrumentum*); but if this structure is already here the very centre of the entire form of God’s self-expression, then it will remain such even in eternity.

At the end of the *City of God*, Augustine attained a wonderful balance between the vision of God in the heart and the vision of his glory in the transfigured cosmos with the transfigured bodily senses. If things were such, says Augustine, that a suprasensual reality could be perceived only by spiritual vision, and that a corporeal reality could be perceived only by the bodily senses, then the Platonists would be right: ‘The spirit could grasp neither the suprasensual through the body nor the corporeal through itself. It would then be established that God could not possibly be seen even with the eyes of a spiritual body. And yet, such petty rationalism is mocked by true reason and the authoritative words of the Prophets’, which say that all flesh shall see the glory of God. ‘If it is evident that the spirit can see corporeal realities, should the power of the spiritual body then not extend to the point where it can perceive spiritual realities corporeally?’ Each of us has an interior experience of our corporeal life; but we perceive a corporeal life external to us through the mediation of our bodily senses, for we *see* whether or not a body is alive. ‘Thus, it may indeed be and it is quite credible that some day, in the new heaven and the new earth, we will see the corporeal reality of the world in a new manner: I mean in such a way that, wherever we turn our eyes, we will see with dazzling clarity—by means of the bodies which we bear and which we see—the omnipresent God who also rules over all corporeal reality. And this will not merely be in the manner in which we now see and know God’s invisible being in the works of creation, in a mirror only, enigmatically and fragmentarily. . . .

Rather, it will occur in the same manner as we now perceive the living human beings among whom we live and who occasion movements proper to life: as soon as we catch sight of them we not only surmise that they are alive, but we *see* that they live (although we cannot see their life without their bodies, while beyond all doubt we do behold their life by the mediation of their bodies). In just this way will we, by means of our own body, behold the incorporeal God who rules over all, wherever the spiritual rays of our bodily eyes fall' (*Civ. Dei* XXII, 29). This is a commentary on the text of the Apocalypse which, in order to be perfect, lacks only the christological aspect, which is what must supply the permanent foundation for this entire doctrine concerning the manner in which the divine δόξα has its expression in the total cosmos.

From this eschatological digression we now return to our central concern. No matter how much dynamic movement the form of revelation may be thought to contain, this form is more than a Platonic economy of symbolic signs which point beyond themselves to a spiritual reality—even if the dynamism of this expressive form leads us down into the depths of the Passion, the Death and Hades itself, and then up to the heights of an Ascension which withdraws the sensory image from our senses for our greater good. For this reason, the form of revelation is unconditionally more than what Protestant dialectics of whatever kind admits—whether, with Luther, we speak of the 'disguise' of the Word, or, with Kierkegaard, we understand his 'incognito' as a *latere sub contrario* (and, therefore, as the crucifixion of the human senses), or as an alienation from self in the Hegelian sense. The modality which God's expressive image attains because of the sin of the world (its character of scandal and judgment) does not abolish its revelatory and, therefore, expressive character; indeed, to the very end, it presupposes it. To the very shattering of the image of eternal life on the Cross, through and beyond all paradox, it remains *revelation,* indeed a revelation which is intensified to the utmost; it remains the supreme self-expression of this eternal life.

In this final intensification not only are we shown that God is love; at the same time it becomes manifest that, in the revelation of his love in flesh and blood, and in the sacrifice of these for the life of the world, God has committed himself unsurpassably and beyond all return. Whoever has been able to read the image of the Son who bled to death on the Cross will not then be really 'surprised' by the prolongation of this commitment in the Eucharist. The Eucharist will be regarded by such a person only as a dimension emerging from that first commitment. Nor, in this context, can the resurrection of the flesh and the eternal marriage-feast of the Lamb and his Bride give cause for wonder: all of it is already included in the self-commitment of God, who with divine freedom, but also with divine consistency, has fashioned for himself in his creation a body through which to reveal his glory.

2. AS REVELATION IN HIDDENNESS

The form of revelation corresponding to and conditioning the Biblical unity between knowledge (vision) and faith (nonvision) must, as form, from the outset span a threefold tension: (1) the inner-worldly tension between the manifestness of the body and the hiddenness of the spirit; (2) the tension, rooted in creation, between the cosmos (as image and expression of a free God who in no way is compelled to create) and God himself; and (3) the tension, rooted in the order of grace and redemption, between the sinner who has turned away from God and the God who reveals himself as redeemer in the concealment of the Cross.

These three orders cannot be reduced to one another or deduced from one another. Hence we should listen seriously to warnings against deriving the aesthetic character of the other two orders from the first order, which is the basis for what we are familiarly accustomed to term ‘the aesthetic dimension’. Nevertheless, important analogies do exist which exhibit the internal relations which obtain between the three orders. The first order cannot be fully understood without the second, and the second in turn has its concrete existence only in union with the third. Finally, the third order makes plain that the other two exist only for its sake and that it constitutes their ultimate foundation and rationality.

a. In the Revelation of Being

The order of body and spirit in the world, or, more broadly, the order of external appearance in the material sphere and of an inwardness that appears (whether it be man’s free rational spirit, or the animal soul, or the life-principle of plants, or an indefinable element of spontaneity in matter), establishes the mystery of beauty in an irresolvable paradox. For, what is manifested in a given manifestation is always, at the same time, the non-manifest. The soul expresses and represents itself in the living organism, and yet, precisely in so doing, it has its being ‘behind’ the manifestation and, through this manifestation, it builds for itself a cell, a husk, a containing cavity.[2] To beauty belong not only the ‘measure, number and weight’ of the organised material, but also the ‘energy’ of the organising agent, which expresses itself in form without losing itself to the external, and the ‘glory’ proper to being free and, still more deeply, proper to the ability to squander oneself in love. Along with the seen surface of the manifestation there is perceived the nonmanifested depth: it is only this which lends the phenomenon of the beautiful its enrapturing and overwhelming character, just as it is only this that insures the truth and goodness of the existent. This holds both for the beauty of nature and the beauty of art, and for the latter even in those abstract constructions which reduce the dimension of depth to a minimum by attempting to express everything at the horizontal level of surface, colour, and rhythm. For even such constellations as these may be seen in a thousand different ways by the eye, that by virtue of its own power is able to perceive the relationships of form in one of many different ways. This shows that even here there come into play phenomena of interior subjective expression, for instance, phenomena of intentionality (what the artist 'wanted to say') and of simple subjective disposition. One can seek in various ways to come to know the intention and disposition of someone who expresses himself on a surface: through objective information concerning what he meant to say, through subjective empathy, which proceeds from the data of the work itself, or finally through a loving comprehension of the artist's whole person. With works of art we can debate whether an investigation that goes beyond the data of the work, to busy itself with the person of the artist, his biography and psychology, contributes to the aesthetic understanding of the work or, on the contrary, detracts from it, seducing us from the contemplation of art into a consideration of other areas—for instance, sociology and cultural theory. This not least because we cannot assume that the work of art is intended in its author's mind, simply, to be an expression of himself. Quite the contrary, it is more often the expression of a world-view which the artist proposes as objective and valid for others as well. It is this world-view, and not himself, that he wants to fashion and make worthy of belief. For this reason, the artist will conceal himself in his work as much as he will reveal himself. To be sure, in so far as he gives shape to *his* worldview, the artist reveals something of himself; but in so far as, at a deeper level, he desires to manifest the world as he has understood it, he becomes unimportant to himself and treats himself as a mere medium which as such does not strive to reach any prominence. Looking ahead to the next step, one could object that in God's case it is different because, when God creates, he can represent only himself since he is identical with each of his possible 'world-views' (or possible worlds). This is true, and to that extent every possible world will be according to God's image and likeness and point to its author. On the other hand, however, in God the distances between work and creator are infinite; no natural bridge mediates between them, no ready-made system of expressions of an organic-spiritual kind provides a grammar, as it were, in terms of which an individual work could be spelled out and understood. Nor can the general ‘concept’ of Being (*analogia entis*) be regarded as such a grammar. It is the art of this artist, rather, that in the worldly form which he has invented as his image and likeness, he has on his own initiative also placed and conferred that expressive and revelatory power which allows us to look from this particular surface and understand this particular and unique depth. In other words, the Deis-tic concept of creation must be overcome, according to which God produces a finished work in the manner of an artist in this world—say, of a Rembrandt or a Bach—and the work then has within it everything necessary for it to point to its author and be interpreted. Artistic beauty here provides only a one-sided analogy, in so far as God is certainly free to create and remains free both while creating and after having created. But the analogy from natural beauty is needed to complete the picture, because in this case the necessary, internal, and living relationship between the expressive form and the self-expressing life-principle is the presupposition for the understanding of natural beauty. God’s accompanying, sustaining, and life-giving activity, his fidelity which is wholly adapted to his creatures and which cannot ‘let them fall’ from his hand, his love for what he has created, which is amply attested to in the creation itself and in the revelation of the Word (*nihil odisti eorum quae fecisti*), his commitment to the extreme point possible to God: all this permits the creature to entrust itself, to the point of self-sacrifice, to the depths of the form of the world.

What this first step was intended to illustrate was the concealment to be found in every worldly revelation. In order to read even a form within the world, we must see something invisible as well, and we do in fact see it. In a flower, a certain interior reality opens its eye and reveals something beyond and more profound than a form which delights us by its proportion and colour. In the rhythm of the form of plants—from seed to full growth, from bud to fruit—there is manifested an essence, and to reduce the laws of this essence to mere utilitarian principles would be blasphemous. And in the totality of beings, as they ascend and maintain their equilibrium, there is revealed a mystery of Being which it would be even more blasphemous and blind to interpret by reducing it to a neutral ‘existence’.[3] As especially the Romantics and many German Idealists deeply knew, we are initiated into these mysteries because we ourselves are spirit in nature and because all the expressive laws of the macrocosm are at work in ourselves. But, contrariwise, the spirit with its clarity of vision is not initiated into all the depths of the womb-like night of the world-soul and of the *natura naturans*. In order to ‘understand’ the forms of nature, the spirit must give up its own light and entrust itself to the loving intimations (*Ahndungen*) which only lead us with certainty when the intellect for a time renounces its argumentativeness. *Anima* begins to sing when she feels alone and thinks that *Animus*, her noisy husband, has left the house. But poets and lovers know how to overhear *Anima* and to induce her to sing. By a strangely contradictory cunning they are able to be both things at once: the persona which has again become involuntary and spontaneous, which is permeable to and receptive of the deep meaning of things, and the calculating persona that, by means of its art of verse, sound, and colour, lays for the fearful deer a trap in which it is caught, panting and unharmed. Thus, the artist is at once wise and ignorant: he knows profounder depths because before them he assumes an attitude of docile ignorance, and yet, technically, he commands the surface of artistic expression because he knows how to transform it into an expression of the sacred unknown. The same occurs with lovers if they do not linger in the antechamber of enamoured infatuation: that is, if they see their beloved in a wholly different way from others because the beloved's profound interior self is manifested to them in all its utterances and appears as that which is really precious and worthy of love. Every gift, every word speaks of this, and every reply they give contains their whole self. Exterior exchanges are only bridges by which the souls pass over into one another. In their act of begetting they receive from nature the deepest confirmation of their bold venture: by giving themselves to one another they are giving far more than they know or are able, but not more than they actually want to express, that is to say, themselves, indeed the fertile possibilities of themselves, which reach out beyond their own selves to a new life. In this way, here too the standard of individual nature has been surpassed. The lover does not give himself in order to fulfil himself or in order to become conscious of his own depths; he trusts in a nature which, to be sure, is in him but which nonetheless transcends him. The gesture which he makes is his own deepest gesture, but at the same time it is more than his gesture, because, through his individuality and even through his spiritual personality, the nature in him speaks and expresses itself. This law is at work not only in 'first love' or in the sexual act; it leaves its impress on the family and everything belonging to it; in short, it characterises all human life, which is a 'play' of 'representations' that are precisely most lively when, in the game of life, man assumes the most serious ethical responsibilities. Granted that it is *he* who is everywhere the focus of meaning: and yet it is not he, but a law of life and of the world which he represents, whose expression he is without his being able to equate himself with it, a law in whose affirmation he takes shelter, knowing that he will be acting best of all when he allows this great law to operate unobstructed through him. This could be the law of 'nature', which surpasses and contains all forms of social and individual human activity.

Or, in a more comprehensive sense, it could be the law of reality, of the Being of the world as such, which reveals itself in everything ordered by the law of nature all the more enigmatically because of the fundamental puzzle about why it exists at all.

The important thing in all this is that, at the level of total humanity, we can speak of a knowledge worthy of man only where we do not preliminarily bracket out 'the substratum of unknowing' (as the so-called 'exact sciences' attempt to do), but, rather, very expressly include this dimension of mystery. For it is only in this way that the figure which lies at the heart of the matter becomes legible as a figure of reality. This is a fact which in Hegel is attested to in a hundred different ways and variations, his final dissolution of it into a divine omniscience notwithstanding. Science and progressive research into mystery can very well be justified even when one recognises the fundamental nature of the mystery-zone of Being, and, the higher the degree of Being, the more this knowledge becomes deepened and concretised, precisely as the domain of mystery becomes the more flooded with light. It is only when such progress rests on the presupposition that the mystery of Being may be fundamentally dissolved by progressive stages (something which at best becomes plausible in terms of the materialistic hypothesis) that the blindness sets in which is no longer capable of seeing the objective phenomenon.

Even in the case of the tension in inner-worldly knowledge we can speak in terms of 'knowledge' and 'faith'. This has the advantage of showing that faith in God (at the second step) and Christian faith (at the third) in no way present a radically new phenomenon. The faith of the second and third steps, in its tension with religious and Christian knowledge, only fulfils on a higher level the structure of all human knowing. The Church Fathers always stressed this point when they said, here following the wisdom of the Greeks, that all knowledge had to begin with a natural faith and, indeed, that in life's most elementary things a certain trusting 'faith' in nature, its laws, and providence, remains the basis for all human conduct.[4] On the other hand, as against the rationalism of the Arians, the Cappadocians in particular emphasised the fact that it is not only God who is unknowable in his being; every being, they argued, even the smallest creature, may be grasped only through its utterances.[5] It is to have recourse to a violent solution—which in addition closes our eyes to the deeper reality—if, in the manner of Kant and his followers, we construct a concept of knowledge and science by first bracketing out the unknowable: our concept will then be necessarily finite and necessarily rationalistic. If our ruling idea is limited to what the cognitive subject is able to construe, then we wholly lose the phenomenon of objective self-manifestation, the self-revelation of the object from the heart of its own depths, and everything runs aground in shallow functionalism. A true science of living nature as, for instance, Goethe strived for in his morphology, or even a science of man’s cultural utterances, cannot be developed along such lines. Yet precisely these sciences are needed if theology, as the science of ‘faith’, is not to persist in its abstraction and isolation from the ‘exact’ sciences. In the same way, it follows from what we have said, that a ‘supernatural’ piety, oriented to God’s historical revelation, cannot be such unless it is mediated by a ‘natural’ piety, which at this level presupposes and includes a ‘piety of nature’ and a ‘piety of Being’.

b. In the Revelation of the Word

We will now, largely for reasons of order, mention the second step; this is not the place to discuss it thematically. The creation is the expression of God in a mode which is unique because God and creation are unique, and this mode constitutes the fundamental theme of all philosophy. For the multiplicity of beings in space and time points in every respect to the unity which is presupposed in and over them—in so far as each of these is one and yet all of them form natural kinds in groups of beings of ever greater universality. Nothing is more incomprehensible than this dissection of the one into individual and generic unity: it is precisely in this not-being-one of both that true unity reveals and conceals itself. Above all, it is the not-being-one which separates beings and human existence that, as the most extreme enigma of Being itself, points beyond itself to identity. This sounds abstract, but it can and must also be demonstrated to be the fundamental existential experience of everything that lives. What is being pointed to as identity is such as to forbid every attempt to deduce the dyad from the monad, for we will never ever come to understand how a monad that really deserves this name needed, for the sake of its own unity, to go out of itself into duality. In other words, by its very being creation shows that it is not necessary. Creaturely beings, thrown into existence, reveal themselves in obedience to a natural necessity; but God creates freely. Thus all contingency does indeed reveal him unmistakably as the free Creator, but also conceals him to a deeper degree precisely on account of the fact that we can nowhere make any firm deduction. Natural theology can only take the form of allowing all creaturely Being to become an indicative utterance about God (since everything derives from him and may thus bear his image and trace). But this positive, cataphatic theology must finally lead to a comprehensive negative (apophatic) theology. This may, in this way, be required *a priori*, and *a posteriori* it may be demonstrated on the basis of the speculative world-views of all peoples. Finally, the same thing can be shown on the basis of what, simplifying, could be called the 'natural theology' of the Bible: here we refer especially to the contemplation of the world in Wisdom literature, which emphasises in the strongest way the revelatory character of the created world but, by the same token, also the vanity of the world, that is to say, the non-existence of a sustaining bridge leading from the meaning of the world to the meaning of God. The wisdom, which at certain moments shines forth so brilliantly, in the last analysis (Job 28, Bar 3.29ff.) remains hidden from man. The world's sense and counter-sense remain inconclusively opposed (Qoh 3), and the wisdom of the world remains resignation. The step beyond it arrives at the prayer for the grace of a wisdom proper to God alone, but this step no longer belongs to natural religion. Taken in itself and abstractly, natural religion abides by the 'cipher-code' of the world's Being, which is the only word it receives from God. 'Taken abstractly' because as we have already seen, the creation's passive character as reflection is necessarily linked to an active splendour (ἀπαύγασμα) on the part of God, a will to reveal himself which is, therefore, already a factual manifestness. We will never be able to determine exactly the extent to which this splendour, given with creation itself, coincides objectively with what Christian theology calls 'supernatural revelation', which, at least for Adam, was not yet a specifically distinct revelation given in the form of words. A distinction is possible only from the standpoint of intention, and in this sense the first word was directed to man as a creature that had come forth from God, and the second word addresses him personally as a child of God's grace and calls him home to the heart of God. We know nothing of a humanexistence placed nakedly before the 'cipher-codes' of existence and which is thus fundamentally incapable of perceiving anything of the call of God's Word.

Nonetheless, we should not pass over the creaturely phase too quickly in our haste to reach the phase of the revelation of grace and the Word, which is higher and, therefore, alone supposed to be important. It is as creature that man first comes to know the ever-greater and, thus, ever-more-hidden God as his Lord. This unique relationship of revelation and concealment is inscribed in his very Being. For man, this is not a positive law from whose opacity he could appeal to the order of Being itself. If he rebels against it he will attack only himself. To be sure, the revelation of the Word is much more than just the awakening of an order of Being which had been forgotten due to sin. But it is always this in part, and therefore it always points to a zone of necessity behind which the creature cannot reach. Consequently, in the particular non-Evidence of Christian faith there always emerges something which, with the necessary qualifications, may be called the evidence of the Creator who reveals himself in concealment as the beginning and end of all the world's paths (Dz 1785).

Whether or not God is evident to the created spirit is a disputed question of scholastic theology which was answered in the negative so as to exclude an intuition of divine Being. But this negative decision was given with the qualification that every human intellect, in every act of cognition, implicitly knows God and, therefore, also strives for God implicitly with a natural love (Thomas, *De Ver*. 22, 2c and ad 1). This quality of 'being enfolded' in man's mental acts is nothing other than God's manner of being manifest in the creature: revealed in ever-greater concealment. Once the spiritual creature realises the content of the concept 'God', it immediately becomes evident that God can be evident to him in his knowing and loving only in such a way that, as the free cause of all that is, God must withdraw more and more from a comprehension within the finite object and the finite structure of spirit. *Si comprehendis non est Deus*. The mystery of Being, which is manifest, invites the creaturely spirit to move away from and beyond itself and entrust and surrender itself to that mystery. If this were not so, then the intuition of Being (in the first theoretical and practical principles) would be nothing other than the apprehension of finite, creaturely Being without its relation to the absolute, which in every respect would be absurd and self-contradictory. This means that the evidence itself points to and indicates the nature of *the analogia entis* within itself. But this does not imply that the finite spirit can wholly comprehend the analogy of Being, or that the spirit can measure in itself the relationship between finite and infinite Being. On the contrary, what is implied is that the finite spirit finds itself directed by the analogy of Being beyond itself (since, as spirit, it is, after all, finite Being) towards what can be 'given' to its evidence only in the mode of non-evidence. Thus, the finite spirit experiences itself as encompassed by and destined for another; it experiences its 'absolute dependency' (in Augustine's and Schleiermacher's sense) without being able to grasp what it is that it depends on; it experiences that all its petty thought is the content of an infinite thought which towers over it just as infinitely (*cogitor ergo sum*: 'I *am thought*, therefore I am'); it experiences, finally, that its entire personality cannot take one step into freedom or slavery without being an image of a free archetype which cannot be grasped because it is absolute and infinite.

Many objections could be raised against the expression 'natural faith', and it has, in fact, been abused in many different senses, especially by a pseudo-Christian traditionalism and agnosticism of both Catholic and Protestant vintage. But it can have a quite proper sense when it is regarded as an interior dimension of man’s natural ‘knowledge of God’. This knowledge does not begin where the evidence and the intuition of Being (into the *prima principia*) end; rather, it makes visible the creaturely rationality which takes us beyond ourselves and is proper to this evidence. This relationality does not imply that here the light is simply extinguished as the night of transcendence begins, which might then equally be seen as nothingness. Nor does it, on the other hand, imply as it were a ‘more subtle’ cognitive and conative transcendental faculty, which could in the last analysis be conceived and described as a form of *potentia naturalis*. Beyond these two related dangers, what it implies, rather, is that natural finite reason is directed to an infinite freedom by which created reason knows itself to be posited and before which it must persevere in an attitude of primary obedience that is beyond all demands, longings, and enterprises. This is the manner in which God’s Word really touches the creature at the most intimate point of its self-transcending Being. But it does not do so as a word that responds to questions that are raised, because in this case it would be a word that is already structured and arranged in anticipation of the question. It is a word addressed to the primary ‘indifference’ of the *Ecce Ancilla*.

c. In the Revelation of Man

What, with respect to the form of revelation, is the original meaning of the revelation of grace, specifically as contrasted to the revelation of creation? The revelation of grace is not the establishment of a new form within the created world; it is but a new manner of God’s presence in the form of the world, a new intimacy in our union with him, an intimacy to which the child of God has access and in which he participates. God’s ‘voice’, addressing Adam in paradise, is not one sensory phenomenon among others but rather God’s presence through grace in the voices of nature and of the heart.[6] The very Being of the world opens up its depths and shines forth with all the splendour of its origin: the countenance of the archetype becomes transparent in the medium which images it. From Adam’s *fides naturalis* the way leads, without break or stumble, to his *fides super-naturalis*: this is certainly a *fides ex auditu*, but which comes, however, not from a word that is spoken to him externally, but rather *per inspirationem internam*, in which God does not show himself unveiled in his essence, but in a ‘sign of his essence, a spiritual radiance of his wisdom’ by which he intimately instructs the first man beyond all his natural knowledge of God (Thomas, *De Ver.* 18, 3). Here aesthetic and religious inspiration stand in unbroken continuity, because the natural inspiration coming from the Being of the world is the locus and the vessel of God’s inspiration by grace. From this we must conclude that it is man’s fall through sin and his alienation from the immediate interior voice of things and of God in them that are to blame for the disjunction between both inspirations and for the fact that, because of man’s deafness, the *locutio interna* had to become a *locutio externa*—that is, a word from God which is spoken to man from outside, which in the Old Testament is the word of the law and of prophecy and, in the New Testament, the Incarnate and ecclesial Word. Accordingly, the ‘exteriorisation’ of the revelation of grace in an historical revelation of Word and Flesh retains something of the penitential character proper to a return to God, and this penitential character is evident to mankind at large when it sees itself constrained to submit its authentic or alleged interior inspirations to the authority of an external inspiration.

This is true notwithstanding the fact that man cannot subvert the plans of God and that God can use the havoc wrought by man to produce works that are all the more astounding and victorious. Thus, ‘positive’ revelation, beginning with the original promise at the explusion from paradise, and passing through Noah, Abraham, Moses all the way to Christ and his Church, is not a substitute for revelation or an emergency measure on God’s part, but rather it is, unconditionally, the interior and organic fulfilment of God’s original plan, even if its ultimate form in this world is the Cross and the glorifying light of the Holy Spirit that falls on the Cross.

Nevertheless, the *locutio interna* and *externa* of salvation-history may not simply be juxtaposed without any mediation. In the passage to which we have referred, Thomas expressly points to the fact that the original revelation of the word (to the Prophets and the Apostles) is interior, and that it is then proclaimed by them in an external, human way. What Abraham heard and followed as God’s voice was a call from the depths of the heart, and the experience of God enjoyed by the Patriarchs as well as by Moses and even by the Prophets was of the same kind. This is shown clearly by the manner in which Israel’s form of religion in its priestly, legal, prophetic, and state institutions and events grew out of the culture of the times—even with regards to prophecy. It is only contemplation which, in retrospect, unambiguously projects the supernatural revelation which manifests itself *within* the natural form into a particular form of revelation which has its place alongside the natural form. The possibility of isolated nature miracles in the Old Testament notwithstanding, this is fully justified considering the fact that a particular supernatural will of God is attested to throughout all the positive institutional and prophetic injunctions. The injunctions issued by Moses or some other leader of the people can with full reason be proclaimed as coming from God. This way of presenting it, however, gives salvation-history a certain miraculous character, both as a whole and especially in its external aspects, something which has not always proven advantageous to the faith of Israel and of Christians. The essential miracle that is God’s interior guidance was often projected into the images of external miracles which were portrayed as more and more marvellous (for instance, the exodus from Egypt and the wanderings in the desert). Such manner of portrayal could make the pious believer of later centuries come to feel the lack, in his own real present, of similar miraculous testimonies on the part of Yahweh, could finally evoke in him a feeling of being forsaken by God. And it was only through great struggles and conflicts of conscience that the poetization and external heroicization of the earlier periods of Israel’s founding could be overcome by the strenuous interiorization practised by Israel’s pious believers and the *anawim Yahweh*; only thus was the authentic faith of Abraham, Moses, and Elijah recovered and made to prevail. In short, even in the Old Testament period revelation is much more ‘incarnate’ than the average believer of the Old and the New Testaments would be willing to grant: ‘the Word of God is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it’ (Deut 30. 14; Rom 10.8). What the Jews learned in a late stage of their religious history, this the Christians of today also learn for themselves under the pressure of critical Bible studies. In spite of its tendency to glorify Israel’s heroic period, late Jewish Wisdom literature carried through this turning to the interior reality of God’s dealings with great thoroughness: God’s Word is a wisdom that is bestowed on the person who prays with humility. This is a wisdom, moreover, which is objectively at work in the cosmos no less than in history and which does not limit itself in deistic fashion to the wise ordering of the created world. Rather, it is the presence of the creating and graciously providential God in all worldly form. What is classified in a literary sense as the ‘personification’ of God’s Word, Wisdom, and Spirit in the world is, in a theological sense, faith’s living awareness that God personally indwells the world and, in particular, the chosen people—the conviction that, by God’s turning to redeem Israel and, through Israel, the world, the more general reality, grounded in creation, of God’s concealed self-revelation in the form of the world receives an unprecedented compression and intensification.

The presence of the living and gracious God fulfils the form of the creaturely reality of man. The tension between ‘institution’ and ‘event’ is first of all a universally human and universally historical tension, and for this reason it permeates even the Old and New Testaments. But the living God is present in such a way that what is human must adapt itself to his essential living holiness and must orient and model itself on it. Hence the emphasis in the first place on judgement, since it not only manifests God’s sublime transcendence and omnipotence over all that is worldly but, to precisely the same extent, makes known his immanence within the human, which God fills by establishing it and orienting it towards himself. The Prophets' word of judgment is predominantly a socio-ethical and socio-political word. The manner of man's life is purified and rectified by the fire of God's indwelling Word. We can already begin to see here the basic form of the New Testament: man's right relationship to God has its measure in his right relationship to the world, to his neighbour. The *doxa* of the gracious God who descends on the sanctuary of creation is, in essence, the man who has been conformed to God. *Gloria Dei vivens homo*: all Irenaeus' theology would have to be developed from this starting-point.[7]

Thus, the faith of Israel is indeed a wholly personal fidelity to the faithful and present God; but, precisely as such, it is a faith that experiences its own truth in the truth of the believing man. The faith which is confirmed in God is also confirmed humanly, in the world, and this unity of both confirmations characterises the man who is 'just' in the Old Testament sense. Initially, therefore, it is not paradoxical, but wholly normal, for the just man to want to see an earthly 'reward' for his fidelity to faith. He cannot renounce this 'reward', for the sake of the very form of his faith, because the revelation that comes to him is not that of a worldless God, but rather that of the Creator of heaven and earth, by whose gracious judgment (*Gericht*) all things attain to their interior rightness (*Richtigkeit*). Supernatural as it is, the faith of Israel implies the whole sphere of natural and created law (*Recht*).[8] The faith of Israel, therefore, is not a 'dogmatic' faith which 'holds true' certain mysteries that by nature cannot be seen. Rather, it is a faith which always sees, perceives, and verifies within the obedience of faith, even and especially when, because of its disobedience, Israel must suffer the punishment with which it had been clearly threatened. Here it finds the classical example of the rightness of its faith, not only for itself but, according to its self-understanding, for all peoples.

Nevertheless, this verification occurs and yet does not occur. The wise man experiences God's assistance, but Job, the just man, cries out to a God who treats him unjustly. Faith believes in the visibility of Providence; but does it also see it? It believes that *in the end* the evil man will be punished and the good man rewarded. But when will this 'in the end' be realised? And, in faith's interiorization, what is the meaning of 'the good man', 'the just man'? Are not all sinners? Does not the hope of Israel thus go beyond the form of its own faith? Does it not hope for a day of the Lord that will make everything credible by bringing it into the light and judging it? Israel thus hopes in an eschatological verification of its own fidelity which does not, after all, see: *videbit omnis caro* *salutare Dei* (Is 40.5, Lk 4.6). The whole ascending period of God's revelation in Israel is also the time of an ever greater concealment of God, in spite of the ever greater evidence pointing to a revelation which is truly unique and different from all other religions. Perhaps it is more in the meditation that reflects on history—but here quite really—that the 'childhood of Israel' emerges as a luminous, unambiguous time. Already the period of the Judges is more confused, and the period of the Kings is deeply problematic both externally and in essence. Israel is never surer of its God than when it appears to have been forsaken by him in exile. The return which appears to fulfil the promises is everything but fulfilment, and, while interiorly the Holy Spirit is bringing the canon of the Scriptures to maturity, externally the kingdom is disintegrating even before Christ's coming, so that Yahweh's faithful ones can understand themselves only as the 'remnant' which survives what spiritually has already fallen into decay. While he is quite comprehensible in his revelation and even demands the understanding of faith, the God of Israel proves himself in history to be ever more incomprehensible and, as such, he exhibits himself ever more truly as who he is. And only the most living kind of faith, sustained by revelation, is capable of knowing him in precisely this form of revelation as the true and living God.

In Jesus Christ, God's revelation in concealment reaches perfection, and this not only in the events of the Passion but in the Incarnation itself—already in the very fact that the Word becomes flesh. This is an inconceivable paradox on which all the paradoxes of creation and of salvation-history converge. For, to be sure, what is fulfilled superabundantly in the Incarnation is what creation had begun: God's expressing and representing himself, the infinite and free Spirit's creating for himself an expressive body in which he can, first of all, manifest himself but, even better, in which he can conceal himself as 'the one who is ineffably exalted above everything which is outside him and which can be conceived' (Dz 1782). And there is likewise fulfilled in a superabundant manner what God himself had introduced into Israel: the fact that, in his own Word, spoken into history and into the heart of the people, he explains himself to them ever more deeply and abandons himself to them ever more defencelessly, and that precisely in this manner he reveals himself more and more as he who remains inconceivably concealed. All particular considerations aside, the Incarnation of the Word means the most extreme manifestness within the deepest concealment. It is manifestness because here God is explained to man by no means other than himself—not primarily through words and instruction, but by his own being and life. What is most familiar to man is suddenly turned for him into a word and a teaching about God: how could he *not* understand! But it is concealment because the translation of God's absolutely unique, absolute, and infinite Being into the ever more dissimilar, almost arbitrary and hopelessly relativised reality of one individual man in the crowd from the outset appears to be an undertaking condemned to failure. For, if ‘man’ is truly to become the language of God,[9] this cannot occur by straining man’s nature toward the superhuman, or by his wishing to stand out by becoming greater, more splendid, more renowned and stupendous than all others. He will have to be a man like everyone because he will be man for everyone, and he will exhibit his uniqueness precisely through his ordinariness: ‘He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the busy streets’ (Is 42.2 = Mt 12.19). The insignificant must be the appearance of what is most significant. We could understand it better if the hiddenness of this ‘flesh’ were supposed to represent the silence of the Word, God’s pure concealment. But no: precisely this hiddenness is to be the speech in which God desires to make himself known definitively and insurpassably, beyond misunderstanding or confusion with any other human word. Already here, in anticipation, we can sense something of the trinitarian character of this revelation: if things are really to be this way, then there must be Three in God who reveal themselves. The Son reveals God in the form of a servant, but the Holy Spirit, being the glory of God, illumines the servant’s form and lets its glory be seen. But this is not enough. If in the simple human word the Son had not said more than a man can say, if in his witness to the Father he had not also had the support of the Father’s witness to him (as the Father’s Word), then the Son’s transfiguration by the Holy Spirit could not have made shine forth anything more than what already was manifest in the Son’s humanity. The interior and necessary reciprocal ordering of these aspects of the form of revelation to one another (their theological three-dimensional plasticity, one could almost say) will form part of their evidential force for the eyes of faith. It would therefore not be enough to want to solve the paradoxes of Christ’s form at the level of character: he who was at once so humble and so arrogant and self-certain; he who was at once meek and obedient as a lamb and angrily zealous for God’s cause, so abrupt that he would walk away from his opponents; he who was so unassuming and yet so all-embracing in his demands. . . . These tensions may indeed reveal dimensions of his humanity; but they can be understood and resolved only as functions of the trinitarian dimensions. Although only the Son of God is man, his humanity necessarily becomes the expression of the total triune essence of God; only thus can he be the manifestness of absolute Being.

Here we once again encounter the difficulty of the revelation in the Word. This revelation, as we saw, does not have its place *alongside* the revelation in the creation, as if it competed with it, but *within* it. In the same way, the revelation in the Incarnation has its place within the revelation of God’s Being in man, who, as God’s image and likeness, conceals God even as he reveals him. In this instance this means that, in Christ, man is disclosed along with God. This is so because God does not use human nature like an external instrument in order to articulate, from the outside and from above, the Wholly Other which God is; rather, God takes on man’s nature as his own and expresses himself from within it through the expressive structures of that nature’s essence. Thus the interiority in this expressive relationship derives from the fact that it is the Creator who is at work, and that he does not misuse his own creation for a purpose alien to it, but rather, by his becoming man, he could only honour it and crown it and bring it to its own most intimate perfection. In abstract language we could say that it is Being itself (and not an existent among others) which, in this existent that is man, has found for itself a definitive expression. Here we must be mindful of the fact that God, as absolute Being as opposed to all finite existents, is indeed the ‘Wholly Other’; but, precisely for this reason, he is also the ‘Not-Other’ (*Non-Aliud*), as Nicholas of Cusa says. God is able, therefore, to reveal in Christ at once God and man, and this not in alternation, as is often suggested simplistically, but simultaneously. Yet this occurs in such a way that the relativity of the human (as creaturely) does not appear to be oppressed and violated by the simultaneous absoluteness of the divine.

Nonetheless, if it is to be grasped objectively for what it shows itself to be, the Christ-form demands of those who encounter it that they accompany Christ through all its dimensions: indeed, the Incarnation took place precisely to make it possible that men should thus accompany and be carried along by him. Because this man is *seen* for what he shows himself to be, he must also (if he is to be understood and not remain a senseless puzzle) be *heard* as the Word of the Father, as God’s decisive utterance which recapitulates the whole revelation of the Word by drawing it together in a definitive form (Heb 1.1ff.). When man realises inwardly and humanly what it is that *this* man expresses, he realises that to understand him, he must believe him. And, what is more, he experiences this not as a vague eventuality, but with compelling force.

It is only after one has seen the dialectic of revelation and concealment in the sensory form of the ‘Incarnation as such’ that one should go on to grapple with the particular modality of this sensory form, which springs from the reality of sin, divine wrath, atonement, and redemption. If the particular mode is taken to be the substance, then everything dissolves into a pure dialectic of contradictions: the form is destroyed and faith becomes the pure opacity of the *credo quia absurdum*. Our task, rather, consists in coming, with John, to see his ‘formlessness’ (*non est species ei neque decor . . . quasi absconditus vultus ejus*) as a mode of his glory because a mode of his ‘love to the end’, to discover in his deformity (*Ungestalt*) the mystery of transcendental form (*Ubergestalt*). His bearing of the world’s sin (Jn 1.29), his being made sin for us (2 Cor 5.21) is understandable only as a function of the glory of love, before and after and, therefore, also during his descent into darkness: what we have before us *is* pure glory, and even though it is really a concealment and really an entering into darkness (embracing even the descent into hell), it is always but a function of its opposite. What is more, for the believer who sees it is the appearance of the opposite: *latens* ET APPARENS *sub contrario* (quae sub his figuris vere latitas). If the Cross radically puts an end to all worldly aesthetics, then precisely this end marks the decisive emergence of the divine aesthetic, but in saying this we must not forget that even worldly aesthetics cannot exclude the element of the ugly, of the tragically fragmented, of the demonic, but must come to terms with these. Every aesthetic which simply seeks to ignore these nocturnal sides of existence can itself from the outset be ignored as a sort of aestheticism. It is not only the limitation and precariousness of all beautiful form which intimately belongs to the phenomenon of beauty, but also fragmentation itself, because it is only through being fragmented that the beautiful really reveals the meaning of the eschatological promise it contains. The point of these remarks is not to tailor the Cross and the *kenosis* of God to the proportions and laws of a natural aesthetic. Nevertheless, the form which gives expression to the meaning of a radically sinful existence which yet stands under the sign of the hope for redemption is already, as such, mysteriously related, beyond itself, to the form of the Redeemer, and this form, in turn, takes the modalities of fallen existence upon itself so as to transvalue them by redemptive suffering. This became evident when we dealt earlier with subjective sensibility: the earthly senses must die to themselves in order to rise up again as spiritual senses, and thus the ultimate standard is not to be found in the former but in the latter.

This last twist of the problem of concealment in revelation now shows where this whole dialectic was leading. The basic form of ‘ever-greater dissimilarity however great the similarity’ (*in tanta similitudine major dissimilitudo,* Dz 432) is irrevocable; but it can vary from being a philosophical ‘negative theology’—in which God’s Being remains infinitely hidden and unfathomable over and beyond all analogous utterances about him—all the way to being a ‘negative theology’ within the theology of revelation, in which God ‘appears’ unreservedly and, therefore, even in his ever-greater incomprehensibility really comes into the foreground and into the form that appears. God’s incomprehensibility is now no longer a mere deficiency in knowledge, but the positive manner in which God determines the knowledge of faith: this is the overpowering and overwhelming inconceivability of the fact that God has loved us so much that he surrendered his only Son for us, the fact that the God of plenitude has poured himself out, not only into creation, but emptied himself into the modalities of an existence determined by sin, corrupted by death and alienated from God. This is the concealment that appears in his self-revelation; this is the ungraspability of God, which becomes graspable because it *is* grasped.

We must note carefully that this characteristic of the God who shows his incomprehensibility in his self-revelation belongs to the objective evidence of the form of revelation, which means that it is above all not conditioned by the darkness of earthly faith. Thus, this characteristic will not be lost to the form of revelation even in the vision of God face to face; on the contrary, it is precisely in the beatific vision that God's ever-greater incomprehensibility will necessarily have to constitute the supreme content of the vision, despite the real grasp of God which will be bestowed. It would be ridiculous—and would run in the face of all religious experience of God—to interpret the *visio facialis* as a *comprehensio* (κατάληψις) in the sense of worldly science or even of philosophy: the axiom *si comprehendis non est Deus* is as true in heaven as on earth, only there it is transformed from the *spes* to the *res*. To see God *sicuti est* means precisely this. This is also the proper place for our vision of God's *kenosis* in salvation-history, which we will come to see in the light of God's δόξα. And it is precisely in this light that the *kenosis* will emerge to view as what it is in reality: not as God's 'self-alienation' (as if the God who is comprehensible in himself were here doing something incomprehensible and thereby himself became incomprehensible—or vice-versa), but as the appearance, conditioned by the world's guilt, of the God who in himself is incomprehensible in his love for the world. Thus there is no contradiction where the *visio facialis* is concerned in saying that in this vision, we will *see* the God who always remains ungraspable in spite of the fact that he is grasped. In the same way, there is no contradiction if, looking back from the vision of heaven to faith on earth, we say that, in its own way, faith itself is a seeing and an understanding of the mystery of faith, though the mystery is not thereby robbed of its character as mystery.

C. CHRIST THE CENTRE OF THE FORM OF REVELATION

1. PLAUSIBILITY

The expression the ‘centre of the form of revelation’ does not refer to a particular section of this form however central which, in order to be read as form, would then essentially need to be filled out by other more peripheral aspects. What the phrase is intended to denote is, rather, the reality which lends the form its total coherence and comprehensibility, the ‘wherefore’ to which all particular aspects have to be referred if they are to be understood. The fact that Christ is this centre—and not, for instance, merely the beginning, the initiator of an historical form which then develops autonomously—is rooted in the particular character of the Christian religion and in its difference from all other religions. Judaism has no such centre: neither Abraham, nor Moses, nor one of the Prophets, is the figure around which everything else is ordered. Christ, by contrast, is the form because he is the content. This holds absolutely, for he is the only Son of the Father, and whatever he establishes and institutes has its meaning only through him, is dependent only on him and is kept vital only by him. If for a single moment we were to look away from him and attempt to consider and understand the Church as an autonomous form, the Church would not have the slightest plausibility. It would be plausible neither as a religious institution (for its sacraments and the *diakonia* belonging to them are ‘bearable’ only as modes by which the living *Kyrios* is present) nor as an historical power for order and culture in the sense of the *Action Française* and of the German Catholic Nazis. On the contrary, seen in this way it loses all credibility, and for this reason the Church Fathers often compared the Church’s light with the light of the moon, borrowed from the sun and showing its relativity most clearly in its phases. The plausibility of Christianity stands and falls with Christ’s, something which has in essence always been acknowledged. For even the doctrine of the *notae Ecclesiae* has never seriously been intended to be taken in isolation from Christology: the *notae* are the properties which are exacted by Christ’s promises and which can be discovered in history as the fulfilment of Christ and as proofs of his living power.

To support such an edifice, the foundation must be of indestructible solidity. It must not be constructed in such a way that on it only probabilities can be erected: it must offer hard evidence, and not subjective but objective evidence. At this crossroads many will be inclined to part ways with us, and for this reason we must render a precise account of what we mean by 'objective evidence'. It is the kind of evidence that emerges and sheds its light from the phenomenon itself, and not the sort of evidence that is recognised in the process of satisfying the subject's needs. The form that we encounter historically is convincing in itself because the light by which it illumines us radiates from the form itself and proves itself with compelling force to be just such a light that springs from the object itself. Naturally, this does not mean that the form must enlighten just *anyone,* or that this someone must not fulfil and bring along prerequisites which are just as specific as, for instance, those expected (in a wholly different field) from an atomic physicist if he is to understand certain formulas of his science, or from an art historian if he is to recognise the quality of a Teniers and tell it apart from counterfeits. As is clear from these examples, the subjective conditions can be varied and sophisticated; but no one will ever argue that it is a person's formation that actually produces the law of physics or the beauty and value of the work of art. The fact that Christ 'says nothing to me' in no way prejudices the fact that, in and of himself, Christ says everything to everyone. And what is involved here is not, as in individual sciences, the mere technical adaptation to the thought-patterns and conceptual dialect of this particular branch of knowledge. What is at stake, rather, is the correspondence of human existence as a whole to the form of Christ. Not only intellectual but also existential prerequisites must be fulfilled in order that the form that makes its claim on one's total existence may also find a hearing in this total existence. So much must be granted at once to the so-called 'method of immanence' of Blondel and his followers and, today, to the school of Bultmann.

But this is also where we encounter a sharp divide. The subjective condition of the possibility of seeing an object for what it is (a condition which can be very far-reaching) ought never ever to intrude upon the constitution of the object's objective evidence, or simply to condition this evidence and thus be substituted for it. In theology, even the most existential form of Kantianism must distort and thus fail to see the phenomenon. Not even the scholastic axiom *quidquid recipitur, secundum modum recipientis recipitur* (which in modern terminology would mean that the object requires a categorical or existential prior understanding) can blunt this assertion. For, if Christ is what he claims to be, then he cannot be so dependent on subjective conditions as to be hindered by these from making himself wholly understandable to man nor, contrariwise, can man, without his grace, supply the sufficient conditions of receiving him with full understanding. The prior understanding is fundamentally not something which the subject applies as a contribution to Christian knowledge: it is something which arises necessarily from the simple and objective fact that God becomes man and, to this extent, corresponds to the universal human forms of existence and of thought. But, within these universal forms, God can make known that which he specifically is only on his own initiative.

There will be time later to say and take to heart many things concerning the facilitating manner in which Christ's Gospel—that is, Christ's form—can and should be presented and proclaimed by the Church to each age, including our own. All this has its quite proper importance, especially in keeping us from turning relative forms and patterns of thought from the past of the Church's history into screens that hide the form of Christ. But in respect of our present discussion of the central core of the form of revelation such considerations are wholly unimportant and irrelevant. If the form of Christ itself is what it shows itself to be *of itself*, then no particular age or culture can of itself be privileged in respect of this phenomenon. The decisively illumining factor must lie in the phenomenon itself, and this in two senses. First, in the sense that the figure which Christ forms has in itself an interior rightness and evidential power such as we find—in another, wholly worldly realm—in a work of art or in a mathematical principle. And, second, in the sense that this rightness, which resides within the reality of the thing itself, also possesses the power to illumine the perceiving person by its own radiant light, and this not simply intellectually but in a manner which transforms man's existence. Now, the evidential power (which is, admittedly, of a very special kind) lies in the phenomenon itself and demands a theological act of seeing the form. But it would be insufficient to limit this evidence, as has become customary nowadays, to the power of the grace that transforms existence and produces faith. This is usually the result of opposing a Jesus of history, who is perceived with anything but overwhelming clarity, to a Christ of the community's and the individual's faith. To this we will have to return later. But here we must say at least the following: such an either / or misses precisely the point which is here at stake and which alone can provide the bridge between the 'historical-critical method' of an obstinate historical scientism (to which apparently only the theologians cling any more and which understandably can never attain to vision since it is already methodologically blind) and the way of faith which, because of the definition of faith it presupposes, is in no better position to attain to real vision. The 'historical-critical' destruction of the form put forward by the Evangelists, for instance, only makes sense as an exercise if one supposes that faith (and the Evangelists are believers along with the whole primitive community) as such can only be subjective and cannot correspond to any objective evidence. And it is indeed fully consistent with this view that the ‘historical-critical’ researchers are quite incapable of perceiving the objective form which the Gospels propose: this is because, on the basis of the same prejudice, they do not even bother to look but, in advance, posit an objective and unknown *x* as motivation for the proposed form. This much only lest the impression should arise that the ‘historical-critical’ method is the only ‘scientific’ method, and lest the description of a form (which, it has been shown, cannot be constructed as a whole out of parts) should be dismissed *a priori* as unscientific popular theology. What unscientific bunglers Burckhardt, Wölfflin and the great portrayers of historical forms must then have been!

The first prerequisite for understanding is to accept what is given just as it offers itself. If certain excisions are practised on the Gospel from the outset, the integrity of the phenomenon is lost and it has already become incomprehensible. The Gospel presents Christ’s form in such a way that ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’, Incarnation to the point of suffering and death, and resurrected life are all interrelated down to the smallest details. If the Resurrection is excised, then not only certain things but simply everything about Jesus’ earthly life becomes incomprehensible. Or if we understand the Risen Lord as merely the ‘Christ of faith’, without an interior identity with the Jesus of history, then once again the whole form becomes incomprehensible. The first, earthly form is legible only if we see that it is to be wholly ‘used up’ in death and resurrection. But death and resurrection (which constitute a strict ideal unity) are comprehensible only if they are understood as the transformation of this earthly form by God’s power, and not as the form’s spiritualisation and apotheosis. Neither the one nor the other half is the ‘Word of God’, but both halves together, and both together only to the extent that the Word is understood from the outset as the bearer of the Spirit, and the Spirit as the spiritualiser and transfigurer of the Word and, thus, as the Spirit both of the Word and of the one who has spoken (sent) the Word. Or if the trinitarian dimension is excluded from the objective form of revelation, then again everything becomes incomprehensible. Not the smallest plausible interconnection is then retained, because each element is plausible only within the wholeness of the image. We must now develop this in more detail.

2. MEASURE AND FORM

One thing is measured by another; but if what is measured and what measures (or vice-versa) is a part or an aspect of a whole, then we can say that the whole is measured by itself. Only if parts or aspects of a whole are measured by each other can they together produce a form. Form consists only of parts or aspects that are distributed and adapted (*pro-portio*) to one another, but in such a way that the parts do not have their ultimate measure from themselves, but from the whole that is, at the same time, both the distributor and the ultimate consumer of its own measuring. And other forms may be held up as a measure to such a form, in order to see whether they are in harmony with one another or not. But the insertion of a form which is complete in itself into a larger context cannot touch, much less destroy, that form in itself, even if it does not harmonise. Measure is not bound to matter and quantity, as the virtue of moderation shows, which doubtless rises above the bodily even if, as 'temperance', it is rooted in the body. There is measure also in what is purely psychic and spiritual, and it is not less verifiable than material measure.

If we were to speak of measure and form in the case of Christ, surely this could not be in the sense that he could be measured with an alien standard from without: if he is the 'Unique One', then no universal and external measure suffices to measure him; essentially he can be measured only by himself. To apply an alien standard would mean to go against his own utterances about himself. It is a secondary question to ask how his measure relates to the other measures of the world surrounding him, the world into which he entered and of which, as man, he is a part. The question may be asked adequately only if we do not lose sight of the fact that he claims himself to be the measure for all other worldly and human measures, and that consequently he cannot subject himself definitively (as anything more than a trial) to any overarching human measure.

If he measures himself by himself (and there can be no question of anything else), then he causes one aspect of himself to be measured by another in order to demonstrate their harmony or 'being-in-tune' with one another. 'To tune' (*stimmen*, as a transitive verb) comes from the vocabulary of music, and it means to give to a string the correct pitch of sound (which, once again, is a matter of reciprocity). 'To be in tune' (*stimmen*, as an intransitive verb), on the other hand, is the result of having been tuned. 'Disposition' (*Stimmung*), or 'pitch' of mood, shows that the concept can also be applied to the psychic sphere. A person, too, can or cannot be 'in tune' or possess the correct 'pitch' of disposition for a certain event. When the concept is used Christologically it refers primarily to the concordance (*Übereinstimmung*) between Christ's mission and his existence. To his mission belongs his teaching, but, as well as this, his life's task as a whole, which makes him undergo his suffering in conformity with his utterances. In his own view, there is between his mission and his existence a perfect concordance: these two things 'are in tune' with one another, and no one can accuse him of any disharmony (*Unstimmigkeit*, Jn 8.46). The fact that no one can do this proves that, in his view, others besides himself can also perceive and judge the concordance of which we speak—at least up to a certain point. They have enough vision at least to allow them the negative ability to ascertain the absence of every disharmony.

Now, with Christ this concordance between his task and his existence may be traced back to the fact that he does not do his own will but that of the Father, that he has not therefore given himself his task but rather accepted it in obedience. Thus what we have is not just a particularly impressive instance of harmony between 'idea' and 'existence', between 'ideality' and 'reality'; rather, what occurs is that the living God claims for his service Christ's whole human existence, along with both its ideality and its reality. The mandated task is divine, its execution human, and the proportion of perfect 'attunement' prevailing between them is both human and divine.

But with this we have not yet unambiguously gone beyond the level, say, of a simple prophet or perhaps even of the figure of a Greek god that could be considered as the perfect earthly representation of a 'divine' principle. The prophet is a mere human being who for a longer or shorter period of time stands in the service of God as having been especially chosen. And even when a prophet—as in the case of Hosea or Jeremiah—must place whole areas of his intimate personal life at the disposal of the task he has been given, even so there can be no question of his identifying himself with his task. The Greek god, on the other hand, may be the apparition of the divine both in stone or in verse, but he can never quite attain to human life itself. In Jesus, the presupposition for his actions and attitudes (even before this is expressly formulated by John) is the fact that, as man, he is identical with the task given him by the Father. And this does not mean that he is identical with one task among others—as is the case with the Prophets—but identical with the total task which encompasses and replaces all others. The whole direction of his existence progresses towards a death which is not only awaited, reckoned with, affirmed and longed for, but a death which is understood to be the quintessence of his mission to redeem the world. His increasing failures, his isolation, the scandal which he is, do not compel him to adopt a new strategy; rather, they slowly disclose the real meaning that was there from the beginning. Nowhere is there a break or a re-orientation; these can be found at most in the slow change of attitude on the part of the leaders of the people. And if at the beginning of his ministry, in his manner of addressing and inviting the people of God, there may be detected a tone of hope, this is the sound of the truth of the divine call itself, which does not simply put a brave face on things (while internally it has already given up all hope) but which possesses the spiritual sound of the grace of God himself—a sound that, nevertheless, has nothing of utopian expectations about it, hopes which the disappointing course of events would then have to call to order. If Christ's steady and serene onward progress to his own destruction were the subsequent construction of his disciples, then this construction would possess such super-human religious genius as to surpass by far that of its model. They would not only have had to place in his mouth (uninventable) sayings which nobody understood when they were uttered, but they would also have had to give poetic shape to a whole existence to go along with the sayings—an existence which not only harmonises with those sayings, but which could be shown to possess such accord only by reference to the death and Resurrection that followed. In order to prophesy retrospectively in this manner, the disciples would have needed to possess a theological Christology so perfect that we cannot suppose them to have had it at that time, other than in the form of an inspiration by the Spirit. But this inspiration itself would have had to share the nature of human poetry, for God's Holy Spirit cannot be troubled to transfigure and establish order in something which does not correspond to any historical truth.

What the Synoptics unambiguously insinuate by Jesus' behaviour and, beyond this, what they say expressly with words, is that Jesus identified his existence with his universal mandate from God, and that without hesitation he threw this existence into the balance. This affirmation receives only a fuller formulation in John, without its essential structure being changed. No attempt (such as Jewish theology is keen to make) to distinguish a prophetic Old Testament Jesus behind the Synoptics from a deified Jesus in Paul and John has ever fully succeeded. The texts simply will not allow such a distinction, or such a philological massacre would be required to achieve it that the total spiritual form, which becomes clear and transparent if the identification is granted, would degenerate into a puzzle full of contradictions.

One way of meeting the problem would be to advance the extreme eschatological thesis. This requires that Jesus' own expectation of the Kingdom simply was not fulfilled and that the first believers twice had to re-interpret this bankruptcy: first as Resurrection (which is seen as the dawning of the Kingdom), and then as a merely spiritual resurrection in faith in view of the fact that the Parousia had not occurred. This would then allow us to dismiss Jesus as a poor visionary who lived and died in good faith, and to exonerate (likewise on psychological grounds) the community which both was deceived and continues to deceive itself enthusiastically. Now, as a human being, Jesus is doubtless a person on whom his task makes inconceivably excessive demands. But does this necessarily make him an unbalanced eccentric? Can he really be classified in this psychic category if one keeps in mind, not only his influence on world-history, but also the serene equilibrium of his doctrine? To be sure, if we follow the eschatological theory we can portray the Sermon on the Mount, for instance, as a utopian ethics for the interim period until the coming of the Kingdom. By the same token, all later Christian ethics can then be pilloried as a diluted adaptation of what is historically impossible to what is possible for man. (This judgment, however, would mean that Christian ethics is a betrayal of Jesus' original idea.) But, in following this trend of thought, how can we overlook the fact that this ethics nowhere presents itself as an interim measure? That would surely have needed saying! From the outset, in fact, it appears as established on the foundation of Jesus' divine mission, on the guarantee of its implementability as insured by Jesus' commitment of himself. The rock-like hardness of each of his sayings derives from the fact that each of them coincides with the totality of his existence: it lies in the phenomenon that he does not only 'remain true to his word' and is ready to die for it, but that he himself is this Word, which from the beginning reckoned with the particular kind of death proper to his existence—and it was precisely with this that we could not and should not have reckoned in terms of the eschatological thesis. In this the thesis contradicts the phenomenon.

John makes explicit what was implied in the Synoptics from the outset: that in Jesus there is not only a factual 'concordance' between his existence and his divine mission, but that *de jure* he himself is this concordance and that, therefore, he represents it for all men. This makes Jesus the essential 'rightness' between God and man, and hence the norm and the form of what Paul calls the *justitia Dei*, no matter how many other aspects this concept may bring together. Until Christ's coming, the norm by which to measure human works could only be the law, and by this norm they were always necessarily found to be inadequate. But Christ not only meets all that the law requires of man; beyond this, he is the identity between the divine demand and the human fulfilment. Thus, he is not only one who is wholly adequate: he is the measure itself. This is why he has 'become God's justice for us' (1 Cor 1.30), 'so that in him we might become the justice of God' (2 Cor 5.21), and this 'by the faith of Jesus Christ' (Rom 3.22), which is what all the law's measures pointed to from the outset. What Paul makes explicit here may already be wholly found in the claims of the Jesus of the Synoptics (*cf*. Mt 5.10 and 11!) in the *exousia* that he claims for himself, which he sovereignly communicates as his own to his followers and which, according to his listeners, is the power with which he speaks (Mk 1.22, 27; 7.29; Lk 4.32, 36). In addition to other meanings relating to man's justification and derived from its primary sense, *justitia Dei* above all means the rightness (*Richtigkeit, justesse*) of everything pertaining to God, and this ‘rightness’ can, by its very nature, only be *shown*, since there exists no measure by which it could itself be measured. For one long moment this rightness could and should be regarded as a static order suggested and even demanded by the existence of the Mediator between God and man and by the unsurpassable and incontrovertible result of his action. Only then would this static order, this firm and not fluid measure between God and the world, be shown in its interior to be living, dynamic, dramatic—an event whose subject is God and which subsequently, within God’s subjectivity, allows man too to ‘happen’ before God.

This dynamism of event, attested to by the phenomenon of the historical Jesus, has always been characterised by an intersecting double movement: as the ‘descent’ of God into the ‘flesh’ and as the ‘ascent’ of the flesh into the spirit. ‘Flesh’ here means earthly man, and ‘spirit’ means God’s sphere and his manner of existence. The event whereby God’s Word descends to ‘make its tent’ in the ‘flesh’ (Jn 1.14) and God’s fulness ‘takes up its abode corporeally’ in it (Col 1.19; 2.9) is already the assumption and insertion of the ‘flesh’ into the fulness and the glory of God. The exchange (*commercium*) and the marriage (*conubium*) can only occur simultaneously from both sides, but not indeed in a reciprocal action comparable to a contract between partners, since ‘God is only one’ (Gal 3.20) and it is he who brings man to himself. Man is ‘his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them’ (Eph 2.10).

Even this dynamic measure which Christ represents can be demonstrated from nowhere other than itself. How could it be otherwise, since it is God himself—the Unmeasurable who can be measured only by himself—who makes himself present here? A created state is something tranquil, opposed to act and event, and as such it appears inadequate to portray the event of God’s turning to us in Christ. But the event itself possesses Being and presupposes Being and, moreover, the event of God’s gracious turning to us in Christ is not real only for a given moment but is bestowed definitively, with a permanent reality. It follows from this that the dynamic measure always reveals a final, static order, albeit one which may be known only because it reveals itself. The dynamism lies with the ever-deeper event of the Word’s Incarnation, in its descent to the most extreme physical and spiritual suffering, to which the *memoriale passionis*—the Eucharist—belongs. God’s entrance is signalled by the beginning of Christ’s public activity, with the double *exousia* it exhibits: the prophetic ‘power of the word’ and the ‘power of miracles’ (Lk 24.19). God himself resounds and acts through the prophetic task of this man. The man charged with this task is, body and soul, a vessel that has surrendered itself to this divine activity: he is a ‘temple’ (Jn 2.20f.), a ‘holy one of God’ (Jn 6.69), indeed the ‘Messiah’ (Mk 8.29). And yet it is precisely this power of God, manifesting itself at first in all its irresistibility, which begins to meet with ever greater resistance and becomes submerged, as it were, in the flesh of its bearer and his impotence—as though the power had been shown only in order to make the impotence the more credible, and this not by way of make-believe but as an incomprehensible reality: the fact that he did not prevail against the superior power of the world that rejected him. The disciples are dragged down with him in this fall. From the beginning they had persuaded themselves that he could do things quite differently if he wished; but now they must learn that he cannot change them because he does not will to do so. And he does not will it because God does not will it, because, through Christ’s prophetic word and miracles, God wishes now no longer to reveal the judging God but rather wishes to descend into the judged human flesh whose suffering and death is everything but make-believe. *This* is what Incarnation is, no longer now as a state but as an event, or, if you wish, as the dynamic and eventful measuring of one’s own static reality. In this history of the historical Jesus, God submerges himself in the creature to the utmost. He takes the creature’s measure with the yardstick of divinity and with it he also measures, not actually his eternal Godhead, but rather his eternal relationship to man and to the world. And yet in a sense he also measures his eternal Godhead which does not persist in a stance of playful indifference to all possible worlds, but has eternally decided on this one world, the length, breadth and depth of which he has measured and traversed ‘once and for all’ (ἐφάπαξ) by his descent into death. ‘The Word became flesh’, accordingly, has the following dy-meaning: the Word which in the beginning rang out prophetically to its hearers in the Old Testament, from the outside and from above (Sermon on the Mount), henceforth becomes a Word which speaks and is expressed through Christ’s flesh, and which, becoming muted by the density of flesh, resounds all the louder. It becomes muted to the point that the whole man, having become the speech of God, not only speaks God’s Word with body and soul, but *is* that Word.[10] And this occurs not in a language sealed hermetically by the muteness and which has thus become incomprehensible, but in the language of suffering and death, one which at last is universally understood and which is uttered not out of constraint but out of love, not out of resignation but out of obedience. This language is not purely human, as is always the case with the guilty; it is the final and conclusive sentence of a discourse which God himself began and which to the last word may not be interrupted or altered. It is the same Jesus Christ always speaking, and the transition from the first to the last sentence is undetectible. Only the centres of gravity change, but always within the same field. For it is just as ‘paradoxical’ that a man should claim divine authority for himself, that he should forgive sins and raise the dead, as it is for this super-human man, in whom God speaks and acts, to end up as the most common criminal, abandoned by the might of the Father, on which he relied and called in obedience and about which he affirmed that it always heard him (Jn 11.42).

Such an exhaustive taking possession of man on the part of God (embracing all the dimensions of human God-forsakenness, such as only God can know) is already as such an adaptation of man to the measure of God. For, in this act of taking possession, man is not a merely passive vessel; he is what God has willed him to be: one who responds to the Word, one who corresponds to God’s speech. By being dynamically inhabited by God, man is brought to attunement (*Stimmen*) by God: he possesses a voice (*Stimme*), and the right voice at that. He does not stammer and babble; he speaks with God. Even in the most extreme human breakdown he does not fail in God’s sight; down to the finest detail he says what God wants to hear from him. No false tone can trouble this dialogue; everything said and done is wholly proportioned: it fits like a glove. Nothing is first ‘tried on’ (by the Evangelists, for instance, or by the transfiguring faith of the Church), only later to be fully harmonised. Who—and following which standard or model—could harmonise the paradox of the God-Man if it did not already harmonise on its own? Who could add a single inch to his human stature? This adequation of man to God is the movement already contained in God’s movement: the exaltation of man to the right hand of God, the servant’s elevation to being *Kyrios* of the world, the transfiguration of the suffering and dying one into God’s resurrecting immortality. Once again, we do not here have two images alongside each other, as in a diptych consisting of two complementary halves. Faith (especially Johannine faith) is able to see both aspects as a unity—God’s *kenosis* in the Synoptics and the Pauline *doxa* of the Risen One. The descent of God’s love to the Cross is already its very glorification. Not, of course, as if the Resurrection no longer needed to take place; but the Resurrection, as the glorification of the Son by the Father, is already contained by virtue of its total truth in the glorification of the Father by the Son. What faith here sees as one is not a pious contemplation but objective evidence. God’s measures and forms may not be split up: the measured form which he proposes is perfect from the outset, even if it is subjected to a temporal course of events (which itself can only be meaningful) and, like a statue, must be walked around in order to be seen as a whole. Nor can we say that the measuring of this form, as contemplated by man, falls into two parts and that the Cross is legibile only as a contradiction of Being. On the contrary, we can understand this form (which, in a worldly sense, we can never see all at once because God himself is within it) to the extent that it becomes plausible for us as the abolition of the essential contradiction between God and a godless world. It would be profoundly ungrateful and unworthy of faith if we were to assert that we cannot decipher the document that God has placed before us to read.

We have a prior understanding of inspiration, in which man can become the vessel of God's truth or of a super-human vision. We also have a prior understanding of man's misery and mortality, in which the cipher 'man' appears definitively inscribed. In Jesus Christ God takes possession of both these dimensions, not only to lead them beyond themselves to the absolute but also so as to bring together the two divergent extremes, to join them into one single figure. By so doing God shows that he does not do violence to man, but that, rather, by becoming man, he perfects man in his most human aspect, whether this refers to the heights or the depths of man. And, by the very fact that man's extremes are joined, everything that lies in-between is rounded off. Nothing needs to be left out, nothing needs to be abstracted, as in non-Christian mysticisms and practices. And yet, such a rounded and perfected humanity can occur only by virtue of the divine indwelling: in the union of the infinitely greatest with the infinitely smallest, a union which both Nicholas of Cusa and Pascal regarded as the figure defined by Christ, who thus becomes the figure that concludes and completes the universe.

In consequence we can properly call this double act of measurement that descends and ascends both form and figure, and Paul likewise can apply the concept of form (μορφή) to Christ—and to the Christ-form which is to take shape in us (Gal 4.19)—in its proper and not its analogous sense. The interior attunement, proportion, and harmony between God and man in Christ-form raises it to the level of an archetype, not only of all religious and ethical, contemplative and active behaviour, but equally of the beautiful, regardless whether this is agreeable or not to the person with a creative aesthetic sensibility and regardless of all the questions that may be raised concerning the 'aesthetic imitation' involved in following such an archetype.[11] For this beautiful object *is* revelation: it is the beauty of God that appears in man and the beauty of man which is to be found in God and in God alone. This is not a beauty which draws things into unity in accordance with an abstract scheme of 'infinity and perfection', 'emanation and encapsulation', but in the precise and unique mode of the Incarnation. What perfection and infinity really are for man, what emanation and encapsulation, self-surrender and being caught up really are, what 'transfiguration', 'deification', 'immortality' really are and what all the great words of aesthetics signify: it is in the Christ-form that all of it has its measure and its true context.

And this is not because to everything there is applied a measure which is unattainable by ordinary man and, therefore, alien and inappropriate as it must at first almost inevitably appear. The God-Man, in fact, is only a particular individual and not a matter of universal human significance; not something which can be generalised. By becoming man, God does not speak to himself; he speaks to the world. Christ is this speech of God which addresses itself to us all. We are addressed not only from outside, but are affected in our very selves, in our intimate nature; and, in so far as Christ is our brother and has responded to God from within our own nature, all of us have already responded with him. By the Incarnation we have been transferred into the sphere of the dialogical, out of the sphere of sin which is the monological, out into the 'marvellous light' of the Word. We already participate in the sphere where things are fundamentally right and attuned and where, therefore, if we so will it, things can be similarly right for us as well. With the appearance of Christ, the Church is already posited: that is to say, his appearance is the measure which God applies to the world, the measure which God has already communicated to the world, bestowed on the world, as a measure of grace and not of judgment, as a freely conferred measure which no one can arrogate to himself but which is given in such a way that anyone so desiring can take it to himself.

There is one last aspect that must never be lost from sight. The 'image' of God that Christ concretises for us has its own dynamism which means that here we have someone who can speak and act with divine power and also suffer and die with human impotence. This does not make it into an image of fragmentation but of unification, because the one speaking with God's power and suffering with man's impotence does both things in accordance with an identical disposition: he does both things out of obedience. But how can a man who is genuinely a man presume to speak in the name of God without arrogance? Are there not statements in the Gospel ('Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away') that must appear to the naturally pious mind to be shot through with the shudder of *hybris*? Not only the Greek but also the Jew must be shaken to the foundations of their truly authentic piety by such words, and whoever would cry out 'Blasphemy!' at hearing them would be fully justified—except in the case of Christ. In a religious sense such claims are 'unbearable'. For look closely: it is not the naked God who is uttering such words, but a man, even if God is supposed to be speaking from him. He cannot shift to God the responsibility for what he is saying. He must answer for it as a man because he said it as a man. For this there can only be *one* justification: that this man is acting out of obedience; that he is the most profoundly obedient of all precisely as he makes divine claims for himself. But, emphatically and decisively, this is possible solely because this man, who is obeying even as he ‘makes’ himself into a God, is a God who is obeying even as he makes himself into a man. For the former, taken by itself, would clearly be *hybris* and impossible to comprehend in terms of human obedience. For the surest thing that can be said of man is that he is not God. Thus, he must already be obedient even as God, and his human obedience unto death must be the epiphany of a divine—that is, a trinitarian—obedience. In the Son of Man there appears not God alone; necessarily, there also appears the inner-trinitarian event of his procession; there appears the triune God, who, as God, can command absolutely and obey absolutely and, as the Spirit of love, can be the unity of both.

> [God’s] speaking and activity and work *ad extra* consist in the fact that He gives to the world created by Him, to man, a part in the history in which He is God, that there is primarily in the work of creation a reflection, in the antithesis of Creator and creature an image and likeness, and in the twofoldness of the existence of man [as man and woman] a reflection of this likeness of the inner life of God Himself. And then supremely and finally (at the goal and end of His whole activity as established at its beginning) they consist in the fact that God Himself becomes a man amongst men and for men in His mode of being as the One who is obedient in humility. In the work of reconciliation of the world with God the inward divine relationship between the One who rules and commands in majesty and the One who obeys in humility is identical with the very different relationship between God and one of His creatures, a man.[12]

Translating this into the aesthetic mode we could say that, if God did not in himself possess form, no form could ever arise between him and man: *finiti ad infinitum nulla proportio*. What would occur, rather, is what *must* occur in all non-Christian mysticism: the finite is absorbed by the infinite and the non-identical is crushed by identity. In the non-Christian realm, therefore, consistent religion (in its mystical form) is in a state of unresolvable conflict with aesthetics (which then also includes religious and political myths), and this conflict can in the last resort be terminated only by a de-mythologisation of religion and, consequently, also by the dying away of religion, for man cannot live without an interior image (*Inbild*). Only Christianity can unite both things, because the appearance of the triune God can occur only within form. This form is unique, not graspable by worldly vision, evident only to the eyes of faith and yet, precisely as such, it is truly form, in spite of the vast infinity of the dimensions that are opened up. It is not a vision of the form of God himself, but the appearance of this form in the previously described identity (of the hypostatic union), as an identity of the obedient one and of his obedience in both natures. And this is more than merely image and likeness: it is the concealed epiphany of the thing itself in the medium of the relationship between God and creature.

The relationship between God and creature in this way comes to participate in the natural indissolubility of the love between the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. Just as the divine Persons do not confront one another as autonomous beings but, in God’s one concrete nature, are forever one divine Being, so too, in Christ, the covenant between God and creature as a covenant of free partners is forever surpassed and indissolubly established, in anticipation, upon the hypostatic union. Both the trinitarian union and the hypostatic union, in their own ways, give to free love an ontological and substantial form; and they make this substance, to its very foundation, something permeated and shaped by love. This becomes most striking for us in the Eucharist: in it the whole substantial Christ offers himself to the world as the gift of the Father, and he establishes the Christian’s total life of faith upon the physico-sacramental ‘eating and drinking’ of his Flesh and Blood.

3. QUALITY

The measure which Christ represents and embodies is qualitatively different from every other measure. This fact need not be deduced; it may be read off the phenomenon itself. To be sure, for this an ‘eye for quality’ is required, analogous to the eye of the connoisseur which can infallibly distinguish art from kitsch, excellent quality from average or merely good quality. In a certain sense such an ‘eye’ may be acquired (Heb 5.14), but in essence it must be bestowed along with the phenomenon itself, since the latter is unique of its kind for which reason its interior constitution cannot be known by being compared to other phenomena. What, as the grace of faith, illumines the subject that approaches the phenomenon has to be the objective light that indwells it—its objective and radiant rightness. The illumined subject then—and ever increasingly—learns how emphatically that light derives from the object and indwells it, and, in the light of the object, it learns also to distinguish it from all other objects. This discernment is but the perception of the manner in which the God-given form distinguishes and sets itself apart from all others. Christ does not have to be set up as our judge in a distinct act: this is what he is by virtue of his own quality.

The coming-into-view of the objective quality, the growing sense that perceives Christ’s incomparability, is developed in four directions.

1. It develops as a contemplation that gains insight into the proportions, connections, and balances proper to the form whereby the continuing resistance of these structures to all destructive analysis and reflection constitutes a spiritual experience for the believer. And yet, this first verification remains, so to speak, within the ‘flatness’ of the contemplative regard.

2. It develops as the verification of the form of faith in existence. It is here that the form’s existential power (the Pauline *dynamis* and *energeia*) first emerges and manifests its autonomous vitality.

3. It develops as the form’s self-differentiation from all other worldly religious forms. For one who has acquired vision, this self-differentiation acquires objective evidential force as can be shown.

4. From this demonstrability there automatically results the possibility of offering an objective proof of: a) the fact that the form is simply missed by all who do not perceive it, and why this is; b) how and in what respect the form is overlooked by such people; and c) in what non-culpable blindness or the culpable self-blinding of those who take offence consist. The one who sees grasps from his vision that the objective evidence of this form does not exclude the possibility and the reality of scandal, but, on the contrary, necessarily requires it, and this is something he can show.

We will now follow each of these four directions in turn.

a. The Form Unfolds Itself

To do justice to this heading we would have to rehearse all Christian thought, not only dogmatics and theological speculation, but also and especially the contemplation of all saints, lovers and believers whatsoever. This is a world withdrawn for the most part from the eyes of the world, a world which has its ‘radiance from within’ and which, along with its contemplated object, necessarily dispenses with external radiance—the purely worldly power of persuasion.

This is the first criterion for the authenticity of the self-revealing form: that it does not do violence. If it did, then it would share something of the nature of mathematical proofs and evidences, in which personal freedom and decision have no place. The kind of evidential power with which God manifests himself must be of the highest kind, precisely in virtue of the fact that it allows freedom because it makes men free. And it wants to overpower a lover that answers in freedom only in its own way—by the evidential power of love—and this cannot be otherwise if love belongs to the very meaning of the form, indeed, if love is precisely what constitutes this meaning. ‘To convince’ (*überzeugen*)—that is, to give such testimony (*Zeugnis*) about oneself that it always remains ‘above’ (*über*) every objection: this is an undertaking which can only be justified in love’s struggle for love. Pascal is the Christian thinker who has best seen and thought out the dimension of hiddenness in Christian evidence and who has best understood its necessity; for him the loss of this dimension already betrays the absence of Christian evidence. ‘Perfect clarity would please reason but harm the will. The proud man must be humbled.’[13] ‘We make an idol out of truth itself, for outside love truth is not God: it becomes his image and an idol which one ought neither to love nor to adore.’[14] ‘Because God is hidden, any religion which does not say that God is hidden is not a true religion, nor does any religion give instruction if it does not give the reason for this hiddenness. Our religion does all this: *Vere tu es Deus absconditus*.’[15] ‘If the world existed only in order to instruct man concerning God, then his divinity would irrefutably shine forth from the world on all sides. As it is, however, the world has its existence only through Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ, in order to instruct man concerning his fallenness and his redemption. Therefore, everything in the world reflects proofs of these two truths.’[16] ‘Just as Jesus Christ remained unknown among men, so too his truth is in no way outwardly distinguished from other generally expressed opinions. So, too, the Eucharist in the midst of ordinary bread.’[17]

> If Christ had come only to sanctify, then the whole of Scripture and all other things would aim at this and it would be easy to convince unbelievers. And if Christ had come only to blind us, then all his behaviour would be opaque and we would have no means of convincing unbelievers. But, as Isaiah says (8.14), he came *in sanctificationem et in scandalum*, and so we cannot convince unbelievers nor can they convince us; but it is precisely in this way that we convince them, since what we are saying is, indeed, that his whole behaviour is not designed to persuade anyone one way or the other.[18]

Thus we see that Pascal does not want the hiddenness of God’s truth in the image of Christ spoken of as if everything within it dissolved into self-destructive paradoxes; but he wants even less to entertain the idea of a manifestness which does not communicate the specific twofold mystery of the divine hiddenness as such and of God’s concealment in the sinner’s redemption in particular. This mystery does not manifest itself in a neutral fashion, but in virtue of grace and for the sake of love. Only in this manner can Pascal develop his contemplation of the ‘mystery of Jesus’, which gathers up and ‘entraps’ within itself all the evidences of God and of creation: it is a mystery which radiates not only the true qualities of the true and living God (as opposed to the ‘God of the philosophers’), but which brings to light above all the true dimensions of man—both his *grandeur* and his *misère*. If we read Pascal as we should, it becomes clear that he does not so much unfold his image of Christ from the vantage of a prior anthropological understanding of these dimensions; rather, he attains to these very dimensions only from within his contemplation of Christ, or, to be more precise, from within his contemplation of the event attested to by Christ’s life and death.

We may say that, in this, Pascal strikes a balance midway between Augustine and Luther. He lays aside the remnants of a Platonic *theoria* characteristic of the early Augustine but does not abandon authentic Christian *theoria* in favour of a mere *latere sub contrario*. He recognises a form of evidence which corresponds exactly to the law governing the object that becomes evident: this law is the manifestation of God’s hiddenness in Jesus Christ. All other kinds of evidence then become concentrically ordered round this centre; indeed, this centre resolves all paradoxes concerning the Being of man and of the world which would otherwise remain unresolvable. We could say that, in actual fact, all great Christian contemplation has developed according to the law which Pascal here formulates; we could say, as well, that it has always been the characteristic of such contemplation—as it works through all the kinds of evidence and properties that gradually unfold—to let itself be constantly determined by the form of evidence proper to its object. ‘In your light we see light’—even if your light must assume the mode of darkness!

The Christ of Mark is a stupendous event, but one which, as such, seeks hiddenness and wants to have its mystery preserved. In John he does not even need this any more because what is stupendous about him—his dazzling *doxa*—itself possesses the mode of hiddenness and requires eyes which have adapted to it to be perceived. In Mark, the hiddenness is a sheath enclosing a core of light; in John, the self-concealment of the Light *is* its revelation: love’s way to its end. Between the two lies a process of appropriation and contemplation: and both these things are the same, something which the ‘theologians of event’ have never been ready to understand. Christian contemplation is the opposite of distanced consideration of an image: as Paul says, it is the metamorphosis of the beholder into the image he beholds (2 Cor 3.18), the ‘realisation’ of what the image expresses (Newman). This is possible only by giving up one’s own standards and being assimilated to the dimensions of the image. Christian life is not a second movement subsequent to contemplation, a practical corollary to *theoria*. For *theoria* can occur only as we spread out our existence under the image offered by God, which has shone within our darkness as God’s light (2 Cor 4.6). The image unfolds *into* the one contemplating it, and it opens out its consequences in his life. It is not I who draw my consequences from what I have seen; if I have really seen it in itself, it is the object of my vision which draws out its implications in me. Again we are at the juncture where Paul undertakes the move from seeing to being seen by God, from seeking to having always been found, the reversal that contains the πίστις Ἰησοῦ (Rom 3.26; Gal 3.22). Christ’s hiddenness can radiate only from my own hiddenness, wrought by him, just as in

Mark, initially, only that person can truly recognise the Messiah who knows how to keep his secret.

The form which inscribes itself in the living centre of my being becomes my salvation by becoming my judgment. From this form I learn, I read, it is drummed into me what is fear of God and what is sin. The order of this form, imposing itself ever more inexorably, passes judgment on my formless disorder. The metamorphosis of which Paul speaks (Rom 12.2; 2 Cor 3.18; Phil 3.21) is above all an assumption of form, the receiving of Christ's form in us (Gal 4.19), the character and the impress in us of the only valid image of God. This occurs the more im-pressively, in the literal sense, the less resistance the impress of the image encounters. Mary's *Ecce Ancilla* is the supreme instance. For this reason the Christ-form attains here the greatest splendour within the greatest simplicity and hiddenness. Mary keeps all the words in her heart and ponders them (Lk 2.19, 51), not as something foreign to her but as what 'happens to her' (*fiat mihi*, Lk 1.37). She also undergoes a judgment which will lead her to the Cross itself, and these are things disposed and decided upon by the one form. Allowing the Word its way in me is not an action, and is not, therefore, an accomplishment and a work; it is contemplative obedience that of its own passes over into the Passion in accordance with the law of the image which leaves its impress on it.

At this point we ought properly to discuss the proving of the Christ-form as it occurs in its self-unfolding within an obedient existence. 'Proving' here means that at no moment does contemplation detect a mistake in the construction and the proportions of the image, or that, if such a mistake is suspected, it will at once be shown to have been because of a defect in one's own vision. We could be inclined to attribute this contemplative 'accord' to the naïve enthusiasm of the contemplating believer, to whom everything to do with Christ appears wonderful *a priori*. But those more familiar with the contemplation of the saints or even of the Church Fathers will see here something different. To be sure, there are 'harmonisations' which strike us as naïve, for instance, solving exegetical difficulties by means of allegory, or projecting the image of Christ with undue haste into situations in the Old Testament. Too cheap an admiration is possible, the result of not having looked long enough into the reality before one. But, notwithstanding the watchword of the historical-critical method not to let oneself be enthused by anything, the believing exegete and theologian will not be able to keep from being attentive to the manner in which the form of Christ proves itself in every dimension. The interrelatedness of the different aspects is such that, while each aspect, taken in isolation, could be considered questionable, nonetheless the balances that dominate the whole do not allow the definitive elimination of any one aspect. If nonetheless essential portions are excluded, what is left is such a paltry construction (such as Renan’s historical Jesus, or Harnack’s, or even Bultmann’s) that its academic provenance may be detected at a distance, and then one is still left with the problem of explaining how so slight a kernel could become such a full-powered and seamless form as is the Christ of the Gospels. In this resulting form, it might be possible to try to explain certain inconsistencies by philological enquiry, by distinguishing different sources and layers, the different character of the documents, and so on. But even then one has still not accounted for—or rather, has not seen or recognised—that tension-laden and supremely plausible total form that is yielded when all these aspects are taken together.

The complexity of the aspects makes for a *lectio difficilior* which passes the test precisely as such, while all the oversimplifying suggestions cancel one another out. The clue lies neither simply in ‘imminent expectation’ nor simply in ‘realised eschatology’, neither simply in Jewish ritualism nor simply in subsequent Hellenistic sacramentalisation, neither in a purely spiritual ethical messianism nor in a purely political messianism, neither in faith as the self-trust Jesus awakens in us as we look and pray to God nor in faith as the mere acceptance of his taking our place. . . . And we could go on and on. To ‘historical-critical reason’ the different aspects may appear to be contradictory; but to the eyes of faith, these ‘sharper senses’, their interdependence becomes evident. Contemplative prayer is nourished by this vision, as is theology, and, indeed, as is historical-critical exegesis itself, which, fascinated (why *fascinated*?) by the fiercely disputed object, cannot in the end turn away from it.

The complexity of the form is the expression of a unity which can never be seen all at once and which is perceived only in its self-expression. This expressive complexity is also evident from the fact that the Christian as he contemplates can always consider a given aspect of the faith-object (he can, for instance, abide in a long and patient contemplation of the Passion) without ever losing from sight the unity of the whole mystery. In the Passion he finds all Jesus’ verbal proclamation as in a dynamic nucleus: here he has the Father who reveals himself; here he has the Spirit; here the sacraments (as John sees); here the origin of the Church, both in a spiritual and invisible sense and also made visible in symbolic figures that speak for themselves: Jesus is exchanged for Barabbas; he is crucified between the two thieves, who are so different and yet belong together; the profoundly revealing roles played by pagans, Jews, and Christians; the balance between supreme justice and supreme injustice, between the deepest concealment and the utmost revelation of God. . . . Is all of this pre-arranged and cleverly thought out? For its part, the contemplation of two millennia finds an ever-greater unity and a fulness evermore imposing in its interelatedness. How could all this have been fabricated by the clever mystifications of a few isolated individuals? Here again, it is the aesthetic analogy which helps us. The inspiration of a great work of art is impenetrable and the result it achieves is not fully analysable. Inspiration resists analysis in the sense that while the latter can indeed point out the proportion and harmony of the parts, it can never synthesise the whole given simply the parts, and it is this whole which remains ungraspable in its patent beauty. Moreover, just as, in contemplating the beautiful, the glance wanders back from the object itself to become lost in the depths of the genial subject, at a level beyond mere psychology, in the place where the mystery of reality itself has been revealed to the rare eye of the artist—so too, Christ's particular kind of unity requires a glance that traces a course back into the very mystery of God, who manifests his 'mystery, more dazzling than the light', by this stroke of 'Christological genius': he is both himself and yet also another; he is both triune and hypostatic. This is a mystery of the divine freedom, which, as in the work of art, coincides with supreme necessity.

The necessary freedom of Christ's form may also be described as the quality of effortlessness exhibited by its self-representation. Here is someone who knows how to do things without having 'learned' them, someone who neither possesses a 'technique' nor teaches it, someone who does not know how to do things in an athletic sense—with the superiority of the trained expert over the amateur: for his 'art' is the humility and the lowliness and everything else proclaimed blessed by the Beatitudes. And this humility is not (as Nietzsche suspected) a ruse for small people: this humility emerges from the most magnanimous, audacious, and valiant of souls, who obeys not out of instinct but out of love for the Father, and who 'learns' to do this as a human being for our sake (Heb 5.8). The unity which Christ himself represents is the opposite of a synthesis of what men imagine to be the best of man and God. This unity is in no sense the result of a simple addition and accumulation; rather, it is a unity which thought alone cannot produce, a unity of the most unpretentious humanity with the one and only divine sonship (which always 'does what pleases the Father'), a 'simplicity' (Mt 6.22) which Paul contrasts to 'carnal wisdom' (2 Cor 1.12) and which he even regards as the offspring of 'poverty' (2 Cor 8.2). It is the unreflected gift of self which in no way throws light on itself (2 Cor 9.11, 13), an obedience which has no thought for itself (Eph 6.5) and, finally, the love of a bride which never considers itself but always looks to the Beloved (2 Cor 11.3).

In this simplicity of the Son of Man all the supposed contradictions in his image are surpassed and balanced, and what to the historical-critical philologists appear to be combined elements (because they do not see the point of unity) can only be seen as the tremendous unfolding under enormous tension of an unapproachable centre which is itself unmoved and which, in its simplicity, appears to be what is most imitable and, at the same time, the least imitable of all.[19] The simplicity involved here is that with which all of us must begin, complicated and reflecting beings that we are, a simplicity which would be easy child's play if only we were children, a simplicity sought after by all the great religious techniques of Asia and which can never be attained by them for the very reason that they are techniques and that they aim at God by bypassing man. Christ's simplicity is so simple that it can only be lived and realised on the basis of God's simplicity, in which this one unique person participates. How could such a one, in the infinite freedom of his simplicity, not utter the sublimest words and do the highest deeds *in humility*, even when and precisely when they lead him into the deepest abysses of shame and humiliation? This simplicity may be called 'love' provided we do not restrict the concept to our sphere of finite subjects as they feel drawn to one another and show one another signs and works of love. For all this still speaks of duality, while that simplicity lives in a centre which in its humility and awe has bridged the duality between God and man; it lives in a transparency in which God's Word and God's human expression have become indistinguishable.

If this is the Logos that comes to us from God, in which and for which we have been created, then its contemplation in us can only be infinite. Now, it is always *this* unity which is revealed to us in every intellectual act of opening and 'breaking the bread' of the Logos (Origen)—not a purely divine or a purely human unity, but always a human-and-divine unity. Thus, Christian contemplation becomes an ever deeper and richer living from Christ and into Christ, and progressively both the living triune God and the whole of creation as recapitulated in Christ enter into this life, not, however, in the rarefied space where ideal contents are beheld in abstract purity, but within the shaping (*Einbildung*) of the image (*Bild*) of Christ in the contemplative subject. For the theological imagination (*Einbildungskraft* = 'power to shape an image') lies with Christ, who is at once the image (*Bild*) and the power (*Kraft*) of God.

b. The Inherent Power of the Form

We now focus on this unity of image and power. Taken by itself, the image remains two-dimensional; the power which the New Testament describes as *dynamis* and as 'Holy Spirit' gives the image as such a plastic depth and a vital force which imposes itself and takes root in the life of believers. Both things are but one: the plasticity of the form of the ‘historical Jesus’ and his power to impress himself in the form of the ‘Christ of faith’. Should one attempt to retain only the second element and reject the first, then the Word and the Spirit would no longer be the same God and, therefore, neither of them would be God: the first would be ‘religious genius’ and the second, at best, ‘enthusiasm’. John is thus right when his reflections lead him first to gather up the fulness of the Spirit and concentrate it on the Logos (Jn 1.32f.; 3.34) and then, beginning with the Resurrection, to see this fulness as radiating from the Spirit himself (Jn 20.22), indeed as the essential proof of the divinity of the image of the Logos and of his reunion with the Father who had sent him (Jn 14.16, 20, 25f.; 16.7, 13ff.). The Spirit witnesses practically—that is, in deeds—to the rightness of God’s ‘exegesis’ by the Son (Jn 1.18). The dimension extending from the Jesus of history to the Christ of the *kerygma* of faith and of the written Gospel is the dimension of objectivization by the testimony of the Spirit, but this dimension is at the same time traversed by the eyewitnesses themselves who are doing the writing: ‘He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he *knows* that he tells the truth’ (Jn 19.35). But he knows yet more: he knows that the objectivized form can, in a material sense, be only a selection from the historical events (Jn 20.30); he knows that, by attempting to reproduce the Word with words, one could flounder in a false infinity of words (‘the world itself could not contain the books that could be written’, Jn 21.25), but that the partial form selected by the Spirit is adequate not only to effect faith in the fact that ‘Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God’, but also to procure ‘life in his name’ (Jn 20.31). The First Epistle of John declares this life to be original participation and full initiation. The anointing by the Spirit ‘teaches us about everything’ (1 Jn 2.20, 27). The universality of faith communicated by the Spirit finds its correspondence. It does not limp hopelessly behind: it does not open up only partial aspects; it creates a concordance between the ‘simplicity’ of Christ and the ‘simplicity’ of faith, in which everything is deposited which is at work in Christ, who is the unity of the whole.

For Paul, the historical Jesus is himself without question full of *dynamis*: it is not only the ‘power of his Resurrection’ (Phil 3.10) which is active in Christians, and especially in Paul (2 Cor 4.7, 10; 12.9), but already the ‘power of the Cross’ (1 Cor 1.18, 24). This dynamism that radiates from Christ is the ‘Spirit of God’ that proceeds from Christ, the Spirit that fills up and energises absolutely everything in the Church, the Spirit that bestows on ‘form’ (μόϱφωσις), and particularly on the Gospel (Rom 1.16), an interior vitality (2 Tim 3.5), the intrinsic power needed for it to impose itself both on the individual who attains justification (Rom 1.17) and on the apostolic preaching (Rom 15.19), which is where God’s power wants to reveal itself by contrast to human weakness (2 Cor 4.7; 12.9f.) while yet strengthening the whole apostle that he may effect a mighty work. *Dynamis* fills the believing Christian in every possible manner (Col 1.11; Eph 3.7, 20), even in the mode of ‘works of power’ whereby the transition from the physical to the moral ‘miracle’ remains fluid (1 Cor 12.10, 28f.; Gal 3.5). These confirmations of the Spirit are the same as with the Lord himself (Mt 7.22; 11.20f.; 13.54, 58; Lk 10.13; 19.37; Acts 2.22; Heb 2.4). Now, Paul always takes this divine power in a trinitarian sense: it is the power of the Father who confers grace and awakens from death; it is the power of the Son who has his way and shows himself to be alive; it is a power which, as such and in distinction from Father and Son, bears the traits of its own hypostasis. Nevertheless, in a very decisive manner this power remains for Paul bound to the Incarnate Lord who has now been glorified. Through him salvation has not only been effected morally, but has been physically infused into humanity: his fulness is spiritually poured into the ‘body’, whether this be the Church or the universe. In all his apostolic work of formation, Paul knows that he is both held captive and sustained by this power of Christ. For this he needs no written gospels which he would then interpret; hardly a word of Christ is ever quoted by him. He writes his Epistles twenty years before the Gospels are composed, and philologically these Epistles do not constitute an intermediate stage leading to the Gospels; rather, what they demonstrate is the inconceivable freedom with which the verbal form of the Christ-story may be transposed both by the Church and by man. Paul is himself the living process of this transposition, the word-wrought phenomenon of the Spirit’s outpouring in superabundant fulness (ὑπεϱπεϱισσεύειν, Rom 5.20; 2 Cor 7.4; ὑπεϱεϰπεϱισσοῦ, Eph 3.20; 1 Thess 3.10; 5.13). All this carries him to the limit of being misunderstood and yet finally accepted and sanctioned (2 Pet 3.15f.). From the purely philological viewpoint, these Epistles present the appearance of a creative chaos, a fertile power run wild, since every sentence is a vessel that overflows infinitely at the content to be expressed. And yet everything is order, reason, even (in Corinth) an authoritative instruction which is sober and incisive. World literature has never again combined these extremes in this manner, or with such playful ease. Only certain aesthetic comparisons are possible which, within their immanent sphere, reflect something of Paul’s transcendental spiritual charisms.

We know the turn that the relationship between word (history) and spirit (Church) took in Alexandrian theology: it becomes the relationship between ‘letter’ (*historia*) and ‘Spirit’, which for Origen together express the dimensions of the Logos. The letter and the flesh, taken in themselves alone, are useless; they come to life in their openness, in their becoming transparent to the Spirit and by the Spirit. Historical factuality need not and ought not to be clung to in its material completeness and fidelity, for many things in the *historia* have been put there by the Spirit for the spirit. This does not mean that the historical Jesus is a myth that must or could be dissolved into spirit; but it does mean that the historical Jesus becomes *our* Lord only in the dimension of the Spirit, in which his unrepeatable deeds become fulfilled for each of us and in each of us. His words 'have their effect now and always will so have it'; 'they are always full and are filled anew daily and are never filled in excess' (*Ser. in Matt*. 54). In the process whereby this flesh 'becomes spirit', the Logos becomes 'for me', 'for what good is it to me if the Word comes into the world but I do not participate in it?' (*Hom. in Jer*. 9. i). 'To me the sign [given to Ahab]—my Lord Jesus Christ "in the heights and in the depths"—is unprofitable if the mystery of his heights and depths does not occur in me' (*Frag, in 1 Cor*.; Cat. Cramer V. 66). In intention, such 'de-letterisation' on Origen's part is the same as modern demythologisation. What Origen calls *pneuma* the latter calls 'authentic existence', and what Origen calls *gnosis* (of *pistis*) the latter calls the realisation in faith of what was actually intended by revelation. But Origen *sees* the connection between the historical letter and the spirit. Against Celsus' disdain for the historical Jesus, Origen holds fast to the wonderful nexus that would have the mighty tree of the Church's faith grow out of this insignificant beginning and that sees the Spirit of God himself as providing the 'proof of the Spirit and of power' precisely for the 'folly' of this hidden life in the flesh and of this disgraceful death (*C. Cels*. 1.2; 1.62; and *passim*). For all his radical Biblical criticism, Origen does not overlook the form which stretches precisely between the letter and the spirit.

The Spirit is not the Word, and yet it also is the Spirit of the Word. But it does not proceed only from the Word but, simultaneously, also from the Father (Jn 15.26), who is God 'before' the Word. He is at once the Spirit of the Utterable and the Unutterable. He explains the Word by showing it as it proceeds from what is eternally beyond the Word. He transfigures both realities in their unity, since he is the unity of both and witnesses to this fact. Thus, he is at once the Spirit of form and formation and a Spirit of love and enthusiasm. In this incomprehensible unity he is the locus of the beauty of God. He is sober in order to show forth very precisely what is and to allow it to be seen; and he is intoxication and intoxicates because the raptures of love are the ultimate objectivity which must be seen and experienced. The Gospel and the Church are not Dionysian; they stand out for their soberness and banish the fanatical enthusiast to the sects.[20] But an opponent of enthusiasm such as Ronald Knox has arguably more than a little underestimated the Song of Songs and its fulfilment in the New Testament and in every authentic Christian theology. How could Christianity have become such a universal power if it had always been as sullen as today's humourless and anguished Protestantism, or as grumpy as the super-organised and super-scholasticised Catholicism about us? If this were the face of Christ stamped by the Holy Spirit on Veronica's cloth, then we could really ask whether this is indeed the triune Spirit of God. The tension between precision and enthusiasm which is the Holy Spirit's must be accepted as he offers it; the saints were able to do it. Their enthusiasm is kindled, precisely, by the precision of the image of Jesus drawn by the Spirit, and this enthusiasm, in turn, expresses with precision, for all others to see, the fact of having been grasped by this image. It is not dry manuals (full as these may be of unquestionable truths) that express with plausibility for the world the truth of Christ's Gospel; it is the existence of the saints who have been grasped by Christ's Holy Spirit. And Christ himself foresaw no other kind of apologetics (Jn 13. 35).

The Holy Spirit is a reality which is ignored by the philologists and the philosophers of comparative religion, or which is at least 'provisionally bracketed' by them. The horizon of the scientists cannot admit the question as to why the wind of world-history blew precisely into *this* sail,[21] or why it did not choose another formula, just as historically insignificant, but that objectively and historically perhaps was quite close to it. (The work of Strack-Billerbeck, for instance, is an immense mausoleum containing the bones of such formulae; likewise Hennecke and the books of the Mandaeans and the Gnostics.) It is an accident of history that the favourable constellation, the historical *kairos* exalted this particular form. But what is certain is that whoever excludes the dimension of the Holy Spirit (the real Spirit, not an imagined one) from the phenomenon will not be able to understand it as it understands itself: as the grain of mustard that *has within itself* the ability to grow taller than all the other bushes in the garden. But, if one makes this excision, from what perspective is it that one intends to understand the phenomenon better than it understands itself? From the perspective of the general philosophy of religion? Or from the perspective of a (modern?) self-understanding of our own which cannot admit the form stamped upon history because this form 'no longer says anything' to that self-understanding? In reality, this form reaches into our very present; it does not cease with the Church of the Martyrs or with Constantine. The Word is fulfilled and continues to fulfil itself daily. The claim of this Word as a claim of the historical Jesus and of the Christ of faith today is always one and the same claim. It is the same 'eye like flames of fire', the same 'voice like the roar of mighty waters'.

c. The Uniqueness of the Form

In our earlier treatment of subjective evidence we referred to the truth that God is free to use even the forms of human religiosity in his approach to those who seek him. To accept this does not however mean to fall prey to relativism in questions of the philosophy of religion. For we are here speaking of two very different things. On the one hand, we have a construct which can be seen as a prolongation of religious man, a religious enterprise that climbs up toward the divine and, at the journey’s summit, plunges into the sun of supraterrestrial transfiguration and even into the light of revelation: this is what we perceive, or think we perceive, in Buddha and other saints of India. On the other hand, we have a construct that from the outset presents itself in quite contrary terms, as something descending from God with a message and clashing sharply with human sensibilities. To be sure, Israel’s prophets also came from God and were not ‘ascenders’, and even Mohammed is something of a prophet, so that in this connection Jesus would have to be placed in the category of founders of prophetic (as opposed to mystical) religions.

But in reflecting on the typological approach itself we are prompted to ask: Is the uniqueness of Jesus’ form reason enough to exempt him from such typological classification? Does the latter contradict his uniqueness? Three different perspectives must be considered:

1. The form of Christ is inseparable from the Old Testament; together they constitute the one historical revelation in a diptych of type and antitype, promise and fulfilment. Within this unique system of order, Christ’s form is indeed related to an overall order, but we cannot therefore say that Christ’s form is subordinated to that order; for the point is precisely that promise and fulfilment are not neutral parts of a whole from which something univocal could be abstracted; promise, as such, has its truth in fulfilment. In so far as the promise, precisely, is not itself the fulfilled truth, it does indeed participate, but only participate, in the uniqueness of the fulfilment. For this reason, it can and must also participate (as we shall see under 3 below) in other ‘ideal-typical’ structures (van der Leeuw).

2. In so far as Christ is supposed to recapitulate in himself everything in heaven and on earth, he is also the image of all images in creation and history, and to that extent he fulfils the partial truths contained in the religious myths of all peoples. These myths, moreover, and indeed all forms of religion whatever, can be grouped under certain categories of religious phenomenology. It is,

therefore, also to be expected that the content of these categories (provided they exist) will find itself taken up and transcended in the form that fulfils it. The question remains open and will be dealt with later.

3. Now, if the man Jesus was (and had to be, in order truly to be human) a man in time, and therefore a man of his time and of his historical epoch, then the first two perspectives must be compatible with the fact that, at least at a certain level, he is accessible to the historical system of categories and to the typological manner of approach. Granted that the message which he brings from God is really that of the Only-begotten in the bosom of the Father (whom no one but him has seen, Jn 1.18); granted, therefore, that this is the unique message which cannot be relativised: nonetheless, it belongs to his human reality that he brings ‘the rule of God’ in the same way as the founder of any religion founds his religion—to be precise, within a specific *kairos*, in this case the *kairos* determined by Jerusalem, Hellenism, and Rome. We could make the point more sharply by saying that it would not be contradictory to think of the star of Bethlehem as standing in a horoscopic situation. We could then enlarge on this by saying that the Church Fathers were certainly right to exclude fate when it is not only the Lord of history, but the Lord of the stars themselves who appears. But this thought does not exclude the fact that, if this Lord truly becomes man, then he too enters into a horoscopic *kairos*, provided, of course, that such a thing can be accepted as true. The moment of Christ’s coming, in any event, was a constellation within world-history, since he not only ‘makes’ history but becomes and *is* history. This is supported by what we said under our first head: Israel, which in relation to Jesus appears first as a promise, grows historically to the full stature of its form as promise and, therefore, learns only on the historical road and through growth to see and understand itself as just such a form. But that is to say that Israel can grow into its own unique form only by starting from the general religious structures of mankind, as indeed is shown increasingly powerfully by research in the history of religions. All the essential categories of Israel’s religion are also categories of its religious environment, with which it has in common certain ideal types both initially and also in the end. There are things which it has in common with all nomadic peoples, and others it shares with the settled peasant population; things which can and must be interpreted in light of, on the one hand, Mesopotamia or on the other, Egypt. Its charismatic leadership is not without analogies, nor, more strikingly, is its priesthood and its later kingship. Even its prophecy grows out of a more general phenomenon, perhaps related to a certain ecstatic-mantic movement in Syria and Palestine, ‘whose origins probably lie outside that area, perhaps in the mantic enthusiasm of Thrace and Asia Minor’.[22] Israel’s religion of promise in this way brings to

Christ the general religious heritage of all mankind, and it does this in spite of its own growing distinctiveness, which develops out of a growing appreciation of the incomparability of Israel’s mission. Thus, by fulfilling in himself Israel’s message of promise, Christ at the same time makes historical contact, through Israel, with mankind’s religious forms, and in this way, too, he fulfils not only Israel’s expectation but the longing of all peoples. All this, however, serves to point up afresh the way in which Christ stands under a particular historical sign, in the Near East, in the general context of the Semitic people which embraces all their distinctive patterns of thought and self-expression, even if, as may appear, this position between East and West can be considered privileged both in a geographic and in a horoscopic sense.

These three aspects can only be brought together by a theological thought always in movement, which rises from one level of consideration to the other. In developing these three aspects we spoke in aprioristic theological fashion, exposing the conditions of the possibility of understanding the Word of God: they demand a uniqueness *within* general historical determinateness, and see this paradox as mediated by a salvation-history that moves from the universal to the theologically particular and unique. What at the one level is enlightening (the similarity of Biblical religion with the surrounding cultural religions, and so forth, something which methodologically is both acceptable and necessary) has its dangers at another level, encouraging a blindness for the particularity of the revealed religion and for its uniqueness which sets it apart from all others. But the fact is that true uniqueness in the end can be seen only by the believing eye, and, therefore, everything that constitutes this uniqueness can, for the non-believing eye, be subjected to the historical-critical method. Does this occur with or without good reason?

If it is true that the Word truly became ‘flesh’, man, world-history; if the Word nowhere encounters us nakedly but always in an envelopment of ‘flesh’; then we shall have to grant that the uniqueness of the form cannot be ascertained ‘scientifically’. Everything about it can be viewed—and dissolved—phenomenologically as belonging to a set of ideal types, always provided that the researcher, as van der Leeuw expressly requires, practises a suspension of judgment (*epoch?*). And yet, theologically, the question remains whether such phenomenology can make the phenomenon of a ‘unique’ form visible (always supposing that such a form exists), and the question must in advance be answered negatively. For, within the whole network of historical relationships, such a form would continually have to be discerned and marked out as the real point of reference, and, in order to be perceived as what it is, such a form would constantly demand the entrance of its beholder into faith—into a faith which has been at least tentatively ‘advanced’ (like money on credit), but a faith which is something different from a ‘methodological participation’ (within the methodological *epoche*) for the sake of phenomenological understanding.[23]

Before we turn finally to consider the relationship between the different images of God of the history of religion and the uniqueness of God’s image in Christ, we must make explicit the question which remained open in the second point above. The question is: Can we grasp typologically and categorically even what different peoples, at the summit of their religions, take to be a divine revelation? Or better: Even if in the experience of such a revelation a role is certainly played by the particular character of a culture, a people, an age, an individual, does not the real event occurring actually escape all comparative classification? Is it not in every instance something absolutely unique, since it represents a ray from the very abyss of the mystery of Being, and as such it proclaims the uniqueness and incomparableness of the latter? And if a given people then brings such a unique expression of Being to the full maturity of a valid symbolic form (in stele, myth, or dramatic action), what right do we have to relativise this construct from the perspective of any typology whatever, thus necessarily robbing it of its believing soul? Walter F. Otto,[24] Martin Buber[25] and Erich Przywara[26] turned in indignation against the cynicism of the Jungian method of therapy, which evacuates and degrades to the level of mere psychic archetypes man’s relation to the authentic images of Being, indeed, images of God. These archetypes can then be dealt with ‘therapeutically’, since allegedly they are nothing more than structures of the collective unconscious. In the highest and most significant sense, ‘form’ can be understood only as a revelation of the mystery of Being: ultimate meaning emerges only where this mystery fills and indwells the form. The gods cannot be interpreted as the personifications of human and cosmic forces which could just as well be given abstract names. As concrete forms, they are radiant, unique images and unveilings of Being, of human existence within experienced Being, of ‘regions’ of Being which cannot be divided by arbitrary borderlines. Within finite contours, these images validly encompass and embody the fulness of the universe. A Michelangelo, a Goethe, a Keats must still have seen such gods with their inner eye; many of their figures presuppose such encounters. And we must ask ourselves whether the inability of the modern heart to encounter gods—with the resultant withering up of human religions—is altogether to Christianity’s advantage. The derision of the gods by Christian apologists, even by the great Augustine, is not indeed in every respect a glorious chapter of the Church’s history. To be sure, it is true that Augustine used crude methods only against what was itself crude deception and ridiculous abuse; against serious opponents such as Varro, Porphyry, Plotinus, and Apuleius he fought with very different weapons, and in the end he considered it almost a verbal dispute whether the angels and the *daimones* (which he took to be cosmic powers) should be called ‘gods’. What is the ‘angel of Yahweh’ in the Old Testament? What is the meaning of this radiant power, this passing face of the one without countenance, this flaming radiance of his might and his presence, glorious and terrible as he wrestles with man near the River Jabbok (Gen 32.25-33) or when he seeks to kill Moses (whereupon his wife circumcises their son and with the foreskin touches Moses’ member, saying: ‘Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!’ And so Yahweh let him alone; Ex 4.24ff.)? A primitive myth crying out for de-mythologisation? Or, rather, is it a tremendous experience of God in revealed forms which (as is usually the case in the ‘religion of the fathers’) cannot be interpreted completely as ‘gods’ nor completely as ‘angels’? The most insignificant of questions is that concerning the role played here by the ‘imagination’: for, although theophanies are certainly shaped within the imagination, what does this fact prove for or against them?

The psalmists still see God as standing in the midst of the gods; and when the Second Isaiah victoriously proclaims their vanity he does so in the sense of Paul’s ‘silencing’ of the cosmic powers: those divine powers neither compete with the Lord nor do they any longer dominate man in such a way as to rob him of his freedom to cling to the one Lord, his Redeemer. In his *Book of Hours* Rilke portrayed a God who ‘inherits’ Christianity. Hölderlin and the late Schelling, but also Hopkins, show us a Christ who ‘inherits’ the gods of paganism: that is to say, ‘inherits’ the splendour of the theophanies which now passes over to him, who is the sole Heir and the Wholly Other. Hopkins in particular can see a primeval landscape in a ‘Christo-phanic’ manner without making a μετάβασις as such. An elementary pedagogical caveat, of course, warns us against fusing Christ with Dionysos or Apollo and making a cosmic religion out of Christianity. But, by so doing, we would only have underestimated the gradient leading from this kind of promise to its fulfilment in Christ. In what concerns Christ’s authentic heritage, Greek and Russian theology as a rule have a far better understanding than the West. Behind Alyosha and his *starets* the tradition stretches out for a thousand years or more.[27] And from Maximus there are lines that lead to his translator Scotus Eriugena, to Gerhoh von Reichersberg, the Victorines, Bonaventure and Nicholas of Cusa, Leibniz, Böhme and Baader, all of whom know that it is not only the Church which inherits the ancient patrimony of humanistic learning, but that the Messiah himself inherits the interior realities of the religions of all peoples, in so far as these contain theophanies and not demonologies.

Only thus can we pose the question concerning the uniqueness of Christ's form meaningfully, over and above all the unique aspects of other theophanies. If Christ is to be *the* Unique One, then, when we look at his form, what must happen is that all other forms, in spite of their qualitative difference and even opposition, come more and more to exhibit related characteristics, while he, who had seemed to be related to them and capable of being classified under the same general categories, now appears in ever greater isolation, incapable of being reduced to anything whatever. To anyone who stops short at the features held in common one would have to prove that he has not really seen what is there, that he has not really perceived the heart of the matter. We now suggest four different directions in which an indication may be sought how this progressive isolation takes place. Many of these points have already been discussed, but are here repeated now from a different perspective.

1. The other founders of religions are wise men who point men to a 'way' (Dhammapada, Tao) which they have found or which has been revealed to them. Jesus, on the other hand, from the outset presents *himself* as the way. The way to which the other founders point can be a simple doctrine of dying to the world and rising again in God. But it can also be the myth of a god who dies and rises, descends and again ascends. But in no case can the historical founder identify himself with the myth. At most, he may in a fairly obvious way later come to be seen by his disciples as an incarnation of the god he had proclaimed. Valentinus is an extraordinary creator of myths whose structures can still fascinate us today; and yet he himself is not Achamoth or the *Logos* that delivers her. Jesus, by contrast, draws the form of his teaching and the form of his life together into a strict identity, not only to the point of his death—as a pledge and a demonstration of love (Jn 15.1 3)—but even of the Resurrection itself: thus he identifies the mythical figure with the historical figure, and this not as an afterthought, but in such a way that the eschatological school is quite right when it says that Jesus' whole doctrine stands and falls with this one trump-card of a transcendence that irrupts into history. Ought we to say that this irrupting transcendence is not verifiable for mortal man, that it is a pure construct of faith? In this case we would have to delete the Apostles' *kerygma* concerning the Resurrection and, at the same time, follow Albert Schweitzer in seeing the cry of the dying Christ on the Cross as his confession of total failure. We have already shown, however, how in this event the whole figure would simply collapse leaving not so much as a discernible fragment of human wisdom but only the historical witness of a perfect fool. In actual fact, however, the uniqueness with which the form of Christ confronts us is the identity between myth and historical reality. At first this might seem to amount to breaking the magic of the 'gods of

Greece', whereas what occurs is that reality, by entering the eschatological dimension, is now plunged into the radiance of God's glory.

2. In order to give credibility to the mission of other founders, it is essential to describe in detail the moment of their decisive conversion, enlightenment, and rapture. They toiled and were rewarded; they knocked and the door was opened to them. They were earthly and were initiated into heavenly mysteries. And now they can and must initiate others to the same revelation. Even the Prophets of the Old Testament become prophets at a specific moment, as a result of a special call which may take the form of a vision that imposes a mission. From this perspective it is understandable that Christ's baptism and the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him have at times been equated with such experiences of being sent. But to do so is already to enter fully the realm of Gnostic Christology, and the 'Spirit' which comes to animate Jesus at a specific moment will logically leave him again at the Cross. In this event, we will again be at a loss to understand the historical form of Christ or of Johannine Christology, which portrays him as the only one who has descended from heaven, who has come down from above (Jn 3.13; 8.23) and contrasts him to all others, who are from below. The attempt could be made to interpret John's portrayal as a mythical Gnostic schema superimposed on the historical Jesus. To this we would have to reply that the infancy narratives in Matthew and Luke support John and, what is more important, that John is in full harmony with the manner in which Jesus' preaching presupposes an identification of his teaching with his entire existence, something impossible if a conversion-experience were involved. The consequence of this identification may be seen most clearly in the fact that, precisely when the very Son of the Father is the man Jesus, the death and Resurrection of Jesus are removed from the sphere of human and worldly destiny and elevated to become the expression of divine love. When Tammuz, Adonis, Attis, or Baldur die, this is 'destiny', and the divine power that awakens them from the dead proves to be stronger than destiny. But 'only Christianity has made death itself to be salvation. All other "saviour" religions preach life out of death; the Gospel of the Cross proclaims salvation *in* death. Here total powerlessness becomes the highest unfolding of power, and utter disaster becomes salvation.'[28] What occurs is not the crowning of a human drama with divine victory: rather the drama of human dissolution as a whole becomes an expression of eternal love.

3. The myths of bringers of salvation are primarily naturalistic, and are therefore, at best, protological and eschatological. The deed of Christ, by contrast, is meant to be understood historically. As such, it indeed fulfils Israel's religion, which thinks in historical terms, and through such fulfilment it

incorporates and embraces the myths of cosmic transformation found in other peoples. In its attempt to express Yahweh’s incisive action as judge, Israel itself had occasionally made use of old mythical images. But the centre of Biblical religion remains nonetheless historical. In this it is set apart from cosmic myths and mystical systems which fundamentally could only choose either to negate the Being of the world as such for the sake of the divine Being (thus locating salvation in the abolition of the illusion of the world), or to make visible anew, through all the confusion and forgetfulness wrought by man, the primal divine law that permeates the world’s Being (the *Tao*, or the *Rta* of the Vedas, or the *Logos* and *Nomos* of the pre-Socratics and of the Plato of the *Laws*). Even Celsus will still hold up this Λόγος ἀληθής to Christians as being the Νόμος ἀϱχαῖος.[29] It is possible to see this cosmic law as indwelt by a salvific law (either with the rhythms of the vegetative realm or patterned after it); in this case the cosmic law is itself essentially salvation. But this either / or of negation and transfiguration cannot be successfully overcome until the structure of ‘the present aeon’ has been gripped in the vice of history and lifted from its hinges. Once again, the decisive element here is the fact that God’s transforming deed of salvation is, at the same time, the deed of a man who has sacrificed himself out of love for us all, and that this deed makes itself present in the community not only as a sacramental event which hiddenly transforms the world but as an immediate and urgent moral demand. It is selfless love of neighbour which, in virtue of the imitation of Christ and by his power, lifts the world from its hinges. Love of neighbour works and suffers in imitation of Christ and, therefore, in expectation of him who ‘is to come again’; but Christ does not return out of compliance with a pre-established cosmological pattern (as is the case with the saviour in Mazdaism): he comes, rather, ‘like a thief in the night’, which means with all the freedom of a love that transcends cosmic laws.[30] What is negated by Christ is not the Being of the world, but its decadent mode of existence in alienation from God. It is not that an eternally present cosmic law is now brought to consciousness in a new way by Christ; rather, out of the freedom of God’s love a mode of salvation is created by which all is safeguarded in God. To unite these two things more than a myth is required (even a Gnostic one) and more than a religious ethic: what is required is precisely that Christ-form which we have characterised by saying that it could not be invented by man.

4. From the image of existence and of the world, let us now turn to the image of God. The other founders are caught up in the dialectic between God and the world, between the One and what is Other (the Many). Possible solutions are: a) to remain midway between the One and the Many (the way of Mohammed); b)

to abolish the Many for the sake of the One (the way of all forms of non-Christian mysticism, including Sufism); c) to incorporate the One into the Many (the way of polytheism and pantheism). Even Israel foresees an eschatological time when God will indwell a sanctified world. God's trinitarian nature, which is revealed in Christ and is in itself an ungraspable light, enlightens the relationship between God and man in a wholly new manner which cannot be confused with any of the others. The possibilities that open up with this revelation avoid the unsatisfactory elements of the other Ways and are inexhaustible. The Son who is both the Word of the Father and a hypostasis, allows man to have a foreshadowing glance into the depths of God, and this glance enlightens man as to how God, at the same time, can be the One and Only (in his spiritual nature) *and* eternal love, without a shadow of that selfishness which weighs down on the other religions in the form of *fatum* or of *necessitas*. The revelation of God's trinitarian nature further shows us how the world can be justified as the Other and the Many without its having to appear as a necessity for God's unity, which somehow has to return to itself after having been scattered. The otherness of creatures is essentially justified by the otherness that exists within the identity of God himself: the reality of the God-Man is inconceivable apart from the reality of Father and Son, and the creation, which derives from the freedom of God and can claim no necessity for its own existence, is nonetheless justified in its existence because it is an expression of trinitarian love: it is a gift of the Father to the Son, a gift which the Son then returns to the Father and which is transfigured by the Holy Spirit as the love between the Father and the Son. It is in this sense, and only in this sense, that the cosmos becomes a *diffusio bonitatis divinae*. Looking back from this standpoint on any other system, the doctrine of the Trinity appears as the only possible theodicy of the world, in the light of which we clearly come to see the inadequacy of any other theodicy (and this is said *a priori*). And the doctrine applies universally, starting with the formal foundation of creaturely existence and ultimately embracing every individual content and perfection. Thus the Son's free act of incarnation intrinsically perfects the free creation which was already established ontologically in the Trinity in a twofold manner, according to both essence and existence. And thus, too, it is guaranteed that all the consequences of the Incarnation, the bestowing of grace, justification, man's elevation to participate in the divine nature can occur without any danger or loss to man's creaturely nature as he freely follows. The trinitarian interpretation of human existence, the cosmos, and world-history (in which, from the incomprehensible mystery, a light pours out that makes things comprehensible) provides man's intellect and will to love with a progressive satisfaction of the most exalted kind which derives from the very heart of the ever-greater mystery of Being. For what can quench man's longings more than the following twofold certitude: I need not fear that I will ever understand God and thus come to exhaust him, but his eternal incomprehensibility is for me a source of eternally overflowing insight and love (γνῶναι τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην, Eph 3.19).

These four approaches allow us to sight the uniqueness of Christ's form. This form, to summarize, does not appear as something relatively unique, as might be said of the creations of the other great founders. Qualitatively set apart from them, the Christ-form appears absolutely unique; but, on the basis of its own particular form, the Christ-form relates to itself as the ultimate centre the relative uniqueness of all other forms and images of the world, whatever the realm they derive from. This relatedness of all myths and religious conceptions, indeed of everything in the world of man which can be and is an authentic revelation of God, to the centre of God's Incarnation necessarily has two sides: it is fulfilment through judgment. Now, the Bible emphasises primarily the aspect of judgment—witness the line from the Mosaic prohibition of images, through the Prophets, the Psalms, and the Wisdom Books, all the way to the Paul of the first chapter of Romans—and this is in keeping with the essence of Holy Scripture as God's taking possession of both man and history: the stage must be cleared and room must be made for the one absolute truth. But it is not necessarily a contradiction of the Biblical tendency when theologians of history such as Justin, Clement and Eusebius, Alan de Lille and Nicholas of Cusa, Schelling and Hegel, and artists such as Calderon in his ecclesiastical mystery-plays, all want to illumine the mythical world by relating it to Christ. Calderon succeeded in portraying convincingly the fact that Christ is not only the true Isaac and Boaz, but also the true Jason and Hercules, the true Amor with the human soul, Psyche, the true Theseus with the Minotaur, the true Orpheus with Eurydice, who represents humanity. These literal illuminations were surpassed by the philosophers, who expanded them to include an understanding of the interior workings of myths and of their limits. Theologians necessarily had to treat this kind of 'enlightenment' more carefully, since there can be no question of any straightforward progression in enlightenment but only of a veiled manner of relating myth to a centre which is itself veiled.

Even as it points to Christ, myth remains in the world of images and it is impossible for it to transcend itself on its own and thus attain to Christ. This constitutes the 'aesthetic' character of myth, in the narrow critical sense in which the term is used nowadays: myth with its infinite fulness of meaning, which yet, on its own, cannot possibly translate image into word; with its atmosphere of the 'silence and sorrow of the gods'[31] in which the mythical as such is steeped and whose internal limits Hegel sensed so keenly. But it would be a mistake to seek to illumine this mute fulness of meaning by attempting to conceptualise it, since what it lacks, to use Kierkegaardian language, is ‘existence’. This is why Plato and Aristotle did not abolish myth from within, even though they transcended it. Both things, myth as well as concept, await the God-Man in order to come into their own. Clearly such realisation could not occur without judgment being passed on the closed and tragic nature of aesthetic existence. It is also obvious, however, that the transfiguration of the God-Man who died under the judgment of the Cross also transfigures the mythical (as Wolfram von den Steinen has shown for the early Middle Ages[32]), and this should be readily understood whenever the philosophical concept itself is enlisted as an *ancilla theologiae*. Proceeding on this awareness, Christian art has at all times—most profusely in the Baroque period—made use of myth, and it is the task of Christian theological taste to identify and maintain the appropriate measures and limits.

d. The Form’s Hiddenness and Its Misapprehension

There is a negative proof both of the uniqueness of the form and of the theory here developed concerning the form-quality of the Christian principle, namely the demonstration that anyone who rejects the form of Christ has objectively misapprehended it, either in whole or in part. Not only has he not contributed the necessary subjective enthusiasm for the form (which he can only do if the form has first convinced him), but it can be objectively proven to him that, in considering the form, he has overlooked essential aspects of it or hastened past them and, since this form is the Word of God, has failed to hear what is being said. A Christian who objectively confirms this objective misapprehension of the form is not thereby entitled to make a value-judgment concerning the disposition of his fellow human being who fails to see the form of Christ, for there may be many reasons (besides personal guilt) why Christ’s form has not been perceived. For instance, a person might simply not have encountered it in the historical realm, or perhaps he has been presented only with a distorted and disfigured image of it. But, in spite of being well-advised not to judge (Mt 7.1; 1 Cor 4.5), that Christian nonetheless has the possibility of knowing that, in faith, his own vision of the form objectively encompasses the vision of his fellow-man who does not see: *Animalis homo non percipit ea. . . , et non potest intelligere. . . , spiritualis autem judicat omnia, et ipse a nemine judicatur* (‘The natural [psychic] man does not perceive these things. . . , and he is not able to understand them. . . . But the spiritual [pneumatic] man judges all things, and is himself to be judged by no one,’ 1 Cor 2.14f.). Even if the Christian neither can nor should judge the subjective act that fails to grasp the form, he can still see that the other person has objectively missed the mark, as is shown by the many words occurring in the New Testament with the prefix παϱα: παϱαβαίνειν (to pass alongside, to trespass: Mt 15.2; Acts 1.25); παϱάβασις (transgression: Rom 2.23, etc.); παϱαδιδόναι (to hand over, to betray: Mt 10.17, etc.); παϱαθεωϱεῖσθαι (to overlook: Acts 6.1); παϱαιτεῖσθαι (to withdraw, to beg off as being excused: Lk 14.18f.; Acts 25.11; 1 Tim 4.7, etc.); παϱαϰούειν (to mishear something, to be disobedient: Mt 18.17; Mk 5.36); παϱαϰοή (disobedience: Rom 5.19; 2 Cor 10.6; Heb 2.2); παϱαλογίζεσθαι (to disappoint, to deceive: Col 2.4; Jas 1.22); παϱανομεῖν (to act outside the law, to transgress it: Acts 23.3); παϱαπίπτειν (to fall alongside, to sin: Heb 6.6); παϱάπτωμα (sin: Mt 6.14 and *passim*); παϱαποϱεύεσθαι (to pass alongside: Mk 9.30, etc.); παϱαφϱονεῖν (to think alongside, to be irrational: 2 Cor 11.23); παϱαφϱονία (unreason: 2 Pet 2.16); παϱεισάγειν (to bring in on the side, to smuggle in: Gal 2.4; 2 Pet 2.1); παϱεισθύειν (to slip in unnoticed; Jude 4); παϱεισέϱχεσθαι (to enter on the side, to sneak in: Rom 5.20; Gal 2.4); παϱενοχλεῖν (to burden on the side, to importune: Acts 15.19, etc.).

Scripture constantly reckons with such failures at every level of thought, attitude, and action. Here we are concerned only with the failure to see or the misapprehension of the central form of Christ; and, in a situation where there is an explicit confrontation with Christ, such failure to see him cannot be exempt from a certain kind of guilt: it can come about through entanglement in a collective rejection of Christ or through personal refusal resulting from malice or weakness. The decisive failure to see recorded in Scripture is Israel’s, and this failure is imputed to the leaders of the people, who are blind leaders of the blind (Mt 15.14). Blindness, ‘groping about at bright midday’ (Deut 28.29), and deafness were long considered to be the real punishment from God: they are at once disobedience and punishment for disobedience (Is 6.9f.; 42.18f.; Mt 13.14; Jn 12.40; Acts 28.26f.). It is the frightful reality of not seeing what—after all the preparations made in the Old Testament, down to John the Baptist—*had* to be seen, the attitude which from the beginning defined Israel’s hardness of heart: ‘Your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead brass’ (Is 48.4; Jer 7.26). In his discourses Jesus refers to this characteristic of Israel’s obstinacy which has been ‘from the beginning’ (Mt 23.32-36), and which thus becomes ‘for ever and ever’: ‘Behold, your house will be abandoned to its fate; for I tell you, from now on you will not see me again’ (Mt 23.38f.). The Lord’s parables proceed from this paradigmatic failure to see: they confront it face to face and bear its stamp. This is why the very form of the parables is intended to exacerbate blindness:

they are words of decision, of scandal, of judgment, precisely because they could also be words of salvation for Israel. For this reason it makes little difference whether in Mt 13.12f. the word t’va is translated as ‘because’ or as ‘so that’: ‘But from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because (ἵνα) seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.’ And the more they themselves think they see, the blinder they become and the more inexcusable (Rom 2.19). The Biblical concept of ‘making blind’ (with all its variations) can have meaning only if it is related to something which is objectively visible, something which could and would have to be seen in the appropriate circumstances. The French expression *cela crève les yeux* here acquires an unsuspected impact: what dazzles to the point of blinding is precisely what is most perfectly evident and which is met with violent negation (*cf*. Rom 1.20ff.).

This is important for our understanding of scandal. It is not the object’s invisibility which creates uncertainty and finally results in a failure to see on the part of the subject. It is, rather, the prior judgment we make that the thing in question *cannot* be what it claims to be which is responsible. The true scandal is the arrogant attitude that opposes one’s subjective opinion to the objective evidence. If the prejudice is of long standing, the rejection of the evidence can occur ‘in good faith’ and the sin of scandal then dates from much earlier. The man here claiming to be the Messiah in no way fits the pre-conceived model which can allegedly be drawn from the Scriptures. The images presented by Scripture appear to be much closer to another much more earthly conception. And, thus, the point at which Jewish claims to a superior knowledge detached themselves from an obedience that remained open to God is deeply hidden in the past. That is the point where the faith that makes room for all expansions of divine fulfilment degenerates into a private knowledge of how things should be.

The prerequisite for sighting the form of Jesus is faith in God, in the very general sense that a person must make space for divine omnipotence—all the space this form needs in order to unfold fully: space between heaven and earth, God and world, Old and New Age. And if, in order to be able to unfold, the form requires such breadth from the beholder, then the latter must allow himself to be stretched until the required space has been created within him. A whole symphony cannot be recorded on a tape that is too short. Naturally, the image of Christ cannot be fully ‘taken in’ as can a painting; its dimensions are objectively infinite, and no finite spirit can traverse them. The advance ‘credit’ of faith, therefore, is required if the image is to be allowed its proper proportions. It is, nevertheless, an image and a form, the Image of all images and the Form of all forms and, as such, it possesses an evidential power of its own which it itself communicates.

This evidence may be best demonstrated negatively, by pointing out where it is that every failure to see the form exactly fails. Something of this method was explained in the last section, where we saw how Christ's image may be distinguished from the forms of all other founders of religions. Here everything depended on the perception of the whole form and on the interrelatedness of its various aspects. Once these aspects are taken in isolation from one another the form has already disappeared; and even if each aspect hereby gains a sort of hyperclarity that makes it more apt for 'scientific' elaboration, nevertheless the spiritual bond among them is sadly missing. In order to see that each individual aspect in truth receives its full meaning only by its overall relationship to the whole, that 'art of total vision' is required of which we have so often spoken. From one arm the archaeologist can reconstruct the whole statue, and the palaeologist can reconstruct the whole animal from a single tooth. A musicologist should be able to tell, from a single fugue motif, whether it was intended as a part of a double or a triple fugue, and to guess at the rhythmical structure that the second or third theme must have had. Everyone who has listened to Bach knows that, in the classical fugue, the rhythmical arrangement is oppositional: the first theme is slow and reposeful, the second runs along swiftly, and the third contains a rhythmical hammering; and every hearer knows that this varied thematic construction is determined by the rationale of the fugue's total architecture. Something similar occurs with the Gospel. The eschatological theme, taken on its own, is incomprehensible without the cadence of Christ's suffering. The vertical form of the Son of God who descends from the Father and goes back to him would be illegible without the horizontal form of historical fulfilment and of the mission entrusted to the Apostles. The evangelical ethic of love of neighbour receives its meaning from the living archetype of Christ, which is not only a model but at the same time (yet not only) the anticipation that makes imitation possible. Every element calls for the other, and the more penetrating the gaze of the beholder, the more he will discover harmony on all sides. If one essential element should be broken off (Christ's eternal divine sonship, for instance), all the proportions will be distorted and falsified. It is here that the problem of heresy has its roots: *hairesis*, the selective disjoining of parts. Heresy is able to analyse individual parts more exactly in themselves, and, in certain cases, where the wholeness of vision is lacking, heresy can call attention to what is missing or has been omitted (provided that here, too, the lacuna is not denied or has not simply been plastered over). But heresy can never make a whole with the parts that have been stolen.

Looking past Christ, failing to see him is something that can occur in various ways, but all these ways have this in common, that the gaze cannot withstand looking at the form of Christ himself. It is impossible to look into his eyes and maintain that one does not see him. There is, first of all, the possibility of erecting a screen before his image, and then being convinced or convincing oneself that it cannot be removed. A modern example of this is the 'historical-critical method', which supposedly can go only as far as the testimonies of faith in Christ and which then sees these testimonies as a screen hiding the historical Jesus. Or one can place before the image all sorts of historico-religious schemas (such as the myths of the 'salvation-bearer'[33]), or simply a system of categories under which one assumes, perhaps in good faith, that the phenomenon will be subsumed. For very many who refuse to take a look for themselves (but, astoundingly, also for many an earnest seeker), the screen of the Church 'as it unfortunately happens to be' suffices for them to excuse themselves from looking at Christ. Or perhaps it is Christians who put them off—Christians in general or a certain number of them one knows and by which one judges all Christianity, or perhaps it is a single individual who has disappointed one for life. For Nietzsche, for instance, it is enough that these redeemed 'do not look more redeemed', although it must be added that this profoundly sincere soul left the form of Christ himself almost totally out of his polemic. Whole periods of salvation-history, such as German Idealism and Classicism, seem to have been content with a pitifully faded image of Christ, accepted, it would appear, as if by tacit convention. At that time almost no one looked at Christ face to face, and for half a century or so it would seem that many things had simply disappeared from the text of the Gospels, and this not only for the philosophers and the poets but also for the theologians. People survived on second-hand presentations, on authorised compromises such as Schleiermacher's, who himself seems to have read the text through two or three pairs of spectacles. Even in the Catholic restoration it is not Christ himself who is contemplated, but rather the remotely derived cultural effects of Christianity: the 'harmonious disposition' found in the Church (Chateaubriand), the reliability of the primitive tradition, the poetic and mystical character of the Middle Ages. . . . In polemics and apologetics alike we largely find the same blinking eyes and batting eyelashes. This stems perhaps from a certain modesty that prevents courtly and bourgeois eras from speaking directly about what is most immediate: the preference to refer to it indirectly, in the reflection of custom and piety. But such 'modesty' quickly becomes a pretex for forgetfulness, a pretext for obstructing the paths to the essential. Often, too, we encounter an inability to speak impartially about the thing itself; instead we find the tendency to preach *cum studio* or *cum ira* from the outset, in the irritating tone of the revivalist which can only be countered with exasperated self-defence. What, however, can be the meaning of ‘impartially’ here? It cannot refer to the *epoch*? (or bracketing) of one’s own existence, which is precisely what Christ intends to reach and what he addresses and which must answer him if it is to catch sight of what Christ intends. Pascal and Kierkegaard were able to speak both existentially and impartially because they both stood under Christ’s fiery glance, which forbade them to engage in any digressive rhetoric and simply charged them to stand firm. They are both doubtless great artists of the word who, in this regard, placed all their art in the service of Christ’s truth. As much could be said for Newman in his prayers, and, at certain times, for given poems of Brentano and Verlaine, but much more frequently for the poems of Eichendorff. The same, finally, may also be said of Hamann’s early *Biblische Betrachtungen* (‘Biblical Meditations’), written in just a few weeks.

Most of those who approach the centre prefer to remain silent, but the manner in which they do this makes evident that they have indeed been stricken. In their existence an order is reflected that becomes a proclamation without words (1 Pet 3.1). This form that images order has something secret and yet clearly sublime about it: the centre of gravity of life has been shifted to Christ (‘I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me’), and the form of one’s own existence becomes incomprehensible except as a function of the Christ-form.

Looking past and failing to see the form is something which can remain externally ambiguous: some can look past an image which consists of pure prejudices to gaze into a mysterious sphere where, unseen yet intuited only by the heart, the true form stands. And this finally brings us to the two decisive questions: 1) How does the evidential force of the Christ-form relate to its hiddenness? and 2) How do man’s guilt and the blindness that comes with it relate to this same hiddenness?

1. The first question faces us with the problem whether Jesus intended to conceal or to reveal himself. The Gospels exhibit both motifs; but how are we to reconcile them? In Mark the problem is at its most confusing. Here the two motifs are found not only alongside each other, but sharply and dialectically opposed to one another, so that we have to look forward to John to see how they can be united in one single figure. Mark is aware of a ‘messianic secret’[34] which Jesus wants to preserve by every means possible. In a manner both impressive and threatening, Jesus commands the evil spirits that recognise him to keep silent (Mk 1.34; 3.12). Even as he heals him, Jesus replies with wrath (ὀργισθείς, according to a well-attested reading, *cf*. Mk 3.5) to the leper who had asked to be cured; ‘he sternly charged him and threw him out, saying: “See that you say nothing to anyone!” ’ (Mk 1.42f.). After raising up the daughter of Jairus, he charges all those standing round to say nothing (Mk 5.43), and the

same occurs at the healing of the deaf and dumb man (Mk 7.35). Before healing many of the sick, he takes them aside, or outside the city gates (Mk 7.33; 8.23), and instructs them to go home without entering the town again (Mk 8.26; *cf.* 5.19). Even more important is the fact that, to those of his disciples who recognise that he is the Messiah, he gives the same stern command (ἐπιτιμᾶν) to speak to no one about him (Mk 8.30). Nor are they allowed to divulge anything of the appearance on Mount Tabor before his Resurrection (Mk 9.9). Related to this is his urge to go apart by himself: just as he has lived in the wilderness among wild beasts (Mk 1.12f.), so too he evades the multitude that seeks him by going 'elsewhere' (Mk 1.38). He escapes into a heathen region (Mk 5.1; 7.24) and there enters a house, and he desires that 'no one should know about it.' Together with his disciples he evades the crowd and retreats to a 'desolate place' (ἔρημος τόπος, Mk 6.31; 1.45).

These commands to be silent are of no avail, and this for three main reasons. Partly it is because the injunctions are not obeyed: 'the more he charged them to tell no one, the more zealously they proclaimed it' (Mk 7.36; 1.45; *cf.* Mt 9.30f.: ' "See that no one knows it!" But they went away and spread his fame through all that district'). Partly, however, it was because they could hardly be obeyed, since the miracles to which they refer are public and at times even wrought in the midst of great multitudes of people (Mk 5.21-43; 7.32; 8.22). And partly, finally, it was because those injunctions appear to contradict the intrinsic meaning of the sign of salvation itself and do, in fact, contradict it in the present form of our text. Such is the case, for instance, when the person cured is, on the one hand, supposed to keep silent and, on the other, supposed to show himself to the priests and, 'as a testimony to them' (Mk 1.44), offer the Mosaic sacrifice of purification. Another example is the situation in which the miracle to be kept secret elicits from the people authentic praise of God (Mk 7.37). The tendency to conceal his messianic character stands in Christ in sharp opposition to the contrary tendency to proclaim his divine mission to the chosen people. The first tendency is contradicted by the sermons that arouse wonderment and the numerous miracles intended to produce even greater astonishment and which doubtless proclaim the arrival of the messianic time. And yet, this first tendency to keep the secret is just as much determined by Christ's mission as is the second tendency; in no sense is it merely a virtuous show of modesty.

In the need to remain hidden there is a kind of constraint;[35] hiddenness is not sought for its own sake, but in order to make possible another, more important thing which is where his true manifestation necessarily lies. He must fulfil the messianic prophecies, but not in the way the Jews conceived and interpreted them. This is all the more difficult as it is not only a question of his message, but of his person—his flesh and blood (all want to touch him)—and yet he is not to be confused with a mere miracle-worker or magician. To be sure, behind the constant recurrence of this motif in Mark there is also the belief of the primitive Christian community that only the risen Christ could be understood and proclaimed without danger of misunderstanding. But this belief is already to be seen in Jesus' whole attitude. He himself is given the seemingly contradictory task of being manifest and hidden at the same time. 'The more he proclaims and heals, the more clearly does he become God's revealer and revelation; and it is precisely this clear revelation of his might and of his word which may not radiate wholly unconcealed, for he is the Son of Man, hidden in both his divine and his human mode.'[36] This hiddenness itself, however, is once again dialectical: it is the manifestation of God's incomprehensibility, a manifestation which is misunderstood by sinners and which must conceal its own need to become manifest if it is to become manifest at all.

Thus, until the truth about his identity becomes inescapable, Jesus had to unfold his messianic reality and glory by constantly, as it were, avoiding the Jewish concept of the Messiah. One initial expression for this seemingly contradictory aspect of his mission is the theological notion of the messianic secret, which is almost totally restricted to Mark and which was probably added by him in many places by way of a leitmotiv. Another expression for this is the different affective states in which especially the miracles are performed. We note the 'anger' (Mk 1.41) we already perceived in his response to the leper who said: 'If you will, you can heal me.' Then there is the way in which he 'looks around at them with anger and compassionate sorrow (συνλυπούμενος) over the hardness of their hearts', this in the case of the man with the withered hand and, particularly, in connection with those who 'were on the watch' to see whether Christ would cure him on the Sabbath (Mk 3.5): here we see Christ performing a miracle in the very face of the sin of scandal. We recall, too, his 'sighing' at the cure of the deaf and dumb man (Mk 7.37) and, soon after, when the Pharisees ask a sign of him and he refuses it and leaves them standing there (Mk 8.12), we note the threatening way he confronts them, literally his 'breathing anger' or 'spitting threats' at them (ἐμβϱιμησάμενος, Mk 1.43; ἐνεβϱιμήθη, Mt 9.30), and this attitude recurs twice in John when Christ is at the grave of Lazarus: 'He became furious within himself' (Jn 11.33, 38), like a captive animal over its impotence. Then, in Mk 9.19, we find the disgust he expresses at still having to put up with this fickle and faithless generation. All of this may, with Lohmeyer, be described as the 'fury of a divine being at being surrounded by the wretchedness and misery of man',[37] as the 'sign of a being with a divine nature who is confined within human limits'.[38] Equally, the question how long all this must be borne 'speaks of divine wrath and human lament, and the unfathomable fact of these two things being united constitutes the mystery of the one speaking here'.[39] And yet, something more is involved here, and it is the fact that he who is absolutely free now stands under the destiny (of the sinful world) that surrounds him, and that his sovereign activity is interiorly touched by a contrary force which transforms it into suffering: it is as if God could no longer do what he wants, because his good actions elicit sin. As he acts he must do violence to himself in order still to act divinely even as he acts differently than he would like. This concealment of the divine will is the manifestation of that violence which sin inflicts on God. There can be no question here of ἀπάθεια in Jesus' feelings and acts; his feelings and acts, rather, have a 'pathetic' form, which is to say the form of suffering: the sinless one has been 'made to be sin' (2 Cor 5.21).

Having said this, we have already anticipated what we find in John. What in Mark still appeared to be an external contradiction between manifestation and secrecy, has in John deepened to become the interior working through in suffering of the contradiction of an infinite revealing love that immerses itself in a world of sin. From the outset, this love is a light in a darkness which does not comprehend it (Jn 1.5), does not recognise it (Jn 1.10), does not receive it (Jn 1.11). Emphasis here falls on 'from the outset': it is a drama which is beyond the dramatic on account of its 'always having known' (Jn 2.25; 6.64; 18.4), so that the end—death—is already found in the beginning. The Son's situation is that of having been given away by the Father (Jn 3.16), which nonetheless makes it impossible for him to entrust himself to men (Jn 2. 24). His is a love which, in its fatigue, preaches and works miracles (Jn 4.6), in the peculiar tension between the fact that his hour has not yet come and the fact that the hour (of suffering) has already come for Mary and therefore also for him (Jn 2.4f.). For the light to be in the darkness always means that the love of God pours itself out extravagantly in the midst of dire need, as is evident in the miracle of the bread (Jn 6.5-13): concretely, it means that God gives of himself in the midst of unbelief, of grumbling, of covert and open threats of death. The discourse of promise reveals the inner state of Passion: he offers himself (as food and drink) to the very limit of indignity, of throwing himself at people. His is a love that breaks out of its security into defencelessness, and that yet immediately (and by the same token) must threaten as a judgment ('Unless you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man. . .'), a love which rejects those it had impulsively drawn to itself just as abruptly: 'Will you also go away?' (Jn 6.53, 67). In like manner, his discourses in Jerusalem are a constant provocation in every possible direction, and their effect is soon felt: those who are accused of lusting for murder (Jn 7.19; 8.40; 10.32f.) and of adultery against God (Jn 8.42) themselves, in turn, accuse him of premeditated suicide (Jn 8.22), madness (Jn 10.20) and possession (Jn 7.20; 8.48f., 52). We have, too, his explicit gesture of self-withdrawal and self-concealment (Jn 6.15; 8.59; 10.39; 11.54), and his pointedly remaining hidden (Jn 7.10) in response to his unbelieving brothers' proverbial plea that 'no man works in secret if he seeks to be known openly' (Jn 7.4). But, for John, all this is already a love which gives itself unto the darkness and which reveals its glory precisely in this way, to the point where Judas is confronted with the Eucharist, where Jesus' soul is 'shaken in its depths' (Jn 13.21f.). What is portrayed by the Synoptics as the inner drama of the Lord's unopposable will as it exists in the midst of opposition is portrayed by John as the Son's will, which from the outset has entered by suffering into the Father's will to deliver him over ('not to do my own will', Jn 6.38). Only for an instant do we perceive, as by a flash of lightning, the drama of the attuning of these two wills: this occurs at the Son's 'consternation' in the temple when he considers his Passion ('What shall I say?' Jn 12.27).

The hiddenness of the Christ-form, which we have just traced in two of the Gospels, was never invalidated, not even by the transfiguration resulting from Easter and Pentecost, from the reality of the Spirit and of the Church. Rather, such hiddenness belongs essentially to the object which is being transfigured and exalted. For it belongs to the verification of the truth and truthfulness of a Christ who 'does not seek his own glorification' (Jn 5.41; 7.18; 8.50), and the Father seeks and effects this glorification of the Son for this very reason and in so far as the Son does not seek it himself (Jn 8.50). Thus, there is an intrinsic logical evidence in the resulting fact that this glory of the Son can be seen only by him who believes, that is, by him who does not seek his own honour (Jn 5.40-44), and that the person for whom it becomes visible sees the evidence for the Son's divine mission shining forth precisely from his hiddenness. If this trait were lacking, then the one contemplating Christ would be greatly unsettled because what, for him, is the decisive criterion of authenticity would be missing. Whatever the case, he would not have been granted the vision of the revelation of the ever-greater God, nor of the revelation of the world's redemption, which cannot occur by means of a spectacular theophany that dazzles human misery with divine splendour, but only in the mystery of a love that, by suffering, withstands all the insults inflicted upon it and all the world's burden it must bear. Seen alongside the path chosen by God, every other possibility, devised by the cleverest human speculation or fancy, will always inevitably turn out to be yet another superficial banality.

It could be objected, however, that this hiddenness of God in Christ is covered over and obfuscated by the form of hiddenness of the Church, which is of a quite different kind and not pleasing to God. For many, this argument possesses a certain power of conviction and, thus, dispenses them from faith. They overlook the fact, however, that the form of the Church consists of Jews and Gentiles and, in any event, always of sinners, and that it neither can nor desires to enter into competition with the form of Christ. In the present aeon, it is unthinkable to conceive of a church which would be nothing but the Body of Christ, that is, which in everything would be the expression of its Head's animating power and in nothing the expression of its own resistance to this power: in this case, it would no longer need daily penance, daily confession of sins and sorrow, preaching, admonition, ecclesial discipline. One can, indeed, desire the Church to acquire a 'more redeemed' appearance, especially if one includes oneself in this desire. But it can only be a matter of a relative more or less, as will surely be conceded by all those ecclesial experiments and projects that have made new beginnings in their pursuit of Church reform.

2. The other question concerned hiddenness and guilt. If one fails to see the form of Jesus it is not because the objective evidence is insufficient, but because of the guilt of a 'darkness' which does not see, recognise, or receive the Light. And it is men's guilt which first forces the Son to reveal himself to the world under the mode of hiddenness. Thus, the guilt is not excused by the hiddenness; rather, the latter becomes the judgment of guilt. The hiddenness is the objective proof that the guilty have not wanted to see. But, because the form of hiddenness is at the same time a form of suffering, guilt intentionally looks away from this its mirror, for there is here nothing gratifying or edifying to behold, but only something contemptible (Is 53.2f.). The last thing that guilt could acknowledge is the fact that precisely such an image is the perfect objectivation of itself, a self-portrait whose similarity and even identity necessarily overwhelms the unprejudiced beholder, and does so the more, the more he contemplates it. In Christ's hiddenness guilt should come to acknowledge the irrefutable demonstration of its own fallenness and dispossession, and this in a new kind of fittingness, 'rightness', which is no less evident than the one considered earlier. Already as an *image* (and not only as δύναμις—power given through grace), the image of hiddenness has the double function of confronting guilt both with its culpable self-concealment and its exposure by grace. Guilt flees from both things, for it is unwilling to admit either that it hides the truth and, therefore, is a lie, or that God can convict it of its own untruth.

In order to see the form of the Redeemer, therefore, a turning is necessary: a turning away from one's own image and a turning to the image of God. And here lies the whole problem of the representation of Jesus in images, particularly of his suffering. The turning or ‘con-version’ is the prerequisite, not only for ‘being able’ to endure this image and look at it, but the prerequisite for being able to see at all what it expresses objectively. Such conversion can take place only in the individual; only individuals can be affected by crucifixes on walls or at street corners. Consequently, the question can at least be raised whether the crucifix can be, so to speak, the ‘official’ image of Christ for the whole community, or whether the latter, as a corporate body, should not have as its symbolic image, rather, the glorified *Kyrios*, as was the case in the ancient Church. The coming to prominence of the image of the suffering Christ in the Gothic Age is closely connected with the privatisation of devotion, the need for interiority and the striving for contemplation that followed an age of external representation which, in part, abused the image of glorification in order to achieve an earthly anticipation of the eschatological Kingdom. Nevertheless, the problem of the image of the suffering Christ, which shows forth the hiddenness of God and the sinner’s ruinous condition and exhorts to conversion, has its limits in the essence of the community’s worship, which as such is directly oriented to the memorial of Christ’s suffering. It is in this *anamnesis* (1 Cor 11.24), this *memoria passionis*, that the Church achieves her own true self. This occurs, naturally, to the extent that the Church consists of nothing but sinners who gather together and celebrate the memorial Meal in common, becoming a ‘church’ only through communion in this memorial. The Church exists in no other form. Thus, we here stand beyond the tension between individual and community. The Church is always a personal reality, and it is this *persona Ecclesiae* which contemplates God’s image of hiddenness—and must contemplate it, since the Church is the adequate subject for whose sake this image was designed in the first place. The Church is the sinful woman who has undergone conversion once and for all and who, nevertheless, must still be converted anew every day.[40] As such, the Church has not only to ‘believe’ the image of hiddenness, but to contemplate it. To persevere in contemplation before this image is for her ‘the one thing necessary’ (Lk 10.41), because the spiritual power of the image will then ‘transform [her] into the same image’ (2 Cor 3. 18). Precisely here, where God conceals himself, contemplation becomes an essential dimension of the Christian faith. On Mount Tabor a restful contemplation of Christ’s supreme glory is denied the disciples; here, however, the ray of divinity is so withdrawn that the human eye is indeed able to see, but only in order to be wounded the more deeply by this concealed light—if, that is, the eye really sees and perseveres in seeing.

Not only the suffering Lord, but also the Jesus of the hidden and public life, is concealed for the sake of the sinner, and every encounter of the sinner with him as Redeemer is portrayed in the Gospel as a contemplation of his form that occurs because of a conversion brought about by grace. Especially in John, the moment of faith coincides with the vision of the form, or, in a better formulation: the form is already perceived; it is already present completely in the soul, but still in the darkness, as it were, and the only thing needed is for the light to unveil itself, to identify itself with the 'I' that reveals itself, and what is already known and possessed objectively is transformed into a subjective possession. 'Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you" ' (Jn 9.37). 'I who speak with you am he' (Jn 4.26; *cf.* 20.16, 27). John's whole Gospel represents the unfolding of this contemplative dimension of faith: here, for the Church, contemplation is grounded and given over to her; here is also to be found the permanent justification for the purely contemplative form of life in the Church, a life-form which indissolubly unites the aesthetics of faith with the mystery of suffering. This is the bridal mystery between Christ and the Church which, in this one image, exacts both the continual contemplation of the 'bleeding Head so wounded' and the existential unification whereby the Bride becomes one with the Bridegroom.

The negative proof of this truth lies not in a pure unbelief which has perhaps never perceived the image, but rather in the negation from within vision itself, that is, in apostasy. The apostate has seen, and then denied what he has seen. Through and through, he remains branded by the image he rejects: with terrible power this image leaves its imprint on his whole existence, which blazes brilliantly in the fire of denial. Wherever the fugitive may turn his glance he is met by the 'eyes like flames of fire', he hears the 'voice like the roar of mighty waters', he feels the 'sharp two-edged sword from His mouth', and he hides in vain from the 'face like the sun blazing with full strength' (Rev 1.14ff.).

D. THE MEDIATION OF THE FORM

1. THE MEDIATION OF SCRIPTURE

When the Son came into the world, his form in various ways became intertwined with the interrelated forms of his immediate and more distant historical context and with the given forms of the world of nature and of salvation-history. In the last chapter we abstracted as far as possible from this network of contexts in which the Christ-form is inserted, in order to let it shine forth in all its uniqueness. But even so we had to note the contrast between the Christ-form and other forms—that qualitative distance which results precisely from vital proximity. We must now focus on this interconnectedness, taking as our perspective the Christian conviction that the Son of God did not come to astound the world, all the while himself remaining within a splendid isolation, but rather that 'I came to cast fire upon the world; and would that it were already kindled!' (Lk 12.49). His form is in the world in order to impress itself upon it and to continue to shape it: everything depends on this event; and, therefore, it is not only difficult but impossible to consider and grasp the shaping form purely in itself, *before* its act of shaping. We see what this form *is* from what it *does*.

Part of what the form *is* is provided by its attestation, and this attestation is not, as might be thought, merely external or posterior to it; rather, it belongs to the very structure of the form itself. If Christ is the Son of the living God, then both the witness of the Father and the witness of the Holy Spirit (with the two of whom he, as second Person of God, constitutes the one and only personal God) are interior to his being and, therefore, to his form. The same is true of the witness of salvation-history, whose promises he fulfils, and even of the witness of the cosmos, the essence and existence of which he wholly justifies and which he brings to its own innermost idea and destination; anchoring it in his very being in a manner not merely external but properly internal to him. This fourfold attestation which, in part, is the foundation of his form (even though none of the four are identical with his person), belongs to what he is, and thus it would seem more appropriate to deal with it first.

But all these testimonies which contribute to the Christ-form witness not to an 'image' set up to be looked at, but to a deed that occurs and that reveals its figure in its effects. The shaping force can be considered both in its exercise (*in fieri*) and in its result (*in facto esse*); neither of the two can be wholly adequately detached from the other because there can be no result that is separable from the action that occasions it. The Christian is a Christian only to the extent that Christ never ceases to affirm himself in him vitally through his grace and through the participation he gives in his form. On the other hand, whatever in the exercise of his shaping deed may be perceived to have form already belongs to the result: this is already the beginning of Christ's assuming form in the world, even if at first this occurs in forms none of which possess a significance which is complete and autonomous in itself, forms which are thus ordered to Christ's assuming form in mankind and in the individual person. These entities, possessing form and mediating the shaping deed, are particularly difficult to describe because, on the one hand, they are the Christ-form itself, but, on the other hand, in their communication to the world, they are thus already necessarily affected in their very form by the world that receives them. This conclusion is either denied by Protestant theology or falsely interpreted (often by the same theologians), in the sense that the element of human mediation in these mediating forms is regarded as something external and alien to the Christ-form, something which, therefore, serves only to obscure it. But this cannot possibly be all there is to say, because in that event the shaping power of Christ as he communicates himself to the world would either be drastically underestimated or from the outset subjected to a tragic futility which would imply the failure of his mission. However, we must never forget that, even in the forms that mediate him, Christ himself is and remains the appearance of the God who does not appear, and that the mediating forms, too, are likewise vehicles of the non-appearing power and efficacy of the gracious God. From the form itself we may never calculate the depth of the divine graces and judgments; indeed, the forms themselves constantly point to this fact.

Christ's mediating form is multiple not only in its result, but in its very exercise, and yet this multiplicity can ever give expression only to the one form. This unfolding of the form in multiplicity can be explained in terms of the old doctrine of the *corpus triforme*, for in this connection 'body' has broadly the sense of a human form in the world. The physical 'body' which the Son of God received from the Virgin Mary, and which was the form of the 'historical Jesus', was the Body of the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world. For this, this body had already been formed as an instrument of universal redemption. The fact of his being so formed becomes apparent at the institution of the Eucharist 'in the night when he was betrayed': the Flesh that suffers and bears is, at the same time, the Flesh that gives thanks to the love of the Father who gives him away; it is the Flesh that is placed as an atonement in all traitors, and as such—

as the Flesh of divine love—it has already transcended the destiny of man’s necessary death and, mysteriously, it is one with the risen paschal Body, in which is openly manifested the hidden reality in the flesh of the historical Jesus: the necessity of suffering and being given away for all. Looking back in the light of the Passion and the Eucharist of Christ’s flesh as it accomplishes redemption we can see what the form of the historical Jesus had been; just as, looking forward we begin to understand what the form of the ‘Christ of faith’ would be: a witnessing Scripture and community, both in strictest unity. In a manner that to us appears somewhat to oversimplify and to be open to misunderstanding, the Alexandrian doctrine of the *corpus triforme* spoke of God’s incarnate Word as having a ‘body of Scripture’ (a scriptural form) and a ‘body of the Church’ (an ecclesial form). For, precisely as the Logos of the Father, as the Word of the Old Testament, it was wholly proper for him, in his assumption of worldly form, to select for himself a body of Scripture: thus, it would make the fulness of its reality as Word and as Meaning flow forth not only in the silent sacramental form of the Eucharist, but also in the verbal form of a sacred Scripture. Here it already becomes evident that Eucharist and Scripture belong most intimately together, that they can only be different aspects of the same thing, and this, furthermore, justifies the practice of the Church, as she remembers her Lord, of celebrating her liturgical memorial as Christ’s becoming present both in the Word and the eucharistic Sacrament. But for this very reason it also becomes evident that the form of both word and sacrament points beyond itself to the form of the Church, which is where they must be fulfilled, just as the form of the Church must be understood not only as a ‘result’ but, prior to that, as an event and as the power of the Christ-form as it expresses and impresses itself: wherever the community is gathered in its eucharistic memorial listening to the Word, there an event called ‘church’ occurs in virtue of the fact that the Lord becomes present in the assembly, testifying to himself and manifesting himself within it. Eucharist would make no sense unless it were enjoyed by men; thus, it is transitory, related to an external purpose and thus a purely mediating form. Likewise, the Logos’ body of Scripture has no meaning in itself, but only as the vehicle that impresses the Christ-form in the hearts of men, as a ‘sacrament’ of the Holy Spirit which effects what Scripture signifies. But precisely in so far as *this* Christ-form of the Church mediates and communicates itself *as* Church, the Church receives her Lord in such a mediating form that she herself essentially remains a mediating form, notwithstanding the sense in which it can be seen as a result which is something it shares with and derives from the risen Christ. The Church is not something which is self-enclosed in the world and alongside the world; she is the light of Christ flooding into a history and a creation which still do not appear redeemed; she is a participation in Christ's bearing the guilt of the world, and at the same time the celebrating proclamation that he has already borne all the world's guilt. In the present age of the world, the Church as a whole is still essentially provisional: that is, she looks and points forwards to the perfect embodiment of the Christ-form in the whole of creation, forwards to an event which will conclude with the eschatological Parousia, with the Judgment (understood as the adjusting and re-directing of the world by Christ towards Christ), with the New Heaven, and the New Earth. The Church is underway to this event; indeed, as Christ's mystical *parousia*, she is already its inception. With her form, the Church stands between the Christ-form of humiliation and hiddenness and the still not visible Christ-form of glory, which does not yet appear in the Church (Col 3.3 f.). This means that precisely the Church's aspect as visible form will have to pass away along with all other worldly form (1 Cor 7.31).

It is thus obvious that these mediating Christ-forms do not stand alongside each other as of equal value. They are intertwined with one another and partially overlap. The Church is the outworking of the risen Christ (in whom the suffering form of redemption has become glorified) through the form of Scripture and the form of the Sacrament. But the risen Christ, moreover, can be separated only very inadequately from the reality of Scripture (as God sees it) and of the Eucharist, even though the relationship in each of these two instances is quite different. The Eucharist is a pure 'mystery of faith'. The only thing which can be perceived in it is the symbol of eating and drinking; no subjective experience can be produced as a criterion for its objective truth. This is why, in the context of a theological doctrine of perception and vision, the Eucharist can be dealt with only marginally. We already dealt with the risen Body when we considered the eyewitness of the Apostles, who by their testimony establish the truth of Scripture and of the Church on this reality of the Resurrection.

Here we shall treat only of Sacred Scripture and the Church, both of which, in spite of the differences between them, have two things in common: they are both perceptible expressions of the Christ-form (*corpora Christi*), but equally in both men share in their communication and formation. Although they both bear witness to the vitality and power of the risen Lord, their testimony differs from those we will discuss in Section E by the fact that it is mediated through a human medium and, to that extent, can be considered to be modified and perhaps also obscured by it. The testimony borne to the Son by the Father and the Holy Spirit can have nothing opaque about it, likewise also the testimony of (salvation-)history and of the cosmos, because what these decidedly give witness to is, precisely, something not shaped by history itself and by the cosmos itself.

Rather, it is Christ who, through his existence that fills all things, compels history and cosmos to bear a witness that is beyond their will to expression. On the other hand, all divine inspiration notwithstanding, Scripture is written by men and sinners. And, notwithstanding everything that can be said about her mysterious character as ‘Body’ and ‘Bride’ of Christ, the Church is populated and shaped by men and sinners. To what extent do these media communicate the Christ-form intact?

In earlier times, before the awakening of the historical sense of the Enlightenment and the rise of Biblical criticism, both these media were regarded as being radically distinct from one another. The Bible was more or less considered to be a book fallen from heaven, infallible even as regards its literary manner of expression. The Church, on the contrary, was thought to remain untouched by the distortions and mutilations of men only as regards her divinely instituted skeletal structures. Since that time the standpoint has shifted. We now see the Biblical word as being imbedded in temporal history, as affected through and through by very far-ranging human relativities, but in such a way that, in spite of all appearances, God’s absolute Word to mankind becomes expressed within this fully human medium. Something similar holds for the Church, the relativity of whose form is far more glaring to us moderns than to our ancestors. Thus, Scripture and Church have been approximated to one another. The institution of the Scripture has come to be seen in connection with the institution of the Church and as one of its ‘constitutive elements’[41], and the inspiration of Scripture has come to be understood as a special ecclesial charism, differing in its positivity from the ‘negative assistance’ that the Holy Spirit gives the ecclesial magisterium when it interprets authoritatively a revelation which has already occurred and been concluded. Considered in this way, Scripture belongs, along with the sacraments, to the Church’s salvific elements instituted by God, but Scripture nevertheless differs from the sacraments to the extent that the spiritual collaboration of men (as ‘secondary authors’) co-determines the original form of Scripture far more profoundly.

a. Faith and the Becoming of the Image

From the earliest days Holy Scripture has been regarded and extolled as a masterpiece of God which bears on its forehead the seal of its author. This not only with regard to its validity and authority, nor only on account of its power to impose itself, but also because of the form that it comprises. The impression this form made on the early centuries was so strong that a tendency prevailed to consider the human author as a secretary of God, one who was, of course, free and intelligent but who basically simply wrote down what was dictated to him. Historical Biblical research has forever disposed of such a conception. Not only has it exposed philologically the layers of human workings and re-workings, of slow and complex composition; with this it has demonstrated theologically how strongly the results of this work are determined and coloured by human viewpoints and perspectives, and above all by ecclesial Christian faith. This discovery has profoundly shaken Protestant research; Catholic research however, while needing to re-think some things, does not see any occasion for a fundamental crisis.

In spite of isolated precursors such as Richard Simon, historical Biblical research was predominantly a child of the nonbelieving Enlightenment (Reimarus, Lessing), which directed its theses polemically against an uncritical belief in the Bible. They undertook to remove the layers that faith had painted over so as to expose beneath them the authentic historical figure of Jesus. The ‘historical Jesus’ thus exposed presented the most varied faces, all of which more or less corresponded to modern expectations or ideals: while the Jesus of faith no longer speaks to today’s man, the historical Jesus, on the contrary, was supposed to address him directly. In 1892, in an important work which received little attention at the time, Martin Kahler distinguished the ‘so-called historical (*historisch*) Jesus’ from the ‘historic (*geschichtlich*) Biblical Christ’. In so doing, Kähler turned away decisively from Enlightenment research into the life of Jesus—a research which sought to deal only with pure facts of the past—and in the end he consciously turned to that image of Christ which alone is significant: the image shaped by faith and which faith alone knows. For Kähler, ‘historic’ (*geschichtlich*) denotes that aspect of an event that possesses authentic and permanent meaning for faith, that aspect which, in addition, ‘evokes the irrefutable impression of fulness of reality’.[42] This second characteristic is decisive for us: not only is the historical Jesus of no significance in the religious sense; compared with the Christ of faith, he is pale and unreal and not credible as a form. This is shown irrefutably by the series of images of Jesus sketched by historical research, including Bultmann’s *Jesus*, whereby it is interesting that Bultmann is the new editor of Harnack. Bultmann’s methodology admittedly does not go beyond Kähler; it is unable either to unite or wholly to separate the two figures which Kähler had juxtaposed. By this tragic dualism Bultmann’s methodology remains the perfect expression of Protestant anthropology as such. What the ‘whore reason’ accomplishes apart from faith is both indispensable and unacceptable. In Kantian fashion, Bultmann paves for faith a path whereby it criticises and limits itself and, thus, admits its inability to come to see the object of faith, namely, an ‘historical Christ’. The dualism that thus arises between history (*Historie*) and contemporaneity (*Geschichte*) is truly tragic. First, it is tragic for theology itself, which is now coming close to giving up altogether the fact of God’s Incarnation: henceforth theology can be founded only on the sole absolute remaining to it, namely, faith’s self-understanding. And this dualism is also tragic for the Church’s proclamation and mission, which cannot interpret such retrogression other than as an act of self-forsaking on the part of Christianity. The possibility of an evolution beyond Bultmann, similar to the manner in which Idealism evolved beyond Kant, is highly questionable: Idealism entailed the abandonment of the fundamental principle of the Reformation, while today, in a Christian sense, the only question can be whether we can regain the salvific significance of the historical facts. The argument concerning Bultmann’s theological exegesis is much less an argument about the result of research than an argument about the theological presuppositions of the exegetical method. It is not even the method itself which needs to be questioned.

What is important in the first place is the radical and definitive self-annulment of ‘research into the life of Jesus’, as that research was practised from Reimarus to Wrede, including their biographer Albert Schweitzer (1906): the ruling presupposition here was that only the historical-critical outlook, unprejudiced by faith, was in any position to see the truth of what happened at that time in Palestine. A consideration of the presuppositions, now generally accepted, that govern a science dealing with spiritual and artistic works would have necessarily convinced the theologians of the naïveté of such a methodological conception (even though here we are clearly in the realm of analogy). A work of art can be grasped objectively only within a certain subjectivity which corresponds to the work, and an analysis of its objective structure presupposes that such a realisation of its content has at least occurred at some time even if such a moment has passed. In more general terms we can say that colours, sounds, scents exist only in the sense organs that perceive them, and because this variegated world as a whole arises in living beings and spirits, we may say that the world can unfold and exhibit its objectivity precisely in the medium of subjects.[43] In the end it comes to much the same, therefore, whether, as a naïve realist, one attributes to all these sense qualities an existence in themselves or whether one mourns the non-existence of such an *in se* in the name of a ‘pure subjectivity’ of the world in its qualitative multiplicity. Protestant theology’s sense of shock at the ‘non-existence’ of a credible historical Jesus before and apart from faith resembles the shock experienced by the naïve realist at the nonexistence of the world in which he had ‘believed’. The same unphilosophical shock then impels this theology to see ‘faith’ as purely subjective.

This comparison should not be developed further because it would then necessarily become a false one. We cannot say, for instance: ‘Behind secondary sense qualities there lie the quantitative impulses of matter as the objective cause of secondary qualities, and in the same way theology acknowledges, behind the beautiful Christ-form of faith, an objective causality working through certain historical circumstances: a prophet by the name of Jesus who triggered these effects of faith.’ The analogy cannot be sustained for the simple reason that here we are no longer moving in the sphere of the physical and the physiological, but in that of spiritual understanding and formation. Hence, the manner in which the ecclesial faith of the primitive community refers back to the historical events that occasion it is the testimony of people who themselves clearly see the connection between cause and effect and who responsibly bear witness to it once they have understood it. Will we take seriously this reference which faith itself makes to the historical event? It seems we must, if, that is, we scrutinize critically the sources accessible to us and are willing to hear the *kerygma* of the primitive Church for what it claims to be: a testimony about the man Jesus Christ, who died and rose for us. But taking this testimony seriously will necessarily lead to the automatic dissolution of the dualistic Protestant position which considers faith and reason to be irreconcilable and does not want to see that, in the theological domain, it is faith alone that can guarantee the full objective (‘rational’) knowledge of things as they really are.

At this point we are in a position to consider accurately the problem of the medium of Holy Scripture as it is posed today. While for an older theology Scripture was seen to be God’s Word to the Church, for more recent theology it is primarily the expression of faith’s reflection on historical revelation. It is possible, however, to see both things in their unity, and indeed not as if the one viewpoint could be brought into harmony with the other only by force and artifice, but in such a way that, with that evidential force which is proper to the theological outlook, both things come together to build a ‘necessary’ unity of form. To see this and to make it evident may be allowed to be the proper task of Catholic theology; when Protestant theology takes to this work it can hardly do so without approximating the Catholic principle. What has to be seen is the fact that divine revelation has been received into the womb of human faith, a faith effected by the grace of revelation itself. Divine revelation wants to be received, borne and brought into the world by this womb. Nowhere does this become more impressively clear than in the textual history of the Old Testament, where the Word of God is carried in a millennial pregnancy by the believing meditation of the people: slowly and steadily it is thought through and illumined to its very depths and its existential implications fully grasped. In the Old Testament one

Word of God is joined to another and together they bear a new Word of God, and all of this without prejudice to the ‘inspiration’ of the Prophets and the meditation of the pious, but also without prejudice to the divine dispositions that fall vertically and descend into the ϰαιϱοί of the history of the Covenant. These are, indeed, dispositions and exhortations from God which, to be at all understood and received, greatly relied upon the prayerful meditation that preceded them. The situation of Moses, who led Israel in the name of God, and the chronic unbelief of the people during its wandering in the desert, were also the object of faith’s subsequent meditation. We see the record of this not only in Deuteronomy, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, but also in the early books of the Pentateuch. Only in the medium of this contemplation by faith can the Word of God at all teach the people what it means and wants to express. For this reason, it is ‘naïve realism’ to imagine the covenant-partnership as the simple encounter of a speaking and a listening person, a commanding and an obeying person, whereby the listening and obeying person is the people and the individual within it. God is not a partner in this limited human sense: ‘God is one alone’ (Gal 3.20); and if, according to Paul, this is expressed only imperfectly in the Old Testament, nonetheless it is expressed perfectly in Jesus Christ, who is the same Word of God, but now in the form of an historical man. The perfection of a partnership with God is precisely expressed in the fact that the Word of God no longer stands before us and alongside us, but has truly been implanted into us (Jer 31.31 f.; Ez 36.26f.). And we ought not to understand this in the way the likewise ‘naïve realism’ of Catholic theologians would have it, that is, that this implantation of the Word of God in us occurs only in a ‘second movement’, after God’s objective deeds of salvation in Christ had occurred ‘in a first movement’ (*in actu primo*), ‘in themselves’ and ‘for us’, but had not yet been wrought ‘in us’. Such a conception contradicts precisely the principle of the Incarnation as understood especially by the Greek Fathers. In spite of the highly privileged character of Mary’s figure and mission, she remains the archetype of the Church precisely as the hearer of the Word whom her Son declared blessed (Mt 11.28): the hearer who also knows how to keep and guard, nourish and bear the Word and who, even after she has given it birth, continues to ponder it in her heart (Lk 2.19, 51). Precisely as the feminine womb of God’s Word, Mary is the believing and remembering womb of the Church, who as the ‘Bride’ of Christ not only receives the seed of Christ but, in an absolute sense, the ‘seed who is Christ’. Thus what we have just seen with reference to the Old Testament is just as clear in the New; indeed, it occurs in the Old Testament solely for the sake of its perfect fulfilment in the New. It was not, in fact, the ‘Israel after the flesh’ but the Israel of God—that of the believers and the obeyers, of the spiritually poor and of those full of hope in the Kingdom of God—which faithfully carried God’s Word within itself and allowed it to mature into that figure which, perfected only a little before Jesus, it achieved as ‘Old Testament’. God’s Word, from the outset, wants to be fruitful in the fruitfulness of the believing person. In the very form in which it addresses man, the Word of God already wants to include the form of man’s answer to God.

This is why, in one sense, it is perfectly correct to say that the form of the historical Jesus (his preaching, for instance), which is discovered by the historico-critical method, is not and cannot be a form that is complete in itself and that satisfies faith: for it to unfold fully, it needs the sphere of ecclesial faith which really opens up only with Jesus’ death and Resurrection. And it is also correct to say that only the Church’s faith in the Resurrection—faith *in* the Resurrection and faith *as* resurrection—possesses the adequate ‘eyes of faith’ that can read accurately the legible form that began to take shape during Jesus’ time on earth: this can occur only in the light of that total form which was already intended from the beginning and which was to unfold fully only in the medium of the Church’s faith. But for this very same reason, however, it is not true to say that what are involved here are subjective projections of the later stage back onto the earlier stage; this is not true because the outlines of Jesus’ earthly form could not have been filled out and completed in any way other than in the fully realised form of the Christ of faith. In the same way, a poet who has the total vision of his poetic work before his eyes can begin with rough drafts and verse fragments which can be correctly interpreted only if one knows their final form. Or we recall how Mozart could write out the violin part on its own for an entire symphonic movement because he had the whole orchestra in his ear. This is not the place to rehearse the historico-critical proof for this; it will suffice for us to affirm *a priori* that, theologically, things cannot be otherwise.

The purity and clarity with which the Word of God presents itself in the world is in direct proportion to the transparency and purity of the medium of faith that receives it and from which it creates its own form. To be sure, here we can first of all point to Christ’s humanity as the purest of vessels that was the perfect expressive body for the Logos-Spirit. But even this vessel, in order to come into being, first had to repose and acquire form within the vessel that was Mary, and Mary’s character as vessel is constituted essentially by her faith: *prius concepit mente*. The fleshly and personal relationship between Christ and Mary, however, was from the outset intended to lead into the universal and social relationships between Christ and the Church; and if Mary bore Christ in faith, it was also in faith that the Church bore Scripture. Scripture is the Word of God and not the word of the Church, but it is a Word which the Church, by her meditation in faith, carries in her womb and really brings forth, giving it birth in the world. This is an event that is accomplished within the sphere of the Church's own coming into being, in that first generation that formed the world around Christ, a generation that includes those who had seen and heard Christ at first hand and which itself belongs to the period of revelation: thus, it is called to bear forth, from the generative power of God's Word, that definitive form of divine revelation which will remain canonical for all time thereafter. Without going into the specific theological justification for it[44]—here we are interested only in the problem of form—we must lay great stress on the fact that all objective theology can be developed only from a medium that embraces in unity both the living historical Christ and the faith of the Church: Christ, who can be what he wants and ought to be only in the faith of the Church; and the Church, who comes to be what she can and must be only ev Xqicttco. Because it contains Christ, this medium is no modernistic subjectivity, but rather an objective medium given by grace whose objectivity is demonstrated by the birth of the canon of Scripture. The Church's *memoria*, reflecting on which she creates Scripture and brings it forth from herself, is not in the end a subjective memory but a memory that hearkens back to the objective interpretation of the whole of revelation by the risen spiritual Christ ('Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee. . . . Then they remembered his words' Lk 24.6ff. 'This is what I meant while I was still with you. . . . Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. . . . You are witnesses of these things' Lk 24.44-48). Scripture is not a self-reflection on the part of the Church, but a faith that goes back interiorly and a tradition that goes back exteriorly. It is the testimony about something that dwells within the Church but is not the Church herself, no more than the seed in the woman's womb derives from any source other than the man. Mary's faith does not generate the form of Jesus; rather, this form is given as a gift to her faith. Nor does the Church's faith generate the form of Scripture; rather, the Holy Spirit uses the Church's formative energies in order to give full shape within her to the image of faith that has been bestowed on the Church.

Now, the difficulty is as follows. Mary bears the personal Christ as the revelation of the Father. The Church, however, as she brings the Scripture forth from herself, does not produce revelation itself but rather the authentic testimony of revelation. And yet, is not even this testimony Christ himself in the Church? As the word of Scripture, does not this taking on of form itself belong to Christ's complete form in this present age, indeed, even beyond this passing age with respect to the Spirit that forms those words (Lk 21.33; Jn 6.63, 68)? Is not Scripture Christ's authentic interpretation by his own Holy Spirit, who works freely not only from above but also freely within God's free children, within

God’s free Church as a whole? Seen thus, as the creative and interpretative light that falls on Christ from Christ’s Spirit in the Church, Scripture belongs to the Christ-form itself and is an expression of Christ’s fulness and glory, even if, at the same time (because of the letter’s ‘servant-form’, so stressed by Hamann) Scripture attests to and actually shows Christ’s own humiliated form through *its* form of humiliation. The tension between letter and spirit in Scripture, that was the constant theme of Origen’s theological work, is unique and cannot find its explanation in general literary considerations, but finally only in Christology, which sees the purpose of Christ’s corporealness as being the manifestation of the hidden God, even though for many reasons (creatureliness, bodiliness, sinfulness) Christ’s corporealness can reveal God only at the same time as it conceals him. In so far as Scripture is an externalised form, placed publicly before all the world, concealment and disclosure obviously and necessarily go hand in hand. In Jesus’ corporealness, unbelief was no more able to see his form than it was able to recognise Jesus’ Spirit within the letter of Scripture. Nevertheless, according to Origen, there is a difference between the physical body and the body of Scripture, since the former is a body of lowliness that bore sin, while the latter is a testimony concerning a paschal faith in the Risen One: the body of Scripture is, thus, a garment that has an inherent tendency to assume the brightness and transparency of Jesus’ clothing on Tabor.

It is a garment that cannot adequately be separated from the form itself.[45] Only in this disclosure in concealment is revelation present and accessible to the Church. Every attempt to grasp the ‘body’ behind the form of the image is futile, for the reason that we possess the Son only through the Holy Spirit, and the Father only through the Son. The form of Scripture is deliberately loose and perspectivistic, so that we will not cling to it and take the garment to be the body itself. Four Gospels, none less valuable than the others; four perspectives on the ungraspable mystery, the result of a stereoscopy which could almost be called artful. This simple means can give to deeds, words, and situations an infinite relief, and the attempt to level this relief into a two-dimensionality (with the aid of source-theories and form-critical analyses) almost always entails a heavy loss. Often, it is only the investigation of a text that can produce the perspective involved or at least help to deepen it; but the fact that research demonstrates that a given redaction belongs to an older layer of composition does not mean that preference should automatically be given that redaction. Another context for a given word of Jesus can also be objective and meaningful as revelation. The demonstration of a certain intention on the part of the hagiographer cannot be played off against the intention of the Holy Spirit. We know this from Old Testament exegesis: a new interpretation of a text, often simply by inserting it into a new context, can attest to a deeper reflection on the total meaning of salvation-history and, to that extent, this insight can help us to see objectively more deeply into the matter. No matter whether the power that radiates from a particular text increases or decreases, the ‘loosening up’ of the text by means of the critical method has in general brought with it an invaluable theological gain since, with the heightened perspectivism that is its result, wholly new dimensions for the theological perception of the object are opened up in the drapery of Scripture’s garment, as it were. Many an exegete in the past, seeing Scripture as a flat painting before him, was often tempted to take it for revelation itself rather than the testimony concerning revelation. For us, a most essential gap has opened up between the testimony and that to which it points, and this in such a way that the testimony is seen to belong unconditionally to the thing it attests as an actual part of it, while the thing itself, as that which is attested, essentially transcends the testimony. Scripture is not something like a magic and sacramental icon within which the thing—grace itself—lies substantially hidden and imprisoned. And the Church does not bring the Scripture forth as her last offspring: the real fruitfulness of the Church is the bearing of souls for Christ, a labour which she began in the apostolic period and will continue unremittingly until the end of the world. Here is the main connecting line, the handing over of virginal fruitfulness from Mary to the Church. Scripture is indeed a sign of the ‘conclusion’ in the developing revelation, but only in the sense that, being henceforth the canonical image of revelation, Scripture makes possible and guarantees the uninterrupted birth of the Church, the continuing impregnations of the souls of believers by the Logos. Scripture and Sacrament belong together and constitute the continual and unattenuated presence of revelation in the Church’s every age. Although Christ could, and in fact had to, institute the sacraments without mediation, Scripture could be completed only at the end of the apostolic age: this is so because the portrait of Christ first had to be meditated upon by believers since many of its features could come to light only through this meditation and since not only *Christus Caput* but *Totus Christus Caput et Membra* belongs to the total objective image of God’s revelation for the world and in the world.

Once this is grasped, the full futility becomes apparent of the efforts of those exegetes—whether they are believers or not—who strive to achieve something like a ‘neutral’ photograph and tape-recording of the historical Jesus. Taking photographs is a physical event, and the equipment can by its nature capture nothing other than what is offered to it physically, even if this is the features of a human face. The writing of history, on the other hand, asks questions about meaning, and essentially it cannot obtain any more meaning than it itself is ready to deposit and invest in anticipation. What historiography is prepared to give in this case is revealed by the different cliches of its respective portraits of Jesus. These portraits mostly brush over what is precisely the essential feature: the claim of Jesus that runs through all his words and deeds and which is a challenge to Jesus-historians to be less niggardly with the range of meaning they allow the text.

In what concerns the Old Testament, it has come increasingly to be realised that the insights of meditation on revelation cannot simply be set out and accounted for in terms of cultural and religious ‘development’, but that the essential question concerns *what* is here developing. What is developing is beyond doubt that unique reality for which there is no analogue in other cultures and which—if speak of development we indeed must—in the course of its unfolding exhibits itself precisely as unique, which means that it must have been such already in its more elusive beginnings. What is true for Old Testament exegesis may be considered applicable to that of the New Testament. Everything that is subsequent (even if all Scripture comes after the historical event!) points back powerfully to the creative origin; Paul, who only wants to know a spiritual Christ, is here a case in point, no less than the Gospels and even the Apocalypse. Within this dynamism, Scripture remains a medium, a testimony, and a mediation. It is not Scripture which is the sacrament of God, but rather Christ. True as it is that Jesus’ flesh and blood are the sacraments of grace from which we can never abstract in gnostic fashion; true as it is that the letter remains and cannot be watered down pneumatically or allegorically; nevertheless it is just as true that ‘the flesh profits nothing’, no more than the letter. So much is of course quite correct in Protestant theology’s assertion that mere historical ‘facts’ cannot constitute salvation. But the event of salvation reaches all the way from God down to the flesh and to the very foundations of human history. It embraces even the very letter of Scripture and effects its miracles of grace always anew, not only as ‘occasioned’ by the letter but *through* this objectivised and canonical image of revelation, even though the event remains quite free to occur by overflowing the canonical image, whose function is in any case always only one of pointing to the true form.

b. Image and Canon

By the end of the apostolic age, Scripture had become the normative and arbitrating image of revelation in the Church, by which the truth of faith was to be measured (κάνων τῆς πίστεως, κάνων τῆς ἀληθείας) and for which by the middle of the fourth century the terms ‘canon’ and ‘canonical’ had become standard. Paul introduced the term into the Christian sphere, but obviously for him it referred not to Scripture itself but to the event of salvation that Scripture manifests as the canon for Christians: Christ’s death and crucifixion for this world, man’s new creation in Christ, freedom from and freedom to (Gal 6.16), grace itself, therefore, but also the mission that is bestowed as grace and which is itself a grace, the mission which has its own proper measure: μέτϱον τοῦ ϰανόνος (2 Cor 10.13). Scripture is an expression of the fact that this unified double guiding principle of grace and mission has been given to the Church, and Scripture objectivises this divine measure given to it by the Church in faith and presents it to successive generations. As it looks again and again to this image, the Church as a whole—not only the individual believer but the teaching Church as such—acquires a proper awareness of the divine measure of grace and mission. For ecclesial faith the *conversio ad Scripturam* is the indispensable *conversio ad phantasma* (‘turning to the objectively manifested image’), and in so doing faith always receives new illumination as to what is to be believed, what is to be done and an insight into both (*intellectus fidei*). This ‘phantasm’, surely, is of a very special, indeed wholly peculiar nature, so that the whole process cannot simply be accounted for as a special case of the human and philosophical knowledge of the truth. Nevertheless, the principle *nihil in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu—nisi intellectus ipse* has here its theological analogy: theological truth is not ‘abstracted’ from Scripture in a kind of theological sensualism where the task of theology is simply to order and clarify particular passages and concepts in Scripture. Rather, abstraction always presupposes a great deal more, namely, a *facultas entis*, an ability to perceive Being itself, as it is manifested in the images, a Being whose unbounded reality must be open if the images are to be at all interpreted as what they are—manifestations of Being. For this reason, the Church cannot be ‘under’ the Scripture as if Scripture were something like a ceiling through which only the Church could penetrate to attain to the divine truth to be found above it. As Bride and Body of Christ, the Church cannot possibly have above herself any superior ‘court’ other than her Bridegroom and, in him, the triune God. The Church bears Christ within herself as the Living Holy One within the temple that she is. In order to know Christ, the Church must but question her own Spirit, which is the common Spirit of Christ and of the Church. But she does not possess this her Lord other than as her incarnate saviour and blood-bridegroom. Therefore, an essential part of her self-consciousness as the bride who has been redeemed and washed in blood is her awareness of the event of salvation-history, which through the centuries can remain fresh and present for her only through its objectivation as Scripture.

An image is no more than an image, which is to say not a substitute for the living reality that it represents and always presupposes. An image, thus, has significance only in so far as it succeeds in making present the forms and proportions of the original, which it never tends to replace with its own standards. For us this means that, while Scripture does indeed have a form, this form is of theological relevance only in so far as it is an indication and a testimony of the form of revelation of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit. As we have already said on several occasions Scripture does not stand over against this form of revelation by way of imitation as a second, autonomous form, complete in itself: for Scripture itself belongs to the sphere of revelation and, being the normative testimony, it is itself a part of revelation. For this very reason Scripture cannot claim for itself a form which can be understood and apprehended in itself. Whoever hypostasises Scripture, turning it into such an autonomous form, wholly misses the point of its proclamation. Nonetheless, for all its historical contingency, Scripture's form is authentic precisely in so far as it is the measure chosen by God himself and intended to communicate the measure of the historical order of salvation. This measure of Scripture, moreover, cannot be accounted for by philological and literary methods, nor in terms of an inner-worldly aesthetics, seeing Scripture's literary and 'well-wrought form', its artistic composition, the balance of its parts, as the criteria for the fact that God is its author, and that it reproduces 'in a worthy manner' the well-wrought form of God's Incarnation. This is simply not the case, and here we cannot fail to hear the pertinent objections of Pascal, Luther, Hamann, and Kierkegaard. The all-decisive proportion is that obtaining between the form of revelation and the form of Scripture, and precisely this proportion can never be the object of literary scrutiny. And yet it does not lie hidden in an irrational abyss, but rather is accessible to the 'eyes of faith' and created for them so that in every age this proportion presents itself ever anew to faith's existential contemplation and conversion as being the true proportion instituted by God. Nor is it a coincidence that the poetic element, so strong in the Old Testament canon almost to the point of predominating (it pervades the Wisdom Books no less than the Prophets, but also large portions of the so-called historical books and the books of the law), recedes in the New Testament. The existential and symbolic character of the whole Old Testament permitted and required such a poetic form; the New Testament's character of fulfilment, however, transcends it the more its proclamation becomes central and essential: now only the most sober style will serve. Elsewhere we will discuss the concluding images of the Apocalypse, which expressly takes up and fulfills the Old Testament's prophetic and apocalyptic images. The Apocalypse is in any case such a marvellous conclusion precisely because it announces the eternal relevance both of the Old Testament as such (twice twelve elders before God's throne) and of its prophetic form of existence: 'The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy' (Rev 19.10).

To the view of a purely literary analysis the writings especially of the New Testament fall apart into a collection of diverse forms of literature which coexist alongside each other without any particular intrinsic relationship and which together do not form a rounded whole. Even the dissecting of a Gospel into its original constitutive parts, whether alleged or real, may perhaps show the final redaction as an artificial and not always credible unification of disparate elements. The point is that the unity and inner necessity both of the whole and of individual segments of the canon lie at a very different level, which is nevertheless not adequately described simply as the level of the invisible divine *dynamis* and of the *pneuma*; for all Scripture has a christological form, and by asserting itself powerfully into the history of the Church and of mankind Scripture gives shape to lives that bear the form of Christ. 'We all, with unveiled face, reflect (κατοπτϱιζόμενοι) the glory of the Lord, and thus we are transformed into his image from [his] glory to [our] glory, and this through the Spirit of the Lord' (2 Cor 3.18). The medial character of earthly prophetic knowledge remains valid for Paul even in the New Testament (1 Cor 13.12), and it is reinforced by the fact that ecclesial faith receives the Scripture as a reflecting image.

But to talk of a 'mirror' that merely reflects the rays it receives would here be inadequate. Even if we should not attribute to Scripture a sacramental and eucharistic structure in the strict sense, as Origen usually seems to do, we must still maintain the closest kind of connection between Scripture and Sacrament. Scripture not only reminds us, in a psychological sense, that all actual Christian grace is mediated by the incarnate God and bears his permanent stamp; it also reminds us of this in a theological sense, which is to say that it serves the Spirit as a vehicle through which it constantly actualises, with grace and as grace, this total historical form of the revelation of salvation. So much so that the canonicity of Scripture may be said to hold for the believing person who seeks Christ something like an infallible promise that he will indeed encounter Christ here in a theological remembering which through grace makes Christ present. It is the book itself which is meant when at the conclusion of the Apocalypse the Lord says: 'I, Jesus, have sent my angel to make known to you these revelations that concern the churches. . . . Let him who is thirsty come; let him who desires take the water of life without price' (Rev 22.16f.). And the book, as it is, cannot be changed. Either to add to or to take away from it would mean to suffer the loss of the promise of salvation it contains (Rev 22.18f.).

But since it is the Spirit of God which wields this instrument, the centre of gravity of the letter lies in the spirit itself, in its Christological sense, which is precisely the sense of the event of the dying and rising of Christ in so far as it becomes an event for us and in us (as Henri de Lubac has tirelessly shown in a series of increasingly comprehensive studies[46]). For this reason, what is required is not only the christological transformation and transposition of the entire Old Testament if it is to retain its living salvific meaning for us, but also the transposition of the 'literal sense' to the level of its own spiritual depth which, as Bultmann correctly asserts with the entire Christian tradition, is nothing other than 'the Christ-event existentially for me'—but 'for me' who am a Christian only in the Church and through the Church, and 'for me' who am a Christian only in faith and in anticipation of the eschaton. Thus at the root of true Scriptural interpretation there lies the transition from the Old to the New Testament, which is far more than merely the fulfilment of the promise, the definitive form of what was provisional, the manifestation of what was hidden, the transition and the correspondence from type to antitype: what is involved, rather, is that radically new re-creation of all meaning through the death of God's Logos. In so far as Scripture is the 'body of the Logos' and not only the unparticipating testimony to his death and Resurrection, the transition in Scripture from the *littera* to the *spiritus* is a participation in the event of salvation, and without this participation the letter's becoming spirit would be unthinkable in a Christian sense. For here 'spirit' refers not to some kind of abstraction, but rather to that universalisation of past history by means of a positive assumption of time up into God's eternity whereby the incarnate Logos wholly becomes Pneuma: the free, almighty, all-present reality of spirit (2 Cor 3.17f.). How could we participate in this spiritual meaning other than by dying and rising along with Christ, just as he takes his Church, his Mystical Body (and, with it, every individual believer), along with himself to the Cross, transferring her with himself into the New Age? With a great wealth of examples, de Lubac shows how this transposition to the 'spirit' which the *Kyrios* is opens up the dimension of the traditional 'senses of Scripture' (allegory, tropology, anagogy), deepening their strictly dogmatic sense. These are the ways, present everywhere in the whole tradition, in which an older theology met today's existential concerns, with a prudence and a thoroughness that are indeed astounding. Today's philological theology is chronically fearful of what it considers an 'extravagant whimsicality' of interpretation; it does not see what spiritual spaces the Scripture of the living Spirit opens up. The criterion for the correct use of Scripture lies in the fact that all these infinite spaces of contemplation are filled with the medium of Scripture. Scripture is not merely the literal point of departure and the occasion for freely roaming spiritual fantasy (as the individual use of philologically untenable allegories might often lead one to suppose); rather, with its own spiritual proportions, Scripture governs the attempts of Christian meditation and contemplation to model themselves on revelation. In a purely literary sense, Scripture does not possess a particular form of its own of any great theological relevance; nor, for example, do the literary accomplishments of certain books or parts of books secure for them a higher theological significance. Hence our attention is directed past this external form to the theological centres of gravity of its content. All this explains the predilection of the Fathers and of the medieval commentators for a book such as the Song of Songs, in which they saw the celebration of the all-transforming mystery of God and of the world, of Christ and of the Church, from the perspective of love. Preference for a book which does not, materially speaking, appear to deserve it can be justified by that book's proximity to the centre of the total form which one hopes to attain within it. Allegories about the tent of the Covenant, Noah's ark, the high priest's garments, and especially those about the Exodus from Egypt, about the struggles to acquire the Promised Land, can, when considered in the context of the New Testament, lead to the vision of the most fundamental and essential truth within the image that typifies it. The older contemplators of Scripture possessed the art of seeing the total form within individual forms and of bringing it to light from within them. But this naturally presupposes an understanding of totality that is spiritual and not literary and philological; that one accomplishes in the obedience of faith the decisive step from word to spirit, from earthly form to resurrected form; and that, in so doing, one relinquishes all abstract short-hand formulas about the 'essence' of Scripture or the 'essence' of the Synoptic, Johannine, or Pauline principles (for in the realm of Scripture there are no legitimate abstractions) and keeps one's eyes set on that universal concrete reality which is Christ himself, universalised in the Holy Spirit and witnessed to by Scripture. If one really has within one's vision this living and divine form which sovereignly stamps its shape on the world then there is no danger that one will stultify in an 'aesthetic' contemplation of dead images and have to be awakened from this stupor by an ethical actualism that destroys all images: this form, which is spirit, more than sufficiently provides for actualisation.

It is true, of course, that certain dangers appear to threaten the medieval and, in part, even the Patristic contemplation of Scripture, dangers deriving from the tremendous influence exercised by Denys with his stress on negative theology—an influence which steadily increased in the Middle Ages. This negative theology at first sight appears to threaten most centrally what we have here been calling ‘pneumatic form’, that is, the transposition of God’s economy with the world to the mode of the resurrection and of the Holy Spirit. For even this final form-quality must be transcended if the contemplating spirit is to attain to God himself, who is wholly formless and modeless. Nevertheless, as we will show in detail in the second volume of this work, one would fundamentally misunderstand Denys, who is perhaps the strongest ‘aesthetic’ theologian in the history of theology, if one did not see at the very centre of his affirmations the great balance, maintained throughout the whole corpus of his works, between symbolic and mystical theology: for Denys, the Formless One shines forth only from what has form, the Wordless One speaks only through the word, and the Mystery which creates all orders, while itself transcending them all, radiates only from the *taxis* of the hierarchical order of both the world and the Church. Denys’ theological mysticism is Christian and ecclesial precisely because he does not, as does, for instance, Evagrius Ponticus, press on towards the borderlands of Buddhism where finitude and form threaten to become merely negative concepts to be abolished. Denys shows the mystery of the divine abyss to be the mystery of fruitful divine eros, which out of a sovereignly free goodness brings forth from itself all the orders of creation and redemption in order to make them transcend themselves ecstatically and erotically so as to become blessed in their union with God. All the diffused Neo-Platonic pathos that may pervade this feeling about the world need in no way destroy its fundamental Christian form. We cannot deny the fact that such an insertion of the Christian reality into Neo-Platonic categories can constitute a stylisation that poses a threat to certain essential elements of authentic salvation-history. We will later on deal with this question of style, which is a question not only of literary but, above all, of theological taste. Judgments of taste can vary according to the presuppositions that each individual brings to bear. For this reason, an unorthodox Areopagit-ism can imperceptibly begin to grow out of an orthodox one. We can point to the places where German mysticism and Renaissance theology definitively crossed the limits of the form of Scripture. The spiritual character of the Scriptural image and the endless range of interpretability stemming from it require that the limits of still admissible perspectivism be variable both for the individual and for historical periods. This is one of the points (there are other very different ones) that make it evident that the canonical validity of Scripture does not exclude, but rather includes an ecclesial teaching authority.

The canonical image of revelation is ‘closed’ because an intensification of God’s gift of himself to the world beyond that given in Jesus Christ is an intrinsic impossibility. But, precisely because of this divine unsurpassibility, the image of this reality remains for all historical time open to ever deeper comprehension and penetration. Nevertheless, we cannot say that the first Christians understood it only fragmentarily and that successive generations attained to a more complete understanding and an increasingly better grasp of it. Rather, for eyes that have been illumined by faith, the image in its totality is simple and visible at a glance (‘You have the anointing of the Spirit and you know everything’, 1 Jn 2.20), and the superabundant fulness is not a threat but rather the description of this simplicity. This is why we must indeed say that, despite all the unpredictibility of the ϰαιϱοί, we cannot expect for the image of Scripture any decisive displacement of the centres of gravity or any shifting of the proportions—even if, in the course of the history of the Church and of mankind, the image does undergo something like a development.

The image, or rather the Christian understanding of the image in the development of dogma and spirituality, may perhaps appear externally to grow somewhat fitfully, but interiorly and essentially its growth is unconditionally organic. An individual aspect of the image’s total complex can come to be focussed upon more sharply, mostly by work of the Holy Spirit who bestows a charism for just this, or by means of theology, which by its reflecting on particular concepts and connections attains to greater clarity, or by a political situation in the Church herself which makes magisterial clarification necessary. In every case, this spotlighting of a detail always concerns and has consequences for the whole. Even if it does not become apparent at once, this occurs infallibly in the course of time, and it can be one of theology’s foremost tasks to show up the implications of this focussing on a particular aspect (for instance in the proclamation of dogma).

One can see here at once the dangers of ecclesial vitality. In the historical realm, the transitions between idea and ideology are essentially fluid. What could at one time gain acceptance as an authentic interpretation can subsequently be shown to be an obfuscation, and what appears to be a timely translation of biblical truth can contain hidden elements of a flight from the inexorable radicalness of this truth. In order to counter such aberrations, which are always a possibility, the canonical image of Scripture sheds its light inerrantly over the whole Church, the believing people and the magisterium, and this image of Scripture at all times allows us to test later developments and conclusions against its original form. This is no rigid image, since it unites within itself a double vitality, both human and divine. It tells a story and tells it in a mode which is itself historical, a mode in which one can follow the stages of appropriation, reflection, and incipient theology, and it is an instrument of the

Holy Spirit who continues to generate and who, through this humanly active form, impresses the form of Christ pneumatically upon mankind.

As the historical record of a highly dynamic process of becoming, Scripture, as we can see today much more clearly, is qualified and able to generate and to direct a new dynamic process of becoming by the light of its own form. Scripture, whether of the Old or of the New Testament, contains theologies which are variously stratified and superimposed and which certainly enter as a whole into the canonical form and which yet, even as such, witness to the legitimacy of human experiments with form, which cannot all be reduced to the same abstract concept. Not only do various forms of thought and expression have a place alongside each other in the Bible; even forms which historically become obsolete have a place there behind and within one another, in such a way that the older forms do not simply appear as surpassed and abolished by the newer forms. In this manner, a construction which is so rich in perspectives can and should—in its total fulness, and without its being reduced in an abstracting and 'enlightened' manner to a few 'fundamental thoughts'—become the guiding criterion for a new abundance of ecclesial thought which is still incalculable in temporal and historical terms. This is possible only because the fulness of the Bible crystallises concentrically around a human and divine centre, a centre which is indeed expressed in Scripture and everywhere flooded by its light, but which essentially transcends Scripture and rests within itself as a sovereign reality. This centre which transcends Scripture, both as image and as force, has the power to organise the millenial history of thought and to effect within this history an 'evolution homogene' (Marin-Sola).

This ecclesial kerygma has to follow this image of power in every form of instruction: the magisterial pronouncement, the homily, preaching, catechesis. It cannot have any objective other than to make this image visible. Thus, it need not produce a theological form of its own, even if it goes without saying that many problems of form will arise at the practical, organisational, and psychological levels. But all these have but a ministerial relationship to the primal form, which is what is to be rendered visible. This is seen most clearly in individual proclamations of the magisterium which, occasioned by practical pastoral concerns, spotlight a partial aspect of Christian doctrine more sharply and formulate it more clearly so as to protect it against errors or false formulations. Finely honed, therefore, as the linguistic form of an ecclesial definition, a conciliar canon and the like may be, this carefully cultivated form is not intended to be admired and esteemed in itself; it stands only in the service of the form of Christ, which it is intended to protect and preserve. For reasons of pastoral praxis it must strive for the greatest possible clarity, always bearing in mind the Church's historical and theological situation to which the formulation is being addressed. But this clarity is not in competition with the form and formulation of Scripture. It replaces nothing, nor does it claim to express better, more comprehensively and in a more modern way what the Bible has uttered in an awkward, fragmentary, purely unscientific, and popular manner which is essentially conditioned by time and, hence, in need of reform. Magisterial pronouncements operate at another level: they interpret revelation, they do not lay its foundations. They do not aim at constructing a system of utterances which eventually would come to replace Scripture either in whole or in part. This can be seen quite clearly from the fact that these proclamations, once collected into a handbook, do not yield an aesthetic 'form' and that in such juxtaposition they create an even more fragmentary impression than when considered in themselves. Nor are they intended to constitute an autonomous form. They all point to something else, something different from themselves, something which is essentially superior to themselves and which lies at the level of divine revelation. Only at this level do we find the reality which has the power of convincing. Every ecclesial pronouncement receives its whole power of conviction from the charge for which not the Church, but Christ alone is responsible—the charge, namely, to bear his word, his work, his reality to all lands and times.

Nor should we think to find in theology the autonomous form which is absent from magisterial assertions, even though theology's task is indeed to harmonise both Scripture and the pronouncements of the ecclesial magisterium into an interrelated system which is as coherent as possible. Thus, theology's task involves, on the one hand, the interpretation of Scripture in the spirit of today's Church, and, on the other hand, the demonstration of the legitimacy of the magisterial kerygma from Scripture and Tradition. This mandate would seem to confer on theology a license to unite and, if necessary, to reconcile both Scripture and magisterium, with their 'purely positive' propositions, in the higher synthesis of the *ratio theologica*. This would, then, appear to be a license to give shape to the definitive and conclusive form. But there is, of course, no question of this at all. To be sure, we cannot simply reduce theology to the level of the mere practical servant of the ecclesial kerygma, although such a ministerial position with respect to the whole of the Church is its by right and in no way dishonours it. But it must at the same time be seen as a meditative act of homage to the Lord of the Church, precisely to the extent that theology does not allow itself to be restricted to a merely practical function aimed at producing certain results. One whole aspect of theology—that aspect which demands the hearing and meditating of the Word of God—belongs to the one necessary deed performed by Mary at Bethany. It gives an account of what it has heard and understood. The attainment of the greatest possible clarity in its conceptual distinctions as well as the greatest possible depth of intuition is for theology an end in itself, beyond any practical intentions and obligations relating to the Church's proclamation; it is an act of adoration before Christ in the name of the Bride-Church.

This means that theology must be as open as possible in three different directions: 1) existentially, towards the accomplishment in one's life of what has been heard and understood, since only the saint who does what he thinks and intuits is a Christian theologian in the full sense of the word; 2) ecclesiologically, towards the full sweep of the Church's thinking, even if such depersonalisation imposes on the individual scholar an ascetical renunciation of his own opinions and fancies; 3) meditatively, towards the total act of prayer and contemplation of the praying, contemplative Church, since a conceptually technical theology can thrive only on the maternal soil of its own contemplation and the transitions from the one form to the other (think only of Augustine, the Victorines and the whole twelfth century in general) are fluid and must remain such. For this reason, a theologian can indeed strive to achieve 'beauty of form' in his theology, not, however, in order to repose in the form and seduce others to that repose, but rather in order both to serve the Church and to pay homage to her Lord. Thus in this way all theological form is, by the mediation of the canonical image of Scripture, reduced to the form of the Lord himself.

2. THE MEDIUM OF THE CHURCH

a. Form and Transparency

In what now follows we will discuss the Church only in so far as she can be and intends to be a medium of God's form of revelation in Christ. This is probably to pose the decisive question beyond which there is theologically speaking probably nothing more that can be asked of the Church. The Church may present herself as an object of inquiry to the historian, to the religious or profane sociologist or to many other specialists. Considered from the viewpoint of the Gospel, however, the Church has no other form than this relative form, whose function is to point to the supreme form of revelation. This is not necessarily immediately obvious for, if the Church is considered the work of Christ (which she is and which she understands herself to be), the analogy of human creation shows that, where a particular work is concerned, not everything and perhaps not even the main thing has been said when one comes to know the life and purpose of the artist. The work itself, where it has truly succeeded, possesses an objective, autonomous form and a meaning which is quite independent of its creator. This holds not only for technical works, in which the agent mostly remains anonymous since he has from the outset subordinated his personal spirit to a greater objective context that aims at a final product; it is true also of personal works such as a poem or a symphony, whose interior harmony is something quite different from the subjective 'aptitudes', from the knowledge and ability of its author. Perhaps the author's divining power lies in his ability to gather up great objective cosmic connections which remain concealed from lesser spirits and to bring them to actuality in an adequate symbolic form. Why then should not the Church similarly possess a form of its own, one initiated and perhaps even intended by its author, Christ, but equally one which could, as it were, grow beyond Christ's form out into the history of the world, like the 'grain of mustard' that becomes a tree (Mt 13.31f.) and like the believer who 'will perform greater works' than Jesus himself (Jn 14.12)?

Such a thing is plainly impossible where the relationship between Christ and the Church is concerned. For the Church is not created from the union of subjective genius with objective world-spirit, but, as the Church of Christ, she is created purely from the being of Christ himself. So much is suggested by the Johannine symbol of 'water and blood' flowing from the wound in Jesus' side which an older theology interpreted as applying to baptism and the Eucharist as the life-principles of the Church. And the same is indicated by the use Paul makes of the image of Eve's origin from Adam's rib (1 Cor 11.8; Eph 5.25-33), which retains its character as an image in so far as the 'rib', even though it is Adam's corporal and animated substance, nevertheless is not his 'spirit' and his person, whereas the Church proceeds from Christ's innermost personal reality, at once 'Body' and 'Bride'. The image of the first human couple is illuminating in so far as in both instances what is at stake is a living generation without union of partners. But, since in the case of Adam God is the actual creator, Eve's personality does not derive from Adam but from God. Because, by contrast, Christ is at the same time God and man, the 'personality' of the Church as the new Eve can indeed derive from him, in so far as he is one with the Father in the Holy Spirit. It follows from this that the Church cannot claim for herself an autonomous form, even if she can be distinguished from Christ by analogy with the wife's distinction from her husband. When man and wife, however, are seen as two self-enclosed persons who stand over against one another and complement each other's natures, then the image cannot be applied to Christ and the Church. Whatever the Church may possess by way of ‘personality’ and ‘nature’ she has from Christ, whose ‘fulness’ she is because he has poured his own fulness into her, so that the Church is nothing other than Christ’s own fulness (Eph 1.23). This holds not only for the invisible life-principle—Christ’s Holy Spirit who fills the Church and her members (Rom 8.9; 1 Cor 6.19); it holds also for the visible offices and ministries which mould the Church in the service of a love that edifies interiorly (Eph 4.10-16). The building-up of this Body by means of the different offices is, therefore, correctly described as a dynamic process which is completed when the Christ-form (which in the Head is always archetypally perfected) has also become implanted in the Body. ‘The point is not that *we*, the members of Christ’s Body, *become* the “perfect man”, either as individuals or as a group; what is meant, rather, is that we, in the movement towards unity in faith and knowledge, *attain* to Christ, the Head.’[47] In other words, the already existing form of the ‘perfect man’ is carried through to perfection in the form of the Church as it develops.

Nor should we in any way think of the Church’s institutional elements as being something like a timeless visible scaffolding within which the living cells come and go—a skeleton, outside destiny and time, which would also constitute the Church’s visibleness and principle of form before the world. Such a conception of the Church, if indeed it could be called such, would in no way be transparent to Christ: this would, indeed, be the last kind of thing one could expect of Christ, who abolished the old ritualism and formalism (Epistle to the Hebrews, Epistle to the Romans). The institutional element in the Church is not absolute (and, hence, not comprehensible in itself); it is relative to love, and the love of the Church, in turn, is not absolute, as if it ever reached perfection: rather, it consists of a steady progress towards an eschatological form which at present is in process of becoming. ‘Not that I have already attained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has already made me his own’ (Phil 3.12).

Such a self-understanding on the part of the Church demands of her that she see herself more deeply as a medium, as a system of relations, whose form becomes comprehensible when it brings together in a coherent manner the elements that the medium must communicate and unite. That the Church, in order to do this, must unite what appear to be contrary properties should cause no surprise, since her Lord and Head, Christ himself, brought these same properties together, not by happy chance, but according to the structure of his own being: namely, the perfect transparency with which God reveals himself in him and the likewise exhaustive transparency with which he reveals man as such —Adam as ‘God’s creation’ (*plasma*, Irenaeus)—and this without detracting from his own absolutely distinctive uniqueness, which reflects and unites in itself both God's absolute uniqueness and the universal validity of the 'Son of Man'. The Church is not Christ, but she can claim for herself and for the world no other figure than the figure of Christ, which leaves its stamp in her and shapes her through and through as the soul shapes the body. In this, the element of structure, which emerges as the institutional element in the Church, is at the service of the highest possible similarity to the archetype itself. For that element mediates between, on the one hand, the individual's impotence to imitate Christ's unique unity and, on his own, to make it take root in himself, *and*, on the other hand, Christ's omnipotence, whereby he can at once be God and man, suffering and glorified, Word and Sacrament. In a manner which is comprehensible only from the divine viewpoint, it mediates between, on the one hand, the distance of the servant of Christ who in his office performs only a service and can, therefore, in no way be identified with the powers conferred on him (2 Cor 4.5; 5.20), *and*, on the other hand, the personal love of an individual member of the community, a love which can reveal itself most purely and effectively precisely on the basis of the ecclesial offices, functions, and charisms. If in this way what is most resistent in the Church has been made credible in its ability to be transparent to Christ, then no more obstacles can be opposed to her character as medium.

But like Christ, whose form she bears, she has to mediate between God and the world. Thus, her credibility will grow the more she is transparent to God (just as in Christ everything, down to the smallest detail, is transparent to the Father) and, at the same time, transparent to the world for God (just as Christ's Incarnation goes to the limits of realism, to the point that no one other than Christ can represent man and display man's being so well before God). This means that in the Church, as with Christ himself, all historical positivity can and must lose its fortuitous character for the world (just as a work of art justifies itself in spite of its fortuitous uniqueness by appealing to its aesthetic necessity) by virtue of the fact that this positivity is made credible as the plausible expression of the God who reveals himself in Christ and, in turn, of man who reveals himself by responding to God through the Church and through Christ.

With such a programme, which seeks to trace the positive facts of history back to their ground in theological necessity, we could be coming dangerously close to the programme of the Enlightenment. For, what else did the theology of the Enlightenment hope to achieve but to uproot from Scripture and dogma everything considered to be purely positive, or at least to erode it to the point where it would lose its form as 'accidental historical truth'? And what else did a Wessenberg hope to accomplish but to simplify everything in the cult and in the catechism to the point where it would become a generally intelligible expression of the religious relationship between God and man? The difference between the Enlightenment and the undertaking we are here proposing can once more be clarified by reference to the guiding concept of a theological aesthetic. The Enlightenment excludes all positivities in rationalistic fashion and its thought aims at universal logical concepts, and the consequence of this is that the Enlightenment likewise subsumes supernatural revelation as a whole under a universal ('natural') conception of revelation which, whether consciously or unconsciously, necessarily dissolves Christology itself. If, however, we want to perceive the true form which God has set before us, then nothing may be excluded from it on logical grounds; for only the whole can be understood in all its profound significance by aesthetic-theological contemplation. Christ is the *Ecce homo* as he is, namely, as the one who came to be from the Holy Spirit and from Mary and as the one who was subject to the actions of men; and, in thus being the *Ecce homo*, he is also the *Ecce Deus*.

The analysis of the Christ-form and, therefore, by extension, of the form of the Church in their relations to God and the world is not, therefore, meant as a rationalistic dissolution which would destroy the form, rendering it superfluous as soon as one has arrived at the concept which the form expresses in images. Rather, it is solely in this image and form that the 'concept' of God and of man becomes truly concrete for us; the idea becomes radiant only in this *conversio ad phantasma*, in this turning to the image which is Christ (and, with him, the Church). In this way, in virtue of its analysability, the form acquires a double synthetic power and function: first, a subjective power and function, since from the form we can always read off what God and man truly are, and then an objective power and function, since the form conducts this demonstration in strict unity. What is demonstrated to be the true God at the same time reveals to us the image of true man, and vice versa. At first glance this seems an absolute paradox and a proposition which can be at home only within a dialectic that destroys all vision. For, how could one and the same operation be the adequate expression of mutually opposed poles, one absolute and the other relative? Christ's image of revelation (and consequently also the Church's) in its unity makes visible not only the two poles, but even the possibility of this double visibleness. This means that in Christ as primary instance (and in the Church as secondary instance) one can here *see*, through one and the same attitude and operation, how the two poles become visible in their unity. It is wholly conceivable and plausible that this man Jesus, the goal of whose existence is to help men attain to God, should give expression through his existence to God's love for us, in which God's being and heart open up to us; and that he should give expression likewise to God’s will to save man’s actions and very being; and that this being of God, revealed to us in this way, should be one with his will to save us, that is to say, one with the image he has of us and which he wishes to realise in us. Hence, all of this can also become plausible for the Church and in the Church, if, that is, she is nothing other than what she is supposed to be: the imprint of Christ’s form in the medium of those who have followed after him and whom he has called his own.

If the form presented by Christ can be grasped by analysis and synthesis (*intellectu dividente et componente*), then that form must also *be able* to be grasped wherever it is impressed on other men by Christ and his Spirit by virtue of the power of the same divine revelation—provided, that is, that this power of God does not encounter a sinful power of opposition, whether human or diabolical, which works against God’s creative power to frustrate it. But in one specific instance such opposition appears perfectly abolished—in the instance of Mary, virgin and mother—and in her two things become visible: first, that here is to be found the archetype of a Church that con-forms to Christ, and, second, that Christian sanctity is ‘Christ-bearing’, ‘Christophorous’ in essence and actualisation. To the extent that the Church is Marian, she is a pure form which is immediately legible and comprehensible; and to the extent that a person becomes Marian (or ‘Christophorous’, which is the same), the Christian reality becomes just as simply legible and comprehensible in him. On the Marian model we could demonstrate both the transferability of the Christ-form and the manner of this transference, but we cannot here go into detail because this would involve us in developing a whole Mariology. Still, from what we have said, the great significance that Mariology has within a theological aesthetic can again be appreciated in a way which is proof against Protestant objections: in the first place it is by no means the case that Mary’s form replaces that of Christ; rather, Mary’s form, as faithful image, reveals Christ’s form as sole archetype both in its specificity and in its divine creative, forming power. Nor is Mary’s form isolated from that of all other Christians, since she is precisely the model of our ‘being formed in the likeness of Christ’ (Rom 8.29; Phil 3.10, 21). Hence, the image of her interior reality stands before the eyes of Christians and should stand before their eyes whenever the conditions for their becoming conformed to Christ are being considered.

These conditions, which at the same time are naturally those of Christian ‘sanctity’, lead into the mystery of the ‘co-operation’ which is both possible and necessary between God and creature, between Christ and his followers. In no person does Christ’s image become impressed as a result of that person’s power, but equally it never occurs without the person’s will and cooperation. This collaboration, however, cannot consist in the fact that here two people are working alongside and with one another, for instance as a master painter sketches a painting and executes the chief strokes and then leaves secondary aspects to his apprentices, whose work he supervises and touches up if necessary. Nowhere do God and man work together on the same plane. Rather, the Marian *Ecce ancilla Domini* points to the distance between Lord and Handmaid, a distance expressed in the fact that in all things it is the Lord who commands and the Handmaid who obeys. This creaturely and Christian obedience characterises all existence: it embraces even death, indeed death on the Cross; it renounces all private ideas and objections in order to accept the entire workplan from the Lord's hands and to place all one's own energies, both bodily and spiritual, at its disposal. This obedience is in this respect the opposite of a passivity that forsakes real co-operation so as to 'let God do what he will': the handmaid, rather, adopts an attitude of constant expectancy, awaiting the least sign from her mistress (Ps 122.2). With all the powers available to her, she is always at the ready to be engaged in this or any other way, or even, if it should be the Lord's will, to be passed over, forgotten, neglected in a corner. Her 'waiting for the Lord' is her permanent attitude, which according to Christ's last parables suffices as Christian attitude provided it is truly lived out: this 'watchful waiting', this 'active readiness' is the wet clay in which alone the Christ-form can become impressed. But since this attitude does not disrupt or intrude its own designs, plans, or well-meant ideas, it is also the indispensable prerequisite of human matter's (which here includes all active powers of the spirit, the will, and the imagination) truly being able to receive the image of the form.

Mary's life must be regarded as the prototype of what the *ars Dei* can fashion from a human material which puts up no resistance to him. It is feminine life which, in any case more than masculine life, awaits being shaped by the man, the bridegroom, Christ, and God. It is a virginal life which desires no other formative principle but God and the fruit which God gives it to bear, to give birth to, to nourish and to rear. It is at the same time a maternal and a bridal life whose power of surrender reaches from the physical to the highest spiritual level. In all this it is simply a life that lets God dispose of it as he will. From that life Christ chiselled the form he needed: unsparingly he took it, used it and squandered it to the limit, and then, with the greatest consideration, he honoured it and glorified it. The situations of this life are inimitable, unforgettable, both unique and universally valid, universally significant. The three cycles of the Rosary offer these situations to the *anamnesis* of the Church and of Christians, in strictest unity of form with the life of Christ. And, in fact, Mary's life possesses no detached form of its own; it is the most intimate possible accompaniment of the Christ-form; it stands in the shadow and in the light of Christ’s form alone. But Mary’s form is not simply outshone by the form of Christ; rather, precisely because Christ exploits Mary, precisely because she bears the Cross with him, her form is inundated in a light radiating from him.

For this reason, Mary’s life must necessarily be misunderstood when (like the form of a purely ‘historical Jesus’) it is read in dissociation from the mystery enveloping it. Mary’s life participates in the hiddenness and ordinariness of Christ’s own life, indeed, as its feminine accompaniment, ‘veiled because of the angels’ (1 Cor 11.10). Indeed, Mary’s life is seemingly even more insignificant than Christ’s, unaccompanied as it is by visible miraculous operations, mystical phenomena, and human recognition and rejection. Even more than Christ’s, Mary’s life stands in the *chiaroscuro* of grace and faith. Glorification comes only posthumously. As a total form that includes this posthumous glorification—in the New Age and, by prophetic anticipation, in the praise of the ‘lowly Handmaid by all generations’ (Lk 1.48)—Mary’s life, in turn, is comprehensible only within this *doxa* that is accessible to faith alone. This is why, in Mary’s train, all the extensions of Christ in the Church of the saints stand under this law of *chiaroscuro*. Many figures yield on earth a very clear symbolic image, especially those figures who are manifestly intended to point the way for entire sections of the Church, entire epochs or regions or communities. They acquire a kind of secondary archetypicity which, however, never quite dispenses with hiddenness. The face of others is essentially turned to a hiddenness which allows only momentary rays to escape lightning-like, permitting us almost accidentally to see, surmise, suspect what a rich life is here concealed from all eyes as it turns its gaze inward. Certain charisms, answered prayers, or other helpful signs indicate that here a great living power is at work, but withdrawn from inspection. Only enough is manifested to assure us that the hand which is being offered in the dark may be grasped with full trust.

The image of Mary is incontestable, and even to non-believers it represents a treasure of inviolable beauty, even when it is understood not as an image of faith but only as a sublime symbol interpreted according to universal human categories. Mary’s image radiates with the evidential power which comes from having been created and shaped by the form of revelation, something which in essence would also be an attribute of the Church if she were nothing but the ‘Bride without wrinkle or stain’, which is the only thing Christ ever intended her to be. This is the only image of the Church offered in the Gospel; nowhere is there any suggestion of those forms determined by compromise which arise in the Church as she falls into the hands of sinners, is formed and administered by sinners. For this reason, no appeal to the alleged realism of her Founder can ever justify those mixed forms to which sinful man has made his own contribution, since these forms can only obscure to the point of unrecognisability the form of Christ’s Church. To be sure, among her possessions there are sacraments for sinners, but these sacraments themselves are of an exalted holiness: they contain a sublime light and their correct application has nothing to do with sin. Paul can only weep over the deformations of the Church wrought by sinners, even when, because of their great number, these seem to have the preponderance and the right on their side (Phil 2.21; 3.18). In this state of distress he offers his own Christ-form as a type and points at the same time to those who follow his example (Phil 3.17; 1 Cor 4.16), just as he walks following the example of Christ (1 Cor 11.1).

While Paul weeps over the Gospel’s wicked servants, Peter weeps over himself. Both weep over the same thing, namely, the failure of the institutional Church. They weep over the gap which yawns in the Church between person and office, whereas Christ wanted to impress upon the Church his own identity. When he conferred his office on Peter, Christ exhorted Peter to follow him to the Cross, so that in the institutional Church the mission laid on the believer should be one with his surrender of his life; such identity would not have been Peter’s ethical achievement, but rather an incomprehensible grace from the Lord. This ‘Follow me!’ (Jn 21.19), however, rings out only after Peter has already denied him three times (not counting the other times when Peter resisted the Lord and his Cross and was described by him as ‘Satan’); the conferral of office follows immediately after the *anamnesis* of Peter’s guilt (Jn 21.17). This guilt is known to the Lord even if it is not explicitly mentioned here, and Christ establishes the Petrine form upon this simultaneity, which is peculiar to institutional authority, of humiliation and elevation to office. This simultaneity is the mode in which the Lord’s identity can (subsequently) still take hold in the guilty Peter. It is an imitation beyond and despite failure which is marvellously represented in Peter’s crucifixion with feet uppermost: it is the Cross, but in mirror-image, which is the definitive symbol of the hierarchical situation. In virtue of this dialectic the Church’s institutional aspect comes under the concealment of the Marian veil (1 Cor 11.5, 10), which is the ‘sign of man’s dominion’, of the man who is Christ, as the conclusion of John’s Gospel makes particularly clear: ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?’ (Jn 21.22). The image of a hierarchical *diakonia* in the Church is justifiable in a Christian sense only by reference to this continual humiliation of the ecclesial institutional office by the Head who rules the Church, this continual act, occurring all through the Gospel, whereby the *Kyrios* makes his servant Peter stoop low: what appears to be the highest place is constantly turning out to be really the lowest place to which he has been shown (Lk 14.7; 22.26f.; 1 Cor 4.9).

Thus the Church’s institutional aspect also receives the ability to follow Christ and, therefore, to image him to the world, but only, as is made quite clear, after an initial estrangement. Yet the fact that this occurs subsequently should not be taken to mean that the concept of institution as such contradicts the reality of Christ and, hence, needs something like a special absolution from him. Institution belongs to the existence of man in the world as an aspect of his social nature; it is not any more or any less tainted with original sin than the rest of human nature. The law of Moses, too, is an institution, and Christ fulfils it. What in the Gospel is in need of special absolution is the abuse of institution: twisting it for purposes of worldly power out of fear of the Cross (Jn 18.10f.), puffing oneself up by appealing to the special grace of office (Lk 22.33), masking fear of and flight from suffering as love for the Lord (Mt 16.22f.), making oneself at home in transfigured heights (Mk 9.5: ‘Master, it is a delight for us to be here’), eagerly awaiting a reward for one’s merits (Mt 19.27). For these and similar things Jesus had to pray expressly, against Satan’s demand that the wheat be sifted here and now (‘Simon, Simon!’, Lk 22.31f.). Jesus thus strengthens Peter’s faith and brings him back to discipleship, which especially for him means following Christ to the last place—to the Cross and to death.

The extent to which the institutional office, essentially and most intimately, entails humiliation can be seen from a brief glance at Paul, who emptied the cup of his office to the dregs. As an Apostle, Paul considers himself ‘aborted’ (1 Cor 15.8). He is never quite taken seriously, nor is he ever recognised by those who are λίαν ἀπόστολοι (2 Cor 11.5). He is ‘feared’ by them and soon after they ‘send him off’ (Acts 9.26, 30). His whole life long he is persecuted by ‘false brothers’ who ‘lie in wait’ for him (Gal 2.4) and severely impede his work. He is criticised by many communities and is never quite accepted by them (2 Cor 11). In the end, he is compelled by James, by submitting to a Judaising custom during the Easter feast in Jerusalem, to make a kind of public disavowal of ‘his’ gospel of freedom. On this occasion, he is delivered over to the Jews who, in turn, pass him on to the Gentiles, whose prisoner he remains for years, finally abandoned by all his ‘friends’, moving to his death with only the Lord for company (2 Tim 4.10-18). Throughout all these humiliations Paul naturally struggles to preserve his ‘honour’ as an Apostle; but in so doing he does not boast of an office different from his existence as a means of gaining authority. Rather, he derives all his ‘honour’ from the unity of (Christ’s) strength and weakness, of the Cross and the power of the Resurrection (2 Cor 13.1-10): he desires to glory only in the Cross (Gal 6.14), but in the Cross of the Lord who has risen forever. Here Paul is the precise anatomy, we may even say the precise vivisection, not only of the

Christian in general but of the hierarchical Christian who holds office in the Church, and this Pauline existence makes the form of the office-holder credible, and hence also the form of the institutional element in the Church as such. Mere psychology will never bring one to a proper understanding of Paul; the more one analyses him in this way the more obvious one's error which can lead to the most embarrassing commonplaces (Holzner). Paul's existence is a theology of the apostolic person on whom an institutional office has been conferred; he provides the living justification, sealed in his blood, that something of the kind can be lived. Paul is an image displayed before the whole world, an image before which spirits must divide just as inevitably as they must before the image of Christ himself. And here we must again say what we said regarding the image of Christ: whoever does not understand Paul's image as Paul himself understands it and wants it understood, to him it can be shown that he has simply misinterpreted the image. This one model, moreover, suffices to show what Jesus, in his prayer for Peter, prayed for for the person engaged in *diakonia*. If this model had been adhered to no further apology for the Church's institutional aspect would have been needed: here the institution is what it should be—a means for the preservation and the intensification of the relationship between the Head and the members, a channel (corresponding to God's Incarnation) through which the Head may work in the members in a living manner, that is to say, in a mode that is mediated through living persons and which yet remains pure, unmuddied and unobstructed by sinners.

There is simply no other way to justify the form of the institutional Church, to render plausible before the world, that is, not only the fact of its existence but also its mode and reason for being. All other ways would only lead to the view that this ecclesial form is a *minus malum* (a 'lesser evil'), a form of adaptation or concession permitted for the benefit of sinners; and it would thus simply lose its credibility as something established by Christ, the only-begotten Son, who has communicated God to us. The classical myth for this form of interpretation is Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor, who seeks to make the current form of the Church plausible to the imprisoned Christ as a necessary and, therefore, philanthropic falsification of Christ's true intentions. The institution, which is to say the hierarchy, here relieves the great mass of the people in the Church of their responsibility; they cannot bear such responsibility, the myth continues, because the inner logic of the Lord's demands can be lived only by the chosen few and essentially exceeds the abilities of the mass. The mass cannot itself think; the pope thinks in its place. It has not the personal freedom to make decisions; the hierarchy decides for it. The norms of the Sermon on the Mount are replaced by the standards of a submissive observance of the Church's precepts: living the Gospel is replaced by ‘religious practices’. In this way everyone is satisfied: the clergy enjoys the spiritual position of power conferred on it and the laity enjoys the resulting exoneration and, in anticipation, the fruits of the spiritual ‘life-insurance’ for heaven which has been accorded to it. By means of this terrible and rightly immortal satire on the ‘concessionary form’ of the Church, Ivan Karamazov seeks to prove two things: how humanly attractive in its logic such a human form of religion can be, and at the same time what a mockery it makes of everything that is Christian. The resultant shock when this is shown is expressed by the fact that this kind of proposal is put in the mouth of the Grand Inquisitor, precisely that figure in the history of the Church who is the least plausible in a Christian sense. This form of humanism is thus unmasked as being the anti-Christian principle itself and, in Dostoyevsky’s sense, that means that it is also the anti-human principle pure and simple.

This is not the place to write a history of the Church from the standpoint of the discrediting of Christ’s intentions. If such a project were undertaken, one would constantly have to take into account the particular historical *kairos*, which did not necessarily regard certain transformations in the Church with the same severity we do today, as obfuscations or falsifications of the Church’s original conception. Such is the case because a given historical *kairos*, through the specific form conditioned by time, was often in a position to perceive the original idea more forcefully than we do, and because what we are today accustomed to interpret and to devalue as an ‘ideology’ still succeeded at that time in being a transparent garment of the true faith. And yet, applying today’s standards of faith to the historical (including the present) and ideological concessionary forms can have its justification and necessity. For the fact is that we ourselves possess no other valid standards by which to test Christian realities in the forms in which they become manifest, and the use of these standards can help us clarify in a decisive manner our own Christian self-understanding.

In what follows we will limit ourselves to taking certain central realities and showing in these instances the possibility and the manner of tracing the institutional form of the Church back to the form of Christ. These central realities will be: 1) the Eucharistic cult as birthplace and centre of the Church; 2) the other sacramental events, especially baptism and confession; 3) the Catholic faith in its relationship to kerygma and dogma; 4) the Church’s proclamation.

b. The Eucharistic Cult

The mystery of the Church is born when Jesus freely exercises the power he has to ‘lay down his life and take it up again’ (Jn 10.8), when he exercises this power by giving to this surrender ‘for his friends’ (Jn 15.13) the form of a meal, of eating and drinking his Flesh and Blood (Jn 6.55), an act whereby he fills his friends with his own substance—body and soul, divinity and humanity. Granted the mystery of Jesus’ inseparably divine and human reality, this act of love that ‘loves to the end’ (Jn 13.1) exhibits a compelling and transparent logic. It is the fulfilment of his own love not as a merely personal and extravagant outpouring of self; rather, the power he has to give his life for others is bestowed on him by the Father that he may achieve this giving of self as a mandate from the Father (Jn 10.17). In this surrender of himself the Son is the substantiated love of God given to the world, a love which in this handing over of self becomes ‘glorified’ and ‘gives thanks’ to itself (is eucharist): the Father to the Son and, in visible and audible form (Jn 17), the Son to the Father.

For Christ the meal is the sealing of his corporeal death: flesh that is consumed, blood that is spilled. The supper and the Cross together constitute the ‘hour’ for which he had come (Jn 12.27f.). The insertion of the content of the Cross into the form of the supper is at the same time a sign of the sovereign freedom of his self-surrender (since he is not amorphously torn asunder like Orpheus by the Maenads, but by his dissolution gives shape to the decisive form) and a sign of the permanent validity of this form for the Church, since the form—the meal—is a social act intended to constitute the interior form itself of the Church. For this very reason this supper is the consummation of all sacral and cultic meals of mankind, which has always realised the naturally mysterious character of eating and drinking (as essential communion with the cosmos and, through it, with divinity) and has consequently assigned a cultic form to this sign: as a meal of joy (or of victory) on solemn occasions in family, tribe, or state; as a memorial meal of mourning in cases of death; as a meal that seals contracts and alliances; finally, as a sacrificial meal that concludes the offering of plants or animals.

In the eucharistic surrender of Jesus’ humanity the point is reached where, through this flesh, the triune God has been put at man’s disposal in this final readiness on God’s part to be taken and incorporated into men. Applied to the Church this means that, in the end, every exercise of the ecclesial reality is a realization (in Newman’s sense) of this event, which had occurred before the Church had come to be: the ecclesial cult is, in essence, a *memoriale passionis Domini*. This cult is a meditation in retrospect on the event which in the first place constitutes the Church, the outpouring of the bodily-spiritual reality of Jesus as Son of the Father, his release from the confinement of his earthly individuality into the social reality of the Church, which arises only from Jesus’ outpouring of self. Hence, the memory of the event of Jesus' self-surrender is a remembering (*anamnesis*, 1 Cor 11.24f.) that recalls the birth of the Church. In other words, it is a memorial that consciously establishes contemporaneity with the act whereby the Church becomes herself. In so far as this birth occurred once and for all (ἐφάπαξ) it is a remembering of a past event and, thus, a true memorial meal commemorating a death. But since this man who died is no longer dead, but lives (Acts 25.19) and has promised to come again, it is a memorial meal that looks to the future, when he will return (1 Cor 11.26; Lk 22. 18) to transform the memorial meal of the death definitively into the eternal banquet of joy (Mt 26.29; Lk 22.30). Finally, however, in so far as all Jesus' earthly activity has been taken up and made present in the risen Saviour, what had occurred once and for all can and must become present here and now. The meal of the Church, whereby the Church comes to be, is the very same as the meal of suffering whereby Jesus surrendered himself unto death; but it is also the same as the eschatological meal, only sacramentally veiled.

The presentation of the event of the Church's coming-to-be is the centre that gives meaning and legitimacy to the memorial meal of hope, and this actualisation, since it is accomplished in obedience to Christ's charge, is the encounter between a primary act of Christ himself (he comes to be, makes himself present) and a secondary act of the Church, which is taken up into this act of Christ's: in its remembering, celebrating, and obeying, the Church recalls and presents to itself the Lord Christ made present in her midst. The power of any human community as it celebrates the memory of a great dead person, already has about it a certain power to call them back to life. Many religions, and even large portions of the Old Testament itself, know of no other kind of immortality. And we should not underestimate the community-building power of such remembering: it is one of the human realities that carry a general power of conviction and which Jesus in a wonderful way fulfils and more than fulfils. The Beloved who died for us becomes alive and present for us in the midst of our remembering (*in meam commemorationem*). And this to the end not only that he may stand in our midst in order to let himself be seen and touched; not only that he may eat a fish and a honeycomb before our very eyes; but in order to partake with us a common meal (Rev 3.20) in which he is himself both the host and the food that is served. The accent that renders the Eucharist comprehensible falls on the real presence, in which the living Christ makes himself present to the Church by means of his deed of power; but this deed of power by no means neglects the realisation of the community which, as it realises him by remembering him, also realises itself. *Anamnesis* is always a breakthrough to objective truth by virtue of a subjective truthfulness whereby we overcome and transcend ourselves. In her confession of her fallenness and alienation (*Confiteor!*), the Church breaks through and discovers her own true reality as she obeys Christ (‘Do this. . . .’) and encounters Christ and herself in Christ, and in Christ the Father in the Holy Spirit.

Everything else must be related to this centre if it is to be comprehensible. To do this is at the same time practical ecclesial theology and proclamation.

1. The accent must fall on this encounter of Christ and the Church in the act of the meal: this is where the centre of gravity lies, and not in the miracle of ‘transubstantiation’ considered in isolation. ‘Transubstantiation’ is a road to the goal, just as Christ in the Last Supper did not intend to offer his disciples a magical demonstration of his omnipotence but, rather, the proof of his love to the end. Thus, the true sacramental sign in the Eucharist is the event of eating and drinking (which is the only thing that gives bread and wine their meaning as human symbols). What is important for the Church is not that something is to be found on the table of the altar, but that by consuming this nourishment the Church becomes what she can and ought to be. Mass without communion (something impossible for the celebrant as representative of the community) is impossible and meaningless for the Church as such; the concession extended in this respect to individual members of the community must, therefore, be made clear to them as such.

2. The accent falls on the constitutive event occurring between Christ and the Church (which always has its concrete expression in a gathered community). It does not fall on the celebrant, who is nothing more than the delegate of Christ and of the community. Christ alone is priest in the full sense (ἰεϱεῦς), since through his self-surrender he has surpassed and abolished the whole former cult of priest and temple. Henceforth he is the sole High Priest, and his liturgy encompasses the surrender of his life for the world in obedience to the Father. He thus fundamentally transcends the opposition between the sacred and the profane, even if in the earthly realm of the present interim period the tension between the Old and the New Age, between the Church and the world, cannot yet be resolved. The hierarchical ministry can, in this context, be nothing other than an ecclesial diaconate (ministry of service), which spends itself in giving service to Christ and to the Church and in itself remains wholly unobtrusive, even if its office is to make possible the reciprocal coming-into-presence of Christ and the community in accordance with the charge laid on it by Christ.

3. It is according to these respective emphases (which alone can make the event plausible for believers and in a certain sense even for those who do not yet believe) that all the various liturgical particulars have to be regulated and, in accordance with the simple rules of theological aesthetics, formed. It is evident

that the mystery itself cannot be ‘explained’, neither the ‘transub-stantiation’ of bread and wine into Flesh and Blood nor the other far more important happening which can analogously be called the ‘transubstantiation’ of Christ’s Flesh and Blood into the organism of the Church (and of Christians as her members). What is important is not that we know *how* God does it, but that we know *that* and *why* he does it. It is on this that the stress must fall in the formation of liturgy, and no human hypotheses which press in from the side-lines should be allowed to obscure the total image.

The Eucharistic cult arises from a *kairos* in which the cultic liturgies of highly developed cultures were in process of being spiritualised and intellectualised. Even the externality of the Jewish temple cult was experienced as embarrassing and unreligious (Qumran). The Christian cult, however, is based not on this (demythologising) spiritualisation, but on a wholly different kind of spiritualisation, made possible only by God, which at the same time is more spiritual than anything men can devise and which nonetheless salvages the bodily and corporeal element in the cult of highly developed cultures and insures its continued existence in a world that is ever more desacralised, disembodied and technicised. What is at stake is always the Incarnation; the embodiment of love and the self-surrender of God’s Son even unto death and unto the cultic meal of the Eucharist constitutes an image which cannot in any way be affected either by the tastes of a particular time or by any kind of demythologisation. This somewhat anthropocentric analysis ought not to be overlooked, no matter how great this concern for positive liturgy. And likewise the theocentric analysis; the Eucharist is directed to God the Father. It is the Son who gives thanks in this self-surrender, and the Church gives thanks with him and through him. The Father’s love becomes evident in the fact that he gives us and trusts us with this food, who as sinners have been sanctified by his Son. The Cross reveals the Father’s love for us. The Mass is a liturgy centred on the Father. The Son takes everything back to the Father in order thereby to make God plausible to us. And the more soberly the Eucharist is celebrated—without superfluous ornamentation, but also without hyperliturgical rigidity—as, for instance, the first Christians celebrated it—the more comprehensible the event becomes, the more legible the figure.

c. The Sacramental Form

The previous discussion has already given us an insight into the fundamental law which governs all sacramental form in the Church. It is that, in everything the

Church, as the steward of the sacraments, does to give visible form, the manner and the measure of this form-giving is determined by the event which is to be made present in that form and which is itself the archetypal form of all revelation and, hence, also the primal sacrament. Nothing in the Church—not even the Church herself—can lay claim to an autonomous form that would compete with the Christ-form or even replace it. Nor is it as if through the sacraments a 'formless' grace, so to speak, were mediated for which the Church, as administrator of the sacraments, had to invent a fitting and adequate form starting from nothing. The fundamental figure of grace is Jesus Christ himself, and all sacramental forms are grounded in his form in a most concrete sense. The ecclesial and social shape that the form of the sacraments comes to have can occur only by constant reference to Christ, the fundamental form. There can be no *res* (*gratia*) which would not, in Christ, already be *res et sacramentum*. For this reason, every ecclesial *sacramentum* must adhere both interiorly and exteriorly to this archetype, which is both double and single. Both the ecclesiological and the personal-charismatic, missionary aspects (the two interwoven into one unique form) are, in every case, the expression of the christological aspect of each sacrament, in which also the aspects of communicated grace and of eschatological orientation (in themselves imageless and formless) are drawn into the form. All sacraments (and in this they are like the Eucharist) are a saving act that God performs in Christ Jesus for the ecclesial believer. They are distinguished from one another by the manner of this saving action, which is not primarily specified by man's universal sociological situations and the context in which the believer finds himself, but by the ways in which Christ has brought us his salvation, which are the ways of his life in human form.

He it is who in every case gives form. In matrimony, for instance, it is not the human event of a covenant entered into by husband and wife that specifies a grace which in itself is undifferentiated. Rather, this is effected by the nuptial relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church, which in turn is the perfection of the Old Testament marriage relationship between Yah-weh and the people. The christological form is infused into the human form, and the first of these determines the form of the sacrament. That a final analysis of this form in a theological and anthropological sense is both possible and necessary does not contradict our assertion. A fundamental bridal and covenantal relationship exists between God and the world as such (compare the covenant with Noah) which from all time has arisen from the Logos' mediation at the creation and from the Spirit's hovering over the abyss. This fundamental relationship makes man, in the reciprocity of husband and wife, an image and a likeness of God: of the God who, in his eternal trinitarian mystery, already possesses within himself a nuptial form. But this final resolution of the image into a network of universal divine and creaturely relationships should occur, as we have shown, only simultaneously with the synthesis in Jesus Christ: ‘For in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,. . . all things were created through him and for him, and he is before all things and in him all things hold together’ (Col 1.16f.).

The main text of Pauline baptismal theology makes particularly evident this creative and moulding form of the sacrament which derives from Christ. According to Paul, we ‘have grown into the likeness of his death (σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ), that we may also grow into the likeness of his Resurrection’ (Rom 6.5). This ‘likeness’ or *homoiôma* connotes more than mere abstract similarity, for it contains in itself an element of form. Plato uses *homoiôma* together with *eikôn* (Phaedr. 250b) when he is describing the relationship of earthly imitative things to their heavenly archetypes. And the Septuagint employs the term even more emphatically in the sense of form, reproduction, image. In the New Testament it means ‘imitation’ (Rom 5.14) and, especially in Christology, also ‘form’: Christ appears in the ‘form of sinful flesh’ (Rom 8.3), in such a way, of course, that the element of dissimilarity is always in the background, excluding every possibility of sinfulness in Christ. We see something similar in Phil 2.7, where Christ takes on the form (μνϱφή) of a slave and enters into the form of man (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθϱώπων γενόμενος), again with the nuance that here one who in himself is not man becomes by this conformation like us in all things that pertain to the human form (*cf*. Heb 4.15: ϰαθ’ ὁμοιότητα ϰατὰ πάντα). Rom 6.5, however, does not speak of his taking on our form but of our taking on his, and in fact not his form as such but the ‘form of his likeness’. Indeed, according to Rom 6.3, we have not simply been ‘baptised into his death’, but ‘towards his death’, ‘in the direction of (asis) his death’, and have been ‘buried along with him by a baptism towards his death’. If the ‘likeness’ were nothing more than either the ceremony of immersion into the water or our own moral dying with Christ (which is what the ceremony means and is what somehow is morally experienced by us), then the relationship between archetype and image would remain merely external and exemplary—as external as in a doctrine of the Eucharist for which the bread and the wine are nothing more than the symbol of the Body and Blood of Christ. By *homoiôma*, however, Paul doubtless wishes to say more than this, namely, the process whereby the thing itself impresses its form on us on its own initiative. The ‘thing’ is the dying of Jesus Christ as a historical reality; the ‘impressing of its form’ is its actualisation in the sacrament of baptism. The ceremony of immersion, which attempts to show this in sensible form, and the death and new life experienced by the catechumen certainly belong here, but only in so far as both these things come under the impress of the objectively actualised death of Christ himself. If *homoiôma* were the sacramental death of the catechumen himself, then the ούμφυτοι would make no sense. The sacramental death lies precisely in the ούμφυτοι, which, from the dative case it takes (τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ), requires an objective content; it is in being con-formed to this content that the catechumen undergoes sacramental death. This interpretation of the school of Marialaach (Casel, Stricker), to which Heinrich Schlier adheres for exegetical reasons, is the only one fully justified by the texts.[48]

This image-form, which bears the impress of the archetype of the dying Christ and into which the catechumen is ingrafted with his whole existence, cannot at all be conceived as a separate and self-contained form; it exists only as the sacramentally realised event in which it mediates as form between Christ and man. This form, therefore, is an objective, ecclesial reality established by Christ, the archetype. The water (as a sign of the act of washing and, at the same time, of death by immersion and flooding: 1 Pet 3.20f.; 2 Pet 3.6) is the sacramental pointer to this mediating happening, a pointer which is indissolubly united to the event which is the actual content of the sacrament.

The sense in which the sacramental form is centred on the event which occurs in and through it leads us to see the similar relatedness of everything institutional in the Church to the events which they mediate, though this is not to deny that the institution constitutes a reality in its own right relative to the individual subject. But the event is nevertheless always aimed at the individual subject, who must discern the mediating, symbolic character of the form mediating the event if his conformation to Christ is to occur meaningfully and fittingly. A sacrament is an ecclesial gesture that Jesus Christ directs to man. In order to be understandable, this gesture clothes itself in a generally intelligible cosmic image (the elements) or human image (laying on of hands, the act of man forgiving man). But the image's universally intelligible symbolic content is itself only a pointer to Christ's corporeal and spiritual gesture, a gesture which the believer understands, both because of the pointer given by the earthly image and because of Christ's unique symbolic power as God and man.

From this it is clear that the baptism of infants is inadequate as a model for the sacramental event. To say that the entrance into God's Kingdom occurs unconsciously—that is, in such a way that the subject involved neither perceives nor understands Christ's gesture—is a fact so conspicuously alien to Scripture (and to the baptismal practice of the Old Testament and of John) that it must without question be regarded as an exception. The decision for infant-baptism was perhaps the most portentous decision in the entire history of the Church (and that, long before Constantine). This is so not only because infant-baptism obscures the normal image of the personal encounter with Christ and the decision for Christ that take place in every sacrament (thus making of it *merely* an *opus operatum*),[49] but also because all Christian existence is henceforth grounded upon a *fact* which is quasi-natural because it is not initially ratified by the subject. The subsequent ratification of this fact at the age of discretion always has something dubious and not quite plausible about it, since no decision whatever can now undo what has been done (*signum indelebile*). The sole theological justification could be found in the fact 'that Christ died for us while we were still sinners' (Rom 5.8) without obtaining our prior consent, something which is all the more true of the mystery of predestination 'before the foundation of the world' (Eph 1.4). If we were to justify successfully the incorporation of an infant into the visible Church on the grounds of this universal cosmic perspective, we would also by the same token have to bring to light the universal cosmic character of the Church and its responsibility towards all humanity; the reception of the sacraments before the age of reason would then have to be seen in the light of this responsibility. However, even so there are elements unaccounted for in this train of thought which cannot be overlooked.

The sacrament of penance has the advantage that its sacramental figure does not lend itself to any such erosion. For here the acts of the penitent cannot be lacking, cannot be provided by any proxy, cannot be made up for later on. In the sacrament of penance the heart of the matter is, precisely, the sinner's 'conversion' and his personal turning to the reign of God as it comes to him in Christ. Here the full form of the sacramental event is made evident, plausible, visible. For all these reasons this is the sacrament which could be taken as the model for a general doctrine of the sacraments, in so far as such a model could be sustained through all the individual sacraments, which are so different and yet interiorly analogous. Spiritually speaking, nothing is more eloquent than the Gospel stories that relate the encounter of sinners with Christ. Every single detail is both credible and indispensable: the fact that their sin must come out into the light whether they want this or not, whether the sinner himself confesses it or Christ draws it from him and confesses it in his place; the fact that embarrassment, contrition, tears of remorse are necessary; finally, the fact that the word of forgiveness, as a seed, is planted into the soul that has been 'plowed up' in this manner. On the other hand, in an interior sense nothing is at the same time more fitting, just, and compassionate than the fact that this forgiveness from God is linked to one's own forgiveness of one's fellow-man and that, contrariwise, the readmission of the sinner into God’s friendship goes hand in hand with the forgiving readmission of that same sinner into the community of those who love. Thus, it is not necessary to wait till the period of the Church before penance receives its social aspect; with the very existence of Christ penance has already received its full sacramental form: Christ is the offended God and the offended neighbour all in one. He is both marked out and known and, as ‘Son of Man’, anonymous. The Gospel image is not obscured by the fact that absolution is given through Christ’s delegate, who is empowered to bestow it in the name of the offended God and of the offended community of saints. This delegate concretises in a sacramental manner both the forgiving God and the forgiving Church, and it is necessary that the form of his image represent both these things in unity. This form, moreover, makes us see that the minister as officebearer (who in his person remains wholly irrelevant in his official function) still may exercise his official service precisely as one who loves: it is truly *this* priest who forgives my sins, not, of course, in the sense that he primarily shows me *his* love but rather that of God and of the Church. Perhaps nowhere does the double resolution of the ecclesial form, in the direction of God and in the direction of man, become more impressively evident than here, as well as the extent to which this form in reality represents nothing other than the focal point, the burning centre of the concrete conformation to one another of sinful humanity and gracious God.[50]

It is not necessary to rehearse the rest of the sacraments in turn; the principle is sufficient. Some of them take man not simply in his totality but in his concrete historical form: as a person growing to maturity who at a given moment has reached the stage of adult responsibility and hence, as if by natural right, is in need of an initiation ceremony. This ceremony—Christian confirmation—is not an amorphous and general divine blessing but the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the candidate, the event whereby Pentecost becomes an event for him. Here, too, this fact makes the universal human situation recede to the level of a secondary occasion for the free God’s sovereign action in salvation-history. Likewise, sociologically speaking, marriage and sacred public worship are to be found in every society. But these states and functions, universally exhibited by mankind, are events that offer occasions and signs in which the Christ-event can take sacramental form and come to prevail over the occasion and the sign themselves. To Christ belongs the mystery of matrimony (Eph 5.32), to him belongs the true eternal priesthood (Heb 5.10), and both things are the shaping form which must henceforth become actualised in the marriage of Christians and in the ecclesial *diakonia* of Christians. The anointing of the sick is also a universally understood sign, a help and a guide to death and to the judgment of the dead, a viaticum for the one departing that consists in the most precious thing the community has to give: prayer and supplication for the forgiveness of sins (Jas 5.14f.). But how different everything becomes when man's ending thus becomes, in Christ, a new beginning and a sacramental expression of being fitted for eternal life, recognition of a capacity for Christian death and resurrection, the form of Christ in the clearest possible expression, human dying as a sign of the dying of God in Christ, which at the same time means the manifestation of eternal life for us!

The sacraments are an essential part of ecclesial aesthetics. Not only does God's invisible grace become visible and graspable in the Christ-form as such, but here, in the sacraments, the Christ-form itself in turn appears before us and impresses its shape upon us in a valid form which is free of all subjective ambiguities. But the sacraments would be radically misunderstood if one attempted in the least way to disjoin them from the Christ-form as *instrumenta separata* and ascribe to them an independent meaning and a form of their own. For the same reason, a description of the sacraments would be deficient which characterised their transitional and event-laden symbolic form as a spiritual work of art in itself. This might be done, for instance, in terms of form and matter, whereby the 'matter' would have to provide the somehow necessary symbolic sign for the form that is here expressing itself. But this would also be inadequate because the symbolic rites for individual sacraments have either developed historically or are the same for several sacraments (laying on of hands, anointing). We must constantly keep in mind the sacraments' character as mediating between Christ and man: both together belong to the figure. The 'matter' that is to be formed is man himself in his concrete situation: as a person who is to enter into God's Kingdom; as a person who is to be washed, nourished, anointed; as a human sinner to whom the great absolution of the Cross must ever anew be applied and who is to undertake the decision of Christian maturity, Christian matrimony, ecclesial ministry; as a person who stands before the gates of eternity. In this person a process of formation is at work whose form is Christ himself. The happening has an external and, hence, sensible and symbolic side: the water of baptism is important because it really washes, and so on. But we ought not to exaggerate the symbolism of the elements as such, statically considered; the *continere gratiam* (Dz 849) should not have to suffer on this account.

In the sacraments, all their theological form-quality and all the splendour of grace they contain derive from Christ, from the triune God in him. Only in this way are they religiously plausible and require no demythologisation and demagicisation. Their theological understanding and their liturgical execution will be most adequate when they make evident in the most incisive and sober way the gesture of Christ that comes to man through them.

d. Faith and Dogma

Does faith in Christ have a credible form? Is faith not the aspect of Catholic Christianity most radically opposed to the individual's personal commitment to God and man—something like a knot elaborately tied by the Church which becomes less unravellable with each new proclamation of dogma? Among any other religions it seems possible to achieve a sort of religious tolerance based on an analysis that describes and resolves the faith-content of each creed in a way which yields a basis of common understanding. With Catholicism this seems to be impossible. *This* form of faith resists comprehension, though this occurs at different levels for different people. For some even the faith of Paul and John (as contrasted with a generally intelligible surrender in trust to God) is itself already a dogmatic propositional faith (*dass-Glaube*) that something is so: for instance, 'I believe *that* the man Jesus is God.' For others the unacceptable element begins where the faith-relationship with God is transferred to ecclesial authority, which decrees that certain things have to be believed. It is, in fact, difficult to sustain an uninterrupted vision that goes from the form of Jesus to the expression it finds in the attitude of faith. It is important to open the door in such a way that one can see through the whole flight of rooms at a single glance. This is what we will now briefly attempt to do.

The success of this attempt will depend on whether or not we walk hand in hand with the Gospel, that is, whether we start precisely where it starts, and then follow its directions until we leave it where it itself leaves us. Although everything we shall consider is in fact an unbroken stream, we will divide it into stages for the sake of seeing the unity of the parts in the whole. The danger of many detailed studies is that they concentrate on the oppositions and are unable to portray the relief of the whole, failing to see that the different aspects belong together precisely in their variety and that, together, they yield the plastic image of Christian faith.

1. Jesus began by 'proclaiming the Good News from God': 'The Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel' (Mk 1.14f.). This is the same message that Matthew puts in the mouth of the Baptist (Mt 3.2; *cf*. 4.17). Jesus appeals to this same preaching on the part of the Baptist, a proclamation which the leaders of the people should have believed, particularly since they saw how tax-collectors and prostitutes were converting in faith (Mt 21.32). There is a

continuity between the Baptist’s proclamation and that of Jesus, no less than between the proclamation of Moses and the Prophets and that of Jesus. ‘If you believed Moses you would also believe in me,’ says the Jesus of John. He interprets the law in such a way that one comes to understand its core and essence, which is justice (ϰϱίσις, *mishpat*), mercy (ἔλεος, *hesed*), and fidelity (πίστις, *emeth*: Mt 23.23). The Sermon on the Mount offers a compendium of his manner of interpretation: the law and its fulfilment are considered in the light of the Prophets’ piety (‘Beatitudes’). All external works lay bare the heart; they expose the earnestness of one’s love for God and neighbour which the Torah demands, and, in Christ’s interpretation, this means the earnestness with which one allows God’s being, power, providential goodness, compassionate fidelity, and incorruptible justice to gain the ascendancy in one’s own existence over and above all one’s own egotistic and formalistic standards. It is in this sense that πίστις Θεοῦ (Mk 11.22) is demanded: the courage and the trust that allow God absolute pre-eminence in all his dispositions and decisions, since this is a God who from the beginning proved his covenant-fidelity (πίστις) to Israel, with the result that human trust is the secure and justified answer to God’s sustaining act. But, since this faith of Israel is only the manifestation of the right creaturely relationship to God (who, by definition, is always right, always sustains, always leads), Jesus’ demand here does not go beyond what is humanly evident. It is the demand that we take seriously the fact that God is absolute unity and that, therefore, the πίστις Θεοῦ demands from man a unity in his self-surrender which is proportionate to God: unity, innocence, simplicity, unanimity (Mt 6.11; 10.16; Phil 2.15; 1 Pet 1.22) are diametrically opposed to duplicity of soul (Jas 1.8; 4.8), to smallness of faith and to lukewarmness (Mt 6.30; 8.26; 14.31; 16.8; 17.20; Lk 12.28; *cf.* 1 Thess 5.14).

2. Jesus is there in order to initiate man into this faith. There are cases in which Jesus confirms the presence of such faith, often with wonderment (Mt 8.10; 15.28). But for the most part Jesus is there to educate men to this faith. He makes a strange link—which appears to approach identity—between real full faith and God’s omnipotence. For the person who reaches the point where he trusts God absolutely, who allows God total ascendancy in himself, who lets God be the ‘all’ in his ‘nothing’—for this person the relationship is wholly reversed: now *he* has power over God. God can do all things in him (because he puts up no resistance), and therefore he can do all things in God. This is the context of the sayings about the faith that moves mountains and for which ‘nothing is impossible’ (Mt 17.20 = 21.21), sayings which, when applied to the prayer of petition, reveal the paradoxical unity of the will of God with the will of man in faith (Mt 21.22; Mk 11.23f.: ‘Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in

prayer, believe that you have received, and it will be yours’). This ability of man to find wholeness in faith is precisely not a mystical dissolution, but is demanded in a positive sense in order to enable God to accomplish his divine work in man. It is here that the role faith plays in Jesus’ miracles becomes manifest. Faith is not only a necessary condition of the miracles’ occurrence (Mk 6.5); it is in an exact sense the measure of the miraculous deed itself. Again and again the assurance is uttered: ‘may it happen according to your faith’ (Mt 8. 13: ‘Be it done for you as you have believed’; Mt 9.29: ‘According to your faith be it done to you’; Mt 9.2: ‘When Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, “Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven” ’; Mt 9.22: ‘Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well’; Mk 2.5; 5.34; 10.52; Lk 5.20; 7.50; 8.48; 17.19; 18.42; *cf*. Lk 8.50: ‘Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well’; and also Acts 14.9f.: ‘Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, said in a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet!” ’). The great number of these testimonies points with certainty to a central element in Jesus’ proclamation. Some have been of the opinion that in these cases Jesus comes closely to the figure of a religious magician or of one of those Hindu gurus who, because of their relationship with God, are able to accomplish supernatural things and, by a hypnotic power, can draw others too into this religious ‘faculty’ of theirs, initiating disciples into their art. It is obviously possible here to see similarities especially with Zen Buddhism and its learnable art of total non-voluntariness, whereby the absolute works through the passive person who, precisely as such and in the same mysterious reversal, receives from God everything he wants. If we consider that in the case of Jesus there can never be any question of an impersonal absolute, but only of the living God of Israel, then we see that with Jesus everything takes place on the personal level. But, on the other hand, we must admit that the parallels are in no sense misleading. Even though, in a Christian sense, no identity of being can be intended, nevertheless the question does revolve around an identity—an identity of wills, of the human will surrendering to God’s loving will to save man. Seen in this way the sayings of Jesus we have quoted do not constitute an embarrassment, as it were the ‘pudenda’ of the proclamation of faith, but, on the contrary, are the very thing which is at stake for Jesus.

3. Jesus lives out this reality for his disciples in order to show them that it is possible and imitable. He sleeps in the midst of the storm on the lake because he is ‘simplicity’ in his whole being and has totally entrusted himself to his provident Father, because he possesses the attitude which he afterwards finds lacking in the disciples: ‘Where is your faith?’ (Lk 8.25 par.). He helps his disciples to do what he himself is capable of doing: he calls Peter out of the boat

and reproaches his ‘doubt’ as ‘little faith’ (Mt 14.29f.). By calling Peter to come to him Jesus sustains him: he assumes the responsibility of the risk and extends to him the necessary force. Likewise, in Mk 9.22f., he brings the father of the possessed boy into his own ‘power’: ‘ “If you can do anything, have pity on us and help us.” And Jesus said to him, “If you can! All things are possible to him who believes.” ’ When Jesus demands anything he himself makes it possible. To the ‘half-hearted’ he extends his hand so that he will dare take the leap into total faith: ‘I believe, Lord; help my unbelief!’ (Mk 9.24). It is not—by any means!—that he replaces human powerlessness with his own power; rather, by means of his power, he helps powerless man attain to his own power. Thus, at the same time it becomes clear that faith is a grace of God: an ability bestowed by God (Mt 16.17; 11.25). None of what has yet to be said will detract from this assertion. At this level the consciousness of the disciples and of the people predominates: ‘He can do it! And so we must cling to him. He does not only demand; he himself has the ability. And not only does he have the ability; he shows us how, indeed, he communicates the ability to us. This makes him the road to God.’ In the context of religious phenomenology, this does not yet necessarily (within Israel’s particular context) take us beyond the phenomenon of a teacher who wields divine powers—a phenomenon which is attested in cases other than Jesus. From this standpoint, Kierkegaard’s either / or between Socrates (who can only perform the service of spiritual midwife) and Jesus is not wholly convincing. And we can ask ourselves whether even Peter’s confession (‘You are the Anointed One of God’, Mk 8.29; Lk 9.21; ‘You are the Holy One of God’, Jn 6.69) has necessarily to take us beyond this level.

4. Because he makes the turning to love complete, this is where John fits into the overall picture, not in chronological order of authors but of insight. This man Jesus, who knows how to love, lives for me; with his whole existence he is there in order to communicate to me this power, in God and unto God. Because he does not do it for himself, moreover, because he does not ‘seek his own honour’ and does it for the Father and for me, his power and his existence are themselves love. What is more, because in his power he is one with the Father, what we have before us is the love of God which has appeared and been made visible in this man. Now the ‘Son of the living God’ (Mt 16.16) is called the ‘only-beloved and the only-begotten of the Father’ (Jn 1.18). The transition from one to the other is not a ‘transfiguration’ effected by the enthusiastic love of the disciples, but rather the illumination by love of a reality which was unquestionably there from the outset (this against Martin Buber’s ‘two modes of believing’). Once granted that this man (and without any doubt he is a man) is the substantial love of God the Father (the covenant-God of Israel) turning to us, then all John’s

utterances about faith follow automatically. Then Jesus can summarize (the Father and the Son, who are one God), saying: ‘Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me’ (Jn 14.1). In a long series of texts Jesus can demand faith in himself (which occurs only once in the Synoptics at Mt 18.6 which in view of Mk 9.42 is probably not original), and John can, without further ado, read the life and death of the Son of God, the surrender of his life for the life of the world, as being the love of God himself, a love which teaches us to respond with our own love by means of our unconditional and loving self-surrender to it. By so teaching us, the love of God realises faith in us. But as much was already contained in Jesus’ question to the blind men in Matthew: ‘ “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to him, “Yes, Lord” ’ (Mt 9.28).

5. To this Paul essentially adds nothing except the painful and blissful experience of the convert: ‘what I cannot do of my own, that I can do in Christ.’ The leap into the sphere of Christ (a leap which itself is the grace of being ‘transplanted’ by God) occurs because of the hand stretched out by ‘him who loved me and gave himself for me’ (Gal 2.20), he who so ‘strengthens’ me that I am able to ‘do all things’ in him (Phil 4.13). Henceforth this is an ability ‘in Christ’, in the reality of his Resurrection, which in fact embraces within itself the quintessence of all earthly reality and delivers mundane reality from self-glorification, enabling it to be con-formed to the crucified, dead, buried, and risen Saviour. This is in strict unity with the logic of the Gospel; nothing would be more preposterous and dangerous than to make a sharp division between Paul’s conception of faith and that of the Synoptics (and, hence, also of James). For in that case Pauline faith would be in danger of running aground as an impenetrable dialectic whose expression would then indeed be the *simul justus et peccator*, which Paul came nowhere near to expressing as such. Paul’s statement to the effect that ‘what I cannot do of my own and in myself, that I can do through Christ and in Christ’ can never be substituted for by the quite different proposition that, ‘since I cannot of my own do anything but sin, Jesus can do everything in my place and, thus, I am justified in him.’ In this second formulation there is no longer any kind of intelligible connection between faith as a fundamental act of the creature (which every religious person can understand) and Christian faith proper. Yet throughout the Synoptic proclamation a continuity is maintained with the Old Testament and the order of creation (Acts 9.15f.; 17.22f.), and there is no reason to speak of two modes of faith. The only thing that might be misleading in this context is the manner in which Paul identifies works with the law, on the one hand, and grace with the Gospel, on the other. We should never lose sight of the temporally-conditioned

historical and polemical intention of this parallelising, if we are to see (1) that the accretions that have grown around the law are in any case not the genuine form of Jewish religiosity, which Paul relates especially to Abraham, and (2) that the 'faith of Abraham' has the same formal structure as the 'faith of Christ'.

6. The whole structure of faith (namely, that one can absolutely trust the God who has given us his Son as his Word) is proclaimed by the Apostles and their successors as the Good News. The Apostles' word of proclamation (*kerygma*) demands faith, not for itself, however, but solely for God, just as they, being delegated and empowered by God, do not proclaim their own word but, rather, God's Word (1 Thess 2.13; Gal 1.11). To believe the Gospel, to believe the Word, to believe the apostolic preaching (Acts 2.44; 4.4; 8.12; 15.7, etc.) is referred quite precisely to the divine subject (to believe in Jesus as the Son of God: Acts 8.37; 19.4; to believe in the Lord: Acts 9.42; 16.31; 22.19, etc.). To be sure, 'faith comes from hearing' the Apostles' kerygma (Rom 10.17; 1 Cor 3.5; 15.1f., 11). The apostolic word demands a decision for and obedience to the Word on the part of those who hear it. This is why unbelief is disobedience (Rom 2.8; 10.16; 11.30ff.; 15.31), as it is a part of the apostolic authority not only to preach but to 'take every thought captive to obey Christ' and likewise, in the case of 'those who fully believe', 'to punish every disobedience' (2 Cor 10.5f.). There exists an authentic apostolic authority which, within the Church (that is, among those who believe of their own free will) can even intervene in the consciences of individuals, there to establish order. Nevertheless, the act of faith is directed not to the Church as a detached object; rather, this act includes the Church as object solely in so far as she mediates faith in the Lord. Through her preaching, she invites man to adhere to her own faith: to become believers first of all *through* the Church, then *in* her and *with* her (to the extent that she herself believes). Once the person who has been exteriorly struck by the kerygma comes to understand interiorly what the Church is in faith, once he sees her as the 'Body of Christ' and as the Communion of Saints, then, to the extent (and *only* to the extent) that Christ lives in her as total sacrament, the Church will become for the believer a co-object of faith.

7. The kergyma as such is already dogma: it demands of a general faith in God that it make the decision to become a special faith in God's self-revelation and self-surrender to man in Jesus Christ. This demand has meaning only if Jesus Christ is the only Son of the Father. This dogma, which expresses the fundamental form of Christian faith, can and must be variously secured and formulated in the course of the Church's reflection in faith, as it is prompted by erroneous historical interpretations and attacks: this buttressing and development must be carried out in the interests of the dogma itself (christologically), of its

presuppositions in the image of God (doctrine of the Trinity), and of its consequences (ecclesiologically). Around the dogma there develops ‘dogmatics’, which is to say the numerous affirmations that explain, defend, and illustrate the dogmatic centre always more adequately. All these assertions, however, must at any moment be able to be traced back to *the* dogma—the fundamental form that appears in the Gospel. The way this is done will, of course, take on different guises depending on the competence ascribed to ‘church dogmatics’ and to the organ for the proclamation of the faith that stands behind it; but there can be no doubt as to the possibility and the necessity for such an analysis. Here we may leave aside the question how far ‘tradition’ is constitutive or only interpretive, while for the question how far Scripture only witnesses to the form of revelation or is one of its constitutive elements, we refer the reader to the previous chapter. Here it must suffice to recall the maxim that everything is admissible which is adequate for clarifying the interior form of revelation in its proportions and articulations, while everything contrary to this clarification is inadmissible, regardless how good the intentions may be from which it derives. Although Scripture is not identical with revelation, but is rather the testimony about revelation established by God, still, in spite of the purely chance nature of its historical conditioning, Scripture is normative for the interior form of the revelation which expresses itself in it. The Church’s pneumatic eye is able to read this form in Scripture, and to this extent the *pneuma* of Scripture is the *norma normans* for the entire form of ecclesial dogmatics. We say the *pneuma* and not simply the letter, even though this, of course, means the *pneuma* within the letter. Hence, too, what we intend is the spiritual, contemplative sense and not simply philology, but certainly a spiritual sense which is embedded in philology. Eyes of faith are required, which alone are able to perceive the form of faith, but supported by eyes which are able to read history critically. Only when both aspects are found in their hierarchical unity will they correspond adequately to the phenomenon being offered; and this double sense, in so far as it belongs to the Church, is the principle of dogmatics as the interpretation of revelation.

The form of faith throughout Scripture is the human answer, elicited by God, to the form of revelation, which is a single form which is merely intensified from the Old to the New Testament. Since the Word of God, in which one believes, becomes man, to distinguish two different kinds of faith can only be misleading. Rather, it is significant that both the beginning and the end of the New Testament revelation quite expressly make the connection with Israel’s form of faith, as established in Abraham and interiorised in the Prophets. We have already shown this in relation to the Synoptics. But even the later so-called

Epistle to the Hebrews, as it reaches out to embrace the thought-forms of Hellenistic Platonism, does so by means of a grand historical recapitulation of the whole of Old Testament faith. This faith (as in the Old Testament, in Peter, and in James) is here closely linked to expectation, to patience, to constancy, to an existence located in God which endures to the end. The faith of the ancients, founded on God's invisibility and on hope in him, was a reception of God's 'witness' (Heb 11.2) in every dimension, both as a present that fulfils and a future that promises. As such, the faith of the ancients proleptically contained within itself the form of Christian faith, which precisely for this reason completes within itself, by fulfiling it historically and eschatologically, the promiseladen form of the ancient faith. In the 'Apocalypse' faith again becomes wholly fidelity to the Incarnate Logos which endures all temptation. The Logos himself is the *testis fidelis* (Rev 1.5; 3.14; 19.11), and, hence, the believer himself must be *fidelis usque ad mortem* (Rev 2.10). The King of Kings triumphs in the company of the chosen *fideles* (Rev 17.14). The very words of revelation are *fidelissima verba* (Rev 21.5; 22.6). The very foundations of all dogmatic 'faith in. . .', as Paul knows it and as apostolic preaching must exact it, is here made transparent. This foundation is the reciprocal *fidelitas* of God and of his people which is what already the Old Testament meant by 'faith'; it is also the trust (*Trauen*) of the Bride who surrenders to her Bridegroom in their definitive espousal (*Trauung*).

e. Proclamation and the Other Ecclesial Forms

The most important aspects of proclamation have already been dealt with implicitly in what we have said about faith. The apostolic proclamation, which must remain the archetype of all subsequent preaching in the Church, is 'ministry to the Word' (Acts 6.4). This means, in turn, that the Church's preaching does not possess its own form existing alongside and in competition with the form of the Word. The ministry consists in allowing God's Word, here and now, to make its own form prevail in those who hear it. As we showed by taking the example of Mary and the Saints, however, service does not mean passivity, but rather the engagement of all human powers—including those of the intellect and of the creative faculty—as handmaidenly matter in which the Word can impress and express its form. The matter involved here, naturally, is one which attracts no attention to itself and does not construct an 'intermediary form', because the actual matter of the Word is the hearts of men which must be touched and converted. The art of Christian preaching and rhetoric, therefore, must undergo the same critical judgment as all other Christian art. They must constantly open themselves to the question whether they devote all their energies to making the Word of God present, or whether instead they are constructing a form of their own which steals in as an intermediary reality to be contemplated in its own right and perhaps even to be admired. To do this would be to dull the force of God’s Word.

We can make a distinction between the word of proclamation addressed to the unprepared and the unbelieving and that addressed to those who already believe. In Paul’s preaching to the first group we clearly detect an attempt to ‘establish contact’ with the general religious world-view of his hearers, which then becomes a springboard for the proclamation of Christ. This need not be seen as a ‘concessionary form’ of preaching, as if it had to begin with something alien to it before being able to move on to its actual concerns. For Paul the ‘order of nature’ by no means stands outside Christ, but is founded in and made possible by him; by the same token the hearers of the proclamation, without knowing it, already stand within the sphere of Christ’s lordship and are being persuaded to move towards something which they already are and have from the standpoint of Christ.[51]

Here, too, the mode of address is not first external, moving, with a sudden leap, to an internal mode; rather, what takes place is an *anamnesis* in the theological (and not the Platonic) sense. We can see this clearly in the case of preaching inside the Church, since the preaching of the Word has its *Sitz im Leben* precisely at the point where the Church takes its origin from Christ in the eucharistic *anamnesis* of the liturgy. The Church arises in a single act which at one and the same time is both proclamation and sacrament, from a single origin which is at the same time Word and Flesh. If one could at one and the same time preach and do the eucharistic ‘deed’ (*hoc facite*), this reality would be perfectly expressed. John’s intention in Christ’s farewell discourses is to present the Eucharist to us as Word, or better, both things as a strict unity. Since time imposes a constraint that precludes exterior simultaneity, the actualisation of Jesus as the Word who is God precedes his actualisation as the Word who is Flesh. The Word is then primarily conceived as being that action of God which brings us into the truth by leading us out of our fallenness and concealment by conviction (ἐλέγχειν) and judgment (κϱίνειν), into the manifest openness of truth.[52] Yet this function of the Word in no way falls behind the sacramental function in either rank or importance (as could at least be suggested by the unhappy phrase ‘ante-communion’ or ‘preparation for the Mass’ to refer to the Liturgy of the Word). One might almost more easily affirm the contrary, since without the Word and the Spirit the Flesh ‘would avail nothing’. The distinction made in apostolic preaching between preaching to those outside and those inside disappears in a church where infant-baptism is practised, because those who stand within the sphere of the Church must always be asked whether they have really ratified their baptism as a dying in Christ (Rom 6), since it is only by so doing that they become true believers. In any case, a word from God that originates from the same source as the Eucharist (‘in the night on which he was betrayed’, 1 Cor 11.23) is a word from the Cross (1 Cor 1.18), a word that has the cruciformity of God’s Word as its own content and as the ‘power of God’ (ibid.), a word that precisely for this reason has the same ‘weakness and lowliness’ for its form. The preacher has feelings of ‘weakness and of much fear and trembling’, and his preaching cannot therefore consist in ‘plausible words of wisdom’ but ‘in the demonstration of [God’s] Spirit and power’ (1 Cor 2.3f.). ‘For power is made perfect in weakness’ (2 Cor 12.9), not indeed in the sense that the preacher should preach feebly in order that Christ may be strong in his word, but rather in the sense that ‘when I am weak, then *I* am strong’ (2 Cor 12.10); for, although ‘we are weak in him, in dealing with you we shall live with him by the power of God’ (2 Cor 13.4), even if this life becomes visible (2 Cor 13.9) not so much in the apostle and preacher himself as in the community he has reached and built up (2 Cor 12.19). The preacher is ‘authenticated’ when he proves ‘that Christ is in him’ (2 Cor 13.5), and since the community asks for such proof (2 Cor 13.3), he can provide it by the fact that the mystery of the Cross (power through weakness) is not communicated to others ‘over his head’, as it were, but lives within him (2 Cor 12.9f.).

Paul knows no other ‘form’ of preaching, nor does Jesus (Mt 10). This is precisely the form of Christ himself, but it can be expressed in the preaching only if it has previously taken shape in the existential faith of the preacher. Where this occurs, then there is no longer any danger that the preacher will preach himself. In the act of preaching he is a ‘servant of the Word’, which is not his but God’s Word, with the same power which God’s revelation in Christ possessed directly. This is why Paul can describe the apostolic preaching as a ‘word of salvation’ (Acts 13.26), a ‘word of grace’ (Acts 14.3; 20.32), a ‘word of life’ (Phil 2.16), a ‘word of reconciliation’ (2 Cor 5.19), ‘and these genitives imply more than just a word “about” salvation, “about” grace, life, reconciliation. . . . The Word is not merely and above all an historical report which tells of reconciliation, salvation, and grace as it would of any historical event. No! This Word, rather, *generates*: it creates and effects “salvation”, “grace”, “reconciliation”.’[53] The Word of God itself, however, gains its power for us from Christ’s existence, and thus it requires the existence of the preacher as its ecclesial medium. If the preacher is living his faith, then he will not need to become artificially attuned to the ‘wave-length’ of his audience, as it were, seeking to ‘adapt’ himself to its style (or, if this occurs, it will only be in a very secondary sense). For a preacher who lives his faith knows where man truly stands—against what background of weak faith, impotence, and darkness he listens to the Word of God. By living a Christian existence, the preacher will succeed both in relating his preaching to God’s Word and to believing and sinful man, and it is precisely in terms of such an analysis that the word of his preaching becomes credible in a Christian sense. It is precisely through this ‘dissolution’ of all private artistry that preaching acquires Christian ‘style’, just as the Eucharistic liturgy acquires its own authentic style when it does not attempt to stage an aesthetic performance for the congregation with pretensions to originality or style, but rather unites in its celebration the two poles that are to be brought together: the Lord who gives himself and the community that hungers for him.

Thus, the style of preaching and of the celebration of the sacraments is decided simultaneously. Both are but two aspects of the same reality: the making present in our remembrancing of the Lord who became man for us and gives himself to us as word and food; and neither preaching nor sacramental celebration looks at the historical event from an objectivising distance: rather, by the power of the risen and living Christ, they make the event present as event. Christ does not need to have himself ‘represented’ by a man; he is mighty enough to use man to speak himself, to touch hearts in his unmistakable divine-human way, just as he acts as God and as man in the eucharistic event. To put it differently, this will best succeed if the preacher avoids basing his preaching, consciously or unconsciously, on a schematic account of Christianity of his own devising. Of course, behind dogma as formulated by the Church there is always a particular theology, and numerous theologies of various strains shape Christian revelation into particular thought-structures which the theological eye can more or less survey and identify according to style. But it is a sore trial for the Christian hearer when, instead of revelation itself, he encounters what is obviously a theological construction. Theology should assist in making the preaching transparent of the revelation itself and not intrude between them as an end in itself. This would be tantamount to hindering the hearer from a true and direct hearing of the Word, and obstructing what Kierkegaard calls ‘contemporaneity’. Preaching is not a theology course for the laity, nor for the same reason is it a transposition of revelation into a merely natural or Christian ethics. Preaching stands or falls with the question ‘concerning the architecture, the christocentric structural principle of the proclamation’.[54] ‘For this reason, preaching always has explicitly supernatural presuppositions, namely, supernatural understanding and the Holy Spirit; but it has very few natural presuppositions. . . . The Spirit will be effective in our word only if we give him space in us, and this means suppressing ourselves.'[55] This alone makes our word of proclamation plausible as the Word of God.

It would be tempting and fruitful to review all other forms of ecclesial existence in this way to show their character as expressions of the form of Christ—as a medium that is intended to receive and fundamentally can receive the Christ-form, but which also, because of man's recalcitrance, puts up resistance to the form's creative power and hence obscures the image to the point where it is unrecognisable.

1. Such a resolution of the Christ-form into ecclesial form would have to be developed first of all with respect to the hierarchical ministry itself. It would then become evident that this office as such is, in Christ's Church, purely a medium for mediating him, a medium created and fashioned substantially from the love of Christ and which in the person holding the office is a graced fulfilment of his personal discipleship. By this fulfilment through grace the Lord of the Church makes a person capable of exercising in the Church a ministry which bears the form of Christ. An astounding thing then occurs: the minister's distance from his Lord comes into bold relief at the same time as he is joined instrumentally to the Lord's action. The reality involved is not comprehensible in a Christian sense if only the distance is emphasised, that is the *opus operatum in Christo* in spite of the unworthiness and sinfulness of the priest. In a Christian sense, what is here at stake can be understood only when we see both discipleship and the conferring of office as a single figure which, as such, guarantees through Christ's grace the *repraesentatio Christi*, the making present of Christ, who is the only true minister.[56] In this way the opposition in the Church between the hierarchy and the laity would be, not indeed abolished, but delivered of its rigour and made credible in a Christian sense, and it would then be plausible to trace the ever-recurring stumbling block of this opposition back, not to the institution itself, but to its exercise at the hands of sinners.

2. A further resolution would deal with the sphere of canon law, which looks back to the jurisdictional power of the Apostles and their successors and poses the intricate problem of ecclesial obedience. It is evident that a purely anthropological analysis is not sufficient: that is, by regarding obedience purely as a subordination of the individual to a socially necessary ecclesial discipline, which must be all the more demanding since the goods of unity in faith and in love cannot otherwise be preserved and actualised. Christian obedience must be

the manifestation of Christ’s unique redemptive obedience to the Father. The element of coercion that emerges particularly in the sphere of canon law must rest upon the far deeper willingness of the Christian to belong to the Church and upon the freedom of the Christian that is thereby effected, a freedom for which Christ, by his obedience, has freed us. From outside what will receive greatest attention is the sociological resolution: some will be inclined to treasure certain cultural and aesthetic values in the ‘style’ of Catholicism, while others will stigmatise its degenerate forms as traditionalism, integralism, and so forth. The view from the outside must be overcome theologically by showing that Christ also wanted to impress the form of his obedience on his Church. The obedience of the religious life, undertaken with total freewill for the sake of Christ, becomes meaningful and credible only in this way. But the dualism between the obedience of the laity with respect to the hierarchy (and to the whole sphere of law which the hierarchy establishes by its mandate from Christ[57]) and the obedience of the religious life can be bridged in spite of all the real differences in their structures, since both forms of obedience come to be seen as credible in so far as they are constituted by the free obedience to Christ in the mediation of the person representing Christ as either ecclesiastical or religious superior.

3. Ecclesiastical discipline and ecclesial obedience constitute one aspect of the total Christian life in the Church in so far as this life is a ‘form’, and the structural principle that applies to the part applies just as much to the whole. In the first place the same principle that constitutes the hierarchical office with its jurisdiction establishes the religious life as a whole. Although for each of the evangelical counsels, too, there can exist an anthropological resolution (since they have a counterpart in most highly developed religions and thus exhibit themselves as conformed to man), the counsels attain their Christian meaning through the creative power of Christ’s form in those who are called to discipleship and who respond to this call. Poverty is the commandment to leave everything in order to acquire the one pearl that is Christ; it is the renunciation of all worldly shaping power in order to become a pure bridal ‘matrix’ that receives the creative imprint of the Bridegroom, of his mentality and life-form. With virginity it is the same: its particular form of discipleship must be read in Mary. It means an exclusive consecration of man’s total corporeal and spiritual vitality and fruitfulness to the end of receiving maternally within oneself the one form of God’s Word made man, then to foster it, give it birth and accompany its own growth and the course of its life. The anthropological resolution can here be accomplished with clarity only with respect to the Christian archetype: the miracle of virginal fertility is too evident for it to find a sufficiently plausible image in popular myths and vital forms. And it can only be made opaque by *a*

priori philosophical judgments (for instance, that reproduction and individuality are evil and therefore to be abolished by self-denial) and erotic obfuscations. The form of life of the counsels, moreover, is the formal (representative) and public living out in the Church of a precept of life which applies to all Christians. The 'spirit' of Christ's counsels (which give expression to his own Spirit and life-form) must also be expressed in the lives of those who own property, are married and dispose of their own persons (1 Cor 7). In this sense, the religious life is not only an expression of Christ, but a co-operation that partakes of Christ's transforming power as it shapes the Church of the laity. This can be seen clearly when the meaning of the Christ-form is manifested as the love of God for the world and as man's perfect love for God and his brother. This meaning, which is the primary structure underlying the Christ-form, can and must also be the meaning of all ecclesial life-forms, and this in turn implies two things. The first of these is that any particular form (such as sacramental and hierarchical structure, ecclesiastical discipline, the life of the counsels, and so on) is Christian only in so far and as long as it makes Christian love concrete and visible. And the second thing is that, even in an existential sense, this ecclesial love is not simply autonomous human love, but rather the love of Christ as the Holy Spirit impresses it upon the Church. In the last analysis, therefore, it is the trinitarian love of the Son for the Father and, hence, also of the Father for the Son.

4. One last area which we will here only refer to in passing (since it will be dealt with at greater length in the second and third volumes) is theology, which, at its very core, is an event that gives form. On the one hand, its task is to make evident the logical interconnection and necessity of the historical and accidental aspects of revelation. On the other hand, and in close relation to this first task, theology deepens *pistis* into *gnosis* so far as this is possible on earth, and it does this through a contemplative penetration of the depths of individual facts.[58] Since the Gospel itself constantly calls for an understanding of what is believed, the theological undertaking is at least in principle possible, and can be developed in obedience to Christ: it does not at all have to be a rebellion of the intellectuals, an eating of the forbidden fruit of knowledge. Nevertheless, from different sides certain measures are imposed on the theological enterprise. It cannot merely be a disinterested consideration without any connection to Christian praxis. From this standpoint the measure applied to theology is the clarification of the structure of Christian faith for the Church as a whole and for her proclamation, and also for the individual in his Christian meditation and existence. Furthermore, theology also has a measure in the communication of the charism of faith and knowledge by Christ through the Holy Spirit (ἀναλογία τῆς πίστεως, Rom 12.6), and it cannot rise above this analogy which has been assigned to it. This is evidenced

especially in the fact that his assignation is differentiated according to particular callings and takes place in various ways; for this reason, a purely univocal theology beyond these assignations is not possible. Theology has an eschatological measure in faith itself, which can only reflect the decisive articulations of the truth of revelation but cannot see them in themselves (*per speculum, in aenigmate*); theology, therefore, can be called a 'science' only by analogy to the other sciences.[59] These three limitations of theology's scope do not prevent God's Word from being glorified in the Christian theologies, and it is above all Origen who best understood and exemplified this. Theology attains to its form as a figure drawn up by God himself and it can, therefore, pass back and forth from the realm of pure logical exactness into an experience which radiates from the archetype—an experience which leads to contemplation and can become truly mystical: this fact confirms rather than questions its character as form. The convergence of the aesthetic and the mystical in the great mystical theologies—from Gregory of Nyssa and Denys the Areopagite to Bernard of Clairvaux, William of St.-Thierry, the greater Mechtild, and all the way to John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila—is striking and can only be explained by affirming that what in God is formless and ineffable is offered as a super-form which fascinates and transports man, eliciting from man and claiming for itself the answer of man's shaping powers. The dangers involved are evident, but they need not make a successful outcome impossible. Besides, the personal existential dimension is never lacking in great classical theology; *sapientia* has always been related to *sapor*, and the personal appropriation of Christian truth in one's existence has always been regarded as an indispensable criterion for the manifestation of the truth. Theology's authentic form radiates precisely from this equilibrium between the personal effort to acquire the *intellectus fidei* and the participation, bestowed as gift, in the object of faith within one's life-experience. Indeed, as radiant form, the authentic form of theology is the fruit of precisely this union. A non-existential theology, therefore, remains unworthy of belief because it is not capable of making anything really visible.[60]

We will now offer some concluding remarks on this whole chapter on the 'mediation of the form'. Together with the following chapter on the 'attestation of the form' it forms a unity and it could also have been included in this later chapter under the title of 'the testimony of the Holy Spirit'. For, in their power to express Christ, both Sacred Scripture and the holy Church together constitute the work of the Holy Spirit. *Ille me clarificabit* (Jn 16.14); *ille testimonium perhibebit de me* (Jn 15.26). If we classify both forms—Scripture and the Church—under the head of 'attestation' (as we not only can but must do), then their indispensability for the understanding of the principal form will be clearly seen. Scripture not only gives a kind of ‘ideal portrait’ of the historical Jesus; it reveals in a form apprehensible by the world the fact that he is the Word of God. Jesus needs this dimension, prepared by the Spirit, in order there to take root and develop his reality, which is both ideal and real. Nor is the Church merely an historical effect of Christ; she is his ‘fulness’ and his bridal ‘Body’; whatever there is in her of Christian reality, he *is* as he expresses himself to mankind and impresses himself upon mankind through the power of the Holy Spirit. So understood, both dimensions will have to be at least mentioned in the next chapter, for then they will constitute a part of that theological landscape which surrounds the central form and which cannot be banished from it either exteriorly or interiorly. In the present chapter we anticipated the dimensions of Scripture and the Church because, as media for the manifestation of Christ, they could be suspected of being opaque and unreliable. If they were merely a human work then they would inevitably be both opaque and unreliable, even granting the divinity of Christ. In so far as they were human, they would obscure his form, and only in so far as Christ could prevail in them against the human work would they be helpless to obstruct his power. But if they are a work undertaken by God, then it is at least possible that in conjunction with Christ, the principal form, they are so complemented as to yield one total form. And it would also be possible that the structure of the principal form should become delineated in them—more strongly in Scripture, less so in the Church. The delineation would be stronger in Scripture because, in spite of all human work of redaction and the obfuscations and relativisations caused by it, Scripture is positively inspired by the Holy Spirit as its ‘primary author’. And the delineation would be weaker in the Church because in her even those structures instituted by Christ are altogether exposed to human abuse, and because infallibility in the preservation and interpretation of the foundations of revelation is guaranteed only on the basis of an *assistentia negativa* (which precludes any substantial error). But this is not to deny the fact that in the Church there can and always do exist true prophecy, true sanctity and the charisms, and an attestation of Christ that is immediately evident, as for instance, through martyrdom. In this way the form of Christ, which in itself is hidden from the world (*mundus eum non cognovit*, Jn 1.10; 14.17), can become so dazzling in the testimony of Christians that its beauty and rightness will be visible and evident—in the same manner as an old and half-faded parchment suddenly becomes legible and is suddenly deciphered, as by a miracle. Beneath the double servant form of a Church that is herself truly sinful and is darkened by sinners there shines the glory of Christ’s love, not only like a little dot of love representing an individual man, but in such a way that Christ’s love, starting from this point, moves out to justify the whole, including the Scripture and including the Church in her institutional form.

The perception of the Christ-form through the media of Scripture and the Church is a revelation which objectively points us beyond itself. Only by a delusion could an apostle of Christ be taken to be a god (Acts 14.11f.). The experience is objectively ecstatic, because in a book Christ's Spirit becomes visible, and Christ's power can be seen in a 'man who is as weak as you yourselves are' (Acts 14.15). The form which both these things present is relative in its essence. But at this point we would have to develop the theme not only of 'form', but of joy' and 'delight', not only of perception but of ecstasy. At the very beginning we said that a doctrine of perception always includes implicitly a doctrine of ecstasy, and vice versa. For, even in the realm of worldly beauty, form cannot really be perceived without the beholder being taken up into it. The beautiful is never a mere flat surface; it always has heights and depths. 'Whoever sees me, sees the Father' (Jn 14.9); 'whoever sees me, sees him who sent me' (Jn 12.45). We will deal at greater length with this enrapturing element in the third volume, where we will examine the predominantly 'dogmatic' side of theology: the objective taking up of the graced person beyond the merely creaturely world into the divine world of God's nature. The media of Scripture and of the Church, however, cannot be understood in their form without this objective ecstasy, this objective enthusiasm. By making present ('transporting') the form of Christ within Scripture and the Church, the Spirit at the same time makes man present ('transports' him) within them and, through them, to Christ. This is what the Fathers called the *admirabile commercium et conubium*.

E. THE ATTESTATION OF THE FORM

1. THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHER

The form of Jesus, as form, is not attested from outside but from within. This means that it is the attestation which in the first place establishes it as the form it is, namely, as the manifestation of God, as the Word of God, as God's testimony about himself. John, who developed this theology of witness most explicitly, distinguishes four dimensions of attestation. First, the testimony of the Father, which he renders to the Son but also in the Son—in his word and in his work. Second, the testimony of the Old Testament: that of Abraham, of Moses, of the Prophets, and, finally, of John the Baptist, who is the living voice that recapitulates the whole history of revelation. Third, the testimony of works, that is, of the power given to the Son by the Father—power over the cosmos, over the 'powers', over the angels, over death and all the consequences of the body's fallenness, and as extreme instance these works include the raisings effected by Jesus and also his own Resurrection. Fourth, the testimony of the Holy Spirit, which for John is intimately related to the sacramental testimony of 'water and blood'—of baptism and the Eucharist. These testimonies do not all hold the same rank. The testimony of the Father (which becomes expressed in the third testimony, that of Jesus' works) 'stands higher than that of John' and, therefore, higher than that of the Old Testament as a whole (Jn 5.36), for the latter does not go into constituting the form of Jesus in the same sense as the witness of the Father and, in its own way, as the witness of the Spirit: water and blood, which bear witness together with the Spirit (1 Jn 5.6), stem from Jesus himself and are therefore in some sense a part of him (Jn 19.34; 'This is he who came by water and blood', 1 Jn 5.6). And yet the testimony of the Father and that of the Spirit are also in a certain order: in his Son the Father witnesses first of all to himself, and Jesus' testimony therefore bears witness to the Father; the Spirit, by contrast, witnesses retrospectively to the Son who had lived on earth (Jn 15.26), developing what has been given. The witness of the Father constitutes the form (εἰδος) of the Son as such; the witness of the Spirit constitutes his glory (δόξα).

The peculiar manner in which the Father and the form (εἰδος) are related by Jn 5.37f. can serve as a point of departure for understanding the Father's testimony. 'The Father who sent me has himself borne witness to me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen; and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe him whom he has sent.’ In what sense can John speak of the Father’s ‘form’ and juxtapose it to his voice (φωνή) and to his Logos? Can God, who indeed is invisible and has never been seen by anyone (Jn 1.18), nevertheless be seen as a form in the same way that his voice and his word can be heard? Jesus’ utterance to the Jews is unambiguously a word of reproach: they *should* have seen the form and they would have been able to do so had they believed in Jesus. This can be connected to the passages of Scripture that attest a vision of God’s *eidos*. After his wrestling-match with the angel of Yahweh, Jacob witnesses that he has ‘seen God face to face’ (Gen 32.31), and concerning Moses we have the testimony from God himself that he did not reveal himself to Moses as he had to the other prophets, in dreams and enigmas, but ‘with him I speak mouth to mouth, with clear evidence (ἐν εἴδει) and not in riddles (οὐ δι’ αἰνιγμάτων), and he has beheld God’s form (Septuagint: δόξα)’ (Num 12.7f.). However Jesus’ allusion can only be a linguistic reminiscence, since he is certainly not expecting of the Jews that they, surpassing all prophetic vision, should partake in Moses’ vision of the form of God. Nor is there any reason to suppose an allusion to the theophanies of the ‘religion of the fathers’, which were never a possibility open to everyone and in any event belong to another period. But if we consider Jn 5.37 in conjunction with Jn 14.9 and Jn 12.45, the meaning at once becomes clear: whoever sees Jesus, sees the Father, for Jesus is himself the Father’s assumption of form, the Father’s *eidos*. He is this with a concentration and an exclusiveness that does not preclude the Old Testament believer’s already being able to hear and see God, in so far as divine revelation was moving on to its definitive form in Jesus. Jesus wants to say that the fact that the Jews are not able to see and hear God in him proves that they had never (πώποτε) encountered him at all, either in the law or in the Prophets.

Πίστις and εἶδος are here far from being in tension with one another; in fact, they actually require and include one another, and this casts light on their alleged opposition in Paul. The point is that the ‘vision in a mirror and in riddles’ (1 Cor 13.12) nevertheless refers to real seeing (the kind of vision typical for the prophetic manner of knowing, which of course is opposed to the three abiding virtues[61]), and the contrast of πίστις and εἶδος in 2 Cor 5.7 should not be interpreted as implying an opposition between ‘naked faith’ (in Christ) and an otherworldly vision of his form; rather, as the context suggests, it should be seen as denoting the inability of vision to grasp the whole Christian form here on earth and the fact that this form will attain full development only in the other world (as suggested by the contrast of ‘tent’ and ‘house’ in 2 Cor 5.1).[62]

Before going further and entering into a discussion which is of decisive importance for our whole undertaking, we must again recall our first presupposition. To engage in theological aesthetics does not mean to transpose the categories of a realm essentially foreign to theology (as, for instance, the Greek religious understanding of the world) uncritically into the sphere of Christian revelation. The fundamental principle of a theological aesthetics, rather, is the fact that, just as this revelation is absolute truth and goodness, so also is it absolute beauty; but this assertion would be meaningless if every transposition and application to revelation of human categories from the realms of logic, ethics (‘pragmatics’), and aesthetics, if every analogical application of these categories, were simply forbidden. And why should the validity of such analogies be recognised in practice by scholarship for the first two fields (such recognition is always given in practice, even when it is rejected in theory) while being refused *a limine* for the third field? The constant concern of Protestant scholarship is to prove that the essence of Biblical revelation cannot be reduced to the system of categories of the non-Biblical religious understanding of the world and of existence, whether to the original religion of Canaan or to the highly developed religions of Egypt, Iran, and Mesopotamia, nor, more especially, to the religion of Ancient Greece. But the result of this vigorous refusal is that the common elements and their significance are overlooked historically and denied theoretically, while so much store is set by the specifically distinctive element in Biblical religion that it is expected to yield the entire form all by itself. By extracting the substance held in common one may indeed retain the specific difference, but this now becomes wholly unsubstantial. Once the ‘Greek understanding of the world’ is labeled ‘aesthetic’, then the only qualifier remaining for Biblical revelation is ‘non-aesthetic’. This has devastating consequences for the whole of theology. For now everything in man’s religious thought and representation having to do with images has to be categorised as ‘mythical’ and, hence, eliminated from the theological interpretation of Scripture. As a result, the only thing retained is what is wholly unperceivable and non-conceptual, and this in the context of an eschatological actualism that renders God’s Incarnation superfluous. To be sure, when the Bible uses the schemas of human world-views it does so in part to judge man’s desire to absolutise particulars which stems from original sin. But to an equal extent it does so in order to surpass and thus bring to perfection the inchoative element contained in schemas devised by man (σχήματι εὑϱεθες ὡς ἄνθϱωπος: Phil 2.7). The fact that here and there a word like εἶδος or μοϱφή is not used by Scripture in the specifically Greek sense does not by a long way prove that the

Biblical and the Greek meanings have nothing in common.[63] The discovery that the 'revealer' in John 'speaks the language of myth' does not always call for demythologising, since this language is nothing other than the common fund of images understood by every human being.[64]

This principle of theological aesthetics had to be recalled before going on to consider the Son in the testimony of the Father (and this at the same time means in his witnessing to the Father) as the *eidos* or form of God and, thus, as the aesthetic model of all beauty. Nor should we forget that the rejection of a trinitarian doctrine as formulated by the Councils very often makes Protestantism in its perplexity oscillate between a practically ditheistic language and a modalistic interpretation of the Trinity. Unity of nature, distinction of persons: this formula, which wards off both dangers, reminds us above all that in Christ the one, concrete, divine nature becomes revealed and manifested in the world, precisely where this revelation is given as a sending and a being sent, a remaining in the background and a coming into the foreground, a remaining above and a descending and re-ascending. God's nature reveals itself in this twofoldness, and this in turn points further to a selfhood which is also in the line of distinctions: it points to a third Reality which unites the Sender and the Sent in a vital way. The one God, who is invisible by nature, appears, but not in the manner to which we are accustomed with worldly reality, namely, that the same being, identical to itself (which may be a person), appears while not appearing and enters visibility while at the same time remaining a ground that rests in itself. Rather, the one invisible God appears in such a way that this polarity reveals itself to us as a personal relationship within God's very nature. *This* is where God is an absolute mystery for us, precisely in his revelation. The absolute mystery does not lie in the fact that God becomes manifest to us in a manner analogous to the way worldly beings become manifest to us. Nor does it lie in the fact that he becomes manifest to us while retaining his freedom: ordinary persons can do this by 'bearing witness' to themselves, that is, by requiring trust and 'faith' from the other person. It lies in the fact that his self-revelation of Being and of nature presents itself as a relationship which, in itself, is (tri-)personal. This is what is absolutely incomprehensible to us, that in God relation-to-self and relation-to-other, eternal repose-in-self and eternal striving and loving can be identical. And this not at all in the sense that opposite poles, which cannot within the world be reconciled, are here made to be identical in an obscure dialectical or monistic manner. Rather, what occurs is that the incomprehensible mystery—the identity of which we speak—itself appears and becomes visible within God's manner of becoming manifest. This event cannot be reduced to any worldly categories of beauty, although it makes use precisely of the double vessel offered by the world—form and its proper glory, on the one hand, love and its glory, on the other—in order to make itself present. Thus, the categories of aesthetics are not simply annihilated, but rather raised above themselves in an incomprehensibly positive way (*non destruit, sed elevat, extollit, perficit naturam*) in order to contain something which is infinitely greater than themselves.

We have shown elsewhere[65] that every created being is a manifestation of itself (the more intensively the higher it ranks): the representation of its own depths, the surface of its own ground, the word from its essential core; and upon this essential movement of being (from its interior to the exterior) are founded the good, the true, and the beautiful. Every act of appearing is at the same time an illumination of a being's ground and a measuring of its own dimensions. Both things—light and measure—are correlative, and the ground is ground only in the manifestation, and there can be manifestation only as a manifestation of the ground. The illuminated space 'between' the ground and its appearing is the measure, and when this light becomes reflected the measure becomes a word expressive of the being's nature which gathers itself up and reads itself (*intellegentia*), making itself into a value and a communicable gift. Thus, the light of Being becomes the source of bliss and the measure of Being becomes the source of truth. Now it is of course true that this movement of Being between ground and manifestation is not rounded and complete in itself, but rather occurs only in the straining of beings beyond themselves: something becomes true in itself only in so far as it is true for others, and something becomes good and worthy in itself only in so far as it is worthy of being striven for by others. And yet each being becomes true and good for others only because, in this state of openness and interchange, it becomes a reality in itself and for itself. The functionality of truth and the usefulness of goodness receive their reciprocal movement from their own self-apprehension (*Eigenbegriff*): this is so because the reciprocity of ground and manifestation, on the one hand, and the intrinsic worth of a being for itself and in itself, on the other, cannot be jeopardised by any event occurring between beings, but can only be more deeply grounded by it. But why, then, does the ground appear at all? To ask this implies the desire to investigate the question of why Being exists at all. All (functional) necessity, all (ethical) exigencies, and all constraints founded on the first two are posterior and do not qualify as ground of the ground. With the ground's appearing and returning to itself we are beyond all constraints: we are in the freedom where the self gives and receives itself, events that are an eternal open mystery to itself and must remain such. All answers derived from the *necessity of being* must always be transcended by the eternal wonder of *being allowed to be*. No manifestation can ever account for and be founded on itself; it always points to the ground that is manifested. But the ground wants to be itself only in so far as it becomes manifest. Thus, the light and the measure existing between the ground and its appearing are the most manifest and, at the same time, the most mysterious reality of all: Being as grace, as gratuitousness, as beauty, as love.

This is not an attempt to offer a deduction of the Trinity, but it is something that must be kept in mind if, beyond everything philosophy can conceive, the relationship between Father and Son is indeed revealed through the Son. The Father is ground; the Son is manifestation. The Father is content, the Son form—in the unique way shown by revelation. Here, too, there is no ground without manifestation, no content without form. In the beautiful these two things are but one; they rest in one another; and whoever would perceive beauty must perceive this interrelation ever more deeply: ‘That you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father’ (Jn 10.38; *cf.* 14.10, 20). As ground, the ground is ‘greater’ than the form that represents it and that proceeds from it (Jn 14.28); and yet they are ‘one’ (Jn 10.30; 17.22), and neither of them can be or be thought of without the other. What is at stake here is the acknowledgement of this interrelation (Jn 10.38), for whoever would know Jesus without the Father would know nothing: ‘You know neither me nor my Father; if you knew me, you would know my Father also’ (Jn 8. 19). The Son is the ‘exegesis’ of the Father (Jn 1.18), and here ἐξηγέομαι (‘make manifest’) includes both elements: the narration and the representation, the personal aspect and the ontological aspect. As manifestation (φανεϱοῦν, Jn 17.6, 26), as open proclamation (ἐπαγγέλειν, Jn 16.25), as a making known (γνωϱίζειν, Jn 17.26), this ‘exegesis’ can express something which is forever definitive and yet ever new and which intensifies dynamically, so that even in eternal life it remains unconcluded. The Son’s expression of the Father in form is intimately related to the praise and ‘glorification’ (δοξάζειν) which, in turn, is closely connected to the act that ascribes to the Father his true worth and honours (τιμᾶν) him as exalted Lord—in the same way that figure and splendour, form and light are one in the beautiful.

But already the danger looms of understanding the Son’s act of revelation—by giving form and glorifying—as his own activity and no longer, as he himself affirms, as the activity of the Father in him, of the Father who expresses and glorifies himself in the Son’s form and word. There is no personal statement on the Son’s part that is not at the same time a statement of the one divine nature! It is God himself who reveals and glorifies himself when the appearing Son glorifies the non-appearing Father—the Father who appears in the Son. This assertion of the identity of nature between Father and Son leads us without fail, if we pursue its personal aspects, to the existential paradox of the Son, in whose servant form is manifested—really manifested—the Father's form of lordship. This is why, to the last, the Son does not do his will (Jn 4.34; 6.38) but acts solely at the Father's command (Jn 10.18), accomplishes the Father's own work, does not teach his own doctrine but that of the Father (Jn 7.16; 14.10, 24), tells only of what he has seen in his Father (Jn 3. II; 8.38), can only do what he sees the Father doing (Jn 5.19), can only undertake what the Father has given him to say and to make known in the manner the Father has commanded (Jn 12.49f.). If this line is followed exclusively, however, it would yield on the part of the Son a kind of re-duplicating mimicry of the Father—a tendency which in the form of a Hellenising Arianism has long threatened dogma. This tendency would obliterate the relation of expression within God's being. The reciprocal movement is introduced by the assertion that, in the form of humiliation of the Son who does nothing but obey, the Father expresses his paternal lordship and glory, not as in an alien realm of expression but as in his very own. It is the Father who has given it to the Son to have life in himself (Jn 5.26), to surrender this life on his own initiative and—something which reveals the divine power even more clearly—to take it up again to himself (Jn 10.18). He can bestow this life on others who will not be lost for all eternity and whom no one will snatch from his hand; and the power that accomplishes this is, indeed, the power of the Father, but in the oneness of Father and Son (Jn 10.28f.). To give life, to raise up on the Last Day (Jn 6.39f., 44, 54), to confer a share in his power to judge (Rev 2.26ff.)—these things are the expression of an unlimited power of judgment which the Father has given to the Son as his own, 'that all may honour the Son even as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent him' (Jn 5.22f.). Once again this line of thought, which in the Son sees the making present of the Father's attributes, would lead to an Arian subordinationism and ditheism if one should fail to see and understand both sides as aspects of one and the same thing. But it is not (only) as if the Son first became a servant in order to show by his obedience the Father's lordly dominion over him, and then became the Lord in order to show in himself God's same divinity from the other side, as it were, by way of completion. (This is basically how the hymn of Phil 2.5-11 describes it.) Rather, following the presuppositions we have established, it must be that the humiliation itself is already in essence the glorification of the Father and, hence, also of the Son himself, as John's statements underline and confirm (Jn 3.14f.; 12.28f.; 17.4f.; 18.6), and the Son's external glorification through his Resurrection can only ratify the extent to which a love that goes unto death has already glorified itself interiorly.

Only the identity of nature between Father and Son, in union with their personal opposition (which is expressed in the opposition of God and man), can make the expressive relationship between God and man an expressive relationship in God himself. It is along this line that we are now to read the decisive statements concerning the Son's attestation by the Father. By virtue of this attestation the Son emerges as the authentically accredited interpretation of God. It is evident that such an accreditation can of necessity take place only within itself. For the aesthetically blind three stars in their tourist guide may witness to the fact that here there is something to be seen; for the aesthetically deaf, the recommendation of an (accredited) opera guide can help them to recognize *Cosi fan tutte* as a magnificent opera. But who is authorised to accredit the 'authenticity' of a work such as Mantegna's or Mozart's? Not even another great artist would be, since, as artist, he would at best be on the same level as they. Only the work itself can attest its own claim to validity. This is why John mentions the testimonies of the Old Testament and of the Baptist only marginally; they are to be regarded only as homages to the One who is unique. The Jews and even the disciples demand that the interior witness become an exterior one (Jn 2.18; 14.8); and they are referred to the expressive form: Jesus' attitude of humility demonstrates that he does not glorify himself but that, rather, Another is glorifying himself in the power that is expressed in Jesus' words and works. It is this that does not have to be believed, but can rather be seen and known. And this acknowledgement of the form contains Jesus' interior knowledge of the Father (Jn 7.27ff.; 8.19), so much so that, 'if I said, "I do not know him," I should be a liar like you,' (Jn 8.55), and with this the legibility of the form of Jesus would be destroyed. It is then, precisely the interior witness that accredits Jesus' form; in this unique case, in which the relationship of ground to form is a personal one, we have a witness that the Father both expresses in the form of the Son and addresses to the Son as person. Both are one. Whoever is able to read the form will at the same time understand the witness which the Father interiorly gives to the Son. Whoever is able to hear the Son as Logos of the Father—as the witness to himself which the Father exhibits to the world—that person will also be listening to the interior dialogue between Father and Son wherein the Father utters his entire divinity, his power, and his love to the Son. The Father accredits the Son's words and works as stemming from himself, the Father; by so doing he also accredits the Son's form of humiliation and obedience as an authentic expression of the divine nature. But only God can express God authentically. Thus, the 'ontological difference' in the first verse of John's prologue ('the Word was with God, the Word was God') immediately indicates the total reality at stake here: it is, so to speak, the act of putting on those eyeglasses that allow us to perceive the phenomenon in a stereoscopic and plastic fashion.

For the Son it is absolutely the same thing to hear God’s Word (Jn 8.47), to hear God’s truth (Jn 8.40), and himself to be this Word and this Truth (Jn 1.1; 14.6). No word or truth can be more authentic than this. This authenticity can be seen in the manner in which Jesus represents himself. For this reason it is not dialectical and invisible, and the paradoxical statements he utters concerning this are mutually contradictory only when considered very superficially: ‘If I bear witness to myself, my testimony is not true’ (Jn 5.31); ‘even if I do bear witness to myself, my testimony is true’ (Jn 8.14). ‘I judge no one. Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true’ (Jn 8.15f.). Seen from within, these statements are not dialectical but plainly reconcilable. And so he continues: ‘For I am not alone, but I and he who sent me’ (Jn 8.16); ‘he who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him’ (Jn 8.29). His remark to the Jews that, according to Jewish law, the testimony of two witnesses is sufficient (Deut 17.6; Job 8.17) is exoteric, for here it is not the case of two separate, finite persons. But the remark thus points us to the esoteric dimension where the one God bears two personal testimonies. Here Jesus is saying that he bears witness to himself and that, besides, the Father bears witness to him (Jn 8.18). He bears witness to himself in so far as every form, by revealing its content, also reveals itself as form. But he bears witness to himself only in so far as he bears witness to the Father (Jn 17.6f.), who in the Son bears witness to himself. Therefore, the truth is both the Father in himself and the expressive relationship between Father and Son as well as, finally, the Son in himself, in so far as he is the Word and the Expression of the Father.

For this relationship the only appropriate term is the Johannine key-word ‘love’, which in the course of the Gospel radiates ever more brightly. At first everything is seen as God’s incomprehensible love for the world, expressed in the self-surrender of the Son (Jn 3.16). Then precisely this surrender of the Son becomes manifest as the love of the Father for the Son (Jn 3.35; 5.20; 10.17), then as the love of the Son for mankind (Jn 11.5; 13.1), then as the communication to man of the love between Father and Son in the person of the Spirit and as the response of man, in the Spirit, to Father and Son (Jn 13-17). And all the leading words—truth, honour, glorification—receive this nuance of love. This is a love that originates in the Father’s deed of surrender for the world and is expressed in the Son’s deed of surrender, of the outpouring of his life for the life of the world. In the Son’s deed of self-outpouring it is no longer only the love of the Father which is expressed (a love at whose disposal the Son obediently puts himself); nor is it only the love of the Son which is expressed (of the Son who alone became man and who alone can die). What is expressed is the indivisible essential love of God himself. The surrender of this love's essence assumes the expressive form of a 'going to the extreme' (Jn 13.1), into darkness (Jn 1.5, 11), like the water of an eternal fountain (Jn 4.10, 13f.; 7.38) that is poured out until it becomes itself an eternal thirst (Jn 19.28). With this the Greek axiom of the *bonum diffusivum sui* is fulfilled beyond anything conceivable and is raised to a potency which surpasses all human imagining. This raising of potency, which cannot be arrived at by any amount of speculation, can be known from the fact that what are essentially creaturely dispositions before God now become manifested in all their divine archetypicity. Just as the ability to die now becomes an expression of a distinctly divine love, so too the creature's prayer to God now becomes the expression of the intra-divine relationship of the Son to the Father. Just as with love, so with prayer in John: the more we approach the Passion, the more does Jesus' prayer become clear, open, manifest: from the prayer at the grave of Lazarus (Jn 11.41), which is already an expressly public act, to the prayer in the temple (Jn 12.27), to the official liturgical prayer of farewell (Jn 17). Here Jesus is manifested as substantial intra-divine prayer, so much so that any accidental, individual prayer of intercession becomes superfluous (Jn 16.26f.). In this form of prayer the content of prayer itself and of revelation receives its ultimate explanation: the unity of essence and love is uttered in a way that surpasses all exterior attestation. The witness of Jesus is no longer a mere assertion *that* things are so (as was necessary with the unbelieving Jews): it is an open interior space (Mt 11.27) which shows forth the existent reality itself. With this there disappears the 'voice' of the Father, which in its exteriority still remains somehow unintegrated and which in the Gospel is occasionally heard 'above' Jesus and beside him: at the baptism in the Jordan (Mt 3.17 par.), at the transfiguration on Tabor (Mt 17.5 par.) and, in John, at the temple before the Passion, this time as a public confirmation of God's own definitive decision to suffer, which anticipates all human plots to entrap him (Jn 12.28). From Chapter 13 onwards such a voice is no longer conceivable: with Jesus' entrance into his Passion, with God's final humanisation, Jesus' humanity is so radically divinised that, in itself, this humanity expresses everything which the Father can say to the Son and to the world (Heb 1.2). The voice of the Father, which is audible externally and sensorily to bystanders, is a concessionary form of God's Word, which retains a somewhat Old Testament character; and it is not for nothing that, in this connection, we twice read the Baptist's statement 'I did not know him' (Jn 1.30, 33), and that the voice in the temple remains wholly or partly incomprehensible for the bystanders (Jn 12.29). The Father's voice becomes fully credible when it is wholly incarnated in the Son, when φωνή and λόγος coincide.

The understanding of the form of revelation wherein the Father witnesses to himself presupposes at its highest level what every understanding of form presupposes at the worldly level: an interior communication from which alone the objective order of the form can begin to radiate. If a person has read or written only historical-critical studies about Goethe's *Faust*, the work itself, as it is in actuality, will probably never be seen by him, or, at best, only before or after undertaking those studies. In order to experience its form, a person must become interior to the work, must enter into its spell and radiant space, must attain to the state in which alone the work becomes manifest in its being-in-itself. This holds not only for works of art or the beauties of nature; to an even greater extent it holds for the encounter with a human Thou (M. Scheler, M. Buber). For this reason, most supremely and at a qualitatively different level, it holds likewise for the encounter with the form of God as it becomes manifest (Jn 5.37f.). By being one with Jesus his own will come to know Jesus' oneness with the Father, and it is for this inclusion of his chosen ones within the holy interior space of trinitarian prayer that Jesus prays (Jn 17.9f.). He does this before he has effected this oneness by his suffering, because precisely the Passion is something which happens in the Son on authority from and as a work of the Father. By his prayer and his suffering, the Son brings his disciples—and, through them, all mankind—into the interior space of the Trinity. For them he asks and effects this loving oneness (Jn 17.11, 21ff, 26), and this will also communicate to them *gnosis* as a knowing and a seeing of the truth in the form (Jn 17.7f., 24f.). Love—indeed, love that partakes in God's love—is the warrant of objective knowledge in the realm of trinitarian revelation. What such participation looks like when it is lived out is portrayed in the First Epistle of John, which no less than John's Gospel revolves around God's form in Christ, but in this case from the perspective of the community. The manner of the form's presentation, objective and inviolable, has now become dogma. A finished work of art must be left as it is: we may not chisel away a bit more at a work of Michelangelo's, nor may we compose and add a couple of measures to a fugue of Bach's. In the same way, we must allow the form of God to be just as it is. By contemplating it, we can interpret its meaning unboundedly, but only provided we take our departure from God's manifest intention. This is precisely what the Gnostics do not do, and John for this reason refuses them both *gnosis* and *agape* (which is already *koinonia*, 'communion'). False interpretations will come and go, but the form remains. And the art is to remain with, to abide in (μένειν) the form.

2. THE TESTIMONY OF HISTORY

a. Figura: The Old Testament

The Father's testimony is necessary to Jesus; his own testimony is the Father's testimony's becoming visible. The testimony of history—that is, of the Old Testament—is not necessary to Jesus; he does not need it, rather, he uses it only for men's sakes. 'You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Not that the testimony that I receive is from man; but I say this that you may be saved' (Jn 5.33f.; *cf*. 2.25). As the one who fulfils God's story with man, Jesus is not dependent on that story: history points to Jesus, not Jesus to history. In so far as it points to him, however, history belongs to Jesus internally and can be understood only through him. But he must fulfil and perfect the Father's earthly work with the same obedience with which he serves the Father (and him alone): he must bring to their conclusion the law and the Prophets which 'bear witness to me' (Jn 5.39). In so doing, Jesus constitutes one form with the history of the Old Testament.

Everything here depends on our catching sight of the theological essence of this unique form, which can have no analogies. The fact that the Son of God allows himself to be conjoined in one form with his human prehistory is not primarily a general historical fact, in virtue of which every man, in spite of his irreducible individuality, is a product of his forebears, his people, his epoch and his environment. Jesus is this as well, in so far as he is a genuine man; but already the sign of the virgin birth calls our attention to the fact that he cannot be these things in the same sense as those begotten of an earthly father. Rather, the act of his subjection to the common historical conditioning is also the act of his free Incarnation by the Holy Spirit: as one who is not 'thrown' into existence (*ein Ungeworfener*), he enters the condition of those thrown into existence (*die Geworfenen*) and accepts the testimony of history on which he was by no means dependent. Liberal theology cannot see this unique relationship: either it stresses (in Marcionite fashion) Jesus' transcendence of the Old Testament and removes the Jewish 'eggshells' as the exterior garment of the human gospel, easily slipped off (Harnack, Bultmann); or, in its preoccupation with analogies and interior historical connections and correspondences, it minimalises and quantifies this transcendence, which is what the greater part of contemporary scholarship does. The uniqueness of the relationship can be seen only in faith, theologically, and even then it cannot be brought into neat formulas because this uniqueness is itself the mystery of faith. We must lightly reproach perhaps already the apostolic age, but certainly the post-apostolic age (Letter of Barnabas) and, thus, the Patristic theology of salvation-history, for having underestimated these distinctions. For, it is easy enough to simplify Jesus' relationship to the Old Testament and to give it prominence by comparing specific deeds of Jesus and events from his life with words and events of the Old Testament (it is difficult to say to what extent already Jesus himself used this procedure). But such examples actually relate to the thing itself as illustrations relate to a text; and it is the text that concerns us.

The problem of the relationship between continuity and discontinuity was the central problem of the primitive Church, which necessitated the first Council. Its decision was basically Pauline, that is, it opted for a theology of discontinuity, but not without giving secondary consideration to historical continuity, represented and argued for by James and his party. It is no surprise that the kerygma to the Jews stresses historical continuity, all the more so since Paul, in his preaching and instruction to the Gentiles, stresses the total Biblical context of Jesus' figure far more than we would have expected. Should we attribute this to his own particular formation, or rather to the kerygmatic need to present Jesus' form to the world—as an historical and theological form—within the frame of reference within which it can be understood, if not solely, then at least more adequately, sharply and completely? Whoever accepts Jesus must also accept the unity of the Old and the New Testaments. He must know about Abraham and the promise of faith. He must grasp the essence of the law, not only so that he knows what he should keep to but also so that he knows what Jesus has freed him from. In Judaism he has the 'manifestation in form (μόϱφωσις) of true knowledge and divine truth' (Rom 2.20); but he 'has' this manifestation in form only in so far as he has the archetypal form; he has the promise only in so far as he has the fulfilment. By no means does the Gentile gain access to Christ only by way of Judaism, which was history's path to Jesus. It was against this all-too-obvious view that the Council of the Apostles decided. Nevertheless, the Gentile, who until now had lived in the 'godless' world without a tradition of salvation-history (Eph 2.12), receives the promise along with the fulfilment, both things in a total form—at once historical and theological—in which the promise concerns him only in so far as it is the promise fulfilled in Christ.

This gives us a way into the difficult question concerning the theological meaning of the Old Testament for Christians. We say 'difficult' because, in order to be able to constitute one total form with Christ, the Old Testament must participate in his singularity (and in this the relationship of proximity and distance between the Old and the New Testament participates), while, on the other hand, Christ's uniqueness—the qualitative newness that he brings—must stand in contrast to the Old Testament, which is thus lowered to another level of theological reality. In this matter, in fact, we will not be able to see our way clear without the aid of ontological categories. The ‘Being’ or reality that Christ brings is nowadays termed ‘eschatological’ by preference; an older theology called it ‘participation in the divine nature’ or simply ‘grace’, and the Bible describes it as ‘entrance into the *Civitas Dei Viventis*—the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem’ (Heb 12.22). This ontological reality, existentially speaking, is something different from the first covenant’s existence in expectant and hopeful faith, which in turn is, existentially, something different from existence in the aeon of sin, without faith or hope. Existence in the Old Testament is, in its innermost essence, a transition from no participation at all to fulness of participation. If we were to apply Kierkegaard’s categories, we could say that Abraham’s existence is ‘ethical’ as opposed to ‘aesthetic’ pagan existence, but that the Old Testament is still the ‘aesthetic’ as compared to Christian existence, which alone is where the final, eschatological decision between heaven and hell is reached. This ‘aesthetic’ character of Old Testament as compared to Christian existence was expressed by all classical Biblical exegesis in Christianity through its practice of looking on the Old Testament as the *figura* (τύπος) of the New. In this theology of type and antitype, of figure and reality, we can detect influence from Platonic thought, or at least Platonic language; but we cannot here mistake the fact that the Fathers and, hence, the Middle Ages, while using the philosophical language available to them, really did intend the theological relationship, which they clearly grasped. For they understood very well that all faith in the Old Testament, living as it does towards its fulfilment (whether prophetically, messianically or eschatologically), could understand and justify itself only on the other side of the leap into the New Testament. In the same way, the paradox of Christian eschatology makes it clear enough that an existence lived wholly in faith in Christ must wait (in hell’s ‘antechamber’) for the Christ-event, until it can attain its own interior fulfilment (Heb 11.13, 39f.). On the other hand, however, we must take care not to introduce Platonic considerations into our understanding, in the sense that we might be inclined to say: ‘At the level of existence every human life is equally insignificant and equally precious before God; only at the level of essence can the one thing be an image and a *figura* for the other.’ The case of the Israelites in the desert, for instance, to which Paul refers (1 Cor 10.1ff.), considered in itself is the case of a people to whom God gave his grace but who nevertheless became disobedient and were punished by God for it; thus, this example was ‘written down for [the] instruction [of us Christians], upon whom the end of the ages has come’ (1 Cor 10.11). But for Paul, in fact, this subordinate clause, concerning the arrival of the end of the ages, is of primary importance; and therefore the things that occurred to the Jews during their trek in the desert can be described as having happened figuratively, τυπιϰῶς (1 Cor 10.11; *cf.* v. 6: τύποι). Even the disobedience and the terrible punishments that befell the people belong to the 'figure' and, hence, also to the 'object-lesson for Christians': this because the Jews could not live and were not granted to live, at the end of the ages, the Christian's eschatological existence which is oriented to the heavens opened by Christ. Modern theologians often interpret the exegesis of the ancients superficially, as if in the Old Testament they saw nothing but a kind of picture-book wherein one can read correspondences between the left and the right side of the page, between the type-image and the antitype-image, and thus obtain a confirmation of Christian truth. What is here involved at a deeper level, in fact, is the relationship (which cannot be realised philosophically) between one ('ethical') existence and another ('ethical') existence, but in which the first of these, theologically speaking, relates to the second in an 'aesthetic' manner.

Thus, all its religious seriousness notwithstanding, and in spite even of its prohibition of images, the Old Testament is marked out as an 'aesthetic' religion by contrast to Christianity. 'Everything that happened to them was figural, figurative.' Indeed, despite all the parallels and connections which we may find in the history of religions, we will understand even the prohibition of images in a theologically correct way only if we comply with the expected renunciation of our own religious aesthetics and discover God's own intention for salvation-history: namely, that he himself was to become his people's Builder of figures and that, in his own divine way, he was to prepare *the* Master Figure, *the* Image par excellence (2 Cor 4.4).

To understand the Biblical meaning of τύπος (*figura*) neither philosophical analogies nor etymological derivations suffice, helpful as these may be. To be sure, sensory reality, in a Platonic sense, is an impoverished world of shadows as compared to the ideal, and the reality of the Old Testament, as compared to the Christian reality, does stand under the shadow of Hades, which is abolished only with Christ. But this comparison of Platonic and Old Testament reality is no more than an analogy, for Abraham's faith is already, substantially, the true faith and, in a hidden sense, is even the Christian faith (Jn 8.56; Heb 1I.10, 26): this so much so that the Apocalypse can place the Twelve of the Old Testament in the same row as the Twelve of the New Testament before God's throne. The etymology circles about the meaning from all sides: τύπος (from τύπτω, 'to strike', 'to press in') is the im-pression or imprint left by a stroke, the trace, the mark (as of nails), the piece of sculpture, the stamp, and hence the image, the form and figure, the pattern and model, the prototype. *Figura* (from *fingo*: 'to give shape by moulding with the hand') stresses in the first place more the external contour, the beautiful construct, the appearing image (for instance, of the dead who manifest themselves); this sense can then be extended to mean a figure of speech, a form of presentation, and so on. This may provide a stepping-stone to the unique significance of the concepts in salvation-history. What is important in the first place is the promise's character as image as compared to the fulfilment's character as reality: There is a dimension to the fulfilment which is lacking in the image, a dimension which, precisely, does not derive its reality from the image. When this image or type is called a 'prototype' this is not done in the sense of an archetype or model from which a copy would later be made. 'Prototype' is here meant in the unique sense that the image or type comes 'before' the reality as a first (*protos*) sketch, as a foreboding and an intuition. We say that here this meaning is unique because in every other case the image or type comes ontologically after the reality which it copies. This characteristic is proper to the Biblical image only in so far (here again in a unique way) as the later reality that fulfils it is the ontological ground for the earlier images: 'Before Abraham was, I am' (Jn 8.58). Thus, the actual temporal descent is founded on a reversed relationship. Consequently, the second element is the theological distinction of levels between shadowy outline and fulfilled form. And the form is fulfilled because it is eschatological, because it makes the leap from the Old to the New Age, through the death of the old sinful world and on to resurrection into God and to a new divine world. The 'figure' cannot take this leap but can only pre-figure it, in an existence that presses beyond the boundaries of the Old Age without nevertheless being able to leave it altogether, in an anticipation of what is to come which, in order to be such, must already in advance live on the grace of what is to come, even though this grace cannot yet, as for Christians, be a fully present reality. This second element is often either wholly overlooked or at least underestimated by the Fathers of the Church, since they believed that, with the categories of hiddenness and openness, they had sufficiently described the relationship between the two Testaments. Thus, they conceded to the just of the Old Testament, especially the Prophets, an immediate participation in the grace of the New Testament. In this view, the Prophets look down the ages and already see the coming salvation more or less as it is in itself, and they conceal it in concepts and words adequate to their time only because the time for its open proclamation has not arrived. This theory, however, contradicts not only the linguistic and conceptual data but (at least if it is taken as a rule) also the theological structure of the Old Testament, whose character as image makes it quite impossible for it to construct the coming reality from itself by way of anticipation.

If we inquire after the meaning of so puzzling a category of theological aesthetics as is the identification of the Old Testament existence with a *figura*, the answer will not primarily be found where it is usually sought, namely, in a preparatory ‘education of the human race’ for Christ. This is not to deny the existence of such an education which we shall discuss shortly. In the meantime, however, the first thing that must be said is that the God-Man, as a form in the midst of creation, *cannot* be an isolated entity without historical connections (Gnosticism, for instance, thought it could think of him in this way—as a sort of aerolith); rather, the God-Man must constitute a genuine composite form together with human history and must become comprehensible within this form: this is what Irenaeus argued against the Gnostics. However, he can enter into such unity only within a qualified history; by no means can this occur within the theologically amorphous mass of ‘the heathen’. The history with which he can constitute one form must rise above the rest of history and must bear a stamp that points to him while originating in him. Without yet actually being the type, this stamp or imprint characterises the theological *typos*, by contrast to the Church and the Christian within her which, as we saw, possess no form of revelation proper to themselves, no form which could be separated and distinguished from Christ—since, as Augustine says, what is Christian about the Christian is Christ himself.[66] Not so with the Old Testament, for here what is essential is the fact that the type cannot be reduced to the antitype, and this is the basis for the total form of salvation-history.

The aesthetic character of historical existence in the Old Testament has important implications for exegesis: although Old Testament existence must necessarily understand itself historically (and not in a purely mystical and, hence, ahistorical manner), still, within this self-understanding, it can interpret itself in images. In other words, it is much less necessary than with the New Testament to determine what in the Old might be historical in individual details or what there might be of mythical material (derived from the general vision of the historical situation) which has been subsequently clothed in historical dress so as to secure the resultant image a place within the actual total history of the people. The most important thing with the Old Testament, rather, is that it understands and explains itself as an incomprehensible historical movement forward that sets Israel apart from the paths of all other peoples and impels Israel towards an ever more incomprehensible historical destination. This historical existence of Israel, half-way between paganism and Christianity, objectivises itself in images of unforgettable vividness and colour (regardless of how many of these images could individually be considered ‘historical’ in the modern sense). And it is in such self-objectivation in images that Israel understands itself most adequately and profoundly. Indeed, this does not occur without that inspiration from above which is not only poetico-prophetic and literary, but which, following P. Benoit's suggestion, could be termed a 'dramatic inspiration' which elicits the actions themselves.[67]

In this 'pilgrimage' from a theologically amorphous paganism to the full form of Christ, Israel is now harnessed, now released in a watchful expectation which has no place where to rest its head. The History of Religions school wants to find this repose for Israel in the place where it itself would so much have liked to find it: in the surrounding religions and cultures. Everything 'corporeal' in Israel seems somehow able to be traced back to such origins; only the spirit which animates all of these materialisations in Israel will never accept it: never. The older exegesis of the Fathers, on the contrary, sought to integrate Israel into the Church by anticipation, as if the 'true Israel' had never been anything but the 'wandering *Civitas Dei*' on earth, that *Ecclesia ab Abel* which Christ the Bridegroom comes to seek on earth to bring her home to heaven. Both these interpretations are a threat to the figural dimension in the Old Testament as such, a dimension that remains itself, indissolubly, in spite of all progress on the part of revelation, in spite of all attempts to take up the old themes of revelation in order to deepen them and bring them closer to the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount. This remains so until the *figura* is confronted by the one and only Son of God with the decision of dying with him, thus rending the veil of the figure from top to bottom. For the New Age that Christ brings can no longer be a figure in the same sense: it still has form, even a provisional form; but Christ's hypostatic union embraces both the transitory earthly form and the imperishable heavenly form.

> Even grace is but a figure of glory, for it is not the end to be reached. Grace was prefigured by the law, and it itself prefigures glory; it is not only the figure of glory, however, but its principle and its cause. . . . Everything which does not arrive at charity is a figure. . . . But charity is not a figurative precept. To say that Christ came in order to abolish the figures and bring charity, but that he brought only the figure of charity: this would be unbearable. . . . The religion of the Jews was formed according to a likeness of the truth of the Messiah; and the truth of the Messiah was recognised from the religion of the Jews, which was its figure. With the Jews the truth was only figurative; in heaven it is manifest, in the Church it is concealed, but it is recognised by its relationship to the *figura* (Pascal).[68]

Thus, we see that the whole Old Testament is a 'likeness', similar to the way in which the parables of the Gospel (all of them located prior to the Cross and the Resurrection) were likenesses: they are images underway which demand that we move on—and this is faith—but which make a clinging to the image itself possible—and this is scandal. Israel is an image, but an image that exacts decision: it is legible to faith but illegible to unbelief. It is legible to faith in the sense that in the image the truth finds its confirmation, while the puzzle of Israel, in the absence of faith, remains a puzzle both to itself and to all others. This is the heart of the matter, and not primarily whether certain particular Old Testament texts and words literally or almost literally foretell particular deeds or situations in the life of Jesus. The Lord himself may have singled out specific texts as referring to himself, and other parables were welcomed by the disciples in order to illustrate the character of fulfilment of Jesus' religion as compared to the Old Testament. But the essential point is that Israel as a whole and existentially is an image and a figure which cannot interpret itself. It is a sphinx's riddle which cannot be solved without Oedipus. Most recent research on Old Testament messianism tends to confirm this. The 'prophetic element' of Israel lies in the fact that Israel, throughout the Old Testament, is at work on an image which, in spite of all borrowings from an historical model of an earlier time, can less and less be interpreted in terms of its earlier history—an image which, by its own internal logic, becomes more and more fractured into elements which can no longer be synthesised, unless it be at a fundamentally new level which Israel can only hope for but cannot itself construct.

b. Myth and Prophecy

Until now only the Scandinavian school of Mowinckel, Pedersen, Engnell, Widengren, Nyburg and Bentzen has succeeded in relating the Old Testament's figural existence to a unified, essential figure, one that is admittedly perhaps too clearly defined to do justice to the multiplicity of the strands of tradition. For this school everything crystallises around a central image which, strange to say, can nowhere be clearly supported by texts but which, once presupposed, orders the most contradictory elements magnetically and, in addition, describes a surprisingly new and simple arc running from the total ancient world-view to Christianity. The fundamental manner, the theory goes, in which all ancient peoples experienced existence was conjointly mythical, religious, and political, and this mode of experience expressed itself not so much in a 'thought'-form as in a cultic form—'cult' understood in the comprehensive sense of a celebration that both represents and effects reality. Originally, creation and time are vertical events: God is at war with chaos ('abyss', 'ocean', 'primal serpent', 'foe') and, in triumphing over it, God secures the world. As God's representative, (primal) man is established over the world as king. The king (of Egypt, Sumeria, Babylon, Iran, the Hittites, Canaan) represents God to the people and the people to God. His ‘time’ is the time of the people and, at the same time, the time of salvation. In cultic mode, the rites for the new year (with their allusions to the battle of the sun with darkness, of vegetation with death) renew for the incoming year the guarantee of salvation. This is done by representing God’s primal battle in a cultic drama of the king fighting his foes: the play includes the descent into the kingdom of darkness, victory over the powers, ascent (*ascendit Deus!*) and enthronement. As ‘God on earth’ or as ‘God’s adoptive son’ (in Israel), the king, as the primal man, always originates from the primal age (*ante luciferum genui te*). The king is the bringer of salvation, the ‘messiah’ (this concept at first without any eschatological nuance) made present and consecrated ever anew in the cultic drama. In Israel, the sagas of the exodus from Egypt and of the trek in the wilderness were incorporated into the ritual, as was later also the story of David’s victories (the ark in the hands of the Philistines and its return). Certain of the king’s psalms of lament possibly belong to the ritual as well, to that stage of the representation of the battle that shows the king in the domain of the powers of the underworld. The scholars disagree as to whether the songs of the suffering *ebed* Yahweh can be included within the cultic context: whether, that is, the ‘servant’ (whoever he may be) has been conceived on the model of the fighting king who represents his people (and, thus, on the model of a political leader in the return from Babylon) or on the model of a prophet (Jeremiah, say, or the Isaiah of the folk saga). This distinction vanishes, however, once we see that the king of primitive times was simply ‘the great man’ (as he was called in Sumeria)—king, priest, and prophet in one, who as such celebrated the cultic drama. Interestingly, long before these Biblical investigations began, Paul Claudel established a link between Chinese culture and the form of Christ. He has the Emperor of the Middle Kingdom execute a cultic battle with the demonic powers of the underworld by means of his descent of substitution into Hades and his re-ascent as one marked by leprosy (the possibility of a leprosy of substitution has also been advanced in connection with the *ebed* in Is 53). In this way, the Emperor expiates for his kingdom and inaugurates a new age of salvation. In Claudel’s symbolist manner, *Le repos du septième jour* (1896) attempts to portray cultically the Christian event of salvation in a mythical image that encompasses all existence, from politics to mysticism. It offers a kind of model for what the Scandinavian scholars attempt to extrapolate from the texts of the Old Testament. There can scarcely be any doubt that for Israel, too, before the end of the exile (in which, to use Mowinckel’s words, ‘experience’ is changed into ‘hope’), as for all ancient peoples, time was a religious ‘time of salvation’ with a predominantly vertical character to which the term ‘cyclical’ can be applied only misleadingly, since the period of salvation is ever present and is a representation of the total (vertical) mystery of salvation between God and the world. This may have been a particular emphasis of the change to a monarchy. Samuel’s misgivings and the anti-monarchical circles that voiced them were so strong because the concept of a king was inseparable from the whole ‘ideology of kingship’ and, as many psalms and prophetic texts prove irrefutably, this ideology did in fact come into Israel along with the kings. But how far and how deep could this ideology penetrate in Israel? Not having been able seriously to dominate pre-monarchic Israel, is not this ideology again called in question by classical prophecy, which completes the move to eschatology? To incorporate the later forms of messianism—namely, the *ebed* of Second Isaiah and the ‘son of man’ of late Judaism (in Daniel, in 4 Ezra and in the Apocalypse of Enoch)—into the older, wholly outmoded ideology of kingship by a kind of temporal regression: such incorporation can succeed without anachronism only if the concept of myth, as embodied and realised by this ideology, is used in a very diluted sense. The ‘servant of God’, in any case, is not simply the king as a mythical figure who accomplishes a dramatic act; rather, he is a person who truly suffers and whose historical destiny is at the same time understood and hymned prophetically (with a view to his return). Divine traits are not attributed to the ‘servant’ as they are to the mythical king. As for the figure of the ‘son of man’, his origin from God can once again be seen in the context of a ‘rebirth of myth’ and of Iranian speculation on the *anthropos* and on primal man. By contrast to the ‘servant’, however, the ‘son of man’ is no longer an historical figure, but stands within an apocalyptic framework. The visionary ‘today’ within which he is seen is in no sense any longer the mythical ‘today’ of the cultic drama.

The conclusion of all this is that we *can* systematise the reality of the Old Testament by referring it to one point of convergence in the past; we then obtain a comprehensible and complete picture, a myth which becomes astoundingly plastic through its successive stages, a myth that belonged to Israel as its own and which, taken as an image, would be a striking pre-figuration of Christ. Type and antitype would then correspond to one another in a way incomparably more clear than that provided by the laborious mosaic of texts which first the Evangelists and then the Church Fathers pieced together as ‘messianic prophecies’, which then related to Christ’s life and mission. For now the mythical and the Christian bearers of salvation would confront each other in one complete image. The mythical saviour is the manifestation of God in the world, is the son of God (by nature in Egypt and Babylon, by adoption in Israel), elemental man, at once personal and collective (head and mystical body), king, prophet, and priest in one person, and as one who suffers as a substitute he is priest and sacrificial lamb. In the world he fights God's battle with the hostile powers of the abyss; he suffers (in the primitive liturgy), even dies (in the *ebed-songs*), descends to the underworld (in the drama) and ascends again to receive the homage of the whole world. The sacraments are not absent (*cf.* the 'sacramental drink from the sacred wellspring' in Ps 110, the outpouring of 'water' and 'spirit' in Is 44.3 on the occasion of the messiah's return). Even the Christian vision of the two ages is already present, since purely vertical (cyclical) time is broken through eschatologically in the Prophets, to enter the new age that the messiah brings, which is not something that was always valid and is now merely renewed, but 'something *absolutely* new'. The *ebed*-songs may indeed make use of the older mythical form and even of the concept of the world's new creation; but what is here involved is 'not only the cultic repetition of the "old" reality of creation, of the exodus from Egypt. The new reality is something greater than what we could experience in the old feast. . . . This conception of a "new thing" in Second Isaiah has its correspondence in the eschatology of the New Testament.'[69]

Given such a complete mythical Christology the relationship between the Old and the New Testament becomes, beyond all expectation, a relationship between image and reality. But scholarship must be careful not to establish between them a causal connection, since this belongs strictly to the dimension of faith:

> We can establish historically that Jesus of Nazareth took the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah as the programme of his life's work: that in these words of the Old Testament he heard God's plan for his life. But our personal assent to the fact that in so doing Jesus saw things correctly, that what was there being proclaimed was indeed God's plan for his life is something which can only be grounded in faith in him as the Messiah and in God as his Lord and the giver of his mission.[70]

It ought to be enough for scholarship for it to verify the fact that Israel's conceptions of the messiah have 'their roots outside the Old Testament', in the common religious heritage of ancient humanity. In Israel's incorporation of the myth a certain weakening of the myth itself may be noted: the king is only an adoptive son of God (although, as such, he can be named 'god'), while in the cultic drama the king does not really die. The *ebed*, then, does die, but he no longer bears divine traits. The apocalyptic son of man is once again mythical, but he is expected only eschatologically. 'The ancient conceptions of the God-King become the material for the formation of Christology, as early as the New Testament. . . . The aspect of suffering taken from Is 53 is combined with the conception of the son of man from heaven', in such a way 'that Jesus again unifies all the aspects of the notion of the primal man and, in the story of his humiliation and exaltation, again brings to bear the whole mythology of the ancient East. . . . Not all myth can be cast on the rubbish heap of theology.'[71]

One thing is characteristic of the dazzling construction of this 'total typology', which may be said to deploy, as it were, an ethnological system of categories for the appearance of every possible redeemer and salvation-bearer. This is the fact that the point of convergence, by reference to which the typological image truly becomes visible and, hence, compelling, lies within the sacral 'primal age' in which the cultures surrounding Israel remain cultically fixed and to which Israel becomes oriented back through the ideology of kingship. What is attractive here (by contrast to textual mosaics made up of isolated messianic texts, which always seem so laborious and forced) is not only the completeness of the image, but its universal validity. This would allow Christ to appear as the fulfiller not only of Israel's longings, but of the longings of all nations. But would this not constitute a blatant provocation of those concerned with questions of demythologisation? Even if mythical promise and historical fulfilment run on distinct levels, does not their very comparability lie precisely in the 'archetypical' category of the salvation-bearer, so that the fulfilment, in so far as it fulfils just such a typical image, must be integrated and subordinated to the image itself? And there is more: through this procedure is not the specific character of the Old Testament either fundamentally denied or robbed of its proper meaning? For the imaged form, which thus illuminates the relation of Old and New, does not result from a mediating movement that runs from the myth to the history that fulfils it; it is, rather, the contrary: the image is the product of a return to the myth. But this is tantamount to a falsification of history, for Israel's centre of gravity quite certainly lies in its unceasing forward movement, so much so that the whole construction of the feast of Yahweh's enthronement for the new year's ritual is nothing more than an unverifiable and ingenious hypothesis.

Israel's distinctive character is to be found in the mediating movement between, on the one hand, the myth which lies behind it and which it must time and again repel and deny (particularly in the form of Canaan's fertility cults) in order to remain faithful to its own idea, and, on the other hand, that second point of convergence in the future towards which Israel is striving ever more clearly without, nevertheless, being able to anticipate it or construct it in actual imaged form. Israel's history is the upward movement from the level of myth as type to the level of Christ as antitype, and this movement is the historical transposition of mythical existence into Christian existence. This transposition, however, can be achieved in no other way than by breaking up and, in fact, shattering the mythical image of totality conceived by this understanding of reality and of the world, on behalf of a new totality which lies in the point of convergence in the future. This new totality requires far vaster dimensions than those afforded by myth and, hence, it cannot even be anticipated in terms of the myth. In this sense the young Hegel is basically right when he portrays the Old Testament as the period of irreconcilables, of sharp opposition between a thesis and an antithesis whose synthesis cannot yet be foreseen (this even though Hegel did not understand much of the specific historical realities involved). The categories of a greater whole are being prepared by a work of expansion, but in such a way that this work cannot bring the contours of the future form together to form an image; rather, the future archetype is to be the absolutely creative unification of what in itself cannot be united. This is the decisive factor, and this is also the *martyrion* of history. Three of the Baptist's sayings should be seen in their unity: 'He who is coming after me is mightier than I' (Mt 3.11) and 'I did not know who he was' (Jn 1.33). 'Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?' (Lk 7.19f.). There is in all Israel a continual dynamism of transcendence that dissolves images but which is not drawn forward and guided by an ideal leading image in the future. On the other hand, this dynamism is conscious of not dissolving images in a negative, revolutionary sense (although this too may emerge after the rejection of the Messiah), but that it is, rather, engaged in the positive work of preparing the fragments of an image-to-be.

Of the major contributions to this mediation there is, first, the dissolution of the mythical experience of time, which occurs early on, and its slow replacement by a 'linear' time of salvation-history. Gerhard von Rad has painstakingly described the phases of this interchange. Like that of other peoples, Israel's original experience of time too was filled concretely with temporal events and, thus, followed the cycles of nature. Israel's yearly cycle, too, was shaped by sacred feasts and times. But then these originally agrarian feasts are 'historicised' and the different phases of God's salvific activity, of which the feasts are a cultic reminder, are connected to an historical happening. 'Israel's faith began to be no longer founded on one single event—even if that event had the stature and importance of the exodus from Egypt, celebrated in the feast of the Passover; but neither was it founded on multiple events with little or no connection between them. Rather, the faith of Israel began to perceive a series of successive facts.' This faith began to 'order the traditions which at first were isolated in the cult into a sequence of events': this constitutes an 'epochal step' which breaks through the 'conception of mythical simultaneity' and comes to understand and describe God's saving actions towards his people ever more clearly as a 'history of God'. 'Only at this point did history really become irreversible.' By the same token, however, the magic actualisation of the cultic drama of the primitive period becomes remote. 'A critical manner of thinking is awakened that has learned to select and arrange—or to reject—materials from the fulness of the tradition.' The consequence was the 'loss of the naïvete of cultic actualisation', something evident, for instance, in the paraeneses of Deuteronomy.[72]

The first historicisation is followed by the second, that of the great Prophets. The conception of a natural ϰαιϱός, which the wise man with his experience of life must know, gives way at a higher level to the conception of a supernatural ϰαιϱός: this is a knowledge of the historical situation and of its mastering by detecting and grasping God's decision within it. Every prophet stands in a new ϰαιϱός and, therefore, brings a new message; the same prophet in a changed situation will have to decide differently than he had before. Obedience does not at first look beyond this absolute and this *eschaton* of salvation that in each case must be grasped at the present moment. And the reversal of perspective effected by the great Prophets is at the service of this actualisation: the 'goods' and assurances of salvation (the promise to the fathers, the exodus, the covenant on Sinai, the promise to David, the idea of Zion), which had apparently been guaranteed in the past, must now be transferred to the impending future. And this takes place not only by portraying Sinai, as does Deuteronomy, as a present situation of utmost urgency; rather, what had sunk to the level of mere historical chronicle and had seen its power diluted by a series of catastrophes is now re-established in a new and intenser mode as that reality towards which the people is even now moving as to its salvation: this salvation God will now establish anew, as if for the first time, *if* the people weathers the historical situation as God intends. This 'if' is occasionally (from Jeremiah's time onwards) transcended to the point where it becomes the definitiveness of God's already having decided: do what it may, the greater part of Israel *has* been rejected; but a 'remnant' will be saved. Here the mythical tradition has been transcended, thanks to a charismatic vision that perceives the will of God in the decisive dovetailing of politics and obedience to God, of 'flesh' and 'spirit'. This new-won understanding of time can provide the lead for a tremendous transposition such as this: the event in the past which laid the basis for salvation becomes an image that guides Israel in its progress toward the true fulfilment—the new Zion (Is 1.26), the new David (Is 11.1), the new Covenant (Jer 31.31f.), the new Exodus (Deut—Is 40.3f.; 43.16f.), and so forth. But this 'present' eschatology, or eschatology of imminent expectation, which is awaiting God's decisive deed—the decisive transformation and the judgment—now, contains a theological element of such weight that it bursts the dimension of internal historicity and produces from within itself the doctrine of the two ages, in the eschatological sense it would later acquire.

After the exile, the tradition of the great prophets dies out, the newly erected temple cannot be the promised fulfilment. But the dimension of the eschatological as a step beyond time into the absolute has been opened up. This dimension, however, can be realised only by a double form of de-historicisation the two parts of which are intimately connected: on the one hand, an ethico-spiritual de-temporalisation of the historical values located in time (covenant, law, kingdom, priesthood, and liturgy), and on the other hand the apocalyptic de-temporalisation of the New Age, which in its totality is to be found in God, which is already coming, and which is contemplated as a ‘mystery’ by the visionary anticipation of certain elect (‘Enoch’, ‘Daniel’, ‘Ezra’, and so on), and can be communicated by them in coded language. This brings with it a transformation of the image of the messiah: both the expected political saviour from the House of David, and the suffering servant of God from the time of the exile, were to come from within Israel, from the people itself. By contrast, the apocalyptic messiah, the ‘son of man’ whom Daniel sees approaching, comes from above, from the glorious splendour of God, from the New World that lies ready and complete in God.

With mysterious logic Israel’s dynamism produces spiritual forms from within itself that succeed and displace one another: one form results from another but is at the same time irreconcilable with all the preceding. Previously we saw that a total image could be constructed only in retrospect, by reference to a (hypothetical) mythical unity in the ‘primal epoch’ (*Urzeit*). So, too, the creation of a new unity out of the different and mutually irreconcilable forms demands a radical crossing of the limits of the Old Testament. The history of the Chosen People does not only have the meaning of God educating humanity existentially to Christ; its task is also to unfold Christ’s dimensions one by one, but these are dimensions that remain mutually irreconcilable within the Old Testament and which, therefore, can never—not even fragmentarily—produce an anticipated sketch of what is to come. The salvation-bearer of the early period—based on the ideology of kingship—is both an individual person and a collective, both the representative of God to the people and of the people to God: he is a kind of total sacrament, one who can perform both ethical and sacramental (mythico-magical) cultic acts. But as soon as the mythical sphere is transcended in earnest, this pre-existential (and, in Kierkegaard’s sense, ‘aesthetic’) synthesis is no longer possible. The terrible personal suffering of the servant of God in the Book of Consolation of Israel is something totally different from the cultic and mimetic suffering of the royal ideology. And, the ‘coming from heaven’ of the ‘son of man’ in Daniel, conceived as it is as a serious possibility, is something totally different from the divine sonship of the mythical king. The ethico-political actualism of the Prophets, which admittedly presupposes the mythical period as its past, is nevertheless irreconcilable with it since this actualism at the same time presupposes an experience of God of a new kind: the experience of a God who commands and creates freely and sovereignly, who cannot be inserted into a calendar of feasts, who has the power to burst open and relativize the closed religious world of myth and to transform it into reality at a wholly different level. This prophetic concept of God emerges as the most exalted and living reality which could be attained by a pre-Christian religion. But, in a very strange way, prophecy breaks off and produces from itself this last period that interiorly remains so ambiguous. On the one hand we witness in it a decay and a petrification into legalism, sapientialism, apocalypticism. On the other hand we also see an ascent to a final distance which is what made possible the final redaction of the Sacred Scriptures: an interiorisation that leads to the contemplation of God's 'great deeds' in nature and history; an abstraction and a universalisation that lead to a total theology and a unified conception of history; and, above all, the radicalization of the whole reality of a New Age which can be sighted but not grasped in itself and which, therefore, is totally misconstrued—witness the apocalyptic calculations, the lifelessness and lack of historical perspective, and the almost lascivious curiosity with which the pseudonymous authors set out to spy on the divine mysteries. How could the 'son of man' in Daniel at the same time be the son of David? How could the glory of God in Ezekiel, which returns at the time of salvation, be one with the suffering servant of God in the Book of Consolation? How could the *kairos*-theology which the Prophets unconditionally demand be one with the contemplation of the wise men, which is wholly divorced from time? And how are we to harmonise Job's dealings with God, the almost Buddhist resignation of Qoheleth, and the ardent eroticism of the Canticle within this total form, which in every direction is pulled apart by intolerable tensions? Qumran's Book of Battles can be taken as an illustration of where such attempts at a synthesis can lead: for this book, the eschatological battle of the apocalypse must—with perfect logic!—be reconcilable with the realism of the holy wars of the periods of the Exodus, the Judges, and the Kings, and the divine battle on the 'Day of Yahweh', in which Israel will participate, must be both a mythico-sacro-cultic act and a prophetic and apocalyptic act; but this union results in a terrible vision of grotesque proportion, which is worse than all other known conceptions of 'holy wars' and crusades. No! The elements that Israel successively bears and gives to the world are, humanly considered, absolutely disparate and demonstrably irreconcilable. They constitute a chain of forms which are impressive and dramatic in the extreme, forms of a religious and ethical earnestness not to be found anywhere else in human history. But this succession of forms cannot itself produce the *one* form; rather, with all the urgency which the fragment of a form possesses, the succession of forms demands a transcendent fulfilment within this second prophetic perspective oriented to the future. Here we are tempted to recall Goethe’s famous ‘Lines on Seeing Schiller’s Skull’, and to transpose them from the sphere of the contemplation of nature to that of the contemplation of salvation-history:

> But none can love the withered husk, though even
> A glorious noble kernel it contained.
> To me, an adept, was the writing given
> Which not to all its holy sense explained. . . .
> What mystic joy I felt! What rapt devotion!
> That form, how pregnant with a godlike trace!
> A look, how did it whirl me toward that ocean
> Whose rolling billows mightier shapes embrace!
> Mysterious vessel! Oracle how dear!
> Even to grasp thee is my hand too base,
> Except to steal thee from thy prison here
> With pious purpose, and devoutly go
> Back to the air, free thoughts, and sunlight clear.
> What greater gain in life can man e’er know
> Than when God-Nature will to him explain
> How she to Spirit makes what’s Solid flow,
> And does what’s Spirit-Born Solid maintain.[73]

The analogy from sub-human nature to salvation-history is not an idle one, for in both cases what is involved is ‘heightened forms’ which flow from one another according to a mysterious logic. They do this, however, by qualitative leaps that exclude every attempt at quantification and that, for the total fulfilment of their meaning, require one definitive leap that establishes a final distance between itself and the whole succession of previous leaps. Both the dimension of form and that of the leap within genuine continuity are thus ‘fulfilled’, both in the first Adam who ascends from nature and in the second Adam who ascends from salvation-history. Both ascend at the same time as they descend from above, from God. And the ascending forms of salvation-history are just as arresting and unique as the results of the great mutations in the animal kingdom, just as convincing as the form of fish and bird, of horse and lion. Human attempts at combining forms in either realm can only produce the hybrid beings of fable, which could not possibly exist. That from all this the form of man should arise:

who could have deduced as much from the preparations of the *natura naturans*? Who could fathom nature's mystery of dissolution and preservation, when it 'to Spirit makes what's Solid flow, / And does what's Spirit-Born Solid maintain'? In Israel's progressive evolution, however, we are not dealing simply with 'preparatory stages' which are surpassed by later stages and 'dissolved' into spirit; rather, what is involved is a 'fanning out' (as in the realm of nature) whereby all the forms subsist alongside each other as a qualitative totality. Fish are not 'surpassed' by birds, nor birds by mammals. So, too, the 'sacramental' quality of the primitive ideology of kingship is not surpassed by the 'spiritual' quality of the Prophets, and the 'prophetic' element is not surpassed by the apolitical character of wisdom literature. Nor is Solomon's regal glory in any sense merely a 'preparatory stage' for the formlessness of the servant of God, or the rigorous letter of the law a preparatory stage for the ethical actualism of the Prophets. Both things are simultaneously true: that the finiteness of each image brings forth the next and, nevertheless, because all typical images are finite, that each image will in its own place be indispensable for the coming antitype.

Historical philological scholarship will always attempt to understand the qualitative transition from the Old to the New Testament in terms of the *general* categories of 'continuity' and 'discontinuity'. Such research will tend to take one of two directions. On the one hand, it can describe the transition to Jesus as one of the many transitions in the prophetic history of Israel, a transition which requires a new reading of the ancient texts and a new understanding of the received traditions and concepts. Or, on the other hand, such scholarship can see the connection in a merely external manner: as the dressing up of what is fundamentally new in traditional forms, possibly also as the legitimation of Jesus' unprecedented new claims by appealing to old legitimations. But in either case the actual form that emerges from the Old and the New Testaments, together, is not yet seen, since it emerges in virtue of the fact that all that has developed in the Old Testament as a succession of forms can, in the New Testament, be simultaneously enveloped in a unity at another level. If anywhere, this is where a theological seeing of form is required, and traditional Christian theology has, for the most part, exercised this vision, although its philological methods in this connection have mostly been very insufficient and unsatisfactory. The analogies and allegories of this theology were convincing only because, beneath the poor philological demonstration, there existed a perception of a far more evident kind which was 'awakened' by those indications, as it were, only by way of confirmation.

The previously mentioned analogy between the first and the second Adam can also help us answer the difficult question whether the New Testament is dependent on the Old. Is the man Adam dependent on the animals? Yes, in so far as in his nature the whole animal kingdom is both really and ideally implied. Yes, again, in so far as he has been established to rule freely over nature and to use it to the glory of God. But this is a dependence of a very special kind, because what it primarily shows is man’s freedom and, hence, his independence. This is why, in John, Jesus can say that he is not dependent on the witness of the Old Testament. This witness is borne him in so far as he is the fulfiller—and this is not an external but an internal relationship. Within this interiority, however, the relationship is wholly irreversible: it cannot be reduced to the same level. To attempt to describe it more closely is to meet the same difficulty we encountered at the beginning of the chapter, namely that of making clear the difference of levels.

Paul is aware of the difference between *littera* and *spiritus* (2 Cor 4.6f.), but these concepts are meant more in a symbolic sense, since in the Old Testament, too, we find the Holy Spirit, and the letter in the New. ‘Letter’ and ‘spirit’ presuppose the more limited understanding of the Bible of late Judaism, in which the events of a living history have become a written book. John speaks of ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ (Jn 6.63), but here, too, these terms are meant only symbolically since, precisely in the context of the discourse of the promise, Christ’s life-giving Flesh is the focal point, and John throughout attributes to Abraham, Moses, and the Prophets a spiritual faith. Nor does the distinction of the two ages significantly help since its origins are in Judaism and it is merely borrowed by the New Testament. The use of type (or antitype, as the case may be) is more pertinent, but it is exposed either to the danger of looking at the Old and the New Testaments as two realities in image form which may be compared on the same level of appearance, or at least to the danger of conceiving the Old Testament as an image closed within itself. This would mean, however, interpreting the Old Testament retrospectively, by referring it back to myth, and, hence, we would be in danger of reducing the New Testament, too, to this level. We could attempt, however, to avoid this danger by interpreting Christ’s appearance as that of the divine and infinite reality of grace, compared to which everything else is reduced to being only an analogous (because only a creaturely) finite reality. But if we did this we would have wholly misunderstood the factor that distinguishes the revelation of God in the Old Testament from the pagan religions. For Paul, Abraham’s faith is not simply the symbol of a universal human attitude, but something historically singled out and delimited by the promise, something which only as such can also serve as principle and basis for the hidden faith of the Gentiles or for their subsequent coming to believe. Nothing remains but to see the figural reality of the Old Testament as a reality singled out from the ‘imagelessness’ of the rest of sinful humanity and prophetically oriented toward Christ—a reality which cannot be anchored in itself but which possesses its *eidos* only as a transition and a mediation between the first and the second Adam. The fact that it does not possess a finished *eidos* of its own makes this people into history’s witness to something higher, and precisely as such it becomes an object-lesson that educates men to this higher reality. This is what Paul means by τύπος and τυπικῶς. Hence, a veil will always cover Israel’s understanding of itself so long as it attempts (or someone else attempts) to read the idea of Israel as constituting an *eidos* of its own; but ‘when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed’ (2 Cor 3.16), and the eyes of faith see—see in a truly objective manner—the actual reality of the *typos*.

c. Seeing the Unseen

It is in virtue of this transitional character of its *eidos* that the Old Testament in the end mediates between myth and Christ, two realities which could not have come together in any other way. Myth had mediated magically between God and the world by means of the form of a ‘primal man’ who was king, priest, and prophet all at once. And the anticipation of salvation which lay at the heart of the mythic system could be fulfilled in Christ because Israel had emptied this system of its treasury of magic images and had shattered it, leaving only fragments. Seen in this way, the world of myth (by contrast with Israel’s figural reality) can be characterised as archetypical: the mythical world in this sense is nothing but created man himself (as *homo naturaliter religiosus et areligiosus, pius et magicus*) who as such cannot prescribe any possible future revelation. The prescription lies only in God, who does not want to redeem his creation by abolishing and destroying it. And here Irenaeus’ theology of history enters in, which has God’s covenant begin in practice with Adam (and Noah) and sees Christ appear by mediation of Israel as the one who fulfils all creation.

Mythical time was vertical time between God and the world: this salvific relationship of social and individual man to God was seen so much as the one thing necessary that all sense for the horizontal progression of time was disregarded. Christian time, in turn, as ‘eschatological’ time, is also wholly vertical time: salvation has descended vertically from God and, through the Resurrection and ascension of the Head of mankind, it has opened up to man in a new way the vertical path into eternity. This alone counts, and, in keeping with the logic of revelation, the extension of the history of the Church is but the patient expectation of the manifestation (*parousia*) of what already is a hidden presence (*parousia*).

However: while myth represented this relationship between God and the world in a great liturgical drama which was in its entirety a magico-sacramental actualisation, Christ's drama remains invisible to the world. Its attestation by eyewitnesses does not in itself mean that the world or even the Church can see it. 'You will seek me and you will not find me; where I am you cannot come' (Jn 7.34). 'A little while, and you will see me no more' (Jn 16.16). 'From now on you will not see me again' (Mt 23.39). The hiddenness in God not only of Christ but of those who, through faith, have died and risen with him (Col 3.3)—the hiddenness of those who, through faith, have passed over to the world of the New Age—belongs to the form of Christian existence, whose eschatological dimension is in this way essentially different from the 'time of the end' in the Old Testament and from the eager curiosity for revelations exhibited by the different apocalypses. Even the Christian Apocalypse at the conclusion of the Scriptures changes little of this: it is quite without curiosity; it does open up a dimension between eternity and world history, but only through the mediation of visions, which always have a degree of unreality about them.

Nevertheless, the decisive drama is played out vertically between God and the world—in the invisible, unfathomable mystery of judgment and grace. The form of Christ is the revelation of this final dramatic action between God and the world. It appears in the world with such a plenitude of meanings, with such an accumulation of all possible religious forms between heaven and earth, that Christ, as divine and as worldly-divine synthesis, necessarily has on man the effect of an overwhelming superabundance and, hence, of a darkness from excess of light. This eschatological accumulation of all absolutes would seem to be a pure contradiction if it were not refracted through an historical prism—the prism of the Old Testament. Within the temporality proper to the Old Testament and to it alone—which is an understanding and a possession of time brought about and fulfilled by God—the eschatologically compressed moment of the ἐφάπαξ is broken down into fragments perceivable to man. The time of revelation is the relationship of God to the world in Christ, now transposed to the horizontal plane, and this transposition is the impressing of form upon the continuity of time. Neither the cyclical time of mythical culture nor the empty linear extension of modern historical time—secularised, void of faith, and determined by 'progress'—have in themselves a form, nor can they. But the time of the Old Testament—moving on toward the New Testament, which is the coming to man of eternity—does attain to an authentic form, the only one existing in world history, because within the Old Testament the relationship between time and eternity becomes visible.

This becoming visible of the mystery through time presupposes two things. In the first place, it implies that the world is not understood as a sub-personal and emanative 'apparition' and self-representation of God but as his free creation, for only on this condition will a medium be at God's disposal within which to trace his self-revelation. And, secondly, it implies that, precisely on the basis of such an image of God, the temporal extension unfolds into moments which theologically are not identical with one another, since at *this* point in time God has wrought *these* acts of self-revelation in history. The specific character of the Old Testament begins with this relationship to time which may very well be a relationship of the cultic actualisation of those 'great deeds' at one time wrought by God; but this in no way compromises the temporality of the *in illo tempore*. This makes possible a memory and a hope directed to the future. This also makes prophecy possible as a knowledge, derived from God, concerning the *kairos* fulfilled by God.

If these two conditions are satisfied it is possible to impress upon the continuum of time a form that reflects eternity. This, of course, is not meant as the empty interrelationship of two realities within an empty time-span, but as the created relationship of being and essence between the two poles within the extension of points in time. The decisive thing here is that the temporal relationship of the Old to the New Testament not only *represents* the relationship of time to eternity, but *bears* it within itself in the manner of a sacrament that contains and communicates what it symbolises in the likeness of what is seen. This 'sacramental' possibility is possessed by the Old Testament in virtue of the grace of the New: because the Word to which Israel should listen is the one that will come in flesh.

We can, therefore, say that theological aesthetics culminates in the christological form (taking this word seriously) of salvation-history, in so far as here, upon the medium of man's historical existence, God inscribes his authentic sign with his own hand. This is a signature which is legible in all world history, as it is God's living Spirit that, throughout the ages, ensures its visibility; not least by neither annihilating the former People of God nor allowing it to dissolve after it rejected Christ, but rather by preserving its presence together with all its enigmatic reality throughout the course of history. Here, if anywhere, it is true that 'God works in a mysterious way.' Or perhaps it would be clearer to say that God first creates from the twisted system of the world's sin the five-line staff upon which Christ's melody can be written down for men to hear and understand. Because the Old and the New Testaments, together, constitute God's *one* revelation, the Old Testament possesses the same 'rightness' or truth as the New: here there is identity, not analogy, and for this reason alone those transpositions can fully succeed which must be made from the Old to the New Testament—the passage from type to reality, from letter to spirit. This essential rightness allows the Church to make use of the narratives, prophecies, prayers, and meditations of the Old Testament as the ‘linguistic body’ of her own liturgy, and this would not be possible if the Christian at prayer had constantly to be making corrections and adjustments. At an even more essential level, Christ himself spoke against the background of the Old Testament situation and made it his own, in order by it (both in proximity to and distance from it) to express and demonstrate his own prophetic and messianic message: a mythical or religious-philosophical system would have been wholly inadequate to serve this purpose. Thus, the Old and New Testaments form the indispensable relational system, the geometric field of co-ordinates, the supernatural table of categories, the necessary historical canvas upon which alone the intended figure could be drawn. It goes without saying that this preparatory system could not be produced from natural archetypes of the psyche, but from divine actions with man. It is God’s actions which are found at the very outset, and not thoughts and words of man. Even the most inspired of these words are but the result and the reflection of these original deeds, decisions, interventions, judgments, and gracious acts of God. These deeds of God are the light of the rightness which falls on a perverted world, and it is in this light that the Old Testament increasingly thinks and finds understanding. It is a divine light and, therefore, not essentially different from the light that will become incarnate in human nature.

This light makes the invisible visible in three dimensions. First, there becomes visible what man and the world are and mean, not for themselves but for God. Further, there becomes visible what the last destiny of man and the world is to be before God and through God. Finally, this transference from the human to the divine viewpoint makes visible what God himself is for the world. These three manifestations, which we will now discuss, do not refer to revelation as such but, more precisely, to the historical witness-form which is exhibited in virtue of the conjunction of Old and New Testaments on the stage of world history.

1. What the world is before God is determined by what man is before God—by God’s assessment and evaluation of man. This is the uninterrupted theme of the Old Testament, inexorably sustained with a realism and a naturalism, with a technique of unveiling which is unparallelled in world literature. Never has man spoken so much against himself; never has he attained to this elevated outlook over himself from which to see himself in all his infinite smallness and nothingness before God, in all his perversity and stubbornness in the face of the divine will and promise, in his inability to help himself by his own means—unless these very means are provided and offered by the grace of God. And,

what is even more astounding: through all this self-deprecation on the part of man there can be detected no impulse of self-destruction, what one would expect, for instance, if, by a disintegration of his being along the ‘nether road’, man attempted to attain what he could not reach by self-exaltation. What we encounter, rather, is the constant awareness of the inevitability of being human, a consciousness of the only possibility granted and left open to man by which he can become whole which is the willing act of letting God dispose over one. Man is not thereby diminished; he is flooded by a sober light, visible nowhere else in the world; the light of a physician in which every contour, every gradation of value emerges with inexorable precision, without, however, there being any discernable bitter existentialist will to self-unmasking. On the contrary, a superior and wise gentleness runs through this millennial cure which is a kind of weaning, a treatment for addiction. This is, in fact, a real weaning away from myth, which in all its dimensions is man’s attempt to advance and exhibit his own ‘glory’: man as a wholly divine or semi-divine being who enthrones himself in the person of the king and beholds himself as such and who by means of religious magic confronts and defeats the powers of destiny and of death, whereas the cosmos is now centred on this divine-human, political-individual glory as its reflection. ‘Investigation of the cultures and religions of Israel’s neighbours shows us that in Israel a wholly unique de-mythologisation took place.’[74] Through many different phases and in many different ways the result of our inquiry is always the same: namely, that every honour that man had arrogated to himself is taken from him, and that this judging light that falls on man floods him as the essential prerequisite for—indeed, as already the beginning of—his healing. It is a light that radiates from the centre of the historical existence of man and the people, a light which, at that centre, forces them to come to a decision, to make a confession. As an historical light, however, it stretches backwards and forwards: as the light of truth it brings past history into its sphere and demands that past history be interpreted in his same light (‘historicisation’ of history: *Historisierung der Geschichte*); and it projects God’s decision concerning man, God’s confession to man, into the future, from which alone we can expect the justification for this judgment in the present.

Therefore, although the Old Testament must be understood as a covenant of God’s grace with man, and although the Old Testament may grasp this grace ever more deeply, the more God’s judgment on man brings him to self-knowledge in faith, the more the Old Testament understands that it itself is predominantly a judgment, in the most comprehensive sense of the word, and that as such it must yield to and be surpassed by a ‘new covenant’ (Jer 31. 31). Judgment means the disclosure of God’s view of man, the unveiling of the standards that God applies to man and to the world. As such, judgment (*Gericht*) means ‘breaking man in’ (*Abrichtung*) according to these standards, which he too can now see; it means his being oriented (*Ausrichtung*) towards God, but this orientation makes sense only if it is completed by an orientation towards that salvation which God alone can confer on man. In man as we see him in the Old Testament we can see, portrayed in history, how man appears to God; but we can also see that man does not correspond to God’s idea of man. Even (and especially) what God has chosen is time and again rejected; none of the chosen is wholly satisfactory (that is, if he does not altogether fail), to say nothing of the people as a whole. None of God’s servants—much less the kings—receive from God the honour which should have been man’s according to God’s plan for creation: everything points to a new order which is what imparts any meaning to the order of judgment. God’s *doxa* descends on all sides upon the world; only in man it does not dwell. And if occasionally (in a sudden fit of self-glorification on the part of Israel which does not harmonize with the basic tenor of its religion) glory is ascribed to the ‘great’ figures of the past (Sir 44-50), this occurs only marginally and as if by misunderstanding (as, for instance, with the unbounded praise of Solomon, which goes beyond anything historically admissible and points to an ideal type): the centre of gravity rests on the rejections of the historical people by the great prophets and on the promise of a totally new order of covenant which God alone will institute.

It is only in Jesus Christ that the light of judgment radiates fully as the light of grace. The judgment now no longer dominates in the light itself: the light is without darkness (1 Jn 1.5), has not been sent and has not come to judge (Jn 3.17; 12.47), and all judgment is transferred to it precisely in so far as it is a light that does not judge (Jn 5.22) since, being raised up, it orients all things towards itself (Jn 3.14f.; 8.28; 12.32). God’s *doxa* dwells within the exalted Christ (Jn 1.14; 2.11) because, to the end, he does not seek his own honour and can, therefore, be the One honoured by God (Jn 5.43f; 7.18; 8.49-50). All the Old Testament’s realism is perfected in him; he is the utterly de-mythologised man, the humiliated one, rejected and crucified by men, and God’s honour and sacredness radiate precisely from one who has been so dishonoured and desecrated.

History makes this leap from judged man to judging man visible. The true man, however, cannot be the man who relates primarily to himself and has found his measure in himself. The true man is the one ‘the Father consecrated and sent into the world’ (Jn 10.36), who has found and received his grace through God, who does not relate to himself, but to God as his Father. In the Old Testament God measured man with his own divine measure, but in the New Testament the divine measure itself became man: and these two measurements with the same measure can be seen in history. But with this God himself enters into visibility—as the hidden God who will not let himself be abused by man for his own self-glorification and who becomes visible in truth only in this *No*! that judges man. Time and again he appears in the Old Testament as a no-sayer, to the point where he seems to destroy what he himself had set up and to reject what he himself had chosen. All these noes have their purpose ultimately in his definitive yes (2 Cor I. 19f.); all the apophases of the Old Testament in the Christian cataphasis, which is such because the definitive rejection of all sinners in the One crucified and abandoned by God is transformed into the definitive calling of all for the sake of this One (Rom 5.15-21; 11.28-32). With this God himself has become manifest in man: manifest as the God who is hidden in his freedom; it is his hiddenness itself which is no longer hidden, but manifest.

2. The clarity and sharpness of judgment of the Old Testament—which even there can be understood as grace—is manifested in an extreme sign which can neither be misunderstood nor overlooked: this sign is Israel’s eschatology. The times are past when theologians could, with a tone of regret, speak seriously of Israel’s strangely and markedly underdeveloped and retrograde conceptions of the beyond—this in contrast to the surrounding cultures. As if this great refusal on Israel’s part to pass beyond the limits of death was not one of the most important and positive data of the ancient revelation! True, Israel shares its representations of Hades with other cultures, in so far, that is, as they are ‘representations’; but, significantly, these cultures never confine themselves to a conception which is as negative and void of consolation as is Israel’s. The other cultures fill out their representations of Hades either ethically (with imagined judgments of the dead and just punishments and rewards) or cosmologically and mythically (with images of the relationship of heaven and earth, of the end of the world, of the transmigration of souls or their transformation into spirit, of graded planetarian ascents, and so forth)—in order, in this way, to give a more satisfactory shape to their eschatology. Israel is allowed none of this. It must persevere before death’s threshold where it is faced with an incomprehensible contradiction: Israel is to believe in God, to entrust itself to God, indeed to hope in God—and yet, it must not expect anything from the other side of death. In all this the question of eternal life, indeed, of simple survival after death, does not even remain open; it remains closed and sealed. And yet Israel does not really chafe because of this question; it accepts this situation as an absolute barrier and begins to think and pose questions only on this side of the forbidden line. ‘Should we not see this theological vacuum, which Israel zealously struggled to keep free from any sacral concepts, as one of the greatest theological enigmas in

the Old Testament?'[75] It is true that, because of Hellenisation, on the one hand, and the moralisation of Torah piety in the last pre-Christian centuries, on the other hand, Israel came to be influenced by universal religious conceptions of punishment and reward in the beyond and, consequently, also by conceptions of heavenly or hellish places and states. Indeed, this phenomenon cannot be judged purely negatively, since apocalypticism brought with it the idea of a new age which already awaits man in God, and this idea implies for man something like an eternal destiny. But this late ethics and mysticism, as a whole, remain shadowy and visionary and in no way exhibit the weight of reality which classical Israel possessed down to the time of the Prophets. The eschatological *non liquet* cannot be explained as an archaism; it can also permeate the most personal psalms of the pious, and these psalms cannot be placed, as fragments of a cultic drama, in the mouth of the king who temporarily descends to the underworld—no more than the songs of the *ebed*-Yahweh can be attributed to him. Any attempt to explain more would explain away the uniqueness involved.

This barrier, so strikingly implanted and guarded, will be removed only by Christ as he descends into hell and rises from the dead. For this reason, the concept 'eschatological' is used in a very different sense in the Old and the New Testament, and the open eschatology of the New Testament points Old Testament eschatology—even in its boldest vistas and hopes—back to the waiting-room before the closed door. To be sure, we do have anticipations, such as the rapture of Enoch or, even more strikingly, that of Elijah, the great visions by which the Prophets were called and transported before God's throne. But these momentary breakthroughs and lightning flashes only weight down the more heavily upon the dread darkness. Everything must be so disposed that Christ's Resurrection and the access to the Father it effects appear as the absolutely new creation, as the opening up of the gates which were closed forever—and this not only for enraptured visionaries and apocalypticists, but for mortal man here below. The miracle whereby, in Christ, one has left death behind one ('You have died!' 'You have risen in Christ!', Col 3.3, 1) is something absolutely incomprehensible for the Old Testament, for as a whole it always lived staring death in the face. And this wholly de-mythicised existence before death can help Christian eschatology to appear within history: the leap from the Old to the New Testament is defined by the taking on of form by that which was eschatologically formless.

This is where the assertions concerning the transitory character of the Old Testament have their theological locus: it is not transitory as revelation, but it reveals transitoriness; indeed, within the revelation which itself is imperishable —*verba mea non transibunt*—the Old Testament 'represents' that transition which is an aspect and a function of ‘making all things new’. This representation casts light on the whole existential pre-cursoriness of the Old Testament of which we spoke at the outset: it bears the character of image not at the level of essence but at the level of historical, indeed, theological existence. The whole Old Testament not only produces provisional images which are anticipated images of Christ, but in its entirety it must remain before the barrier of death, where it ‘hardens’ into a total image, so that ‘all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect’ (Heb 11.39f.). Theologically, this imaged quality of the Old Testament’s order of existence represents an insoluble puzzle, since in typology what is involved is an imaged quality which is not only exterior, but so interior that even the form of faith itself, of the sacraments themselves, of the grace that is conferred, remains branded with a *quasi* which both Origen and Augustine affirm. What is the meaning of John’s baptism ‘for the forgiveness of sins’ (Lk 3.3)? Does it forgive sins or does it not? And what is the faith of Abraham, imputed to him for his justification (Gen 15.6; Rom 4.3)? Does it really justify or does it not? It cannot justify in the New Testament sense, according to which grace is the *inchoatio vitae aeternae*; otherwise we would have to conclude that, theologically, the concept of *sheol* is incorrect, or that it lags behind the actual reality itself. We have no choice, therefore, but to characterise all Old Testament existence—including its faith, its hope, and its ‘beyond’—as an existence *in typo*. Thus, it is a foreshadowing of Christian existence, but at the same time it is the reality whereby all human existence assumes a form oriented towards Christ. With this, however, Christian existence exhibits another ambiguity: for it is now seen to stand in the shadow cast by Christ’s eschatological light and, thus, also in the shadow of his death and Resurrection, without having any formal centre of its own. Its centre lies in Christ, the incarnate God who will come to judge; it lies in the very centre of Christ himself, enclosed by both his humiliation and by his form of glory. While Christian existence moves beyond itself towards a Christ who is coming to complete history, at the same time it rests on the reality of the Christ who is incarnate and present in the Church.[76] The Old Testament, too, possesses no centre in any one of its phases, nor is its form to be found in a movement which runs both backwards and forwards in time. The road backwards would lead to myth, but myth here represents only a constructed point of convergence that is in fact disavowed by the total movement of Israel’s history: to polarise Israel on such a myth would mean to run directly against the current of its thought and very being. Even those texts that are rooted in an early mythical period are vigorously drawn into the forward movement and are gradually embedded into contexts that ever more clearly delineate Israel’s salvation-history. In the end, it is impossible to say at what level of their ‘remarkable multi-layeredness’ they can be interpreted ‘correctly’. For their interpretation itself is in flux, in the same flux which characterises the essence of all Israel. ‘Yet the same exegetical process holds true in principle for all Old Testament texts—even those where it cannot be so closely observed. For the field within which all these texts are interpreted extends from the time when the events they contain were first recorded to their final interpretation in the light of the saving event of Christ’s coming.’[77] It is not the Christian interpretation that overtaxes the reality of the Old Testament; God himself overtaxes the Old Testament when he applies the measure of Christ already to pre-Christian times, and it is to this that the Old Testament bears witness before God and before history.

3. The manner in which the Old Testament must represent judgment so that, by comparison, the New Testament will be able to shine forth as the light of superabundant grace—the manner in which the Old Testament must come to a halt at a barrier that proclaims man’s finitude so that God, in Christ, will be able to step over this barrier historically and visibly: this, in the last analysis, is the manner whereby an intra-divine mystery enters visibility. A one-sidedly intra-historical interpretation could explain the series of steps leading to Christ merely as the ‘education of the human race’, or, more incisively, it could interpret the relationship between Old and New Testament as the process whereby the law of Being becomes manifest: as does the young Hegel, who sees in the New Testament the law that synthesizes all the unconcluded antitheses of the Old Testament. But such an interpretation is far from exhausting the revelational power of this historical form. It is God himself who is interpreting himself in this form—not the God of an idealist world-process, but the God of supreme freedom and supreme love: the God who reveals himself as the freest of all by constructing the whole form of salvation-history on the basis of an election which he is not bound to make and by then developing all the articulations of this salvation-history in the interplay between this divine freedom and the freedom of man (who remains obdurate). This God is so free that he can reject the election that had apparently been definitive, breaking the scaled covenant and replacing it with a new one. The very first person to be chosen must encounter on Mount Moriah this God who is free to the point of contradiction. But this is also the God who is free only as a lover who suffers more than anyone else at the ruination of his chosen form: a God who, along with his untouchable sovereignty, does not draw back from revealing to the lascivious whore Jerusalem his form of suffering—the face of a lover who is not only

humiliated, but who assents to this humiliation and even humiliates himself. He rejects her—he must reject her; that is his right as the holy God. But he cannot reject her; he must run after her, undeserving as she is, and bring her home with humiliating pledges and promises, and he is not ashamed of this humiliation. It is only when we come directly from these scenes between Israel and Yahweh that we will realise the extent of what God is determined to reveal and confide about himself in the New Testament. For man's abuse of these concessions which love makes, his abuse of this fidelity and renewed election in the midst of the most justified of all rejections, his abuse of the step God's love takes beyond the Old Testament is a certainty from the outset. Disclosing the New Age in the midst of the Old Age belonging to sinners can only lead to a catastrophe for God himself, but—'so much did God love the world' (Jn 3.16). We see, therefore, that Yahweh's double visage in the Old Testament is actually a most single and unified reality, and neither of the two aspects would be in any way comprehensible and bearable without the other. The Manichaean and Marcionist caricature of two gods (a god of power who dominates the Old Testament and a god of love who reveals himself in the New Testament) is so diametrically opposed to the entire structure of the form of revelation that Irenaeus had no trouble whatsoever in demolishing this demonic contrivance. But the dualists were right at least in this respect: in the tension, which amounts almost to self-contradiction, between the exaltedness of the free God and the humiliation of the loving God what opens up is the very interior space of the heart of divinity itself. And it is not so much in the names of the divine energies emanating from God and shaping history (his *kâbôd*, his *dabar*, his *hokmah*), but rather in the tragic history of God with his unfaithful people that is prefigured the immanent Trinity which becomes fully manifest in the Incarnation of God's Son.

It is impossible to rationalise this vitality of God, which at the same time is demonstrated and hidden in the tensions of salvation-history, nor is it possible to distribute the periods of world-history among the three divine Persons. To assign the Old Testament to the Father and the New Testament to the Son means sending the Holy Spirit away empty. One could make an equally good case for attributing the Old Testament to the Son (because in it the Word of God prevails) and the New Covenant of the risen spiritual Man and of the Church to the Spirit; in this what remains for the Father would be the order of creation and the time from Adam to Abraham. But this is all arbitrary artifice. The one trinitarian God is the Lord of history who makes his triunity known in an ever more eventful manner. It is only in the New Testament that the face of the Father is really unveiled by Christ. Only the Son knows the Father, and he to whom the Son wishes to reveal him (Mt 11.27). And, in turn, no one knows the Son except the person whom the Father draws (Jn 6.44) and whom the Spirit teaches (Jn 16.13). The Old Testament, however, bears witness to the fact that in God something akin to a drama is played out between the sovereignty of his judgment and the humiliation whereby he allows himself to be judged, and that these two voices in God are both united and kept distinct by a third, ineffable voice. Israel is forbidden to have any image of God because God wanted to image himself in a singular way in the history of his covenant with Israel. No divine image of the mythical religions—even those that had a conception of the dying and rising of God—approaches even in a distant way this image, painted with the very colours of Israel's history. And the features of this image already take on a human visibility: in Hosea's marriage with a whore man is to embody—and, hence, experience in his own way—a divine experience. And Isaiah is not only to experience in his own person the failure of the whole divine undertaking; beyond this, Jeremiah is to represent and *be* the locus of the clash between God and his people. He 'bears God's suffering and at the same time that of his people'.[78] Here we can already see what, in the New Testament and at a new level, will be the self-representation of the trinitarian mystery of God in man alive—that is, man as essentially related to God and as existing with God in history. Only in this form of self-representation in historical man does the mystery of the Trinity attain for us to that relevance which it ought always to retain as the revelation of absolute and utmost love. An image of God which could be abstracted from God's intervention in historical event and which could be contemplated statically for its own sake ought not and can not be offered to us—not even in the vision of God of eternal life.

The testimony of the Old Testament is the testimony time bears to eternity, which with Christ enters into time. This is a testimony that constitutes one intelligible form with what it attests, and without this total form the testimony itself would remain impenetrable. For the eyes of faith, the 'riddle of Israel' does not exist, not even the riddle of Israel's continued existence until the Last Judgment. The figure is legible, but only on Christian presuppositions. Israel and Christianity together form one single figure, carved in bold relief from the block of world-history—a figure whose higher centre is the God-Man, just as he is the higher centre between the two thieves, both of whom bear witness to him even as they are both touched by his outstretched arms and, together with him, form a crucified trinity. In the figure of the two Testaments, which are really but one Testament, time attains theological form: time becomes the clay from which God creates a measure of revelation for eternal life: *quia (tempus) non tantum dicit mensuram durationis, sed etiam egressionis* (Bonaventure), and this *egressio* from the outset also implies the *regressus*.[79]

What we have done here is to examine the total testimony of history, as Scripture offers it to us, from the standpoint of the concept of form. But to all who contemplate and love this form, it has always appeared as the most glorious drama and the most perfect harmony possible in the world. The concept for the relationship between the Old and the New Testament which the tradition of the Fathers coined and modified unceasingly—is that of συμφωνία, *consonantia*, 'consonance',[80] described by Augustine as a concert of beauty (*concinere, consonare, concitare*[81]) which surpasses the harmony of the spheres because in the latter only an inner-worldly melody resounds. What is involved here, however, is not a consonance of two equivalent sounds, but the transition, contained in the testimony, from figure to archetype. And even this transition does not occur in the sense that a higher reality 'snatches up' a lower reality to itself, but, rather, in the sense that the figure dies and rises together with the archetype. The Fathers and the medieval contemplatives never tire of celebrating the *delectatio* of this manner of considering Scripture, and they find in it a foretaste of eternal bliss. This kind of Scriptural meditation, moreover, was always practised in the context of an existence that longed for the vision of God and that was constantly dying to this world in order to rise up with Christ unto God.[82] In this, the great contemplatives are but realising in themselves the movement of all history, which bears witness to Christ merely by dying to itself and tending towards a form which transcends it. Into this symphony Protestantism introduced the sound of shattering fragments; but, even as it crushes the earthen vessel for the sake of the spiritual fruit it contains, Protestantism envisages the same sacrifice, to which, however, it does not dare to ascribe the predicate of beauty. For Protestantism beauty remains eschatological; but if the *eschaton* which is Christ has appeared in the midst of history, and if the rays of his Resurrection already begin to brighten that history, then we should be permitted to speak of Christian beauty even here below.

3. THE TESTIMONY OF THE COSMOS

Christ is the creating Father's first and last thought concerning the world and, as such, Christ gives the cosmos its conclusive form, in which the world's fragmentariness receives a head and the forest of heathen columns (to use Claudel's image) arches up toward the Christian keystone. In this sense, the testimony of the cosmos will have to be a testimony of glorification. The testimony of the Church and of salvation-history, too, is glorification, because they both receive their final form only from Christ and must bear witness to him as their Lord. But they have both entered into an historical and existential dialogue with Christ, and it is only through the unforeseeable outcome of the conversation (which revolves principally around the Passion: Lk 9.31), and only after the defeat of all the resistance put up by both synagogue and Church, that the form of Christ can triumph in them. The cosmos, on the other hand, was from all time conceived and created for him (Col 1.16), and as such it must from the outset acknowledge him as its Lord. This holds not only for the subhuman world, but also for the ‘forces and powers’ that rule the world as intelligences, and for the angels, that with Christ’s appearance become wholly ‘his angels’ and the expression of his lordliness. Its variety within the history of salvation notwithstanding, the testimony of the cosmos attests to a single truth: ὅτι Κύϱιος Ἰησοῦς Χϱιστός: ‘that Jesus Christ is Lord’ (Phil 2.11). At its centre we find the miracle, which, as a soteriological deed, is always the self-witness of the Κύϱιος and of the power and glory proper only to himself; but, within this self-witness, there is included the testimony of the world’s submission to its Lord. This submission is the willingness of matter to receive and express the saving signs of grace (σημεῖα), to let itself be bodily permeated by God, first in the anticipation of Christ’s Resurrection and then in the full fruition of the gift in the general resurrection. The cosmos’ submission to Christ also entails the subjection of the ‘forces and powers’ who sense the Lord’s sovereignty from the first moment of his appearance and must acknowledge it grudgingly. This submission, finally is the overcoming also of the heavenly intelligences which, likewise ‘bending the knee’, profess the *doxa* of the incarnate and risen Lord. The miracle encompasses all three testimonies and cannot be assigned to any one of them exclusively. It is in each case the irruption of the New Age into the Old. The miracle is not only or primarily a manifestation of Christ’s power over dead nature, for the miracle is necessarily located within the salvific and dialogical dealings of the Redeemer with man. His miraculous act is, therefore, a clarification of his own living form and of the manner in which this form is communicated to the human partner, sinful and sick as he is. But precisely as such it is a sign of his lordliness also over the world of the ‘forces and powers’, because, as eschatological Lord of the cosmos, he sets himself over the realms in which they hold sway.

a. The Powers and the Miraculous

It is impossible to extricate the figure of Jesus in the Gospel from its confrontation with the ‘powers’. Jesus is in conflict with these powers just as much as he is with men. Nor can the motif of the cosmic powers be excluded from the rest of the New Testament: it dominates Paul’s Epistles, the Catholic Epistles, and the Apocalypse; as such, this theme evidently points to a totally indispensable aspect of the event of salvation. To excise this theme by resolute de-mythologisation would mean transforming the rich depth of the Biblical understanding of the world and of salvation into a flat and moralising enlightenment. In his understanding of the world, modern man shows himself to be at least as naïve as the man with a mythical image of the world: what the latter at least holds on to through his intuition and imagistic representation the former has lost as a result of his all-destructive rationalisms. Modern man no longer has even the ability to see the reality which, in man’s understanding of himself and of the world, was at first expressed by images and myths and later on by an intuitive description of the cosmic potencies—what Idealism and Romanticism called the ‘world of spirits’. Here the Idealist categories may be found to be by no means the most inadequate, just as it is those forms of thought which have their life in the historical *kairos* (which is where the beautiful also dwells, halfway between all-divinising *mythos* and all-desecrating *ratio*) that often come closest to the truth.

It may of course well be that the family tree of the Biblical ‘forces and powers’ in the end takes us back to the mythical divine theophanies and presences, and that the Old Testament’s ‘angel of Yahweh’, who stands for Yahweh himself, originally was his cosmomorphic and anthropomorphic manifestation. It may also be that the gods of the ancient Orient in some instances pass over almost without discontinuity to become Biblical angels, especially when these are presented as angels of the stars, of the peoples, or as angels that preside over and move the kingdoms and the regions of the cosmos. And yet Heinrich Schlier is right when he warns us against short-circuiting the problem with an easy either / or: ‘This phenomenon cannot be grasped with only *one* of the traditional and conventional concepts since it evades all previous conceptions.’ ‘According to the New Testament, the “powers” are certainly a category of personal beings’; however, they appear not only as individuals but ‘also as exemplars of a genus’, as ‘exemplars of the demonic’, ‘representatives of a collective (Mk 5.9)’. In this they are ‘beings of power’, and here ‘being’ (*Wesen*) is to be understood at the same time ‘in its substantive and in its verbal sense’: ‘Not only do they have power, might, force, but they *are* power, might, force’; ‘they exist (*wesen*) as power.’[83] This is a power, moreover, which, although deriving from God, did not remain a power in God and through God since it did not remain subject to God; it wanted to become autonomous power, and as such it makes both the world and man fall prey to itself. Malady of the individual here takes the form of decadence, of decay (whether spiritual or physical is secondary, since here the borderlines are ‘wholly fluid’): nature is taken by the ‘powers’ into subjection that it may be experienced as divine; historical life above all is made subject, and the ‘powers’ become embodied in its ‘great powers and in power-ideologies’ of all kinds; the religious sphere, finally, is made subject, and here the ‘powers’ produce (and express themselves in) the gods of the pagans, the abuse of the law on the part of the Jews, and the heresies of the Christians. The enfeeblement and decadence of the world demonstrate the totally overpowering and ‘blindly enrapturing force’ of these potencies (1 Cor 12.2), among which Scripture reckons realities, such as ‘sin’ and ‘death’, which we would prefer to call abstract. Both in whole and in part the world and existence emerge as simultaneously ‘seductive and threatening’, as a ‘temptation’, as an illusion and a lie that conceal. And all of this comes with the full ‘pressure of inevitability, like a whole atmosphere that weighs us down’ (Eph 2.2; Rev 13).

The extent to which these powers—radiating innumerably from a single central point: the ‘prince of this world’ (Jn 14.30)—dominate and determine the whole of existence will be realised only by the Christian who has learnt from what it is that Christ’s victory over the world has delivered him (Jn 16.33). He can read it off the form of Christ’s destiny, infallibly guaranteed him by the fact of his ‘coming into the world’ (Jn 1.10): the power of darkness (Lk 22.53) becomes manifest in this progression towards ruination at the hands of murderers (Jn 8.40; 10.32). Chaos is reflected in the most sublime of forms. There can be no question here of Christ’s giving some shape to these ‘powers’; they can only be banished, can only be robbed of their force and their efficacy, can only be silenced (ϰαταϱγεῖν), ‘disarmed’, ‘openly pilloried’ (Col 2.15), subjected to the lordship of Christ by being unmasked and having their threatening and opaque masquerade brought out into the light. Their devouring, all-rending nature is left to devour and rend itself apart (Rev 18.9; 19.20f.; 20.9).

If it is true that this disarming occurs on the Cross, which thus becomes the locus of triumph over the world (Col 2.15), then, in respect of the powers, the whole way from the crib to the cross is already a triumphal procession. Just as Jesus appears to men as the humiliated and scorned servant, to the same extent he appears from the outset to the powers as the one who reigns in glory. With Jesus the end of their world has come for the powers. The first act of his messianic activity is his confrontation with Satan in the desert, where all is decided in advance: he is ‘tempted’, and he thereby ‘tastes’—because of the ‘flesh and blood he has in common’ with his brothers—what it means to be subject to the powers and to live under the weight of the Kingdom of Death, which glorifies itself demonically (Heb 2.9-18). ‘All the kingdoms of the world with their *doxa*’ (Mt 4.8) are shown and offered to him; but in the tempting ‘tasting’ of temptation, which belongs intrinsically to his being ‘like his brethren in every respect’ (Heb 2.17), he experiences the essence of the illusion of power and rejects it by pointing to the glory of the one and only God. *Doxa* stands against *doxa*, beauty from below against beauty from above: beauty as entanglement and as a decadent, seduced sliding into the power of lust and the lust for power stands against the beauty of the adoration and service (Mt 4.10) of the one God of glory, whereby the servant not only experiences glory but is himself wrapt about with glory: ‘Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him’ (Mt 4.11).

From that point on Jesus’ coming into the world is a coming in judgment over the powers, a coming in ‘fulness of power’ (ἐξουσία) which is expressed right from his first encounter with the powers in man. In the very first chapter of Mark Jesus enters the synagogue and teaches like one who has power. There is a man there who is possessed by an unclean spirit. ‘And he cried out: “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God” ’ (Mk 1.24). And the possessed man of Gerasa will cry out: ‘What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?’ (Mt 8.29). Jesus receives this testimony, but does not accept it: ‘Be silent and come out of him!’ (Mk 1.25). ‘Whenever the unclean spirits beheld him, they fell down before him and cried out: “You are the Son of God.” And he strictly ordered them not to make him known’ (Mk 3.11f.). This is the involuntary testimony of a hell that is beginning ‘before its time’, of the power which is cast down from the illusion of eternal perdurance (‘the moment is eternity!’) into time (Rev 12.9), where in ‘fetters’ (Jude 6) it must contemplate its coming ruin. It is a testimony, too, with regard to ‘Jesus’ fulness of power at the end of time, a power with which through his miracles and cures he robs the ‘powers’ of their strength.

The miracles of the Gospel as a whole, in fact, are signs of the fulness of power at the end of time, and as such they are primarily directed against the ‘powers and dominations’, the ‘archons of this world’. In the healing of disease and possession, in the raising from the dead, in the subjecting of the cosmic forces unleashed by the ‘powers’ (night, storm, waves—Mk 4.39: ‘He awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea: “Peace! Be still!” ’ *cf*. Mk 6.45ff.), and in the relieving of material care and need by the multiplication of loaves he is concerned primarily not with acts of social concern, but rather with the epiphany of the messianic fulness of power over the ‘powers’. This Isaiah had promised, and his promise is fulfilled today (Lk 4.18f.); such signs did God build into the prophecy that began with Elijah and Elisha and to which Jesus points in the passage as referring to himself (Lk 4.24-27). This confrontation between demonic power over the world and eschatological fulness of power deriving from God is a definitive reality which can in no way be further de-mythologised. The Old Testament had de-mythologised the gods of the pagans into this demonic power over the world and in this way had showed it to be as ‘nothing’ (Is 44.6f.) and a ‘demon’ (Ps 96.5, LXX; Ep. Jer), and Paul too stops here (1 Cor 10.19f.). The miracles of the Gospel and, consequently, those of the Acts of the Apostles are, so to speak, the normal equipment of one sent by God, since he is to free the world from its subjection to the ‘powers’ and restore within it the order of God. The miracles are not to be read as ‘disruptions’ of the natural order but rather as signs of its restoration, which fundamentally occurs when Christ appears. In him becomes visible what man is: ‘crowned by God with glory and honour, everything is placed under his feet’ (Heb 2.7f.).

The Bible has never shown any interest in so-called ‘natural laws’. In the Old Testament the world is what God has set before himself, that wherein he reveals his power and his glory. Psalms, hymns, wisdom songs praise the world only in so far as its beautiful structure reveals this power and glory of God. Israel is allowed to see this *kâbôd* of God in his creation, while the eyes of the heathen are darkened and they put their own idols in place of this clear manifestness (Wis 13f.; Rom 1.18f.). The prohibition of images gives expression to Israel’s zeal for God’s own *kâbôd* in the world, which is not to be obscured or misdirected by any autonomous glory on the part of creatures. Israel, as having received full power from God, wholly restores God’s *kâbôd* in the world; of this the miraculous deeds are a testimony. From the standpoint of later cosmological thought we could indeed say that the concept of the ‘miraculous sign’ (σημεῖον) is naïve in the Old Testament, since for it everything in nature was a miraculous sign of the greatness and glory of God. And, thus, the ancient Christian concept of miracle—Augustine’s, for instance—is also naïve, since it consciously and deliberately makes the Old Testament concept its own and understands all God’s ‘great deeds’ in the world as miracles, which no longer appear as such only to those who are corrupted by sin and who in their dullness have grown accustomed to the miraculous in daily life: these must be shaken from their stupor by ‘unusual’ and ‘startling’ miracles such as raisings from the dead. And even though St. Thomas Aquinas’ scientific concept of miracle represents a considerable advance by comparison with the naïve religious concept, nevertheless the centre of gravity of the New Testament’s intention lies in the latter. The primary concern is not to show that Christ has power over the natural laws, but that he has power over the 'powers'. In so far as the order of coercion established by the powers is expressed in the destiny and the course of the natural laws, and in so far as the powers make their own structure out of the structure of the world created by God, the messianic miracle also cuts across 'nature' in the modern, abstract sense. And yet, by emphasising this abstract element the danger arises that the element of the messianic *exousia* will not remain in focus, as it should. The yogi, too, has power over matter and over the body. There are techniques (with religious implications as to the nature of the world) which can make things similar to the miracles of the Gospel happen. As soon as this parallel is considered it immediately threatens to take the upper hand. Jesus' miracles, to which the Gospels give such an uncomfortably strong emphasis—almost as if Jesus' messianic legitimacy stood or fell with them—coalesce into a single demonstration of his spiritual strength and of the power of his religious concentration. Are they not, then, by their very essence something merely 'praeternatural', and hence to be consigned basically to the same intra-cosmic realm as other similar non-Christian phenomena?

The intention of the Gospel contradicts such a parallelism. The miracles, rather, belong to an indissoluble whole which, as such, is the epiphany of the living God of Abraham, who glorifies himself and is also the God of Jesus. This God, however, is not a cosmic but an historical God, not a God who glorifies himself in the cycles of nature and in the associated myths, but in his free salvific deeds. From within history Israel looks out into the cosmos and sees in it the glory of this free and sovereign God of the covenant. The Son of the Father, sent by him into the world, is, in person, the glory of God descending into the world and taking form. The *kâbôd* that 'overshadows' Mary—who then enters into the temple with the child (Lk 1.35; 2.21-38)—is the same as that which overshadowed the tent and the temple as a cloud of splendour and darkness (Ex 40.35 = Lk 2.32). To see Jesus means to see—along with Simeon (Lk 2.30, 32) and John (Jn 1.14)—the glory radiating from the Father.[84] Thus, in his totality, he is the 'sign (σημεῖον) of salvation and glory' with which John notably comes to grips. In John it becomes clear 'that the concepts σημεῖα and ϱήματα (λόγοι) both qualify each other: σημεῖον is not a mere demonstration, but a spoken directive, a symbol; ϱῆμα is not teaching in the sense of the communication of a set of ideas, but is the occurrence of the Word, the event of the address.'[85] In his totality, Jesus is the sign that is meant to be read and which can be understood (in faith), and the total form of this sign appears concentrated in the central event of the *kenosis*, in the '*semeion* of Jonah' (Lk 11.29f. par). 'Jesus refuses to give a sign in proof of his authority, such as would enable men to recognise him without risk, without committing themselves to him',[86] for if the whole form is not read then the partial form of the miracle, which can be understood correctly only as belonging to the whole, must necessarily be misinterpreted.

This provides the basis for the whole dialectic, which is readily enough intelligible, of Jesus' working and not working miracles in the Gospel. He works them where faith is found and where they can be recognised as what they claim to be. But he does not work them precisely where a yogi would have worked them without hesitation. If faith receives a miracle, unbelief also sees it as a bystander and *could* itself, in the abstract, come to faith because of it. The 'work' is in itself strong enough to have this effect (Jn 10.38). But man's reluctance to accept the total form holds him back even in the face of the evidence provided by the facts of the miracle, as is shown with irony in the extended discussion concerning the man born blind (Jn 9.1-41; 10.21). Using this miracle for a starting point, Jesus instructs his listeners by placing the miracles worked by him in the total context of revelation. To the Jews' question concerning the Messiah he first proposes his word as proof, attested by the 'works' (miracles) performed in the name of the Father: the Jews can believe neither thing because they do not 'hear'. To hear would mean, at the same time, to perceive Jesus' word as the Word of the Father and to understand Jesus' deeds as the work of the Father, for they are 'performed with the power of my Father' (Jn 10.32), indeed they are 'the works of my Father' (Jn 10.37), which not only confirm the oneness of Father and Son externally (Jn 10.38) but actually express it.[87] The glorification of both Father and Son is but one glorification: the death of Lazarus serves 'for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by means of it' (Jn 11.4). Here we must remember what was said earlier about the relationship between sign and form in general: the 'sign' which the Jews demanded (1 Cor 1.22) was a detached sign, comprehensible in itself, which could be known neutrally and taken as an index for a content independent of the sign itself, which or in which one would then have to believe. But the sign which Jesus is, by contrast, and which he works only in connection with his total revelation, is essentially not an indication but the thing itself. He brings about resurrection because he is Resurrection itself (Jn 11.25). He bestows light to the eyes because he himself is the light of the world (Jn 8.12). He gives the bread because he is the bread of life (Jn 6.35). He purifies his chosen ones by pouring water over them (Jn 13.6) because he is himself the flowing water of God (Jn 4.13f.; 7.37f.). If the 'thing itself' is the Incarnation of the Logos, then it is not enough when Origen says that the Redeemer 'worked even the symbols of his own spiritual deeds' (ὁ ϰαὶ σύμβολα ποιήσας τῶν ἰδίων πνευματιϰῶν πϱάξεων σωτὴϱ ἡμῶν: *In Mt*. 16. 20; Kl. 545)—unless, that is, 'symbol' is here understood in the full sense of a sacramental reality which corporeally contains the spiritual truth in the sensible image and likeness. But in the Old Age this sacramental reality remains essentially concealed, and only occasional eschatological rays, as it were, escape from it: not everyone is simply healed and not everyone receives bread. Thus, this sacramental reality belongs to the total knowable sign only by being subordinated to the Word which speaks and interprets. It is this Word which must primarily be believed (Jn 10.38), and indeed in the authentic sense whereby one can believe only in God: 'He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me. . . . The Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what to say and what to speak' (Jn 12.44, 49).

The miracles of the New Testament do, of course, possess in the first instance an external reality in their appearance whereby they are signs in the ordinary sense of a pointer to a higher power that effects them; this power can then come to be seen as being divine when the indispensable connection has to be admitted that exists between the sign and the word Jesus preaches. In this sense, as the Lord himself suggests, they are occasions of faith even when taken for themselves. However, because they must be seen together with the word if one is to understand what it is their witness points to, miraculous signs constitute, together with the word, that unified form, which receives its life from within and which is visible to the humble spirit which has made itself ready for faith—a form which is more than a merely external composite of different marks and signals. The testimony of the miraculous exists as it is integrated within the sacramental form of the God-Man, who 'interprets' and represents God to us through the visibleness of his being and his actions as man. And this does not occur in the manner of a mythical, ahistorical theophany, but precisely as the event of divine history with man whereby a 'new creation' (2 Cor 5.17) breaks through the old creation, which had been subject to the powers.[88]

b. The Form of Glory and the Angels

The flesh (which is to say the human form: μοϱφή) that the Son of God assumed (λαβών, Phil 2.7) is wholly the instrument of God's saving deed for the world; starting from this relationship a functional Christology can be constructed (Karl Barth, Cull-mann). This *morphē* of Christ is the instrument through which God wills to glorify himself in the world. But such glorification occurs precisely through God’s humbling himself to become man. Therefore, Christ’s *morphēe* exists within a tension unique to it which is intelligible only in a christological sense: it is an emptying out (ϰένωσις) of the form proper to God (μοϱφὴ Θεοῦ), and hence presents itself primarily as its opposite and as the uttermost concealment of this divine form; but it is equally the bringing near and making visible of the divine form, since the humiliation (ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτόν) and the submission even to the Cross (ὑπήϰοος μέχϱι θανάτου . . . σταυϱοῦ) are precisely the human realisation of the divine disposition of Jesus Christ. We ought not here, moreover, to speak of an opaque christological dialect that destroys all form; rather, its structure is truly visible to faith, so overpowering is it for man’s spirit and sentiment to realise that the most glorious aspect of God’s glory is precisely this divine disposition that becomes manifest in Christ’s condescension.

Jesus’ transfiguration on the mountain which tradition has probably erroneously identified with Tabor shows clearly the structure involved here: it shows that the Son of Man’s form in his humiliation is a function of his glorified form. It is this that the transfiguration makes visible, and not primarily an anticipation of the eschatological manner of existence after the Resurrection. The risen Christ is the man who was raised to God’s right hand after having suffered. But the transfigured Christ is the God who reveals himself by condescending to become man. It is to this that the traditional elements of the event of transfiguration point: the high mountain common to theophanies (such as Moses and Elijah had seen on Sinai and on Horeb: this is why they appear here together with Christ); the dazzling white garments usually worn by heavenly apparitions (such as the angels of the Resurrection); the face like the sun, an attribute of the divinity (Ps 84. 12) and of the glorified Lord (Rev 1.16); the bright overshadowing cloud, a traditional image of the divine glory: God himself is known to appear in the cloud and as cloud (Ex 16.10; 24.18); then there is the voice which speaks from the cloud (Deut 5.19), and the three ‘booths’ that Peter wants to erect and which recall the Feast of Tabernacles, which itself reminds us of the fact that God’s glory has pitched its tent among men. But the theophany does not rest in itself. The voice addresses the disciples: ‘Listen to him!’ In this way the ‘beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased’ is expressly identified by the voice as the servant of God in Isaiah, who enters into his vicarious suffering (Is 42.1): this quotation constitutes a *leitmotiv* which accompanies Jesus’ whole life (Mt 3.17; quoted in whole by Mt 12.18-21 par.). Correspondingly, the dialogue between the transfigured Old and New Testaments revolves around the imminent suffering (Lk 9.31), and in Matthew the whole theophany is framed by two prophecies of Christ’s suffering. What we have before us is the very glory of God on its way to the Passion.

For the disciples the transfiguration is a ‘metamorphosis’ (the word which is used in Mk 9.3) from the servant-form that is seen into the form of God which ordinarily goes unseen. But what at a deeper level is made visible is the reverse metamorphosis which lies at the foundation of the other: that of the divine form into the form of servant. It will teach the disciples to read and understand the servant-form as the very form of God. Everything about Jesus which appears to be his ‘nature’ must now be interpreted by the disciples’ faith as the action and love *of God*. This ‘art of faith’ reaches perfection in John’s Gospel, which does not report the Transfiguration as a separate event, and John is fully aware of the hermeneutic in which he is here engaging. For him Jesus’ whole life and death are one ‘transfiguration’, that is, the love of God glorifying itself.[89] To the eyes of John’s faith and love it is precisely God’s humiliation which appears as his exaltation: in the erection of the Cross he sees the implanting of God’s sign of victory over the world. Even the Pauline opposition between *kenosis* and exaltation because of the obedience on the Cross is surpassed in John by an indissoluble unity: John’s ‘going up’ is but the rendering visible of a dimension of the event which had been present all along: see Jn 1.51; 3.13; 6.62; 20.17 (here note the present tense of ἀναβαίνω; the verses that follow—20.19f.—presuppose as present not only the Ascension, but even Pentecost). Indeed, we can say that, with the Passion and the Resurrection, Jesus’ divine form comes wholly to permeate the human form and to make it transparent in its functionality as love. The Gnostics sensed something of this mystery but, while coming very close to the truth, they disfigured the mystery and reversed its sense: this because they did not take the expressive form—the suffering flesh—seriously and, thus, were totally blind not only to the man Jesus but to the love of God in all the depth of its reality. It was precisely John who had to struggle against this fundamental mistake. In this, Johannine symbolism has a genuinely Biblical and not a mythical, Hellenistic basis: the creaturely form (to its utmost hiddenness under the form of contradiction) is, by virtue of its being affected by God, transparent to the love of God himself. To the gaze of answering love, the concealment is already the unveiling.[90]

This is why through the mysteries of humiliation and servitude, and even of the Cross, we catch a glimpse of the mysteries of Solomon’s bridal Song, through the mysteries of the divine *agape* a glimpse of the mysteries of the divine *eros*. Jesus’ metamorphosis before his disciples on the mountain is the revelation of the Bridegroom just as he is before the eyes of the Church. The splendour of the garments is discussed to avoid all possibility of error, something that Origen interprets as the concealing letter becoming transparent to reveal the unveiled Spirit who is Logos. And yet, the Bridegroom shows himself physically naked before the world only as the man of sorrows on the Cross, and the sinner must endure this nakedness resulting from the tearing off of his garments. What the sinner encounters here, along with the sight of the divine love, is the sight of his own shame. And only a gaze such as that of the virginal John could here contemplate the two unveilings as one: the unveiling of the Song of Songs, whereby he shows himself bodily in the ardour of *eros*, and the unveiling of the love of the triune God, who suffers in just as bodily a manner. Unheard-of balancing of corporeal love: in the face of the Cross, love is sobered to its very marrow before God's *agape*, which clothes itself in the language of the body; and, in the face of this intoxicating language of flesh and blood that gives itself by being poured out, love is lifted above itself and elevated into the eternal, in order there, as creaturely *eros*, to be the tent and dwelling-place of the divine love! Love is dispossessed in order to become the expression of something higher. What is involved is a double, reciprocal dispossession: of God into the human form and of man into the divine form, and this double dispossession contains the most concrete possible life: the life of man, which attains its form by letting itself be shattered to become the form of God; the life of God, that gains man for itself by renouncing its own form and, obedient unto death, pouring itself into the form of existence unto death. As the point of intersection of these two self-surrendering lives, Christ on the Cross and in glory is the ultimate form in which God and the world meet.

This had to be said if the testimony of the cosmos is to be understood aright. The world has to surrender its most sublime fruit in sacrifice so that God may at the same time consume and fulfil it. The world must be ordered concentrically around the new centre inserted into it from above. This is a submission which lies in the world's essence as creature, but which is actually an overtaxing of its being (in a *potentia oboedientialis* that it has, not in itself, but in God): as a result, the world can come to contain and express things which are quite simply beyond it. Signs of such an overtaxing of the world's native abilities are its mourning and convulsion at the death of Jesus: this presence at the death of the Lord of the universe cannot be borne by the world of itself, but only at the service of the eschatological prophecies. What the world 'darkly feels' is negligible compared to its ability to surrender itself to become an expressive body for its Creator. And if the world wholly belongs to the Incarnation, then it must wholly die with the Son of God in the night of God-forsakenness in order to rise with him wholly in the definitive form which God confers on it. Already on Golgotha the world conforms to the apocalyptic laws; at the resurrection of the flesh it will have (and will be able) to conform to those of the Kingdom of God. The same royal power, the same divine *kâbôd*, is expressed in the dominion over creation as over the cosmic ‘powers’, and at the Resurrection what takes place is a simultaneous victory over both: the resurrected body is nowhere conceived in terms of a merely gnostic *restitutio* in integrum of creation’s slavery to the ‘powers’. Until far into the day of Easter (especially in Mark) we witness both in creation and in the ‘powers’ the same ‘horrified’ astonishment, the same anguished paralysis before the inconceivable event that has rocked the foundations of creation.

At this point we must speak of the angels. In the Old Testament the angels, as mediating beings, played a role that constantly grew in a gnoseological direction: to the mind of late Judaism and of Paul it was they that mediated the covenant on Sinai. In the New Testament, however, the angels can only recede to become the accompanying servants of the Son of Man on earth. In a fundamental sense, mediation is no longer necessary when the Son has the Father with him (Jn 8.16; 16.32), when he himself dwells in the bosom of the Father (Jn 1.18), and when he acts in accordance with his own seeing, hearing, and touching of the Father (Jn 3.II; 8.26, 38) and by virtue of his own fulness of power, which he has received directly from the Father (Jn 5.22). Nevertheless, the angels are indispensable because, in the first place, they belong to the heavenly glory of the Son of Man and, secondly and above all, because they make visible the social character of the Kingdom of Heaven, into which the cosmos is to be transformed. It is simply erroneous—and this impression should on no account arise—to conceive of the Kingdom that the Son comes to found and which he surely embodies in its totality (as *autobasileia*) as a solitary place within the Absolute, a place which is empty until populated by those who follow the Son and rise with him and then come to build a community in God. This place in God, rather, to which are brought those who have been redeemed on earth, is from its very inception ‘the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem’ with its ‘countless hosts of angels, the festal gathering of the first-born’ (Heb 12.22f.). Unlike the ‘powers’ on the earth and in the cosmic heaven (Col 1.20), these angels do not need to be overcome and subjected in the battle of suffering; but, by completing his work of redemption, the Son, who stands over them as God, is also raised above them all as the ‘one who ascends’ (Heb 1.4-14), and by the same token they are engaged in his retinue: ‘Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?’ (Heb 1.14).

This is a testimony of the living Kingdom of Heaven that belongs to the form of glory of the Son of Man: ‘You will *see* heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man' (Jn 1.51). But this statement, that doubtless connects with Jacob's vision (in which the ascending is also named before the descending), is nowhere fulfilled in John; thus, we will have to suppose that he himself took the received image (which may have reached him from a context of eschatological images) as the theophany of God himself, as the *doxa* of the Father in the Son. In the Synoptics, too, the angels are always absent whenever Jesus speaks and acts in the fulness of his own power. Jesus never looks to angels for guidance, not even in his servant-form. He could have asked the Father to send them when he was taken prisoner, but he does not do it (Mt 26.53). Nor does he ever appear in the company of angels, as if they completed his heavenly form (in the way that the two thieves complete his crucified form); what the angels do is accompany his course as the living splendour that witnesses to it. In Luke they appear over the crib as the splendour of the descent, and after the Ascension has taken place as the splendour of the ascent. At the empty tomb they are the splendour of the Resurrection, which radiates back into the Old Age from the empty grave. After his temptation and victory over the demonic powers, the angels approach Jesus as his servants (Mt 4.11), in order to witness to his triumph. Only in Luke, once again, does a comforting angel appear on the Mount of Olives: here, as his hold loosens on his experienced connection with the Father, as the suffering servant wholly descends into the depths of human weakness, the almost Old Testament service of mediation as man enters into the heart of suffering becomes plausible. The vision promised in John is directly fulfilled only in the eschatological image of the Son of Man returning from heaven 'with his angels' (Mt 25.31); it is eschatological because at the same time it is apocalyptic: John's Revelation finally permits us a glance into the community of angels and men that constitutes the Jerusalem on high.

The genuflection of the cosmos before the *Kyrios* holds also for the angels: for the mysteries of God's descent into the flesh and Cross wholly transcend them. It is in their contemplation of these mysteries that the angels learn the full extent of the depths of God (Eph 3.10), as Gregory of Nyssa portrays it:

> It is truly through the Church that the powers in the heavenly places come to know the many-coloured wisdom of God, that wisdom which effects its great wonders through what is its opposite. . . . Previously they had known a simple and uniform divine wisdom. . . . In its might, the divine nature had produced the whole of creation; it had made everything that is beautiful, jetting up from the wellspring of all beauty. But it is through the Church that the heavenly powers will now be instructed concerning the variegated aspect of wisdom, which consists in the unification of contraries: they now see how the Word becomes Flesh, how Life becomes commingled with Death, how our wounds are healed by his ulcers, how the force of the Enemy is vanquished by the weakness of the Cross, how the Invisible becomes manifest in the Flesh. . . . Through the Church, the friends of the Bridegroom have learned all of these many-hued and not simple things. Their heart has been

> touched by them, since it came to recognise in mystery the new tell-tale of the wisdom of God. Dare I say it? Perhaps the angels, as they beheld in the Bride the beauty of the Bridegroom, have come to marvel at him who is invisible and incomprehensible to all. He, whom no one has seen or can see, has made the Church into his Body, has formed the Church into his image, so that, by turning to her, the friends of the Bridegroom have perhaps seen the Invisible more clearly in her.[91]

The bridal mystery of the ‘wondrous exchange of contraries’ which the angels contemplate has, in fact, made the angels the friends of the Bridegroom, thus making them participate in the mystery. Heaven is not what hovers untouched above the mysteries of the flesh: through the Incarnation of the Son heaven receives a share in that covenant between Agape and Eros which, even though it is the centre of all, nevertheless ought not to be equated with the erotic myth of the ἱεϱὸς γάμος. Myth has no vision for the sin of the world and for the humiliation of divine love even unto death. But this self-surrendering love of God is precisely the mystery ‘into which the angels long to look’ (1 Pet 1.12). And so, in the end, what is involved is a reciprocal vicarious vision: just as the angels of the little ones on earth always behold the face of the Father for them in heaven (Mt 18.10), so, too, men on earth behold for the angels the beauty of the God who has concealed himself in flesh.

F. ESCHATOLOGICAL REDUCTION

The mythical understanding of the world sees the whole world as a sacred theophany. In an eschatological sense, this is also what the world is for Christian faith. If the cosmos as a whole has been created in the image of God that appears—in the First-Born of creation, through him and for him—and if this First-Born indwells the world as its Head through the Church, then in the last analysis the world is a ‘body’ of God, who represents and expresses himself in this body, on the basis of the principle not of pantheistic but of hypostatic union. If the first Adam is lord of the world only as simultaneously being its fruit, then in the second Adam this genuine quality of being fruit and originating from within is surpassed by the free act of his Incarnation. While the first Adam remains open and accessible to the forces of the formless chaos by reason of his being the fruit of the world, the second Adam has from the outset vanquished these forces of chaos through the freedom of his love. That which is itself formless must submit to his shaping power, and rebellion itself must bend the knee with the rest of the cosmos. But in his definitive form he takes up into himself all the forms of creation. The form which he stamps upon the world is not tyrannical; it bestows completeness and perfection beyond anything imaginable. This holds for the forms of nature, concerning which we cannot say (as in medieval eschatology) that they will at some time simply disappear, leaving a vacuum between pure matter and man, who is a microcosmic fruit of nature. To be sure, it is only in man that nature raises its countenance into the region of eternity; and yet, the same *natura naturans* that in the end gives rise to man is also the *natura naturata*, and the whole plenitude of forms that the imagination of the divine nature has brought forth belongs analytically to the nature of man. The same holds in greater measure for the creations of man in his cultural development: they too—they especially!—belong to him as the images which he has produced out of himself then to impress them upon the world and which have a continued existence in man by reason of their birth even when they have perished in time. The same, finally, holds to a supreme degree for the creations in the realm of grace: these are shapings of sanctity from the human material of faith and obedience, vessels of the divine Potter for both glory and shame, for wrath and for mercy (Jer 18.6; Rom 9.21), vessels which, within the scope of mercy, can collaborate in their own formation to become a ‘vessel useful to the Master’ (2 Tim 2.21) by accepting on the potter’s wheel the shaping pressure of his thumb; these are shapings of the charisms and offices in the Church, of the whole temporal economy of the Kingdom of God in pilgrimage, none of which, in so far as they stand under the shaping power of the God-Man, will have been in vain. Some of these are more subject than others to the law of transience. Some are offices which can exist only within temporality, but their innermost shaping principle, being a mission of Christ, already derives from eternity. Other offices and functions grow, at their summit, into what is invisible for the time being, and the contours of this invisible reality are anticipated by them in faith. Formless and senseless in the eyes of the world, these latter charisms and offices are wholly oriented to a form in eternity, and they develop links and organs that they are already beginning to move and activate within the sphere of the invisible. Thus, the total form of the world stands in a transition whose process cannot be followed starting from time, for the temporal ‘form of this world is passing away’ (1 Cor 7.31), ‘heaven and earth pass away’ (Mt 24.35); they are ‘stored up for fire’ and will ‘pass away with hissing haste, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up’ (2 Pet 3.7, 10). This is a destroying fire for everything which is purely temporal, but a fire which tests, purifies, and preserves everything which is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 3.12-15). What is saved is man, ‘but as through fire’—man either with or without what he has created, depending on whether it was built on rock or on sand (Mt 7.24-27). Structures as such—as ‘objective spirit’—have no claim on entry to the Kingdom of Heaven. This holds for all structures, including even the very sanctuary of the Church and the hierarchy established by Christ himself.

The Middle Ages carved the disintegration of temporal forms as the central image over the doors of its churches. In the face of Christ’s unique form, the icon of the Last Judgment levels all earthly forms: not only the worldly crowns but also the mitres and tiaras roll in the dust. The gesture of division which the Judge of the World makes pierces ‘to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow’ (Heb 4.12). From a mankind that has been levelled without exceptions only the intercessors are marked out, kneeling near the throne, embodying the *doxa* of the love of the crucified Judge: Mary for the New, the Baptist for the Old Testament. It is by passing under this image that the Christian people enter and leave the cathedral: it is a wonderful symbolic picture of the eschatological form of the world that is aware of its own transitoriness.

The Judgment is the affair of the Son of Man alone (Mt 25.31f.), and it can take place only in the face-to-face confrontation of man with the crucified Lord:

‘Every eye will (have to) see him, everyone who pierced him’ (Rev 1.7; *cf*. Zech 12.10; Jn 19.37). This is a confrontation in which the tough husk of a sinful life will dissolve, while man realises, in an inescapable and inexorable vision, what he has done to Christ, what should have been (and was not) the form of his Christian life, where it is that now, no longer through meritorious but through imposed repentance, he will be melted down and be made pliable for the only form in which he can enter the Kingdom of the Father; this is the ‘form of Christ’ (Gal 4.19), since from now on Jesus Christ will be ‘publicly portrayed as crucified before [everyone’s] eyes’ (Gal 3.1). This is that dimension of judgment which is called ‘the purifying fire’: the existential event whereby definitive form is given, which should never be forgotten as accompanying the Judge’s act of sentencing. It is an essentially solitary process in which the creature is alone with the God who became man for her, and every contention between man and man—all questions of reciprocal rights or violation of rights, everything we still owe one another, everything that has made us guilty in our relations with one another, all reproaches, all claims, all expectations of redress which we continue to harbour: all of this is thrown back onto the one-to-one relationship between Christ and myself. He is the universal neighbour with whom I must fight out every dispute: Christ, my crucified Neighbour. And until I have paid the last penny of my own pretended justice (Mt 18.30, 34) I shall not be released from this ‘re-training programme’.

Of course, whatever in the Church has already on earth withstood this judgment on justice in the name of love, whatever has attained to the love of Christ, will not come into judgment since it already stands on the side of the love that judges: ‘Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?’ (1 Cor 6.2). But in this judgment the saints constitute no tribunal of their own; they are but the glory of Christ, who ‘will come together with all his saints’ (Zech 14.5), the ‘epiphany of his *parousia*’ (2 Thess 2.8). They are that part of his Bride, the Church, that is filled with nothing but Christ’s fulness, that part which cannot utter an opinion of its own, one that would be contrary to his opinion as Judge. Some part of the judged man who has known God will always stand on the side of the Judge and will judge the sinner along with him. The sinner, thus divided to the division of joints and marrow, will fall apart into a right and a left side. Something in himself will accuse that part of him that has not loved God, and that ‘something’ will find refuge in the Judge, so that, with himself as accuser, he stands alone and has no recourse but to flee to his Judge (Augustine). Something in him has already been claimed for itself by the Church’s consciousness; this more-than-individual element in him belongs to the Church and has from the outset forced his narrow self open that it may participate in the consciousness of Christ’s Bride.[92] But this supra-personal element of belonging to the Church is of no consolation to him now in the event of judgment; rather, it makes his solitude the more keen. And the self which did not want to transcend itself and pass over into the love of the Church must now join the judge in condemning itself—must now tear itself to pieces and be thrown into the fire.

The Bride of the Lamb does not go up from earth to heaven; together with Christ she comes ‘down from heaven from God’ (Rev 21.10). The wonderful geometry of her beauty is properly to be called ‘uranometry’: the measure, form, and splendour of heaven. And surely it is ‘granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure, for the fine linen signifies the righteous deeds of the saints’ (Rev 19.8), and these deeds derive from the ‘camp of the saints’ and the ‘beloved City, surrounded’ during the extreme distress (Rev 20.9). The gates of the City bear the names of the twelve tribes of Israel and the foundation-stones of its walls the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb (Rev 21.13f.), and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it (Rev 21.24). But all of this is but the adornment of her whom the ‘Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world’ (Rev 13.8), has by his death formed into his Bride. A new heaven and a new earth come to be, but only because ‘I make all things new’ (Is 43. 19) and because the old things have really ‘passed away’ (2 Cor 5.17).

ΧΑΙΡΕ ΜΑΡΙΑ Η ΜΗΤΗΡ ΤΟΥ ΦΩΤΟΣ

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End Notes

Foreword

[1] *Wahr-nehmen* is deliberately separated by von Balthasar into the two words consituting the compound *wahrnehmen* in order to indicate the etymological meaning of the word: ‘to take to be true’. (Tr.) Back to text.

I. Introduction

[1] With the pretence of ‘wanting to get behind it’ genetically. Back to text.

[2] E.g. Ronald Knoxs *Enthusiasm*. Back to text.

[3] See F. X. Funk, ‘Ein angebliches Wort Basilius des Grossen über die Bildverehrung.’ *TQ* 70 (1888), p. 297f. Back to text.

[4] F. Medicus, *Grundfragen der Ästhetik* (Jena, 1907), p. 14. Back to text.

[5] See the study of Hamann in vol. 2.2, and also my article ‘Hamanns theologische Ästhetik,’ in the *Festschrift für Alois Dempf*. Back to text.

[6] The two words attempt to translate the double meaning of the single German word *liebenswürdig*. (Tr.) Back to text.

[7] *Das Ereignis des Schönen* (Klett, 1953). Nebels attempt is not isolated. We must consider him in connection with Walter Otto’s great achievements. Without falling into Hegelian syntheses, Otto’s mature skill in interpreting Greek antiquity and mythology in general has overcome the polemical situation (i.e. Greece versus Christ) created by Heyse, Schiller, Goethe, the middle Hölderin, Nietzsche, F. G. Jünger, and others. There are again important similarities to Schelling in his last period. Back to text.

[8] Let us note that, in his last works, Gustav Siewerth wholly complies with this proviso. The same is true of Ferdinand Ulrich. Back to text.

[9] The aesthetic myth of Christianity in the early Middle Ages becomes the exclusive measure of Biblical revelation in Wolfram von den Steinens *Welt des Mittelalters*. Back to text.

[10] *De rerum originatione radicali*, 1697 (ed. Erdmann, 1840, pp. 147-148). Back to text.

[11] *Monadologie*, 87 (*ibid.*, p. 712). Back to text.

[12] See M.-D. Chenu's *La théologie comme science au XIII^{e} siècle* (1943^{1}), and his *Introduction à l'étude de S. Thomas d'Aquin* (1950). Back to text.

[13] See, for instance, J. Schildenbergers *Vom Geheimnis des Gotteswortes* (1950), and above all the works of Henri de Lubac on the fourfold meaning of Scripture, most importantly his *Histoire et Esprit* (1950) and his volumes on the history of exegesis, *Exégèse médiévale* (beginning in 1959), with abundant bibliographies. See also E. Przywara's *Alter und Neuer Bund* (1956). Back to text.

[14] *Aesthetica*, ed. Nadler, 2, p. 204. Back to text.

[15] *Biblische Betrachtungen*, Nadler, 1, p. 5. Back to text.

[16] *Ibid*., 1, p. 97. Back to text.

[17] *Kleeblatt hellenistischer Briefe*, 2; Nadler, 2, p. 171. Back to text.

[18] *Zwey Scherflein*, 1; Nadler, 3, p. 234. Back to text.

[19] *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten*, Nadler, 2, pp. 70-71. Back to text.

[20] *Ibid*., p. 74. Back to text.

[21] *Fünf Hirtenbriefe*, 5; Nadler, 2, p. 367. Back to text.

[22] *Zweifel und Einfälle*, Nadler, 3, pp. 191-192; *Konxompax*, Nadler, 3, p. 217f. Back to text.

[23] *Konxompax*, Nadler, 3, p. 226. Back to text.

[24] *Philologische Einfälle und Zweifel*, Nadler, 3, pp. 35-53. Back to text.

[25] *Älteste Urkunde* I, 6; *Hieroglyphe* (ed. Cotta, 3, p. 271). Back to text.

[26] *Maran Atha*, Vorrede (Cotta, 8, pp. 5-6). Back to text.

[27] *Ibid*. 1. pp. 8-9. Back to text.

[28] *Älteste Urkunde*, I, 3 (Cotta, 3, p. 228f). Back to text.

[29] *Ibid*. I, 4 (Cotta, 3, p. 239f). Back to text.

[30] *Geist der ebräischen Poesie*, I, 1 (Cotta, 1, p. 19). Back to text.

[31] *Cf*. the derivation of myth in the fragment 'Von Entstehung und Fortpflanzung der ersten Religionsbegriffe' (Cotta, 5, pp. 76-82; *cf*. pp. 86-88). On the opposition between mythical *gnosis* and Judaism, see *Älteste Urkunde*, II, 4 (*Morgenländische Philosophie, Cotta*, 4, pp. 156f). Back to text.

[32] *Von Religion, Lehrmeinungen und Gebräuchen*, VI, 9 (Cotta, II, p. 238). Back to text.

[33] *Ibid*., V (Cotta, II, p. 259). Back to text.

[34] *Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament aus einer neu eröffneten morgenländischen Quelle*, I, 1 (Cotta 7, pp. 19-20). Back to text.

[35] See the essay 'Plastik' (Cotta, 25, pp. 21-109). Back to text.

[36] *Von der Auferstehung als Glauben, Geschichte und Lehre* (Cotta, 9, p. 325f, esp. p. 371). Back to text.

[37] *Vom Geist des Christentums*, VI: ‘Entgeistung’, 1 (Cotta, II, p. 47). Back to text.

[38] *Ibid*. (Cotta II, p. 43 and pp. 58-59). Back to text.

[39] *Vom ersten Augurium des Christentums* (Cotta, 11, p. 103f). Back to text.

[40] H. Fromm, *Bibliographic deutscher Übersetzungen aus dem Französischen* (1950), II, pp. 62-66. Back to text.

[41] *Défense du Génie du Christianisme*. Similar comments in the *Mémoires d’Outre-Tombe* (crit. ed. by Maurice Levaillant, II, p. 39f). Back to text.

[42] ‘To deliver a great blow to the heart, to strike the imagination vividly.’ (Tr.) Back to text.

[43] The work remained unfinished. What had already been written was edited and published posthumously by Gugler’sfriend Widmer, who was also the editor of Sailer’s complete works. Our quotations bear the following symbols: I = *Die heilige Kunst*, Landshut, 1814; II = *Die heilige Kunst: Darstellung der Bücher des Alten Testaments*, 1. Hälfte, Lucerne (place of publication likewise for all the following), 1817; III = 2. Hälfte, 1818. IV = *Fortsetzung der heiligen Kunst: Darstellung der Bucher des Neuen Testaments*, 1. Hälfte (*Nachgelassene Schriften*, 3), 1828; V = 2. Halfte in 2 Abteilungen (*Nachgelassene Schriften*, 4), 1836. With regard to its contents and the literary influences which affected it, the work still remains wholly unresearched. Of great biographical and documentary interest, but theologically wholly unsatisfactory, is J. L. Schiffmann’s *Lebensgeschichte Alois Guglers* (Augsburg, 1833). See also K. Werner, *Geschichte der* (deutshen) katholischen Theologie seit dem trienter Konzil (Cotta, 1866), pp. 362-370. Guglers influence on Möhler is unmistakable. Back to text.

[44] I, pp. 335ff (as general category of mankind); V, pp. 8, 183f, 213-246; also his whole interpretation of prophecy in III, pp. 295-518. Back to text.

[45] See, for instance, II, pp. 88, 131: ‘If we examine our knowledge more closely, we will see that it leads us back to faith.’ Back to text.

[46] Our quotations use the following symbols: N = *Natur und Gnade* and H = *Herrlichkeiten*, both of these quoted from the new editions of Grabmann and Grosche (1941). M = *Mysterien* and D = *Dogmatik*, both quoted from the original editions. Back to text.

[47] ‘O, what awe and respect do we Christians not owe our soul! With what care must we not protect this pure mirror of divinity, so that not even the tiniest

speck of dust should spot it, to say nothing of the dirty filth of carnal lust. . . .' (H, III, § 9, p. 267). Back to text.

[48] D, II, § 151, esp. n. 481-482. *Cf.* in this connection the meaning attributed to Mary's marriage in D, III, § 275, n. 1575f. Back to text.

[49] *Wahrheit*, vol. 1 (Benziger, 1947), ch. 3. Back to text.

[50] 'Because through the mystery of the incarnate Word the new light of your brightness has shone onto the eyes of our mind; that knowing God visibly, we might be snatched up by this into the love of invisible things.' (Tr.) Back to text.

[51] 'Perception', from *per* = 'thoroughly' and *capere* = 'seize, take', German *nehmen* (Tr.) Back to text.

[52] *The Divine Names*, IV, 13. Trans. by C.E. Rolt (London: SPCK, 1940), pp. 105-106. Translation slightly altered. (Tr.) Back to text.

II. The Subjective Evidence

[1] TDNT, art. πιστεύω. Back to text.

[2] J. Botterweck, *Gott erkennen* (Bonn, 1951), p. 73. Back to text.

[3] *Ibid*. p. 81. Back to text.

[4] For this whole issue in Paul, see Dupont, *Gnosis* (1949) and J. Mouroux, 'Remarques sur la foi dans S. Paul', *Rev. Apolog*. LXV (1937), pp. 129f. and 281f. Back to text.

[5] Huby, 'La connaissance de foi dans S. Jean', *RSR* (1931), XXI, pp. 385-421. Back to text.

[6] *La Spiritualite du Nouveau Testament et des Peres* (1960), pp. 262-314. Back to text.

[7] This is why, even with vision, faith does not pass away: "Οταν ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον τὴς πίστεως τὸ ἐϰ μέϱους ϰαταϱγηθήσεται τὴς διὰ εἴδους πίστεως πολλῷ διαφεϱούσης. . . ." (*Commentary on John* X. 43; Preuschen, p. 222). Back to text.

[8] Völker rejected this misunderstanding with both energy and success in: *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes* (1931), pp. 81-85, and *Der wahre Gnostiker nach Clemens Alexandrinus* (1952), pp. 375f. Back to text.

[9] But two things must be considered. The philosophic faith intended here has nothing to do with the *fides naturalis* of more recent fundamental theologians, who by this term designate the natural and purely rational faith which (possibly) is produced by the historical signs of Christian revelation. Furthermore, the 'philosophic faith' of both late antiquity and of the modern period indirectly

stands in the light of the Biblical revelation which has already taken place; in part, such ‘faith’ may be seen as a warding off or secularization of revelation. But it is possible that, precisely in the light of Christian revelation, the light of Being can itself shine much brighter and deeper, and that what we can call Gods revelation, his grace and his favour, can enter the philosophers consciousness in a wholly different and new manner, so that here philosophy—consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, objectively or subjectively—is flooded by the light of Christ and becomes ‘Christian philosophy’. This then gives support to Guardini’s view that, besides pure philosophy (reason alone reflecting only on the truths of reason) and pure theology (Christian faith reflecting on the truths of revelation), a third discipline is possible in which truths of reason, illumined by the light of revelation, are contemplated by a reason that thinks in the light of faith. Back to text.

[10] M.D. Chenu, *La theologie comme science au XIII*^{e} *siécle* (1943^{2}). Back to text.

[11] 3 d 23 a 17 sol (quoted from: Anselm Stolz, ‘Glaubensgnade und Glaubenslicht nach Thomas von Aquin’, *Stud. Anselm*., 1 [1933], pp. 82-83). Back to text.

[12] R. Aubert, *Le problème de l’acte de foi*, 2nd ed. (1950), p. 705. Back to text.

[13] See my commentary on the charisms in Thomas Aquinas, in the German-Latin edition of his works, vol. 23 (1954), pp. 254-464. Back to text.

[14] ‘Les yeux de la foi’, in: *Rech. Sc. Rel*. 1 (191o), pp. 241-259, 444-475; further articles in the same periodical in 1913 and 1914. Back to text.

[15] *Cf*. his important work *L’intellectualisme de S. Thomas* (3rd ed., Paris, Beauchesne, 1936), intro. by Léonce de Grandmaison. Back to text.

[16] *Cf*. Aubert’s historical survey, *op. cit*., pp. 451f., 587f., 689f. Back to text.

[17] Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Poems and Verse Plays, ed. Michael Hamburger* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1961), p. 39. Back to text.

[18] See ‘Fides Christi’, in: *Sponsa Verbi: Theologische Skizzen*, Vol. 2 (1961), pp. 45-79. Back to text.

[19] For the personal aspects of faith, see M. Scheler (*Das Ewige im Menschen*, 1954^{4}) and especially Jean Mouroux (*Je crois en toi*, 1949). Back to text.

[20] *Das Ewige im Menschen* (1954^{4}), p. 138. Back to text.

[21] This is a Brahmanic formula which means ‘This art thou.’ It refers to the unity achieved between the Ego (*Atman*) and the One which underlies the world (*Brahman*). (Translator’s note from the Italian edition.) Back to text.

[22] *Serm*. 98, 3 (PL 38, 592). Back to text.

[23] 2 a 2ae q 5 a 2 ad 1 et ad 2. Other references in Aubert, p. 56, note 28. Back to text.

[24] *De Ver*, 149 ad 4. Back to text.

[25] 3d 23q 2a 2q ia 2 ad 3. Back to text.

[26] 1 *Sent*. prol. a 5; ia q ia 2 ad 2. Back to text.

[27] Art. ‘Miracle’ in: *Vocab. techn. et crit. de la phil*. I, p. 471. *L’Action* (1893); Paris, PUF, 1973: pp. 395f. Back to text.

[28] Van Hove, *La doctrine du miracle chez Saint Thomas* (Wetteren, 1927), pp. 132f. Back to text.

[29] S. Th. 3a q 43 a 1. Back to text.

[30] G. Söhngen, ‘Wunderzeichen und Glaube’, in: *Die Einheit der Theologie* (Munich, 1952), p. 283. Back to text.

[31] H. Vignon, *De virtutibus infusis* (Rome, 1943), p. 163. Back to text.

[32] See Joseph Coppens, *Les Harmonies des deux Testaments* (Tournai, 1949^2), with bibliography. Back to text.

[33] *Cf*. ‘Die Wurzel Jesse’, in: *Sponsa Verbi* (Einsiedeln, 1961), p. 311. Back to text.

[34] J. Mouroux, *Je crois en toi* (1949), pp. 43f. Back to text.

[35] Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Revelatione*, I (Rome, 1931^3), p. 512. Back to text.

[36] *Ipsa realitas christiana, Christus scil. et Ecclesia. . . , omnibus per seipsam directe praesentatur in sua specie sensibili . . . at prior haec propositio directa manet imperfecta et confusa. . . . Ideo mysterium christianum modo pleniori indirecte (seu mediate) . . . at perfecte proponitur per revelationem mediatam, i.e. Christo per Ecclesiam*. Vignon, *op. cit*., p. 156. Back to text.

[37] ‘Fides Christi’, in: *Sponsa Verbi* (1961), pp. 45-79. Back to text.

[38] Von Balthasar here refers to the form of the word *Erfahrung*, in which the prefix *er*- expresses the concept’s character as event. This does not apply wholly to the Latin *experientia*, whose etymology derives from the adjective *expers*, and hence from the elements *ex* and *pars*. (Tr.) Back to text.

[39] In connection with what follows, see especially Jean Mourouxs penetrating work, *L’Expérience chrétienne: Introduction à une Théologie* (Aubier, 1952). Back to text.

[40] *Sic ipse (Christus) habitat in nobis perfidem informem, et hoc modo nihil prohibet nos cum certitudine scire quod Christus habitet in nobis* (on 2 Cor 13.5). Likewise Cajetan, who speaks of a *certe scire se habere fidem* and a

certitudo experimentalis (De Gratia, IX, c. 12). Back to text.

[41] This is a reference to the classical distinction in modern Protestant theology between *Historie*, a mere reconstruction of a past event, and *Geschichte*, an interpretation of history which involves the present and thus becomes contemporary. (Tr.) Back to text.

[42] The original explicates the word *Erfahrung* ('experience') by reference to *fahren* ('to travel'), which is its root. (Tr.) Back to text.

[43] More on this in the essay 'Nachfolge und Amt', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (1961), pp. 80-148. Back to text.

[44] E. Boismard, 'La Connaissance de Dieu dans l'Alliance Nouvelle d'apres la 1re Lettre de S. Jean', in: *Rev. Bibl*. (1949), pp. 365f. Back to text.

[45] *Die Johannesbriefe* (1953), p. 93. Back to text.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 62. Back to text.

[47] 'To feel' and 'feeling' translate *fühlen* and *Gefühl* quite precisely. However, to these von Balthasar here contrasts *spüren* and *Gespür*, which have no precise English equivalent. The words 'to apprehend' and 'apprehension' will have to do. Even though these words are active concepts, of course, according to their etymology, nevertheless their semantic meaning is generally that of a passive receptivity, which is the nuance the author intends. (Tr.) Back to text.

[48] For more exact analyses we again refer the reader to Jean Mouroux, *Expérience chrétienne* (1952), in which, in addition to philosophy and theology, he also gives due attention to tradition. Back to text.

[49] *Enarratio in Psalmos*, 74, n. 1 (PL 36. 946). Back to text.

[50] Cyprian, *Ep*. 63, n. 11 (Hartel, pp. 701f). H. Lewy, *Sobria Ebrietas*, 1929. Back to text.

[51] '[The pilgrim] soon began to sense a noticeable change in his soul. . . . He began to observe with amazement this change [of dispositions] which he had never before noticed, and he thought to himself: What sort of new life will this be which we are now undertaking?' (Ignatius of Loyola, *Autobiography*, ed. B. Schneider, 1955, p. 57). Back to text.

[52] On the personality of the Church, see 'Wer ist die Kirche?' in: *Sponsa Verbi* (1961), pp. 148-202. Back to text.

[53] Jean Coste, 'Notion grecque et notion biblique de la "Souffrance éducatrice" à propos d'Hébreux V, 8'; in: *RSR 43 (1955), pp. 481-523*. Back to text.

[54] A fragment quoted in the *Dion of Synesius of Cyrene* (ed. Terzaghi, 1944), p. 254. Back to text.

[55] *Div. Nom.* 2, 9; PG 3. 648B. Back to text.

[56] *De fuga*, 138. Back to text.

[57] PG 79. 1165f. See the new translation with commentary by Irenaeus Hausherr in: RAM 35/36 (1959-60). Back to text.

[58] M. Frankenberg, ed., *Evagrius Ponticus* (Abh. Kon. Ges. d. Wis., *N.F.* XIII, 2), Berlin, 1912. Back to text.

[59] Gressmann, ed., *Texte und Untersuchungen* 39. 4 (1913), p. 151. Further texts in Hausherr's commentary on the *De Oratione*, c. 28. Back to text.

[60] PG 40. 1271-1276. Back to text.

[61] Hermann Dörries, *Symeon von Mesopotamien; Die Überlieferung der messalianischen 'Makarios'-Schriften. Texte und Untersuchungen* 55. 1 (1941). In what follows this source is referred to as D, while the 50 Homilies (PG 34. 449-821) are referred to only by their number. Back to text.

[62] *Gregorii Nysseni Op. asc.*, 1952. Likewise, *Two Rediscovered Works of Ancient Christian Literature, Gregory of Nyssa and Macarius*, 1954. Back to text.

[63] References in my *Gnostische Centurien des Maximus Confessor*, 1941, pp. 33f.; 2nd ed. in *Kosmische Liturgie*, 1961. Back to text.

[64] This expression occurs as frequently in Macarius as in Gregory of Nyssa. Dorries points to passages that betray an 'Alexandrian' Christology. 'Ἔϰ δύο φύσεων ϰαὶ ὑποστάσεων ἓν εἰδος' (D 166) could anticipate the μία φύσις: the emphasis here is not placed on the dogmatic aspect, but on the *eidos*, the form through whose humanity we experience the divine 'without mediation'. In a very Origenistic mode Macarius says: 'He did everything in order to represent himself to us as a likeness [of himself]' (D 341). See the letter on the ability of the Logos to transform all things (D 225): in him the sons of the Spirit see the Godhead—Father, Son and Spirit—corporeally, but also the pure man—obedience, piety nature as it was originally: Christ is both God and man become visible. Back to text.

[65] The αἴσθησις of the divine is, therefore, a recurrent theme. See Dorries, p. 433ff. Back to text.

[66] Quoted from the critical edition of his works (ed. des Places, S.J., *Sources Chrétiennes*, 1955). Back to text.

[67] See the warning of Fr. Hausherr ('Les grands courants de la spiritualité orientale', *Or. Chr. Per.* I, 1935, p. 127, and *Or. Chr. Per.* V, 1939, p. 248) that the central concern of Messalianism must be formulated in this and no other way, because otherwise we would have to number among the Messalians authors

who have nothing in common with them. On the other hand, Hausherrs remark: ‘Applique a Diadoque, ce principe le sauve entièrement’, does not seem to me to be quite so obvious. The reserve shown by M. Rothenhausler with regard to this question (‘Die asketische Lehrschrift des Diadochus von Photike’, in: *Heilige Überlieferung*, 1938) appears justified. Back to text.

[68] This is the subtitle of the only thorough monograph on Diadochus: Friedrich Dorr, *Diadochus von Photike und die Messalianer*, Freiburg im B., 1937. Back to text.

[69] See *Visio* 14: God ‘limits himself even while remaining unlimited’: an ‘Origenistic’ formulation, but in the spirit of Chalcedon. Back to text.

[70] Other passages are negligible because the word πϱόσωπον, in the question directed at Macarius, derives from the circle of his listeners (685CD, 765D). Back to text.

[71] Stiefenhofer, in: *Bibliothek der Kirchenväter*, Munich, 1913. Back to text.

[72] Macarius and Diadochus should be considered only as examples of a complete theology of experience. We could also suggest various Egyptian documents that antedate Evagrius, for instance, the letters of Ammonas (*Patrol. Orient*. 10 [Paris, 1915] and 11 [1916]) and the works of Pachomius (A. Boon, *Pacho-miana lat*., 1932; L. Th. Lefort, *Oeuvres de S. Pachôme*, 1956). Back to text.

[73] See my *Kosmische Liturgie* (Einsiedeln, 1961^2), pp. 330-338, and the discussion of a similar text in Evagrius. Back to text.

[74] Gregory Palamas, *Defense des saints Hesychastes*, trans. J. Meyendorff (Louvain, 1959), II. 1. 29, pp. 280f. Back to text.

[75] I owe many references to texts on *experientia* to an unpublished work of Dom Miquel, O.S.B. (Paris), and to the article ‘Experience’ by A. Léonard, O.P, in the *Dict. de Spir*. There is an abundant collection of texts in Karl Boeckl, *Die sieben Gaben des Heiligen Geistes in ihrer Bedeutung fur die Mystik nach der Theologie des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg im B., 1931) and in the pioneering works of Dom Lottin. Back to text.

[76] *Loc. cit*. Back to text.

[77] On all of this, see the chapter on Augustine in the second volume of this work. Back to text.

[78] *Augustin als Philosoph*, posthumous work. Fr. Klossowski has translated a chapter of it in: *Dieu Vivant* ii (1948), ‘Les Sens spirituels chez Saint Augustin’, pp. 83-105. Back to text.

[79] Texts in F. Lieblang, *Grundfragen der mystischen Theologie nach Gregors*

des Grossen Moralia und Ezechielhomilien (Freiburg im B., 1934). Back to text.

[80] *De Concord*. III (Schmitt 2, p. 277). Back to text.

[81] *Ep. de incarn. Verbi*, 1 recens. (Schmitt 1, p. 284). Back to text.

[82] Bernard, *Sermo de div*. 18. 1 (PL 183. 587). Back to text.

[83] E. Gilson, *La theologie mystique de S. Bernard* (Paris, 1947), pp. 35-38. Back to text.

[84] *In Cant. sermo* 85 (PL 183. 1194C), a number of similar refs. in *De diligendo Deo* (PL 182. 986-998). Back to text.

[85] *Ibid., sermo* 1 (789C); 3. 1 (794); 22. 2 (878C). Back to text.

[86] *De Convers*. 25 (PL 182. 848B). Back to text.

[87] PL 180. 695-725. Back to text.

[88] See my *Presence et Pensee*, Paris, 1942. Back to text.

[89] *De natura corporis et animae*, 721B-722C. Back to text.

[90] *De natura et dignitate amoris*, 35-37, ed. Davy (1953), pp. 112-116. Back to text.

[91] *Commentaire sur le Cantique*, ed. Davy (1958), n. 46. Back to text.

[92] N. 45. Back to text.

[93] N. 103. Back to text.

[94] N. 127. Back to text.

[95] N. 83. Back to text.

[96] Abbot Absalom, *Sermo* 35 (PL 211. 205). Back to text.

[97] William of Auxerre, *Summa Aurea* (1500), f 181ra. Back to text.

[98] *Scholastik* 20 (1949), pp. 39-58; *Dogmengeschichte der Frühscholastik*, I, 2 (Regensburg, 1953), pp. 57-74. Back to text.

[99] *Die Entwicklung der Gnadenlehre in der Hochscholastik mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Kard. Matteo d'Acquasparta* (Freib. th. Stud. 62, 1942). Back to text.

[100] *De virtutibus*, c. 11 (*Opera*, *Paris-Orleans*, 1674), p. 143; given in this place as his earlier option. Back to text.

[101] Ia IIae. 68. 1. Back to text.

[102] Ia IIae. 68. 2. Back to text.

[103] 3 d 35 q 2 a 1 sol 1. Back to text.

[104] IIa IIae. 45. 2. Back to text.

[105] Id 15 q 4 a 1 sol, ad 1. Back to text.

[106] Id 14 q 2 a 2 sol, ad 2, ad 3. Back to text.

[107] I a 43. 5 ad 2. Back to text.

[108] IIa IIae. 97. 2 ad 2; see 1 a 1, 6 ad 3. Back to text.

[109] See above, pp. 160f. Back to text.

[110] See the works of P. Rousselot, Gustav Siewerth and K. Rahner. Back to text.

[111] Blondel, *L'Action* (Paris, 1893; PUF 1973). Here, through the total human experience and through the discernment of spirits, the theological *a priori* and the *vérité expérimentale* of the rightness of faith are finally discovered (p. 452). In connection with this, see particularly: Yves de Moncheuil's introduction to his Blondel anthology (*Pages religieuses*, Paris, 1942); all Cardinal Newman's 'empirical' theology; Léonce de Grandmaison, *La religion personnelle* (Paris, 1930^2); A. Lemonnyer, O.P, *Notre vie divine* (Paris, 1936); Karl Adam, *Glaube und Glaubenswissenschaft* (Rottenburg, 1920; enlarged in 1923). Back to text.

[112] Des Places' translation ('passions') misses the meaning. Back to text.

[113] PL 199. 954D. Back to text.

[114] Clm 6935, fol. 1f. For extensive details concerning the opinions of the schools, see Dom O. Lottin, 'Nature des Dons du S. Esprit', in: *Psychologie et Morale aux 12^e et 13^e siècles*, III, 2/1, pp. 329-456. Back to text.

[115] *De virtutibus* (1674), p. 152. See Noel Valors, *Guillaume d'Auvergne* (1880), pp. 266f. Back to text.

[116] There are a great number of Patristic parallels in Peter Vogt, *Christliche Aszetik im Lichte der ignatianischen Exerzitien*, vol. III, 2 (1921), pp. 107-248. Back to text.

[117] On this, see especially: Fr. Wulf, ed., *Ignatius von Loyola: Seine geistliche Gestalt und sein Vermächtnis* (1956), in particular the contributions of A. Haas, H. Rahner, H. Bacht and the essay of K. Rahner, 'Die ignatianische Logik der existentiellen Erkenntnis', pp. 345-405. Back to text.

[118] Jeanne-Lydie Gore, *La notion d'indifference chez Fenelon et ses sources* (Paris, 1956). Back to text.

[119] Jean Mouroux, *L'Expérience Chrétienne* (Paris, 1952), pp. 55f. Back to text.

[120] *Ibid*., p. 214. Back to text.

[121] We may say this on the basis of the *communicatio idiomatum*. The sixth-century Church even approved the so-called 'Theopaschitic' formula: 'One of the Trinity has suffered.' Back to text.

[122] See 'Fides Christi', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (Einsiedeln, 1961). Back to text.

[123] This is an exact transposition to the Christian dimension of Proclus’ doctrine of categories, which rotates around the central concept of ἀμεθέϰτως μετεχόμενον (‘unpartakably partaken’). Already Denys the Areopagite anticipated this Christian translation, in the relationship both between God and the angels and between the heavenly and the ecclesial hierarchy. Both instances imply the aesthetic (indissoluble) concept of the reality of the symbol. Back to text.

[124] *Comment. in IIa IIae*, Leonine edition, X, p. 374b. Back to text.

[125] 1 a 12. 133^{m}; *C. Gent*. 3. 154 init. Back to text.

[126] Maximus, *Ambigua*, PG 91. 1304D. Back to text.

[127] *Eine Untersuchung über die Wahrnehmung des Menschensohnes durch die Apostel* (Zürich: Evang. Verlag, 1946), quoted in what follows as MB. Back to text.

[128] MB, p. 72. Back to text.

[129] MB, p. 209. Back to text.

[130] MB, p. 65. Back to text.

[131] MB, p. 107, 114f. Back to text.

[132] MB, p. 108. Back to text.

[133] *De Genesi ad litt*. 1. 12. Back to text.

[134] In his gradation of the imagination’s prophetic vision (which is accompanied by the light of spiritual interpretation). See my commentary on IIa IIae, q 174 (vol. 23 of the Latin-German edition of Thomas, 1954, pp. 351f.). Back to text.

[135] MB, p. 340. Back to text.

[136] Lyder Brun, ‘Die Gottesschau des johanneischen Christus’, in: *Symbolae Osloenses* V (1927), pp. 1-22. Back to text.

[137] MB, p. 38. Back to text.

[138] See ‘Fides Christi’, in: *Sponsa Verbi* (Einsiedeln, 1961), pp. 45-79. Back to text.

[139] A. Schlatter, *Die Sprache und Heimat des vierten Evangelisten* (1902), p. 85; Jer 49.14; Is 21.10; 28.22; Ez 33.30, and so forth. Back to text.

[140] ‘Fides Christi’, in: *Sponsa Verbi* (1961). Back to text.

[141] And this must suffice. Whoever would say more will either judge Christs experience of God by the laws of ordinary human psychology, which cannot grasp the hypostatic union; or, starting abstractly from Christ’svision of God, he will no longer make Christ’s human psyche credible; or, finally, he will no

longer be able to unite Christ’s different *scientiae* into one unified life of the soul. Back to text.

[142] MB, p. 71. Back to text.

[143] MB, p. 41. Back to text.

[144] W. Baudissin, ‘Gottschau in der alttestamentlichen Religion’, in: *Arch. f Rel. Wiss*. 18 (1915), pp. 173f. F. Notscher, *Das Angesicht Gottes schauen nach biblischer und babylonischer Auffassung* (Würzburg, 1924). R. Bultmann, ‘Untersuchungen zum Johannesevangelium, Θεὸν οὐδεῖς ἐώϱαϰεν πώποτε’, in: *ZNW29* (1930), pp. 169f. E. Fascher, *‘Deus Invisibilis’*, in: *Marb. Theol. Stud*. I (1931), pp. 47f. O. Samuel, ‘Lass mich deine Herrlichkeit sehen’, in: *Evang. Theol*. 2 (1935), pp. 275f. Back to text.

[145] The texts in MB, pp. 68f. Back to text.

[146] MB, p. 69. Back to text.

[147] Thus Paul Gächter, *Petrus und seine Zeit* (Innsbruck-Vienna-Munich, 1958), 9: ‘The Limits of Paul’s Apostleship’ (pp. 338-450), not lacking in theological enormities. For Gächter, Paul did not furnish a proof for his apostleship. Back to text.

[148] For instance Markus Barth, *loc. cit*., pp. 136ff. Back to text.

[149] More on this in the second part of this volume. Back to text.

[150] See ‘Wer ist die Kirche?’, in: *Sponsa Verbi* (1961). Back to text.

[151] See *ibid*. Back to text.

[152] J. Schniewind, entry for ‘Matthaus’ in: *Neues Göttinger Bibelwerk*, 2 (1950). Back to text.

[153] G. van der Leeuw, ‘External Soul, Schutzgeist und der agyptische Ka’, in: *Zeitschriftf äg. Sprache*. See also his *Phanomenologie der Religion* (Tubingen, 1933), secs. 42-44. Back to text.

[154] H. Odeberg, *The Fourth Gospel* (Uppsala, 1929), pp. 33f. Back to text.

[155] H. Windisch, ‘Angelophanien um den Menschensohn auf Erden’, in: *ZNW* 30 (1931), p. 216. But see Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Gottingen, 1941), pp. 74f. Back to text.

[156] P. Claudel, *Cinq grandes Odes* (Paris, NRF, 1936), 2nd Ode, pp. 51ff. Back to text.

[157] *Theologische Traktate* (Munich, 1951), pp. 323-408. Back to text.

[158] *Ibid*., p. 375. Back to text.

[159] *Oeuvres poétiques completes (Pléiade, 1941), p. 698: ‘O Lady of the way, and of reconcilement, / O mirror of justice and precision of soul, / You alone*

know, O great our Lady, / What is detainment and what recollection.’ Back to text.

[160] See especially: Karl Rahner, ‘Le début d’une doctrine des cinq sens spirituals chez Origène’, in: *RAM* 13 (1932), pp. 113-145. Here all the texts are gathered and interpreted. Rahner’swork is dated only in the sense that he bases his interpretation on those parts of the *Commentary on the Psalms* which I have since demonstrated belong to Evagrius (‘Die Hiera des Evagrius’, in: *ZKTh* 63 [1939], pp. 86-100, 181-189). See more recently: Josèphe-Marie Rondeau, ‘Le commentaire sur les Psaumes d’Evagre le Pontique’, in: *Or. Chr. Per.* 26 (1960), pp. 307-348. Origens main texts are to be found in my anthology *Geist und Feuer* (Salzburg, 1953^2), pp. 307-363. Other Patristic texts in Rahner. Back to text.

[161] Further texts in *Geist und Feuer*; text, pp. 621f. Back to text.

[162] On this see G. Horn, ‘Les sens de l’esprit d’apres Diadoque de Photice’, in: *RAM* 8 (1927), pp. 402-419. Back to text.

[163] Texts in K. Rahner, *loc. cit.*, p. 143. Back to text.

[164] Karl Rahner, ‘La doctrine des “sens spirituels” au moyen-âge, en particulier chez S. Bonaventure’, in *RAM* 14 (1933), pp. 263-299. Also more recently: J. Walsh, S.J., ‘Guillaume de St. Thierry et les sens spirituels’, in: *RAM* 35 (1959), pp. 27-42. Dom P. Doyere, O.S.B., ‘S. Gertrude et les sens spirituels’, in: *RAM* 36 (1960), pp. 429-446. Back to text.

[165] See J. Walsh, *op. cit*., p. 33. Back to text.

[166] In the Augustinian *Imago Trinitatis*, the ground of memory is ordered to the Father, reason to the Son, and the will to the Holy Spirit. Thus, faith corresponds to the first, the attempt to understand faith corresponds to the second, and the experience of faiths reality to the third. Only thus does the Bernardian doctrine of *amor-intellectus* become wholly comprehensible in a theological sense. See O. Brooke, O.S.B., ‘The Trinitarian Aspect of the Ascent of the Soul to God in the Theology of William of St. Thierry’, in: *RThAM* (1959), pp. 85-127. Back to text.

[167] *Summa* I. 4 (Paris, 1500), fol. 300f. Back to text.

[168] *Summa* II. q. 70 (ed. Quaracchi, m. 3, no. 381f.). Back to text.

[169] 3 *Sent*. d 13. a 4 (ed. Borgnet 28, p. 240). *De coel. hier*. 15. 5 (Borgnet 14, p. 414). Back to text.

[170] The chief texts are: *Itinerarium mentis ad Deum* 4. 3 (Quaracchi V, p. 306); *Breviloquium* 5. 6 (Quaracchi V, p. 259f.); 3 *Sent*. d. 13 (Quaracchi III, pp. 291f.); the others in K. Rahner. Back to text.

[171] *Compendium theologicae veritatis* 5. 56 (in the Borgnet edition of Albert: 34. 191; in the Vives edition of Bonaventure: 8. 196). Back to text.

[172] Third Part, sect. 46 (Bonaventure-Vives 418). Back to text.

[173] *De 7 donis Spiritus Sancti* 1.3 and 2.7 (Vives 7. 590; 637). *De 7 itineribus aeternitatis* (de 4 itin. 4. 2; *loc. cit*. 443; de 6 itin. 1-6; *loc. cit*. 464-472). Back to text.

[174] K. Rahner, *op. cit*., pp. 293f. Back to text.

[175] For what follows, see: M. Olphe-Gaillard, S.J., 'Les sens spirituels dans l'histoire de la spiritualité', in: *Nos Sens et Dieu* (Etudes Carmelitaines, 1954, pp. 179-193, with an historical survey). J. Marechal, SJ., 'Applications des Sens', in: *Dict. Spir*. I (1937), pp. 810-828. Marechal, *Etudes sur la psychologie des mystiques* II (1937), pp. 365-382. Hugo Rahner, S.J., 'Die Anwendung der Sinne in der Betrachtungsmethode des hl. Ignatius von Loyola', in: *ZKTh* 79 (1957), pp. 434-456 (with a longer bibliography). Back to text.

[176] See E. Przywara, *Theologie der Exerzitien* I (Freiburg, 1938), pp. 137f. Back to text.

[177] H. Pinard de la Boullaye, 'Sentir, sentimiento y sentido dans le style de S. Ignace', in: *Archivum hist. Soc. Jesu* 25 (1956), pp. 416-430. Back to text.

[178] *Monumenta Ignatiana*, Ser. II, vol. 2 (1955), pp. 300-303. Back to text.

[179] *Monumenta Nadal* IV (1905), pp. 677f. Back to text.

[180] *Commentarii in Exercitia* 2. 2 (ed. Brugge, 1882), p. 23. Back to text.

[181] *Ibid*., pp. 23f. Marechal also refers to Suarez, De Ponte and Surin as going in the same direction. Back to text.

[182] *Directorium* 20. 4 (*Mon. Ign*. II. 2. 681). Back to text.

[183] In his commentary on the *Exercises*, 2nd Week, 5th Meditation, Nota 29. Back to text.

[184] Ludolphus de Saxonia, *Vita Jesu Christi* (ed. Rigollot, Paris, 1870), p. 9. Back to text.

[185] Thomas is here consciously hearkening back to Origen by referring to Origens *Hom*. 3. 7 *in Leviticum* (see 3 *Sent*. d 13; *expos, textus*; ed. Moos, Paris, 1932, no. 160). Peter Lombard had remarked that four of the five senses are in the head, which is Christ, and only the sense of touch is in the body—the Communion of Saints. This led Thomas to distinguish as follows: in so far as the spiritual senses are named after the specific acts of the bodily senses, they are active in all the saints; but, in so far as the sense of touch alone is indispensable and the others signify the fulness of perfection, only the sense of touch is present in the body as necessary to salvation, while the fulness of all grace resides in

Christ alone. Back to text.

[186] We will simply give within the body of the text the page numbers referring to the English edition of *Church Dogmatics* III/2. (Publisher's note.) Back to text.

[187] The original is extremely compressed: *gegenseitige Aussprache und Ansprache in Ausspruch und Anspruch, Sichvernehmenlassen und selber Vernehmen*. (Tr.) Back to text.

[188] This is the meaning of the long preparatory chapter 'The Phenomena of the Human', pp. 71-132. Back to text.

[189] See the chapter 'Real Man', pp. 132-202. Back to text.

[190] See the chapter 'The Spirit as Basis of Soul and Body', pp. 344-366. Back to text.

[191] Parenthesis mine. (H.U.vB.) Back to text.

[192] The numbers in parentheses within the text refer to the pages in Guardinis work. (Publisher's note) Back to text.

[193] Karl Barth, *op. cit*., p. 519. Back to text.

[194] Guardini has countless times called our attention to all these things. From his abundant writings we indicate the following almost at random: 'Litur-gische Symbolik', in: *Vom Geist der Liturgie* (Freiburg, 1918); *Heilige Zeichen* (Mainz, 1933). A great deal is to be found in his collection *In Spiegel und Gleichnis* (Mainz, 1932^{2}); *Vom lebendigen Gott* (Mainz, 1936); *Besinnung vor der Feier der Hl. Messe* (Mainz, 1939); *Grundlegung der Bildungslehre* (Würzburg, 1928), in which he deals with image and image-formation; *Über das Wesen des Kunstwerks* (Tübingen, 1947); *Die Situation des Menschen* ('Akademikervorträge', Munich, 1953: 'Über das Schwinden der Bilder'); *Die Offenbarung, ihr Wesen und ihre Formen* (Würzburg, 1940); *Jesus Christus* II (Würzburg, 1940, pp. 149f.: 'Die Epiphanie'); *Wunder und Zeichen* (Würzburg, 1959). Back to text.

[195] *Die Sinne und das Wort (=SW), pp. 8f*. Back to text.

[196] *Wort und Bild* (=WB), p. 14. Back to text.

[197] SW, pp. 10f. Back to text.

[198] SW, pp. 12-19. Back to text.

[199] SW, pp. 19-22. Back to text.

[200] WB, pp. 15f. Back to text.

[201] WB, p. 25. Back to text.

[202] WB, p. 13. On this, see G. Siewerth, 'Die transzendentale Struktur des

Raumes', in: Hans André, *Natur und Mysterium* (Einsiedeln, 1959). Back to text.

[203] WB, p. 14. Back to text.

[204] WB, p. 15. Back to text.

[205] WB, pp. 11 f. Back to text.

[206] SW, p. 36. Back to text.

[207] WB, p. 21. Back to text.

[208] WB, pp. 21-24. Back to text.

[209] WB, pp. 27-30. Back to text.

[210] WB, pp. 24f. Back to text.

[211] SW, p. 38. Back to text.

[212] WB, p. 28. We are astonished already to find in Maximus the Confessor an attempt to interpret the five senses as the sensory unfolding of the five 'faculties of the soul': the eye is the organ and sensory root of contemplation (*theoria*), the ear the sensory organ of practical reason; smell appears as ordered to the irascible soul, taste to the concupiscible soul, and touch as ordered to the vital foundation of the soul. *Ambigua*, PG 91, 1248BC. Back to text.

[213] WB, pp. 33f. Back to text.

[214] SW, pp. 23f., 32-35. Back to text.

[215] SW, pp. 28f. Back to text.

[216] WB, p. 25. Back to text.

[217] WB, pp. 49ff. Back to text.

[218] Ed. Mercure de France (12th ed.), Paris, 1939. Back to text.

[219] In: *Presence et Prophetie* (Fribourg, L.U.F., 1942), pp. 49-126. Back to text.

[220] For what follows, see Claudel, 'Sur la presence de Dieu', in: *Presence et Prophetie*, pp. 11-46. Back to text.

[221] *Ibid*., pp. 12f. Back to text.

[222] *Ibid*., p. 28. Back to text.

[223] *Ibid*., pp. 17f. Back to text.

[224] *Ibid*., p. 40. Back to text.

[225] *Ibid*., pp. 40-48. Back to text.

[226] 'Sensation du Divin', in: *Nos Sens et Dieu; Etudes Carmélitaines*, XXXIII (Bruges, 1954), pp. 54-60. Back to text.

[227] *Ibid*., p. 60f. Back to text.

[228] *Ibid*., pp. 61f. Back to text.

[229] *Ibid*., p. 63. Back to text.

[230] *Ibid*., p. 77. Back to text.

[231] Especially in *La Cantate a Trois Voix* (Paris, 1943) and in *Conversations dans le Loir-et-Cher* (Paris, 1957). Back to text.

[232] ‘Sensation du Divin’, p. 71. Back to text.

[233] ‘Non impedias musicam’, in: *Les Aventures de Sophie* (Paris, 1937), pp. 211f. Back to text.

[234] ‘La Sensation du Divin’, p. 84. Back to text.

[235] *Ibid*., p. 93. Back to text.

[236] *Ibid*., p. 95. Back to text.

[237] *Ibid*., p. 97. Back to text.

[238] *Ibid*., p. 116. Back to text.

[239] *Ibid*., pp. 124f. Back to text.

[240] Claudel, *L’Art Poétique*, p. 111. Back to text.

[241] This is what we tried to establish, much against the stream of a strong tradition, in our commentary on the *Treatise on Prophecy of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (Latin-German edition of the works of Thomas, vol. 23). Back to text.

[242] *Nos Sens et Dien; Etudes Carmélitaines* (Bruges, 1954), p. 167. Back to text.

[243] *Etudes sur la psychologie des mystiques* II (1937), p. 376. Back to text.

[244] ‘Die Anwendung der Sinne. . .’, in: *ZKTh* (1957), p. 452. Back to text.

[245] Ed. F. Pfeifer (1857), II, p. 597. Back to text.

[246] Job 19.26f. LXX. Back to text.

III. The Objective Evidence

[1] In the passage from Rom 1.19f., even if τοῖς ποιήμασι is taken as a dative of indirect object (‘for cognitive creatures’), the ϰτίσις ϰόσμου would still be the ontological medium and the meaning would remain the same. Back to text.

[2] J. Gebser, *Ursprung und Gegenwart* (1949), pp. 443f. Back to text.

[3] Hans Andér has provided a most marvellous analysis of all this in his trilogy (O. Muller Verlag) and in *Natur und Mysterium* (Einsiedeln, Johannes Verlag, 1959). Back to text.

[4] Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autol*., I, 5.8. Back to text.

[5] *Cf*. my study on Gregory of Nyssa, *Présence et Pensée* (Paris, 1942). Back to text.

[6] Thomas Aquinas, *De Ver*., q 18 a 3. Back to text.

[7] *Cf*. the chapter on Irenaeus in the second volume of this work. Back to text.

[8] *Cf*. 'Die Implikationen des Wortes', in: *Verbum Caro* (Einsiedeln, 1960), pp. 48-72. Back to text.

[9] *Cf*. 'Gott redet als Mensch', in: *Verbum Caro* (Einsiedeln, 1960), pp. 73-99. Back to text.

[10] On this *cf*. ibid., 457. Back to text.

[11] This argument is pursued in the third volume of this work. Back to text.

[12] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV, Pt. I, sec. 59, trans. G.W. Bromiley (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1956), p. 203. Back to text.

[13] *Pensées*, (ed. Chevalier), no. 596. Back to text.

[14] *Ibid*., no. 597. Back to text.

[15] *Ibid*., no. 598. Back to text.

[16] *Ibid*., no. 602. Back to text.

[17] *Ibid*., no. 638. Back to text.

[18] *Ibid*., no. 637. Back to text.

[19] *Cf*. 'Nachfolge und Amt', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (Einsiedeln, 1961), pp. 80-147. Back to text.

[20] H. Lewy, *Sobria Ebrietas* (Giessen, 1929). Back to text.

[21] 'When the ship spreads its oars in the shape of the Cross / and with both sail-beams makes a lap for the wind; / when it thus deploys the Cross, / then the path lies open for its course. // O pure womb of the sail, image of our Redeemer's body, / who was full of the Spirit without having encompassed or enclosed him! / Through the Spirit which dwells in linen sails / life is given to those souls in which The Soul dwells.' Ephraem, *Hymn. de fide* 18, vv. 8 and 10. E. Beck (CSCO), vol. 155 (1955), p. 54. Back to text.

[22] Gerhard von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, II (Munich, 1960), p. 22, ET., p. 8. Back to text.

[23] Gerhard van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion* (Tübingen, 1933), p. 652. For criticism, see Jan Hermelink, *Verstehen und Bezeugen: Der theologische Ertrag der "Phänomenologie der Religion" von G. van der Leeuw* (1960). Back to text.

[24] *Theophaneia* (Hamburg, 1956), pp. 19f. Back to text.

[25] *Gottesfinsternis* (Zurich, 1953); *Das Problem des Menschen* (1938). Back to text.

[26] *Mensch: Typologische Anthropologie*, I (1959), pp. 181f. Back to text.

[27] See my *Kosmische Liturgie: Maximus der Bekenner* (Einsiedeln, 1961[2]). Back to text.

[28] G. van der Leeuw, *op. cit*., p. 94. Back to text.

[29] C. Andresen, *Logos und Nomos: Die Polemik des Kelsos wider das Christentum* (1955). Back to text.

[30] Henri de Lubac, *Catholicisme* (Paris, 1952[5]), pp. 138-144. Back to text.

[31] Walter Rehm, *Götterstille und Göttertrauer* (1949). Back to text.

[32] *Der Kosmos des Mittelalters* (Bern, 1959). Back to text.

[33] H. Lietzmann, *Der Weltheiland* (Bonn, 1909). Back to text.

[34] W. Wrede, *The Messianic Secret* (Cambridge, 1971). Back to text.

[35] 'He could no longer openly enter a town' (Mk 1.45); 'he could perform no miracle there' (Mk 6.5). Back to text.

[36] E. Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Markus* (Göttingen, 1954[12]), p. 48. Back to text.

[37] *Ibid*., p. 46. Back to text.

[38] *Ibid*., p. 150. Back to text.

[39] *Ibid*., p. 187. Back to text.

[40] *Cf*. 'Casta Meretrix', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (Einsiedeln, 1961). Back to text.

[41] K. Rahner, *Über die Schriftinspiration* (Freiburg, 1958). Back to text.

[42] *Der sogennante historische Jesus. . .* (Munich, 1956[2]), p. 57. Back to text.

[43] *Cf*. my *Wahrheit*, I (Einsiedeln, 1946), pp. 58f. Back to text.

[44] For a more detailed discussion, see: K. Rahner, *op. cit*. Back to text.

[45] *Cf*. 'Wort, Schrift, Tradition', in: *Verbum Caro* (Einsiedeln, 1960), pp. 11-27. Back to text.

[46] Most recently in his introductions to the editions of Origen in *Sources chrétiennes*, in *Histoire et Esprit* (Paris, 1950), and in *Exégèse médiévale*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1959-1964). Back to text.

[47] H. Schlier, *Epheserbrief*, p. 201. Back to text.

[48] So, too, J. Schneider, after discussing other opinions in *TWNT*, V. 191-198. Back to text.

[49] This practice has other immediate consequences, for instance, that in the East communion is given to infants and that the sacrament of maturity—confirmation—is received by those whose age makes them necessarily immature. Back to text.

[50] See Adrienne von Speyr, *Die Beichte*, 1960 (Eng. ed.: *Confession*). Back to

text.

[51] *Cf*. 'Die Implikationen des Wortes', in: *Verbum Caro* (Einsiedeln, 1960), pp. 48-72. Back to text.

[52] As Heinrich Schlier has splendidly shown in his development of 1 Cor 14, in: *Die Verkündigung im Gottesdienst der Kirche* (Cologne, 1953), pp. 50-68. Back to text.

[53] Franz Xaver Arnold, *Glaubensverkündigung und Glaubensgemeinschaft* (Düsseldorf, 1955), p. 30. Back to text.

[54] *Ibid*., p. 39. Back to text.

[55] Hermann Volk, *Sonntäglicher Gottesdienst* (1956), pp. 68f. Back to text.

[56] *Cf*. 'Nachfolge und Amt', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (Einsiedeln, 1961), pp. 80-147. Back to text.

[57] *Cf*. 'Priesterliche Existenz', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (Einsiedeln, 1961), pp. 388-433. Back to text.

[58] *Cf Das betrachtende Gebet*, 1955 (*On Prayer*), pp. 136-211. Back to text.

[59] M.-D. Chenu, *La theologie comme science au 13^{e} siècle* (Paris, 1943^{1}). Back to text.

[60] *Cf*. 'Theologie und Heiligkeit', in: *Verbum Caro* (Einsiedeln, 1960). Back to text.

[61] G. Kittel, *TWNT*, I, pp. 177ff. Back to text.

[62] *Ibid*., p. 372. Back to text.

[63] Nor does it prove that both meanings are found in Paul in two separate compartments that barely communicate. See J. Dupont, *Gnosis* (Louvain, 1949). Back to text.

[64] See, for instance, Bultmann on Jn 8.14b (*Das Evangelium des Johannes*, Göttingen, 1941, p. 210, ET., p. 280): 'The Evangelist can take over this Gnostic characterisation of the Revealer, because in Gnosticism the Gnostic'sknowledge—however much it may have been elaborated mythologically or speculatively—was in a decisive sense a form of self-understanding both as a stranger in the world and as belonging to the divine world.' Back to text.

[65] *Cf*. Wahrheit, Part I (Einsiedeln, 1947). Back to text.

[66] *De pecc. mer. et rem*., II, n. 60 (PL 44. 144f.). Back to text.

[67] 'Les analogies de l'inspiration', in: *Sacra Pagina* (Paris, 1959), I, pp. 86-99; *Revue Biblique* 67 (1960), p. 177. Back to text.

[68] *Pensées* (ed. Chevalier), nos. 560, 549, 583, 572. Back to text.

[69] A. Bentzen, *Messias, Moses redivivus, Menschensohn* (Zürich, 1948), p. 56.

Concerning the *ebed*-Yahweh Bentzen remarks: ‘The king of Israel became the servant of all when he stepped forth as a sacrifice of atonement and intercession for them’, *ibid*., p. 71. Back to text.

[70] *Ibid*, p. 42. Back to text.

[71] *Ibid*., pp. 78 f. Back to text.

[72] G. von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, II (Munich, 1960), pp. 112-125, ET., pp. 99-112. Back to text.

[73] J.W. von Goethe, *Poetical Works*, v. 1, ed. N.H. Dole (Boston, Francis A. Niccolls & Co., 1902), p. 255. Translation slightly adapted. (Publisher’s note.) Back to text.

[74] G. von Rad, *op. cit*., II, p. 361, ET., p. 349. Back to text.

[75] *Ibid*., p. 362, ET., p. 350. Back to text.

[76] In *Parusia: Hoffnung und Prophetie* (1960), Paul Schütz has convincingly shown how everything depends on our understanding what has happened in history as essentially that which is to be, which is to come for Christians and for the world. Back to text.

[77] G. von Rad, *op. cit*., p. 398, ET., p. 384. Back to text.

[78] *Ibid*., pp. 390, 213-220, ET., pp. 376, 202-208. Back to text.

[79] 2 *Sent*, d 2 p 1 a 2 q 3c. On this see: J. Ratzinger, *Die Geschichtstheologie des hl. Bonaventura* (Munich, 1959), p. 143. Back to text.

[80] Origen, *In Joh*. 5. 8 (Pr. 105). Back to text.

[81] *De mor. Eccl. cath*. I. I. 27f., 34 (PL 32. 1322-1326). Back to text.

[82] Jean Leclercq, *L’amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu* (Paris, 1957). Back to text.

[83] H. Schlier, *Mächte und Gewalten im Neuen Testament* (Freiburg im Br., 1958), pp. 15-20. Back to text.

[84] Rene Laurentin, *Structure et Theologie de Luc I—II* (*Etudes Bibliques*, 1957), pp. 62f., 123f. Back to text.

[85] R. Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Munich, 1953^{13}), p. 79, ET., pp. 113f. Back to text.

[86] *Ibid*., p. 88, ET., p. 125. Back to text.

[87] A. Vanhoye, ‘Opera Jesu donum Patris’, in: *Verbum Domini* 36 (1958), pp. 83-92. Back to text.

[88] Gottlieb Söhngen, ‘Wunderzeichen und Glaube’, in: *Die Einheit in der Theologie* (Munich, 1952), pp. 265-285. Back to text.

[89] W. Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und VerherrlichungJesu im*

Johannesevangelium (Münster, 1959). Back to text.

[90] No theologian, not even Origen, has developed this thought more effectively and magnificently than Cyril of Alexandria in his commentaries on Scripture, particularly on John. *Cf*. Augustin Dupré-La Tour, 'La Doxa du Christ dans les oeuvres exégétiques de S. Cyrille d'Alexandrie', in: *Rech. Sc. Rel*. 1960, pp. 521-543; 1961, pp. 68-94. Back to text.

[91] *Hom. in Cant*. 8 (PG 44. 948D-949B). Back to text.

[92] *Cf*. 'Wer ist die Kirche?', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (Einsiedeln, 1961). Back to text.

HANS URS
VON BALTHASAR

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

II: STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: CLERICAL STYLES

IGNATIUS

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Hans Urs von Balthasar

THE GLORY OF THE LORD:
A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

By Hans Urs von Balthasar

VOLUMES OF THE COMPLETE WORK
Edited by Joseph Fessio, S.J., and John Riches

1. SEEING THE FORM

2. STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: CLERICAL STYLES

3. STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: LAY STYLES

4. THE REALM OF METAPHYSICS IN ANTIQUITY

5. THE REALM OF METAPHYSICS IN THE MODERN AGE

6. THEOLOGY: THE OLD COVENANT

7. THEOLOGY: THE NEW COVENANT

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and Brian McNeil C.R.V.
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Qui tantis rerum creaturarum splendoribus non illustratur caecus est; qui tantis clamoribus non evigilat surdus est; qui ex omnibus his effecibus Deum non laudat mutus est; qui ex tantis indiciis primum principium non advertit stuitus est.

BONAVENTURA

The Church, which was once the mother of poets no less than of saints, during the last two centuries has relinquished to aliens the chief glories of poetry . . . , she has retained the palm, but forgone the laure . . . . Fathers of the Church (we would say), pastors of the Church, pious laics of the Church; you are taking from its walls the panoply of Aquinas; take also from its walls the psaltery of Alighieri. Unrol the precedents of the Church's past; recall in your minds that Francis of Assisi was among the precursors of Dante, that sworn to poverty he forswore non Beauty, but discerned through the lamp Beauty the Light God . . . What you theoretically know vividly realize: that with many the religion of beauty must always be a passion and a power, that it is only evil when divorced from the worship of the Primal Beauty.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

INTRODUCTION

1. THE CONCERN

The first volume attempted to show that one both can and must consider the revelation of the living God, as the Christian understands it, not only from the point of view of its truth and goodness, but also from that of its ineffable beauty. If everything in the world that is fine and beautiful is *epiphaneia*, the radiance and splendour which breaks forth in expressive form from a veiled and yet mighty depth of being, then the event of the self-revelation of the hidden, the utterly free and sovereign God in the forms of this world, in word and history, and finally in the human form itself, will itself form an analogy to that worldly beauty however far it outstrips it. In Jesus Christ, to whom the revelation in creation and history leads, the 'yet greater unlikeness' of God over against all that is not divine is not simply inferred as it were from certain 'signs', nor simply known (in a *docta ignorantia*), but—no matter how strange the manner of its appearing—read off from the form of the revelation and from nowhere else. Where God freely manifests himself (be he still never so deeply veiled), this is finally intended as a gift, as love and therewith as self-surrender; each *via negativa*—which philosophically considered may be set over the *via positiva*—stands in the service of a positive way, indeed the negating ineffability of the gift speaks only of the still greater overwhelming of man (*via eminentiae*) through this 'ineffable' fact that God wills to be with me, for me and in me. This now, in theological terms, is the 'dazzling darkness' of the divine beauty: it is not that which remains inaccessible when God has manifested himself in Christ, rather it is on the contrary the splendour which breaks forth from this love of God which gives itself without remainder and is poured forth in the form of worldly powerlessness: the superabundant power of the light and meaning of love, as it shines forth in the form, causes it to become necessarily a form of veiling—just because it reveals that which is utmost, the ineffable.

If it is true that the divine revelation of grace perfects created natures—both conferring on the complementary disclosures of beings their final meaning, and also revealing the transparence of all being in the world to the absolute ground of being—then everything of beauty found in the world (and with it too the true and the good) is drawn up into a relationship to this inexhaustible standard, where the living God of love is glorified as he pours out his limitless love for the creature kenotically into the void which is empty of himself, indeed into what is strictly totally other than himself: into the abyss of guilty, godless darkness and godforsakenness. Thus, going to the utmost point of what is not God, he can finally establish his lordship and his glory in what is other than himself, in man, and by the glorified *Kyrios* fashion glory out of humanity and the cosmos, which Christ in his final prayer (Jn 17) declares to have been accomplished, at the same time as he still requires it to be accomplished.

This form stands at the centre of the first volume. Everything else is arranged around it: the subjective possibilities of its being discerned; the demonstration of the objective structure of its form (whose cipher could be broken only in terms of the divine, namely as representation of the trinitarian God) and of the glory of God which breaks forth from it objectively, and which is represented in the form of Jesus; finally the whole historical economy, in which this final form is led up to (Old Testament), and which subsequently shows itself in humanity as the Lord of Glory (the time of the Church).

In all this we may gain a preliminary sighting of the relations between the present theological aesthetic and the projected theological dramatic which will follow this work: if God represents himself in the world, then there lies in that an act of the most sublime freedom, an act moreover which is greatly rich in its consequences for human action. God’s advent as Lord of the world and its history can release only the most prodigious drama, which indeed it already contains within itself; there can be here no question of simply perceiving, contemplating, of simply registering what is shown; whoever is moved in faith must go out on the stage (*theatrizesthai*: Heb 10.33, *cf*. 1 Cor 4.9), in the sight of a world which at first imagines it can afford to be nothing more than a spectator itself. The Christian *epiphaneia* of God has nothing about it of the simple radiance of the Platonic sun of the good; it is an act in which God utterly freely makes himself present as he commits to the fray the last divine and human depths and ventures of love: the ‘ethical’ is realised precisely in the figure of the ‘aesthetic’: behind the perfection of each word, each gesture, each encounter of the Son of Man there stands, making it possible and bearing it, the harmony of divine and human ‘existence’, life together with death, heaven together with hell. And again within all this—and not as it were merely as a detached witness—there lies as the object of a theological logic the structure of the truth, which can indeed be nothing other than the discernment of being in the freedom of its self-revelation.

The next task of a theological aesthetic is, then, to lend to these abstract propositions historical colour and fulness. Is it true that mankind (in so far as it has learnt to see in faith) comes to behold in the Christian revelation the glory of the Lord, and in what way does it experience this? The very richness of God in Christ would lead us to expect this to occur in the most diverse ways; to indicate the extent of the fulness of this experience is the task of this volume. It will try to do this by presenting a series of Christian theologies and world-pictures of the highest rank, each of which, having been marked at its centre by the glory of God's revelation, has sought to give the impact of this glory a central place in its vision.

The choice of these theologies and world-pictures has been made—apart from the fact of their intrinsic excellence—by taking into account their historical significance. They are reflected rays of the glory and have in this capacity also illuminated and shaped Christian culture through the centuries. There are more inward reflections, which have in secret perhaps cast no less light and have no less theological power—reflections found in mystical, hidden men of prayer and self-sacrifice, to whom has been allotted no publicly ascertainable historical influence. This is possible in the realm of death and of hiddenness and constitutes no objection to that which has become visible. On the other hand, there is in the time of the Church no historically influential theology which is not itself a reflection of the glory of God; only beautiful theology, that is, only theology which, grasped by the glory of God, is able itself to transmit its rays, has the chance of making any impact in human history by conviction and transformation. This may be regarded as a corollary of the argument of the present volume.

The subject of enquiry is then exactly this: the glory of the divine revelation, as it is presented and unfolded in the length and breadth of the theology of the Church. Therefore not immediately (and more narrowly) the form and beauty of theology, but the ultimate, objective ground which lies in the biblical revelation, as it gives shape and form to theology. In this way this historical *enquite* forms the transition from the delineation of the form of the historical revelation in itself (first volume) to its inward, theological and dogmatic, working-out (third volume). Now it is a matter of the different ways of seeing, which are so manifold not so much because of the limitation of human perception as because of the yet greater fulness of revelation, as it shines forth and overwhelms its beholders. The display of this plenitude of perspectives will prepare us too not to overlook anything essential in the dogmatics of glory and to formulate out of the wide-ranging induction of the Church’s theological tradition the leading themes of this theological discipline which today is so neglected as scarcely to exist.

In order to feel where a great theology has been moved centrally by the glory of God it is in no sense enough merely to gather together those passages (often paltry or conventional or dependent on alien philosophies) where the subject of the beautiful is expressly considered. Rather, what is decisive for a theological aesthetic occurs most centrally in the heart, in the original vision and in the middle point where the basic forms crystallize. How the theological form is fashioned around the centre of this original vision determines what and how much of the *kâbôd* descends onto this form and thereby acquires body and visage. Thus in each case an effort has to be made to get the sought-after moments to express themselves as one traces as concisely but as exactly as possible the outlines of the work. As we proceed certain constants will also necessarily appear, which accompany us from form to form and perhaps become more plain in the process—for example, the Augustinian-Anselmian theme of the *cor rectum*, of *rectitudo*, which returns in Pascal and finally in Péguy as the two-in-oneness of *justice-justesse*, or the theme of figure (Old Testament) and fulfilment (New Testament) or that of *eros* and *agape*. But it is perhaps even more instructive to see the themes in complete opposition, pushed even to the very limit of contradiction (let Irenaeus or Dante simply be set alongside John of the Cross!): such tensions must be reckoned with right at the heart of this discipline, and they only can convey an adequate representation of its object.

In the main we have chosen official theologians, so long as such were available, who were able to treat the radiant power of the revelation of Christ both influentially and originally, without any trace of decadence; but after Thomas of Aquinas theologians of such stature are rare. Now it is primarily laity who, out of an adequate theological culture and with a more powerful vision and deeper creative insight than the theologians of the schools, carry forward the concern and guarantee its effectiveness with a breadth and depth which escapes the professional theologians. The dividing-line between this and the next volume which occurs about 1300 is not meant in any polemical way; it simply corresponds to an unfortunate but incontestable fact. That the great upholders of Christian spirituality (amongst whom, in an ecumenical spirit, but also with inward justice, there is included a Protestant: Hamann) not seldom feel themselves to be, and behave like, representatives of the ecclesiastical ‘opposition’ and have to take on themselves the corresponding fate of the exiled, the misunderstood, the outlawed is not astonishing; rather, it manifests, in the main, a burning concern for the most genuine concern of the Church and of theology—Dante! Pascal! Peguy!—which they see is being inadequately defended by the run-of-the-mill clergy. It would be worth tracing the history of this movement of ‘opposition’, and then it would appear that, for the most part, it is protesting against a narrowing-down of Christian theology merely to the training of pastors or to academic specialization and the timeless pursuits of the schools and that it is demanding an understanding of revelation in the context of the history of the world and the actual present. And here we must name alongside Dante, Lull, Nicholas of Cusa, Erasmus, Luther, Las Casas; alongside Pascal, Leibniz; alongside Hamann, Boehme, Fénelon, Kierkegaard; alongside Péguy, Bloy, Bernanos, Mauriac; alongside Soloviev, Baader and Schelling; and alongside Hopkins, Newman.

After Thomas the theology of the schools became essentially a process of commentary on St Thomas which lasted till the eighteenth century and was resumed in the second half of the nineteenth century; the collapse of this, prepared for in our own times by the advance of biblical studies, has yet to produce a new and convincing theological figure who could be ranked with those selected here in their grand array. On the other hand, the great, historically influential saints often stand, like the hidden lovers and men of prayer, apart from the levels dealt with here. Benedict, Francis, Ignatius, even Charles de Foucauld, stamp the impress of glory less through their own words than in the working out of their mission, which often, where they themselves are concerned, appears fairly abrupt. And no more than of the saints have we been able to treat of the artists as such, no matter how alluring and rewarding a theological exploration of their work would have been: what would Giotto, Fra Angelico, Michelangelo, Tintoretto, or El Greco, what would Champaigne, Vivaldi, Bach, Haydn, or Mozart, Mahler or Schoenberg, have had to contribute to our theme! Or the builders of the Romanesque minsters, of the Gothic cathedrals, of the churches of the Renaissance and the Baroque, or even Rudolf Schwarz! Or the Christian poets of antiquity, Synesius and Romanos, the poet of the *Heliand*, Wolfram von Eschenbach, Arnoul Greban, Corneille, Milton, Spee, Eichendorff, Claudel and Eliot! A few representatives of the world of letters had to be selected, but only in so far as their literary work stands in an immediate relationship to the vision and exposition of the biblical revelation and there is a fluent transition from it to theology. Something else is missing too: the Church's own exposition of itself and its understanding of revelation in the liturgy. But apart from the fact that the liturgical witnesses develop on their side a world too extensive to be quickly assimilated, the liturgical utterance depends less on the individual word than on the whole procedure in which forms are evolved. There will be some response to the question which emerges here—of the relation between the form of revelation and the liturgical form—in our third volume. Finally we have omitted anything which relates to theological dramatics, theologians as well as poets (the mystery plays, Shakespeare, Calderon and the *autos sacramentales*): they will find their place in the volumes on dramatics. What remains, as is now manifest, is a quite small selection, which can however stand as representative of the whole of the tradition and offers such a fulness of the experience and form of glory that it will overflow in every respect what can be said in a book.

2. THOSE SELECTED AND THOSE MISSING

A few words in justification of the selection found here; a few sentences to render comprehensible the omission of important names.

Irenaeus stands as the founder of the theology of the Church with his stance which is at once markedly anti-Gnostic and pre-Alexandrian, that is to say, not as yet Platonizing. The emphasis lies on the glorious creation of God —*gloria Dei vivens homo* (the glory of God is a living man)—and on the miracle of the temporal order of salvation. Christian thought is imbued with a good spirit; one can only regret that succeeding ages did not give more careful attention to this beginning.

Augustine brings the period of Western Patristics to a close by accomplishing the move from Plotinus to Christ, by both going along with and going beyond Plotinus; he takes up the aesthetics of the Idea and in particular of number (from Pythagoras to Varro); but beyond that, in the existential theology of the *Confessions*, he praises the beauty ever ancient and ever new of the love of God, and in the *City of God* the glory of the temporal order of the dispensations, and lays down for a thousand years the fundamental rules of theological aesthetics.

Denys the Areopagite, the ancient, Syrian monk, translates for the East Proclus' philosophical world-view into the realm of Christian theology; his hierarchical liturgy is timeless, a crystalline worship offered to the heart of the ineffable Godhead; his world-view, determined throughout in aesthetic categories, becomes after that of Augustine the second pillar of Western theology from the classical representatives of High Scholasticism down to the great figures of the Renaissance and the Baroque.

Anselm's Benedictine, contemplative reason is aesthetic in a new and original way: it is the spiritual intuition of measure and right relationship, together with the clear knowledge of how the glorious form of order, which God has placed in the world, depends solely on his inconceivable freedom and love and bears witness to it.

Bonaventure's cathedral-like theology unites Augustine and the Areopagite in the spirit of Saint Francis; his giddy syntheses are transparent to the mysteries of the glory of the poor heart: of Jesus, of the *Poverello*, even of God himself whose *expressio* is nature and grace such that even the mystery of time presses for the unravelling of his being.

Dante represents the painful experience of the collapse of monastic and clerical theology into a lay theology: into the centre of the Platonic and Scholastic world-view there is now brought—for the first time in Christian intellectual history—the mystery of an eternal love between man and woman, *eros* refined by *agape* and drawn up through all the circles of hell and spheres of the world to the throne of God.

John oj the Cross, the Reformer of Carmel as a response to Luther's Reform, treads the same path from the night of hell into the glory of heaven, but in mystical solitude with God, without the Dantean world-view. Everything is made to depend on pure faith, which in the darkness of his final deprivation veilingly unveils the mystery of the dazzling love of God and of the eternal marriage.

Pascal, a second Catholic answer to the Reformation, conceding to it the loss of the ancient philosophy of being, fashions a bridge between pure, theological faith and modern metaphysics and natural science, but in such a way that he (in contrast to Descartes) attains in the crucified Christ an intuition of man (who is in himself the fallen-incomprehensible) and fashions a proportion out of disproportions, just as 'by joining the demonstrations of knowledge to the uncertainty of the die' (*matheseos demonstrationes cum aleae incertitudine jungendo*) he attained a 'geometry of the die' (*aleae geometriae*), which brought form and rule to the unruliness of the accidental: the high-point of a baroque theological aesthetics.

Hamann, at the end of the Enlightenment and on the eve of German idealism, of which he is *de jure* (rather than *de facto*) the Christian father, stands as the representative of a Protestant theological aesthetics, as the third therefore who attempts to give an answer to Luther. He celebrates in prophetic intuitions the *kenosis* of Christ and the humiliation of the Holy Spirit in the form of the slave manifest in human nature and the letter of the Scriptures, and in the same breath the glorification of the flesh and the letter as final, unsurpassable bearers of Logos and *pneuma*.

Soloviev stands at the other end of idealistic philosophy, bringing its enormous harvest into Christian theology, while at the same time he draws in the whole theological tradition of the East, from the Greek Fathers, through Byzantium and ancient Russia, to Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy and Leontiev: a thinker of universal genius, who anticipates the vision of Teilhard de Chardin and to some extent corrects it.

Hopkins, the English Jesuit and a poet of the highest calibre, represents the English theological tradition, for which, in contrast to continental thought, there has never been any opposition between image and concept, myth and revelation, the apprehension of God in nature and in the history of salvation: he is able to build a bridge between poetic aesthetics and the Ignatian exercises.

Péguy can therefore close this series because he works out his Christian existence between communism and the Church and maintains that he has found the point at which both concerns run into one another without a break. At the heart of his problem he wrestles to free himself from a certain medieval Augustinianism, of the Reformation and of Jansenism: he thinks in a confrontation with Pascal and the Dante of the *Inferno* and wants in his *Mystères* to draw Christian theology in such a breadth of vision as to make it understandable anew to mankind-to-come.

A Western symposium thus develops: representatives of regions of the original sources—Syria (Denys), Greek Asia Minor (Irenaeus), Africa (Augustine)—are joined by the Lombards (Anselm), the Italians (Bonaventure, Dante), the French (Pascal, Péguy), the Spaniards (John of the Cross), the Germans (Hamann), the Russians (Soloviev) and the English (Hopkins).

Anyone who perceives the fundamental discontinuity between these twelve creative figures will have to concede that a continuous history of theological aesthetics can therefore not be written, because it simply does not exist. In the new constellations of intellectual history there break out from time to time from the midpoint which is beyond history new and original perceptions which certainly, in the succession of the ages, are related to one another, indeed often expressly measure themselves one against another, and enrich the great tradition or stand aside from it; but all this never consists in a mere further weaving of threads that are already to hand, but rather in the power of a total vision. Only so can Denys' relationship to the Cappadocian Fathers be rightly assessed, or Anselm's relationship to Augustine, or Dante's to Thomas, or Soloviev's to Schelling and Baader, or Péguy's to Pascal. In this realm there is no more scope for development as such, as there is or could be in mysticism, or in philosophy: *les philosophes n'ont pas d'élèves* (Péguy—'philosophers do not have pupils’). This observation could place a gentle mute on any enthusiasm for the development of theological doctrine.

This is naturally not to deny that, between these twelve figures picked out as typical, there is not a host of others who could have clarified the intellectual and historical relations and transitions between them and would in themselves also have been worthy of presentation. So, to give a few examples, between Irenaeus and Augustine, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa and Synesius could have been discussed, alongside Denys Boethius, in the period before Anselm Maximus and Eriugena, in the period after him Bernard, William of St Thierry, Hildegard, Albert, Mechthild and Wolfram, after Bonaventure Thomas and Eckhart, after Dante Ramon Lull, Nicholas of Cusa, Petrarch, Ficino, Luis de León, after John of the Cross Francis de Sales, Boehme and Spee, after Pascal Fénelon and Angelus Silesius, after Hamann the Catholics of Tübingen, Baader, Deutinger and Lacordaire, together with Péguy, Bloy, Claudel, Blondel and Bernanos, together with Hopkins, Newman and Chesterton.

Meanwhile the discussion of all these great ones (not to mention other lesser beings) would already have led, many times over, to wearying repetitions. Very often important intuitions in theological aesthetics by a Christian thinker can find the same place in the firmament of another, even a greater, thinker. So it is not imperative to deal with Eriugena if one has already dealt with Augustine and particularly Denys. Likewise Baader’s concerns are covered by a discussion of Soloviev, and the same goes for Boehme. In John of the Cross the best of Eckhart’s mysticism finds its home and in some respects is redeemed and finds a calmer expression. Anyone who sees the primordial power with which Dante grasps the problem of Christian *eros* and resolves it in the form of Beatrice will, as far as theology is concerned, scarcely experience anything deeper or purer beyond that in Claudel; indeed Claudel’s ode to Dante can be seen to bear this witness.

A further consideration in the omission of the great names was that while often in Christian world-views great aesthetic values are certainly incorporated, they do not always crystallize into an original, theological aesthetics. It may be that the aesthetic moments are simply borrowed from an alien world-view or that they have not fused with the proper theological vision into a complete unity—this is, it seems, the case with Origen and in some respects with Gregory of Nyssa, and similarly with the Florentines and the Cambridge Platonists. It may be that a deep and lucid philosophical aesthetics has been developed, but that it has failed to achieve a theological translation, that is, to be seen as the unfolding of a theology based on the biblical revelation: that is the reason why Thomas Aquinas has been omitted from our sequence. It would perhaps have been possible, in his case too, to have developed (beyond the philosophical aesthetics elucidated by Kovach) out of the structures of order of the theological parts an implicit theological aesthetics, but with uncertain success. Again, other Christian thinkers may possess a strong sense of the harmony of the truth of revelation (for example, Erasmus or Francis de Sales) but without being able to give it expression in a structured aesthetics, or may have an experience of the fulness and many-sidedness of the truth, in which the Christian can romp without a care (like Chesterton), without feeling any necessity to give to this fulness any other than a paradoxical expression. Finally there are Christians to whose original vision and imagery there has been denied any effectiveness either in the Church or in history—such as Hildegard and Mechthild of Magdeburg.

Because no continuous development can or should be shown, each picture that is to be offered is relatively closed and self-sufficient. That fascinating dialogues open up between one and another, one greeting another across the centuries, grasping something and perhaps making expressible what was once intended in quite a new form, completing what was fragmentary, and bringing to the one-sided a compensating counterbalance: this and similar things the reader will see for himself. Yet such dialogues form together no overall system; for how should man be able to attain an overall perspective on the revelation of the living God? All that develops is a full orchestra, whose various instruments blend well with one another: their mutual harmony proves that they all play from the same score (which both transcends and embraces them). And this concordance in opposition paves the way to the third and final volume, which will treat of dogmatics.

3. FORMS, STYLES

Again it must be emphasized that the formal object of this investigation is the glory of the divine revelation itself, in the multiplicity of its manifestations and understandings, and then, certainly, within that glory theological beauty as such, in its transcendence over all models of secular beauty. Thus the object as such does not embrace directly the choice of secular means of aesthetic expression by individual theologians, as they need them for the presentation of their vision.

The visions themselves in their various articulations can be ordered to some extent in accordance with their grasp of the formal object of theology and the different accents manifest within each individual understanding. If 'God in himself' is contemplated as the formal object, then all the rest has value and meaning only in so far as God is expressed and presented therein, in so far as it is transparent to God and returns to God. That is the prevailing world-view of the East, as it emerges in almost pure form in Evagrius, in Gregory the Great, in Eckhart and John of the Cross, but which also predominates in Fénelon. Glory is here God as God, all else is a veil which bears and mediates him. If one sets 'God's revelation' at the centre, then the shimmering radiance of glory falls on the mediation itself: either purely dynamically as in Origen (where the decisive moment is always when the body is transfigured and the letter yields to the spirit, time to eternity) or in a more static way, so that God is rather discerned as he is displayed in the orders of the world and of salvation, as one more deeply veiled in his manifestation, the Unmanifest (Denys), or as the one who has found the culmination of his self-being in the other, in man, in Jesus Christ: here we find Maximus, Nicholas of Cusa, Soloviev, and in all essentials Thomas Aquinas. If the formal object shifts yet again, and, as with Bonaventure, Christ, as the epitome of reality, as the synthesis of God and the world, now assumes the centre, then the human drama wins a more prominent place: sin, suffering and death are now also represented in the formal object itself. In Christ we can now contemplate the interpretation both of God and of man: the heart of God interpreted in the heart of Christ (Peguy), the heart of man in its fall into inauthenticity and lostness caught up and restored to authenticity in this same heart on the cross (Pascal, Hamann). That the experience of the divine glory has here changed is clear: it has taken on increasingly a kenotic colouring, the true depth of the divine glory is only manifest in suffering love. In the end there is a danger of a slipping into, or a change into, anthropology, when faith in Christ threatens to become simply the ‘authenticity’ of man (Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, Bultmann). Finally the formal object can allow the human form of the mediator to become completely transparent to the Holy Spirit, promised by the mediator himself as the conclusion of all divine revelation: then the engagement of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man in the Spirit of Christ is what ultimately bestows form. This we find in Joachim and in Hegel, in such theologies of the Church as those of Schleiermacher, of the young Möhler, of Pilgram, and of a number of Russians. Again the picture of *doxa* has changed: to the all-consuming, dazzling intensity of the Spirit, a picture and experience which leads us back to the first-mentioned view of the East.

Over against these possible shifts in the centre of the formal object of theology stand the secular resources of style, as they are utilised for human utterance in poetry and prose, in rhetoric and didactic, and are available for use by the theologian. The latter can, like Augustine in his *Confessions*, unleash a great, symphonic, lyrical and rhapsodic music in order to give expression to his aesthetic experience of God. He can tune the same orchestra to the impersonal style of liturgical music, as does the Areopagite. He can devote himself to the cutting of tiny jewels of verbal skill to thread on the necklace of his sermons (as—not without some vanity—in the case of Gregory Nazianzen). He can attempt to achieve the same clear-polished, laconic style in the Roman spirit of legislation, as often with Tertullian, as with Leo the Great and occasionally with Ambrose: an example of the utmost concentration, which is conceived as a human and ecclesial answer to the most exact sharpness of the biblical word of God. He can go further in a thorough axiomatization of theology, as with Evagrius in his *Centuries*, or in casting it in mystical and magical proverbs, as with Ramon Lull in the *Book of the Lover and the Beloved*, or with Silesius in the *Wandersmann*. He can also, in his search for overladen formulae, fall into kitsch and gongorism, as in many early Byzantine Marian sermons. He can further, counting the outer form as of little worth, concentrate wholly on the vision of the mystery and, like Origen in his endless dictation, strew his treasures without care and without number, in a simple trust in the fulness and the value of the content. He can also—something very similar—seek to master such superabundance by building dizzying towers, some in this way, some in that, masterpieces of classification such as Bonaventure achieved, gothic sacrament houses, all beautiful and possessed of an inner correctness, and yet lacking any final necessity. He can, on the contrary, concentrate entirely on the inner structure and ordering of the mystery and seek to mediate in his style as faithful an impression and reflection of them as possible, as do Irenaeus or Cyril of Jerusalem, and in particular Anselm and Thomas Aquinas, who strive in their style for the utmost self-stripping and a pure transparency and service to the matter in hand. He can strive after the encyclopaedic, as in the later *Summas* and the modern handbooks, whose apparent completeness, however, often conceals the sieve with the greatest holes, or out of necessity or deliberation prefer the form of the fragmentary, which at best mirrors the not-to-be-grasped fulness of transcendent totality: Nicholas of Cusa, perhaps, when he deserted the form of the *summa* and *quaestio* to wander on the lonely and lofty paths of speculation, or Pascal, who was perhaps conscious that he had more to offer through the openness of his uncompleted fragments than in a closed and finished work, or Newman who pointed only to aspects of the whole truth and completely renounced any systematic account. He can also attempt the perspective of the double form, one side of which interprets the other, without any attempt to exhaust it: Boethius writes profound poems, which he then expounds in prose, as does John of the Cross; but the exposition cannot, and is not intended to, exhaust the content of the poetry. He can clothe the mystery in the drapery of an accomplished ‘fine’ style, either as an act of homage, or (as often with Bernard) in an attempt to preserve it by veiling it; he can—fully conscious of his powerlessness to mirror the real beauty in any real way—deck out its style with all kinds of blossoms—images, similes, and other delights—which only imperfectly serve the concern in hand, and not seldom detract still further from the seriousness of the vision (as with Francis de Sales). He can, through a labyrinthine form, through a breathless, endlessly whirling dance, seek to set free a sense of the superabundance of God, as with Augustine, whose whole work has become an infinitely extending, rolling sea, or with Ruysbroek, who despises any systematization. He can, like Clement of Alexandria in his somewhat dusty ‘carpets’, open up, with the touching ardour of a connoisseur, a kind of treasury of antiques, present a bouquet of the best and the finest that he has found in the religions of all people and philosophers, to lay at the feet of the Word made flesh.

At first this bewildering variety of styles alarms one, and there arises the suspicion that between the glory of the divine revelation and its imitative expression there can be achieved no kind of convincing correspondence. Is not perhaps then the paradoxical pointer, consciously intending shock and offence, the only possibility? A human word, which, in witnessing to God's word, witnesses itself to its own inappropriateness, even contradictoriness? Were that all, then the Word of God would not have become flesh. So there is a twofold mediation to be considered: the general phenomenon of the freedom of human expression in spiritual utterance and the humanity of the historical revelation of salvation.

With a certain contrast to the forms of expression of the beauty of nature, the element of freedom holds sway in human expression, and therefore in all beauty of art. Certainly the forms of nature in their inscrutable emergence from the ground of life are never simply released by a mechanical necessity; they too are 'freedom manifesting itself' (*erscheinende Freiheit*—Schiller). In human self-expression, in its highest form in the work of art, the will to express itself not only freely creates suitable form; it incarnates in this very form its freedom. It is only that which gives to the form the radiance from the depths. The more given and established the form, the weaker the creative breaking-forth of freedom accomplished in it; the power of expression can therefore be greater where technique does not yet rule completely, but is rather achieved piecemeal in the process of creation, than where it can be learnt from the masters: greater then with Masaccio and Uccello than in the refinement of the Baroque. The true artist is not so subject to the necessity of creating that he does not preserve sovereign freedom in the choice of form. Goethe could write his *Iphigenie* both in prose and in verse, and no-one can know whether he could not have made of his *Werther* just as good a play, or whether the fashioning of *Hyperion* in verse would not have produced a wholly effective work. What a sovereign freedom in the use of individual themes, individual harmonies, even of complete pieces there is in Bach and Mozart! Wagner's *Leitmotive* are expressive and appropriate, but no-one can prove that they could not have sounded differently. In the case of the beautiful it is not primarily the immanent harmony of number and proportion that is enjoyed, but the considered freedom which is manifested in it and is 'necessitated'.

By analogy, the self-expression of divine freedom in the history of salvation and its written witness, the Bible, has a bodily manifestation, which, considered as such, is a miracle of appropriateness and power of expression, but which, precisely as it allows full scope to the sovereignty of divine freedom, does not bind it to the form, but on the contrary brings it to view and to freely lived exposition. Here too we find a deliberate play with forms of expression that lie already to hand: prose and poetry (alternating in the case of the prophets), historical report, legislation, hymn and prayer, wisdom sayings, etc., all forms both preserved in their purity and, when necessary, amalgamated to the point of total interpenetration. And yet this game with forms in no way expresses contempt on the part of the divine spirit for the limitations of secular forms of expression; its high-point, the Incarnation of the Word, proves the opposite: an absolute acknowledgement and sanctioning of the created vessels of expression, a total harmonisation of content and form, and this precisely in the making manifest of the divine freedom. The freedom of the Holy Spirit, for instance, in selecting the sayings of Christ to be included in the Gospels—thus and not otherwise—bearing witness in the midst of the most evident contingency to the deliberateness and appropriateness of his choice, and not without a measure of divine humour, and a certain challenge to the deadly seriousness of the philologists. The phenomenon of revelation is only truly encountered by those who, like Anselm, see the greatest freedom of the manifestation in the greatest necessity of the form of manifestation: whereby necessity means unquestionably more than what theologians on the whole understand by ‘convenience’—which perhaps they are not able to understand any better precisely because of their neglect of the aesthetic analogy.

If these two mediations—the human and the divine / divine-human relation of free expression—are established, then a link seems possible between the content of all theology (grasped in the breadth of the adumbrations of its formal object) and the form of expression of any individual theology. The content is itself already the divine expression: the divine glory proclaimed in mundane terms; and the forms of expression are subject, on their side, to the laws of free, human power of fashioning. They are seen to be essentially not finished ‘styles’ ready to hand, but a style which develops in the creative process of giving form to this unique content. In so far as the content itself is already the expression of God, theology is the expression of an expression, on the one hand an obedient repetition of the expression of revelation imprinted on the believer, and on the other a creative, childlike, free sharing in the bringing-to-expression in the Holy

Spirit—who is the Spirit of Christ, of the Church and of the believer—of the mystery which expresses itself.

In this free but obedient relation, where nothing therefore is left to wilfulness or to chance, there are at least these fixed points: (1) the form of revelation, which as form is the unique content of Christian theology—this form should be made visible, and pondered over, and, as far as is permissible, be rendered intelligible; (2) the teaching of the Church, which has the duty of proposing the binding ground rules of such hermeneutics and to which each orthodox theologian has to conform, for the Church as such possesses the Holy Spirit of interpretation and the theologian only in so far as he undertakes to express himself in the spirit and in the name of the Church; (3) the commissions or theological charisms in which individual theologians can share, in order to see and interpret the form of revelation as a whole or an essential part of it under a particular, perhaps up to now little noticed, aspect. These commissions of charisms can be important as a kind of 'inner form' of a great theology, which is given and poured out from the living revelation, the 'form' here emphasizing the aesthetic side of a personal calling, as it breaks in from the self-revealing God through the Church to the heart and mind of the individual.

This is once more to make the particular standpoint of the following studies clear: they deal primarily not with the external form of the individual theologies, but with their inner form, in so far as this is an active-passive radiance of the divine glory from the form of revelation. Naturally this primary form is only attainable through the secondary form—through words, concepts, images, patterns—but through the secondary form we want to make the primary form present. So once again the questionableness of any historical development in theology becomes clear: each original form breaks out anew from the centre. It has, besides, its own *kairos* in its historical context, is, as an instruction for the Church, indeed of the Church, set into the ways of thought and forms of speech of the epoch and it is in this way that it attains its uniqueness.

One can see certain historical lines being drawn here: for example, that the family of 'platonizing' theologies (from Origen and Augustine, through Denys, Eriugena, the scholastics, Dante, Nicholas of Cusa, to John of the Cross) retreats in the modern period (but where then does Soloviev belong?) and gives place to a more directly Biblical theology, corresponding to a change from a preference for *theoria* (monastic and scholastic) to one for an active involvement in the world. But first, this is not a true opposition: who has spoken more of an active, indeed political, realisation than Soloviev? Secondly, the strongest accents of the modern period—from John of the Cross to Charles de Foucauld—are outspokenly contemplative, and finally the general term ‘Platonism’ covers so much that it is scarcely more than a slogan. It covers practically the whole of so-called ‘natural theology’, the world of the religious thought of mankind: a sphere which no Christian theology in any age can dispense with, because faith does not replace reason (even religious reason), but exalts it in perfecting it, and because additionally even the form of expression of the Biblical revelation itself does not renounce it. Even a Biblically based theology, which sees itself as a function of the preaching of the Church, can do no other than engage seriously with the thought of the time, to which it turns as proclamation (Bultmann’s use of Heidegger’s categories is an illustration of this); and there can be no fruitful engagement unless somewhere there has been some mutual involvement. Christian theology will always be, in whatever form or adumbration it appears, a crystallization of the divine-human content of revelation in human, if also faithful, thinking and understanding, so that precisely through this ever-new incarnation it may witness to and demonstrate the uniqueness and thus wholly-otherness of the manifestation of God in Jesus Christ.

Even at the end of this volume it will not be possible to suppress a feeling of disappointment: for we shall have only circled round the Biblical and dogmatic meaning of the glory of the Lord and have not elucidated it from the very centre, and how many important individual aspects shall we have left untouched! But that will be the concern of the third volume.

IRENAEUS

Irenaeus’ work marks the birth of Christian theology. With it, theology emerges as a reflection on the world of revealed facts, a reflection which is not just a tentative, partial approximation but achieves the miracle of a complete and organised image in the mind of faith. The first and second post-apostolic generations had indeed made a vigorous start on this task, producing works of inimitable brilliance, but these remained occasional works like Clement’s glowing letter to the Corinthians; steep, high, narrow confessions like the blazing letters of Ignatius; attempts at synthesis which remained trapped in the contemplation of a detail or the putting together of elements, only just learnt and mastered, like the Didache and so much in the Apologists. But no sooner does Theophilus of Antioch see, however indistinctly, that his task is to present salvation history within the framework of world history, than he runs aground on the sandbank of a dry-as-dust chronology, while the believer’s spiritual indignation at the world of lies of the pagan pantheon is expressed in him, in Hermias and in Tatian, in jibes which leave one looking for a more sovereign refutation and treatment. Typical of the form of this theology in search of itself is its most valuable example, the Letter to Diognetus, in which one finds sections without internal structure or coherence side by side with precious intuitions and formulations of an intensity possibly never reached again (especially § § 5-6). The most important preparatory work is done by Justin, whose calm, magnificent intelligence gathers and arranges the scattered pieces and assembles them around a centre which is not just conceived, but really seen, the Logos everywhere present in the world who in the Judaeo-Christian history of salvation nevertheless entered the world and finally became flesh. Without Justin, to whose material he constantly goes back, Irenaeus would never have reached his heights, but his relation to him is that of the genius to the man of ability, like that of Mozart to Christian Bach and his many contemporaries: they gave him the forms out of which they could make only a clever game. Justin, for all his cleverness, has a certain dullness; his industry cannot overcome a feeling of boredom. Irenaeus radiates from every pore; his utterance derives not from academic and pious knowledge, but from a creative sight of the glowing central core. The height of the spring betrays the force of the pressure which drives it up, and here the stimulus is not the general enemy, paganism, but a personal one, fully recognised and fully mastered for the first time by Irenaeus, who not only sees through him to the heart but is also enabled by him to employ his intellectual and existential indignation at such a radical falsifying of the truth in an attempt to capture and represent the centre of reality. Justin and the Apologists had no such enemy. The ordinary pagan religion was too amorphous, and their petitions to the emperor required them to spare it and discover what was good and usable in it; and in the same way the dialogue with the Jews had to be conducted in such a way that it constantly shifted between intimate agreement and an assault on their blindness. But Gnosis, which, largely with the tools and materials of the Bible, had erected a totally un-Christian structure of the highest intellectual and religious quality and won over many Christians, Gnosis was the opponent Christian thought needed in order fully to find itself. Every Christian theology is conditioned by its situation, or it would not be the theology of a historical revelation. Every book of the Bible, every statement of Jesus, is conditioned by its situation, because fully historical. Great Christian theology shares in the mystery of Scripture, in as much as it too possesses, in and through its conditioning by its situation, that special vitality which secures and preserves its supra-temporal validity. Though talking to an opponent long-since vanished, Irenaeus is as fresh and relevant today as ever; his work shares the power of perpetual renewal which he says the Holy Spirit gives to the Christian faith and the Church which contains it. The power may come from the faith, but the opponent was the occasion for the crystallisation. So, at the beginning of the history of theology, we have an illustration of the same historical law which governs the history of thought from Plato onwards: it is only the turning away from the ‘aesthetic’ and its conquest which provides the power and opens eyes to see real beauty.

1. THE AESTHETIC MYTH

We must therefore glance at Valentinian Gnosis, this late, mature and most ambitious of the systems, the one with which Irenaeus wrestled first and in most detail, treating the others as no more than variants or illustrative sources: 'Once the Valentinians are bested, the whole crowd of heretics will be refuted.'[1] Gnosis was a regression from Platonic philosophy (which had separated itself from myth in order to know being) in the direction of myth: Socratic sobriety and the Platonic ethos of knowledge had been transformed into a new intellectual concupiscence in religious colouring which, lacking the naivety of ancient myth, turned being and existence into a novel. Never have man, his structure, his sufferings and his tragedy, been more plainly projected on to the screen of heaven in order to fascinate him and, professedly, to redeem him by the contemplation of this magnified image of himself. To fascinate, because in the heavenly and cosmic giant portrait he really recognises himself; he sees his own fate in the drama of the wisdom which falls out of the divine fulness and is brought back in a series of romantic reversals. And to redeem, because this phantasmagoria is presented to him on an eternal divine scale in the contemplation of which he can hide and lose himself. Valentinus is 'prophet, poet, preacher and philosopher' in one,[2] but he is also something more: he is a magician and producer of the first rank.

At the origin of all things is the unbegotten 'primal father', the 'groundless one' (*Ungrund*) 'in complete silence and calm': to the religious sensibilities of the time the unknowability of the ultimate is a guarantee of genuine and lofty thought. In the bosom of the 'groundless one', resting eternally with him, is the true image, also called 'silence' or 'grace'. From this first pair, which is in truth only a single being, there proceed in sequence 'for the glorification of the Father' three united pairs (syzygies): Nous (reason or the only-begotten son) and Truth, Logos and Life, Ideal Man and Church (ideal election). These eight form the original ogdoad, which is in its turn fertile and expands into the pleroma (fulness) of thirty aeons, by application of the old Pythagorean laws of divine even and uneven numbers, which do not need to be described separately here. The last aeon is that

Sophia (love of wisdom) which, in her drive towards the infinite, will become the heavenly initiator of the drama of the world. She is at first a pure drive (Enthumesis) to understand the infinite greatness of the Father, the ‘passion’ (pathos as a psychological as well as an ethical passion) which, in its expansion into the infinite, ‘threatened to disintegrate in the universal being’, but then encountered one of the aeons, Horos, Limit or Measure, and was saved by him. She is ‘brought to rest’ and thereby to herself by him, the pure drive is refined into ‘astonished admiration’, and so wisdom is kept within the pleromatic divine fulness. But what had to be pruned away and separated from her to this end, the pure, blind ‘striving’, does not now simply disappear; it is a spiritual but ‘formless’ substance, a ‘rejected fruit’ separated from the pleromatic fulness and so ‘crucified’, for Horos’ other name is Cross, since Limit does not only bring being to maturity by strengthening it, but also purifies it by pruning.

To deal with this situation a new pair proceeds from the primal ground, Christ and Holy Spirit. Their mission is to bring to the pleroma the knowledge (gnosis) of the Father’s unknowability, to form and comfort the formless substance of wisdom which fell from the fulness,[3] and—this is to be the Holy Spirit’s role—to balance and harmonise the pleroma in itself, whereupon ‘in stability and perfect peace and with great joy it glorifies the primal Father with hymns’. Each aeon now gives of its truest and best and all, ‘weaving the whole in harmony into a complete unity, send out, in honour of the groundless one, the most perfect of all beauties, as it were the very star and heart of the fulness’, its final fruit and quintessence, Jesus, also called the saviour, and with him his pages and attendants, the angels. The same process which heavenly wisdom had experienced within the fulness is now repeated for fallen wisdom on the edge of the pleroma. Though she is outside, excluded from the light, wandering and ‘boiling’ ‘in shadow and the void’, Christ stretches himself out for her on the ‘cross’ of the pleroma-limit to bring her to herself in her being (*kat’ ousian*) and to give her an awareness of her state, her exclusion from the fulness. Only then will she be enabled to set her eyes on the things of heaven and, after Christ has withdrawn into heaven from the cross, to emulate him in striving after a ‘certain fragrance of incorruptibility which he and the Holy Spirit left behind’. She is now for the first time really (worldly) self-conscious Sophia (in Hebrew Achamoth), and able to ‘deposit’ the elements of blind passion which were in her, as a chemical substance forms a ‘precipitate’. What she throws off in this way are the elements of the material world. She herself, wisdom, is in essence pneumatic, she is the mother of the pneumatic human souls; but what she throws off is psychic (‘animal’, the world soul and the Demiurge) and ‘hylic’ (the material elements). ‘After she had gone through all the passions, just as she was emerging, she turned in entreaty to the light she had abandoned, to Christ. Christ, now returned to the fulness, sent her the Paraclete, that is, the saviour, whom the Father had endowed with all power by making all things subject to him, visible and invisible (Col 1.16). On catching sight of him, she wrapped herself reverently in her veil, then, when she had looked at him, him and all his offspring (the angels), she hurried to him and received a “power” from his manifestation.’ This encounter now leaves her formed in her knowledge (*kata gnōsin*). In this the saviour strips away her passions and makes them into the basic substances out of which the psychic demiurge will later form the material world, so that the saviour is the ‘potential creator of the world’. There are thus now three worlds or ‘places’: the heavenly world of the pleroma, the ‘centre’ between heaven and earth, the seat of Mother Wisdom, who encounters the redeemer (an encounter which gives rise to the pneumatics), and the lower world, formed by the demiurge out of the elements precipitated by Achamoth, psychic and hylic souls and substances. The constructor of the world is formed out of the mother. He is psychic and so has no (pneumatic) knowledge of the spiritual powers which lie above him, work through him and can leave pneumatic seed within his lower world without his knowledge. However, since the psychic, as the power of the centre, can direct its attention upwards as well as down, the world of the demiurge is nonetheless in some way redeemable: the constructor of the world rises eschatologically into the mother’s place in the centre. But the elements, the precipitate of the passions (terror becomes earth, fleeing fear water, grief air, the ignorance concealed in the other three the fire concealed in everything), are fundamentally insubstantial and in the universal conflagration disintegrate into nothing, together with the souls of the ‘hylics’, which are set wholly on the material. The saviour sent from the Father’s fulness thus works on the mother and through her, and the mother works on the constructor of the world, who works on the world; but whereas Mother Wisdom knows the saviour, the demiurge does not know the wisdom which works through him, and among men the pneumatics know her but the psychics and hylics do not. Wisdom formed the lower world in the image of the upper, aeonic world of ideas and its numerical relations, whereas the demiurge (the world soul) ‘was convinced that he was forming it out of himself when he was in fact only carrying out the ideas of Achamoth’.

This system of dynamic foundations then becomes the basis for the interpretation and integration of Christian theology. The Christ (saviour) of the gospel is the synthesis of four powers. From wisdom he received the pneumatic element, from the demiurge the psychic, and the ‘order of salvation’ (*oikonomia*) saw to it that he received a similarly psychic (illusory) body so that he should be visible and tangible to material men, though he himself has his origins in the divine pleroma. Thus, in addition to matter, which is doomed to destruction, the saviour took into himself ‘the first-fruits of all that he was to save’. It is this psychic saviour that the prophets of the Old Covenant foretold (for of themselves they could see no higher than the demiurge), and the same psychic saviour is the object of the belief and worship of the human beings of the Catholic Church, while only the pneumatics understand his higher powers, the pneumatic and the aeonic. These, of course, are incapable of suffering and therefore deserted the psychic Christ before the Passion. But even the psychic Christ, who, of course, could not really be material, only suffered ‘in mystery’, so that through his sufferings the mother might be enabled to see the form of the upper Christ, who had stretched himself on the limit-cross, since all earthly things are an image of those in heaven. To find numbers of scriptural references to apply to this sophiology and christology was both exciting and amusing. The woman with the issue of blood was Sophia, whose substance flowed into nothingness until she touched the hem (limit, Horos) of the saviour. The woman who lost the drachma and swept the house until she found it is also Sophia, and so are the lost sheep and the widow Anna. It is because wisdom veiled herself before the angels of the saviour that Paul orders women to veil themselves in church. Jesus sweats blood on the mount of Olives to represent the passions precipitated by wisdom, and so on.[4]

Once one allows oneself to feel the effect of this system which has here been described only summarily, it is impossible to deny it a grandeur and a philosophical and religious completeness: it includes everything that can move a human being, above all everything that could excite the cultivated mind of late antiquity. Plato, the Stoa and the beginnings of Neo-Platonism have their place, no less than Orphism and the Mysteries; it contains both an all-embracing monism and a tragic dualism, a fatalistic system of world order alongside a dramatic mobility of levels, falls and rises. Ancient heathenism is present, but dressed in the robes of Judaism and paganism, their essences saved, in such abstruse interpretations that no cultivated Christian needed to feel troubled by such illumination. The whole glitters with a strangely immaterial beauty, at once both passionate and passionless. Valentinus—to mention only him, though the same could be said of the other great Gnostic mythmakers—is beyond doubt a powerful poet, and it is easy to see why great poets have constantly felt and succumbed to the Gnostic fascination, poets like Shelley and Mombert and, above all, Blake. There is the same passion for the beautiful, the same spiritualism, the same tragic, Manichean fragmentation, and above all the same aesthetic indifference and ambivalence which simply plays musically with all positions without letting itself be bound by any, and so produces the aesthetic illusion par excellence. It is no accident that the rescuing of the fallen Sophia (with all the ambiguities about earthly and heavenly love) is a favourite theme of Richard Wagner's operas!

Valentinus fails to distinguish adequately between God and creature, in that while the two are distinguished to the point of a rift between the heavenly and the earthly world, God's world is then populated with innumerable emanations and aeons which together make up the divine world and, conversely, the quintessence of the earthly world is deified as the pneumatic Christ and the pneumatic Church. The result is a lack of any real distinction between heaven and earth, such that it is impossible to decide whether the earth is really an image and shadow of the heavenly ideal world (as a genuine fragment of Valentinus says),[5] or whether, as Irenaeus rightly objects, this whole heavenly world is not in fact a clear and essentially simple projection of earthly conditions into eternity.[6] Is it profundity to have an earthly cross matched by a heavenly cross, earthly painful suffering by a divine 'painless pain', and in which direction is the relation of original and image ultimately to be construed? Again there is no real distinction drawn between person and idea (or point of view). The logical and metaphysical dialectic of being and becoming, which is often very reminiscent of Hegel, is turned into a personal drama. Every concept becomes an aeon, every conceptual tension becomes a male-female relationship, every example of intellectual 'alienation' becomes an episode of tragedy. However, the personalisation cannot be maintained; the personalised principles must instead be constantly reabsorbed, and constantly are, into the progressive unity of becoming. This is shown very clearly by the christology, which deliberately talks not about four Christs, but about one under four aspects. Nor is there an adequate distinction between the physical and the moral, the substantial and the accidental, as states solidify into substances, but are not really substances and may either evaporate into nothing or be expelled as waste. So in all this it is the final category which leaves no choice and is interesting for having been bought at this price. The divine becomes interesting because it so much resembles the human, because in God too there is an abyss, a suffering, a darkness and a drama, infinitely deeper than in man and yet (as Schelling will say later) always already overtaken and past and conquered by the light. And the human is interesting because of the extent to which the divine displays itself and its life in man, because man himself is a part of the eternal drama and his small passing passions here receive an absolute character. This means that nothing is finally fixed; before it is fixed seriously or irrevocably it is already cancelled, withdrawn, eclipsed by the arrival of the next vision. But what a sense of intoxication to look into the inner mechanism of being itself! This aesthetic spiritual frenzy is the constant element that holds the rest of the system together and, as Irenaeus will show, leaves its mark on people even in their general disposition; it is this that marks them out as sectaries. Irenaeus judges them as Kierkegaard judged the Hegelians and Nietzsche the Wagnerians. There is no need, as he puts it, to drink the sea dry to know that, it is salt.[7]

There is no need to evoke again the atmosphere of his polemic, which has been sharply portrayed by Reynders;[8] a few brushstrokes will suffice. Irenaeus does not judge by hearsay; he knows his men and has all their mysteries in his head. He recommends a precise knowledge of one’s opponent, lack of which had hampered his predecessors.[9] And when he tears the structure of lies apart piece by piece, he does not indulge in polemics piece-meal (like so many Church Fathers), but attacks from the vantage of a superior overall view. This view gives him two things, his great calm which enables him to develop a whole theology of divine and human patience, and his great impatience which finds this web of lies intolerable. The fault here is not, as in the case of other heretics, a mistake on one point of doctrine, nor even, as in the case of the pagans and Jews, the absence of the crucial piece, which could however be supplied, but the falsification of the truth, of the elementary articulations of being itself. This radical poisoning of thought, which has been carried to the limit, can expect no mercy. The Gnostics have blinded themselves like Oedipus in the tragedy,[10] they chase a shadow and drop the bread, like Aesop's dog,[11] they, who are constantly talking about God, are more godless than the pagans.[12] No wonder, for they simply do not know God, and so are unable to make a single correct statement about him.[13] They are the fools, the *insipientes*,[14] of the Bible because they think against nature itself.[15] They lack common sense; they burrow about in their speculations like blind moles.[16] They think that as pneumatics they are wiser than the architect of the world and invent another God above God, despising the discovery of God and preferring an eternal search to finding.[17] They have exceeded the measure of thought,[18] which also means that they have gone beyond God's limits.[19] They themselves could not produce a flea, yet they look down in contempt on the creator.[20] They pride themselves on doing theosophical research and learning something new every day,[21] but the old truth and simple goodness are too trivial for them. They talk about God as though he were not the living one, the ever-present;[22] they are unhappy lovers whose love is in fact not returned, a spectacle more comic than tragic.[23] They open up and dissect the deity;[24] they behave as though they were God's midwives, whose task was to bring him to his own pleromatic fulness.[25] All of which shows that they have no idea who God is or how to think and talk about him. They think they can interpret God 'with a + b and cold figures',[26] and so all their efforts are nothing but posturing and mystery-making with things that are the reverse of divine,[27] an illusion made of sheer false, imaginary infinities, perspectives of worlds which reflect each other back and forth into infinity.[28] At every point, to get their drama going, they have to project an ignorance which is not divine into the divine world, a world in clear contradiction to the divine light which they also proclaim.[29] Their thought bristles with contradictions. If the primal father is the unknowable, how can there be a revelation of him and how can this revelation consist in the knowledge of his unknowability? An eternal seeking without finding is inherently contradictory. And since they already—indeed by virtue of their nature as pneumatics!—know all the mysteries of God, what use is revelation? If they know the truth, they have made obsolete the saying of Jesus that no-one knows the Father except the Son.[30]

The falsehood spills out uncontrollably where they come into contact with Scripture: they break in pieces on its unity, their false mystery is dispelled by its clarity. They have to come to terms with it and cannot. They are left with no other course than to tear apart the indivisible unity of Scripture;[31] not just

Marcion, but the others too must rely on eclecticism and hairesis or on a permanent double-talk, speaking a Catholic language to the people and a Gnostic one to the initiates. So they split asunder not only Scripture, but the Church as well.[32] They are not just occasional but comprehensive falsifiers of meaning;[33] they recast the bronze image of the king in the image of a dog, claiming that of course the substance remains the same.[34] They give themselves airs as textual critics: 'The texts are corrupt, are apocryphal, do not agree.' No wonder, for they do not recognise the tradition of the Church.[35] They take care, however, not to look for the real causes of the discrepancies in Scripture.[36] The dark places in Scripture hermeneutically, which ought to be interpreted and illumined with the aid of the clear ones,[37] are welcome to them as a pretext for finding hints of their mysteries and so no longer seeing the plain things.[38] The parables are not taken in their clear and obvious sense, but turned into obscure riddles and tied into knots which cannot be unravelled: this is the result of a refusal to accept any canon of truth.[39] In this way everyone forges his own revelation and his own God, and they all, unwilling to be Catholics, have only one common characteristic, which marks them to the core: they are not the one Church which,[40] by virtue of its unity that is its demonstrable tradition, preserves the unity of Scripture, the source of the unity of the revelation of the one, true, living God. The indissolubility of these unities is what prompts Irenaeus to risk the statement which Augustine repeated after him: all heresy can be reduced to the common denominator of a denial that the Word became flesh.[41]

So, after describing the heresies in his first book and their internal contradictions in his second, Irenaeus comes to the unity of reality. This has already been proved negatively by the inherent tendency of the Gnostic systems to disintegrate, but he wishes to prove it positively as well. Since Gnosis presented itself, not as un-Christian, but as the perfection of Christianity, the fact that the heresy refutes itself in this way is not just an apologetic to those outside, but also a part of dogmatics, just as the one true God of revelation reveals himself as who he is by demolishing the proud and the 'gods' and exalting the humble. This is why Irenaeus attaches so much importance to tracing Gnosis back to Simon Magus, that is, to a situation of revelation within the New Testament.[42]

In Irenaeus apologetics and dogmatics are totally one, because the indissolubility of the inner necessity and harmony between the triune God, the decree of salvation in Christ, Scripture and the Church together with its tradition is both the real content of the *intellectus fidei* and the only convincing proof of Christian truth *ad extra*. Whereas in the Gnostic system everything remains arbitrary, fictional invention—'Let someone tell us the reason for the procession of the aeons, why each is as it is, why the original ogdoad was sent out first and not a pentad or triad or hebdomad,' nor is it based in creation, 'because, according to them, it all lies farther back and therefore needs a separate justification'[43]—in Catholic unity everything is internally plain and bright and can be made clear to anyone who wishes to see within the enduring mystery of God. Although Irenaeus was stimulated in many particular features of his own view by Gnosis, he is, in contrast to the Alexandrians who come after him, the first 'anti-modern' (Maritain), for whom the power of Christianity derives not from its perennial modernity and conformity to the currents of the age, but from the irrefutability and irresistability of its internal obviousness. His account sets out accordingly to be always simple and true;[44] plainness is to be the basis of his explanation. The form of his thought, like that of John's, is a circling within the broad unbroken sphere to which every mystery of the inner divine life and of salvation history belongs; and like John's it is a circling that leads to no loss of clarity, to no dizziness. In this circular motion a line of thought is equally true whether it is followed from below to above or from above to below, from front to back or from back to front. We can say that the eucharist would not be true if Christ's Incarnation were not true, and it would not be true unless man were truly composed of spirit and flesh, and we can consider the same fact in the reverse order. Again, if God is not the one God of the Old and New Testaments, the basic statements of Scripture are misleading, and it is also impossible to rely on the statements of the Gnostic Jesus, but if Jesus speaks the truth so did the prophets, and the Father is both the God of Jesus and the God of the prophets.[45] Or, if Jesus is the Son of God and the apostles his officially appointed witnesses, and if the Church through her tradition and institution is in possession of the apostolic truth, the Church's kerygma is true, but since the Church's kerygma is true (as absolutely one and homogeneous), it proves the institution of the apostolic office and, as its precondition, the existence of divine authority.[46] So Irenaeus is brought, by the very form of his thought (which is plainly only the crystallisation of its content), to note the continuity above all between reality and ideal, between nature and grace, the work of the Father (creation) and the work of the Son and Spirit (the order of salvation), between Adam and Christ, Old and New

Covenant, world and Church. It is this point that is the source of his sober truth, his warming goodness and glowing beauty. For goodness must stand between truth and beauty, the perfection of both and their crown. Irenaeus too, faced with a Gnosis which knows so much, wants to know only one thing, Jesus Christ and him crucified,[47] because he is love. For him, therefore, holiness is greater than gnosis. Holiness is the ideal in the Catholic religion, as opposed to the ideal of gnosis in all Eastern and Greek religions. ‘It is better and more profitable that we should be uneducated and know little but draw near to the love of God, than that we should think ourselves deeply learned and experienced and so blaspheme against our Lord. That is why Paul proclaimed, “Gnosis puffs up, but love builds up”.’[48]

2. THE BIRTH OF THEOLOGICAL FORM

Gnosis was an attack on being itself which led to its dissolution into visionary apparitions. Theology begins by seeing what is. Far more than philosophy, which can be and usually becomes idealist, it is recognition of an accompaniment to and dedication to reality. It is either realistic or it is not theology at all. 'Truth helps us to faith, for faith's object is the things which really are, and so we belive in things as they are and by believing in things as they are, we retain ever after our firm conviction of them. And since our faith is the basis of our salvation, we must take trouble over it to see that it gives us a true understanding of the things which exist.'[49] This means that the insistence already mentioned on thinking *kata physin* instead *oipara physin* would lead us to translate these terms, with great profundity and rigour, as 'in accordance with being' and 'contrary to being', 'in a manner inadequate to being'.[50] The primary aim is not to think, to impose Platonic intellectual or even mythical categories on things, but simply to *see* what *is*.

To see. The two words *videre* and *ostendere* fall constantly from Irenaeus' pen. *Videre*, again, is less Plato's contemplation than simply standing before the clear message of the facts. The thing itself is single, whereas the intellectual hypotheses are countless. In Irenaeus this form takes up the old theologoumenon of the 'two ways': 'For all who see there is only one way which goes up and is lit by the light of heaven. For those who do not see there is a multitude of shadowed ways which lead in the opposite direction.'[51] But whoever wants to can see the truth. God's light does not refuse itself.[52] To see God is the distinction of Adam, the distinction too of the prophets and of Christian believers, though to see God remains equally the great eschatological promise, *quoniam videbitur Deus ab hominibus*.[53] In the beginning it is the Son, together with the Holy Spirit, who sees God. 'And no-one in heaven, on earth or under the earth could unseal the Father's book and see the Father but the Lamb that was slain, who redeemed us by his blood and, when the word became flesh, received from the Father, who created everything by his Word and adorned it by his wisdom, authority over everything . . . , so that all might see their king, that the Father's light might be gathered in the flesh of our Lord and from his flesh strike into us like lightning, so that man might attain to eternal life, wrapped in the Father's light.'[54] For us, therefore, seeing means simply the revelation of the Father in the Son through the Spirit ('for without the Spirit it is impossible to see the Son of God, just as without the Son no-one can approach the Father,'),[55] that is, the triune God's being for us.[56] Thus, on the one hand, all revelation is God's becoming visible, and faith hangs on those encounters in which God has been seen; similarly the Church's tradition (working backwards) hangs on the 'autoptics', the eyewitnesses.[57] On the other hand, historical revelation (moving forwards) has an inherent direction towards the eschatologically perfected vision of God. The Old Covenant sees the coming salvation as indeed something which is to come: 'the prophets did not see God's face directly, but saw saving decrees and mysteries, through which man was to begin to see God.'[58] Moses saw God and at the same time did not see him, a dialectic 'intended to indicate both the impossibility of a man's seeing God and the fact that, at the end of the ages, through God's wise decree, man will see God.'[59] The same dialectic is later upheld by the Son at a higher level 'when he shows God to men and men to God by, on the one hand, protecting the Father's invisibility so that man should never become a despiser of the Father but always have room to progress and, on the other, by making God visible to men by many saving decrees so that man should not completely fall away from God and cease to exist'.[60] The prophets thus looked to the future,[61] the apostles saw in Jesus the presence of God, but a presence obscured and so also granted as a fulfilment, as a promise. The promise of the Old Covenant says 'that God will be seen by men and have contact and conversation with them on earth and be present to his creature and perceiver . . . , for what is impossible for men is possible for God. Man cannot of himself see God, but God is seen by men by his own choice, by those he chooses and when he chooses and in the way he chooses. God has power to do anything: through the Spirit in the past he was seen prophetically, then through the Son adoptively, and one day in the kingdom of heaven he will be seen in his fatherhood.'[62] Seeing the incarnate Son thus remains a seeing in faith:[63] a fulfilment, because God is already coming on earth, and a promise because the final descent of God's glory has not yet taken place. In all this we must never forget that 'the vision of God is the life of man',[64] that what is referred to as seeing is not anything theoretical, but is identical with life-giving, nourishing, purifying and bliss-giving communication,[65] in which the role of the Holy Spirit is of crucial importance.[66] What is seen is ‘the living God, who is a God of the living’.[67] This is not a seeing in ecstasy which leaves the earthly senses behind. The important thing is that it is the same eyes which before did not see and which now through the healing miracle of grace have attained vision,[68] that it is ‘the Father’s ancient creation’ which through the Son and Spirit gains access to the glory of the Father, through the ‘economy’ of the triune God: ‘There was no other way in which we could have been trained than by seeing our teacher, hearing his voice with our hearing, so that, having become imitators of his works and doers of his words, we might achieve fellowship with him.’[69]

If seeing is the path and goal of the man who advances towards God,[70] the work of thought can consist in nothing other than preparation for this seeing. Irenaeus used, to the point of overworking them, the terms *ostensio*, *manifestatio*, ‘display’, ‘exhibit’, ‘draw into the light’, ‘announce’, ‘make plain’. It is significant that the process marked out by these words has a vast range. At one extreme is the polemical ‘conviction’ and ‘exposure’ of the opponent—Irenaeus even thinks that with this bringing to light he has done almost enough, since his opponents’ teaching cannot bear the bright spiritual light of day and refutes itself.[71] Then comes the apologetic *ostensio* of truth from the Scriptures,[72] and the climax is the theological *ostensio* of the triune God by God himself. This occurs as the *ostensio Dei per conditionem*, to which is closely related the *manifestatio Patris per Verbum*,[73] as the *ostensio* of the inner reality of the incarnate one by his life and his cross;[74] the *self-ostensio* of the risen one, who ‘shows himself’,[74a] and thereby at the same time ‘shows from the Scriptures that Christ had to suffer’,[75] because faith is related both to the vision of the risen one and to the pointing of Scripture (*fides manifestam ostensionem haben* . . . . *ex scripturis*).[76] Through all this there takes place the *ostensio* by God (which had remained hidden in the Old Covenant) of our likeness to God,[77] which is also the ‘opening of God’s previously sealed testament in favour of men’.[78] It is therefore natural that the Pauline *parrhesia*, free access, the confident approach to God which is without fear because nothing obscures it, also constantly recurs in Irenaeus.[79] The Catholic tradition, unlike the secret Gnostic tradition, is marked by its openness and simplicity, its availability to general inspection.[80] It reflects the *ostensio Christi*, in which all appearance and all action is identical with being: *quod parebat, hoc erat*.[81]

This principle of clarity drawn from the clarity of the object itself gives Irenaeus two victories. One is over the Gnostic theory of the secret tradition: Christian teaching is a secret, but ‘a holy, public secret’. The second is over the Gnostic theory of the adaptation of the Scriptures of both Old and New Covenants to the mentality, milieu and prejudices of the men of every age, as though the prophets, the Lord and the apostles, out of regard for human weakness (and so out of love for humanity), had not told the whole truth, but ‘talked to the sick in accordance with their sickness’.[82] This still popular theory is easily refuted by Irenaeus, who points out that both the prophets and the Lord and his apostles do not shrink from provoking the deepest offence and anger by the directness of their message, or from paying for the welcomeness of their teaching with every sort of torture and even death.[83] If the principle of adaptation and soft speaking were left unchallenged, any fixed standard of truth would be lost and everyone would be left believing in his own God; any objective revelation would be redundant and everything would remain as it was.[84] The basic methodological structure reflects not only the central feature of theological truth—it is revelation—but also the most characteristic feature of this particular theologian, his ability to see, above all to see things in their relation to one another, in a compact concentrated whole, in a summary (*epitome*, *compendium*)[85] which is prevented from being a falsification because it keeps the whole in view of its intensity and is able at any time to reproduce it again. This pulling together of his material produces a formula which outlasts and marks everything; but this is neither a piece of rhetoric, because it lacks the casualness and practical precision, nor a mere product of artistic intuition (although it is that too), because it follows the articulations of saving revelation in total obedience. It is not a trick of polemic, though it would never have been produced but for the pressure of indignation; it is the power of speculation in the original sense of the word. Above all, however, it is not an abstraction, like for example the christological formulas of the councils, but possesses the vibrancy, fragrance and downright poetic quality of direct, spontaneous creation. It is totally traditional; the terms used come from the Bible, are sometimes words of great simplicity, and yet in this use create a fresh, unique effect and have the inexhaustible violence of spontaneous creation. They have the impetuous quality of inspiration—just as for Irenaeus the

Holy Spirit in the Church generally is a tempestuous roaring[86]—but at the same time possess a detached calm which matches this thinker's deepest sense of being, his earthy patience with existence. The formulas are therefore engineered to perfection—nothing in them may be altered—and yet open-ended, an invitation to eternal advance in believing, loving and hoping, to an eternally new conversation with God.[87] The concentration shares in the movement from the Old Covenant to the New, from the 'detailed statement of the law' to the 'conciseness of faith and love', since 'love is the pleroma of the law' (Rom 13.10),[88] but this concentration is at one and the same time expansion, a scattering over the globe,[89] so that there is no longer any going back from this unity of fulness to the previous narrowness.[90] This is also to say that the balanced formulas which Irenaeus loves—between the first and the second Adam, between Eve and Mary, disobedience and obedience, etc.—with their *aequa lance*,[91] do not refer to a merely aesthetic harmony and symmetry, but to the unique theological relation of promise and fulfilment, which is at the same time that of fall and restoration.

We have now reached the central concept of Irenaeus' theology, *recapitulation*;[92] on the one hand the material expression of the method's formal aspect, it is at the same time the formative element in the world and history in general. Not just in the world, since for that the philosophical concept of transcendental unity would suffice, the *hen* and *nous* which were later to be used by the Alexandrians and Augustine, but specifically in temporal and historical extension, which cannot receive its meaning from any merely supra-temporal unity, but only from a power immanent in the temporal flow itself which gives the fleeting elements meaning and direction, a goal and substance. Christ, who became man at the 'end of the ages', binds together the disparate strands into that unity of essence and meaning which is their justification before eternity. Here there is no extraction of a permanent content from lost time as in the Platonists; recapitulation gives time itself validity before eternity. The concept retains a characteristic plurality of internally analogous levels which give it its unprecedentedly fertile richness, though it is a richness it must have if it is to express the centre of the mystery and not reduce it to a philosophical proposition.

(a) There is, first, the dimension of beginning which embraces both the initiation of a work and the final process which brings perfection of inchoative and perfective. However, since we are dealing with a process, these do not simply coexist like comparable entities, nor in precisely the same way as the entities usually described by the two Biblical concepts type and anti-type, but in a way which allows the one which brings the perfection to give the one at the beginning of the process scope in itself for perfection. In Christ's reality Adam's reality comes to its full truth, in Mary Eve, in the Church the synagogue, with the first in each case the outline, the sketch;[93] the vague and complex finds itself under the impress of unity. This is also true of smaller unities within the large, which is why for instance Irenaeus loves to linger over Deuteronomy; he sees it as a unification of the whole Mosaic law which deepens it, clarifies it, and brings it to its culmination,[94] and, in this integrating function, as a 'second giving of the law'.[95] But the concept reaches its complete fulness only in Christ, who, as the God-man, brings perfection because at the same time he 'recapitulated in himself the long unfolding (*expositionem*) of men and gave us salvation in the mass (*in compendio*).'[96]

(b) The second element is already present here: the active power of the fulfiller to give every emergent thing scope within itself in order, by assimilating it to himself, to bring it to its own fulness: without this active attraction into his own primacy recapitulation would be impossible.[97] So, 'in himself he raises man from the ground to which he has fallen',[98] since by giving the whole of man scope in himself he also assumes man's death into himself.[99] With the same vigour he assumes all the prophecies in order to fulfil them too in themselves,[100] a process in which they are fulfilled and redeemed, not outside themselves but in their own essence, with an effect which works back in time.[101] The ground of the advance of the inchoate is thus found in the fulfilling return (*recirculatio*) of the definitive,[102] by whose integrating power everything is decided. Adam is not redeemed just by a moral 'feat' of Christ's, by a 'representative' suffering, by a forensic justification, but is taken up into the redeemer as he is, with all his genuine bodiliness: *antiquam plasmationem in se recapitulates est*.[103] All Christ's acts must possess this absorptive power, just as he symbolically washed only Peter's feet but thereby made his whole body clean: he redeemed the 'whole body' of the human race by the isolated cross.[104]

(c) This integrating power of Christ's would, however, be only divine and not also human if it did not have some sort of analogy in created mankind, if it did not recapitulate in itself an existing integrating power. Here again, Irenaeus does no more than extend Biblical thinking: Christ is raised and appointed to the position of head by replacing and at the same time redeeming another head, the first one, Adam. This makes it clear why for Irenaeus it is not just a pious wish, but a theological necessity, that the first Adam should be redeemed and saved.[105] So, despite the universality of the redemption of mankind, the full personal relationship of the two heads of humanity is of crucial importance: it is important that what distinguishes the first, namely, his birth directly from the virgin earth and the shaping hands of God, should be repeated in the second at the level of fulfilment, but now the *terra virgo* can no longer be lifeless matter since it is at the same time the 'old Adam' who must be the 'clay' out of which the new Adam is formed.[106] From this it necessarily follows that the new *terra uirgo*, the Virgin Mary, as the one who definitively submits to God and is formed by God, should in her personal answer recapitulate the first woman, Eve, matching disobedience with obedience. This quiet, easy conclusion, which is the result of close *attention* to the biblical complex, is the moment at which mariology is really born, though here it remains wholly a function of Christology: the virgin birth is only a sign, the sign by which the uniqueness of Christ the recapitulator can be recognised.[107] That Christ was born of the Virgin (and not just of virgin clay like Adam) shows at the same time, however, his divine status because it is the distinctive sign of his eternal birth from the Father: *praeclaram praeter omnes habuit in se earn quae est ab Altissimo Patregenituram, praeclara autem functus est et ea quae est ex Virgine generatione*.[108] What for later Church Fathers easily becomes a mere sign of his divine purity (that he was not stained by any human conception, which transmits original sin) is for Irenaeus a double sign of his true divinity and of his true humanity, in that as man he possesses fully not only Adam's flesh and blood through Mary, but in addition Adam's archetypal mode of origin.[109] It is only in this (and not in a mere Platonic lack of imperfection) that the whole art of the Father is displayed: 'this was the way it had to happen, so that God might not be conquered and his art might not succumb to any weakness'.[110] And even if the transformation of the original uncultivated virgin earth into the intactness of a virgin is felt to be a sort of spiritualism, according to Irenaeus God's art goes still further. This happens in image, when Jesus spits on the ground and makes a paste of clay which he uses to restore sight to Adam who has become blind, *ostendens antiquam plasmationem quemadmodum facta est, . . . quod enim in ventro plasmare praetermisit artifex Verbum, hoc in manifesto adimplevit*.[111] It happens in reality too, when the living second Adam finally also enters into bread and wine, into products of the earth, in order to recapitulate in himself not just man but also nature and the cosmos, the most deeply realistic earth. The eucharist is therefore the culmination of the case against Gnosticism.[112] It now becomes plain to faith that Christ in the end judges everything because he sums everything up redemptively in himself,[113] that he unites heaven and earth in man[114] because he has previously recapitulated them in himself,[115] because he sums up the whole order of salvation and so absolutely everything in himself.[116]

We have looked at recapitulation here first predominantly from the formal point of view, but the fact that the form also proved to be the content has given us a decisive proof of its Tightness. Nevertheless we must now also illustrate the method of attention to reality by its most important results, as a preliminary to isolating the specific characteristics of Irenaeus’s aesthetic.

3. STILLED CENTRE

Irenaeus wants to see reality as it is. He does not dream; he does not build with bold hypotheses; he places his trust in the logos of being. He does not rake through the background of his subject, but describes its beautiful surface which as such is the true revelation of the hidden depths. *Vere et firme*: the words often recur. His efforts are directed to the *firma et vera de Deo scientia,*[117] but while human knowledge produces a variety of conclusions, convincing and less convincing, the principle nevertheless holds: *quod verum est et certum etfirmum, adjacet* Deo.[118] And only what is revealed by God in Scripture, *sola ilia vera et firma,*[119] this testimony alone is *vera . . . , manifesta et firma,*[120] and so our faith, which rests on it, is *firma et non ficta et sola vera,*[121] because it has chosen as its guide *solum verum etfirmum magistrum, Verbum Dei,*[122] and listens to him in the *vera et firma praedicatio Ecclesiae*.[123] In contrast to the Alexandrians, who are shortly to follow, Irenaeus endeavours to hold thought back on the ground of solid reality and to restrain its tendency to take off in to allegory: *et nihil allegorizari potest, sed omnia firma et vera et substantiam habentia* (i.e., on the new earth).[124] A further aspect of this firm and established character of the truth is the *ordo traditionis* implanted by Irenaeus in the centre of theological truth,[125] which is no less reliable than the Word of Scripture, since the Holy Spirit 'has written it in our hearts, without paper and ink', and the same Holy Spirit guarantees it through the ministerial succession and the unity of the Church in his truth.

But certainty and truth are only guaranteed if what supports God's revelation can really take the weight. *Portare* ranges between the dignity and suitability for receiving the weight of a burden, the burden of God, the responsibility of carrying it with oneself, of carrying it to the end, of enduring it,[126] the power to protect and care for it in oneself as a mother does her child, and every kind of caring and supportive help. The centre of the concept for Irenaeus is the notion of the man who bears God: he has the suitability for it, the strength, the power to grasp him: *portante homine et capiente et complectente Filium Dei*.[127] And God accustoms man 'to bear

God’s spirit’,[128] even *capere et portare Deum*.[129] This is more than the underlying Biblical idea, *portare imaginem ejus*;[130] it is the fundamental capacity of the created being to withstand the creator, which certainly presupposes the ‘image and likeness’: ‘Creation would not have borne him if it had been [Achamoth’s] cast-off ignorance and taint . . . . How could a creation which was hidden away from the Father and far removed from him have had the power to bear his Word, to bear him who contains all gnosis in himself and is true and perfect? If it had been created by some intermediate being, how could it have borne the Father and the Son together—for the Lord says, “I am in the Father and the Father is in me”? And so the Church’s preaching alone is true, namely, that it was creation itself, which derives its existence from the power and the art and the wisdom of God, which bore him; while invisibly it is itself borne by the Father, in the visible world, reversing the roles, it bears his word which is true. But the Father bears creation and his Word together, and the Word borne by the Father gives the Spirit to all.’[131] But the true God-bearer is Mary, by her complete ‘obedience to his Word’.[132] Because the creature is not thrust out of the fulness by God but constantly borne by his goodness and patience, it can bear even God. This idea from the heart of supernatural theology receives its justification from an accompanying natural theology: the Old Testament law was able to ‘bear’ the New Covenant, to serve as a basis for it and to be transfigured into it,[133] and again the general law of ‘nature’ provided the basis for the commandment to Abraham and the law of Sinai.[134] These foundations do not threaten the radical necessity of supernatural grace, however, since we require the Holy Spirit, ‘God’s dew, necessarily if we are not to burn up’,[135] but they make possible a different sort of positive relation both to the law and especially to nature, and even to the state,[136] from that which normally exists in the Platonising Patristic writings. The ever greater light into which God guides mankind[137] is always at the same time an illumination of the object of the guidance, created nature.

The purpose of the following pages is first of all to indicate the three main points of articulation of Irenaeus’ theology. None of these should be considered in isolation, and all three together are only like three static cross-sections through the system, still lacking the dynamic temporal bond which will be described in the next section. Nonetheless these three sections show the theological form: reduction to the simplest basic formulas which, when held up to the light of the Biblical revelation, reveal the organising power and the blazing heat of the recapitulative movement. The first collecting point is God, hidden and revealed in his unity and trinity. The second is the relation between God and creature, being and becoming, especially God and man. The third concerns the relation of time and eternity patterned according to the order of salvation (*dispositio*): Old Covenant, Gospel, Church.

(a) God is the One Totality, outside which nothing can exist, no autonomous separate void (*kenōma*). This is recognised in any sound religious thought. And this is also the original (Gnostic) concept of the pleroma,[138] which does not mean the self-contained fulness of a world of ideas, but that fulness which, as Paul says, fills all in all. However, the pantheistic streak in the Stoic and Gnostic pleroma makes it possible, from the point of view of the particular, to include what is still unfulfilled, still empty, in the all-embracing unity, and this is where Irenaeus' distinction begins. God's fulness (Irenaeus avoids the use of the term pleroma of God) does not permit any kind of unfulfilledness, limitation or void,[139] whereas the fundamental Irenaean concept of ful-fulment (*plērein*) is shorthand for the nature of the temporal order of salvation, though this cannot be fulfilled in any other way than by being filled out with the divine fulness. God is not the One merely in a way which would require him to be at the same time the totality of the world; he is the *idem ipse*, that is, the free 'creator of heaven and earth and of this whole universe . . . and the Lord over all things',[140] and as this eternally free Lord in himself unknowable. It is an apparent paradox that in reaction to the fashionable Gnostic transcendence, which stamps the highest God as absolutely unknowable, Irenaeus is himself forced to stress this unknowability. Gnostic transcendence, however, was nothing other than the inseparable logical and dialectical obverse of his immanence and filling of the world as aeon and fulness of the aeons (pleroma), whereas Irenaeus' God of all is the free majesty which 'encompasses all, but is alone encompassed by no-one, he the former, he the founder, he the deviser, he the creator, he the Lord of all things. And neither outside him nor above him does anything else exist, not even that mother whom they attach to him, no other God such as Marcion invented, no pleroma of thirty aeons . . . . no bottomless depth, no first origin, no heaven, no virgin light, no indescribable aeon, . . . but the one and only God.'[141] 'Therefore do not transcend God himself, for he cannot be transcended. Do not look above the creator, for you will find nothing. He who formed you cannot be defined, . . . your thought cannot encompass him, but if you think against nature you will become a fool, and if you persist you will fall into madness.'[142] 'God cannot be measured by the heart or grasped by the spirit, he who encloses the earth in his fist.'[143] Naturally God's three-in-oneness is also part of his incomprehensibility: the generation of the Word from the Father is 'indescribable and inexpressible'.[144] The processions of God cannot be predicted and are not subject to any human logic. Nor can God's attributes be reduced to a system which would make them proceed logically (as aeons) from the divine ground of being.[145] 'Nor, further, is the All-Father like a composite creature to which the rational spirit was subsequently added; the Father is rational spirit and the rational spirit is the Father.' Father, Son and Spirit are in eternal conversation,[146] but beyond all the imagined drama of ignorance, seeking or finding.[147] For in God there is no trace of darkness,[148] no trace of *ananke*,[149] only eternal light and freedom.

But God has communicated himself and made himself knowable, and this knowledge (gnosis) of God is real, indeed the most real of all forms of knowledge, though it does not prejudice the unknowability of God. Irenaeus here speaks in formal tones: 'In respect of his greatness it is impossible to know God, because the Father is immeasurable, but in respect of his love—for it is his love which leads us to God through his Word—we learn, if we are responsive, more and more how great God is and that it is he who through himself establishes and chooses everything and makes it beautiful and contains it.'[150] This formula is repeated constantly,[151] and is taken from the beginning as a trinitarian formula. For the unknown God is indeed the Father, but he reveals himself through his 'two hands', the Son and the Spirit, with which he makes the world.[152] This enables Irenaeus to repeat the saying that no-one knows the Son except the Father and that no-one knows the Father except the Son and whoever the Son wills to reveal him to (through his Spirit; Mt 11.27), without giving rise to any agnosticism or supranaturalism, because the creation itself is the product of love revealing itself, a love which then, as salvation history, leads us through Son and Spirit ever deeper into the knowledge of the Father. In the last resort Irenaeus knows no other doctrine of the Trinity (and here he keeps to Scripture) than that of the act of revelation and the historical content of revelation.[153] The triune God is accessible to us only where he makes himself accessible to us, so that it is the greatest possible slight to God to disparage the historical self-revelation of his immeasurable love and to look behind it for a non-existent access to the unknown God.[154] The image of the trinitarian God, the highest image which can be sighted from within creation, is the translation of the ark of the covenant into the domain of eternal life, the invisible flanked by the two worshipping cherubim. ‘This God is glorified by his Word, which is the eternal Son, and by the Spirit, who is the wisdom of the Father of all. And the powers of these (two), known as cherubim and seraphim, glorify God with incessant cries, and the entire creatio . . . . glorifies him.’[155] Origen later will again present this image of the Trinity,[156] perhaps following Philo,[157] and make Son and Spirit, at the pinnacle of the entire creation, offer the divine worship. Worship in God carries over into the *dynameis* of Son and Spirit, the highest angels, before communicating itself to the whole cosmos. The emphasis with which the *Demonstration*, Irenaeus’ unpolemical dogmatic treatise, dwells on the theme of universal worship is amazing: God’s worship of God which carries over into heavenly worship and human worship,[158] the worship we owe to God day and night,[159] the worship of the seven heavens, particularised by the seven gifts of the Spirit and symbolised by the seven-branched candlestick[160] (Denys will later build up his cosmic liturgy on the number nine), the temple worship of the priest Aaron as the core of the Old Covenant, which nevertheless remains binding as worship on the attitude of every worshipper of God,[161] and finally worship in the New Covenant, where God’s temple has become the human body.[162] This universe of adoration is inherently trinitarian. What is made known through the love of God is the manifestation of his unknown (because immeasurable) greatness: his love itself is the inconceivable, the indescribable; *benignitas ejus inenarrabilis*.[163] This inconceivability is an attribute of the fact of his concrete presence, which cannot go unnoticed or unperceived by any created thing.[164]

Certainly the model of the God who is at the same time inconceivable and conceivable is prefigured in Gnosticism, as Irenaeus freely admits: ‘The ground of the eternal duration of the aeons’, he says, ‘is the inconceivability of the Father, but the ground of their origin and development is that which is conceivable in him, that is, the Son.’[165] But the difference predominates. Between Father and Son, in the Christian understanding, lies the area of their knowledge of each other, into which they invite whom they will: not only does the Son lead to the Father in the economy, but ‘the Father in turn through the Son gives the knowledge of his Son to those who love him',[166] in a free decision of his will which man matches in freedom. No natural salvation, no 'divine core' in man, no overlap between God and the world: Son and Spirit belong unequivocally on the side of the Father.

(b) Here we have the basic articulation of Irenaeus' picture of the world, and it is here that his formulas acquire their greatest force. All 'communion' between God and creature is based on a fundamental opposition of nature, creating and being created, which at the same time implies the opposition of being and becoming and of eternity and time: *Deus quidem facit, homo autem fit; et quidem qui facit semper idem est, quod autem fit, et initium et medietatem et adjectionem et augmentum accipere debet*.[167] And so 'in the same measure that God needs nothing, man needs communion with God'.[168] God is *perfectus* because *infectus*,[169] but man needs *profectus*.[170] The man who transgresses the law of becoming (*supergrediens legem humani generis*) 'and before he has become human wants to be like the creator God, who will allow no distinction between the God who always was and man who has only just come to be, is more irrational than a brute beast'.[171] For the creature there is no appeal from the creator 'because he takes from himself the substance of creatures and the pattern of his artefacts and the beauty of the individual life-form'.[172] God is being which is,[173] and therefore eternal;[174] the creature which comes into being, on the other hand, which necessarily has a beginning, middle and end, *i.e.*, time,[175] is fundamentally dependent on God, in need of him,[176] and so, if it chooses rightly, determined by faith, love and hope.[177] Because God is eternally always greater, it must always entrust itself to God, 'always hope for new kindnesses from him in order evermore to love him; always, in obedience to him, learn from him that God is so great',[178] always serve him in holiness[179] in order 'to get right to him',[180] and, across the infinite gulf which is bridged by his gracious power, 'to win communion with him'.[181] And even in the fulfilment the original opposition persists, but stilled: for the 'flesh . . . . does not in the strict sense inherit the divine Spirit, but is appointed heir by him (*ou klēronomei, alia klēronomeitat*). . . . Therefore just as the bride cannot take the bridegroom to wife, but can certainly be taken to wife by him, so "flesh" of itself cannot inherit the kingdom of God, but can be brought into the kingdom of God as an heir by the Spirit.'[182] The creature's every action rests on a still deeper passivity: in order to come into being it must place itself like clay in the shaping 'hands' of God and entrust itself to them.[183]

This difference cuts so deep that the other, Greek distinction between spirit and matter totally pales in comparison. The centre of the created universe is in no sense the angelic spirit (which in Irenaeus plays only an accompanying and subordinate role), but the man who—in a gesture against the Gnostics—is first the clay shaped by God's hands and into whom the breath, *spiritus*, is then infused. This breath, the human soul, is not man, any more than the Holy Spirit of grace is man: *hominis esse possunt, homo autem nequaquam*.[184] The true man is soul in body and grace in both (the Holy Spirit who lives in soul and body as in a temple),[185] and therefore the eschatologically whole man is also not the disembodied soul after death, but emphatically the risen flesh, whose participation in eternal life is no more miraculous in principle than its present participation—like that of a sponge in water and of a torch in fire—in life and the Holy Spirit.[186] The natural 'breath' (*pnoē*) is temporal, but the spirit (*pneuma*) is eternal, and so the natural man dies when he turns away from the spirit (in Adam), but when he is rejoined to the spirit by God he obtains eternal life.[187] Therefore, although it is the man who dies when he loses breath and not just the body, the breath-soul can still be called 'immortal',[188] but the man is immortal at the resurrection of the dead. Irenaeus is totally amazed at the miracle of the human body made alive by the soul. It is for him the most fundamental example of what distinguishes the creature: its *being* formed by God's hand: 'The flesh is not without a share in the artistic wisdom and power of God, because God's power, which bestows life, is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor 12.9), that is, in the flesh.'[189] Strange and impressive exegesis! 'The flesh is devised to be receptive and to be able to contain the power of God, since in the beginning it received the art of God, and one part became an eye for seeing, another an ear for hearing, another a hand for feeling and making, another nerves, tensed in all direction and holding the limbs together, another arteries and veins for the circulation of the blood and the soul-breath, another in turn different internal organs, and another blood, the link between body and soul. It is indeed impossible to describe the whole masterly structure of elements which makes up man; it did not come into being without greatness and wisdom. But what shares in the art and wisdom of God also shares in his power.'[190] Accordingly, for Irenaeus the body does not bear just a trace of God and the soul the image of God, as the Platonising

Fathers will later say, but the whole man, made up of body and soul, is created as the image and likeness of God. The language may vary, with the starting-point for this creature of becoming called at one time ‘image’[191] and at another ‘likeness’.[192] Or the two may be distinguished dynamically, as when it is said that as a result of sin the image lost the likeness or resemblance (*similitudo*) to God, and as a result of God’s making himself resemble the fallen creature by becoming man[193] and ‘recapitulating in himself the image of the beginning’,[194] the resemblance has been recovered.[195] This dynamic understanding of the image is that of salvation history and authentic Biblical theology: ‘The image of God is the Son, in whose image man was created, and that is why the Son appeared visibly in the last ages of the world, to reveal that the image resembled himself.’[196] The revelation and making visible of the resemblance is the distinctive feature of the New Covenant, whereas in the Old Covenant, though man’s image-character had been declared, it had not yet been shown and demonstrated.[197] Since in Irenaeus human nature is seen as all along embedded in time and becoming, it is not advisable to make a sharp division between the static image and the dynamic process of acquiring the likeness. The doctrine of the image and likeness shows at the same time the trinitarian character of the creature. Because it is a thing which acquires its being gradually, ‘God’s hands’ do not cease to impress their form upon it, the Son objectively, the Spirit subjectively, both in the realm of nature and also in the realm of grace, so that ‘over all is the Father as the head of Christ, through all the Word, the head of the Church, and in us all the Spirit, the living water which the Lord offers’ (Eph 4.6).[198] And so nature everywhere shows sketches and foreshadowings, the two-dimensional diagram of what is to be developed through becoming and time into the full model. But because God is guiding the direction of the process towards a goal which is unattainable by man, nature can of itself lay no claim to perfective grace.

If man is to be able to follow God’s lead, he must be free,[199] and one of the principal places where this freedom can be seen is in that guidance itself, which always takes the form of gentle suggestion (*suasoria*) and never of compulsion.[200] For the same reason he must have an original knowledge of his createdness and of his creator, a *sensibilitas* for God,[201] a natural knowledge of God.[202] In this way it is possible for the wild shoot of nature which grew wild and fell after paradise to be grafted back onto the true shoot of Christ’s healing grace. For the process requires that the same substance of wood, and analogously of ensouled flesh, should be found in both states, in other words that the cultivating of the man of flesh into a man of spirit should not involve any change of substance.[203] The important conclusion from this is that the Greek categories of matter and spirit must be assimilated to the Biblical paired concepts of flesh and spirit without suppressing or falsifying them.[204] In other words, the body is not an obstacle to man’s true spiritualisation.[205] More generally, not only a flight from the world (which, taken in the most literal sense, is impossible) but also a proper use of the world and its goods are both permitted and proper for a Christian according the teaching of Scripture.[206]

(c) Man is perfected according to the threefold order of salvation in the incarnate Word of God. Since the dynamics of the order of salvation will be described later, here for the present we shall discuss only the static perfection, in so far as this can be treated separately. It is after all true that the process of becoming contains the meaning (as the German *Sinn*—from *sinθa* ‘journey’ as in *Uhrzeigersinn*, ‘clockwise’—or the French *sens*, which includes the direction of a process), and every element acquires its meaning in the totality of the developing process. While for the Gnostics and again later for Augustine the distinction between ‘wheat’ and ‘chaff’ in the Church and the world has a predominantly static character, in the sense of two classes of people, its meaning for Irenaeus is determined by the position in the organic process of growth: the husk is necessary until the fruit inside it has ripened, and then it becomes dispensable and useless.[207] But to a mode of being which develops there belongs the joy of fulfilment, in other words the believing trust and hope which make existence delightful. As a result, every point in time, even those preceding the fulfilment, receives a fulness appropriate to its particular *kairos*: as each individual in his particular place does the will of God as expressed in salvation history, he has a share (anticipatory or subsequent) in the total fulfilment. Irenaeus applies this temporal interpretation to the simile of the body and its members.[208] Thus Platonic or Gnostic views of being, which break it up into a useless part which runs away into time and a timeless part which is the only valuable one, completely destroy and distort the mystery of the meaning of existence and at the same time the mystery of the economy of salvation and of the mystical body of Christ.[209] The Son who comes last justifies all hours worked in the Lord’s vineyard[210] because ‘the king has prepared the marriage feast for his son from the beginning’.[211] So Christ is both the fruit of the long organic development of the ages of the world and the one who descends freely from above;[212] as both the fruit of the world and the fruit of the Father he has brought heaven and earth together and united the Spirit with man.[213] That God can do all things was always clear, but that man together with God can also do all things had to be proved. The mediator came to exercise this power together with man,[214] in order ‘by his own affinity with both to lead both back to mutual love and harmony, to introduce God to man and man to God’.[215] No question, had he been only man, we would still be ‘in the old slavery of disobedience and would die’ as ‘debtors of death and would not have received the antidote of life’.[216] Everything thus turns on the disposition of the God-man,[217] on the intimate union of the divine Spirit with his flesh.[218] And in this the flesh is crucial: ‘If the flesh had not had to be saved, the Word of God would on no account have become flesh’,[219] and flesh is really saved only by flesh.[220] If merely a divine spirit were to descend on a pre-existing man, it could and inevitably would leave him again in a crisis, and nothing would have been achieved: no, the Word himself must become flesh.[221] Man must achieve it: ‘Had not man conquered the enemy of man, the enemy would not have been properly conquered. On the other hand, if God had not given us salvation, we would not have it for certain.’[222] The same person must be glorified and abased,[223] must penetrate heights and depths,[224] in order to make up by his humiliation for Adam’s arrogance,[225] must live through all the ages of man in order to heal all.[226] Salvation lies in the human life and fate of Jesus,[227] and this includes his real death;[228] really dying, however, means going down to the realm of the dead, into Hades, and not just leaving the cross to return to the Father.[229] And if everything in the fate of Jesus is the revelation of his Father, so too is his Passion.[230] It is the real suffering and dying man who, by what he completely and utterly is, glorifies the Father, and this man who suffers and is humiliated even to death is much more magnificent than all the bloodless patterns of the Gnostics: ‘If one were to pass judgment on the two Christs, far better and more powerful and truly gracious would be the one who, in the very wounds and stripes and all the other injuries and insults, showed himself our benefactor and did not remember the malice shown to him—better far than the one who would have fled from it and would not have suffered any injustice or slight . . . . We ourselves, indeed, would be “above the master” (Mt 10.24) if we had to accept and endure things which the master neither accepted nor endured.’[231] But when, as a result, a man treats his suffering and death as discipleship of Christ, when he ‘believes’ Christ, that is, entrusts himself to him in discipleship,[232] all pain becomes a demonstration of the truth of God in us, even the highest ‘attempt to tread in the footsteps of Christ’,[233] even martyrdom, whose solemn glory the Gnostics mock with their heavenly limit-cross. In an emotional passage Irenaeus lists the human features of the redeemer. For him they are not, as they are for the later Platonising theologians, sources of embarrassment which have to be artificially reconciled with the perfections of the Son of God; they are, like martyrdom, the halo adorning real existence.[234] And only because all this has been can there also be the *ordo resurrectionis*[235] the raising of the dead Son through the Spirit in the name of the Father.[236] Only because from its very creation the universe as a whole has received the impress of the sign of the cross, because, that is, the cross has universal dimensions,[237] can the resurrection then set the seal on the whole bodily dispensation of salvation which makes the communion in life between God and man final.[238] Through the suffering flesh of Christ the Father’s light reaches us;[239] that is the essence of the *mysterion.*[240] The Church as the unfolding of this mystery is better discussed in the context of the temporal economy of salvation.

4. GOD’S TEMPORAL ART

At this point we can uncover the intellectual bond in Irenaeus’ picture of the world which knits together his apologetic method, the essential content of his dogmatics and that new Christian aesthetic with which he conquers the aesthetic myth of Gnosis. The Christian reality is inseparable from history. And, consequently, it is free from time: the Greek demand for proportion, order and beauty must be found again in Biblical time or nowhere. But the fact that human nature which unfolds in time has been taken into the divinely ordained Christian order also gives it proportion and beauty, and through it the whole world. Except that for Irenaeus this cosmic beauty, which tells of the art of the creator, can never be contemplated in isolation from its true artistic intention, from the mystery of *anakephalaiosis*.[241]

In this section, in accordance with our overall purpose, we shall consider the material structure of the apologetics and dogmatics in their aesthetic and formal aspects; first the essence of the divine art, then its temporal dimension, and last the essential content of time.

(a) The demand that the created ‘image’ should resemble the original which created it is for Irenaeus an elementary demand on the creative artist who is God, ‘for if the creator of the worlds did not create things in his own image but, like a poor craftsman or an apprentice, copied other models, where is their “groundless one” supposed to have got its original from?’ There is an infinite regress. ‘If it is admitted that even men have invented things which are useful for living, is God, who made the whole world, not to be allowed to draw out of himself the beautiful form of created things and the devising of the beautiful ordering of the world?’[242] No, ‘God’s art does not slacken; has he not the power to raise children of Abraham out of the very stones . . . . The light does not grow weak because of those who have blinded themselve . . . . and do not wish to keep his art (*techne*).’[243] Sin would disprove his art only if God were not powerful enough to raise up fallen creation once more and to fill up (*adimplere*) the ages of its banishment.[244]

God creates by his ‘artistic Logos’,[245] since ‘everything was created by a word of God’.[246] But the trinitarian relation is the original measure or proportion in God, ‘for it is rightly said that the immeasurable Father himself is measured by the Son, that the Father’s measure, indeed, is the Son, because he has his measure . . . . And therefore God creates everything in proportion and rhythm (*metrō kai taxei*), and nothing lacks proportion with him because nothing is without number (*anarithmeton*).’[247] From him come not only the substance but also the original and the form of the ornate things of the world,[248] and the worker is known by the rhythm of his works.[249] For his creative work God needs no emanations,[250] no ‘radiations’ or ‘fecundities’,[251] nor does he need any world of ideas.[252] He derives the original design for the creation of the world from his own power and from himself,[253] so that the whole Platonic and Gnostic numerical system becomes redundant, to the extent that it is conceived as superior to the contingent world and independent of it. ‘We ourselves declare the harmony of created nature, because, in relation to us, things are suitable for their places (*aptabilia*) because their own rhythm is appropriate (*apta*) to the general rhythm for which they were created.’[254] Quite apart from the fact that the numbers of the earthly and contingent realm in no way agree with those of the (imaginary) numbers of heaven![255] The Pythagorean origin of this correspondence of heavenly and earthly numbers does not impress Irenaeus.[256] The numbers of the real world are so unbelievably complicated: who would use them to ferret out the heavenly ones? Irenaeus leaves them to divine providence, which ‘has numbered all the hairs of our head’ and given ‘each thing its own pattern of action, its order, number and particular quantity . . . and done so with supreme skill in matching them to each other and with sublime intelligence’.[257] God’s work also reveals creative power, wisdom and goodness: creative power and goodness in the fact that he has freely established and created what is not yet, and wisdom in that he created the things that exist to form a harmony (*eurhythma, apta et consonantia*).[258] The Pythagoreans are certainly right to talk about a music of being, except that it is the harmony of the created world which gives glory to God by its existence. ‘While creatures are varied and numerous, but skilfully placed in the whole creation and in tune with it, nevertheless, considered separately, they are opposed to each other and not in harmony, just as the sounds of the lyre produce a harmonious melody made up of many contrasting notes as a result of the intervals between them. The lover of truth must therefore not let himself be led astray by the particular interval of each one and postulate one creator for one and another for another, . . . but a single one, to demonstrate the wisdom and justice and grace of the whole work. But those who can hear the harmony must praise and glorify the artist, notice the tautness of one [string] and the slackness of another and listen for the compensating mean between the two, never departing from the canon or straying from the artist.'[259] What is true of the universe is also true of Holy Scripture. If we keep to the canon of faith, 'all Scripture given to us by God will be found to be harmonious (*symphōnos*). The parables will harmonise with plain speech, plain speech will unlock the parables and through the polyphony of the utterance a single symphonic melody will be audible within us.'[260] Irenaeus is not here describing a literary work made up of different writings and chapters, but the symphony of being and history which is expressed in Scripture and has as its supreme law the recapitulation of mankind through the God-man: 'For if Adam from the earth had received his shaping and essence from the hand and art of God, but Christ had not been formed by the hand and art of God . . . . the work would lack internal consistency (*inconstans artificium*).'[261] The last chapter does not take its lead from the first, but the other way round, as the true art of storytelling demands. So the physical world is the promise of the supernature which is to follow,[262] because the flesh is itself 'not without the artistic wisdom and power of God', 'but God's hands are accustomed, as they have been from the time of Adam, to give their work a rhythm and hold it strongly, to support it and place it where they choose.'[264]

But the centre of the divine art is man, and the rest of the world has been created for the sake of man rather than man for the world.[265] Already by his very nature as a compound of body and soul, man is a work of art, one in which the soul acts as the artist and the body as the instrument. Moreover the speed of the artist's ideas contrasted with the slowness with which he executes them on the instrument is in no sense an argument against the virtues of the latter.[266] Body and soul, however, each demand their own purity: 'purity of the body as abstinence from all unjust and shameful things, purity of the soul as faith in God without addition or subtraction . . . . for piety preserves its beauty and proportion if truth forever rules in the soul and purity in the body. What value is there in knowing the truth in words while staining the body by bad deeds? And what can possibly foster the purity of the body if truth does not rule in the soul? Both are glad to be together and form a harmony and brotherly unity, in order to present man before God.'[267] It is in this creature alone, a compound of two elements, for which God 'took the purest and finest elements of the earth in order to mix his power with the earth in correct proportio . . . . so that man should be like God not only in his breath but also in his shaped flesh',[268] it is in this creature that God has chosen to reveal himself. The whole of salvation history will be written in man himself: 'Man is the receptacle for the action of God and for all his wisdom and power. Just as the doctor shows his skill in his patients, so God is revealed in man.'[269] Especially as the one who pardons: 'in forgiving sins he on the one hand healed man and on the other showed clearly (*ostendit*) who he himself was.'[270]

This is the source of the central concept of 'glory' as the mutual glorification of God and man. Man, who preserves God's art in himself and obediently opens himself to its disposing, glorifies the artist and the artist glorifies himself in his work. 'You do not create God; God creates you. Therefore if you are God's work, wait patiently for the hand of your artist, who does everything in due proportion, and in due proportion as regards you who are being made. Offer him your heart soft and pliable, and preserve the form which the artist forms out of you: preserve it by keeping yourself moist, so that you do not dry out and harden and lose the trace of his fingers. Keeping the form that has been impressed on you, you will move towards perfection, for the clay that is in you will be hidden by the artist. His hand has created the substance in you, and now it will cover you inside and out with pure gold and silver and beautify you so much that "even the king will lust after your beauty" (Ps 45.11). But if you despise his art and show yourself ungrateful to him because he has made you only human, you despiser of God, then you have forfeited both his art and your life . . . . If, however, you surrender to him what is yours, trusting faith in him and submissiveness, then you will receive his art and become a perfect work of God. But if you believe in him but still tear yourself out of his hands, the cause of your imperfection lies in your disobedience and not in him who called you.'[271] Life and art are thus won and lost together. 'Man's glory is to endure and persist in submissiveness to God, . . . the disciples did not glorify the Lord by following him, but because they followed him they were glorified by him.'[272] As they are, ' "all men need the glory of God," (Rom 3.23), but cannot justify themselves; they are justified by the advent of the Lord if they look towards his light.'[273] 'The glory of God is the living man, but the life of man is seeing God.'[274] 'Therefore you must first preserve the human order, so as eventually to participate in the glory of God.'[275] 'And whoever remains in his love and devotion and gratitude will increasingly receive greater glory from him by being formed into the likeness of him who died for him.'[276] 'The more we love him, the greater the glory we receive through him because we stand constantly before the face of the Father.'[277] But from the sight of the Father and from hearing his word Moses won such great glory that the others could not look him in the face.[278] This persistent standing before God is the sum of Christian effort and virtue, and here the concept of glory incorporates the usual concept of 'merit' (which Irenaeus does not use) and gives it an aesthetic justification which is almost unquestionable: if goodness had been imparted to us by nature, 'what is good would not be sweet to us, or fellowship with God precious, . . . and we would not conceive how beautiful (*pulchrum*) goodness is or delight in it . . . for what glory will be given to those who have made no effort to obtain it? What victor's wreath will be given to those who have not won the glory like the winner in the contest?'[279] And yet this glory of man who can do what God wants is always only 'the demonstration of the powers of God in him', who is only a 'vessel', and his growth is nothing other than 'grateful abiding in submissive love' of this active God,[280] who decrees everything for man out of love, even death, which puts an end to his sin and does not let him persist in undying transgression.[281] The golden gleam of Irenaean glory shines even into the dark powers of the world, for the world is *capax gloriae Patris*,[282] this world in its finitude, out of which God has still been able to make his work of art and his image, 'for he established it as a law that each thing should remain in its place and not go beyond the divinely decreed limit, but that each and every thing should bring its divinely ordained work to completion.'[283]

(b) But these are all categories of the temporal economy, which cannot itself become the mutual revelation of God and man until it unfolds to become God's art. It is the first great theology of the *kairos*, the *aptum tempus*, and in it the qualitative difference and uniqueness of every point in time in which a being or event is placed depends on the free decree of God, his revelatory will at any moment, and points to him. But the fact that the Son is in his essence the revealer of the Father's will and being and that the Spirit reveals to man the truth of the demand of the times means that the *kairos* in Irenaeus is from the start trinitarian. 'Thus it is from the beginning the Father's Son who makes all known. He indeed was with the Father from eternity and made known the prophetic visions and the distributions of charisms and his ministries of service and the glorification of the Father to mankind in logical sequence (*consequenter*) and in harmonious arrangement (*composite*), at the appropriate time which would bring benefit in each case. For where there is logical sequence (*consequentia*, *akolouthia*) there is permanence, and where there is permanence there is opportuneness (*pro tempore*, Greek, according to Grabe, *kata chronon* or *epikairia*), but where there is opportuneness there is profit, and therefore the Word became the giver of the Father's grace for the profit of man, for whom he made such great dispositions of salvation by showing God to men but also by presenting men to God.'[284] The 'times' and their 'fulfilment' are 'appointed' according to the Father's 'pleasure' so that 'his art might not be in vain',[285] but this pleasure is always translated into the order of time by the Son and Spirit: 'and so, through this disposition (*taxis*) and by such rhythms (*rhythmos*) and with such guides (*anagoge*) man, who has been produced and shaped, is led towards the image and likeness of the ungenerate God. In all this the Father approves and prescribes, the Son executes and forms, the Spirit nourishes and increases, while man gently advances and moves towards perfection, in order, that is, to approach the Uncreated.'[286] This is the *ordo promotionis* and the 'method of training for incorruptibility',[287] an essentially gentle, easy, quiet, patient order. These terms keep on recurring where Irenaeus wants to convey the authentic feel of the harmony of his spiritual world. He speaks of'the mildness and peaceful calm of the kingdom of God',[288] of 'the Holy Spirit's having become accustomed to dwell among men and to rest in them',[289] of God's mercy spreading 'gently and slowly' in the world.[290] He tells of how for the sake of human freedom everything is ordained by God 'not to compel but to encourage free will',[291] of how he proceeds with *suasio*[292] and *suadela*[293] and *consilium*[294] how man is destined through the ages to offer God a *cor molle et tractabile*,[295] to fit himself with patience into the temporal sequence,[296] to 'await the time of growth' and 'not to transgress the law of human nature',[297] 'for Adam will never tear himself from the hands of God'.[298]

This original situation is described in terms of three ideas. The first is that man behaves like a child and acquires wisdom only slowly by experience. Adam in paradise is this child (the idea has appeared earlier in Theophilus of Antioch, *ad Autol*. II, 25): 'the intention was that, as he developed, he would reach adulthood and in order to feed himself and grow in pleasure (= Eden)' he was placed in the marvellous garden.[299] But the idea of development and education—where it is introduced into the Biblical dimension of time, the time of mankind—already includes the second idea. Just as the child gains wisdom through injury, so the great Adam, the human race, through *peira*, experience of the opposite, of the loss of God's grace, was to be trained in a true and definitive appreciation of it. Thus what has to be theologically justified and 'understood' is not just human freedom, but the whole dispensation of salvation which allows for the fall. If man had possessed all goodness from the beginning by nature, 'it would have not become sweet to him and he would not have valued the society of God as something precious, as a prize worth great effort . . . . The more we have to struggle for something the more valuable it becomes to us, but the more valuable it is to us the more pleasing it becomes to us too. What is given to us for nothing is not valued in the same way as what is won with great effort. But we were given the task of loving God more, and of winning this in a contest.' And finally, with all possible clarity: 'Sight would not be so desirable to us if we had not learned how awful it is not to see, and health becomes more prized by the sick as a result of experience, and light by comparison with darkness and life with death.'[300] Experience here is the key word, constantly recurring: *utrorumque experimentum*. 'Who could have acquired practice in the good without knowledge of the opposite? The concept of something acquired by experience is more solid and less open to doubt than a conclusion from a hypothesis. Just as the tongue by tasting obtains experience of sweet and bitter and the eye by seeing distinguishes black and white and the ear by hearing perceives differences of sound, so the rational spirit, acquiring practice in good from double experience, is given a solid foundation for its test of obedience to God, . . . so that it is never again tempted to taste disobedience to God. But whoever flees the double knowledge and the double spiritual sensation is secretly destroying himself as a human being.'[301] The vehemence of this statement may be polemical, but it expresses nonetheless one of the positive achievements of this theology, which does not wish to maintain that the fall was inevitable, but acknowledges the profound necessity within God's free order of salvation: 'The generosity of God consisted in this, that man, by going through everything, . . . might learn by experience what he has been freed from and evermore remain grateful to God.'[302] Even for the spiritual man the experience of existence is close to the earth and the world of the senses. What Origen will later call the spiritual senses and, as a Platonist, sharply distinguish from the physical senses is for Irenaeus the man of earth's original and abiding sensitivity to the taste of things, the good and the bad. It is not until Claudel that a similar language reappears in Christianity.[303] The third idea develops directly from the first two; it is that of becoming accustomed. Man becomes accustomed to obey God, to bear his Spirit, to be a pilgrim in the world, to follow his word.[304] There is even, according to Irenaeus, an eschatological process of becoming accustomed to eternity, namely, the thousand-year kingdom of the just after the resurrection.[305] But God too has to become accustomed to mankind: at Jesus' baptism the Spirit of God descends on him to become accustomed, through him, to dwell among men.[306] And so it is finally the mediator who 'accustoms man to receive God and accustoms God to dwell in man'.[307] This process of accustoming takes place in the whole order of salvation, especially in the Old Testament, which is a preliminary adaptation (*praeaptatio*),[308] a preliminary formation (*praeformatio*),[309] a preliminary training (*praemeditatio, prosmeletan*)[310] of mankind for the coming of Christ.

This whole economy proclaims the pure goodness of the God who guides it.[311] In comparison, any kind of spiritualising does violence to man and in the end takes its revenge by turning into a new legalism. It does so because spiritualising of every stamp despises the *naturalia praecepta* and has to replace them with purely positive ones.[312] This has been confirmed time and again by the history of the Church and of dogmatics, and it is also the reason why Irenaeus' basic attitude cannot be assimilated by true Protestantism. The ancient Greek idea, also sanctioned by the Bible, of God's 'lack of envy', the idea that God is not jealous of created nature, but is able to guide it gently and, where necessary, even to crucify it, is dear to Irenaeus.[313] Such a theology does not find it difficult to answer the much-discussed question, why the redeemer came so late, not until the end of the ages.[314] Nor is it difficult for it to make credible the necessity of trials and temptation[315] nor, as already mentioned, to argue the usefulness of the 'chaff' in allowing the good seed to grow to maturity.[316] Such a theology will have a tendency to find even the most elevated teachings of the gospel traced somewhere in ordinary human nature, for example, the evangelical counsels in man's general following of God.[317] It will everywhere stress the congruence of grace and nature[318] and even in the order of grace prefer the argument of congruences, which can be called an aesthetic argument, but which for thinkers like Irenaeus expresses not just a vague appropriateness but bears the conviction of absolute Tightness.[319] And so the concept of justice becomes in this view the concept of the deepest Tightness and suitability,[320] and there is not even a glimmer of an opposition or contradiction between the just and the good.

(c) The central exposition of the content of God's temporal art takes place in the theology of the two testaments, and this is where Irenaeus' theology too is centred and where his apologia against Gnostic dualism is at its strongest. The economy of salvation is the training of man by God to encounter the God-man: the old Covenant is *paidagōgos eis Christon*. In a course of instruction, however, everything must happen at the right time. 'With [Christ] nothing happens unplanned or at the wrong time (*incomptum et intempestivum*), just as nothing inappropriate holds sway in his Father. The Father knows all things in advance, and then they are put into operation by the Son according to their suitability, in their correct sequence and at the appropriate time (*apto tempore*).'[321] Even the Son himself waits for his hour, which only the Father knows, in order not to do anything too soon, but to make the fulness of grace coincide with the fulness of time. And this multiplicity of *kairoi* reveals the inner multiplicity, the richness of the one God: *omni . . . . ordine et tempore et hora praecognita et apta perfecit Dominus noster, unus quidem et idem existens, dives autem et multus*.[322] The idea of the right *kairos* thus precludes a comparison between Old and New Covenants as between imperfect and perfect: law and grace, *utraque apta temporibus*.[323] To apportion them to two separate deities therefore means to undo all God's art and oneself 'to fall out of the saving dispensation': 'We, on the other hand, will show both the reason for the difference of testaments as well as their unity and perfect harmony.'[324] The unity consists in the fact that a single God both concerns himself with a single human race from beginning to end and maintains an association with it, 'now talking to what he has shaped, now giving it laws, now again reproaching it, sometimes exhorting it, finally freeing the slave and adopting him as a son, and at the appropriate time bestowing on him the inheritance of incorruptibility'.[325] It is the continuation of the first forming of man as a development towards the 'true man', Jesus Christ, 'for God repeatedly calls man to the fellowship with him through which we were to receive a share in incorruptibility. He who was announced by the law through Moses and the prophets of the Most High and Almighty, the Son of the universal Father, through whom all things exist, who conversed with Moses: he came into the world in Judaea, begotten by God through the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, who is descended from David and Abraham.'[326]

Because in Irenaeus' trinitarian theology the creator Father creates the world through the Son and the Spirit, who are the visibility of the invisible Father, all the theophanies of the Old Covenant are the Son, just as the inspiration of the Old Covenant is the Spirit, so that the Son 'was with our humanity from eternity, announcing beforehand the things that were to happen later and instructing men in the things of God'.[327] This gives the Old Covenant in a hidden manner the same trinitarian structure which the New shows plainly, and the trinitarian faith of the New Covenant is the key which immediately unlocks all the riddles of the Old.[328] Because Christ is the goal of the whole development, he must necessarily be present even at the beginning.[329] The separate theological treatise which makes up the first part of the *Demonstration* therefore needs to do no more than follow through salvation history, giving it a historical and theological interpretation, while the second part then fills out this outline with the parallels between promise and fulfilment.

It is typical of Irenaeus' approach here that he finds the totality of fulfilment in Christ promised and present in outline not only in Abraham as the father of all believers, Jews and Gentiles,[330] but already in the previous covenant with Noah, 'for after the flood God made a covenant with the whole world, especially with all the animals and men'.[331] He can do so because the order of salvation which starts with Abraham is not a different, purely supernatural one; no, through the Old and New Covenants the old world, the old creation of flesh was to be brought home. So also the symbolism of the 'two peoples' of Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, is shifted back to the sons of Noah, one of whom continues the line of Cain's curse, while Shem and Japhet continue the line of blessing. Shem's 'blessing develops and reaches Abraham', while Japhet's blessing contains both the promise of 'enlargement' and that of 'dwelling in the house of Shem', which is a reference forward to the Church of today, which will inherit both the whole world and the covenant of Abraham.[332]

But Abraham is the father of our faith because he was the first to follow the call of God's Word, as the apostles did later, leaving all.[333] 'In Abraham mankind learned the Word of God in advance and was accustomed to follow it. Abraham followed the prescription of the Word of God in accordance with his faith when with a willing heart he gave his only-begotten and beloved son to God as a sacrifice, so that God too might be pleased, for the sake of all his descendants, to give up his own only-begotten and beloved Son as a sacrifice for our redemption.'[334] And if later the educational volumes of the Mosaic law were added, to prepare the people's faith for the unfettered freedom of Christ, we must still not forget that 'Abraham followed in generous faith freely and without ties and so became the friend of God,'[335] just as it is Abraham who later looks out prophetically across the whole intervening order to Christ (Jn 8.56).[336] The 'natural' law (which for Irenaeus consists essentially in the attitude of following God in faith, hope and love) was alive in Abraham not least 'thanks to the blessing' of Shem, 'and because in the fiery zeal of his soul he roamed the whole world to find his God . . . . God had mercy on him, who sought him in loneliness and silence, and revealed himself to him through the Word as in a ray of light.'[337] So Mary is really Abraham's daughter and in her Magnificat inherits Abraham's longing and exultation.[338]

Because the Logos-Son has a personal association with Abraham, Moses and the prophets and gives them 'foreknowledge',[339] a 'preview',[340] of his Incarnation and his Church, there exists between them and the Lord a direct relation of love:[341] they are at their point in time members of his mystical body.[342] Even the Old Covenant is a word about Christ, indeed 'the word of Christ', though still in a hidden way.[343] The two Testaments are made of the same substance.[344] The Old Covenant, with its prophecy and law, is directed wholly towards the New: originating in Abraham's free obedience, helping men to find the way to love through the law, and in the prophets rejecting all legalism and directly prophesying the New Covenant as an inner attitude of heart.[345] The signs and symbols are thus also set up purely in respect of the fulfilment which is to come and are fulfilled by Christ with literal faithfulness.[346] Of course, the Pauline perspective is not absent: the law as conviction of sin (ostensio),[347] as the establishment of a rule with the grace to keep it added only later,[348] the tightening of legal provisions as an antidote to concupiscence (the legal element of the New Covenant being also assessed from the same point of view),[349] the place of fear and punishment in the old righteousness,[350] while in the New Covenant free obedience based on gratitude predominates,[351] in short the historical dialectic constituted by the two Testaments which ends the dogmatic section of Romans.[352] But the idea of the development and education of the human race is more important:[353] the fruit grows in the shell, the essential in the temporarily conditioned, which can then be left behind;[354] the law forms ‘steps’ (*velut gradus*) up to discipleship of Christ.[355] So direct does this development appear that a question is fully justified: If everything was literally stated in advance and laid down, what did Christ bring that was really new?

Irenaeus’ answer is well-known and conclusive: *omnem novitatem attulit, seipsum afferens qui fuerat annuntiatus*. Everything new might have been announced, but it had not come; up to this point everything had been in the form of teaching, and now it becomes a person and so fulfilment.[356] The word ‘new’ in Irenaeus has itself a new sound, the exultant and youthful ring of the first Christian period.[357] It means the opposite of the Gnostic ‘new’; it is that ‘ancient truth’ of God’s intimacy in paradise which is now found again after all the estrangement, more welcome and better understood. It is not enough to note the absence of any contradiction between Old and New Covenant (it is only men and the misunderstanding of the law which introduce the opposition);[358] it is not even enough to talk about an ‘intensification’ or to demonstrate the reverence of the New Covenant before the Old.[359] What has to be seen is the creative movement of *fulfilment (adimplere*), which has already been described as the Christian temporal counterpart of the Gnostic pleroma.[360] In addition to the correspondence and the intensification there is Christ’s divine quality and his efforts to transpose everything verbal and symbolic into living existence and so to recapitulate it by giving it concrete form in such a way that its reality is enhanced.[361] With this creative event in view the Father gave this ‘hour’ the character of the fulness of time.[362] In this fulness not only the Old Covenant but also all human and physical nature is fulfilled, because now the Word is present within the flesh.[363] Nor is this just in the one man Christ, because through him all hearts are really changed.[364] It is here that the Church with its timeless newness will makes its entry.[365] The roots of everything new always go back to the old and the primeval. So the universal priesthood of believers has its roots, not in Christ alone, but also in the priesthood of the

Old Covenant;[366] anyone who is familiar with this will find it easy to understand what God means in the New Covenant.[367] The points of convergence are clearly indicated in the New Covenant, for example, in the incident between Peter and Cornelius.[368] But the Gentiles find themselves prefigured in the world of the Jews, Japhet in Shem, and Christ's fulfilment makes plain to them too why the old law was necessary and is now redundant.[369] Not for nothing did God's art place on the threshold of the New Covenant figures such as the Baptist, Simeon and Mary in whom the connection between the Old and New Covenants becomes, in persons and in conversation, a play between human beings: in them the relationship is presented as a tableau to our view.[370]

There is in this development an indissoluble mystery, which indicates the character of God's action in the present. On the one hand it is a 'ripening' towards fulness,[371] a growth (*profectus*)[372] until the 'flesh is ripe',[373] the tree of mankind bearing fruit,[374] but it is at the same time a return from all adulthood under the law to childhood,[375] because for us the Word of God was *made a child like us (coinfantiatum*)[376] not now so that we could win back Adam's threatened childhood but, in Novalis's phrase, so that we might become the 'synthetic child'.

Something of this paradox is also present in the life of the *Church*, which is the mature product of salvation history and its final form at the end of the ages. In Irenaeus the Church also stands historically at the end of the early Christian era, the splendour of which still surrounds it, and at the beginning of the Catholic form of the world, the features of which it has already assumed. It is the esoteric mystery of the world and of Christ and yet the most public and anti-sectarian body known to history. It is fully the pneumatic and charismatic Church,[377] as in Tertullian; but Irenaeus avoids the dangers and disasters which befell Tertullian, because at the same time in his view the Church remains resolutely in the spirit of the apostolic kerygma and *paradosis*.[378] The apostolic kerygma of the Church fills the universe like the incomparable sun.[379] And the theological integration of the *notae ecclesiae* reveals yet again the Irenaean theological and apologetic method. 'It is inevitable that the heretics, because of their blindness to the truth, should follow the most diverse paths and that therefore the tracks of their teaching lead hither and thither without direction or order. In contrast, the path of those who are in the Church encircles the world because it has its firm tradition from the apostles and shows us that all possess one and the same faith because all confess one and the same Father, accept one and the same order of salvation based on the Incarnation of the Son of God, know of the same gift of the Spirit, strive to keep the same commandments, preserve one and the same form of Church order (*eandem figuram . . . . ordinationis custodientibus = to auto schēma tēs peri tēn ekklēsian katastaseōs tērountōn* [Harvey]), wait for the same coming of the Lord and hope for the same salvation for the whole man, that is, for soul and body.'[380]

In the early books, Irenaeus' theology appears as nothing other than an exposition of the Church's credo, and everything he ventures to think or suggest clings tightly to the framework erected by the *presbyteri* and previous theologians. Nevertheless he pursues his theological work in the spirit of freedom and charismatic inspiration,[381] within that true and spiritual body which in his eyes is the enduring incarnate beauty.[382] For it is only in this body that the divine Spirit rests and remains,[383] only from the body of Christ that the purest of springs flows—while the others dig themselves stagnant cisterns.[384] For the Spirit himself has created this body of the Church, and it is he who, keeping the faith always fresh and youthful, 'constantly also rejuvenates' his vessel the Church (*disposition juvenescens et juvenescere faciens ipsum vas).* . . . 'For where the Church is, God's Spirit is, and where God's Spirit is, the Church is, and every sort of Grace.'[385]

The eternally young beauty of the Church in its unity of body and soul, which depends both on Christ's true bodiliness[386] and on the fulness of his possession of the Spirit,[387] receives concrete form anew in the sacraments, which match the nature of man who is to be saved by being at once material and spiritual, just as he is body and soul. 'So our bodies received the unity which produces incorruptibility in the bath of baptism, but our souls received it through Spirit,'[388] and similarly in the eucharist body and soul must be fed on the heavenly food in which the best of this earth combines with the best of heaven[389] to produce the purest of all sacrifices.[390] The bread and wine must come from the earth because the Church of Christ must make the earth whole. So too the gospel has the fourfold structure of the world with its four elements[391] and preserves in its truth the distillation and quintessence of all that God wanted to give and impart to men throughout the economy of salvation: what remains as the fruit is its simplest form, the attitude of Jesus, faith, hope and love,[392] which pick up the true childlike fear of the Old

Covenant, allowing, it to develop and grow.[393] This attitude does not in any way make the New Covenant static, but just as the Lord 'has fulfilled all things by his coming, so he continues to fulfil the New Covenant in the Church until the end foretold by the law'.[394] Only in this way, in the Christian life's constant newness, is it an abiding in the fulfiller. But only in this way is the Church and existence in it open to eternal life.

The goal of the process is not redemption, not the Church, but the merging of both into eternal life. Accordingly, even in Irenaeus' thought we find the Platonising perspective of the letter to the Hebrews, in which the earthly is an image and copy of the heavenly and is made perfect only eschatologically, when the earthly Christ ascends through the heavens to the Father and the heavenly Jerusalem descends to earth. Moses set up the tent and the cult in accordance with the heavenly original on the mountain, and John saw the same heavenly sanctuary in Revelation: 'the whole earthly order of salvation corresponds to the heavenly original, and both come from the same God. For only so could he make the image like the spiritual things.'[395] The heavenly is also the eschatological: 'the covenant tent was the earthly imitation of the invisible spiritual things in heaven and contained images of the Church, prophetic representations of the things which were to come',[396] so that the one relation is threefold, Old Covenant—heaven, Old Covenant—New Covenant and New Covenant—heaven. To this ecclesiological argument we must restore the human argument, the theology of 'image and likeness', for then it will be seen that the perfecting of the 'likeness', the unveiling of the original of man, has itself an eschatological function.

At the same time Irenaeus remains a man of the present Church, Catholic and Roman, attached indeed even to its earthly form, the man of the pastoral letter to Florinus, of the letter to Blastus about the schism, the bearer of the letter from the persecuted church of Lyon to Pope Eleutherus, the author of the impressive and effective letter to Pope Victor about the urgency of settling the controversy over Easter. In this, according to the tradition, he urged on the pope the very practical view that the Church could be united in spite of differences of opinion and practice and so, as Eusebius says, well earned his name of peacemaker (*Eirēnaios*), since, moreover, he approached not just the pope 'but a very great number of church leaders with similar questions'.[397]

5. LIMITS AND STRENGTHS

Irenaeus' consciousness of the dazzling Tightness of the dimension he has revealed gives him a self-confidence and sense of exhilaration similar to Paul's. This is vented in a long triumphal paraphrase of Paul's saying, 'The spiritual man judges all things but is himself judged by no-one.'[398] From the centre and unity which is the Church every deviation can be judged and its limitations exposed. Nevertheless no theologian will ever exhaust this unity. Every theologian's insight into the faith is limited, and it is in itself no small achievement if it does not prove contradictory, if it remains capable of development. Two such limits may be indicated for Irenaeus, the first Biblical, the second relating to his understanding of eschatology. The first is conditioned by his time and not specifically Irenaean. In the case of the second, which is usually the target for severe criticism, we shall have to ask how far such criticism is justified.

(a) Irenaeus' *Scriptural interpretation* of the saving economy of the Old and New Covenants is based, like that of his predecessors (especially Pseudo-Barnabas and Justin), wholly on the wording of the texts and on their literal correspondence. The clearest illustration of this is the arsenal of apologetic texts which makes up the second part of the *Demonstration*. This exegesis, which was to remain predominant down to Augustine's *City of God* and so through to the Middle Ages—though perhaps to a lesser extent in Origen and Cyril of Alexandria with their spiritualising tendency—impedes and obstructs the achievement of the very aim implicit in the structure of the system, a historical understanding of revelation. The texts are taken as bare prophecies which, apart from their prophetic significance, have no content relevant to their own time or situation. So all that is compared and found to correspond is textual contents which are somehow timeless, rather than different periods, situations of the kingdom of God in different epochs, whose historical and existential contents in terms, that is, of life and experience, could have been brought to bear on each other. Even what Irenaeus regards as most important, the temporal value within the whole of each and every *kairos* of salvation history, remains in this way unrecognised and obscured. The elimination of this defect by modern historical exegesis is the removal of a defect which is accidental in Irenaeus; it is the true continuation and liberation of his basic purpose across the centuries. The premise of the ancient view is that a prophetic utterance remains unfulfilled and empty of meaning in the Old Covenant[399] and so can have a bearing only on the future. If one nevertheless wants to allow the prophet some insight into his utterance, he must be credited with a prevision or foreknowledge of the future event which is being prophesied. This is nothing less than a direct illumination from the New Testament (in much the way that Abraham, as a 'prophet', is supposed to have been able somehow to understand the encounter with the three angels in a trinitarian sense,[400] though not as clearly as the Christian faith enables us retrospectively to interpret the ancient events).[401] A further misunderstanding arises between the fulfiller, Christ, and the texts which are to be fulfilled by him. The fulfiller is tied all too materially to the wording of a text; too little allowance is made for the sovereignty of his freedom, precisely because the freedom of secondary causes, which would be presupposed by a thoroughly historical view of the prophetic events, also fails to emerge with sufficient clarity. Meaning attaches essentially only to the actions of the *auctor primarius*, the Word of God himself, who announces himself and lets himself be seen in advance.[402] Also connected with this is the fact that in spite of the Pauline correction the curve of the development from the Old Covenant to the New is presented too much as a single line, and not nearly enough in dramatic and dialectical form. The opposition between the two is underestimated because secondary causes are in practice given too little prominence. The Augustinian, and indeed general patristic, formula that the new is veiled in the old and the old unveiled in the new is a far too imperfect expression of the full truth. It implies that the problem is simply to 'understand' things which were there all along and could not be seen with sufficient clarity merely because they were obscured by signs and images. Here too modern exegesis will bring a significant enrichment of the theological dialectic of salvation.

(b) Irenaeus' eschatology must be seen first of all as the logical conclusion of his theological edifice, as the perhaps clumsy expression of his fundamental Christian, anti-Platonic endeavour to tie God's salvation to man, to the earth and to history. He develops the idea of the thousand-year kingdom of the just on earth after the resurrection because he takes seriously the Old Testament promises of a final, completely secure occupation of the land, promises not yet fully fulfilled by the missionary outpouring of the Church of Christ, by the pilgrim state of Christians (which corresponds to the nomadic state of the patriarchs and Mosaic Israel). Nevertheless the Church is essentially a re-entry into 'the inheritance promised to Abraham',[403] a return, *regressio*, not to be interpreted in Platonic terms as a return to the origin above the world, but that backward movement which is a main theme of the Old Covenant (down to the latest settlement in modern Israel) and whose eschatological counterpart would have to be the recovery of the original paradise. Irenaeus is the advocate of the new earth which constantly pales and vanishes in Christian eschatology in favour of 'heaven': that in the process he should clutch at the apocalyptic texts about the millennium is, in comparison with his aim, trivial. His insertion of this transfigured earth in between the resurrection and the judgment is admittedly awkward, and yet the anti-spiritualising tendency in his eschatology (*nihil allegorizari potest, sed omnia firma et vera*)[404] is heartening. The new Jerusalem, the new earth, the new risen man, all of them *non in supercoelestibus possunt intelligi*.[405] All this is, in a triumphant working out of the great Irenaean theme, the last 'training' and 'accustoming' for the 'contemplation of the Father's glory'.[406] Another possible objection is that the distribution of the redeemed between three eschatological *mansiones in domo Patris*: the transfigured earth (the holy city), paradise and heaven, certainly points back to Valentinian eschatology. There the redeemed are distributed between three places; the psychics go to the residence of the demiurge, the demiurge to the previous residence of Achamoth on the edge of the pleroma, and wisdom with the pneumatic souls into the interior of the pleroma. But this suggestion does not determine the decisive element in Irenaeus' eschatology. Irenaeus' vision is that in the whole expanse between the new heaven and the new earth 'God will be seen everywhere, in each place according to the worth of the beholders',[407] and the whole pyramid of the eschatological universe will be yet another illustration of the fact that men are led by the Spirit and the Son to the Father by degrees.[408] In his eschatology Irenaeus produces an important counterweight to the flight from the world and the failure to take seriously the resurrection of the flesh which marks the Platonising Christian eschatologies of a later period and indeed the average Christian consciousness. It is of real importance to consider these statements well, if only for the sake of the dialogue with Israel[409] and in order to take account of the discussion of the picture of the world drawn by natural science and cosmic religion (Teilhard de Chardin).

In conclusion we must mention the great fidelity to the Bible in the way Irenaeus speaks theologically about judgment and its twofold outcome. What marks him out is that he allows the two lines in Pauline and Johannine theology to continue side by side without attempting to force them into a system—always dangerous to the full breadth of truth. He maintains both the line of a divisive judgment and the line of the unlimited universality of the lordship and redemptive power of Jesus Christ,[410] and at the same time always carefully juxtaposes God's universal redemptive will and the mystery of his free choice and the other mystery of human freedom. In the same way the dogma of the eternal fire is also proclaimed in a truly biblical way. There is no attempt to dissolve it as Origen does or to justify it from the Old Testament. Instead it is established with reference to Hebrews 6 as a specifically New Testament theologumenon, which did not have an adequate basis in the Old Testament and has only received this through the final exposing of God's love to men in Christ, through the far higher claim made on the answer of human love.[411]

AUGUSTINE

Augustine’s path, which we call his conversion and which comprises many stages, is, less than all the other exemplary ‘turnings’, one from ‘aesthetics’ to ‘religion’; rather, in its crucial articulation, it is one from a lower to a higher aesthetics. No-one has praised God so assiduously as the supreme beauty or attempted so consistently to capture the true and the good with the categories of aesthetics as Augustine in the period during and after his conversion. And this was not just in words, but also in action: the *eros* with which he seeks the true and wants the good is, in both Christian and Platonic terms, an active enthusiasm which, even in the sobriety and humiliation of the later exercise of ecclesiastical office, does not cease to press back unswervingly towards the point at which God had unveiled himself to the enflamed heart of the young man as the supreme beauty: ‘In a gaze and embrace of the highest chastity, without the interposition of any veil, you desire to look at her nakedness,[1] and to hold what she grants only to a chosen few of her admirers. If you were aflame with passion for a beautiful woman, she would refuse herself rightly if she found that you loved something other than her . . . . ’

Seeing, wanting to see and being able to see are for Augustine the essence of knowledge; just as he places the sense of sight high above the others, so the act of seeing spiritually becomes for him the act of cognition pure and simple. Reason (*ratio*) remains in itself *aspect us*, a looking towards, whose subjective power has no control over whether the object it is trying to catch sight of shows itself or not; it is only when the objects reveals itself by its own gracious pleasure that it comes into sight and so into knowledge.[2]

There is disagreement about when Augustine’s questing reason ‘saw’ its all-important sight: at the time of his turning from Manichaeism and scepticism to the overwhelming light of Plotinus and to philosophical training for its ecstatic contemplation, or not until later, when the clear turning from ‘philosophy’ to Christian ‘theology’ took place. If the latter, when could this second shift have taken place? As early as the Cassiacum writings Augustine is fully conscious of himself as a Christian and a believer and, as Courcelle showed,[3] it was in Ambrose’s sermons in Milan and in his contacts with the Christian Neo-Platonist, the priest Simplicianus, that he became acquainted with Plotinus. The two things come into his field of vision simultaneously, philosophical form and the content it frames and structures, Christian teaching; both are equally strongly attested by the early writings. And if later, especially in his counter-attack against the great heresies, the Christian content emerges ever more distinctly and strongly, it is never in the form of material additions, but as developments of parts and elements already clearly contained, albeit in outline, in the original conception. Things which were only implicit, which were in the air, come into full view, are given explicit formulation; single intuitions spark off whole series of books, like those on the Trinity and the city of God. Even among the early writings distinctions have to be made. Essays on subjects designed to overcome doubt (*Contra academicos*, *Soliloquia* with its sketched-out sequel *De immortalitate anitnae*, then *De quantitate animae*) are more introductory. *De beata vita* clarifies terms. *De magistro* is primarily defensive, constructive only in the short final section. *De musica* remains a fragment of the *Disciplinarum libri*, which were never written but were to have led men to the study of theology via the development of the liberal arts; only in the sixth book does the treatise expand to take a broader view. *De ordine* remains for the most part playful and psychological. As the really central works there remain only *De vera religione* and *De libero arbitrio*. The latter was finished late (395) and, despite its broader horizons, is nonetheless specifically anti-Manichaean, while *De vera religione* (390), drawing together all the efforts of the early years and deliberately unpolemical, presents a sort of rational construction of sacred doctrine, not the credo itself (expounded four years later by *De fide et symbolo*), but its refraction in the temperament of a religious philosopher. It is here that we shall attempt to capture Augustine's basic intuitions (here and not so much in the *Confessions*, which shift the emphasis principally to subjectivity and precisely for this reason do not provide the key to theological seeing), though supplementing it as necessary from the surrounding early works.

The 'rational construction' of the Christian faith here has a very similar structure to that in Anselm. It is the thinker's question to himself, 'So what have you understood of what faith has presented to you?'. This leads to a bracketing-off of the object of faith in the interest of discovering how far what has been believed has been appropriated with intellectual integrity.[4] In this sense the form of reflection is the point around which all previous experience crystallises. We learn what made Augustine a Manichee and what made him stop being one, what made him temporarily a sceptic and what enabled him to overcome scepticism, and so on. *De vera religione* is thus a sort of *Pensées* (‘I promised to write down for you my ideas on true religion’),[5] circling, unsystematic, but in secret drawn magnetically to its true pole.

1. THE EYE, LIGHT AND UNITY

God is ‘the true light without any darkness’,[6] so John and Plotinus agree and so too Augustine the Manichee and the anti-Manichee repeats after them. He is the ‘sun of minds’,[7] of the things that know and of the things that are known. But whereas the physical sun is an object among others, albeit an exalted one, which the eye can have before it as the object of its vision, God is not an object in the same class as created things. It is true that there are intellectual objects which can be seen only in the holy sphere of his light, but while they may be divine in form,[8] they are yet not God himself. He ‘is light itself by which the soul is illuminated to make it able to see everything either in itself or in him with true understanding . . . . The soul is only a created thing, though created with reason and understanding in his image, and when it tries to look at that light it trembles with weakness and faints. Nevertheless the light is the source of such limited understanding as the soul has, so when it is swept up to the light . . . , it sees, not spatially but in its own way, also what is above it, which is the source of its power to see whatever it perceives intellectually in itself.’[9] So the whole multiplicity of both sacred and profane exists as a unity within this single light which transcends all plurality,[10] and which consequently, for the soul, lies rather in the extension of its illuminated subjective act of seeing (inwards) than in the direction of the external multiplicity of objects, and therefore shines on the soul all the more to the degree that it also purifies itself from the dross of the multiplicity and corruption of the world and matter and rises towards its own intellectual existence as light. The concentration on the act of seeing, the purification and collection of oneself for unity: why should these not be taken ultimately as pointing in the same direction as Plato with his parable of the cave, Plotinus with his *epistrophei* and the Sermon on the Mount with its beatitude of the pure heart which will see God and for this encounter must shut itself in its inner room?

If God, as transcendent simplicity, is light, the soul will not be able to see him with a particular ‘faculty’, but only with its very substance, as it is collected and centred into a totality. As he proceeds, Augustine more and more sees the soul’s visual power and penetration as its centre, the centre where soul-ground (*memoria*), soul-mind (*intellectus*) and soul-love (*dilectio*) coincide in substance. In this ‘substantiation’ of its faculties, the soul realises its true nature as mind, in which it becomes an image of the trinitarian light and so capable of seeing God. Certainly ‘reason’ already possesses light. The *oculus mentis,*[11] the *oculus interior*,[12] is as such the *lux mentis*,[13] and yet only a completely healthy and specially schooled eye is able to look into the eternal sun,[14] one which has learnt to make proper use of its acuity (*acies mentis*),[15] something which cannot occur without a general moral effort. Here, where theory and ethics converge, there emerges as a third term, almost as a product: aesthetics, the ability to see, *oculus quo cerni possit*.[16] ‘Seeing the beauty of things must be left to those who as a result of a divine gift are capable of seeing it.’[17] This is true above all of seeing the beauty of God himself, access to which and passion for which will be given only to the person who, through having become himself pure and light, learns to see God’s light. Such a person alone begins to have a ‘taste’ for God and ‘an eye for the only true beauty’,[18] that of ‘the good and beautiful God, in whom and from whom and through whom everything is good and beautiful’.[19] If God’s beauty is once seen as absolute, it becomes wholly obvious that ‘God created all things in the most correct way, in the best proportions and with the greatest beauty,’[20] and also that all carping about providence (foreseeing) must be attributed to a failure to see oneself, a lack of aesthetic capacity. The argument Augustine mounts in his first theodicy against the Manichees (*De libero arbitrio*) involves the most broadly based proof of God’s existence to be found in all his work: once one has seen (Book 2) that the glorious God exists, by that very fact every objection to him falls silent and turns into praise (Book 3). Certainly Augustine will also ascend from the beauty and order of the world to eternal beauty, but he far prefers to see in the light of God’s beauty the beauty of the world revealing itself to the person who loves God: ‘Whoever, on his way to wisdom, contemplates and considers the totality of creatures feels how wisdom kindly reveals herself to him on the way and goes to meet him with all forethought, and so his passion to walk that path will burn all the more fiercely as the path itself is beautified for him by that wisdom he thirsts to attain.’[21] Augustine is certainly familiar with the contemplation of the beauty of the world, but long before the vision at Ostia it is for him, much more than the *theōria physikē* was for the Greek Fathers, a means and a path: ‘There is no lack of value or benefit in the contemplation (*intueri*) of the beauty of the heavens, the arrangement of the stars, the radiant crown of light, the change of day and night, the monthly courses of the moon, the fourfold tempering of the year to match the four elements, the powerful force of seeds from which derive the forms of species and numbers, yes, everything that preserves its own measure and nature in its kind. But such a consideration must not pander to a vain and passing curiosity, but must be turned into a stairway to the immortal and enduring.'[22] For that reason a sense of measure and proportion is no small advantage to the person who possesses it, and 'reason and truth' are very close, since even in the realm of the spiritual and the divine the important thing will be to see and to be able to judge proportions.[23] And this training in seeing also leads, when the soul becomes pure and open, to that 'spiritual seeing' of God in his works of which Paul speaks in Romans (1.20): *invisibilia ipsius per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur*).[24] But this seeing succeeds only when the sight, leaving all finite things behind, has already reached the divine (*sempiterna ejus virtus et divinitas*) and looks back from there on what can become for it an entrance and an epiphany, when, that is, it is 'devout attention',[25] when the eye which looks has already been given strength and clarity by faith, hope and love.[26] Hence the detailed examination of conscience on which *ratio* embarks with Augustine at the beginning of the 'Soliloquies': how far have you got existentially with your love of God, with the quite specific desire to prefer God to all things?[27]

This means that the plurality of the world cannot be understood in any other way at all than in terms of God's unity and in its light. This basic theme of all philosophy, in particular of all Eastern philosophy (and the Egyptian Plotinus also belongs to the East) is used by Augustine right at the beginning of *De vera religione* both apologetically and theologically and as a proof of the truth of Christianity. All religion outside the Church, he says, is at best syncretism, to say nothing at all of polytheism;[28] the common worship of the Roman state is quite happy to allow everyone who participates in it, whether philosopher or not, to have his or her own opinion about God and gods. Plato, of course, had seen the unity of God, but he also saw that the soul cannot behold God's beauty without grace; if he had lived in Augustine's time, the direction of his thought would have made him a Christian. The philosophers too have been able to found only sects, while the Church is gradually bringing about the unity of mankind in practice and so revealing the reality of the unity it embodies.[29] It also does this theoretically, since according to its faith and teaching ‘the first principle of human salvation consists in the fact that there is not philosophy, the quest for wisdom, on the one hand, and religion on the other, for those whose teaching we do not approve of we do not admit to sacramental fellowship either’.[30] In this, in the exclusion and simultaneous polarisation of heresies, the Church demonstrates its true unifying power: all of them, the Jews too, are what they are as a result of a negative relation to the one centre which is the Church. The Church ‘uses the pagans as material for its action, the heretics to test its teaching, the schismatics as evidence of its steadfastness and the Jews by way of comparison with her own beauty . . . . But the fleshly one in its own ranks it tolerates as chaff by which the grain is more safely preserved on the threshing-floor until it is stripped of such husks.’[31] The unifying power of the Church is thus irresistible even for everything which sets itself against it from outside or inside, and for this reason it is the complete manifestation in the world of the God whose order and providence no power, not even that of the devil, can oppose. Augustine’s idea of the Church is already fully formed here. He sees its glory and also its unavoidably tragic character as an inherent element in the active presence of an absolute moment within time. There can, for example, be error in the exercise of the divine power of the keys: ‘providence may very often permit that in the all too turbulent revolts of fleshly men even good people may be expelled from the Christian community’. If they die excommunicate, God in his mercy will look after them.[32] So far does the one God go in the hazardous venture of true religion, which in its unity is the most convincing sermon on the one, true God.[33] Only here is unity not just aimed at from afar or ‘faked’ in an illusion,[34] but displayed materially. In the world of plurality this is such a miracle that the individual miracles of the gospel and primitive Christianity could be brought to an end in favour of this miracle.[35] It can be said that Augustine’s proof of the true Church is an aesthetic proof: anyone who cannot *see* the specific nature of this catholicity (as opposed to mere geographical extension or a syncretic, organisational unity) cannot be moved by it.

In the Church it is not a god or an idea of God which appears, but the living God who is being, life and spirit in supreme unity, whose being must appear in a reality existing in history, whose life must appear in a sacramental organic life-*communio*, whose Spirit must appear in a spirit-filled community pressing forward towards the Spirit. All three aspects require an historical path and development from an external teaching to an inner appropriation, from a belief based on authority to a free understanding of what is believed, from an historical form (which is in itself prophetic, which is why *historia* and *prophetia* are mentioned together)[36] to a lived, integrated existence, and all this applies to the individual as well as to humanity as a whole.[37] However, since the individual will always have to start at the same point and have to struggle to the end of the same path (from the world and sensuality to God and the spirit), humanity's path too can be seen as a development only if the same movement away from the world and towards God is illustrated exemplarily in it as the one step from the old (covenant) to the new (covenant). But since Augustine sees principally the movement towards God ('I forget what lies behind and strain forward towards what lies ahead,' Phil 3.13), this historical step for him does not have a truly formal character. The 'old' is as such not an object of contemplation; it is either the jumping-off point for the new or the visible sign of the failure of those who fall back from the new into the old. What is decisive is the path taken; it alone in its movement is the image in saving history of the divine unity. The only interest of the parable is the truth it contains; of the obscurity of the old, what is revealed in the new. The kingdom of God, the *civitas Dei*, has existed in essence from the time of Abel; what occurs in Christ is only that it moves out of the shadow into the sunlight, though in the Church, 'for the sake of the fleshly and sensual ones', it still remains largely veiled.[38] And only 'the person who reads attentively discovers the articulations of the ages (*aetatum articulos*)'.[39] Indeed, it is the change itself which reveals more profoundly the unity of the Testaments.[40] The movement is from 'body to mind' (Plato), from 'flesh to spirit' (Paul), and Augustine has deliberately equated the two terminologies.[41] In philosophical, Platonic terms, the movement is from appearance to being, in theological, Biblical terms, from being lost to redeemed existence in God. The direction decides everything, including the outcome of the last judgment. Already it divides humanity into 'two nations', 'two classes of human beings';[42] it 'divides the whole human race, which is like the life of a single person, from Adam to the end of this period of time, into two orders', into two 'kingdoms'.[43] This was what Manichaeism rightly saw, though it construed the division in terms of two substances whereas it should be seen in terms of the two different directions in which men strive; this is the starting-point for the *civitas Dei's* theology of history. This is where the foundations of every ethics which divides people into defeated and undefeated are laid,[44] and where, at least in the early period, he constructs a parallel between the stages of an individual's development and the stages of the education of humanity as a whole. The path leads from above to below, from being to appearance, into death and damnation; from below to above it leads to the gathering up even of the realm of appearances into being, to the transformation of the meaning of death into no more than the transition to eternal life.[45]

All these movements of unity in the *oikonomia*, however, must be seen in relation to the unmoved unity of *theologia*, of the 'supreme and exalted and unutterable unity of the creator'.[46] This unity, which transcends every number and every form and essence and by transcending them makes them possible, is 'the one eternal essence in which there is no discord, no confusion, no transition, no defect, no death, but instead supreme harmony, supreme clarity, supreme persistence, supreme fulness, supreme vitality, in which nothing is lacking and nothing in excess'.[47] Because it surpasses everything, this unity is free and creative, but because it inwardly makes possible the existence of everything, insofar as it exists at all, any discussion with it is ontologically impossible; it is always eternally right before we begin, and the only thing to do is for the creature to conform and bind itself to it—that is religion—and to look for a cause of the discords of the world outside this unity. Here Augustine in the first instance agrees with both Mani (and Marcion) and Plotinus; he then has to show as a second stage in the argument that this cause cannot be a subordinate god, nor an eternal opposed principle, nor matter devoid of being, but the abyss of creaturely freedom, for the misuse of which no primary cause can be made responsible. As Augustine observes with astounding profundity, 'The movement away from God does not come from God, so where does it come from? If you put the question like that, I must reply that I do not know. That may sadden you, but my answer is still right. There can be no knowledge of what is nothing.'[48] 'Why should one need to know it?'[49] It is the movement of alienation (*abalienatio*),[50] which Plotinus and Origen built into the foundations of their systems and then subdued by theological thinking, just as Hegel finally captured it in a system of dialectical necessities; Augustine, however, refuses to provide a final explanation for the yawning gulf of sin.

This is in all probability the reason for his lifelong refusal to offer a theory for the soul's origin in God and for the distance at which it is set from its maker: *anima vero unde originem ducat . . . , quantum distet a Deo, quid* *habeat proprium quoad alternat in utramque naturam, quatenus moriatur et quomodo immortalis probetur*. who can do justice to the philosopher’s requirement?[51] Neither derivation from the parental soul nor individual creation by God, neither the insertion of the precreated soul into the body nor a pre-natal fall from the original unity, none of these satisfied the searching mind.[52] Enough if the human being understands that he is always outside the unity, that his progress from God [*progressus*) requires a re-gress (*regressus*),[53] a return home (*conversio, epistrophē)*[54] and a stretching out towards being[55] and towards the lost origin, and that this path in itself is already divine truth and guidance and order, whether it is called (as the essence of all true knowing, all *science) disciplina*[56] or *ordo*[57] or *lex*.[58] Enough that he strives to regain, in the spirit of the gospel, the principle, the origin from which he fell—how he does not know—to find himself in a strange land, by ‘becoming a child for God’ (*repuerescat Deo*);[59] enough if he opens the light of his eyes once more to the eternal light.

2. TRUE AND GOOD

What first gives the idea of this universal movement towards unity its distinctive Augustinian stamp is his anti-sceptical search for the true starting-point of intellectual reflection. The fundamental task of *ratio* is to find secure foundations for truth in the original pure act of the *cogito*.[60] But the evidential force of the *cogito* for Augustine includes, by contrast with Descartes, more than just simply the *sum*: 'Since it is obvious that you exist and since this cannot be obvious to you in any other way than from your being alive, your being alive is similarly obvious . . . . Consequently a third thing is also obvious, namely that you have understanding (*intellegere*)'.[61] Being, living and understanding (which means more than the Cartesian pure act of thought), are in the Augustinian *cogito* originally a unity of three in one. To say this is almost immediately to prompt the question, 'Which of these three seems to you the best?' and the answer, 'Understanding,' is justified as follows: 'because even a stone has existence and even an animal has life, but the stone is not alive and the animal does not think, so then if someone thinks, it is absolutely certain that he also exists and is alive'.[62] Nothing is more fundamental in Augustine than the hierarchical character of the primary intuition about being—even if the diversity of the levels is shown only by a comparison with the world. The point is not to establish an empty identity between being and thinking, nor an original 'tension' between subject and object; it is an attempt to find a place for the most fundamental order of being in the world within the original act of consciousness. This not only radically invalidates every dialectic between concept and existence, but also the unfruitful dialectic between thought and life whose divisiveness fills the history of modern thought. Rather, Augustine lays the foundation for a major thesis of Thomas Aquinas' when he says, 'I know that I can only know if I am alive, and I know this all the more certainly in that I become more alive by knowing.'[63] 'You did not prefer something else to life, you preferred a better life to a particular life.'[64] It is a law which determines both the intensification and the foundation of existence. 'To be in order to be alive, to be alive in order to understand.'[65] There is in the *cogito* that which is fundamentally self-evident to the eye of the mind: the recognition of precedence, a preference for the higher and better which entails a risk and a choice: *videt praeferendum,*[66] *audet se praeferre*.[67]

This core contains the whole of Augustinianism; it is from this original perception that everything else is developed, in agreement with and in opposition to Plotinus. 1. It contains a fundamental sense of quality or value, and correspondingly of hierarchy. ‘No-one who has an eye for it (which is not a difficult art) will deny that living substance is to be preferred to lifeless, or that which bestows life to that which receives it.’[68] This all depends on being able to see, just as does all that immediately follows from it, which is called the Augustinian proof of the existence of God, the only one he produced but a comprehensive one, and one which Thomas set out schematically in the Fourth Way. The underlying assumption is that in *intellegere* the level of thought (*cogitatio*) is transcended and the level of the reality of being reached, an assumption which Descartes was never able to make fundamentally, *i.e.*, without reducing existence to the sphere of thought. 2. The triune experience of being in the intellectual act directly implies both freedom and order: freedom because preference presupposes the superiority of the higher level to the lower, and because such preferring becomes automatic in the mind; and order because the levels form a mutually supporting structure such that it is ontologically impossible to play freedom and order off against each other. 3. The same supporting structure in the human being shows his non-absoluteness. The hierarchical movement from being to life to mind (from stone to plant and animal to man), or psychologically from thing-consciousness via sense perception to intellectual reflection, compels thought to transcend this whole striving and potential realm of being in an unmoving and identical being which is the being of all beings, the life of all living things and the mind of all mind, and which must therefore be superior to the free human being as the free divine person. Plotinus too sees the hierarchical principle, but he ultimately turns to pantheism and absolutises striving human nature. Augustine goes beyond Plotinus by extending the Plotinian hierarchy to its logical conclusion, by crowning and perfecting the relative freedom of man, as exercised in human preferences by the creative freedom of the personal Biblical God. 4. In this way a path is opened up for the religious and aesthetic view of life to catch sight of God. It sees God in all things (which are what they are only by participation in an unqualified being, life and mind), and it can see them in no other way than in their participation in God; but equally it sees God over all things, since God can be the ground of all things only because he is no one of them, which is why the supreme activity of human freedom is, when presented with the whole divinely established order of the world, to prefer God himself as the far better. When things reveal God, they point beyond themselves to him; that is, they conceal him in themselves to reveal him in himself. The inner order of being is thus perceived by the same vision which sees also the transcendent freedom of the creator and orderer. Contingency thus has its place within the necessity of the laws of being,[69] and from this it becomes apparent that the Augustinian proof of God's existence from the different levels of being does not go beyond the limits imposed by the structure of the proof itself.[70]

The analysis of the *cogito* (which, of course, is always performed under the stimulus of envisaging a not-I) can just as well be developed in terms of the triunity of power of thought, object of thought and act of thought,[71] but this schema is itself explained in terms of the first. The first reason for this is that the act of thought proves to be a judgment on what is presented to it and so demonstrates the superior position in the hierarchy of the mind-subject (and also of the animal subject of perception over the object perceived),[72] and the second is that the triad object—power—act reflects the triad being—life—mind.[73]

The structure of the *cogito* thus demonstrated requires for its completion what in Augustine's writing is usually called *illuminatio*. The only way in which finite mind can make judgments is in the 'light' of absolute mind: this light, in that it informs the mind, is the transcendental condition of the mental structure of finite mind, but at the same time, in that it is absolute and free, personal, it is its transcendent basis. The relation between finite and infinite mind must therefore be both necessary and free (this is the crux of Augustinianism): it must be both philosophically transcendental (in the sense of Kant's critical philosophy and Fichte and Hegel's 'mysticism') and theologically personal.[74] Thus the personal relation, that is to say, prayer and humility, the purification of the soul in its movement towards God, belongs fundamentally to the act of coming to know being, though it would be wrong for that reason to make prayer an instrument within that act, or to develop a methodology around it. The element of dialogue (in the *Confessions*) does not abolish the justified element of monologue (in the *Soliloquies*); it is impossible simply to reduce thought to 'dialogue' for the very good reason that God is not a finite partner but the ontological basis (*interior intimo meo*)[75] of the personal act of thinking. The temptation to resolve this tension must be resisted by anyone who wants to recapture Augustine's intention, as it must in the case of Origen's concept of the Logos (Logos as the absolute original structure of all mental acts and also as the personal Christ in the centre of our hearts as the one 'whom you do not know' Qn 1.26], but who must be known for true knowledge).

Illuminatio coming from the truth which the Son of God is[76] therefore does not mean a vision of God's 'essence'. Augustine reserves this for the next life; here below it is granted only quite exceptionally and only in ecstasy (Paul, Moses). *Illuminatio* expresses in ancient language what moderns might describe as the fundamental openness of the kingdom of absolute truth (which as absolute belongs to God and is inseparably bound up with him), a truth therefore which, however profane it may appear, is in its source and ground sacred because it is part of the God who is never a thing, but always personal and alive. But this means that for this divine, absolute character of definitive truth, which bears eternity within it, to become visible at all to finite mind, certain requirements must be fulfilled. The truth which God is must spontaneously open itself to men, and consequently finite mind must be prepared subjectively to be able to perceive this revelation for what it is: *aeternitate affici*.[77] Here, in passing, we find the starting-point for the whole of Augustine's later doctrine of grace and can see how wrong the Donatists were to appeal to Augustine's early writings. For already here the logic of his position requires him to state, 'Of himself man can by no means raise himself from earthly life to attain the image of God.'[78] The terms relating to truth's spontaneous opening of itself multiply: God's truth 'shows its face (*faciem*)',[79] places itself 'at the ready' (*praesto*),[80] lets itself be 'embraced' (*amplectere*),[81] shows itself (*se ostendere*),[82] makes itself 'present' (*praesens*),[83] 'knows when to show itself' (*novit ilia pulchritudo quando se ostendat*),[84] 'shows itself when it pleases' (*quando placet sese ostendit*)[85] 'lifts up to itself' (*sublev at*).[86] 'But it makes itself present in vain to stained souls, because spiritual blindness cannot see it.'[87] So the act of the mind again depends on the aesthetic capacity to perceive the quality of the eternal and divine in truth (something it can do only when it is collected and purified); otherwise, even if it draws the correct logical conclusions, it may miss the real experience of truth. The concluding truths of the secular sciences, whose laws rest in eternal truth, thus clearly have a profane and a sacred side, with the first extending further than the second;[88] further, ‘between the intelligible majesty of God and the intellectual processes of reasoning there is a gulf no less wide than between heaven and earth’.[89] It is thus possible, without doing violence to the immanent structure of the human mind, to maintain the personal role of the inner teacher, Christ, who is ‘the wisdom of God’ (1 Cor 1.30). He is word and light at once: he is ‘heard’[90] and ‘he illuminates’,[91] and anyone who ‘is a disciple of the truth’ and ‘can see inwardly’[92] is ‘instructed, not by my words, but by the things themselves, which God reveals within him’.[93] He has passed from the external authority of teaching tothe supreme authority of truth itself,[94] and to its ‘hidden oracle’.[95]

This is the origin of the tension in Augustine between innatism (a position he never fully adopted), indeed the Platonic doctrine of anamnesis, and the idea (also never adopted) of the created mind as pure active potentiality for every intellectual content. ‘Authentic’ creaturely knowledge is something from which, in its pure spontaneity and freshness, each man has been estranged (by original sin); it is the simple knowledge of the presence of God, whose reality alone confers final reality and certainty on everything else: we are lighted towards this authenticity and reminded of it by the Son, whose will is to lead us to the Father. The renewal of men’s ties (*re-ligio*) to this absolute origin, as distinct from man’s bondage to idols of his own creation, forms the subject of the solemn conclusion to *De vera religione*.[96]

In this starting-point we can also see prefigured the later anti-Pelagian dialectic, which on the one hand must maintain that the structure of the human mind and, in consequence, of its freedom has not been destroyed by the Fall, but on the other that man, as a result of his alienation, must be incapable of a return to authenticity, of a free choice of the supreme God in love;[97] the analogy of states (*status*) cuts through the concept of nature.[98]

The transcendental and transcendent character of the sphere of divine reality is, finally, guaranteed by its supra-subjectivity. It escapes from the over-present ‘mine’ of the knowing and loving ‘I’; in consequence, it needs, if it is to be grasped, a loving universalisation and fulfilling depersonalisation of the ‘I’, that lack of envy which the Greeks always regarded as a mark of the divine (but *cf.* also Mt 5.45), whereas all privatisation of the universal divine truth betokens a movement which is typical of sin and failure.[99] This universal character of truth must be taken together with its personal character.[100] Then, says Augustine, its divine character will become plain: only God can in fact be the love which is most personal to each individual and yet common to all. Augustine regularly relates the love command of the New Covenant to this realisation, and to the *regula*, the *ordo amoris*—including even love of enemy—as the ‘understood’ order.[101] This rule becomes light for the soul itself.[102]

Thus the good springs from the true in which it is already contained, just as, in the original intuition, freedom was already contained in order. Freedom contains the possibility of preferring, of choice (and the reverse), but freedom itself is free only in the measure that it rightly (*recte*) prefers the right and justly (*juste*) prefers the just.[103] It is sovereign in the measure that it conducts itself by the rule of the absolute: such conduct contains all virtue,[104] and fulfilling happiness (*vita beata*) supervenes both as its immanent result and as the freely given reward (*praemium*).[105] Only if a man sets a direct course to God is every possibility of error eliminated,[106] and the ‘concept of happiness’, like the ‘concept of truth’, imprinted (*impressa*) a priori on both rational and moral striving (the two are one), not as an ‘innate idea’, but as identical with the striving itself. The gracious restoration of this striving, however, takes place through faith, hope and love, which, in the end, where they are alive, are again one as humble submission and devotion to the divine true and good.[107] In such devotion we can already see how the concept of merit is, if not abolished, certainly surpassed. For in its devotion the loving soul knows itself more and more indebted to God,[108] though here Augustine takes every care to show that the encompassing freedom of God does not destroy human freedom.[109]

3. THE BEAUTIFUL

Discussion of beauty hals been left to this point to show how far this basic category of Augustine’s is built on well thought-out foundations. Elements of a doctrine of beauty have already appeared in plenty, in the basic experience of the self-manifestation of light-filled, light-giving essential truth, in the experience of its sacred and gracious character, in the demand that the vision of the experiencing soul should be purified and kept ready for this revelation. They have appeared too in the basing of revelation and the longing for it on love, but especially in the demonstration of the hierarchical structure of even the most primitive experience of being, which uncovers a pattern of levels of being in terms of form and matter. Alone, however, these would not be sufficient for more than a general dynamic from below to above, that movement of love whose Platonic and Biblical rapture is proclaimed by the *Confessions* and often too by the *Enarrationes*. What is still missing is the emphasis on the form in space and time which, again in Platonic terms, crystallises the enthusiasm and, in Christian terms, brings the striving of Jewish expectation to rest in the Incarnation of the Son of God. Only the one who loves finite form as the revelation of the infinite is both ‘mystic’ and ‘aesthete’.

After the introduction dealing with the true unity of religion (contrasted with syncretism), Augustine begins the main part of his investigation into ‘true religion’ with the idea that the Christian dogma of the Trinity receives support from the fact that every created thing has its own structure, in that it exists (*esse inquantum est*), has a particular nature (*speciem suam habere*) and is placed within a perfect order (*ordinatissime administrari*). As an existent, the creature is an individual, as a member of a species it is distinct from others, but is as such caught within the order of things (*non excedat ordinem*).[110] Being inevitably includes being of a certain kind (species) or, what comes to the same thing, a form (*forma*), two words which imply both ‘essence’ and ‘beauty’ and are immediately understood by Augustine in this duality (*speciosus* and *formosus,* ‘beautiful’, ‘well-formed’).[111] To the question why this is so, we receive an answer on three levels: 1. Because everything that is and exists derives from a creative action by which the highest Being informs the ‘nothingness’ of matter; moreover this highest Being, as the supreme unity, is the absolute *fascinosum*, beauty as such. 2. Because the immanent structure of everything that is and exists displays this stamp and image of the unattainable unity. 3. Because all resemblances among created things point to a supreme, an absolute similarity and likeness in the triune God himself and are only adequately explicable by this.

Augustine thus explains the Biblical creation with the categories of Platonic participation. That something can exist outside the complete absolute unity is conceivable only if out of the quasi-nothing of matter, ‘out of which God made everything,’ the finite existing essences are formed by a creative irradiation from the forms which reside in God and are identical with him.[112] ‘Shaped out of shapelessness’ (*ex informitate formata*)[113] and ‘created out of nothing’,[114] these two dimensions, which Thomas and the Thomists will later carefully separate as a composite structure in the order of nature (matter and form) and in the order of being (being and existence), still coincide for Augustine because for him the supreme existent being is understood in Platonic terms as absolute unity, and contingency and creativeness are therefore adequately expressed in terms of the unity pertaining to things, which is only striven for and never attained. In terms of Thomas’s thought, the setting-forth of matter from God in Augustine must be regarded as the true act of creation, though real being is given to it only by the simultaneous action of form which calls it back to its origin.[115] Against this view it has rightly been argued that the formative moulding force of the ideas for Augustine must be seen as equally creative,[116] and this is indeed the only possible corollary of his ‘essential ontology’. If being consists in unity, then the participation of created things in being also consists in a graduated participation in unity. And then matter itself (against both the Manichees and Plotinus) must be explained as the pure tendency and potentiality for form, as simply the capability of being formed.[117] In this way creation is seen as the art of the supreme artist and must be judged by his creative idea.[118]

Form and beauty, however, considered as immanent, can now be seen in purely numerical terms, for number is the pluralisation of unity which originated in unity and is explicable only in and through unity. This conception can and indeed must be developed in two ways, as the young Augustine saw in his lost first work *De pulchro et apto* (‘On the Beautiful and the Suitable’): ‘I defined and distinguished the beautiful as what looks good in itself and the suitable as what looks good when adapted to go with something else.'[119] The former expresses unity by the inner harmony of its parts or aspects, the second by fitting as a part into a larger complex. In the picture of the Trinity described above, these two aspects correspond to the Son (*as forma*) and the Spirit (as *ordo universi*), just as the Son becomes man and takes individual form while the Spirit brings the redeemed universe into harmony with that form. The idea that the nature of things is number was taken over by Plato in his later work from Pythagoras and incorporated by Plotinus into his system—and even Augustine allowed himself to be revered by his friends as a reviver of Pythagoras.[120] Nevertheless it cannot be regarded as a mere quantification of being or merely a translation into mathematics, because the unity which these numbers and numerical relations reflect is, beyond all quantity, the qualitative as such. Augustine consequently applies entirely qualitative criteria to the numerical figures of geometry which extend in space and to those of rhythm in music and speech which extend in time, and arranges them in a hierarchy according to various considerations which seem to him self-evident.[121] But the question arises how these hierarchies are related to the fundamental hierarchy of levels of being or existence (being—life—mind), and whether they can be derived from it. In spite of attempts which point in this direction,[122] this is impossible if for no other reason than that it would run counter to Platonic causality, which operates only from above to below. Thus he can do no more than posit an analogy between numerical figures and structures and the three levels of existence (and the degrees which mediate between them), as the theory of numbers shows, especially in Book VI of *De musica*. By means of these analogies Augustine explains the possibility both of sensory and of intellectual knowledge, which of course, in Platonic terms, can never be explained by an action of the external world on the senses and of the senses on the mind, but only as an informing intuition of the mind into the senses and of the senses into the external world, though such a process is occasioned by the analogous numerical affection between the lower and the higher faculties in the hierarchy. The observation that geometrical phantasms are only an imperfect accompaniment of the exact mathematical laws perceived by the mind, which the soul ultimately does not receive in itself, but (in however veiled a form) by irradiation from the highest 'sanctuary of numbers', seems to confirm this epistemology. Thus the concept of *numerus*, which applies to all levels of being, can assume an internally analogous form: from the usual mathematical sense in the material world through the sense of proportion (in space) and rhythm (in time) within the world of souls (external and internal sense and memory) to harmony and intellectual correspondence in the realm of the mind, and finally to the harmonies we can only guess at in divine wisdom, from whose ‘numbers’ all form has flowed and in whose light it is seen and enjoyed as a beautiful copy of the eternal beauty. This explains Augustine’s sense, as early as the *De vera religione* (where it is an ancient Platonic sense) of the harmony of finite form as the container of being, whereas he feels numerical infinity in time and space to be really a distorted product of the imagination, so overcoming in advance Pascal’s horror of the quantitatively-infinitely large and infinitely small.[123] The aesthetic view of being found in the early works is expressed in the exaltation of measure and moderation, in which the term *modus* is applied not just to the Christian life as a whole,[124] but to God himself. ‘*Modestia* comes from *modus*, and *temperantia* from *temperies* (which is a harmonious combination). But where moderation and due proportion prevail, there is neither excess nor insufficiency. That is true fulness, which we oppose to “lack”—a far more significant opposition than between “lack” and “excess”. For in excess there is an inflow and an altogether too turbulent overflow. If this occurs in greater measure than is required, then here too there is a lack of proportion; thus what is excessively disproportionate also displays signs of defectiveness . . . . The measure of the soul is therefore wisdom. That is what enables the soul to acquire a gravity which prevents it from running to excess or being restricted by a lack of fulness . . . . But what is wisdom if not the wisdom of God, God’s son?. . . And wisdom is truth. “I am the truth” (Jn 14.8). But for truth to exist there must be a supreme measure, from which it proceeds and to which, when it is perfect, it returns. This supreme measure is subject to no other measure, for if the supreme measure is measure by virtue of the supreme measure, it is measure by virtue of itself . . . . So truth is never without measure, and measure never without truth.’[125] To this picture of God as self-measure there corresponds an ideal of the closed nature of essences even in finite mind: ‘Everything that is conscious of itself embraces itself, but what is embraced is finite for itself. But mind perceives itself, and so is finite for itself. It would not even want to be infinite if it could be; for [it] wants to be known to itself because it loves itself.’[126] This un-Augustinian ideal is already paling in the emotion of the *Confessions*, which know that ‘there is that in a man that even a man’s own spirit does not know',[127] but this is also the same time at which the metaphysic of numbers recedes into the background.[128] True, Augustine cannot quite do without it; he takes it up again in his explanation of the creation story, since it is to the active force of numbers in potential being that he attributes the mysteries of the generation of animals,[129] and he relies on the *numeri efficacissimi* once again to explain how a unique creation always develops at its particular time.[130] And when, totally in the spirit of Plotinus, he describes time as an extenuation of the soul (the world-soul fallen from mind),[131] this non-identity[132] becomes for him an enduring basis for all the beautiful play of rhythm and melody which seeks in infinitely varied ways to imitate unity in the sphere of what is not-one. The element of painful melancholy which is present in all music because the totality can be grasped only in the flight of its parts becomes the complete expression of his temperament and a basic pattern of worldly ethics, which sins against the meaning of fleeting beauty when it tries to hold on to the individual note instead of allowing the quantitative to slip away as one sways to the rhythm of beauty.[133] Yes, the beauty of material bodies is real beauty:[134] there is nothing evil in it, but it is only a trace[135] and so a hint (*nutus*) pointing one away from the non-existent to the existent.[136] And the mature Augustine again uses numbers, this time taking them from the Church's tradition but giving them a justification at a deeper level in his metaphysics, to unlock the secrets concealed in the Biblical numbers.[137] Surely no-one would maintain that the many numbers of the Old and New Testaments were set down at random by the divine author, or even merely by Moses or John? They too are a hint which is in principle capable of being understood and yet can really be puzzled out only in rare cases.[138]

Nevertheless, none of these applications of numbers develops the original metaphysics any further. For this Augustine started from the identity of nature (*species* or idea = *ratio*, *sapientia*) and number, and even believed he had found confirmation of this in the Biblical books of wisdom.[139] However, it has to be said of this metaphysics that it does not uphold the original Pythagorean principle of the identity of countable quantity (of sounds in the monochord) and their qualitative counterpart as heard sounds in the soul. In Augustine's work there is a correspondence between various hierarchies of numerical systems, broadly speaking between material numbers and the numbers of the soul, but not between number and sound or number and colour. He does occasionally use the traditional definition of beauty as 'a correspondence combined with a certain sweetness of colours',[140] but he does not really make it his own. The reason for this peculiarity is to be sought less in his general Neo-Platonic approach than in a personal nervousness of Augustine's with regard to all sensible entities. He asks himself in the *Confessions* how he is to tear himself away from the spell of music, even of church music: it fans the flame of his devotion and touches the soul with 'some mysterious affinity', but, as sensual pleasure, must nonetheless be checked.[141] It is most revealing that in his treatise on music he deals only with one half of music, numerical rhythm, while melody is sent empty away. It only reappears in a lyrical and enthusiastic discussion of God's internal *melos*,[142] of a supernatural music which once again has nothing to do with Pythagorean music. His fundamental mistrust of the senses receives its most consistent metaphysical expression in his depreciation of the middle and mediating element of human and physical nature, the soul between body and mind, the imagination between the bodily senses and reason. (This will be discussed later.) This, the true seat of the aesthetic sense, because also the seat of the production of the world of images, is constantly accused by Augustine of untruth and falsehood, emptiness and pretence. And even though he does say on one occasion that 'what is of first importance is to know in itself the living nature which senses all this (the beauty of the world) and which on any account, since it gives life to the body, must be better than the body,'[143] the firm rejection of the senses and especially of the imagination continues to be a basic feature of his philosophical attitude. In terms of Plotinus' theory this is justified because the higher level contains the goods of the lower eminently within itself and has no essential need of the latter in order to reproduce them in itself, but for a Christian incarnational and (so to say) resurrectional view this idea lacks certain necessary qualifications. It appears first, in an eschatological and theological context, at the end of the *City of God*, where it is said of the risen that they will see God with their glorified bodily eyes, not directly, since he is spirit, but also not indirectly in the way that we infer God from the order of the world, but in a similar way to that in which we, living among other living human beings who express (*exserere*) their life in vital movements, 'immediately *see*, and do not just believe, that they are alive'. In an analogous way, the transfigured universe and especially transfigured souls, our own and those of others, will be a direct expression of the living and all-controlling God.[144] However, this eschatological indication of imagination and sense comes too late to make up for the illusory status ascribed to sense on earth.

The only slight adjustment of the balance comes in the theological culmination of the system. For here the image character of substances is justified by reference to the original image in God himself, the Son who is identical with the Father in nature and who yet stands in relation to him as his image. But for this crowning idea, all the Platonism could only veer tragically between the mystical dissolution of all images in the imagelessness of unity and the aesthetic idolisation of finite form as it is worshipped and absolutised. The further Augustine penetrates into Scripture and theology, the more detailed and the richer become not only the figure of the Son as eternal wisdom and original likeness, through which and by participation in which all things can be traces and images of God,[145] but also the figure of the incarnate, humble and humiliated Christ, disfigured to the point where no image is left. The Incarnation is now no longer for him simply (Alexandrian) ‘milk’ instead of solid food, an introduction for ‘children’ and the ‘immature’.[146] Rather, just as he saw the temporal void as the medium of beauty, he now sees Christ’s *kenosis* as the revelation of the beauty and the fulness of God: ‘the path itself is beauty’.[147] All the inexhaustible wealth of Augustine’s ideas about Christ, about the mystical Christ, about the kingdom of God on earth, about the humility of Christ and the Christian, about longing for God and the long pilgrimage towards God’s light, is now permeated by a trembling and blazing rhythm of beauty which owes no more to the philosophy of numbers than the *Retractationes* allow it, namely, the role of a preliminary training which has to be abandoned again when the real work comes. And so even that ‘hidden sanctuary’ of the eternal numbers (*quasi cubile ac penetrate, quasi habitaculum quoddam sedemque numerorum,*[148] *[in] secretari veritatis*)[149] is drawn back up into heaven like the linen cloth in Peter’s vision, and being swept up in ecstasy to the heavenly numbers gives way to the simple following of Christ.[150]

4. THE REALITY OF THE IMAGE

There runs through Augustine’s thought the contradiction which, ultimately, is the contradiction of all Platonism. Regarded statically, it is a dualism of world and God, sense and mind, not mediated as in Aristotelianism, and yet it is at the same time a monistically descending outpouring of the One truth-and-beauty and a monistically ascending eros moving towards this One. What remains dualistic when static is, however, brought together when dynamic. Consequently, where Platonic and Augustinian thought loses its erotic dynamic it necessarily disintegrates into Cartesianism, Idealism and mathematicism. The fact that in Augustine the picture of the world does not fragment is due to the Platonic and Biblical enthusiasm of the heart, which brings together, not only in appearance but also in reality, what the schematism of the thought very deliberately sets out to leave unconnected. It is enthusiasm which has to fill the theoretical gap, and it can only do this, to put it briefly, by looking at the world in an aesthetic way. Precisely because the world lacks the theoretical status of an image, it has paradoxically to be viewed aesthetically as a world of images, as an aesthetic world in the narrow sense. This paradox must be explained in more detail.

Since, in Platonic theory, there is no receptivity of the human mind to that which lies below it, the mind contains eminently, exactly, and as truth, that which is suggested inexactly, in rough transcription in the senses and the imagination.[151] No sensible circle attains the precision of the concept of the circle. The whole world of images therefore lacks truth. Nevertheless, whereas sense impressions are ‘true’ at least to the extent that they announce states of affairs in the material world (which in turn are only striving for unity in time and space), the internal image-world of the imagination—and so human art as part of its domain, and also metaphysics in so far as it is dependent on imagination and as it is un-Christian—is the source of all deception and the true *fabrica idolorum*. Naturally, Augustine knows that it is not the imagination which sins, but the free rational person, but the sin lies in taking the buffoonery of the imagination for truth and in becoming attached to it. The speculations of Manichaeism—ultimately on the same level as the sensual fantasies to which Augustine was attached in that period

—were nothing other than the imagination become images,[152] 'the illusion created by the shadow-figures of the imagination'.[153]

As far as human arts are concerned, Augustine does want to distinguish fiction from lies; art is based on the former,[154] and it can be said that deception is the truth of art.[155] In this Augustine is more Platonic than Plotinus, who had tolerated art as the imitation of nature, since does not nature itself imitate the Idea?[156] Plotinus sees the connection with the Ideal, Plato and Augustine the unreality of artistic images.[157] The roots of this rejection, particularly of the plastic arts (music seems to him more intellectual, closer to the order of the world) include a deep-seated and almost traditional Christian suspicion, and, not infrequently, Old Testament ideas (such as that the drive to produce images derives from the cult of the dead and leads from that to idolatry).[158] Whereas Augustine almost everywhere vigorously rejects the theatre, in *De vera religione* he develops a profound and illuminating theory about the pleasure contained in the movement between illusion and its unmasking ('getting behind it' to see 'how it's done') in theatrical performances, in conjuring displays and feats of dexterity.[159] But the pleasure of seeing through such performances ultimately rests on curiosity, which, as the *Confessions* show, is the opposite of true pleasure and intellectual rapture.[160] 'The attraction of the theatre and entertainment lasts only as long as we realise what truth is being compared to to make us laugh. And so we are refuted by our own judgment and out of our own mouths, since we simultaneously approve the one thing with our reason and pursue the other in our vanity.'[161] We should therefore 'banish . . . the figments of our madness from the stage of reason' as a 'valueless and deceptive pastime' because 'they turn our whole life into an empty dream'.[162] We should set out on the road from poetry to philosophy as on the path from appearance to being, a way Augustine describes in the little myth of the two birds Philocalia (love of beauty) and Philosophia (love of wisdom). Philocalia, unconscious of her origin, sits trapped in the cage of the earthly world, while Philosophia flies free and soars to heaven; she recognises her imprisoned sister, but can only rarely free her.[163] Suspicion of imagination made Augustine in *The City of God* the final demolisher of the ancient myths;[164] but it also cast its shadow over his theology of mystical experience, in which he firmly and remorselessly demythologises all forms of 'manifestations', whether they be natural, praeternatural or supernatural, and reduces them to the same psychological level.[165] This theology continues to have very significant effects even in the eschatology of *De Genesi ad litteram*, where the damned finally lose possession of true being and are consequently hurled into the being-less world of the impressions of sense and imagination, which constitutes eternal hell (in this respect the pure opposite of the true eternity of heaven).[166]

The Platonic dualism between the higher real, intellectual world and the lower material world of appearance also has serious implications for the question of the status of earthly culture, the state and its order and authority. If for Augustine all genuine truth is transcendent and so determined by religion, any earthly truth which is indifferent to the connection with the living God can a priori only belong to the sphere of appearance. Long before the decisions of *The City of God*, Augustine takes it for granted that 'no true freedom' can prevail in this whole area (since such freedom can be set free only in a loving relationship with God).[167] The most that can exist is an apparent, civil and political freedom, although there is naturally nothing to stop the legislator of the earthly state from seeking advice on the framing and application of the temporal law from the eternal law.[168] Connected with this is the negative teaching of *De magistro*, according to which no pupil really learns from a human teacher but is stimulated by his words to find the truth in himself.[169]

And yet again the Platonism in Augustine's thought here should not be construed in terms of a vulgar dualism, as though the world were divided horizontally into two parts, the sphere of the senses and of appearances and that of the intellect and truth. The true cause of the lower world's lack of being is merely that it is not understood and construed in terms of the upper, as is required for truth, for in fact the truth of being is not restricted to the upper world, but embraces the whole, though the whole as viewed from above. This true world consequently includes, not just the material, temporal and sensible as its emanation, but, as Augustine emphasises most forcefully against the Manichees, also sin, alienation and even the abandonment of hell. It is at this point that the great final vision comes, the vision which enabled Harnack to speak of Augustine's 'aesthetic optimism'.[170] It is a contemplation of the world-totality from the supreme vantage point of divine providence, which enables us to survey the 'whole pattern of the mosaic floor' and not just an isolated section.[171] It is the world seen in the light of the God 'through whom the universe, even with its left side, is complete' and ‘who does not allow even the slightest discord to arise, since the less good is in harmony with the better’.[172] ‘Just as in a painting the black becomes beautiful in the context of the whole, so too immutable divine providence presents this whole contest for our instruction’, to show us that even ‘the imperfect’ contributes ‘to the perfection of the whole’, to ‘the beauty of the universe’.[173] It is mistaken to argue here that in that case sin was willed by God ‘because without it an element of perfection would have been lacking’,[174] or to object that it would have been a simple matter for God to create us sinless and perfect from the beginning,[175] mistaken because sin depends on the free will of the creature, not on God. However, God is powerful enough to find a place for immanent disorder in his transcendent order and to fit it into the higher harmony. Augustine has to press his argument against the Manichees into the finest points of detail, and, tentatively but also firmly, he makes no exception for the sufferings of the irrational creation, not even for the sufferings of innocent children,[176] for suicide nor finally for the existence of hell.[177] The same images which Plotinus and Origen had used to justify the existence of the ugly and base, of physical evil and finally of medicinal punishments are extended by Augustine to moral evil and the eternal punishment of pure justice.[178] The weighting of the formulation varies between the simple statement that God’s unshakable order includes equally good and evil,[179] that even lies have to serve truth,[180] that the ‘rightness’ of God’s love and of its order does not become a punishing justice of itself, but as a result of human sin, in order to remain faithful to itself,[181] and that in the process the faithful human beings have to fill the gap left by the fallen angels,[182] and the much more extreme statement that beauty even requires its opposite,[183] and that in the harmonious universe no level can be omitted.[184] The darkness in the world ‘seasons’ it, just as a solecism in a high-flown speech provides a ‘highly pleasurable spice’.[185] This slight variation in formulation between the assertion of the ethical non-necessity of sin and its consequences and that of its aesthetic necessity is not just important for Augustine alone; its significance for the millennium which follows him can hardly be overestimated. It will be this aesthetic justification, and not primarily Scripture, which will be the source of the shadows which from Gottschalk onwards darken the middle ages and, from Calvin and Jansenius, the Christianity of the modern period. We can say that Augustine’s concluding aesthetic theodicy represents a two-fold reduction of the Biblical data, first by interpreting its existential statements in aesthetic and systematic terms and again because this interpretation, in which immanent evil, considered transcendently, becomes good, is then used to, close a gap left open by philosophy. The Greek Fathers, who follow Plotinus and Proclus, never opened up the abysses in the same way (on the one hand Manichaean, on the other markedly Western) as Augustine, who then, as a last resort, has to call in the Eastern theodicy and throw it like a cloak oyer the tragedy. The return of the Italian and German idealists (from Ficino via Bruno to Hegel) to the pure contemplation of Plotinus provides, for the Christian, no escape from the dilemmas of Augustinian aesthetics; only a deeper Biblical theology promises a solution, and this can naturally not be a renewed, still less a higher, ‘systematics’.

5. THE DYNAMIC AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF BEAUTY

The dilemma we have outlined is not Augustine’s last word. It is possible to be true to him without accepting the tragic consequences of his static model of the world, since all that is really positive in his thought is contained in the dynamic of the light of truth and love: this is a dynamic which both creates connections and is itself creative, a light which not only combines the separated fragments but even creates them in order to combine them. It would thus be a mistake to take the harmony of the world, which is built on fixed numerical relationships in space and time, as an ultimate, static entity from the passive contemplation of which the contemplating mind receives aesthetic sensations. On the contrary, for Augustine this beauty itself is only a dynamic striving towards a unity which can never be attained,[186] but which at least is intellectual (and ultimately divine) and which thus makes it possible ontically to transcend numerical beauty.

Our original starting-point was the intellectual light which is primarily the light of God himself and secondarily the light of created mind and as such truth itself. ‘That by which you recognise that these things are not the true things is the true light.’[187] This light of God, which is the simplest of all light, original truth, is also original beauty: but, if so, what is its relation to the plurality of number? Surely it is in the search for this relationship of light and number that the key to Augustine’s whole aesthetic must lie, assuming that such a key exists at all? If it does not, his whole religious aesthetic is open to the usual criticism that the concept and domain of beauty in the strict sense—the harmony of number in the cosmos—is determined by a transcendental ideal. It is not clear how beauty in the strict sense can be attributed to this; to do so nevertheless is the unscientific dogmatism of mystical enthusiasts. The path by which Augustine demonstrates the unity of his aesthetic must therefore be retraced step by step and shown to be a Christian and a theological path.

1. That we love only what is beautiful was self-evident in the ancient world. It was a belief which Augustine took as the basis of his argument as early as

De pulchro et apto and again in *De musica*.[188] But if the beautiful is what is rhythmical and harmonious, how can we love the simple beauty of light? The first answers which suggest themselves incorporate simple light into the numerical network of relations itself. The senses, and even the soul itself, derive pleasure from functioning: the soul loves to receive what is appropriate to it, while rejecting and fleeing unsuitable sensations.[189] But the action of light on the eye—as Basil, making use of Aristotelian and Stoic ideas (Posidonius), had already remarked in his commentary on the creation story—is beneficial. This assumed harmony between light and the sense organ of the soul is itself based on a further Stoic assumption which Augustine also adopted: in the eye, he says, there is a sort of light-like matter, in the ear, an airlike, in the nose a steamlike, in the mouth a moist sort, in the fingertips an earthlike sort.[190] This is a Stoic variant of the general ancient theory that like is known by like, Stoic because a background assumption is the pantheistic conception of the intellectual and material world-soul.

By contrast with this horizontal parallelism, the Augustinian movement does not begin until the point where the phenomenon of number, as outlined above, forms itself into a hierarchy and at the same time becomes interiorised. Its only element of intellectual originality (after the first five books of the *De musica*, which draw on Varro) is the psychological theory of numbers. According to this, numbers lead upwards in stages from the ‘material’ numbers in the external object, via the rhythms of the senses and the rhythms of the memory to the bodily rhythms actively produced by the soul, such as breath and heartbeat, and the rhythm of the *judicium sensibile*, which for its part is subordinate to the judgment of the mind and the intellectual rhythms which God inspires in it.[191] Although Augustine gives it no special weight—and this is a matter of regret—the physiological rhythm of heart and breath seems particularly interesting here as a biological phenomenon expressive of the soul; it would have been a point which would have given a purchase to the Aristotelian and Thomistic idea of the unity of sensible and intellectual worlds.

2. Augustine, however, develops this idea of the interiorisation and consequent simplification of rhythm in another passage, where he applies his doctrine of rhythm to the soul and its virtues. The virtues are the way in which the soul gives itself back to itself,[192] returns from alienation from self

to authenticity and subjectivity by being *transformed into its own likeness*. And that is what virtue is, the coming together of life in unity and likeness as it comes to agree in all respects with reason (*aequalitas vitae rationi undique consentientis*).[193] Virtue is thus the eurhythmy of the soul, goodness and beauty at once ('everything in the soul that is beautiful is virtue').[194] Augustine demonstrates this in respect of the individual virtues, especially of justice and wisdom. Justice is the order and Tightness of the soul's direction; it 'consists in loving the better more and the worse less'[195] and so 'giving to each his own'.[196] 'For we say that justice is nothing other than equity (*aequitas*), and equity seems to get its name from a sort of equality (*aequalitas*).'[197] Such subjectivity as it comes to itself is, however, itself inner light (the great Eastern theme from Plotinus to Gregory of Nyssa, from Evagrius to Symeon), of which it is sufficiently clear that for Augustine it is only light by virtue of its transcendent and transcendental relation to God's eternal light: as the rhythm of the process whereby created unity, by gradually simplifying itself, comes more and more to resemble the uncreated absolute unity, in which every attribute is identical with the substance. 'For everything predicated of God is himself. In God power is not one thing and wisdom another, courage one thing and justice or chastity another. Whichever of these you predicate of God, it makes no difference, and you do not predicate them according to its degree of dignity because they are all things of the souls which as it were that light envelops, making their attributes stand out, rather as when the sunlight rises over the material world. When it sets, all objects become the same colour or, better, colourless. If that light lights them up, it sprinkles them with different kinds of brightness according to their constitution.'[198] What Augustine is trying to convey through the image is the mystery by which every soul which unifies itself in an attempt to approach God's unity receives from God its unity and at the same time its relative uniqueness and personality. God, as the only unity, is at once the giver of unity and uniqueness; since, as the absolute light, by his light-giving action he both creates unity and bestows individuality, he is at once creative justice and absolute beauty: *justa pulchritudo*.[199] And the soul's rhythmic entering into relationship with this light is not distinct from its simplification; in fact it is what makes simplification possible. Here, then, qualitative number and light (to which the primary 'colours' always belong) have simply become one. It is in this realm that are heard the 'inner melodies' (*melodia interior*)[200] whose praises Augustine sings with such longing; that there can be seen ‘a certain light, a certain voice, a certain fragrance, a certain food, a certain embrace’,[201] ‘the beauty above all beauty’,[202] the ‘indescribable beauty’,[203] ‘the true, unique beauty, beauty itself’,[204] seen moreover with an insight which is at once enthusiastic and totally lucid, ‘philosophical’.

3. This divine beauty is in Greek philosophy the ‘captivating’ beauty of that intellectual light which itself makes everything light (*lucifica lux*)[205] which confers truth and existence on everything. This light’s lack of envy makes it supremely lovable and ethically most worthy of imitation; already in Plato it is what provokes the supreme human attitude, eros. When, in Christianity, this overflowing light names and reveals itself as freedom and love, creaturely love for this God is once more drawn more deeply into the rhythm of unity. This is where the fundamental Augustinian category of *frui* is to be located; here, in relation to God, the relation to truth becomes a relation to love, and this grows into the settled and blossoming enjoyment not granted in one’s relations with fellow creatures in the world of original sin. The appropriate relation to a being in the world, subordinate to the soul, is the sobriety of *uti*, right use, but the movement of *frui* goes inwards and upwards to God: *Veritas sapit*.[206] Augustine’s anxious caution about the sensual and this-worldly enjoyment of beauty cannot therefore be described in the strict sense as asceticism, since it is no more than a preparation for true enthusiasm. That God’s offer of himself for the definitive enjoyment of the purified soul is only eschatological may not yet have been so clear to the young Augustine as to the older, but that is not the issue here, since even the God of the suffering Son of man and of the Church is never present for the believing soul in any other form than in the relationship of *frui*.

4. The culmination of this equation of number and light, however, is the mystery of the transcendent Trinity which is nevertheless immanent in the whole world of creation and redemption. In the mystery of the *lumen de lumine* which is constituted by subsistent love in its union with the Father, the relatedness (of the persons) is crowned as identity (of nature). Light is now no longer just the interiority of absolute subjectivity, become one with its being; it is now absolute love, which transcends and flows over into the world only because it is already love in itself. Augustine’s psychological images of the Trinity in the created soul, which cannot be expounded in

detail here, form the conclusion not just of his metaphysics, but, expressly, of his aesthetics. It is only in the light of such considerations that the beauty of all being is fully justified, because here for the first time the inner vitality and dimensionality of being as such fully emerges and gives being the fulness and richness which neither the hierarchical pyramid alone nor the dynamic of eros alone was able to give it. Here also the defects of Platonic-Augustinian essentialism are to some extent counterbalanced, since though the trinitarian structure is also treated as a question of form, indeed of the image-character of beings, it nonetheless reaches, in intention, the ground of being itself. And when Augustine, in the last book of *De Trinitate*, rubs out again the pictures he has drawn and gives the last word to the greater unlikeness, this is, after all, inevitable since we are dealing with the God *qui scitur nesciendo*;[207] indeed, we can say that a glimmer of infinity and unintelligibility thereby falls on the image itself.

5. It would have been strange if the effects of this exploration of the *mysterium* of the Trinity had not been felt in Augustine's theological aesthetics; they are visible in his sermons, the *Enarrationes*, *Sermones* and the *Tractatus in Johannem*. God's eternal beauty becomes a man, enters the fallen, alienated world of space and time; it appears as humility, veiled. Is Christ beautiful? Is the category 'beautiful' applicable at all to this manifestation of eternal beauty? Two scriptural texts seem to conflict in the writings of the Fathers, the saying from the Psalms (45.2), which greets him as the fairest of the sons of men, and the one in Isaiah which denies him any beauty or attractiveness (53.2).[208] Relying on the former, Chrysostom[209] and Jerome[210] assert Christ's physical beauty, while Justin,[211] Clement of Alexandria,[212] Tertullian[213] and Ambrose[214] deny it. Origen argues that Christ was without beauty for the unpurified, the 'fleshly', but to the purified and 'spiritual' (at least when he himself wished, as on Tabor) he could appear in his eternal beauty.[215] Augustine puts this idea, which is typical of Origen's approach, into his own idiom: a person must love Christ and have pure eyes to see his inner spiritual beauty,[216] because for those who stand at a distance, and certainly for his persecutors, he is veiled to the point of ugliness.[217] But his veiling of his beauty was not just inspired by his wish to be like us, who are ugly, in all things, but also by his desire to make the ugly beautiful by his love (*qui et foedos dilexit, ut pulchros faceret*).[218] With this statement Augustine moves away from his first assertion that only beauty is

lovable. This Platonic statement, whose audacity culminates in the idea that the lover, the eros of beauty, need not himself be beautiful, gives place to the Christian view that love for beauty in Christ creatively produces beauty. How could it not when the love of Christ is the manifestation of the all-creative divine love? This is argued at length in the exposition of the first letter of John: ‘ “Let us love one another because he first loved us.” He loved us and gave us the power to love him. Through love we became beautiful. What does a crippled man with a hideous face do if he loves a beautiful woman? What does an ugly, crippled, dark-haired woman do if she loves a handsome man? Can she somehow become beautiful by loving? Can the man become well-proportioned by loving? Will he wait until beauty comes to him? If he waits he will become old as well, and uglier than ever. There is no escape; there is no good advice you can give him. But our souls, brothers, are ugly because of their wrongdoing: by loving God they become beautiful. What sort of a love is it that makes the lover beautiful? But God is always beautiful, never deformed, never liable to change. He, the beautiful one, first loved us, and what were we like when he loved us? Ugly, deformed. And it was not to leave us ugly, but to transform us and turn us from ugly creatures to beautiful ones. But how do we become beautiful? By loving him back, him who is eternally beautiful. The more love grows in you, the more beauty grows, since love is itself the beauty of the soul. Listen to Paul: “God showed his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us,” the just man for the unjust, the beautiful for the ugly. By taking flesh, he took to himself, as it were, your ugliness, to make himself like you and suited to you, and to spur you to love inner beauty. Where do we find it said that Jesus was beautiful? “You are the fairest of the sons of men; grace is poured upon your body” (Ps 45.2). Where do we find it said that he was deformed? Ask Isaiah: “And we looked at him, and he had no form nor beauty” (Is 53.2). They are like two flutes with different sounds, but the one spirit blows in both, the one fills both, and together they produce no discord.’[219] Here too, everything follows the path of love which leads inwards. ‘Christ’s beauty is all the more lovable and wondrous the less it is physical beauty.’[220] In the *Enarrationes* and the sermons the theme is firmly switched to that of marriage. The Bride-Church is the ugly woman who is endowed with beauty by the love of the Bridegroom;[221] for her, who was ugly, he made himself ugly too out of love (*deformis factus est*) ‘for he emptied himself and took the form of a slave (Phil 2.6) so that the people rightly shook their heads at the sight of the cross and said, “Is that the Son of God?”.’[222] But the Bride becomes beautiful by confessing her guilt; the psalmist mentions *confessio et pulchritudo* together.[223] Christ is thus the ugly root from which the beautiful tree of the Church rises,[224] and the ugliness of earthly birth is the condition for the glory of the resurrection.[225] Christ loved ugly sinners to make them lovable.[226]

What needed to be done, and what Augustine, once he became a bishop, could no longer do, was to revise his early aesthetics on the basis of these new principles or—since not much in it could be altered—to let the new christological principles work themselves out in it in all directions. The crucial area for this, of course, is eschatology, and Augustine himself was anxious to see development here. Eschatology—and for him that means the resurrection of the body—is the only place in his theology where man is safe from the fear of the *posse peccare*. The Greeks regarded the end as a return to the beginning; Origen, in his early systematics, did not shrink from including the original *posse peccare* in the eschatological situation; Augustine, however, from the beginning saw, as Kierkegaard later even more sharply, a shadow in the possibility of sin included in the paradisial state, despite that state’s excellence; the good beginning hides uncertainty and indifference.[227] Only at the resurrection will the difference between *frui* and *uti* be abolished, will ‘enjoyment’ be permitted to include not just the spiritual God but also his material creation, in which he will henceforth be openly reflected. Only then will the analogical hierarchies of rhythmical systems be able to vibrate through the whole, as was plainly the creator’s intention. And if Augustine all along admitted that a disinterested aesthetic contemplation even of material beauty, its form and colour, was possible, and certainly distinct from concupiscence,[228] if even now during our contemplation of the divine things bodily rhythms often vibrate harmlessly in sympathy, how much more after the resurrection, ‘when we shall see the one God and truth made plain, will we feel the rhythms with which we animate our bodies without disquiet and with full joy?’[229] Until then, however, it is none other than the virtue of discipline, imposing as it does a rhythmic harmony (*temperantia*), which draws us away from the love of lower beauty, and courage which enables us to rise above it.[230] But the extent to which the action of the soul’s vibrations on the body and its beauty is originally and eschatologically the natural state is shown by the statement that what prevented Paul, when caught up into the third heaven, from seeing

God with final abandonment (like the angels in heaven) was the fact that his soul in one final point was still scattered and disturbed by the defective harmonisation of his body.[231] This is a notable victory of Christian thought over Platonism, and is confirmed at the end of *The City of God*, where (as we have already seen) the bodily senses are promised a share in the soul's vision of God. Nor is it pure souls, but risen human beings, which are called to fill the gap left by the fallen angels, by 'contemplating the eternal artist who has formed all things in measure and number and weight'.[232]

6. HARMONY AND ANALOGY

The unique balance between the pathos of rhythmical proportion and the pathos of infinity which dominates Augustine's aesthetic theology does not derive simply from the encounter of a burning African soul with the culture and conceptuality of Hellas and Rome; this balance of apparent irreconcilables is fought for and finally achieved in the inner battle of his Christian and personal existence. And if nevertheless Platonic and even Manichaean dualisms and personal rejections of certain levels threaten to cloud the harmony (and in certain forms of Augustinianism they have produced terrible destruction), in spite of everything harmony remains predominant. In Augustine—as again later in Pascal, Soloviev and Newman—the certainty of the ultimate rightness of the *vera religio* does not rest in mere intuitions of heart and conscience or of faith, but resides in a seeing of the rightness which in the broad sense must be called an aesthetic vision and yet which stands up to rational examination and which can even be made visible to the person who purifies his mind's eye. The doctrine of hierarchical number, the highest level of which rests in God and forms the ideal world of the Logos, is the clear expression of this conviction. This hierarchy cannot be translated into the quantitative terms of a mathematical picture of the world (in which identity, and no longer analogy, would have to predominate) without first banishing the soul of Augustinianism. On the other hand, neither can it be portrayed as a mystical monism, because Augustine was constantly aware of the always greater dissimilarity between God and his creatures, and indeed right to the end (in the struggle against the Pelagians) continued to become increasingly aware of it. Once these dangers are excluded, his hierarchical world-picture becomes a secure and open framework within which a whole Christian millennium was able to develop the rhythms of its thought and life in all directions.

The harmony between God and the world exists as a result of this relationship of the original numbers, which are displayed in the being and nature of everything in the world, though always only in approximation and by way of participation. It exists also at a higher level because even the infinite God is not without measure,[233] but has been fully measured by the

Son as his exact image and because this point in God is the source of the possibility and reality of a measured world. ‘First comes the form of all things, which, without any dissimilarity, is the image and likeness of unit . . . . and completely fills the unity from which it derives so that the other things which exist, to the degree that they are like the One, can come into being through this form.’[234] Image, word and light of the world are thus one and the same.[235] And to prevent this image and emanation from being dissipated into infinity as in Plotinus, in Christianity the relation between Father and Son is completed in the Holy Spirit to give an eternal, infinite, but personal and free ‘form’, which bestows freedom and selfhood on the created person as a ‘gift’.[236] There is therefore not just the analogy of divine and created being, but also that of divine free personal being and created free personal being. This is where the Biblical and Christian content bursts out of the Platonic frame. God is the one who freely chooses; man is the one who freely ratifies or rejects this choice. And these personal relations do not form a higher storey above natural relations, because the natures themselves are personal and free, and God’s decisions always express his essence, just as all human and historical decisions always coincide with the laws and rules which govern the nature of man and the world. God’s law is both positive and natural. Man is never rewarded or punished purely from outside, but by the operation of his nature itself.[237] Augustine therefore attaches vital importance to the harmony between providence and personal development. His thesis is that nothing is guided by God purely externally without at the same time being guided internally,[238] though this involves him in a much more audacious bridging operation than the one required of the Stoic and Plotinian doctrine of providence. The *dispensatio temporalis* of providence is described with almost organic categories chosen to suit the development and education of man and the human race, with the final unity between natural and supernatural order and control provided once more by aesthetic categories.[239]

Here Augustine goes back to the aesthetics of the Christian era for which Irenaeus laid the foundations and extends it by integrating the periods of personal life into the massive construction of the ages of salvation history. ‘The scale shows, for anyone who takes the trouble to examine it, the significance of the intervals of beauty and appropriateness which seem to be as it were simply scattered through the universe . . . . Sacrifice, as prescribed by God, was appropriate for the earliest periods, but now it is no longer appropriate since God has ordained something else to be appropriate for this period. He knows much better than man what is suited to each period and what it needs, what he should bestow, add, take away, withdraw, encourage or check. He is the unchanging working for the changing. As creator he also guides the ages until the beauty of the universe, whose individual parts consist of things appropriate to each period, combines in the great song of an incomparable composer: *velut magnum carmen ineffabilis modulationis*.'[240] So it is an idle question why Christ appeared so late. The answer runs: 'Because all beauty derives from the supreme beauty which is God, but the beauty of the ages from the appropriateness of the sequence of things. Even in the individual human life each age, from childhood to old age, has its particular beauty. How stupid therefore would be a person who wished that man, who is subject to time, should always be young—they would be missing the other beauties which succeed each other in due order in the other ages. And it would be just as stupid to long for the whole human race to be the same age. Mankind as a total man also has its tides.'[241] Number and beauty thus rule even the apparent void of time.

Once this is seen, the relationships and analogies within the universe will, despite all the gaps, no longer be difficult to see. Those between soul and body are created by the system of bodily and mental rhythms, which are connected by physiological ones. There is a closer relationship between bodily organs and the organs of sense, between sense and memory, between the soul which is linked (in whatever way) to the physical elements and the soul as pure spirit. Where the relationships in Augustine are not relationships of information, and so of expression, they are still hierarchical relationships of inclusion and control, which often strain the analogy but never to breaking point. They may have a real existence, but this does not mean that they will necessarily be seen; the image does not force a vision of the essential form on a person, although that form alone makes it intelligible. The beauty of the body does not force people to notice the beauty of the soul, though the former derives totally from the latter.[242] Only the person who already enjoys the spiritual vision of the higher realm, or finds that he has it unconsciously 'buried' in him and 'digs it out', can see,[243] looking down from above, where the image is pointing. Philocalia sits imprisoned; beauty alone cannot fly up to the true and living God. If Augustine regards all 'love of beauty' (as an ultimate) as pagan, we can nevertheless say that he also regards all objective beauty in nature or mind as consciously or unconsciously Christian, and believes that only a Christian aesthetics can be true. Plato and Plotinus may have said amazing things about beauty, ‘but it does not immediately follow from the fact that what they said was true that they really knew what they were talking about.’[244] Truth in any area exists only when a person looks up from below and penetrates to the one true, living God. Art is thus either untrue, where the light does not penetrate to the higher realm, or it receives truth by looking down from above through God. In this vision, which is at once religious and aesthetic, the character of appearance and emptiness which all beautiful things necessarily retain without the God who is disappears, and they come to share in the reality of his ordering of the world. In the kingdom of being there are thus only two movements, that upwards towards truth (*caritas*) and that downwards from truth towards appearance (*cupiditas*): all being in time and history is tied to these two. Nothing else in world history, salvation history or Church history interests Augustine. It is a constant astonishment to find how much *The City of God*, which laid the foundations of Western philosophy of history, is an essentially unhistorical work, original and creative only in those places where it abstracts the eternally unchanging existential conditions of historical existence from the historical process. Not even the great aesthetic turning-point of Christian salvation history, the dialectic of the Testaments, receives full justice from Augustine, since from Abel to the last day the kingdom of God is always present, veiled, unrecognised, both before and after Christ, but present. In Augustine everything becomes transparent; through the flow of history he perceives always the relation between time and eternity, the pilgrimage through the night of faith, hope and love.

DENYS

1. THE PHENOMENON

With Denys we have a unique case in theology, indeed in all intellectual history. A man of the foremost rank and of prodigious power hid his identity not only from centuries of credulity but also from the critical acumen of the modern period, and precisely through that concealment exercised his influence. That for our modern, and above all German, scholarly world is unforgiveable. After their tank-formations have laid waste his garden, there is for them not a blade of grass left: all that remains is pseudo-, written in bold letters, and underlined with many marks of contempt. Not only is he branded as a forger, but, with a reference to his dependence on Plotinus[1] and Proclus,[2] any originality of thought is stripped from him. Indeed, scholars declare, what has real substance in the Neo-Platonists is with him detached and without any proper foundation,[3] so that in the end he stands forth as a wretched mongrel:[4] a corpse beneath the triumphal car of modern philology, which by the same token and without noticing it also discredits his commentators, the greatest minds of late Antiquity, of the Middle Ages, of the Renaissance and even of the Baroque period.[5] This explains why in Germany there has been scarcely any theological work on Denys since the researches of Koch and Stiglmair,[6] whereas today France, in continuation of the great Catholic tradition, produces not only distinguished tools for research and critical editions[7] but also, leaving on one side the question of authorship, has devoted itself to serious theological research.[8] It is a pity that since Koch and Stiglmair, who established the date of the composition of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* as between 480 and 510, there have been recently fantastic and indefensible attempts at redating that are scarcely worth the trouble of refutation.[9] All these untenable hypotheses are signs of a certain spiritual ‘colour blindness’ which prevents them, for all their individual scholarship (which Stiglmair, Pera, Honigmann and the rest doubtless have), from grasping the general flow of the Areopagitic handwriting. That goes especially for their attempts to identify him with personalities otherwise already well-known (such as Severus of Antioch): as if a Severus (or a Peter the Fuller) could have 'on the side' worn Denys' mask too, or *vice versa*: as if the writer of the CD[10] could conceivably also have been someone other than himself, or have written another style than his own![11]

But if anyone should set aside all bias (and equally the bad humour and resentment with which the CD is often approached) and allow this astonishing work to exert its influence upon him, he will in the same glance recognize two things. First, that this writer, like no other, is 'indivisible' and that his person is wholly identified with his work; in other words, that there is nothing 'made-up' about him, that he is no 'pseudonym' for another. And then, that such power, such radiance of holiness streams forth from this unity of person and work—as the Middle Ages sensed immediately—that he can in no case be regarded as a 'forger', not even as a clever 'apologist' pulling off a trick. From the first it follows that it is this indivisibility that has made the theology of Denys, whatever the influences are—Neo-Platonic or Christian, Alexandrian or Cappadocian—into an original whole of such character and impact that none of the great theological thinkers of the following ages could avoid him, could escape a fascination to which the supposed august authorship may have contributed something, but which could scarcely have had less influence, had there been no claim to apostolic authority. Or is one to say that Scotus Eriugena, the Victorines, Bernard and his followers, Albert, Bonaventure and Thomas, Eckhart, Tauler and Ruysbroek, Gerson and Nicholas of Cusa, the Spanish mystics up to and including John of the Cross, Bérulle and Fénelon have all fallen victim to a crass forgery without which the theological substance and power of the CD would never have had any influence? All one needs to do to be convinced of this explosive and yet constructive originality is to listen to the unmistakable sound of gifted self-consciousness which, in union with the deep humility of the author, echoes throughout the *Corpus*, above all in the letters, where the man appears most strongly as he responds to questions and doubts raised in the course of the systematic work: a tone the genuineness of which has nothing to do with so-called literary fiction. One may, with Richstätter, deplore the 'fateful influence' of the 'father of Christian mysticism';[12] one can, on the other hand, welcome the way in which the modern psychological trend is being replaced in spiritual theology by the ontology of CD: but one cannot deny the influence of this spiritual theology. It is on the whole scarcely less than that of Augustine (if we include Boethius as part of the received wisdom), and one can see virtually all medieval philosophy up to the Aristotelian renaissance and the whole of theology up to Thomas as derived from the fecundity of these two. And even with Thomas himself: if Aristotle supplies the exact categories, Denys supplies not just the great frame for the plan of the *Summa*, with procession and return[13] and many essential adagios, but also the fundamental structure of the doctrine of God, of the angels, of a 'sacred' cosmos (with structures based both on function and rank), of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He gives atmosphere, a sense of the spiritual, he gives a deep peace and blessedness which Augustine could not have provided to the same extent and which is and remains perhaps the most important evidence of the presence of Asia in the heart of Western theology. He gives a sense of the sacral and the sacramental, without its developing into an ecclesiastical seclusion from the world (one thinks of his first impact on Eriugena!). But above all he gives, and in this we see his deepest influence, the clear, realized synthesis of truth and beauty, of theology and aesthetics, which was never wholly lost even in the driest realms of the scholasticism of the schools.

So the second question is to be approached only with the greatest circumspection: is Denys a forger? If one proves that he was not the convert and disciple of Paul, that he was not in correspondence with the Apostle John, nor with Titus or Polycarp, nor present at the death of Mary, that he did not send his writings to Timothy, nor experience in Egyptian Heliopolis the eclipse of the sun at Christ's death, has one really done him the slightest injury? Is one telling this Syrian monk in 500 A.D. anything new, if one proves to him that he was not converted by the speech on the Areopagus in 50 A.D.? Or does not the whole phenomenon exist on an utterly different level? On the level, that is, of the specifically Dionysian humility and mysticism which must and will utterly vanish as a person so that it lives purely as a divine task and lets the person be absorbed (as in the Dionysian hierarchies) in *taxis* and function, so that in this way the divine light, though ecclesially transmitted, is received and passed on as immediately (*amesōs*) and transparently as possible? The identification of his task with a situation in space and time immediately next to John and Paul clearly corresponds for him to a necessity which, had he not heeded it, would have meant a rank insincerity and failure to respond to truth. One does not *see* who Denys *is,* if one cannot see this identification as a context for his veracity. And one can only rejoice over the fact that he succeeded in vanishing behind the

Areopagite for a millennium, and that now afterwards, in the age of the opening of graves, he has been brought out, he stubbornly hides his face, I suppose, for ever. Could he ever have said more than his work has said?

Nothing is more characteristic of Denys than his rejection of apologetic: why engage in controversy? To do so is only to descend to the level of one's attacker, 'but if the truth is rightly developed, it simply offers no openings to any possible attack. Everything that is not wholly in accord with it is cast out by itself through the unconquerable presence of genuine truth. Knowing this, therefore, as I say, I never argued against the Greeks (the philosophers) or against any others.'[14] One cannot therefore assume with Ivanka that the author has adopted his system and his pseudonym and the enticing and suggestive language of the mysteries from essentially apologetic motives, in order to make Christianity palatable to his Platonising contemporaries by the use of fashionable language.[15] One can at most regard his Christianizing of the Neo-Platonic *milieu* as a side-effect of his own properly theological endeavour, for Denys disposes of the objection that he is a 'parricide' because he uses the teaching of the Platonists against themselves with the unruffled reply that they themselves turn 'the divine weapons against divine realities when they try to destroy the reverence that is due to God by means of the wisdom that they have received from God'.[16]

Now indeed someone with a mission is never alone, and Denys, as his writings show, was certainly not that. He could not situate himself in the apostolic period on his own; he must transfer to that period his relationships, his theological and spiritual acquaintances. The person of his much-lauded teacher whom he calls Hierotheus and whom he regards as a disciple of Paul and to whom he maintains that he owes everything of importance is undoubtedly a real person: perhaps the man who had converted him from Neo-Platonism to Christianity, perhaps the abbot of his monastery.[17] And the other personalities to whom he often attributes very contemporary opinions or accusations or from whom he pretends to have received letters containing enquiries about particular theological problems, are surely to be found in his own surroundings, only their names are transferred into the apostolic age. So the 'philosopher Clement' (DN 5.9) who has nothing to do with the Alexandrine, or 'Saint Justus' (DN 11.1), or 'Saint Bartholomew' (MTh 3) who expresses his opinion in a way reminiscent of Origen and Nazianzen; 'the mad speeches of Simon' who 'imagines that he is wise' (DN 6.2) may in name be modelled on Simon Magus, but the denial of the resurrection has nothing to do with the historical Simon; rather, we may suppose, we have a reference to an Origenist-Evagrian contemporary. Similarly with the scoffing reference: ‘That is something the wise Elymas has not understood’ (DN 8.6) whose sophistical objection that there are things of which God is not capable again has nothing to do with the Elymas of the Acts of the Apostles. The letters to Sosipater, to Polycarp, to Titus reflect quite real encounters, not to speak of the great letter to Demophilus, the elevated tone of which is unique in the CD and surely reflects a historical occurrence. The wonderful last letter to the apostle John may, on the other hand, be the immediate fruit of prayer and contemplation, a loving homage, which stands at the close of the work to seal it, and to express, as through a veil, the family likeness of the Dionysian to the Johannine theology.

All these personal relationships find their place in a form, a picture, a pure, immediate relation to the original, which only the apostolic age possessed. So a monk, dying to the world, assumes the name of a saint, and lives in his encompassing reality; so too the disciples of the great prophets, living centuries later in the tradition of this particular calling and continuing it, unconsciously attribute their own sayings to the founder: and one speaks rightly of a Deutero- and a Trito-Isaiah, but not of a Pseudo-Isaiah. It even seems as if, long before Valla and Erasmus, in the early and high Middle Ages, there was already a sense of this mystical relationship, without this in the least upsetting the reverence in which the author was held. Hausherr has gathered together a whole collection of expressions of such knowledge or suspicion.[18] One can even ask whether Thomas of Aquinas himself did not know of this relation, or at least suspect it, when he recognized the dependence of the *Liber de causis* on Proclus’ *Stoicheiōsis Theologikē* (which William of Moerbeke had recently translated), and in his commentary on it repeatedly speaks of the relation between Proclus and Denys: *hanc autem positionem (Proculi) corrigit Dionysius*.[19] Thomas hardly thought that Proclus belonged to the pre-Christian period.

The CD presupposes by its whole attitude a great distance, both spiritual and temporal, between many of the movements and struggles of the first three centuries of the Christian era and its own situation. The completely untroubled way in which he appropriates and uses thought-forms which a century earlier were still deeply controversial, and whose rejection or use in those days still had an actual, temporally conditioned, polemic and apologetic character, means that most of those storms have now passed and that such thought-forms are henceforth at the disposal of the Christian thinker without any recrimination or bother: the concepts and patterns of ancient Gnosis, of the Mystery cults, of Manichaeism and of the religion of Mithras; but above all the language and the realm of feeling of the early Church's *disciplina arcani* and of the Gnostic secret tradition, the images of the Platonic and Neo-Platonic mythic world, the religious-aesthetic idea of the cosmic eros (which Denys expressly equates with Christian agape, both God's and men's), Iamblichus' language of theurgy, the quasi-pantheistic, emanationist language of Plotinus, and finally the triadic ontology of Proclus. All that is used with an easy, lucid carelessness and dogmatic sureness of touch: a few corrections from time to time suffice to avoid any dangers. What was once historical, temporally conditioned reality becomes for Denys a means for expressing an utterly universal theological content. The dimension of history and Church history interests him not at all; only the eternal, only the divine concerns him. And each thought-form of which he makes use will, at his touch, be liberated from its historical context and exalted into eternity.

To give an example: take the *disciplina arcani* we have just mentioned. He makes use of this not only in relation to the sacraments of the Church: there indeed it is much emphasized in the exclusion of the catechumens, the possessed and the penitents before the eucharistic prayer. But he makes use of it too in relation to the theological doctrines of the divinity, of the holy angels, Scripture, Tradition, and the Christian life: everything is essentially holy and therefore essentially secret, it can only be misunderstood, fundamentally and necessarily, by the profane, the uninitiated, and greeted by them 'with roars of laughter'.[20] What idiom is adequate for the divine mysteries as a whole? Denys asks. And his reply is that it can only be an idiom in which every sentence, indeed every part of each sentence, is appropriate to the character of the content as mystery, is indeed the unique form of the unique content. The theological structure of the CD is not only an outer, but also an inner, structure: an idiom which no-one has ever used before him or since, an idiom which springs not from a queer, affected mulishness, but from an inward commitment to the divine character of God and all his saving revelations. The Christian *disciplina arcani* and the Hellenistic mystery-language provide only a philological and aesthetic tool for this unique creation of theological form. For this Denys needs both the atemporal and what belongs to all time. The revelation of Christ is finished, the divine mixing bowl has been emptied out into the world. There remains only to drink the drink of wisdom,[21] to breathe in the divine scent that forever pours forth,[22] through the sacred veil of the temporal revelations to perceive in rapt contemplation the eternal mysteries disclosed to the initiated.[23] Denys, who for the sake of this *theoria* withdraws from all doctrinal polemic, can feel only constraint where the contemporary doctrinal struggles over Christology—it is the period of Neo-Chalcedonianism—impose precisely on him, the irenical discerner of the whole in all partial formulations, a reserve, a way of thinking and speaking that leaves such matters undecided.[24] In such a deeply believing thinker, who maintains moreover that all his wisdom is drawn from Holy Scripture, the conscious timelessness of this Dionysian theology might appear to present a problem, though in reality it is a consciously willed way of proceeding: precisely not to follow through in thought the Biblical history of salvation, but from the viewpoint of timeless *theoria* to contemplate the essentially timeless (and only lately temporal) outflow of the eternally good God, or rather, as Denys never tires of saying, to celebrate it. The actualisation of the divine mysteries as in ecclesiastical celebration they assume forms which are supratemporal is what we mean by liturgy: the whole theology of the Areopagite is for him a single, sacred liturgical act. To the extent that liturgy is a human, ecclesial act which, as a response of praise and thanksgiving, seeks to echo the form of the divine revelation, the categories of the aesthetic and of art will play a decisive role in it, and there has hardly been a theology so deeply informed by aesthetic categories as the liturgical theology of the Areopagite.

2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORK

If Greek thought from Plato to Plotinus has an essentially aesthetic, religious structure—for the cosmos is experienced as the representation and manifestation of the hidden transcendent beauty of God—then it is no sacrilege, but rather a fulfilment, if Christian theology, following Philo, first in Alexandria and Cappadocia, then in the Egypt of Synesius and Nonnus, then in Latin hymnody from the time of Hilary and Ambrose, Juvencus, Ausonius, Prudentius and Sedulius, and with the Greeks from the time of the Nazianzene, and in the great forms of the Greek liturgies—if in all these manifestations, Christian theology takes over this aesthetic and metaphysical schema. But in all this, nothing approaches in power and will to achieve expression the theological composition of the Areopagite. In order to grasp his intention in its fulness, the numerous hints as to the complete structure must be followed up, whether the parts of it we do not possess have been lost, or were perhaps never written, or only sketched. It will not do at all to take these references, as is usually done nowadays, as a merely literary device making for further mystification. There are most telling reasons for believing that at least three of these missing works actually existed: not simply the repeated references, not only the assignment of an adequately described and quite indispensable place in the complete work, but above all the same kind of summary recapitulation and indication of content, and at the same time the graphic evocation of other works in a phrase or two in one or other of the surviving works, as for example the *Celestial Hierarchy* is summarized in outline both in the *Divine Names*[25] and in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*.[26] Roques[27] and Ivanka[28] have therefore rightly again put some weight on the declarations of the author about the general plan of his works, thus departing more than a little reluctantly from the usual disparagements.

If one counts the ten genuine letters as a single work (which fundamentally they are not) and the *Mystical Theology* likewise as a single work (although it could be regarded as a ‘letter to Timothy’, for even the longer works are in the form of such open letters), then the author mentions eleven works of his own, as well as both a theological and a hymnic work by his teacher, Hierotheus. The *Divine Names* presupposes the existence of five works: *Theological Outlines, On the Properties and Orders of the Angels, On the Soul, On Just and Divine Judgement*, and on the *Symbolic Theology*. The *Mystical Theology* refers to the *Divine Names*, the *Outlines* and the *Symbolic Theology*; the *Celestial Hierarchy* likewise refers to the *Symbolic Theology* and to a work *On the Divine Hymns*; the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* refers to the *Celestial Hierarchy* and to a work *On the Objects of Spiritual and Sensible Perception*; Epistle 9 refers once again to the *Symbolic Theology*. These references are logical and enable us to deduce the order of appearance of the surviving works, with the exception of a single obscure point: the *Divine Names* presupposes a treatise on the angels, but it is not clear how this treatise can be the same as the treatise we now have, as this presupposes unequivocally the *Divine Names*. Both writings could have appeared at the same time, or perhaps there was an earlier form of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, and one might also bear in mind that dates of publication would not have the same precision then as now. Other 'contradictions' that are sometimes referred to simply do not exist.[29] Of the six works referred to that have not survived we can form a clear picture of at least three which equally have an indispensable place in the whole structure: the *Theological Outlines*, clearly the first, basic work that defines the structure of the whole, the *Divine Judgement*, the content of which can be clearly inferred, and the *Symbolic Theology*, to which reference is made with such emphasis and so much detail as being the decisive work in the whole system: it is logically linked to the *Divine Names*,[30] of which it is the indispensable counterpart. It is perhaps less important to reconstruct the content of the lost works, for Denys has the characteristic already mentioned of continually recapitulating what he has said and reminding us of the all-encompassing nature of his vision. Rather, must we grasp the significance of the works within the grand structure of the whole *Corpus*, something which is quite possible with so systematic a writer and which is also illuminating, regardless of how many of the works now lost ever existed (for they all subsisted in the mind of the author, and probably also in outline).

A word first about the two works of his teacher: the *Elements of Theology* and his *Hymns of Love*, both of which are generally consigned to the realm of fable, because they remind one of no-one but Denys, whose style is quite unmistakable. But the citations from both works (DN II. 10; IV. 15-17) prove just the opposite. The doctrine of the Logos in II. 10 contradicts quite decisively the Areopagite's doctrine of the Trinity, both in its content and in its strongly Stoic formulation, for Denys strictly denies any distinction between the functions and spheres of the three divine Persons in this world. There is contradiction too in the teaching on love in IV. 15-17, which is much closer to Proclus than the more cautious account that Denys gives in the hymns. As Denys explains his relationship to his teacher and the reasons why he has dared, despite the existence of the *Elements of Theology*, to put pen to paper himself, there emerges a humanly very credible relationship: Hierotheus had the gift of ‘drawing much together in comprehensive definitions in a single sentence’ for his disciples; he had also given his favourite pupil the ‘task’ of expounding his ‘closely packed summaries’ (*synelixeis synoptikas*) more comprehensively to his fellow pupils. Hierotheus is the surpassing genius, his work ‘is like a kind of second sacred scripture which discloses itself immediately to those who are divinely inspired’, his ‘vision, self-witnessed, of the spiritual revelations’ and his ‘synoptic manner of teaching’ presupposes a spiritual power that stands (*presbytike*) closer to God.[31] Denys therefore interprets, and indeed he takes great care not to touch what his teacher had made perfectly clear from the Scriptures and to limit himself to unfolding his teacher’s ‘synoptic’ statements. Only the imperative missionary task implicit in Christian truth has enabled him to overcome his ‘exceeding reverence’ and become a writer.[32]

His first work which sets out the framework of the whole is the *Theological Outlines*.[33] Its content is the unknowability of the triune God (DN 1.5), the ‘detailed discussion’ of his ‘shared names’ (which are basically identical with those treated in DN). Beyond that, he deals with the use of the ‘differentiated designations’ for the individual persons in God himself and in his Incarnation (something briefly mentioned at the beginning of DN as not belonging to its theme and then excluded: DN II.3; in II.4 there is again a reference back to the first work). In II.7 a twofold theological method is distinguished in the *Outlines*, corresponding to the twofold mode of communication in Sacred Scripture, both in plain speech and in hidden yet suggestive figures: on the one hand a peaceful contemplation of the mysteries presented to man’s view and on the other a being caught up into the mysteries presented, beyond any active knowledge, in mystical union. According to XI.5 the *Outlines* dealt with the Biblical names of Jesus, which indicate his ‘supernatural gifts’, as when he is said to be our ‘Peace’ (one must think here of the Fathers’ frequent treatment of the names of Jesus, such as Shepherd, Door, Resurrection, Light of the World, something which is sadly missing from the surviving *Corpus*), names which are to be clearly distinguished from the philosophical divine names dealt with in DN. MTh III arranges the *Outlines*, the *Divine Names* and the *Symbolic Theology* in a logical order, according to which the *Outlines* dealt with the unity of God (*De Deo uno*), his threefoldness within the abiding unity (*De Deo trino*), the Incarnation of Jesus (*De Deo incarnato*), 'and other such matters drawn from Scripture as are celebrated in the foundations of theology.'

The *Outlines* is followed (MTh III) by one of the surviving works, *Of the Divine Names*, the centrepoint of which is the theology of creation as a communication of God (*De Deo creante*), expressed Platonically as the theology of the God who allows creation to participate in himself, who proceeds forth into multiplicity.

Now this can be properly expressed only if the relationship between the communicable and incommunicable in God is everywhere presupposed. God's 'becoming the world' can be described only if it is understood that the immutable one, exalted and transcendent over all, is the one who, in different degrees of intensity, gives to the realms of creation a share in himself while safeguarding the immanent order of all things.

In relation to this, the complementary book of the *Symbolic Theology* is very clearly defined: 'In the book on the *Divine Names* (we have discussed) how God is called good, existent, life and wisdom and power, and the other spiritual names of God. In the *Symbolic Theology*, in contrast, (we have discussed) the meaning of names whose application is changed from sensible things to the divine; what are the divine shapes, what the divine figures and parts and organs of the body, what are the divine places and divine worlds, what the passions, what the griefs and wraths, what the drunkenness and intoxication, what are the oaths and the curses, what the sleep and the awakenings and the other similes belongirig to the symbolic depiction of God, sanctioned in the divine oracles.'[34] Letter 9 to Titus answers exactly to this description, for it is directed to his inquiry in what sense we can speak of the 'House of Wisdom', of her 'mixing bowl', of her 'food' and her 'drink'. After his explanation Denys concludes in these words: 'For the rest we send our complete book, the *Symbolic Theology*, in which you will find explanations of the other expressions that designate Wisdom: house, seven pillars, solid food divided into offerings and loaves; all that concerns the mixing of the wine, the divine drunkenness and intoxication, and other similes that we have just explained: which is there developed further'.[35] Similarly DN 1.8 tells us that in contrast to the intelligible divine names treated in DN it is the sensible names that Scripture ascribes to God which are to be dealt with in the *Symbolic Theology*: human forms and shapes, fire or electron, eyes, ears, hair, face, hands, wings, arms, back, feet. Crowns, seats, drinking-cups, mixing-bowls, and a number of other mystical objects which express something of God are also dealt with.[36] There too the meaning of light and the sun (DN IV.4-5) is explained, which Denys indeed celebrates among the intelligible names. The distinction is not very exact. When he (DN IX. 5) deals with the divine name of the 'other', he introduces the spatial dimensions of 'breadth, length and depth' and interprets them as God's procession, his limitless power and his incomprehensible secrecy: 'But lest in this exposition of the various shapes and forms we should unconsciously confuse the immaterial divine names with those drawn from sensible symbols, these latter will be dealt with in the *Symbolic Theology.*'[37] CH XV.6 makes reference to the theological treatment of the four elements in the *Symbolic Theology*, and in different places in the two *Hierarchies* there is worked out an interpretation of fire, wind and water, as applied to God.

Mention is made, more incidentally, in EH 1.2 of a book, *On the Objects of Spiritual and Sensible Perception*, which was to have constituted, on the one hand, the crucial link between the *Divine Names* and the *Symbolic Theology*, and, on the other, that between the *Celestial Hierarchy* and the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, as well as concerning itself with the central object of any 'aesthetics'.

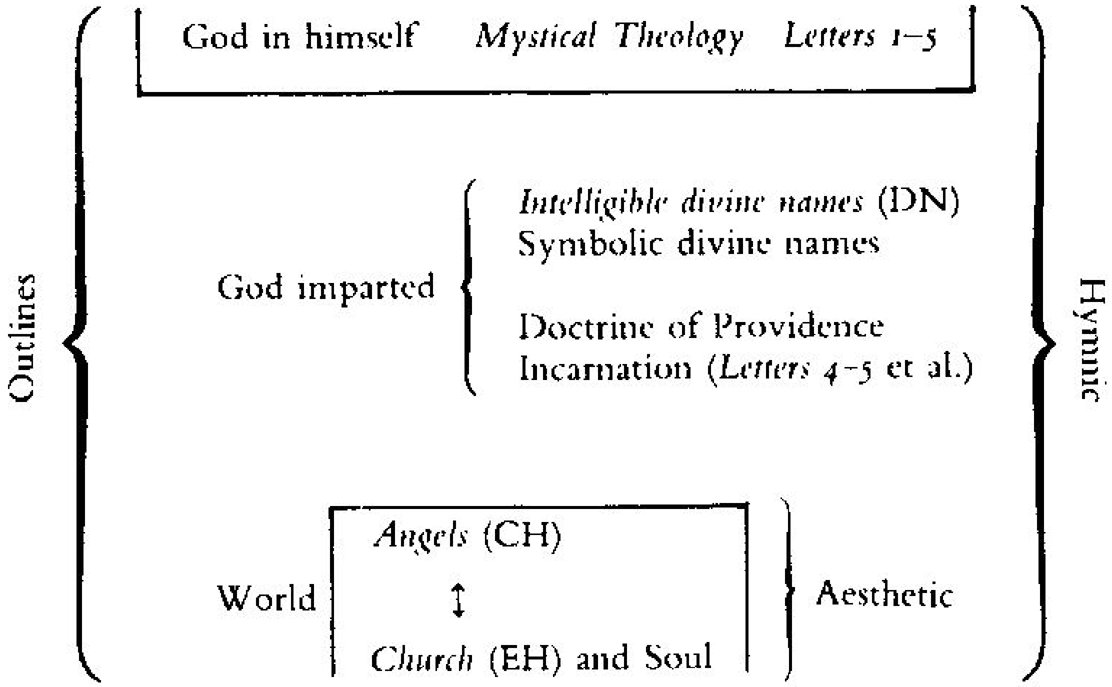
Further, CH VII.4 once mentions a tractate on the *Divine Hymns*, in which the songs of the angels mentioned in Holy Scripture such as the *trisagion* in Isaiah, the calls of the angels in Ezekiel (3.12), and the thunderous hymns of the Apocalypse, were made to yield their meaning: something of decisive importance for Denys, because all theology is for him a glorious celebration of the divine mysteries and therefore has its archetype and pattern in the liturgical songs of heaven, as DN 1.3 declares: 'Submitting to the yoke imposed by the Thearchy, which governs all the sacred orders of the choirs beyond the heavens, we wish to join in honouring the secret mystery of the Thearchy, which is beyond intellect and being, and, abandoning all attempts to penetrate the mystery, in the silence of humility to worship the ineffable in acts of spiritual reverence. Reaching out to the rays that illuminate us in the sacred oracles (Holy Scripture), we receive from them the light which leads us to the hymns of the Thearchy, and illuminated by them (the Holy Scriptures) in a supernatural way and patterned after the sacred hymnology, we are enabled to contemplate the lights given us through them (the Scriptures) according to our capacity by the Thearchy, and to hymn the generous source of all sacred manifestation of light, as it is handed down to us in the sacred oracles.'[38] The 'hymnic' is therefore for Denys a methodology of theological thinking and speaking.

There is also only passing mention made of a book, *On the Soul*, the content of which, manifest in outline from DN IV.2, would in a Plotinian context have had its proper place after the tractate of God and his processions, and of the Nous (that is, the intelligences, the angels)—but which in the CD remains shadowy. Denys admittedly avoids speaking in a Plotinian way of a world-soul, he simply sets 'nature as a whole' over against the individual soul (DN V.7). This is indeed one of the most striking deviations from the Platonic world-view, a deviation that even Augustine did not dare to carry through with complete decisiveness, although the individual personality receives much greater emphasis with him than with Denys. But for that reason the metaphysical place which the latter could have allowed the soul in his cosmos is somewhat opaque. For soul is for him, in a much clearer way than for Origen, Gregory of Nyssa or Augustine, a spirit bound to the body with ways of perception conditioned by the body, which therefore appears in a 'symbolic' hierarchy, ecclesially and socially ordered. But for Denys the individual and social orders (*taxis*) are inseparable, as will appear. A *Peri psyches* can only be systematically conceived as the individual complement of the social *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, even though this relationship does not appear to have been fully thought through by Denys; this not least in view of the fact that he offers no final explanation of the relationship of the *Mystical Theology*, as the highest personal event, to the ecclesiastical hierarchy (which appears more clearly as a social structure than as the 'Bride of Christ' and bearer of the mystical life). This is something which will have consequences for the history of Western mysticism.

It is otherwise with the last of the lost works, the *On Just and Divine Judgement*, whose place in the system is immediately manifest if one considers that *krisis* is inseparably bound up in the Alexandrine-Evagrian theology with the concept of providence (*pronoia*), and that therefore everything is conceived in terms of this double concept, *krisis-pronoia*, from the creative distribution of the destinies of beings and essences, to the preservation of beings within their own limits and specific natures, to the apportioning of ‘worthy’ rewards and ‘worthy’ punishment. It will become plain just how indispensable this concept is for Denys, who here perfects and transcends the Origenist *krisis* in the creation of the cosmos in that he rejects the idea that it is based on a precosmic fall due to sin, and makes the justice of God coincide with his election conceived as an allotting to each being of a particular and limited existence. The occasion of this work was the ‘sophistical objection that charges God with injustice and falsehood and is to be vigorously dismissed as foolish and empty talk.’[39] DN VIII therefore expressly lists power, justice, salvation and redemption as divine names, whence it follows that ‘all those who impugn the divine justice themselves unwittingly pass judgement on their own open injustice.’[40] For Denys, as little as for Augustine, evil and sin cannot upset the divine ordering of the cosmos to salvation; at best they contribute to its clearer revelation. If the Platonic *tyrannis* is for Denys the essential image of the perverted, demonic ‘order’ of sin, divine power and justice is characterised, on the contrary, by its complete freedom.[41] What folly and arrogance, then, when Demophilus takes it into his head to ‘avenge God’.[42] So the tractate becomes a justification of the ways of God, a theodicy.

Significantly, there is no mention of a treatise on the Incarnation, although Denys composed two splendid letters (4 and 5) on the *Mysterium Christi* as the veiled unveiling of the unknowable God and often spoke of Christ as the appearing God. It may, on the one hand, be due to the christological controversies: if one was to speak systematically there was no possibility of adopting an irenical position. On the other hand it may be, as we shall see, because of the difficulty posed by the very design of the Dionysian cosmos. In Roques’ systematic account, christology appears as a kind of appendix.

If we organize the total oeuvre, which existed at least in outline, according to its essential aspects and with abbreviated titles (with the surviving works *underlined*), we get the following picture:


God in himself
Mystical Theology
Letters 1–5
God imparted
Intelligible divine names (DN)
Symbolic divine names
Doctrine of Providence
Incarnation (Letters 4–5 et al.)
World
Angels (CH)
Church (EH) and Soul
Aesthetic
Outlines
Hymnic

The schema is for many reasons inadequate. For one thing, it does not enable one to bring out the fact that the imparting of God is not a realm on its own between God and the world, but that movement of God in creation and grace, which on the one hand with regard to what is imparted coincides with God himself, and on the other (as to its goal) with the world. The symbolic divine names (and indeed the intelligible names) are identical, as far as content goes, with the material and spiritual structure of the cosmos. The doctrine of providence is discerned partly in the immanent, ontological rightness of things, and partly from the equally ‘worldly’ Holy Scriptures. The Incarnation fulfils this, for it is in unity both the unknowable God and also God made known as man. CH and EH are then not an immanent ontology of creatureliness (a doctrine of the cosmos), but—because it is a matter of theology—a doctrine of the structure of the world conceived as having God completely and utterly as its goal, indeed even its formal object; and in this respect one may observe that for Denys no other creaturely ontology could in fact ever seriously come under consideration. Therefore, between the content of the ‘aesthetic’ (*On the Objects of Sensible and Spiritual Perception*) and that of the two treatises on the ‘divine names’ there can be no sharp distinction, as little as there can between the doctrine of providence and the hierarchies. The ‘hymnic’, however, makes contact with the doctrine of the angels, as far as content goes, because in heaven the praise of God appears archetypally perfected, and, as a concept, can serve as the ideal of the hymn of all creatureliness, especially of the Church and within it of the individual, and can therefore also serve as theological method.

So finally, according to Denys, all is in all in accordance with the great flowing movement of being itself as procession and return, *proodos* and *epistrophe*, so that what is ultimately important is to trust oneself to the direction of this flow, recognizing in the procession the source, and in the return the goal.

3. AESTHETICS AND LITURGIOLOGY

But what is the meaning of this movement? It is the manifestation of the unmanifest. Manifestation is the aesthetic expression for communication and word. Manifestation conceived of in the Greek, not the Indian, sense, as becoming visible in reality—not as *maya*, mere seeming illusion, but always as (real) manifestation of the unmanifest, of the ever greater and ever more hidden God who can never be changed into simply comprehensible appearance. As *manifestation* of the unmanifest, the movement is procession, *proodos*, and as manifestation of the *unmanifest* to which every manifestation refers (and which it discloses as it conceals it), it is return, *epistrophe*. Indeed, every manifestation, even within this world, is such a manifestation of the unmanifest: were the external splendour of the beautiful and of order not the splendour of a mysterious depth—of being, still more of life, still more of spirit—then it would not be the beautiful and would not awaken reverence before the 'sacred mystery made manifest'. But in the world there is a proportion suitable to the creature between the manifestation and what it is that (unmanifestly) is manifest, even if there is a gradually increasing transcendence of the comprehensible relation. This proportion (between spirit and what is perceptible to sense), which is the real centre of the aesthetic, is, without being simply ruptured, infinitely transcended and, as it were, stretched out, when it is a matter of the relation between God and the world. If, on the one hand, any manifestation makes itself known as the manifestation of the One-and-Only not merely contingently (as is often the case with members of a class) but rather of necessity, then indeed this One is truly visible, everywhere announced, in the all which is his manifestation, but only as the eternally One and therefore eternally mysterious, hidden One who can never be fully comprehended in any of his manifestations; and therefore the wondering admiration of his beauty—as manifestation, as relation between manifestation and non-manifestation—is grounded in the worship of what is not manifest. The more deeply our wonder experiences the unmanifest God, and does not simply know him (*ou motion mathon alia pathon ta theia*, DN II.9), the more the aesthetic relationship is transcended, the more it is possible to discern in the manifestation *what* is really manifest, the more the truth of the aesthetic emerges. This relationship between negation and affirmation was laid down by Plato and determined the mysticism of Plotinus and Proclus as also of Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine; but only with Denys did it receive its balancing counterpoise: in that the tremendous ascending movement of negation, often rising to a pitch of sheer frenzy,[43] which sets the apophatic (rejection of names) over the cataphatic (affirmation of names), is kindled only—and ever more brightly—by God's movement of descent as he imparts himself in manifestations. The proper attitude to these manifestations of God (this is perhaps the most characteristic thing about Denys) is neither disdain nor aversion, because such behaviour would necessarily have its effect on the relation to the self-manifesting God. For any 'entanglement' in the manifestation itself mistakes its essential language which declares only the truth of the One and the Good and the Beautiful; and it is this alone which is essentially esoteric and imparts to all its manifestations something of this esoteric character. If no one has emphasized so strongly as Denys the transcendence of God, nor has anyone upheld so decisively the givenness of the essential boundaries and hierarchical ordering of the creation (because no one has thought through or applied so consistently the consequences of this apophaticism). As a result, Thomas of Aquinas had no need to draw his conception of *ordo* directly from Aristotle, because here it was already thought out for him. The objective, hierarchical *taxis* (already we are moving towards the Byzantine and Carolingian world-order!) is the form of God's self-manifestation; the Church is the heart of the world and the earthly representation of the heavenly court; and any flight from the world is unthinkable, even for the most exalted mysticism. And if the earthly manifestation, the actual Church, is defective, then this never becomes for Denys (as it did for Augustine) an opportunity to distinguish between the carnal manifestation of the institution and the spiritual core of the 'pilgrim people of God'. Rather, the spiritual lies definitely in the form of manifestation, in hierarchy and sacrament; what is and what should be, the 'physical' and the 'moral', must, in accordance with God's will (which is decisive for theology), simply coincide, in proof of which the orders of the angels are forever set over the Church, who must see herself as their earthly translation. Therefore the mystics' praise of God is none other than the expression and development of the Church's praise, and is in this way also liturgy. The form of words of this hymn is a marvelling, rising to worship, at the beauty which appears in every manifestation of the unmanifest, and which is therefore the sacredness of everything apparently profane. Everything lies in the circular movement between procession and return, the cataphatic and the apophatic, nothing can find fulfilment except by entering into this movement. No explanations can help him who does not see the beauty; no ‘proof of the existence of God’ can help him who cannot see *what* is manifest in the world; no apologetic can be any use to him for whom the truth that radiates from the centre of theology is not evident.[44] And it is not as if something good is to be effected by the theologian’s looking restlessly back and forth between the needs of his age and the apparently so uncontemporary divine truth in the Church; but ‘just as with earthly pictures, if the painter looks constantly at the archetypal form, not distracted by any visible object, nor divided at all in himself, then what is to be depicted is (if one can speak thus) duplicated, and he can show forth the truth in its likeness, the archetype in the image, and each is in the other, only the substances remaining different. So too for the lovers of (the divine) beauty, whose image they inscribe in their minds, the constant and intent contemplation of fragrant and secret beauty is rewarded by that manifestation (*indalma*)[45] which is unerring and most godlike.’[46] By ‘divine artists’ Denys means of course the saints, who look to God alone with undeviating gaze and reflecting him are ‘little concerned to attract the attention of men’ or indeed to display the likeness publicly at all (as also the Church veils her sacraments). But what has been said applies just as much to the theologian who, on this view of the world, can be such only if he is involved in the business of the saints. Only he who can show the truth as a whole is beyond refutation—this is the teaching of the Sixth Letter. But the truth is both single and mysterious (*kryphios*), and so in refuting something from polemical ends one does not thereby demonstrate the truth of the alternative. For if it is proved that something is not red, it does not therefore follow that it is white.[47] But if someone gets in a passion of zeal about a partial lack of order, he shows by that fact that he does not possess the calm of order, and therefore cannot reveal it.[48]

Because the object can only be grasped by a movement—a circling movement—it is right to speak of the mutual ‘implication’ of the methods (Roques).[49] The mystical method is for Denys by no means a renunciation of the aesthetic method, and in that too he is far removed from Plato’s ‘conversion’ from art to philosophy. Indeed Denys can be regarded as the most aesthetic of all Christian theologians, because the aesthetic transcendence that we know in this world (from the sensible as manifestation to the spiritual as what is manifest) provides the formal schema for understanding theological or mystical transcendence (from the world to God). ‘For just as, when we form an idea of the soul, we give it a bodily likeness, and surround with bodily parts that which is without parts, so we interpret these bodily parts in a different way, suitable to what is without parts—so the head signifies the mind, the neck opinion (which is between the rational and the irrational), the breast the passionate part (*thumos*), the belly the desiring part (*epithumia*), and the bones and feet the nature—thus using the names of the parts as symbols for the soul’s powers. Much more, then, in the case of the one who is transcendent over all, it is necessary to purify utterly (*ana-kathairesthai*, to lift up to a purer understanding) the forms and shapes of all otherness so that they may express (*anaptyxis*, unfolding) what is holy, fitting to God and mystical.’[50] But this ascending ‘much more’ cannot be developed to the point where one altogether abandons the relationship between the form and what it expresses, because viewed from above the relation of likeness and beauty between spirit and the sensible within this world is itself a reflection of the relationship between God and the world (the *analogia entis*). But not for a moment is the singularity of this analogy, its irreversibility, forgotten: things are both like God and unlike him,[51] but God is not like things.[52] Already there is a pointer to this expressed in the fact that God is in all things in his immanence and yet in himself is independent, transcendent over them, and therefore even his immanence is comparable with none other.[53] If then the concept of image (*eikōn*), in all its forms (as *theāma*, object of contemplation, drama, or, using the language of the mysteries, as *agalma*, sacred idol or image of the gods), is applied to the manifestation, through which, for those who can see, ‘the blessed beauty of the archetype shimmers through (*apostilbo*) clearly’,[54] then only this qualification is needed, that between manifestation and what is manifest there is no sort of link of natural necessity, and that even where the divine is imaged, the more sensible the representation, the more it is a concession to human weakness,[55] and so the more it reveals the more it conceals.[56] Indeed, images can be interpreted in different ways, the ordinary people remaining standing in front of the symbols while the priests and the contemplatives penetrate more deeply to their spiritual meaning;[57] but a more penetrating (*optikōteros*) gaze could discern in the same images something still deeper and more revealing.[58] The same knowledge of God demands both a deeper penetration *into* the image and also a more sublime transcendence *beyond* it, and the two are not separated one from another but are the more fully integrated, the more perfectly they are achieved. For if it is true that God goes out of himself 'ecstatically'[59]—because all things really are, and would not be if God were not in them all in all[60]—then it is also equally true, and even more true, that he need not go outside himself in order to know the world,[61] for he knows it in himself in an archetypal fashion, which is the same as to say again that God does not simply—as creative *causa efficiens*—set a 'second thing' alongside himself, but that the mystery of creation because of its intimacy cannot dispense with the category of participation; that God, like the sun, imparts being through his being and is present to every being, so that now no being or form can be—or may be—excluded from those which can help us to find him.[62] Here it is already clear that, just as in God rest in himself and going out from himself are held together, so also with the creature: its movement towards God in ecstasy, a movement that reflects God's movement and answers it, is held together with its nature as established and complete in itself:[63] the creaturely understanding in its movement to absolute unity is already unifying in itself (*gnōsis* as *henotikē*, unifying, of the knower and the known). Only here Denys would not speak of a 'synthesis', but rather of (certainly active) participation in the unifying and reconciling power of God, who as pure peace quietens the 'immanent war' (*emphylios polemos*) of limited and opposing things, without robbing them of their own being.[64]

Theology is exhausted in the act of wondering adoration before the unsearchable beauty in every manifestation. It is knowledge, *gnosis*, but knowledge that answers to the mystery of beauty in a beautiful fashion, which is to say in a manner fitting, apt, poised (*symmetrōs, en symmetriā*).[65] While for Gregory of Nyssa *eros* overthrows all limits as it hastens after the ever-greater God, with Denys the self-same *eros* is contained in its striving after infinity within two limits: the possible (*hōs ephikton*)[66] and the permitted (*themiton*, strictly speaking: what can be attained without sacrilege).[67] Theological thought and speech here finds in measure the optimum. Boldness of thought is not at all decisive, for it can impair the awe and the reserve,[68] restraint,[69] and holy reverence[70] demanded by the object of its thought. Two things upset this measure: love of evil, which makes the eye of the soul apprehend the divine rays in a squinting and short-sighted way, and presumption, which ‘oversteps the limits that have been wisely set for vision and pretends that it can in itself behold the light immediately’. If the beholder is blinded, the fault lies not with the light, which gives itself in a bounty innocent of envy, but with the beholder, who has not kept to the proper relation set down for him.[71] The divine light raises to contemplation of itself and to contact with it all those ‘who eagerly desire it in a way permitted, suitable to such sacred things, and do not insolently presume to something more exalted than the divine manifestation thus harmoniously offered them, nor because of a weakness for what is worse slip downwards.’[72] This methodical *harmonia* is an *analogia*,[73] an appropriate relation, a proportion between revelation and the capacity for receiving it, set by the one who reveals himself with regard to the particular nature and comprehension of the subject. Providence itself, both as creating and as communicating salvation to the creature, is analogous,[74] in that it guarantees to each being a primordial ‘worthiness’ (*axia*) to receive God in accordance with its rank and imparts its divine self-expression in accordance with this ‘worthiness’.[75] All this in such a way, however, that the ontological worthiness connected with rank always includes the ethical self-realisation of the being that has received such worthiness.[76] But because this ethical moment is only included as a consequence, it would be a mistake to translate *kat’ axian* as ‘according to merit’.[77] The apportionment of divine grace is not a matter of reward, but of symmetry and harmony between the giver and the receiver, whereby the being and nature of the receiver is always already grounded in the allotted grace, and God primarily crowns his own gift, while correct (symmetrical) human behaviour is taken up into this divinely established harmony secondarily and as a response to God’s giving. This Patristic use of *axiotēs* and *meritum* occurs otherwise almost only in liturgical and hymnic formulas such as the address to Mary: *tu quae meruisti portare* (you whom God made worthy to bear). But with Denys such use is thorough-going and fundamental.[78] Because grace is participation in the infinite God and because the assimilation of man to the proper measure laid down by God is equally a matter of infinite approximation, there is, even in the Dionysian theology of fittingness, room for endless striving.

If the manner of theology is ‘holy measure’, its sound is ‘holy celebration’. Because God is in all things and above all things, being and knowing can only be a festival and a ‘dance’,[79] a continuous ‘celebration’ of the glory that communicates itself and holds sway in all things and above all things, a ‘hymn’, a ‘song of praise’, which has its own laws which must be followed in everything from its basic conception, the choice of point of view, right down to the least form of expression. Everything that antiquity had at its disposal by way of sacred forms is included and adapted. The style strides along so consciously loaded, draped with so many sacred garments, that it makes any haste impossible and compels us not only to follow him in his train of thought but also to join with him in his mood of celebration. Nowhere do we find the lyrical-subjective mood, as with Augustine, but nowhere the decline into theoretical dryness either—except in the often-noticed (because clearly so dependent on Proclus) and much-despised treatise on evil and wickedness. ‘The style,’ says Stiglmair, ‘now becomes very sober and dry and loses the exuberant intensity and moves in short, dialectical formulae’:[80] certainly, for should one ‘celebrate’ the evil and the wicked? Can one in such a theology do otherwise than speak of it tunelessly? But where it is a matter of God and the divine, the word *hymnein* almost replaces the word ‘to say’;[81] for what is at stake is that ‘the divine mystery should be honoured by spiritual and invisible knowledge and kept free from any contact with or contamination by the profane.’[82] So it is a matter always and above all of vision, of looking and striving after vision, but ever only (at least on earth) of vision through veils that protect and conceal.[83] All is a sacred veil: the world as much as the Church and her sacraments, the hierarchies in heaven and on earth. But it veils only in order to initiate one more perfectly, so that ascending the steps of the shrine one can draw yet nearer to the mystery. Theology is essentially initiation, *myesthai*.[84] But the mystery entrusted to the initiate (even the expression *thiasētēs*, participant in the cult of Dionysus, is used for him[85]) is none other than that of the divine being of God, whose minister (*leitourgos*[86]) he is to be. Theology in an all-embracing sense is—as in the pictures of the Apocalypse—the concentric arrangement of heaven and earth, angels and men, in praise around the throne of the Invisible: the Word, that is repeated in an ever louder echo, around the silent centre; sounds around the essential stillness, unapproachable, hidden.[87] First the angels are ‘called to proclaim the divine silence, set up as manifest lights, so to speak, interpreting what is in the sanctuary (*adyta*).’[88] This central silence is for Denys not at all the empty silence of non-Christian mysticism, but rather that unique, primordial Word which transcends all the sounding words. The further its echo sounds, the more words are needed to realise it. For even the angels fall short of expressing it adequately,[89] and men need many words indeed. This is ‘why the latest, most remote, works are much longer than the first and highest. The fundamental concepts of theology and the explanation of the divine names must be much briefer than the *Symbolic Theology*, for the higher we ascend, the more the realm of words narrows—in proportion as our spiritual perspectives expand. Just as now, on our entry into the darkness that is beyond understanding, we find not even brevity of words, but complete wordlessness and failure of the understanding . . . . In the end speech is rendered utterly inaudible, and becomes completely one with the Inexpressible.’[90] The word that proclaims to those outside must, therefore, if it is to be a true word, itself embrace the divine stillness: in other words, the theological liturgy must be essentially contemplative. The aim of the sacramental liturgy is the spiritual enactment of that which is celebrated in symbols—*ut quae sollemni celebramus officio, purificatae mentis intellegentia consequamur*[91]—but the spiritual insight is ‘more hidden and more unified, more unifying’.[92] Theology must therefore take care not to multiply interpretations infinitely, lest it lose its symmetry with the one Word, just as Denys, in his short treatises, ‘was concerned about the symmetry of his expression and about honouring the transcendent hiddenness of the divine with silence.’[93] Earthly liturgy makes this unconditional demand that the celebrating hierarch (bishop) be perfected in the contemplation of the divine and be still, so that while he does indeed go forth into the congregation, in imitation of God’s going forth, in his actions, speaking and consecrating, he nevertheless during this moving out in action still holds fast to contemplation—like God himself—and leads all his activity back to it.[94] But if the unity of the sacrament and the ‘insight of purified spirit’ is the very meaning of the liturgical enactment, then it becomes clear why Denys will have nothing to do with an isolated consideration and treatment of *opus operatum*: the moral enactment is not a second act alongside the sacramental which merely occasions it, it must be one with it or it is nothing at all. If Denys affirms the principle of Tertullian and the Donatists that only he can mediate who himself possesses, only that can shine which ‘has itself in a measure become the sun’,[95] then this is said from no sectarian zeal,[96] but from the ideal of his theological perspective, from which he refuses to stray. The priest and theologian who does not live out of the grace of his office departs from the law of being which demands the unity of essential and moral ‘worth’. For Denys it is pointless for a theologian to speak from any other perspective than that of purifying, illuminating and unifying grace. The realm of sin, apostasy and rejection can concern the Christian liturgy only insofar as it provides the raw material for the Church's activity which sets forth liturgically the salvation wrought by Christ. It is the Church which thus transforms the chaos of the realm of sin, by the inclusion of the 'embryonic'[97] existence of the catechumens, the possessed (that is, hardened sinners), the only half-converted and the penitents in the structure of the hierarchical liturgy—whereby we must remember that the liturgy embraces more than the three sacramental ceremonies of water, bread and wine, and of chrism.

As with the anarchy of sin, so too Denys considers the realm of human life and humanity in general only under this form. The meaning of the Fall and of the ordering of man's existence towards death, the meaning of the cross and redemption and of human hope and of correct human action: all this is declared to us by the 'divine utterances' (for it is of such that Denys speaks, rather than of the 'Scriptures') in Epistle and Gospel.[98] Indeed the whole scriptural revelation is taken up as the 'reading' into the liturgical action—it is portrayed in this distinctive perspective from Genesis to the Apocalypse[99]—it is so to speak raised to a liturgical potency, it is moulded into the theology of the celebrating Church, to which the 'holy songs' of Scripture (Psalms and alleluia) already provide the bridge. The only consideration of the relation between the Old and the New Testaments in the whole work of the Areopagite is in this place, a purely liturgical one. In this context it is a matter of the mystery of the Incarnation as also of the following of Christ,[100] but the Incarnation has to be seen in a measure in the context of the other theophanies[101]—as their consummation—and the following of Christ in the context of the 'imitation of God' (*mimesis theou*).[102] All history is, as it were, aesthetically set at a distance, forming an eternal, sacred picture (*agalma*),[103] for the Church has no longer any proper history, or, if one prefers, its history forms a kind of heavenly concert, like the great polyphony of Josquin or Palestrina, the roots of which stretch back to the cosmic music of the Pythagoreans. 'It is certainly true that his writings represent a bold attempt to provide a series of intelligible settings for the various acts of the Christian history of salvation; so, for example, the whole earthly life of the Lord appears as it were swallowed up in the timeless contemplation of the sacrament of the eucharist. Yet it cannot be said that Denys destroys the meaning of history; the world and its contents are not given once for all as in Greek wisdom, rather the divine truth is inscribed as an event in the very bosom of space and time.'[104] And the union of the world and God, which is already philosophically the only possible justification of its multiplicity and its existence, is brought to completion precisely in the Incarnation, the efficacy of which is continued in the sacraments, above all in the eucharist.[105]

As the dogmatic hymns of the Western Fathers are taken up in the liturgy, as are indeed those of the later Byzantines, so it is a mark of the purity of style of the Dionysian theology that as a work which is overall hymnic in character it assumes, on occasion, the tone of great poetry. As for example in the last chapter of the *Divine Names*, which praises God with a wealth of titles:

'The many-named God is called Pantocrator, because he is the all-ruling seat of all things, embracing and penetrating everything, giving it stability and foundation in himself, and binding all together. He perfects everything in himself so that it shall not be moved, and everything comes from him as proceeding from an almighty root, and all things are drawn into himself in return, as to an almighty trunk which bears and supports all, and he embraces all things as the sovereign throne of all. All embraced find security in him in accordance with a single transcendent embrace; sent forth from him and driven from this all-perfecting hearth, they may not perish. The Thearchy is also called Pantocrator, as both ruling over all and as holding sway, yet without confusion, within all things, as being desired and loved by all, and imposing a voluntary yoke on all and the sweet pangs of a divine, almighty and indissoluble longing for its own goodness.'[106]

Such language, too, which can be distinguished from the rest only by degrees, is meant to reveal the symmetry, the appropriateness to its object; it is in its way a much more exact expression of the vision of the divinity of God than most of what a theology that works by definitions can say about God. There can be no doubting that Denys was a monk: that much is clear enough from his humble[107] placing of the monastic state in the last hierarchy below the priestly state[108] and his blazing censure of Demophilus. His theology too, like everything in the West that stems from Benedict, is a theology of monasticism,[109] which in its structure is to be contrasted sharply with a theology of the priestly hierarchy (the Roman) or a lay-theology, whether medieval or modern. It is noteworthy that the genuine, inwardly hierarchical theology has not been created by the Romans but by a Greek, in whose ecclesiastical hierarchy the papacy is indeed not mentioned: his hierarchy is concerned with degrees of consecration which correspond from the first with the degrees of authority.

4. THEOLOGICAL SYMBOLISM

We must now attempt to give an outline of the three stages of this theology: the material stage (of symbols), the intellectual stage (of predominantly affirmative expression) and the divine stage (of predominantly negative expression). The methods are distinguishable, but they condition one another and are complementary, at least for us men. For example, we can understand the material symbol only if we see its spiritual content, but only if we also grasp the complete inadequacy of this spiritual content as applied to God.[110] It cannot be said that the symbolism and the spiritual conceptuality express God's immanence, while mysticism expresses his transcendence, for the symbols and concepts can only be interpreted as referring to God, who in all analogies remains the 'Wholly-Other', while the mystic negations have no other goal than to express the contact, encounter, union with God, as he really is. In other words: the whole tension between cataphatic and apophatic theology runs right through symbolic theology, as Denys continually emphasizes. For in the sensible symbol, in its necessity and impossibility, there is exposed not only the dialectic of the doctrine of God, for God is and must be both all in all and nothing in anything, but also the doctrine of man, for man is 'indivisible' as regards his soul and 'divisible' as regards his body, and a divine revelation to him therefore naturally needs both levels, that of the 'simple, inward pictures' and that of the external 'symbolically fashioned figures, which have been artistically fashioned beforehand'.[111] It is the greatness of man and his tragedy to embrace both without being able to bring them into a final synthesis: to be immersed in the aesthetics of the world of images and at the same time to have irresistibly to dissolve all images in the light of the unimaginable. Perhaps never in the history of theology has the unity of the two been more strikingly visible than here. By no means is Denys just the advocate and architect of negative theology, the mystical iconoclast, as he is generally thought to be. He is not even, like Origen, the unflinching allegorist, for whom the 'letter' is preeminently a pointer, an appeal to search for the deeper, spiritual meaning; rather, with Denys we characteristically find of allegory neither the word nor the thing. In his attempt to elucidate and explain the text, Origen's concern with the literal meaning (*historia*) is no more than philological, whereas Denys contemplates the divine symbols in creation and the Church with an aesthetic delight. Things are not simply the occasion for his seeing God; rather, he sees God in things. Colours, shapes, essences and properties are for him immediate theophanies, and if he gives up the veil for the sake of what is veiled, then he gives up something that he has embraced and loved. He can give dialectical expression to this state of affairs, as when he speaks of an 'unlike likeness',[112] or says that 'the same things can be both like God and unlike him: like, in virtue of the possible imitation of the inimitable, and unlike, because of the difference between effects and their cause, because they fall short in an infinite and incomparable degree of their origin.'[113] But he knows too that this dialectic is nothing other than the unravellable phenomenon of the 'significance' (*semainein*) of a 'manifestation'.[114] If, then, Denys expounds his theory of 'like unlikenesses and unlike likenesses', that is, of those images of God and the angels which seem to make immediate reference in themselves to God, such as light, fire, water, and a sweet smell, and those others, so frequent in the Scriptures, which by means of their striking inappropriateness invite us to reject them in order to lift ourselves from the picture to what is meant, and indeed precisely in these pictures to see the 'protective shields' that guard against any confusion of sense and spirit, or the world and God, then he clearly knows that both functions are ultimately complementary and at their limits pass without a break into each other, 'because the ineffable and what can be uttered are inextricably entwined (*sympeplektai*)'.[115] 'The reflective spirit' must always 'regard the manifestation of beautiful things as reflections of a beautiful form not made manifest, sensible odours as the expression of an intelligible emanation, and material light as an image of the diffusion of immaterial light, and the discursiveness of sacred instruction as a pointer to the fulness of contemplative reason.'[116] Indeed, were it not for the 'stimulus' of unsuitable pictures—which represent to us angels as stones and beasts, and God himself as angry, grievously affected, as cursing, deceiving, war-mongering, and so on—were it not for the 'perfect inadequacy',[117] then there would be a great danger of resting content with the affirmations, of imagining angels as 'golden, radiant forms',[118] and ascribing an elementary beauty to God himself. This inappropriateness applies just as much to the symbols of the cosmos as to those of the Bible or the Church's sacraments, so there is no question with Denys of 'demythologizing' Scripture or the

Church in order to contemplate God more purely in nature, nor of devaluing the images of nature in favour of Scripture and the Church (as with many spiritual writers of the Middle Ages), because the Bible and the sacramental order depend on the images drawn from creation, for example on the symbolic power of water, of bread and wine, light and oil, used in the administration of the sacraments. Nor can one say that Denys in his interpretation of the cosmic language of essences is determined by his own age. His art of interpretation betrays only a loving and deeply absorbed gaze into the elements, forms and processes, which is characteristic above all of the artist. Nor can one say, finally, that he projects the sensible into the spiritual (the negative theology should be sufficient protection against this), but one must rather notice that his penetrating contemplation of the symbols makes it possible for him to receive an utterly different—and quite concrete—picture of God from that found in predominantly abstract and conceptual theologians. An example: the image of fire, for which the Scriptures have a particular fondness:

‘The sacred theologians many times describe that being which is beyond being and any form in terms of fire, which contains many images of the nature of the Thearchy—if it is permitted to say this—in sensible terms. For sensible fire is, so to say, in all things and shines through all things without confusion and yet is at the same time quite distinct from all things; it is both wholly luminous and yet also secret, unknowable in itself, if there is no combustible material in which it can manifest its peculiar energy; it cannot be mastered or banished, having power over all and assimilating everything it penetrates to its own essence and activity; communicating itself to everything that approaches it in whatever manner; renewing and rejuvenating with its vital warmth, illuminating by its irresistible rays; unvanquished, unmingled, dividing and unchangeable, tending upwards, attacking vigorously, blazing up, not open to flattery and pandering; eternally on the move, self-moved, moving others; circumscribing and uncircumscribed, needy of nothing, increasing itself secretly and manifesting its own greatness to those substances that receive it; active, powerful, invisibly present to all things, not seeming to exist if neglected, but suddenly revealing itself as indwelling things and yet as obedient to its own nature when rubbed—which is a way of seeking it—and then again flying away from men’s grasp; undiminished by all its joyful bestowals of itself. And many other properties of fire can be found that provide a visible image of the thearchic energy.’[119]

One can only with difficulty resist the temptation to quote profusely the theological portrayals by this poet of water, wind and clouds, and particularly of the fragrance of God, the delightful interpretations that go right to the heart of such things as bodily eating and drinking and the assimilation of food, sleeping and waking, and also the drunkenness of God (as the ‘ineffable measurelessness of the divine perfection’).[120] Particularly noteworthy are his accounts of the spiritual significance of the colours,[121] of the essential properties of the beasts—the might of the ox, the sublime untameability of the lion, the majesty, powerful ascent, swiftness, watchfulness, inventiveness, and sharp-sightedness of the eagle, and so on[122]—of the power of symbolic expression found in the human body and its individual organs[123]: this gives one an idea of what natural contemplation (*theoria physike*) can mean in Greek theology.

The same thing recurs in the Holy Scripture, which, although in contrast to nature it is throughout regarded as the Word of God, is as a whole a symbolic cosmos which is to be read as such within the tradition of ‘spirit to spirit’.[124] And because Scripture provides a better education in the things of God than does nature, it is here that are to be found especially images that startle because of their discordance. They are found much less in the mysteries of the Church, in the *theamata* (contemplations, remarkable dramatic presentations) of her liturgy, which are regarded more as divinely ordained, appropriate[125] translations of the spiritual into the sensible. In particular the *theoria* of the bishop and priest must pass through all these sensible signs in order to fix itself directly on the spiritual sense;[126] indeed, the spiritual understanding must precede the sensible celebration, which is why the liturgy of the Word and the eucharistic prayer come before the consecration and communion.[127] The symbolism of the sacraments is naturally not to be construed in our modern attenuated sense: it is quite clear that the mysteries *continent et causant quae significant*.[128] One ought rather to extend this realism to the other holy symbols, the cosmos and the Holy Scriptures: even if they do not cause, at least they contain what they signify. Therefore the pictorial character of the liturgical ordinance belongs unconditionally to the sacramental effectiveness: the ever-present fragrance of the holy oil, the sweet smell and the rising movement of the incense, the movement of the celebrant from the altar to the people and back again, the sign of the cross in baptism, confirmation and hierarchical consecration, the dipping of the baptizand in imitation of Christ’s descent into death, the tonsure of the monk, the breaking of the host, the assimilation of the bread and wine in communion, and whatever else the purifying, illuminating and perfecting mystery-rites contain. Their holy forms are finally the content of all true formation: only through them does the material, embryonic man attain his divinely ordained form.[129]

In the Church’s liturgy the Platonic dialectic of the image is to a certain extent stilled: its emphasis on the image as ‘holy myth’ together with its destruction of the image for the sake of the pure concept and finally of mystical union. As little as the great, final image of God in the world, Jesus Christ, can be dissolved and thus rendered null and void (no more than can be the Transfiguration and the Resurrection), as little are the divinely ordained images of the Church, its hierarchy and liturgy to be spiritualized away. A true theology of images can be achieved only in a Christian context, as the next methodical step will definitively show. It belongs to the Areopagite to have caught up the whole spiritual energy of the Alexandrines and the Cappadocians in his work and at the same time to have banished definitively their tendency to threaten the Incarnation, the visible Church and the resurrection of the flesh.

5. THEOLOGICAL EIDETIC

Only through the mediation of an understanding spirit can the sensible symbols speak of God. What such a spirit understands of God are those ‘names of God’ in the cosmos, which are the expression of his true communication and self-explanation. But the understanding spirit is first the pure, creaturely spirit, the angel, and only secondly the spirit bound to a body, man. It is for the sake of this spirit that God has spoken of himself in the world and Scripture (*theo-logia* as God’s speech), that there are inspired heralds of God’s word (*theo-logoi* as prophets, apostles, those inspired, the commonest use of the word in Denys), that there is finally a theo-logy in the Church, in the modern sense of the word. The spirit of angels and man can theo-logically understand the whole communication of God in which he, the created spirit, is a part. But he would not understand if, in so doing, he failed to discern that all his understanding is an understanding of the incomprehensible, because it is an understanding of God. All the divine names together produce nothing less than a system of God: that is indicated in the introduction to the treatise on the ‘divine names’ which, after some preliminary remarks on the holy tradition of revelation (chap. 1), goes on immediately to treat of the central content of revelation (chap. 2): of the three-in-oneness of God, which is clearly expressed in dogmatic-liturgical form, but as a whole is consigned to the darkness of the unsearchable *mysterium*. In this way any theology of an *imago trinitatis* in the creature is strictly rejected: whether an Origenist ‘sub-division’ of the ‘realms’ of the Father, the Son and the Spirit within the created order (Father-being, Son-life, Spirit-reason, or Father-being, Son-reason, and Spirit-holiness), or a Tertullianist-Joachimite partition of saving history amongst the three persons, or an Augustinian indication of *vestigia* and *imagines* in the structure of the individual creature. And this rejection is the work of a pupil of Proclus for whom the whole structure of being and the world has a triadic structure! One senses what sort of ascesis the Areopagite imposed on himself with this constant renunciation. The mystery within the unsearchable unity has nothing to do with number and cannot be translated into numbers.[130] Only by directing our gaze upwards to the transcendent unity do we look in the direction of the trinitarian mystery. And it is not that some aspects of God are comprehensible while others are not: in this way the theological schematism found in Philo and Proclus is transcended in a Christian way. It is not that one can ‘only’ know the powers of God *ad extra*, but not the underlying essence; rather, for Denys what is Incomprehensible is to be found in what is really comprehensible, for it is in every case the incomprehensible God in his totality who makes himself comprehensible in his communications. Nowhere is there any trace of the Gnostic and Hegelian *Ungrund*, whose obscurity ultimately gives way to universal comprehensibility: in its stead we find everywhere the consciousness that even in the most comprehensible we are concerned with the mystery and in the most incomprehensible we are embraced by the supreme light of the Godhead. This is the sphere of Christian thought, marked out once for all with the utmost precision and lucidity—even for thinkers who will think in quite another way, perhaps much more biblically or ‘existentially’, than Denys.

This spiritual theology has two areas. The one is the interpretation of the world as the *act* of divine communication (*proodos*): that is the content of the theology of the ‘divine names’. The second is the interpretation of the world as the *result* of this communication, that is, the divinely ordained ‘holy order’ (*hierarchia*), which can be seen as the result only as the return of the creature to God (*epistrophē*). We shall deal with these in turn.

The act by which God allows creation to share in his being, through which the world comes into being and in which it consists, is God himself, in whom each creature participates, as does each radius in the centre of the circle, or each mark of a seal in the original. But as a radius only subsists because of the centre and the mark only because of the seal, and yet the centre is not a radius, nor the seal a mark, we must speak of ‘participation, while not participating’: God’s primordial reasons are ‘participated in for all that they cannot be shared’ (*amethektōs metechomena*).[131] The multiplication and differentiation of the participants is primarily a matter of ‘closeness’ and ‘distance’—that is admittedly a picture that reminds one of both Origen and Plotinus and yet is understood in the sense of neither[132]—it is, always allowing the necessary deficiency of all being that is not divine, also a matter of the determination and positioning of beings by God, who allots to each its being and essence ‘analogously’. The deliberate turning of

God towards the creature is equally that in which it participates (the communicated God) and the truth of the creature; the ideas or paradigms are equally the predestinations.[133] Because the creature participates in that ‘which cannot be shared’ and yet not, as for example in Spinoza, as an accident in a substance, it participates in God’s *allowing* it *to share* and as a creaturely being necessarily possesses within itself the ontological difference between Being and being—put in general terms—or between that in which it participates and that which participates (*metocha* and *metechonta*). This distinction, which is the very basis of the ontology of creatureliness, was already repeatedly misunderstood in Denys’ time, so that, towards the end of the book, he explains it yet again to some rather slow-witted person who had asked him about it in a letter (Chap. XI.6)—and yet even today he is persistently misinterpreted. His teaching is as simple and luminous as possible, as he himself says: ‘We are convinced that this is not an intricate problem but rather the most direct and simple explanation.’[134] One must simply guard against hypostatizing the *metocha* (the participated) as any sort of ‘gods’ or ‘world demiurges’ or ‘angelic essences’ (as did Proclus and the Gnostics)—in Denys’ theology they have therefore nothing to do with the angelic hierarchies—but nor are they simply the archetypal ‘thoughts’ of God (as Augustine interpreted the Platonic ideas); rather, they are the genuine reality of the world itself, in so far as it consists of principles which share their reality with the individual essences that participate (*metochonta*), of which principles Denys indeed says that among themselves they stand in a relationship of participation, because Life Itself participates in Being Itself, and Wisdom Itself participates in both.[135]

‘And so before everything else first Being Itself is brought forth (*probeblētai*). And Being Itself is prior to Life Itself and Wisdom Itself and Divinisation Itself and so all the others (scil. *metocha*) in which things participate in Being before anything else,’[136] which can be best understood in terms of Thomas Aquinas’ *actus essendi*. Denys does not want to make a real distinction between it and Life Itself, Spirit Itself and even Divinisation Itself, but only to distinguish it in terms of the *metechonta’s* degree of intensity of participation. But Thomas does not in any way designate his *actus essendi* as a ‘creature’, rather creatures are for him only the *metechonta*; no more does Denys, who is at the same time careful not to equate the *autometochai*[137] with God in himself. We see him first of all ranking goodness (*agathotēs*) above the *actus essendi* because goodness embraces in its sphere not only being, but also not-being (by which is meant any kind of subjective or objective potentiality), so that therefore the act of being is always already embraced by the absolutely primordial determination: the Good. This most sublime and pious of all metaphysical thoughts, which later Christian ontology was hardly able to do justice to, finds its true resonance in Denys, because with him the *metocha* are no longer emanations of the One but those world-principles that effect and mediate participation in the living God. But where the Good can be seen as the embracing principle of all divine communication, God himself is rightly raised above all the principles of his communication (otherwise there would be no participation in him) and is always designated as beyond being (*hyperousios*: 115 times), beyond the cosmos, beyond the heavens, superabundant, beyond perfection, supernatural (*hyperphyēs*), and finally beyond the divine (*hypertheos*), because 'God' is that in which the creatures can by grace participate through the principle of 'divinisation'; but that in which they participate is itself precisely that in which they cannot participate, for were it not that, they would not be participating in God.[138] He who does not keep that in mind at every stage of his thought has, in Denys' opinion, no understanding of creaturely being. But he neither intends to develop an immanent ontology of the creature, nor to offer a doctrine of God as he is in himself; rather he wants (in the *Divine Names*) 'to celebrate providence manifested as creative of good, most excellent goodness and the source of all good, as being, life and spirit, as the source that makes being and life and grants spirit to all those who participate in being, life, spirit, reason and feeling.'[139] Therefore God is called in the world 'by all names', while he remains in himself (and therefore for us too) nameless;[140] he is 'of all forms' without himself possessing a form;[141] he who creates and releases from himself every relationship and each opposite in the world is therefore necessarily beyond identity (*tautotēs*) and otherness (*heterotēs*), equality (*isotēs*) and inequality (*anisotēs*), likeness (*homoiotēs*) and unlikeness (*anomoiotēs*),[142] and also something that will interest Nicholas of Cusa—beyond greatness and smallness, and—something that had fascinated Gregory of Nyssa—beyond movement and rest.[143] As God in his radiance makes himself available as gift and fashions the world,[144] two things happen: the gift takes on a graduated form and therefore brings forth the different realms of being (*proodos*), but also at each level the whole God communicates himself and presents himself and therefore draws everything back to himself as a unity (*epistrophē*). So the structure of the treatise on the Divine Names becomes clear:

I. Introduction

1. On theological knowledge and manner of expression (chap. 1).

2. On unity and distinction in God: a. the Trinity, b. creation, c. Incarnation (chap. 2). In what follows neither the Trinity nor the Incarnation will be dealt with, but creation as God's communication.

3. On the methods of theology: prayer, holy Tradition, relationship between the master and his disciples (chap. 3).

II. The names of the act of creation (as names of the stages of being, names of distribution, *proodos*).

1. The name that transcendently embraces all being, that of the *Good* (beside which, of equal rank and the same meaning, stand the names of light, beauty and *eros*. Evil, discussed from the point of view of the embracing good.) (chap. 4).

2. The act of *being* which underlies all stages. The fundamentals of being, idea and *metochē* (chap. 5).

3. *Life*, as a particular form (intensity) of being (chap. 6).

4. *Intelligence (nous*), as the highest intensity of being. And in relation to this, spiritual accomplishment (reason, faith) and truth (chap. 7a).

III. The names of the act by which things are brought back to their home or of controlling providence (names of union, *epistroph?*).

1. *Wisdom (sophia)* (chap. 7b).

2. *Power (dynamis)* as ordered (justice), salvific (salvation, preservation, redemption), apportioning equally (*isotēs*) (chap. 8).

3. Apropos the equality of God in the inequality of things (which proceeds from God) the names of contraries are dealt with: great-small, identity-difference, likeness-unlikeness, rest-movement, and comprehensive likeness (chap. 9).

4. Names embracing time and space: Pantocrator, ‘Ancient of Days’, Time and Age (aeon) (chap. 10).

5. Peace (*eirēnē*). Appendix to chap. 5 on the meaning of the *metochai* (chap. 11).

IV. The Names of perfected Union and Transcendence.

1. The potentiated names (of power): Holy of Holies, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, God of Gods (chap. 12).
2. Final name: Perfection and *Unity*.

Endre von Ivanka[145] has argued that we have here a structure consisting of the names of procession and distinction, dealt with in accordance with Proclus' schema (II), and then of the names of providence drawn from the triad of Constantinian theology, in which the names of the three churches founded by Constantine in Constantinople appear: Hagia Sophia, Hagia Dynamis and Hagia Eirene, interlarded with the names of contraries applied to the One, mentioned in Plato's *Parmenides* (and discussed by Proclus in his *Parmenides* commentary!). The last-discussed names complete the series by reverting to the beginning and so set at the very end the Biblical and Platonic names of unity. Denys does not want the transition from II to III, or from III to IV, to appear too obvious, so intelligence and wisdom are dealt with under the same heading, and the chapter on peace forms a hinge between the third and fourth parts. Any sharp disjunction would have obscured the complementary immanence of the points of view. The One is not placed at the beginning, as in Plotinus and Proclus, but at the end, together with concrete totality (*teleion*), which rules out any suspicion of an idealist unfolding in 'procession' or a mere filling-up of the abstract. The One belongs to the realm of the good, of beauty and of *eros*, which express the power of the primordial Godhead in radiance and affirmation that underlies any concrete form of being and fundamentally shapes any real or possible creation. This primordially divine power of affirmation, in which all created things participate in every respect, and to which all the great theological images of the cosmos in the West from Eriugena to Hegel are indebted, may never be attenuated, in Denys' theology, in favour of the expressions of negative theology or relegated to the second rank. The 'yes' to the world that issues from God and is repeated at every level of being is just as original as the knowledge every creature has that it is not God, either as an individual or generically. And that must equally be dealt with.

But first two concluding remarks. The first is about the wholes (*hola*; the word *holon* occurs over 180 times). In the Dionysian cosmos they are neither bare generic concepts or 'ideas', nor hypostases or demigods; rather, they are, as we saw with the highest *hola* (being—life—wisdom), genuine aspects of concrete reality, which contain the participants in themselves without endangering their individuality and only together with them form the all:

meros kai holon is *pan*.[146] Perhaps the neglect of this aspect of reality in Christian theology has provoked the repeated reactions of pantheism, but these for their part did not notice that according to Denys the Godhead is certainly truly immanent in the *hola* (just as it is in the *pan* as such), but only because it transcends the *hola*, the *mere* and the *pan*.

The second point touches the hierarchical structure of the world as a concentric formation around God: from the greatest closeness—the highest angels stand *amesōs*, immediately, before God[147]—through all the ranks of the angelic and ecclesiastical hierarchies to the beasts, plants and the 'most distant echo' of the divine names, to material things and the 'not-being' of pure matter.[148] Now this is certainly a vision of the greatest aesthetic power, but it is not without its problems. For with this 'distancing' the light, the power, and also the Word of God are 'weakened',[149] because the medium in which the revelation is 'refracted' becomes thicker and less transparent,[150] because further the intervening levels become more numerous, and because by the same token even the Incarnation of God falls under this 'general hierarchical law',[151] which means that Christ is, as man, necessarily subject to the angels.[152] Is this law of a gradual 'lessening' and 'darkening' acceptable in a Christian theology? Is it not trying to express in a single form two irreconcilable points: the truth of the right ordering of the cosmos and the truth of the sinful fall from God?[153] Against that one can immediately say with Ivanka that the system of mediation found in Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism is undermined in a Christian sense by Denys with his assertion of the immediate relationship of all creatures, especially man, to a personal God of love.[154] One can also make the opposite and therefore complementary point that, in a splendid passage in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, Denys condemns those who despise the prayers of the saints and think themselves capable of ascending to God by their own efforts alone.[155] Here hierarchy is understood as the communion of saints, which is one way of conceiving it for Denys: if with the angels there is no sin and therefore no error in the passing on of the spiritual light, then just as little is it the case in the ecclesiastical hierarchy as such, considered as the divinely-ordered arrangement.

But there is yet a third aspect to consider. God is essentially *kryphiotēs*, unified depth of mystery, which as such is hidden. Revelation of this mystery is necessarily double-sided: it will be clearest to the highest creatures, who as the most unified will receive it most immediately; in this way its mysterious character will be most truly preserved. The further revelation penetrates, the more it will need words of interpretation, the more ‘public’ and ‘expounded’ (*emphanōs*) it will become, and just to that extent the weaker in meaning. The theophany and theology of the angels is ‘*kryphiotera*, more secret, because more intellectual and simple and more unified, and *phanotera*, clearer, because the first gift and the first manifestation, because poured out more universally and potently, into this transparent order.’[156] The more expounded (*emphanesteron, ekphanesteron*), more discursive theology of the lower levels, even that of men, is therefore a sign of distance:[157] there is a shift here in the understanding of revealedness and therefore—in another way—in that of mystery, for with increasing interpretation the mystery is veiled still more, ‘and the Thearchy as it were reduces its radiance so as to uphold the oneness and unknowability of its own mystery.’[158] The nearer a creature stands to not-being (and the boundary between being and not-being is pure matter), the darker is God’s revelation of himself in it, or the more God reveals in it his darkness. If God is in the beings as that which is beyond being, he is in nothingness as that which is beyond nothing,[159] and in this way the sudden radiance of God can shine into the darkness of human existence (*suddenly—exaiphnēs*) in the Incarnation of the Son, because here what is the more revealed is the more hidden: ‘He who is beyond being has come forth from his secret place, clothed in being in a human form, to manifest himself among us. And yet he is hidden even after his manifestation, or to speak more divinely, precisely in his manifestation. For this mystery of Jesus is veiled and cannot be explained or understood as it is in itself in any way, but even when spoken remains ineffable, when thought unknown.’[160] One can therefore from this point reject criticisms of Denys’ manner of expression when he refers to the descent of the angelic hierarchies to the lower as also a completion (*apoperatōsis*),[161] for the increasing darkening, in its way, reveals anew the true nature of God, and so the high and the low, the great and the small, light and darkness in the world compensate for one another.

Now to the structure of the creatures themselves, of the *metechonta*. The first thing that strikes one if one comes to Denys from Alexandria, from Origen and Evagrius and Gregory of Nyssa, and the more so as Denys is seen as the theologian of the divine limitlessness, is the emphasis he places on limits. Limit (*peras*), holy law of being (*thesmos*), rank (*taxis*), ordering (*diacosmēsis*), measure (*metron*), symmetry (*symmetria*), analogy (*analogia*), holy gradation (*hier-archia*) are the perpetually recurring categories. Because God is beyond rest and movement, beyond finitude and infinity, there is no direct opposition between him and anything created; and therefore the latter is set forth in its limitedness and finitude, and as such affirmed and sustained. Not only the equal, but the unequal too, comes from God and is a name of God.[162] Still more important: because God's unity is beyond the unity of wholes (*hola*) and that of individuals (*hekaston*), the unity of both—for they are equally his image—is set up, safeguarded and assured by him: the particularity (*idiotēs*) of the individual is just as positive and final in its unlikeness (*anisotēs*) as the relatedness, the harmony of the parts as a whole and the common breath (*sympnoia*) that penetrates everything. No pantheism, not even of the Stoic sort, could give such positive significance to finitude and limits, and even with Plato the finite form remains questionable and is threatened by a spiritualistic doctrine of man. Denys, however, safeguards his cosmos with the theological doctrine of the resurrection, through which the sustaining of individual form is finally assured:[163] 'Its whole being will be saved and live forever in fulness.'

Here the Chalcedonian concepts press forward powerfully and broaden their range from christology to the whole conception of the world, the whole sense of being. 'Unconfusedly' (*asynchytōs*), 'unchangeably' (*atreptōs*), 'indivisibly' (*adiairetōs*) and 'inseparably' (*achōristōs*): thus was each of the two natures preserved (*sōzetai*) in its individuality in Christ.[164] The concept *sōzein* takes on with Denys an undreamt-of wealth of meaning. God is above all *Soter* already as creator, in that he affirms and safeguards the natures in their particularity and the individuals in their individuality and preserves them as such from destruction, the tendency to blend with others and to yield before the superior power of the all, and protects 'each one in the position allotted to it in accordance with its rank and power'.[165] For that God is celebrated especially as the righteous God: 'because he keeps (*diasōzein*) everything free from mixture (*amigē*) and confusion (*asymphytos*) with all else and gives to each what is suitable in accordance with its worth.'[166] In this God is primarily salvation (*sōtēria*), and it is only because he wills the individuality of each being that he draws it up again and thus saves it (*sōstikōs*) from its tendency to sink down away from itself into non-being; thus he becomes the 'redeemer', 'who paternally forgives frailty and re-establishes it when it falls victim to evil, or who rather by setting it firmly in the beautiful, restores to it its lost goodness, putting its disarray to rights and adorning it and bringing it to perfection.’[167] This unity between preservation and redemption as the work of the righteousness of God is for Denys the perfect ‘beauty, even measure and right ordering’.[168] All things are drawn into an ‘unconfused union’ with one another and with God, ‘in which union nothing of their clarity or purity is lost’.[169] And everywhere protection is afforded by the ‘bolt’ (*kleithron*) which is pushed home lest the world dissolve into a material or spiritual chaos, ‘and things fall apart and sink into the indefinite and limitless, and lose their structure, and forsake their foundation, and be deprived of their own unity and be chaotically confused with one another.’[170] Limit is not an evil thing; even privation is not evil as such.[171]

The thought of being allotted a finite position leads to the thought of the divine election (*eklogē*), particularly developed in connection with the priesthood. Denys sees here a conjunction of three factors: suitability for the function, calling by God and the conferring of orders by the bishop, so that the bishop makes himself the ‘interpreter’ of this divine election.[172] Such a calling (*klēsis*) exists more generally for all the baptized and redeemed,[173] and in the most general sense (according to an etymology which derives *kallos*, beauty, from *kaleō*, to call) everything is ‘called’[174] to its place in the beauty and harmony fashioned by God.

And with that the way is open for an understanding of the concept of ‘station’, which for Denys, long before the development of the medieval estates, is always a ‘sacred estate’, a hierarchy. This is, according to Denys (*kat’eme*), not primarily what we imagine by this term, an ordered arrangement of functions. First of all it is an individual station (as being situated in a particular spiritual place), which is determined by its place in the order of being (*taxis*), by the allotted insight (*epistēmē*) and activity (*energeia*): these three serve ‘for the attaining, as far as is possible, of likeness to God an . . . . imitation of God’, and because ‘the beauty that befits God is simple and good and the cause of all initiatio . . . . it causes each being to participate in its own light so far as it is worthy and perfects it harmoniously to itsel . . . . in an unchangeable form.’[175] Thus the determination of this threeness of being-knowledge-action has its basis and goal in the transcendent, and the order of being itself, together with its acts of knowing and doing which build it up and express it, has its immanence only by virtue of such a basis and goal. This dynamic will now inform the twofold schema of God and the world: that of creation, rest—procession—return (*monē, proodos, epistrophē*) and that of redemption, God—fall—purification, which have both an active, communicating aspect and a passive, receptive aspect. Knowledge is primarily the reception of spiritual light from God (*ellampsis*); activity is primarily the giving back of this light in imitation of the God who goes out from himself and communicates himself. But because the outgoing creature is equally the fallen creature, the turning to God demands as its presupposition a ‘purification’ (*katharsis*).

From the viewpoint of the individual, the movement is on the one hand the strictly complementary response to the articulation of revelation: the ‘purification’ corresponds to the movement of in-gathering (*epistrophē*), the ‘illumination’ to the self-revelation of the inner light of God (*proodos*) and the ‘perfection’, the goal, is the ‘union’ (*henōsis*) with the immovable God, ever abiding in himself. In this ecstatic movement towards God the creature finds itself and perfects its order of being (*taxis*). But the movement is not only a ‘passive’ response to the active God; it is an active search for the divine. The creature’s return becomes of itself its own going forth (*proodos*) as communicating, apostolic movement. As God ‘humbles himself’, so does the spirit, as it ascends above itself to God, ‘humble itself’, seeking out those who as yet are lacking in order to mediate to them what it already possesses. This communicating activity necessarily assumes the same threefold character that holds between the creature and God: the spirit can now purify others for God, because God purifies it; it can enlighten in respect of the divine, because it has been enlightened; it can contribute towards union with God, because it is thus united.

This active-passive pattern has its original context in a metaphysical-ethical psychology and expresses the threefold holy ordering (*hierarchia*) of the religious progress of the individual, the ‘way of enlightenment’. It is therefore the religious way for society, which the Church lays down for man: purifying conversion, illuminating instruction, perfecting and consecrating union. Only if this personal hierarchy is established (which Denys everywhere recognizes and presupposes) could it be sensible to require that the individual moments be stressed and assigned to particular functions of the individual, and even then only in such a way that these prevailing emphases do not threaten the inseparable unity of the three moments. And also in the sense that one who has the function (say) of unifying therefore possesses *eminenter* the other two functions and must exercise them, and that always includes as a presupposition the passive movement of being oneself one who is purified, enlightened and unified. But he who has the predominant function of being purified has therefore not only the task of striving after enlightenment and union, but also already, as far as he can, of helping to purify others.

So there develops a subtle net of relationships, extending in all directions and universally applicable, which, through the stressing of each respective function, can be unfolded to a static yet versatile structure of respective stations, but in which, because everything rests upon everything else and each remains in need of the other, function remains transparent to that nature which expresses itself identically in all things: a most spiritual, most Greek product, which adapted itself to being a tender and inspiring soul for the more rigid and more external social structures of the Romans and the Germans. If one now observes the dimension of the ‘aesthetic’ (that is, of the relationships between the sensible and the spiritual), then the hierarchy once again possesses a threefold structure: as hierarchy in the realm of pure spirit—the three times three orders of the angels; as hierarchy in the realm of the purely sensible symbol, still unenlightened in the spirit—the hierarchy (only mentioned by Denys and not more closely described) of the Old Testament;[176] and as hierarchy ‘standing in the middle’ between symbol and spirit, as sacramental and in the strictest sense ‘hierarchical’ hierarchy, that of the Church, which seeks as far as is possible to become like the heavenly.[177] If the angelic hierarchy has the advantage of being constructed throughout in accordance with the pattern (in three times three orders), so that it forms a clear, if somewhat pale, archetype of the Church, then it presents this difficulty, that the function of ‘purification’ can be used only in an inauthentic sense (the removal of a relative ignorance through a higher enlightenment[178]). The ecclesiastical hierarchy has the advantage of a much greater closeness to reality and experience: here the functions can really be grasped, but for that reason the triadic system is either incomplete or rendered viable only at the cost of being forced. Because of his faithfulness to reality, the Areopagite has set up only two triadic structures in the Church: that with the active function of initiating—high priest (= bishop), offerer (= priest), server (= deacon), and that with the passive function of being initiated—monks, holy people and catechumens (with which are included sinners and penitents). Within the two triads the first function corresponds in each case to unification, the second to enlightenment, and the third to purification.

Denys, in fact, also attempted to provide these two ecclesiastical hierarchies with a third, that of the sacraments, which he likewise makes threefold (but without however forcing the scheme, for he adds further sacred initiations): the sacrament of water (baptism) as conversion and divine birth, that of bread and wine (the synaxis) as union with Jesus who proceeds (himself in the Incarnation, sacramentally in the host), imparts and returning enfolds in himself, and that of the oil (confirmation, priestly ordination, extreme unction).[179] But an assignment of the three functions to the three sacraments was not possible, because even baptism, which must properly be union, is called 'illumination' in the Church's tradition, and if the synaxis is claimed as 'union', then no particular function is left for the *myron* and its properly initiating function.

If Denys withstands the temptation to find a thorough-going external pattern in the Church, he also resists the temptation, which attracts him even more and is ready to hand, of a trinitarian or christological derivation of the order of triads. He does admittedly explicitly state: 'The origin (*archē*) of this hierarchy is the fountain of life, the essential goodness, the one cause of all beings, the Trinity, from whom flows through goodness both being and well-being to all that is. To this most thearchic blessedness, transcendent over all things, to this truly triple monad belongs that will, incomprehensible to us though known to itself, which is the rational salvation for us and for all beings that transcend us,'[180] something that, as he then works out, is realized through the equally threefold turning of the creature to God. But nowhere is there any attempt to set out the hierarchical functions in terms of the personal relationships within the thearchy. The same reserve can be clearly seen when, although every hierarchy both of angels and of men is declared to be ordered from and to the incarnate Son—for 'he is the *archē* and being of every hierarchy and sanctification and theurgy, and the most thearchic active power',[181] and 'every hierarchy finds its completion in Jesus', as it does in the complete Godhead[182]—there is yet no suggestion that the individual functions can be derived from the functions of the incarnate Redeemer. As soon as God comes into view—and Jesus is God—then any comparison of orders, any discernible analogy, ceases. Enough, if the beauty of the order of the world points to God, who is, in a way beyond our comprehension, 'primal order'. Therefore the final meaning of the hierarchies is not, in a Christian context, designated as the knowledge of God or even the representation of God, but love: as ‘the perpetual love for God’[183] to which all three functions raise us, but also, in the game of give-and-take between the creatures, the imitation of God in mutual love.

And here appears, as already mentioned, a gap in the absolutely continuous and inexorable intermediary order, in that from each step there opens up an immediate way to God, which love always wants and which every world-order intends and reflects immediately. For if the hierarchy does not reflect the trinitarian in God, then ‘it is nevertheless an image of the order and distinction in the divine activities . . . . For the Thearchy purifies first those intelligences to which it is closest, and then illuminates them, and then perfects those whom it has illuminated to a godlike, consecrated activity.’[184] This image-likeness is, to put it more accurately and comprehensively, true natural-supernatural secondary causality, for, to give an example, the priestly hierarchy has, on the one hand, nothing to communicate but what is divine, and on the other hand a priest, as a fellow-worker with God, must without question himself also be purified, enlightened and unified, in order to hand on the graces of God in an appropriate way.[185] So the motive of mediation is reduced to the double motive—both Christian and ecclesiastical—of the sacramental structure of the Church (in which the familiar three ‘offices’ of the Church are expressed) and to the clearly defined thought of the missionary character of all Christian grace: whoever receives must in turn pass on; he who has been made personally worthy by God must live in his worth (*axia*) as if it were a rank (*taxis*) which makes its claim on him, a claim that reaches to what is most deeply personal. This objectivity of sanctity, which includes and does not exclude personal piety, prayer and mysticism, will be passed on to the Middle Ages not by Augustine, but by Denys. There is yet another point to notice: the care with which Denys describes the hierarchy (the astonishing definition of which we have given above) as a single order in three functions. What is important for him is not that the angels form nine choirs, but three hierarchies, within which the three functions are of equal rank.[186] And if there is then gradation, it is not in the sense of a simple subordination, but of an order of foundation. One can therefore ask what the word-structure *hier-archia* really means, especially if one sets it alongside the concept continually used for the divine, that of *the-archia*. If thearchy means the principle of all divine being, or of all divinization, then hierarchy can only mean the principle, foundation, effective form of holiness and sanctification. Holiness (or simply the holy order) certainly demands as elements both the ordered sequence of the three stages and the active-passive reciprocal working of the three functions; but this is only a first deduction. Hierarchy is not primarily graded subordination, but order within the individual person as within the community, a divinely ordained divine order, which leads to God and consists essentially of bounty and grace.

This whole spiritual and yet visible order is, as is said eloquently and ever again, the cosmic beauty, in which the thearchic, surpassing beauty is manifest.[187] The hierarchical principle in the defined sense is for Denys simply the world-principle. He has taken over this fruit of late Neo-Platonic wisdom in its, for him, unquestionable self-evidence, but has given it a Christian *point de depart*—what a moment, when he discovered that the revealed names of the angels were really nine and of the ecclesiastical ranks twice three!—and a most deeply Christian sense. If the triadic image of God applies now also to the structure of the Church, it remains still for Denys—-if in a different way from Proclus—the structure of the world and the structure of being. Not only is philosophy in a non-Christian sense derived for him from the true, revealed Wisdom, but he makes the historical economy of salvation include the whole of history in an all-embracing way. Thus he will have nothing to do with the theologumenon, according to which the nations have their archontic ‘angels’, but Israel alone is immediately under divine rule. Like the others Israel has its own revealing, hierarchic angel (Michael); the same providence rules over all the nations; and the question is only how the nations hearken to this illuminating and guiding providence.[188] This liberal view is strengthened by the exceptional position accorded to Melchizedek: with Abraham’s homage to him the legal hierarchy is subordinated to him as the ‘hierarch of all the nations and the immediate type of Christ’.[189] These not completely harmonized motives testify, at least, to a tendency towards an historical universality, which is in any case realised in the conception of the Church as the heart of the world, the source of all form and life. As in the great peace of God among all created natures the ‘natural war’ of all limited beings one with another is overtaken and softened,[190] so at a much higher level the Church of Christ is the place of peace and reconciliation and union of all being with God.

It is hard to say what Denys, the disciple of the Alexandrines and of Nyssa, thought about eternal damnation. He repeats in his letter to

Demophilus the vision of Carpus, who, in the face of open heaven and open hell, must reach his decision about love:[191] but this vision is related with the express intention of warning and frightening. If the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* treats of the fall of the angels and their being assigned places within God's good cosmos,[192] it is as little a matter of Origenist *apocatastasis* as it is of an Origenist pre-temporal fall: Denys in no way belonged either to the professed or to the secret Origenists.[193] His picture of the world remains pre-eminently a 'picture', in the realm of the now appropriate liturgical thinking such that any attempt to penetrate eschatologically beyond this picture would endanger the *symmetria*. It is only with Maximus that the Dionysian world will at this point again be channelled into an Alexandrian course.

6. THEOLOGICAL MYSTICISM

Mystical theology is the high-point of the whole theology of the Areopagite. It is present secretly or openly in all his theological utterances and it is systematically necessary to the whole. It is called for as much by his doctrine of God as by his doctrine of the Church, and is therefore no ‘appendix’ for the ‘chosen few’. But for just this reason it is not so much the centre of his theology, such that his symbolic and intellectual theology might be relativized and even called in question. There is no gulf between exoteric and esoteric theology; each needs the other and they compenetrate one another:[194] there is not even any tension between dogmatic and mystical theology. Each dogmatic decree, even the sharpest conciliar definition, must be seen in the light of the ever-greater unlikeness of God,[195] of his ever-deeper mystery. To all eternity we know God only in his self-communication, though it is really God in his self-communication. But even the communicated divinity and goodness of God is an ‘inimitable imitation of what is beyond divinity and goodness’, which, ‘being beyond any principle of divinisation or any ground of goodness, is as such inimitable and un-graspable and transcends every imitation and every attempt to comprehend it as it transcends all who imitate it or participate in it.’[196] So the old principle is called to mind: ‘If anyone sees God and understands what he has seen, then he has not seen him at all but rather something of his that can be known. But he is transcendently enthroned beyond intelligence and beyond being, and only by virtue of not being known in any way at all and by not being does he exist beyond being and is he known beyond understanding. And this perfect ignorance, understood positively, is knowledge of the one who is beyond all that can be known.’[197]

That is a dogmatic, not a psychological, utterance, although it would be ridiculous to deny (as people have) that Denys had experienced what he expressed. The correctness—both philosophical and theological—of his utterance, which again could be doubted only by one who has no sense at all of what is intended here, is certainly no objection to such realization. Certainly it is true that according to Denys the essence of each being is itself ecstatic towards God (something that so little threatens its individuality that this movement itself determines it at its deepest level); indeed, that this ecstasy of creaturely *eros* is itself an imitation of the ecstatic divine *eros* which out of love goes out of itself into the multiplicity of the world;[198] that therefore mystical experience represents a philosophical and theological realization of that which *is*, an experience which the hierarch of each hierarchy should have undergone in order to be able to ‘purify’ and ‘illuminate’, to say nothing of being able to ‘unify’.[199] In this sense the mystical experience is for Denys no ‘exceptional experience’, which does not prevent it being such on the psychological level (as is, for example, the case with Spanish mysticism).

The God of the ‘dazzling darkness’, whose ‘simple and absolute and immutable mysteries of theology are hidden’ (or according to another reading ‘are revealed’) ‘in the dazzling darkness of most secret silence’, mysteries ‘that dazzle with a light of the utmost clarity in deepest darkness, and—in a way completely beyond our grasp and utterly invisible—overpower blinded minds with a splendour surpassing beauty’:[200] this God is the Johannine God, in whom is no darkness at all (1 Jn 1.5). Only the transcendent brightness of this inapprehensible light, which immeasurably transcends the power of spiritual sight, may in no case be taken as a quantitative or relative superabundance. But this relationship of the creature to the ever-greater God is not, in the end, a complete denial of all relationship, but is rather that of a relation established by God through creation, a relationship which the creature itself can realize by peeling off all the concealing veils of creaturely being and knowing, and of which the apophatic method is only, so to speak, the negative impression or hollow reverse. Obviously for Denys this method of continuing negation and of peeling off the veils of sensible symbols and intellectual concepts can never be adequately separated from the positive mystical experience (which stems from God); the concrete whole that he continually has in view is not a method of thought, but an always experienceable encounter, something that takes place in the presence of the mystery of the living God, known through faith. And therefore the often-mentioned ‘third step’ beyond affirmation and negation, the transcendence (*hyperoche*)[201] not a cognitive ‘method’, but the proof that there is, beyond anything that a creature can either affirm or deny, only the objective superabundance of God,[202] so that the last word of ‘mystical theology’ can only say that God is not only beyond all affirmations but beyond all negations too.[203] The expressions, handed down in part from

Plotinus and Proclus, which describe the mystical act—‘union without knowledge’ (*henōsis agnōstos*), ‘throwing oneself against’ (*epibolē*) the dark ray (*aktis*), ‘contact’ (*epaphē*)—remain descriptions, which are again meant theologically not psychologically, and yield the positive meaning (*kata kreitton*) of the negations.

All this presents no fundamental difficulty. There is perhaps a difficulty only in the relation of this assertion to the eschatological vision of God. An immediate vision on earth is denied even to Moses and Paul—somewhat in opposition to Gregory of Nyssa and several texts of Augustine: there is only mediated knowledge of God.[204] In accordance with the law of hierarchy, the angels of the first hierarchy can see God immediately (*amesōs*).[205] Does this law cease to be valid eschatologically? At first sight it can appear so, for the vision of God now ‘through the sacred veil’, through ‘form and image’, is contrasted in Scripture and Tradition with the coming vision at the resurrection, when ‘we shall be with the Lord for evermore, filled with the purest contemplations of his visible theophany which will surround us with most luminous splendours as [once] it did the disciples in that most divine Transfiguration’ on Tabor. But at once the following sentence describes this eschatological vision with expressions belonging to mystical vision.[206] And indeed Denys could not possibly speak in any other way according to all his presuppositions: he can emphasize the illumination of the ‘dazzling rays’, the blessedness of contact with them, but only in the context of a general emphasis on the overall continuity of the epistemological structure. And this leads one to ask whether the ‘*amesōs*’ of the highest angels is not something conceded to a philosophical system of thought rather than something due to the influence of the specifically Areopagitic conception of God—unless, that is, one takes the ‘*amesōs*’ to mean only that the first hierarchy has no need of a further intermediary between itself and God, which need not, however, imply that because of this it possesses an ‘essential vision’ of God. Naturally this ‘union’ between God and a creature freed from all forms and categories of sensible and intellectual knowledge is something utterly positive, fulfilling beyond any hope, because in it there is something that as it were corresponds to the inexpressible: but why attempt once again to express this with finite categories?

The theology of the Areopagite was seen and used for a thousand years and longer as one of the basic forms of the Church’s theology. He remains, with Augustine, *the* classic representative of theological form in the West. If nowadays the ‘myth’ of his person has been demythologized (at least, in part), nothing is thereby said about his achievement. The proof that the influences on his thought are not only ecclesiastical (the Alexandrines and Gregory of Nyssa), but also Jewish (Philo) and Hellenistic (Plotinus and Proclus) says—in his case as little as in the case of any other Christian thinker—nothing against the genuinely Christian substance of his theology. His dependence on Neo-Platonic forms of thought is so obvious that it was already turned against him in his lifetime. But he turned the tables himself, and retorted, ‘the Greeks had made an impious use of the divine in relation to the divine, trying by means of the wisdom of God to destroy the fear of God.’[207] And by that is certainly intended not only the traditional idea of the borrowings of Greek philosophy from the Bible, but something much deeper and truer, which relates to post-Christian Gnosticism and the (likewise post-Christian, and not uninfluenced by Christianity), philosophy of Plotinus and Proclus, and perhaps more fundamentally still the relation of all Greek philosophy to what we nowadays call natural theology or primordial revelation: the misuse of true religious thought for the purpose of Promethean speculation. Denys therefore does not want to borrow, but rather to return what has been borrowed to its true owner.

His stupendous knowledge of Scripture may not be overlooked; he does not quote much, but when he does it is with exactness and with sovereign mastery.[208] Often he only hints, and leaves it to the initiate to understand. He places himself on another level than that of scriptural theology, as indeed the fashioner of a theological liturgy must do. What appears to be missing suddenly emerges in a secondary passage, so that one must conclude that what was presumably quite consciously not expressed was always to hand. So for him the mystery of the God-man, his humiliation, his suffering, death and descent is perfectly present, but it is contemplated in the context of God’s descent into the world as a whole and only comes to the fore as a theme when he treats of following Christ in the case of those who are called, the priests and the monks. The bearing of sinners by the Good Shepherd, his prayer for his enemies on the cross, his condemnation of all thought of revenge by his disciples, his compassion for our weaknesses, his soft and gentle manner, his offering of himself for our wickedness,[209] all that ought to have been in the mind of the rebellious monk, Demophilus. But everyone anointed with the holy oil must behold the ‘divine humiliation’ of Jesus who, ‘that we might be divinized, himself died on the cross, in order to snatch away from the abyss of death any who have received the baptism of his death.'[210] Should one hold it against Denys, if he relates this sacramental dying (Rom 6.3) to martyrdom, and also to the Christian's life of witness, the Christian who 'dies for the truth daily', in that he 'bears witness, as is fitting, with each word and deed',[211] and beyond that especially to the dying to the world that happens both as a sign and in actual fact in the ordination of monks?[212] If finally he interprets the actual death of the saints who are commemorated in the Mass as the 'consummation of their holiness',[213] namely as the inner conclusion of their death with Christ, which already has taken place, and on account of which the death of the believer is at every stage contrasted with the death of the unbeliever?[214] In the face of such a theology, what would be the use of referring to the fact that the Greeks (or the Buddhists) also see 'philosophy' as a daily learning to die? What force has this observation in the face of Jesus' saying (reminding one of Pascal) in the vision of Carpus? For the Lord, descending from heaven, takes the side of the two sinners persecuted by Carpus and says to their avenger: 'Raise your hand and from henceforth beat me, for see, I am ready to suffer afresh for the salvation of men, and I would do it gladly if thereby I could stop other men from sinning.'[215]

For Denys the sanctity of Christians is the result of the harmony of hierarchical order, the knowledge of revelation and apostolic activity (*taxis-episteme-energeia*). In this divinely-arranged triple harmony man becomes transparent to God and amenable to the proclaimed will of God. That is true typically of the hierarchy, which is called in the following of Jesus to be a 'herald of the counsels of God'. In the realization of this thought Denys' doctrine of prayer[216] (Neo-Platonic, it is said) is drawn into the Christian realm at the deepest possible level. Through putting himself completely at God's disposal in purification, illumination and union and through assimilation to the divine will, the hierarch comes to the point of 'no longer willing anything that is not completely pleasing to God and in agreement with the divine promises'. As a sacred minister he utters no petition which he does not know corresponds to the saving will of God. Therefore he chooses nothing in his own power, but rather places his will as a tool within the divine will, just as Peter, to whom has been given the power of the keys, the power to bind and loose even in heaven, did not utter the 'holy theological words' confessing Jesus' Godhead on his own impulse or through revelation from flesh and blood, but 'in virtue of an initiation by

God’. Prayer is therefore resignation to God, but in order to be ‘moved’ or ‘inspired’ more effectively by the divine will. Here for a last time office and spirit have become one.

ANSELM

Anselm's slender work, radiant and perfectly balanced, realises in the purest form the concerns of theological aesthetics. His reason is monastic, like that of the Areopagite, but it is Benedictine, and that means both communal and dialogic at the same time. Its monastic form is contemplative, beholding, transparent; its Benedictine content is manifest in the consciousness of freedom and in a form of life stamped by freedom. These yield a common fruit in the acme of Christian aesthetics. Anselm contemplates the highest rectitude (*rectitudo*) of the divine revelation in creation and redemption; he discerns its truth from the harmony, from the faultless proportions, from the way in which it must be so (*necessitas*), something at once dependent on the utmost freedom and manifesting the utmost freedom, and this vision reveals to him absolute beauty: God's beauty in the freely fashioned form of the world. When he asks by what reason or necessity God was made man (*qua ratione vel necessitate Deus homo factus est*), the question appears to him 'very difficult, but in its solution it is intelligible to all and delightful both on account of its usefulness and on account of the beauty of the reason (*rationis pulchritudinem*).'[1] This beauty appears to the one who beholds it so ineffable (*inenarrabilis pulchritudo*[2]) that he hardly dares attempt its human imitation; the master does not want to accede to Boso's pressing requests, 'for the subject matter is not only precious, but is fair with a reason (*speciosa ratione*) above human understanding, just as it has to do with him who is "beautiful above the sons of men". I am always indignant with poor artists when I see our Lord himself painted with an ugly form, and I am afraid that I may find myself in the same position if I dare to set out such a beautiful theme in rude and contemptible language.'[3] However, the problem of expression remains secondary to the problem of thought: the decisive thing about this monastic contemplation is that it is not ecstasy, nor feeling, but contemplative reason (*rationis contemplatio*[4]), contemplation albeit of a reason on a pilgrimage of longing, between earthly faith and eternal vision (*meditetu . . . . esuria . . . . desideret tota substantia mea*[5]). It is the contemplation, above all, of a praying reason which only hopes to find insight in dialogue with the eternal truth, and therefore ever again passes over from the form of meditation to that of prayer.

Anselm’s work has two sides: form and content, method and subject matter; and if both exist in tension with one another, too little attention is usually paid to their unity and their mutual interdependence. The method is that of *rationes necessariae*; it appears as a prevalent philosophical method, and this presupposes that the subject matter is to a significant degree also philosophical. In spite of this the subject matter is the free dealings of the free God with a mankind freely created and brought anew into freedom by Christ, that is, a predominantly theological subject matter, which will be shown to be reflected in the method. The ‘philosophical’ meditation is unfolded predominantly in the first two works, the *Monologion* and the *Proslogion*, while the theological questions concerning the freedom of God, of the angels, and of men, their presuppositions, conditions and their dramatic outworking, are the concern of all the following systematic works: *On the Freedom of the Will, On the Fall of the Devil, Why God Became Man, On the Virginal Conception and Original Sin, On the Concord between the Foreknowledge, Predestination and Grace of God and the Freedom of the Will*. The polemic against Roscelin (*Letter on the Incarnation of the Word*), the discussion with the Greeks at the Council of Bari (1098), *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, overarch the problem of freedom at the level of the trinitarian relations, while the wonderful *Prayers and Meditations* bestow on it the indispensable ecclesiological and existential form. Although, then, the method and subject matter completely interpenetrate one another, we may, beginning with considerations of method, treat them one after another, because in this way what is peculiar to Anselm, even over against his great master, Augustine, comes into prominence.

1. AESTHETIC REASON

Contemplative Christian reason, whose subject matter is the truly real, grows organically—if one sets on one side all polemical deviant strands—out of the ancient contemplation of Being. The gnostic, as Clement and even more Evagrius Ponticus conceives him, thinks not only the content of Biblical revelation which is believed by the pistic, he thinks it necessarily as the perfection of the philosophical theology of the 'pagans'; as the authentic—theoretical and practical—philosopher, he brings the wisdom of the world to its final state. The *monachos (i.e.*, a solitary and unified man, enfolding everything in himself and turned towards the One) brings the ancient *theoria* to perfection; he is therefore the philosopher in the Christian realm.[6] The question whether Anselm is a philosopher or a theologian is therefore quite superfluous and fundamentally misconceived: the anti-pagan polemic of the Fathers is no longer relevant, nor is the separation of disciplines which began in the period of high scholasticism yet acute: Anselm stands in the *kairos*, for the Biblical revelation can be understood simply as the transcendent consummation of ancient philosophy, which never was philosophy in the modern sense but was rather in its fundamental concerns theology: speech about God, about the eternal, about the being of the one who is. That all earthly existence is rooted there, whence it has proceeded and whither it seeks to return, this the Greeks knew, but Christians know something they hardly guessed: that God is a person, that he is free, that he is therefore creator and loving, loving in the inner freedom of his life. Here philosophy, without any discontinuity, finds its authentic self, and thus it is pointless to ask whether these last expressions are 'theology' or the fruit of reason illuminated by the light of revelation. In face of the overwhelming depths of reality it would be irrelevant and uninteresting to ask what reason might do without revelation, but it would also be unthinkable to want to dispense with reason so as to live from 'faith alone', for the revelation of God means his causing himself to be beheld and therefore appeals unequivocally to the understanding of the believer, to the eye of his reason.

In so far as the free God expresses his inner being in freedom, everything begins with the acceptance of his word, and therefore with faith; the humble acceptance of the free and absolute word, in the form in which it offers itself, is the fundamental meaning of *credere*, which, because this presupposition always remains the same, can never be set aside by understanding. It is in particular also the reception of the word in its churchly form; the ever-new sowing of the word, 'or more exactly of the sense which is perceived through the word', in the heart, and the wearisome cultivation (*laboriosa cultura*) of this grace which is allotted to the believer, is the ever-new foundation for any understanding.[7] But the word in the gospel itself continually demands of the hearer understanding, insight, apprehension. Therefore *credo, sed intelligere desidero.*[8] *Credentem mefecisti scire quod nesciens credebam*.[9] So it is a matter *of fide stabilitus in rationis ejus indagine se exercere,*[10] *ut non solum fide, verum etiam evidenti cognoscant ratione*[11] This understanding has its place, as we have said, between faith and vision (*inter fidem et speciem intellectum esse medium intelligo*[12]), although no sort of immediate transition from the one to the other is intended.[13] The earthly character of this understanding is made even clearer if we consider its twofold intention: from below it is a defence against unbelief, whose grounds are hereby removed; from above it promotes contemplation and the Christian life.[14] The understanding of the total (philosophical-theological) truth demands—as the wise men of the ancient world knew—the total commitment of a man: 1. a life established on the truth and set free for it, to which life there belongs for the Christian the wrestling of prayer; 2. the struggle for conceptual understanding so as to achieve in-sight, *intellectus*; 3. the pure joy and blessedness (*delectatio, beatitudo*) in the truth thus found, which accrues to man through grace and merit alike. Each of these moments yields an aesthetic moment, from which the Anselmian *pulchritudo rationis* attains its unity.

1. Life for the sake of the truth (such as Pythagoras, Plato, Epicurus demanded of their disciples) means a loving devotion to the thing itself: for this is *tanta res*, that is, it wills to be embraced not only with 'most certain faith', but also with all love, even with life-giving love.[15] In Christian terms it means purity, freedom from sin, for how should the spirit understand the things of God 'when it is so estranged from itself by the enormity of its dullness that it is scarcely aware of the seriousness of its sickness'?[16] This 'deathly insensibility'[17] must be removed by living faith, but also we 'must carefully detach ourselves from the inclinations of our own will, which often

and greatly hinders the mind from the understanding of rectitude.'[18] For certainty concerning the things of God comes only to those who are willing: *omnibus est volentibus advertere perspicuum*.[19] This will in relation to a free God means prayer, *ut Deus aperiat quodprius latebat*,[20] means to be free and to be still in the presence of God,[21] to wait patiently for understanding, 'worshipping by loving and loving by worshipping with all one's powers'.[22] On the other hand, it does not mean 'raising up the horns of a knowledge that trusts in itself', rather: 'if I am able to understand, then I say thank you, if not, then I bow my head in reverence.'[23] The demand of 'purity of heart', of 'humble docility before the testimonies of God', of 'becoming a child' and before all else of the exercise of 'firm faith, serious virtue and wisdom' is the ancient demand of the Fathers, which Anselm repeats against Roscelin: it is only when one is perfected in *praktikē* that one can undertake *theoria*; between faith and insight comes the experience of life: *qui non crediderit non experietur, et qui expertus non fuerit non cognoscet*.[24] This experience yields the 'spiritual wings', with which alone one can 'ascend to the loftiest questions of the faith', and without which an 'untimely ascent' (*praepostere*) can lead only to one's being 'cast down into manifold error'.[25] But what is this experience of life? It is a rising above the level at which mere thinking is simply confronted by what is merely thought; it is the realization that a free, created person—who moreover knows himself to be lacking in freedom due to sin—faces the infinite, free, personal God, whom he can neither control nor command for a double reason: because he is created, and because he is lost and sinful. *Experientia*, as the intellectual result of *praktikē*, consists precisely in the *sensorium*, that each finite and fallen creature is entirely bereft of the *sensorium* appropriate to the living God. Both moments, the philosophical (the *major dissimilitudo* of God) and the theological one of the fallenness of the creature from God, belong together for Anselm; the prayer at the beginning of the *Proslogion* testifies to this, when it bewails the 'absence' of a God who is yet believed to be present, while it cannot effect of itself the act by which he would be made present, because it is 'man's unhappy lot to have lost that for which he was made', to have fallen 'from his native land into exile, from the vision of God into our blindness'.[26] 'Grant me to behold your light, even if only from afar, from the depths.' The one praying appeals to his knowledge of the *analogia entis*: 'I do not try, O Lord, to penetrate your depths, because I do not at all compare my understanding to that; but I desire to understand in some measure (*aliquatenus*) your truth, which my heart believes and loves.’ But he appeals equally to the grace of God, which can renew and restore again the image of God which has been buried and blackened in the sinner.[27] And yet when once the proof of God’s existence and the consideration of his nature have been given, there returns, at a deeper level, the same prayer of lament: ‘if you have indeed found him, why do you not feel (*sentis*) what you have found . . . . O Lord my God, my maker and remaker, say to my soul in its longing what else there is than what it saw, that it may see purely what it desires. It strains itself to see more, and yet it sees nothing beyond this thing that it sees except darkness; or rather it does not see darkness, which does not exist in you, but it sees that it cannot see *more* on account of its own darkness.’[28] The formula for the analogy between God and the creature so characteristic of Anselm (*videt se non plus posse videre propter tenebras suas*) makes the philosophical one with the theological, not only in the sense of the Areopagitical contemplation in dazzling darkness, but equally in the realization of the loss of any perception as a result of original sin, something that goes beyond the Augustinian prayers and contemplation in the *Confessions*. Following Denys and Augustine he can say: ‘my spirit is darkened through its shortsightedness, and overwhelmed by your infinity . . . your light is too strong, the eye of my soul cannot long behold it.’[29] But then, in contrast to Augustine, comes the lament: ‘I do not feel you . . . my soul looks around, but it sees not your beauty. It listens, but does not hear your harmony. It smells, but does not perceive your fragrance. It tastes, but does not know your savour, feels but does not sense your gentleness. For all these, O Lord God, you have in yourself in an ineffable manner, for you have given them to things created by you in their sensible manner, but the senses of my soul are hardened, stupefied and blocked by the ancient malady of sin. And again behold what trouble, what sadness and lamentation meets one who seeks joy and happiness . . . . I had thought that I could eat, and behold I hunger for more.’[30] So faith’s starting-point, when taken seriously, brings reason to this realization: that it is not only—in the experiencing of reality—overwhelmed by God’s being ever greater, but beyond that it perceives in the personal encounter how out of tune with all-purity and all-love is man, subject as he is to original sin. It is certainly the ‘inexhaustibility for mortals of the *ratio veritatis*,’[31] the ‘incomprehensibility of the divine Wisdom’,[32] and the one who seeks ‘should endure the fact that there are things in God that his understanding cannot penetrate’,[33] should also understand that, if he does find reasons, there ‘are always still higher reasons that remain hidden’,[34] and that man never deals with God as an equal and can never ascend above God even in his thoughts.[35] But beyond all this it is the realisation that there is a dependence on the freedom of the God of grace, which proves itself gracious to the sinner only in the irreducible situations of the history of salvation. Only on this level can the next step, the effort of conceptual understanding and the methodological bracketing (*epochē*) which subserves it, be made comprehensible.

2. This effort of the understanding is what is decisively Anselmian in the universal Christian demand of *intelligere fidem*. Anselm, who much more than Augustine emphasises the freedom of the creature, experiences this effort as an obligation of gratitude in response to the word of revelation: ‘It seems to me to be negligence, if, after we have been established in the faith, we do not make the effort to understand what we believe.’[36] The bracketing[37] of faith grounded on authority, of the simple acceptance of the facts presented in the Bible, is intended above all to disturb the untroubled and comfortable way in which the pistic relies on mere facts which a man does not need to answer for to transcend theological positivism and nominalism. If it is truly the Logos who became man, then it can only be the case that in this, his highest manifestation, the whole meaning of Being is made manifest, and to grasp this, at least in outline, belongs to the dignity of a Christian. To that can be added that the reason, which operates here within the methodological bracketing, is no ‘pure’ reason, but a reason sinful and redeemed and coloured by the historical dimensions of existence, and that it demonstrates from historical reality the conditions of its possibility and therefore reduces to silence those who deny and scoff.[38] Moreover this reason, which produces a kind of freehand copy, retains a continuing contact with revelation: whatever in it contradicts the evident decisions of authority is acknowledged as false.[39]

But these are simply preliminaries, for still nothing fundamental has been said about the character of Anselmian reason. This reason has such a unique character that it can be determined neither by relating it back to the Patristic *intellectus* nor by seeing in it a foreshadowing of the *ratio* of High Scholasticism. Reason is for Anselm the spirit’s capacity for sight in a quite original way. To think means to make something visible spiritually. Because the introduction to this vision often happens in dialogue between the master and the disciple, the teacher is the one who brings about vision, who draws the truth out of hiddenness: *Aperias!*[40] *Ostende!*[41] is what one demands of him. The result of his pointing is sight: *non video cur, nisi mihi ostendas.*[42] *Videre* is the fundamental word for understanding, in each case as the result of an explanation or pointer[43] which, in its simplicity and clarity, has something evident about it,[44] something beyond contradiction.[45] *Video nunc aperte quod hactenus non animadverti.*[46] *Nihil corrigendum esse video.*[47] This continually repeated *videre*[48] also relates to cases of difficulty (*quiddam inexplicabile video*[49] *non video cur,*[50] *nondum video*[51]); it gives the *videtur* (*mihi*) a quite specifically eidetic colouring (*nec mihi nunc videtur,*[52] *quamvis mihi videar intelligere, apertius ostende;*[53] finally: *si videtur quomodo Christus huic subjacere non potuit, palam erit . . .*[54]). Instead of *videre* Anselm can use any verb for beholding: *intueri,*[55] *cogitando intueri,*[56] *inspicere,*[57] *speculari* (with the clear connotation of mirror and sight),[58] *contemplari,*[59] whence one passes without a break to *considerare* and *meditari*. Much is made of the transparency of what is true *liquida vera,*[60] *liquidissime pervisum est,*[61] *liquet,*[62] *liquido,*[63] *liquidissimum est.*[64] Truth or *ratio* is *perspecta,*[65] *pervisa,*[66] *conspicua,*[67] *perspicua*[68] *manifesta.*[69] It is revealed, made known: *patet,*[70] *palam est,*[71] it is seen *patenter;*[72] it appears, *apparet.*[73] Continually there surface the words: *aperire,*[74] *apertum,*[75] *ratio aperta,*[76] *apertissimum,*[77] *apertissime probare,*[78] and this opening up of the truth and its grounds causes it to appear in its incontrovertibility: *inexpugnabiliter,*[79] *ratio* (or *necessitas*) *inevitabilis*[80] *irrefragabilis*[81] *indubitabilis*[82] in a *robur inflexibile*[83] finally as *ratio evidens,*[84] *evidentissime.*[85] In an openness or revealedness which spiritual vision cannot withstand: *non possum apertae consequentiae resistere*[86] *non potest aliud esse,*[87] *resistere nequeo rationi tuae,*[88] and which compels agreement: *cogit*[89] *velit nolit sentit.*[90] The radiant obviousness of the truth (*claritas veritatis,*[91] *nihil clarius,*[92] claret)[93] is something that convinces so persuasively (*persuadet ratio)*[94] *that finally it must be described by using the keyword, as 'necessity', that which must be so: as ratio necessaria*[95] *rationis necessitas*[96] *necessitas veritatis*[97] *as that quod supra rationabili et perspicua necessitate claruit.*[98] *The interchangeability of perspicuum and necessarium*[99] *points to the true character of the latter: it is that made apprehensible to spiritual sight, realizable, unavoidably perceptible as true* *(intellectus sentire per rationem constringitur*[100]*). From such apprehensibility there arises certainty (certa ratio,*[101] *certa Veritas et verta certitudo,*[102] *certissimum,*[103] *indubitanter,*[104] *nihil consequentius*[105]*), the opposite of which is absurd (stultissimum,*[106] *absurdissimum*[107]*).*

The Anselmian process of thought is, at the level of spiritual demonstration, true thought, which can never cease to protest against ‘modern dialectic’[108] which plays with unclear concepts (*dialecticis sophismatibus*[109]) and just for that reason, as Anselm sees it, remains bound to the realm of sensible imagination without being able to rise to the level of aesthetic reason.[110] In order to think, there is needed a *simplicem intellection et non multiplicitate phantasmatum obrutum*.[111] But what is here spoken against Roscelin can elsewhere be used against a theology that is pleasing but devoid of thought, which thinks it sufficient to compare image with image and set up ‘fitting parallels’—comparing the disobedient woman Eve with the obedient woman Mary, the tree of paradise with the tree of the cross—in order to fashion thereby a ‘wonderful beauty’. ‘It must be admitted that all these things are beautiful and can be accepted as material for the imagination. But if they do not rest on something solid, they are hardly enough to convince unbelievers . . . . For when a man wants to paint a picture, he selects something solid to paint on, so that his painting will endure . . . . *Monstranda ergo prius est veritatis soliditas rationabilis, id est necessitas*. . . .’[112] At the end of his proof Anselm will take up again the images of fittingness with which he began; their Tightness and fittingness (*convenit valde*) has now been demonstrated, and it can be said: *valde pulchrae et rationabiles sunt istae picturae*.[113] Now are these things ‘established on the firmness of truth, as on a solid foundation, which, with the help of God, we have to some extent perceived.’[114] Neither playing with concepts nor looking at images is in itself to be equated with thought. *Monologion* 10 enumerates four steps: (1) the mere ostensive naming of a significant name, such as man; (2) the inward thinking of the name (*nomen cogitare*); (3) the spiritual apprehension of the thing itself through a sensible image (*imago*); (4) The spiritual apprehension of the thing itself by reason (*ratio*). While the *imago* only represents the *figura sensibilis,* reason grasps the *universalis essentia.*[115] *Proslogion* 4 emphasizes once more the second and the fourth steps: ‘the thing is thought in one way when the word signifying it is thought, in another way when the thing itself which it is is understood.’[116] For the understanding of the thing itself there stands the traditional expression *universalis essentia*, which in the first place need mean no more than that the insight into the essence of the thing, the philosophical intuition of its essence, is the unconditional presupposition of any, even of theological, thinking. ‘How can someone who does not yet understand how several men are one man in species comprehend how in that most mysterious and lofty nature several persons, each one of whom is perfect God, are one God? Or how can someone whose mind is so dark that he cannot distinguish between his own horse and its colour, distinguish between the one God and his several relations? Finally, he who cannot understand that anything except the individual is man will only be able to understand “man” as referring to a human person. For every individual man is a person. How, then, will he be able to understand that manhood, but not a person, was taken by the Word . . .?’[117] In all theological thought philosophical thought is implicit, but nominalist philosophy (for which nothing universal can be intuited) is for Anselm a contradiction in itself.

For Anselm the process of thought moves unmistakably towards the point where the subject studied appears with such clarity that one can speak of an immediate in-sight, towards the making present of the subject matter, whereby the attempt to achieve such a making-present proves whether the subject matter can be achieved and is therefore true or not. To give an example:

> Anselm: Can you suppose that a man who has once sinned, and has never made satisfaction to God for his sin, but is simply let off unpunished, is equal to an angel who has never sinned? Boso: I can think and say the words, but I cannot think their real meaning any more than I can suppose falsehood to be the truth.[118]

This making present before the mind (*cogito hoc, velut ante nos sit*[119]) will not be achieved by the unexperienced at the first stroke; the pure beholding (*puro rationis intuitu*[120]), the simple conceptual vision (*simplex intellectus*[121]) is accomplished in a process of analysis and synthesis of the components (*intellectus dividens et componens*, as Thomas will say), each of which is a partial view (*quasi cogitando intueri, cogitantis inspectio*[122]), which to begin with appears to be quite irreconcilable with any other view (*ne forte repugnet huic assertioni quod intueor*.[123] *Sic tua disputati . . . . necessariis rationihus concatenatur, ut nulla ration . . . . dissolvi posse* videam, *nisi quia* video *aliquid consequ . . . .*[124]), Thus the foremost task for the thinker is to develop and use this power of synthetic vision, the capacity to gather together what is separated, which is the root meaning of *legere, logos: opus est ut tu ea quae dicam non sis contentus singula tantum intelligere, sed omnia simul memoria* quasi sub uno intuitu colligere.[125] This power of uniting in the *intuitus*, which raises one from a particular view to a universal vision, is judgement: *judicium animae*.[126] Anselm will have recourse to this same unifying judgement for his proof of the existence of God: *nullus intelligens id quod Deus est, potest cogitate quod Deus non est*.[127]

Such unifying vision—as *speculatio,*[128] *meditatio,*[129] and particularly *consideratio*[130]—judges what belongs together, what unites in the correct way (*concatenation*[131] *contextio,*[132] *convenientia,*[133] *congruentia,*[134] *consequential*[135] *concordia*[136]) what forms a unity in spite of the initial impression (*quomodo convenient contraria*[137]) and produces a *concors veritas*.[138] It can take place as a calculating hesitation (*mihi magis videtur convenientia quam inconvenientia,*[139] *magis convenit*[140]), a preference on balance, so that his words here are often in the comparative (*congruentius*), granting rather than requiring (*non incongrue*[141]), marking the perception of a suitability (*decet*[142]). So there arise degrees of compellingness with which the subject matter thrusts itself upon the *intuitus* (*non solum conveniens, sed etiam necessarium*[143]).

This notion of degrees, however, so far as it is concerned with the divine work of salvation, does not apply to the subject matter itself, but rather its more or less central manifestation of itself to the subject. Where, on the other hand, the subject matter is concerned, there are in God’s free dealings no degrees of necessity. Just as his creation proceeded from the fullest, unconstrained freedom from which developed an order determined by law, so his self-revelation is unfolded in the history of salvation and in Jesus Christ equally in unsurpassable freedom and ordered necessity. The God who allows himself to be seen (even if through a veil) shows himself with a logic nothing can surpass, the inner consequence of which is the most compelling that there is, in the objective structure of which there is no room for any distinction between the necessary and what is simply fitting and suitable. It is only that the vision of the whole structure is something that transcends human, even believing, reason; what it can perceive of necessity within it is only a fragment which nevertheless clearly contains within itself a guarantee of the meaning of the whole. With this we stand once more before the Anselmian form of the *analogia ends*, in which *evidentissime comprehendi potest* that the manner of God’s knowing and fashioning *ab humana scientia comprehendi non posse*.[144] This is again the *videt se non plus posse videre*.[145] Nevertheless God’s revelation of love is presupposed, and there is no harsh barrier set in the path of the one who seeks and longs, but rather just as the being of existents is disclosed to the philosopher in an incomprehensible manner, so the inner ground of the freedom and love of God is opened to the believer in an incomprehensible manner: *miro modo apertissimum est*.[146] There is a necessity which ‘compels’ us to posit within God, the free creator, a *pluralitas, ineffabilem certe*, and which ‘can be expressed in no way’;[147] there reigns *quaedam tarn ineffabilis quam inevitabilis pluralitas* in the highest unity.[148] After Anselm has taken a few more steps into the *mysterium*, he breaks off: ‘For I hold that it must be enough for the one who seeks to understand an incomprehensible matter if by reasoning he arrives at the conclusion that he knows most certainly that it is, even if he cannot penetrate by his understanding how it is . . . . For what is so incomprehensible and so ineffable as that which is above all? If, then, those things which up till now have been disputed concerning the highest being are asserted on the basis of compelling reasons, although they cannot be so penetrated by the understanding that they can be explained in words, in no way is the sure foundation of their certitude shaken. Such consideration understands rationally that it is incomprehensible . . . *rationabiliter comprehendit incomprehensibile esse*.’[149] The solution of this paradox lies in the human mind, which can only understand itself, its rationality and freedom, in the inner opposition of ground (memory), spirit-word (understanding) and will; but this structure can be understood only as a reflection of a quite other archetype and so that in itself it ‘reflects’ as in a ‘mirror’ the obscure archetype (*in speculo speculari*).[150] This is good Augustinianism; only it should not be overlooked that here too the theological act is rooted in the philosophical, and that, as the existent is distinguished from Being, in which it is rooted, and the creature from God, so the free spiritual being understands itself in the contrast with absolute Spirit, in which it is rooted just in its being spiritual and its being free.

The way of the *Monologion* (beside which the *Proslogion* can be seen as an epitome) is this steady ascent from philosophical (or a classical-theological) vision to the vision of (Christian) theological reason, in which the theological element lies rather in the light of faith which falls on the divine being than in an object of faith of its own; this last is already methodically bracketed off, for the sake of understanding. The change is accomplished as imperceptibly as possible—through the equation of *per ipsum* with *ex* in chapter 5: what comes forth from God is also created by him, and indeed, as the continuation shows, necessarily out of nothing or out of his creative idea, from which there follows God's freedom and personality and finally his being as spiritual word. Thus one of the standing titles of God is henceforth *creatrix essentia (substantia, natura*),[151] and the 'ideas' are deduced not primarily from below, from the contingence and the degrees of worldly qualities, which are ascending degrees of perfection, indeed of reality, and which persuade (*persuadet*)[152] of the existence of something most perfect and most real in their sphere, but rather from above: from the free self-expression of God, who plans and 'imagines' what he wills. And with that the category of expression (*exprimere*) is given its place, which will become so important for Bonaventure; and the *ars divina* will be less *in facto esse*, in the order of the universal, than *in fieri*, in the free discovery of essences, seen in the power of expression of the divine 'fancy' and located in the 'place' in God, where the power of generation within the divine itself is engaged in its trinitarian work.[153] All this is certainly a continuation of Augustine's trinitarian thought, but from the outset there is an emphasis on God's total freedom and therefore on the spontaneity of his self-disclosure; also the philosophical categories of infinity, of God's transcendence over space and time, his invulnerability (*apatheia*) and therefore his immanence in everything finite are filled out in a personal way: impassibility must be one with God's mercy,[154] his immanence is equivalent to his personal presence.[155] The striving after happiness, which the Greek philosopher sought to satisfy through contemplation of the highest good, assumes in virtue of the personal freedom of God the mode of an aspiring after God, who both graciously gives himself and himself comforts him who exerts himself on his account and recompenses (*retribuit*) him in accordance with his effort.[156] And if already with Plato thought gains admittance 'suddenly' (*exaiphnēs*), then this is even more true with Anselm, where the granting of the decisive encounter depends on the very decision of God in his freedom. Anselm was already close to giving up in despair his efforts to find a synthetic proof of the existence of God (*desperans volui cessare*) when that for which he was seeking suddenly 'presented itself' (*se obtulit*),[157] as earlier in the *Monologion: 'ad magnam et delectabile quiddam me subito perduxit haec mea meditatio'*.[158] From this the *appetitus naturalis ad Deum* emerges in clarity and without caesura as the Christian stance of faith, hope and love, and indeed this is characteristic in that from the recognition of God as the highest good 'there follows with utmost certainty that each man has to love and long for this God with all his heart, all his soul and all his feeling', something that equally includes the fact that no-one can strive for this without the hope that he may one day attain to it. 'No-one, however, can love or hope who does not believe.' Anselm characterizes this faith as *credere in summam essentiam*, because the 'in' expresses both the movement towards God and the acceptance of all that which is a presupposition for such a thrusting forward (*intentio*). 'For it would not seem that he believed in that if he believed something that did not belong to this striving, or if he did not strive for that through what he does believe': the content of faith is specified by the pressure of love and derives both its measure and its title to existence from it. In every way is this remarkable: not only in respect of the sequence love—hope—faith, but also in the way the Christian faith is incorporated without break into the classical eros in its movement towards God, even though Anselm naturally knows that the content of faith is God's freely revealed reality and truth, which is presupposed even for the striving itself. Thus, even though he does indeed equate *credere in* with *credere ad*, it is the former expression that he prefers, because he goes on to say that whoever 'believes in God' already moves within the sphere of God (*intra illam permanebit*) and, in the light of faith and its object, participates in God.[159] This whole conception culminates in a theology of the human spirit as *imago trinitatis*, as spiritual ground, self-possession and will of love, which is presupposed in the act of trinitarian revelation and is actualized as the answer to the Word of God. What spirit finally is is only clarified in the personal dialogue between eternal and created spirit, whose answer is comprised in and made possible, both essentially and personally, by the word of eternal love.

The *Proslogion* with its 'ontological argument for the existence of God' presents itself as a tautened condensation of the *Monologion*[160] and must therefore contain in a tightly argued form the thought of the earlier work. If, then, the proof derives God's existence from the speculative characterisation of God as *id quo majus cogitari nequit*,[161] because what exists is more than what is merely thought, then the first point to make is that according to the

Monologion God can be attained by no concept drawn from the world,[162] indeed that a 'concept of God' is a contradictory form of words, because God is essentially what cannot be conceived, and that this indeed is what finite reason can grasp: *comprehendit incomprehensible esse*.[163] The *id quo majus cogitari nequit* is thus exactly translatable by *quiddam majus quam cogitaripossit*.[164] No more than being is a concept, though it is the presupposition for any formation of concepts, no more, indeed far less, is God a concept, although he is the presupposition for all being (and any being) and all thought (and any thinker). If the negative formula (*id quo majus* . . .) could be taken at most as designating a limiting concept, then the comparative (*majus*) clearly expresses the fact that it is in no sense a static concept, but rather points to a dynamic movement of thought, and within that to a never-attained horizon of thought, which yet contains all thought, a horizon indeed which the positive formula (*quiddam majus* . . .) then expressly represents as transcendent. But in Anselm's doctrine of thought each statement about essence is primarily a function of a statement about existence; if the function of indication or meaning can indeed be considered or understood for itself, abstracted from existential correctness, then it can be so only in its applicability to the real.[165] If reality or unreality or any condition of being is to be predicated of something which we conceive, then we must at least initially posit the act of thinking as the existing 'cause' (*causa*) or active bearer (*facere*) of the property of being or essence which is predicated.[166] Thinking owes (*debet*) this effective cause, on the basis of which it makes its claims (*affirmatio*[167]), a statement which rightly characterizes reality (*recta* = *vera signijicatio*[168]). Thus it follows that thinking owes the final bearer of the whole order of designation and expression the declaration of reality, because this logical bearer is by definition also the ontological bearer, in so far as every conceptual order is founded on the order of existence; the judgement S = P is reduced in this case to the tautology A = A: being is being. This is not to deny that for the aesthetic, intuitive thought of Anselm this highest intuition,[169] achieved after a long struggle, presupposes the conventionalities of thought of the *Monologion*: on the one hand the manifestation of the highest reality from the attempted comparison of degrees of being of ever-ascending reality, and on the other, and as part of that reflection, that philosophical experience of thought about the existent itself, which the letter against Roscelin calls *experimentutn*. A 'deduction' of existence from a concept, or even the notion that we can think God as a concept, can only be for Anselm a caricature of a philosophical act. In contrast, the full realisation of the true philosophical act is to be found in that theological experience of the revelation of the mercy of the Father in the suffering Son, in which in an incomprehensible manner all righteousness is satisfied, *ut nec major (misericordia) necjustior cogitaripossit*:[170] herein lies nothing less than the overwhelming of the aesthetic reason of faith by the incomprehensibility of the divine love, an incomprehensibility radiating in the form of revelation as it is exhibited: *rationabiliter comprehendit incomprehensibile esse*.[171] This structure of thought is final, it applies even in the heavenly vision: *Sancti Dei in gloria sua Deum videbunt, sed magnitudinem divinitatis ejus sive immensitatem potentiae illius comprehendere nequibunt. Non enim immensus esset, si intellectu alicujus comprehendi potuisset*.[171a]

3. It is precisely from this structure of aesthetic reason that the third moment emerges: joy, *gaudium*, *delectatio*. It is joy at the 'utmost beauty' of God,[172] which to begin with certainly, again in the sense of classical contemplation, is read off from the glory of the world-order (*multitudinem tarn formose formatam, tarn ordinate variatam, tarn convenienter diversam*[173]) but is much more to be seen in the supernatural beauty of the order of salvation, which is *propter rationis pulchritudinem amabilis*[174] and makes possible a *valde pulchra contemplatio*.[175] But because the joy of finding the harmonies hidden in the history of salvation presupposes the grace of faith and therefore supplicating prayer, it will at the same time be both satisfaction of the reason through the evidence that is offered and, at a deeper level, thankfulness for its being given in grace: thus the theological blessedness is found in the philosophical and beyond it. Both moments are inseparable in the *delectabile quiddam*, at which the contemplation suddenly (*subito*) arrives,[176] in the *delectabiliter intueri*[177] of the inner mysteries of God: *valde mihi videtur delectabile retractare saepius tarn impenetrabile secretum*.[178] This joy breaks out at the end of a wearisome train of thought, which as such has been sustained wholly by an ascetic concentration of thought which allows itself not so much as a glance to the side, a pause for rest. For the joy breaks out really in the moment of reaching understanding: *ut eorum quae credunt intellectu et contemplatione delectentur*.[179] It is *the gaudeo invenisse*.[180] But it is not without cause that this joy breaks forth unhoped-for just at the point where despair at ever being able to attain a

solution (*desperans volui cessare*), even indeed where an erosion of one's resistance to such a pressing and dominating problem (*cum vehementer ejus importunitati resistendo jatigarer*), has gone before: for the evidential form of the truth which offers itself to the despairing (*se obtulit quod desperaveram*)[181] shines out of the abyss of ever-deeper incomprehensibility, indeed it is and remains the manifestation of just this: the incomprehensible.

Creation, and even more the order of salvation, is radiant in the order of its beauty as the revelation of God's freedom and therefore of the wholly other and infinite blessedness which belongs to the realm of the divine.[182] Therefore the joy communicated through the grace of God not only stands in no relation to human effort or to human joy in discovery, but neither does the joy which is granted through God's grace in this life of faith stand in any relation to the promised joy of the eternal vision face-to-face, in which the shared joy of all redeemed and loving creatures will be fulfilled at the same time. Henri de Lubac[183] has shown that the line of the *Proslogion* is thus deeply broken: the intellectual satisfaction at the discovery of the proof of God's existence is not at all the joy in God promised by Christ: the light of truth which streams forth from God does not bestow the vision face-to-face, and therefore the book ends with faith's reflection on the eschatological joy, in which alone the full satisfaction and the full overwhelming by the eternal blessedness of God will take place. The model of heavenly joy also makes clear what the vision face-to-face can mean for Anselm: nothing other and nothing less than the final and most positive fulfilment of the *comprehendit incomprehensibile esse*. 'O human heart, O needy heart, O heart experienced in suffering, indeed overwhelmed by suffering, how greatly would you rejoice if you abounded in all these things! Ask your innermost soul whether it could comprehend its joy in its so great blessedness? But surely if someone else whom you loved in every respect as yourself possessed that same blessedness, your joy would be doubled, for you would rejoice as much for him as for yourself.' But there are not just two or three but innumerable souls, 'no one of whom will love another less than itself, and each will rejoice for every other as for itself. If, then, the heart of man will scarcely be able to comprehend the joy that will belong to it from so great a good, how will it find space for so many and such great joys?' And because each one will love God and God's own happiness infinitely more than itself and than the others, it is clear 'that their whole heart, their whole mind, their whole soul, will not suffice for the grandeur of this love’. Therefore, deduces Anselm, the joy of God will not enter into the heart, but the hearts of the blessed will enter into the ever-greater joy of God: *intra ingaudium Domini tui*. Meanwhile there remains, rising up in a great wave to meet overwhelming joy, the greater longing and hope, the thirst of love for the stilling of love’s longing.[184]

And then there comes a final thought. The joy of the aesthetic reason, which contemplates the harmony of God’s work of salvation, is founded on the suffering of the Son of God. This casts a shadow over the whole theological aesthetic, at least so long as it is the aesthetic of faith, of the mortal life. ‘But Thou, O Lord, Thou, that I might live, hast taken death upon thyself. How can I rejoice at my freedom, which would not be were it not for thy chains? How can I be thankful for my salvation, which would not have been except for thy sorrows? How can I rejoice at my life, which would not have been except for thy death? Or should I rejoice at those things which thou hast suffered, and at the cruelty of those who did these things to thee, for unless they had done the . . . . this my good would not have been? Or if I grieve for those things, how can I rejoice for these things which would not have been, if those had not been?’[185] In this reversal, which explodes every perceptible proportion and finally casts the one who beholds together with his joy out of himself into the ever-greater love of God, there lies the overwhelming nature of Christian joy, which here can no longer be in any wise a human achievement, but which, because in spite of all it is offered, is given in grace as Christ’s Easter present.

2. THE RADIANCE OF FREEDOM

Anselm’s most important dogmatic treatises revolve round the problem of freedom: the early work, *De veritate*, points up the ethical element in truth, *De libertate arbitrii* sets out the basic principles of freedom, *De casu diaboli* their application to pure spiritual being, *De conceptu virginali et de originali peccato* their application to mankind; *Cur Deus homo* demythologizes the doctrine of redemption and grounds everything in the unforced freedom of the death of the Redeemer and the consequent liberation of the constrained freedom of men, and *De concordia* answers the objections against freedom drawn from the foreknowledge, predestination and grace of God. Freedom is the central concern of a Christian understanding of reality which (bracketing the historical-positive under revelation) contemplates the relationship of absolute and relative being in the light of the self-disclosure of the absolute. Anselm’s inquiry is, moreover, timely, for ‘in our times there are many who completely despair of the freedom of man.’[186] From time immemorial, and in particular since the Augustinian doctrine of sin and predestination, freedom has been the playground for all short-sighted and corner-cutting philosophers.

Everything springs from an utterly simple vision of the analogy between God and the creature as an analogy of freedom. For the creature, freedom can only mean being allowed to enter into communion with the other (and thus participation in God’s independent personal being), something, however, which can only be perfected as, through grace, creaturely freedom is drawn ever more strongly into absolute freedom, to the point where the creature achieves its final freedom, when it is free with God and in God, and simply wills, in freedom and not through being overpowered, what God wills: ‘God’s will itself will no longer be different from yours, for as you will will what he wills, so will he will in all things what you wil . . . . you will almightily dispose of your willing, because the Almighty himself will in all things be in accord (*concordantem habebis*) with your will.’[187] But because ‘perfect *concordia* will reign only where this unites to become an *identitas* and a *unitas*’, namely, in the divine triunity,[188] the eschatological analogy of freedom between God and the creature can be realised in no other way than in grace as participation in the triune life, because ‘the Father has joined us to his almighty Son as his body and as coheirs with him, and made us who are called in his name to be gods. But God is the one who divinises; you on the contrary will be the one who is divinised.’[189]

It is this eschatological orientation which renders everything intelligible: the whole way that created freedom has to go before it can be realised and be freed for its own freedom. Looked at from this goal it may ‘not be part of the definition of freedom to be able to sin’, because such a definition would ‘lessen freedom, while its rejection would increase it’;[190] at best the power (*potestas*) which originally constituted freedom can in part be defined as being unable to be constrained to sin by any power on earth,[191] even the power of temptation.[192] ‘If it succumbs, then not to any alien power, but to its own.’[193] Freedom is therefore power (*potestas sive libertas*[194]), and this can be so powerful that either there simply is no question of powerlessness to resist temptation, as in the case of God and also in the case of Christ,[195] who is the only creature who is God, or there is no longer such a question, as in the case of the angels after the temptation which established them, or in the case of holy men—in both of which cases, because they are not God, this final freedom could only be attained with a great effort.[196] To have seen the necessity of having to attain by one’s own efforts the state of created freedom is one of Anselm’s greatest achievements, and governs his whole doctrine of freedom.

The non-necessity or contingency of the creature carries the implication that, if God gives it creaturely freedom, the ground for such freedom cannot lie in itself but can only be attained in the ground of divine freedom which is creaturely freedom’s ultimate ground. As a guide to the creature’s achievement of its freedom by its own efforts, God’s freedom comes to it necessarily in two ways: as law and as grace. Both together inseparably form the initial gift given and required by God himself for man’s realisation of his freedom. To make this intelligible Anselm works out, first in the treatise *De veritate*, the concept of rectitude (*rectitudo*) as a governing concept for the true and the good (and therefore for the beautiful, too): ‘true’ refers to the thought or proposition that rightly engages with an existent, or to that faculty which is able to express the sense of an existent according to its natural determination; ‘true’ refers also to the existent itself in so far as it corresponds to the highest norm of God’s knowledge and will. This ontic truth then leads into the ethical and in this way the right being (just or lawful being) of created freedom is subordinated to the norm of absolute freedom. Thus ‘truth and rectitude and justice are mutually defined’,[197] to which it is necessary to add in the case of justice that the free will may embrace the right norm for the sake of no other good or goal than rectitude itself,[198] something that for freedom leads to the final definition: ‘freedom of the will is the power of preserving the rectitude of the will for the sake of rectitude itself.’[199] This firmly-held definition[200] has meaning only within the context of a theistic and theological thought, in which the opposition of autonomy and heteronomy has been already overcome: rectitude, which is fitted for and empowered to preserve creaturely freedom, is nothing other than the initial gift of divine autonomy and therefore of the promise of participation in it. The self-orientation of *rectitudo propter se servata* is the way in which freedom is grounded in itself: *voluntas non est recta quia vult recte, sed recte vult quoniam recta est*.[201] Thus we can see why Anselm, when considering his aim, never fills out the content of the law (in terms of ‘natural law’) but rather determines it only formally as the will of God. This will is, by definition, identical with absolute freedom, which God is, no matter how it is made concrete for the creature, and submissiveness in relation to it is therefore the only way in which the creature can achieve its freedom. This will be better understood through a look, first, at God’s freedom, and then at the freedom of Adam, or, indeed, of the angel before its establishment in the good.

God is truth, because everything that regulates itself according to his idea is true; he is goodness, because everything that regulates itself according to his will is good. He himself regulates himself according to nothing: ‘his rectitude is his own will’, and ‘if rectitude must be preserved for its own sake, then this can be said so fittingly of no other rectitude than of God’s. For just as it preserves none other than itself, . . . so also it is not for the sake of any other, but only on its own account.’[202] What was more difficult to see in the case of truth, namely, how God, if truth is defined through a right *relation* to God, can be himself the highest truth,[203] is clearer in the case of freedom, because it emerges clearly that an identity of being and self-being (self-possession, freedom) does in fact occur, in which the moment of God’s being a rule—which is presented to the created will—exists in God himself. If God owes (*debet*)[204] no-one anything and needs (*eget*)[205] nothing, if he is free from within himself (*a se*)[206] and observes no superior will;[207] if further his will can be broken by no foreign will, then this would appear to lead right to the limits of a pure voluntarism: ‘Any necessity or impossibility is subordinate to his will, for his will is subordinate to no necessity or impossibility. Nothing is either necessary or impossible, except because he wills it so.’[208] However, ‘this must not be taken to mean that if God were to will something unfitting, it would be just because he wills it . . . thus it is only true to say: If God wills this, it is just, of those things which it is not unfitting for God to will.’[209] ‘God’s will is never irrational.’[210] But this again does not mean that God’s will is governed by norms laid down by a reason prior to him; rather his freedom penetrates and upholds his being through and through, and in this self-mightiness of being his truth is illuminated as the power of the total illumination of self and self-presence. ‘This insurmountable power and might’[211] of God over himself and over all real and possible being keeps his being free from anything coerced or prohibited, ‘two necessities which are as closely interrelated as necessity and impossibility’.[212] *Voluntatem vero ejus nulla praecessit necessitas,*[213] and for this very reason this will, for the creature, is truth beyond any court of appeal.

And now the ‘dignity and power and beauty’[214] of Adam in his original dowry of freedom becomes understandable. If God wished man to be free, then in creating him he had to give him a threefold endowment to set him on his way: the act of willing, which obediently wills the divinely-ordained good; in this very act the rule, which lies both in the act (in so far as it is morally good) and beyond the act (in so far as he obeys); and grace to enable man to keep himself in the freedom of this obedience. God must impart the act of willing (i.e., not only possible, but real, freedom), for without God’s act of freedom our ability (*potestas*) will not come to the point of acting.[215] In this notion Anselm will root his profound doctrine of the abiding freedom of the sinner: he possesses the *potestas* and is so far free,[216] and the sinner remains indebted to God for being free in the act of freedom,[217] ‘for he is always by nature free to preserve rectitude, if he once possessed it, even when he no longer has that which he is to preserve’;[218] he retains the *aptitudo intelligendi et volendi,*[219] the *naturalis dignitas,*[220] but the ability remains idle (*otiosa*).[221] Thus God has created Adam in the act of freedom: *in ipsa datione facta recta*.[222] But this means that the rule (which is God in his will) must at the same time be imparted to this will at creation, and, in so far as this rule was once one with the freedom and self-possession of the creature, it cannot be withdrawn from it by God without contradiction.[223] But this handing over of the personal will of God to the created will in the form of a rule to be followed is grace,[224] whence again it becomes conceivable at a deeper level why the sinner's *rectitudo voluntatis*, which was lost in the Fall, can no longer be won back by the sinner himself, but can only—through a miracle!—be restored by God.[225] For 'the will wills rectitude only because it is upright. For the will it is the same thing to be upright and to have rectitude. Thus it is clear that it can only will rectitude when it has rectitude. I do not deny, therefore, that the upright will can will rectitude which it does not yet have, *viz.*, when it wills a greater than it has; but I say only that it can will no rectitude unless it has the rectitude by which it can will it.' But the will cannot bring it forth out of itself, nor can it borrow it from any other creature. 'Grace alone' can give it to the creature 'without preceding merit'; if then the one who wills justly merits a higher rectitude or a reward, that is 'all fruit of the first grace'.[226] And 'even if rectitude is preserved through free will, it is not so much to be imputed to free will as to grace, for free will possesses and preserves rectitude only through prevenient and subsequent grace.'[227]

In all this Anselm speaks only of the final freedom of the creature, which serves it for the attainment of salvation.[228] But the character of this freedom is such that it can only be understood in terms of that most intimate and incomprehensible penetration of human freedom by divine freedom, which makes the whole relation of man to God dialogical; it is personal obedience to the free personal God, and through the appropriation of the will of God to its own free being this obedience becomes the incomprehensible mystery of the taking of God into its own being. Anselm, who always speaks only of *rectitudo* and obedience (and firmly avoids the Augustinian language of a *delectatio spiritualis* for the good, which was later misused by Jansen[229]), can here, where he deals with the depths of the concepts of *rectitudo* and *justitia*, no longer avoid that of love. Thus the *propter se servata* can be illuminated in a *solo amore*.[230] And similarly the meaning of free will and the ability to discriminate is that it 'should love the good and choose it, and still more love and choose the better'.[231] Indeed 'this choice, which can also be called judgement, is free, because the reason, by which rectitude is understood, teaches that that rectitude should always be preserved by the love of the same rectitude.'[232] The fact that freedom cannot be coerced, its incomprehensible spontaneity—*sponte* is the key-word of the Anselmian doctrine of redemption—gives to its applications that costliness which belongs only to love and which determines the meaning of what takes place between God and the world. *Memoria* and *intellectus* are in the service of *amare*;[233] all natural *rectitudo* refers in the end to the *rectum* cor,[234] which is created in order to 'love and to choose God, who is subsisting love',[235] 'above all else, for no other reason than for his own sake'.[236] So it is significant that the 'Book of Similitudes', both at the beginning and again at the end, goes beyond Augustine in depicting creaturely freedom in the language and thought-form of Origen, admittedly in a terminology which betrays a uniquely Anselmian character:[237] 'the power of willin . . . . occupies a position between God and the devil like that of a woman between her lawful husband and an adulterer . . . . If she unites herself only with her lawful husband, then she is lawful herself and bears legitimate children, but if she unites herself with the adulterer, she is adulterous and bears illegitimate children. If it unites itself to God, by receiving the prompting of the Holy Spirit, like a good seed, it is the lawful spouse and bears legitimate children, that is, virtues and good works, for straightway at its command all the organs (*sensus*) of the soul and the body are opened to fulfil the command of God: the power of willing itself is opened to the inclination (*affectio*) to virtue and to the (actual) willing of what it longs for, [similarly] memory, power of reflection, insight, the mind is given courage to love, is made ready for humility, is steeled for patience, and is opened to the bearing of the other virtues. Similarly the bodily senses are opened . . . . The one power of willing bears all that, when in love it has united itself to the will of God. The inclination or the use (*usus*) of the will is called the pleasing will or obedience, for, hearkening to God's will, it has him for a defender (*advocatam*) when it is asked why it does this or that.' Things are quite otherwise in the case of the pact with the devil, in which the soul opens itself to evil and gives birth to pride, that is 'the overstepping of its obligation', which is to say of its subjection to God's will. 'Each sin springs from such [pride]. And because man has this pride from himself and will not endure above himself the will of God as that to which he must owe obedience, therefore he withholds from God something that most properly and uniquely belongs to him. For it must belong to God alone to will from his own will, without owing obedience to any will set over him . . . . As God's own will is the source and origin of all good, so is man's own will the origin of all evil.'[238] This passage sheds light on the otherwise strange *Meditation* 2, in which the *virginitas male amissa* is bewailed: ‘You were a virgin, betrothed to Chris . . . . you have become an adulterer to him; freely you have cast yourself down miserably from the sublimity of virginity to the abyss of fornication . . . . you have become a stubborn harlot, a shameless whor . . . . , you have deserted your chaste lover in heaven, and followed your odious seducer into hell!’[239]

Only against the background of this mystery of marriage are Anselm’s final intentions perceptible. For him the philosophical *analogia entis* becomes the *analogia personalitatis* or *libertatis*, and correspondingly the perfection of the creature is found in its perfect liberation in the absolute divine freedom as it is taken up into the divine will: *haec est enim perfecta et liberrima humanae naturae oboedientia, cum voluntatem suam liberam sponte voluntati Dei subdit, et cum acceptam bonam voluntatem sine omni exactione spontanea libertate opere perficit*.[240] The good will is ‘received’, *accepta*, as the seed of God and of eternal freedom in the womb of human freedom, and the ‘opening’ of this womb to God—as obedience—is precisely the reception of freedom. Indeed, the *De concordia* compares the union of grace and created freedom in the begetting of the redeemed man with the union of father and mother in the begetting of the child.[241]

This further sheds light on the central concept of *debere*. God is simply free; he owes no man anything. The redemption of the sinner by Christ is not a ransom, as if the devil had any rights over man which he could assert against God.[242] Not the least necessity saddles God’s freedom if he decides freely (*sponte*)[243] to save lost mankind.[244] And the whole obedience of the incarnate Son depends entirely on the spontaneity of his love and simply unfolds the inner necessities of this free love,[245] including the very mystery of Gethsemane, the heavy bearing of the guilt of the world and the death. The whole trinitarian mystery between the Father and the Son—that the Son obeys really and to the end, and on the other side that the Father compels nothing but allows the Son’s way of sacrifice—however one contemplates it, is such a mystery of spontaneous, unforced love.[246] And just this absolute, because divine, spontaneity in the sacrifice of the Son determines its utmost costliness, which outweighs infinitely all the guilt of the world.[247] The sacrifice consists, however, in the fact that God of his free love really enters worldly destiny, really humbles himself to be included in the lineage of Adam, in that he becomes the son of Mary, and yet thereby, because all depends on freedom, does not fall under the sway of Adam, as did all the others who are included in his seed as members of his lineage.[248]

This assumption of worldly necessities into the free will of God which is not inwardly affected by them, that is, the assumption of worldly necessities into the necessities of intra-divine love, now raises the question: how far is God's plan of creation affected by the sin brought about by man's free will? If God owes nothing to any creature, does he owe it to himself, in view of his responsibility for the consequences of the world he has undertaken, to intervene and redeem, and indeed in just such a manner as is demanded by the linking of the necessities of the world order with those of his divine freedom? Man has violated God's glory in that 'he has taken away from God whatever he has planned to make out of human nature'.[249] 'For the wisdom of the artist is praised and declared according to the success of his work. As human nature, then, the precious work of God, on account of which he is to be glorified, diminishes or soils itself, so does it by its own fault dishonour God.'[250] There has then been withheld (*subtrahitur*) from God what is 'justly owed'[251] him.

But this withholding of honour must first be made good in the right measure: 'When the creature wills what it ought to will, it honours God—not because it bestows something on him, but because it willingly submits itself to God's will and direction, and keeps its own place in the universe of things, and maintains the beauty of that same universe, as far as in it lies.' But if it does not do this, then it 'disturbs the *universitatis drdinem et pulchritudinem*, as far as lies in it, although of course it cannot injure or diminish the power and dignity of God.' For, Anselm continues in the working out of an Augustinian meditation, the beauty of the world-order and therefore the glory of God are in any case intact, because God's distributive justice sees to it that order is preserved even in the event of an insurrection, so that no *ex violata ordinis pulchritudine deformitas* can develop; as little as any creature can escape any part of the canopy of heaven, except by approaching it at another point.[252] However, this aesthetic justification of evil, which has eschatological significance for Augustine, has only a limited place in Anselm's scheme of thought, and he will attempt to pass beyond it from various directions. The reflections immediately following on the 'perfect number' of the elect, that is, of the eschatological *ciuitas Dei* with its constitution of angels and men, attempt to take him beyond Augustine in a subtle chain of reasoning: if the purpose of the elect human beings were to fill up the number of the fallen angels, then each one of them would have to rejoice over the fall of the angel whose place he was taking—but this would be unbearable in Christian terms.[253] So the full number of the angels can in no way have made up the full, eschatological number of the elect, and men were elected for their own sake and not simply as stop-gaps; and further, the material creation is not simply a replacement for the spiritual, but was originally created with a view to the perfected cosmos, which should consist of both spirit and matter.[254] So Anselm does not stop, in what concerns the injured honour of God, at a consideration of the *ordo congruus universitatis rerum*:[255] no matter how intact God's honour remains because of his punitive justice, his love still suffers loss which dishonours it and which must ultimately be made good. The insubordinate will deprives God of his own most proper good: *ipsi Deo aufert quod proprie et singulariter debet habere*.[256] And as all the angels and just men, as the whole *civitas Dei* and God himself are grateful (*gratiosi*) to the lover who helps to build up the city of God, so contrariwise are they all wounded by the fact that the wicked banish (*extorres*) themselves from the holy city. 'Just as any man sorrows and mourns if he in any way loses what he has acquired for his needs and his advancement, so, as it were, does God sorrow and mourn too, when he sees how man, whom he created for himself, has been abducted by the devil and is to be lost to him for ever. So indeed are the damned designated lost, because they are lost to God, for whose kingdom and glorification they were created.'[257] And so the tender thought can find expression, that the just man confers a benefit on God himself (*beneficium praestabit*),[258] is in a certain way profitable to him (*quadam ratione prodesse videtur*)[259] that God himself is grateful to the lover for his love (*Deus ei scit gratias*)[260] Love indeed is conceivable only as a mutual occurrence, and that *rectitudo*, which Anselm erected into the supreme concept embracing the whole of logic, ethics and aesthetics, ends in this mutuality: 'God must be love . . . . from rectitude (*rectitudine*), because he gives us everything that we have, even our very being. And so must we love him all the more than ourselves, the greater he is who gave himself for us and himself wills to keep us for himself.'[261]

So much may lead us to suspect, indeed to see, that Anselm's doctrine of redemption, his so-called doctrine of satisfaction, will have about it nothing of the 'juristic'. On the contrary, he is at pains to defend himself against any idea of a God of justice, 'who would so delight in or stand in need of the blood of the innocent that apart from his death he would not pardon the guilty'.[262] But this would be the clear implication if God were to let himself be reconciled through the sacrifice of his Son in such a way that he 'reckoned' the merit of this death to the guilty and therefore let them off their punishment. It is not a matter of reckoning, but of inner, ontological union: no one will willingly add a blemished pearl to his treasure.[263] If God were therefore to forgive man, because man, in the powerlessness he brought on himself by his sin, cannot pay his debt, 'surely that is to say that God remits what he cannot get; but it is mockery to ascribe such mercy to God';[264] and besides, man would be in heaven eternally one who could not pay and therefore one who is needy (*egens*) and thus deprived of blessedness.[265] 'Therefore Anselm used to say, to the astonishment of many, that he would prefer to be free from sin and to bear hell innocently than to go to the kingdom of heaven polluted with the stain of sin.'[266] The moment of 'rectitude' in the Christian explanation lies therefore not so much abstractly in the fact that guilt must be expiated, that for an infinite guilt an infinitely valuable penance must be made, as in the fact that it only happens justly (*juste*), when man, on whose side the guilt lies, can pay for himself, which means on a deeper level: 'when of himself he rises and again lifts himself up'.[267] If the accent were placed only on the divinity of the Son, then the whole would remain an inner-trinitarian concern, and man, who is meant to be the object of the whole business, would remain outside. But the accent is placed on the covenant between God and man and on the obligation God has placed on himself by his decision that man should remain an authentic partner. That is the undertaking of grace, which 'he undertook for our sake and not for his own, since he is in need of nothing. For what man was going to do was not concealed from him when he made him, but despite this, in creating man of his own goodness, he freely bound himself, as it were (*sponte se . . . quasi obligavit*), to complete the good work once begun.'[268] For this reason nothing less costly is required than a God-man as redeemer; man had indeed to become free for the convenant with God, that is, free for absolute freedom. A merely sinless man would not have sufficed here, for 'if any other person had redeemed man from eternal death, man would rightly be reckoned eternally as his servant. But in that case man would in no sense have been restored to the dignity he would have had if he had not sinned, that is, to be the servant of God alone, and equal in everything to the good angels.'[269] Christ is not an (Arian) instance of mediation, but rather the effectiveness of the covenant itself (*pacti efficacia*[270]); on him, therefore, the whole human race founded in Adam can converge as its centre.

On the level of debt (*debere*), the reckoning cannot be settled, and therefore Anselm's theory cannot be understood juristically. For in what way is man not 'indebted' to God? 'When you pay what you owe to God, even if you have not sinned, you must not count this as part of the debt you owe for sin'; the highest exertion of love would be demanded to meet God's covenantal promise, and in this highest exertion it would always have to be weighed 'that you do not possess what you give of yourself, but from him whose servants both you and he to whom you give are . . . . As for obedience, what do you give God that you do not owe him, to whose command you owe all that you are and have and can do?'[271] From this point it becomes only negatively clear that the freedom of the sinner, despoiled as it is of its capacity to act, restores to God nothing of what he owes him—but has even Christ in his work of redemption not simply done what was owing? For if his work was well-pleasing to God, then 'he had to do what was better, especially since the creature owes to God all that it is and knows and can do.'[272] The answer to this can only be to point to the impetus of ever-greater love, how, beyond all calculable proportions, it is carried towards the ever-greater God and how, in the human realm, it finds its expression in the freely-offered vow: 'Even though the creature possesses nothing of itself, when God permits it either to do or not to do something he puts both alternatives in its power, so that, although one course may be preferable, neither is definitely required. Thus, whether a man does what is better or does the other, we can always say that he does what he ought to do (*debere facere dicatur quod facit). . . .* Although celibacy is better than marriage, neither one of them is definitely required from a man . . . . Thus, when you say that the creature owes to God what he knows is best and is able to do, this is not always true, if you interpret it as a true debt (*ex debito*), and do not understand: if God commands it.'[273] Thus the inquiry has suddenly moved forward into the realm of the vow, and only here does it find its true solution. Anselm's aesthetic reason, which considers the mystery of salvation, is ultimately monastic reason. Here is found the profound justification of the vow of obedience against secular men who uphold the opinion that it is more meritorious again and again to do what is right spontaneously (*spontaneus*) than to give up one's free disposal of oneself and 'to suffer oneself to be compelled to serve against one's will'.[274] This would be, replies Anselm, as if a slave were to say to his master: ‘Lord, I want to serve you with my whole heart, but that I should remain faithful to you I do not wish to promise. For if I promised it and afterwards sinned, then would I, guilty of a more serious sin, be due a more severe punishment. I want to serve you as well as I can, but if I fail, then judge me as one who did not promise at all to remain faithful to you.’ The monk, by contrast, is that slave who has given up to his lord his whole person and his whole freedom. If the first slave fails, he will be judged by God as one who does not belong to him (*alienus*), but the second will be improved that he may genuinely belong to him (*ut proprius emendatur*).[275] The former offers his works but not his person; the latter gives, together with the fruits, the whole tree and its roots: ‘he loves God so, that he offers him his whole self, while he says: Lord, hitherto I have disposed of myself and done according to my own lights good and evil. But because I must (*debeo*) be wholly yours, I deliver myself wholly to your disposing power (*potestas*), in order, in the future, to bear fruit for you alone. In order to be able to do that the better, I submit myself to an ecclesiastical superior, who watches over me and teaches me to do only those works which he knows are the more pleasing to you. But also I will strive, as much as I can, to watch over myself.’[276] In this *suscipe* there lies for Anselm the absolute spontaneity of human freedom, and his doctrine of redemption is conceived after this pattern. It is loving, creaturely freedom, which wholly gives itself up to eternal freedom, and on its side finds a model in the trinitarian freedom of the Son, whose spontaneous loving obedience to the Father is necessitated by nothing, but in the splendour of his absolute freedom is that which is most acceptable to God and, to that extent, most necessary: *debuit facere, quia quod voluit fieri debuit; et non debuit facere, quia non ex debito*.[277]

To this there corresponds the inner construction of freedom, as Anselm gives it apropos Lucifer’s fall. The presupposition of freedom is a dualism between two scales of value: that of the moral (*justitia*) and that of the agreeable (*commodum*).[278] Were the mind presented with only one scale, then there would be no freedom; each time it would have to choose the better. Because the scales can be considered separately, there is the possibility of a choice, which then necessarily leads to the alternative: to prefer God in obedience to his command and so to stake oneself on the Absolute, or, choosing rather the *commodum*, to prefer oneself and reject absolute freedom. But how can Lucifer, who has been fashioned in willing the good, turn his will? To that there can be only one answer: because he wills it. He has a motive, but that he follows it through has no other reason than the abyss of his freedom.[279] 'Why, therefore, has he willed? Only because he has willed. For this will . . . is itself the efficient cause and the effect.'[280] Over against this diabolical *sponte* there stands only the *sponte* of the eternal love of God in Christ.

3. THE VICTORY OF PRAYER

The final illumination of his whole work stems from Anselm’s prayer. This is properly directed to the eschatologically fulfilled form of freedom, it aims exactly at the point where the free will of men—in the Church and her saints, supremely in Jesus Christ—is made one with the free will of God. What is (this is the initial question) the character of fulfilled freedom? The answer lies in the doctrine of the establishment of freedom in the good, both for the steadfast angels and for the saints in heaven; God’s reward for their steadfastness is a fulfilment such ‘that they are granted whatever lies within the sphere of their willing, so that they see nothing that lies beyond their desire, and thus can no longer sin because of it.’[281] Already at the end of the *Proslogion* the transcendence, beyond any fulfilment, of heavenly blessedness had been depicted, because the heart not only acquired whatever it wished but infinitely more beyond that; the creature’s mental capacity was simply swamped, and it was not that the freedom and joy of God entered into the creature’s heart, but that the heart entered into the freedom and joy of God.[282] In thus transcending themselves, the hearts attain the freedom of God and are in concord (*concordia*) with him, ‘henceforth almighty in their wills, as God is in his’.[283] In this concord of the divine-creaturely omnipotence of love Anselm puts down his roots. It is the place where the New Covenant, the Church, is at its most real.

The place from which he prays is the place where one is lost, hell as existential reality. He has considered *quanti ponderis est peccatum*.[284] The man without the grace which rectitude bestows on him is conceived of as moving away from God, falling into that which is bottomless, *in abyssum sine fundo, nisi misericordia retineatur*.[285] As God’s enemy, he has made enemies of all beings which were created good, so that they can hardly endure him.[286] His place lies *in descensu super irremeabile chaos inferni*[287] in the threefold abyss of God’s judgement, of his own sin and of the eternal state of being lost which thus threatens him.[288] Again and again without hesitation Anselm takes up his position there, as it is to this place that Christ descends in his Passion, as grace too descends to save mankind.[289] ‘God did not need to suffer anything so wearisome, but man needed to be reconciled in this way. Nor did God need to suffer such humiliation, but man needed that he should thus be saved from the depths of hell.'[290] 'O hidden strength: a man hangs on a cross and lifts the load of eternal death from the human race; a man nailed to wood looses the bonds of everlasting death that hold fast the world, a man condemned with robbers rescues those damned along with the devils.'[291] 'O glorious cross!. . . The cruel ones could do nothing but what he in his wisdom permitted . . . . They worked to condemn the Redeemer, he to redeem the condemned.'[292]

But if the saving love of God vicariously descends into his abyss, has Anselm still any claim on this love? Has he not finally gambled it away? Here is the place of the appeal to the *concordia* of the city of God—between Son and mother: 'For if I have sinned against the Son, I have hurt the mother, nor can I offend the mother without injury to the Son . . . . Whither therefore will you flee, sinner? For who will reconcile me to the Son, if the mother is my enemy? And who will pacify the mother, if the Son is angry? But if you have both been offended equally, may you not both show clemency? Let the one therefore who is guilty before the righteous God flee to the kind mother of the God of mercy. Let the one who is guilty of offending the mother take refuge with the kind Son of the loving mother. Let the one who is guilty before both thrust himself between them both. Let him cast himself between the kind Son and the kind mother . . . . Let me who cast myself between two of such great kindness not fall upon two so severe in their power.'[293]

Still more imposingly in the great (the third) prayer to Mary, which Anselm subjected to a series of revisions, until his final thought was brought to expression: 'For if you, Lady, are his mother, are not your other sons his brothers?. . . For he caused it to happen that he should be of our nature by his birth from a mother, and that we by the restoration of life should be sons of his mother: he invites us to confess ourselves his brothers. Therefore our judge is our brother! The Saviour of the world is our brother. Indeed our God has, through Mary, made himself our brother. With what certitude then ought we (*debemus*) to hope, with what consolation can we fear, we whose salvation or damnation rests on the will of a good brother and a kind mother?. . . The good mother may pray and implore for us . . . . The good Son may hear his mother pleading on behalf of his brothers . . . . Perhaps I speak presumptuously, but it is your goodness mat makes me bold . . . . Lord and Lady, is it not much better that you should freely give to him who seeks what he does not deserve, than that you should be withheld what is justly owing to you?. . . Show me therefore your mercy, which is profitable to me and becoming to you.'[294]

Or between Christ and Peter: 'Good Shepherd, Peter, before you there lies groaning a sick sheep . . . . But although it has erred, it has not denied its Lord and Shepherd . . . . Recognize its confession of the name of Christ, who, three times asking you whether you loved him, said to your threefold confession: Feed my sheep . . . . As you confessed his love, so this one confesses itself to be his sheep. How therefore can you, his shepherd, despise the sheep? Peter, shepherd of Christ, gather up the sheep of Christ.'[295]

Or between Christ and Paul: 'O Saint Paul, have you not called yourself the nurse of the faithful, cherishing your sons? And for which children do you lie in travail, which do you nourish, unless those whom by teaching you cause to grow and educate in the faith of Christ?. . . Behold, this your son is dead . . . . Mother, you are again in travail with your sons, offer to him your dead Son, who is to be raised again, who, with his death, raises his servants . . . . But you, Jesus, good Lord, are not you mother? Were you not mother, when, like a hen, you gathered your little ones under your wings?. . . For what others are in travail with and give birth to, they have received from you. For unless you had been in travail, you would not have endured death; and unless you had died, you would not have given birth . . . . You are both, therefore, mothers . . . . Thus you are fathers in your effectiveness, but mothers in your tender feeling . . . . And if you are unequal in the amount of your care, in its quality you are not dissimilar . . . . In will, however, you are at one (*concordantes*). . . . You declare yourselves mothers, I confess myself your son . . . .'[296]

Or between Christ and John: 'Therefore, blessed John, make it that he who loves you may also love me through that breadth of love, which you teach and possess, and because of which you envy no one, but wish that good in which you rejoice to be common to all. Make it, through that mutual love which you owe him, that you may tax for him my love too together with yours, for in return simply for his love you owe him not your love only, but that of many. For, blessed John, you have experienced in your blessedness itself that just as no one can offer God anything before he ought (*debeat*), so no one can ever pay him more than he ought. If therefore all who love God, your lover, through you cannot requite him, then I pray, O Lord, that you reject not him who would be numbered among them . . . . Jesus, Lord, whom I choose to grant my requests, John, whom I put forward as intercessor, my desire so compels me, that my heart desires to compel you, not truly as if you were reluctant, but of your own free will (*spontaneos*). . . . Be patient therefore and forgive, if my heart devises something in order to extort love . . . . Lord, and lord, I believe and I know that you love one another; but how may I experience (*experiar*) this, if on account of your mutual love you do not grant that for which I seek?. . . Do not shut up among yourselves for your own enjoyment such a great good, but let something of it overflow to us . . .'[297]

Or between Christ and the Magdalene: ' "Woman, why weepest thou?" O ardour of grief!. . . But why, at all events, do you, her sole joy, excite her sorrow?. . . Indeed faithful love can no longer bear either her sorrow, or to remain hidden . . . . The Lord names the familiar name of the maiden and the maiden recognizes the familiar voice of the Lord . . . . "Mary!". . . But what should I, unhappy man without love, presume to say about the love of God and of the blessed friendship of God? For how should my heart bring forth a perfume which it has not savoured within itself? Truly you are my witness, truth . . . that I desire that your love should be kindled in my heart . . . . Hear me for the love and the dear merits of this your beloved Mary and those of your most blessed mother, the greater Mary . . . .'[298]

As Anselm puts down his roots everywhere in the manifest almightiness of love, which stands open and is approachable in the perfection of the *analogia libertatis*, so in his letters he draws his correspondent ever again into this *concordia* of love, which, overcoming all distance, makes him present to the beloved: *nostrarum conscii sutnus conscientiarum de invicem*.[299] There is a strange logic of fate in the fact that the same man, who had to defend Christian freedom against all the gloomy clouds of an unbiblical doctrine of foreknowledge, predestination and original sin, had to spend his best efforts in struggle for the freedom of the Church in the English investiture controversy. For this reason it is important that, in all his unswerving and crystal-clear loyalty to the Holy See, he always saw the office and the *concordia* of the Mystical Body, the objective and subjective holiness of the Church in a perfected unity.[300] The Church is for Anselm essentially the Bride, who through the new marriage-bond with Christ is chosen and enabled for the freedom of love. 'God loves nothing in this world more than the freedom of his Church. And those [kings] who would rather control it than further it are doubtless to be handed over as opponents of God. God wills to have his bride free, and not as a hand-maid. Behold this queen whom he has been pleased to choose from out of the world as his bride. Her he calls “beautiful” and “friend” and “dove”.’[301] If *concordia* characterises the uncompelled freedom within the Church, Anselm has no other word to characterise the relationship between Church and state: the king is *advocatus*, *defensor*, but in no way *dominator* of the Church; over both there rules uniquely the free God.

The older and the more experienced Anselm becomes, the more the accent on aesthetic reason of his early works (*Monologion* and *Proslogion*) with their, as it were, immediate apprehension of theological necessities, shifts to the defence of Christian freedom—in the individual and the Church—from whose unfathomable glory all necessities are derived. Necessity is reduced more and more to a contradictory proposition, according to which the law of freedom is necessary, in so far as it is and cannot not be. To the same degree the perspectives are veiled in the eternal truth: what we see is only a reflection: ‘as we are aware of the sun through its rays before we see it unveiled, so we are aware of God from the reflection (*speculatio*) of our reason: if we discover anything true in the light of truth, then we are aware at the same time of him by recognition and love in faith and hope. In the future we shall see him face to face . . . .’[302] So at the last there remains a yearning longing for glory, for the unveiled radiance of the Lord:

> ‘He whose aim in serving is directed towards the recovery of the kingdom of eternal life strives to stick to God through thick and thin, and with unshakeable perserverance to place his whole trust in him . . . . Strong in patience, he rejoices in all things and says with the Psalmist: *Magna est gloria Domini*. This glory, even in this earthly pilgrimage, he has a taste of; he savours it; and as he savours he desires it; and with great desire he salutes it while yet far off. Thus he is supported by the hope of attaining it, and consoled by it in the midst of all earthly dangers, and he sings with great joy: *Magna est gloria Domini.’*[303]

The final thing here below is not vision, but being seen: *Johannes, certe vides, vides me. Ergo vide me, domine, vides me noscendo, vide me miserando. Vides et scis, vide ut sciam*.[304]

BONAVENTURE

1. THE SERAPH AND THE STIGMATA

Of all the great scholastics, Bonaventure[1] is the one who offers the widest scope to the beautiful in his theology: not merely because he speaks of it most frequently, but because he clearly thereby gives expression to his innermost experience and does this in new concepts that are his own. At a superficial level he could indeed appear simply to occupy a privileged place of convergence and confluence of all the ideological tendencies that from many sources water the mid-thirteenth century and make it fruitful: he could appear as the heart, wide as the world, that offers a place of shelter to each influence, that synthesises them all. The principal influence would still be from Augustine: a philosophy of love, of the image of the Trinity in the created spirit, of the degrees of being and correspondingly of beauty, of an illuminative shining and indwelling of the eternal truth as of the personal *magister interior* in the intellectual act of the creature. But Denys' influence would appear as strong, both directly and as mediated through the School of Chartres and Richard of St Victor: divine transcendence and mystical ecstasy that reaches towards it, creation as the effusion of God, now in combination with the Augustinian teaching on the Trinity, whereby a new pattern is produced—the reservation which characterises Augustine as much as Denys when they speak of the revelation and communication of the Trinity to the world disappears, and the Trinity is not (as for Denys) the absolutely separated and unknowable, nor (as for Augustine) is everything in the world that speaks of the divine Persons mere appropriation. Rather, the Trinity is truly revealed in its overflow into the world (in creation and the Incarnation of Christ), and shows itself thereby to be the a priori ground of everything that exists in the world. Thirdly we would have to mention Anselm, in that which is most peculiarly his, the 'ontological proof', which Bonaventure takes over. For him too this is only the highest example of an aesthetic and theological insight, just as in decisive passages it is precisely the hymn-like texts and the prayers of Anselm which are introduced. He it is who is allowed the last word when Bonaventure speaks of the overpowering of the creature made happy by God, the creature that does not grasp its happiness but rather is grasped by its happiness.[2]

As a fourth and even more significant influence, we must mention the spiritual theology of Bernard and his followers, which had taken over Anselm's tone and developed it (especially in Bernard's sermons on the Song of Songs) more decisively than anyone previously in the direction of a nuptial theology. The foundations were indeed laid in Augustine's theology of the *totus Christus*, head and body, Bridegroom and Bride, but this was essentially restricted to the Church as a whole; in Denys this is almost wholly absent (there are only hints of it in the concept of eros). But in Bernard and his school, this becomes a dominant theme: fundamentally, the Bride is the Church, but in its membership of the Church so too is each believing and loving soul; and mediating between the two, as 'personified Church' and soul identified with the Church (*anima ecclesiastica*), is Mary, the mother of the Lord. In Bonaventure, the nuptial theology and spirituality is omnipresent, permeating everything as a matter of course; it comes to expression more strongly the nearer he approaches the mystical peaks. In close connection with this, and likewise particularly characteristic of Bernard, is the idea of theology as *sapientia*, that is, precisely, as *sapida scientia*,[3] which as such stands above theoretical and practical science, 'for the recognition that Christ died for us, and similar knowledge, moves to love, if a man is not a hardened sinner—this is quite different from a proposition of geometry'.[4] Finally, we must reckon Joachim of Fiore's theology of salvation history as an important influence. In one respect he gives new life to the historical aesthetic of Irenaeus (and of Tertullian), though of course in an exceptionally literal manner which does not correspond to the early Fathers, but which is taken over by Bonaventure and built into his system. If the Old Covenant is the period of the Father and the New Covenant the period of the Son, then out of the parallelism of these periods, which are read into each other and each interpreted by the other, springs the understanding of the Spirit, because in the dispensation of salvation the Spirit also proceeds from both the Father and the Son. In the history of the Church, this interpretative understanding of the Spirit is something that develops, and according to Joachim and Bonaventure we stand at the dawning of the eschatological age, for which this understanding is reserved in a special way.[5] What for Joachim appeared as prophecy, appears to Bonaventure as fulfilled: as man came forth on the sixth day of creation, as God became man in the sixth age of the world, so when the sixth apocalyptic seal is opened the ‘angel goes up from the rising of the sun, bearing the seal of the living God’ (Rev 7.2):[6] who else but the stigmatised man of the Spirit, Francis?

When we speak of this event, we have at last mentioned the living, organising centre of Bonaventure’s intellectual world, the thing that lifts it above the level of a mere interweaving of the threads of tradition. His world is Franciscan, and so is his theology, however many stones he may use to erect his spiritual cathedral over the mystery of humility and poverty, like another Baroque Portiuncula over the unpretentious original chapel. And yet, when we have established that the Franciscan mystery is the centre that crystallises all, we have not yet uncovered the ethos that is peculiar to Bonaventure. For Bonaventure does not only take Francis as his centre: he is his own sun and his mission. If we were to use here the categories which Gundolf developed for Goethe, we could distinguish between a wholly personal, fundamental experience and an experience of education which confronts one in the realm of history and brings the still shapeless fundamental experience to crystallisation.

At the origin lies an experience of *overpowering* by the fullness of reality, like a sea that emanates gloriously from the depths of God, eternally flowing and not to be restrained. As he encounters revelation and the endlessness of its meanings and possibilities of interpretation, there occur to Bonaventure words from the Old Testament about rivers and seas: ‘All rivers flow into the sea, and the sea does not overflow, and the rivers turn back to the place of their origin and flow on further.’ The *mirabiles elationes maris* are the Word of God, and those ‘who travel the sea in ships and do much work in the deep waters’ are the interpreters of the Word, but ‘such endless depths—who can plumb them?’ Only the uncreated Wisdom makes this her boast: ‘I have my dwelling in the highest heights’: at the creation, ‘my throne is in the pillar of the cloud’; in the Incarnation, ‘I trod through mighty waters’; in the Passion, ‘I plumbed the floor of the abyss’; in the investigation of the Scriptures, for ‘Jesus opened their meaning to them’ after the Resurrection. ‘Endless variety’ characterises this flowing revelation: ‘Manifold indeed is the flowing forth, from the water in the clouds, from the rivers, from the springs, and all comes from the sea.’ But ‘the earth receives’ everything that streams down from heaven, ’. . . and brings forth a swarm of wonderful growth (*facit pulcherrimas pullulationes)’*.

Nevertheless, ‘like a drop that one takes from the sea, so are all the *theoriae* that are produced when compared with those that could be produced’.[7] And so nothing is more typical of the author than the prologue to the whole commentary on the *Sentences*. He writes that his subject is the four rivers of paradise: the first is the triune, eternal flowing of God himself; the second is the creation, which is wide and deep as the sea in whose depths the dragon dwells; the third is the Incarnation of God, who in Christ flows out of himself and flows back to himself: ‘as in a circle the last joins itself on to the first, so in the Incarnation the highest joins itself on to the lowest, God unites himself with the clay’; ‘it belongs to the nature of water to mount up again to the same extent as it sank down.’ The fourth river is the sacraments, that stream of ‘the water of life, clear as crystal, that went forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb’, for ‘from the side of Christ as he slept flowed out the sacraments, as water and blood streamed out’. But Bonaventure needs the image of the river only because of the liveliness of the image of flowing; otherwise, he replaces it with the image of the depths of the sea: ‘The depth of the eternal emanations (of the divine Persons) is the sublimity of the divine nature . . . the depth of the creation is its futility: “I stick in deep mud and find no firm place to stand”. . . . The depth of the Incarnation is what Christ’s manhood achieved . . . . “You have thrown me into the depth of the heart of the sea, and its waves closed together over me.” This can be said about Christ, who was brought so low that he can be described as one thrown aside and rejected . . . . For Jesus’ gentle heart beat in so tender love for us that it did not seem to him too hard to endure for us the extreme, harshest death. The depth of the dispensation of salvation in the sacraments, however, is the efficacy of the perfected means of salvation: “You led them on your way through the depths of the sea, and they walked through the sea as freed men. ” ’ This is the content of the book that Bonaventure intends to comment upon, dealing with the *revelatio quatuor absconditorum*: ‘The first hidden thing is the greatness of the divine being . . . the second hidden thing is the dispensation of the divine Wisdom (as Job says, “Where is Wisdom to be found? Where is the place where she is known? She is hidden from the eyes of all the living”). . . the third hidden thing is the strength of the divine power . . .: Christ hanging on the cross, where the strength of his power hid itself under the mantle of powerlessness . . . . The fourth hidden thing is the sweetness of the divine mercy, for the sweetness of his mercy is truly hidden, and laid up for those who fear him' (Ps 102.17).[8]

The place of the rivers of paradise is taken in the *Soliloquium* by the four dimensions in the Letter to the Ephesians: 'That you may be able to understand, together with all the saints, the length and breadth, height and depth, and that you may know the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fulness of God' (Eph 3.18-19). These four dimensions are 'the blessed cross on which you, consecrated soul, must forever hang in contemplation with your gentlest Bridegroom Jesus Christ'.[9] The introduction to the *Breviloquium* chooses the same text to explain the nature of revelation and theology, and to elevate them above the more restricted area of philosophy: theology does not take its starting-point in human research, but in divine revelation that flows from the Father of lights; as theology progresses, it is 'not narrowed down by the rules of human logic, definitions, and distinctions', but 'embraces the whole as in one single epitome'; and the goal of theology is the 'fullness of eternal beatitude', so that 'our fulfilment may bring us into the entire fullness of God'.[10]

Because of this superabundance, revelation appears to the outsider like something 'uncertain, with no order, and like a kind of virgin forest (*silua opax*)'.[11] Even for the one who penetrates into it, the experience is the same: 'Who is capable of knowing the endlessness of the grains of seed, when in one single seed woods upon woods are hidden—and so once more endless seeds?'[12] But it is precisely this swarm, too vast for the eye, that is the beauty (*speciositas*) of revelation's starry sky: 'The swarm of meditations which spring forth from the faith outshines the shining of the stars.'[13] It is 'an exceedingly rich turmoil' (*pullulationes uberrimae*);[14] it is assuredly not without divine order, for indeed 'it is that which is most ordered of all, but its order is like the order of nature in the growth of the plants'.[15] The ethos of the theology in Bonaventure is thereby quite different from the ethos in Thomas Aquinas, whose philosophical point of view tries to reflect the order of the world as rigorously and clearly as possible. In Bonaventure, there is something defeated from the very start; theology is an imposing upon that which is not to be imposed upon, a tireless proposing of new ordering, counting, classifying, gathering the 'blossoming wilderness' into bouquets. But in the face of this, the last word remains the experience of being out-trumped, of wonder, and of being transported out of oneself (*excessus*). The dizzying pyramids of concepts frequently lack a final necessity: that is to say, they do not satisfy the need for fullness, and it is often the case that a lower degree leads itself to the last stage in a way which is not really surpassed in the subsequent higher degrees.[16] But the impossibility of mastering revelation does not give rise to doubt or an experience of anxious failure in Bonaventure: it is complete beatitude in the face of the inexhaustibility of God. The ‘inconceivable Wisdom with her inscrutable ways’[17] is still *sapientia amorosa*;[18] it is a great beatitude to see how everything in the world bows down before the divine, like the stars in Joseph’s dream—*ibi est magna delectatio*.[19] The nearer one draws to God, the higher becomes the experience of beauty: ‘For there is great beauty in the construction of the world, and far greater beauty in the Church, which is adorned with the beauty of the gifts of grace of holiness, but the greatest beauty lies in the Jerusalem above, and the beauty greater than the greatest (*supermaxima*) is in the highest and most blessed Trinity.’[20]

With divine things, the business of grasping them in thought always involves a stage of being taken over and grasped, and it is the nature of the created spirit to be orientated precisely to this: ‘For nothing satisfies the soul except what exceeds its power to grasp.’[21] The soul might be brought in six ways to what exceeds its capacity: through believing, thinking, wondering, contemplating, being transported out of itself, and comprehending. Faith by itself is imperfect and only a beginning, while it is only God who may comprehend God: so we are left with the pair: thinking and wondering (*arguendo—admirando*) for the earthly life, and for the heavenly life the pair: contemplating and being transported out of oneself (*contuendo—excedendo*). This is true even for the soul of Christ, which contemplates God indeed, yet does not grasp him. ‘And this is why the astonished wondering has its place not only in this life, but also in the next life . . . for what is seen (*apprehenditur*) is not thereby understood (*comprehenditur*). When God is called inconceivable, however, it is not because some part of him is kept concealed, but because of the immeasurability of his simplicity.’ Even the soul of Christ is ‘taken up in plenitude and ecstasy’ (*capiturper superexcedentiam et excessum*) by the superabundance of God’s Wisdom and goodness.[22] This ecstasy awaits the faithful in heaven also, and is indeed more perfectly realised there than on earth.[23] For in heaven, the whole incomprehensible fullness of the Godhead offers itself to the one who contemplates, ‘in the same kind of way as the whole Seine offers itself to someone who brings a jug, but is not grasped in its entirety, but only as much as the capacity of the jug'.[24]

So no one should think that for the study of theology it suffices to have 'reading without unction, speculation without devotion, research without wondering, prudence without exultation, hard work without piety, cleverness without humility'.[25] Rather, the purified soul 'is prepared by devotion, wondering and exultation for the spiritual experiences of being transported out of itself' which allow it to experience God 'as the highest beauty'.[26] For 'we attain to ecstasy (*mentis alienatio*) for three reasons: occasionally from an abundance of devotion, at other times from an exceedingly great wondering, and at other times again from extreme joy'.[27] For Bonaventure, this ecstasy (usually described as *excessus*) is 'the highest and chief manner of knowledge', but 'scarcely anyone understands it if he has not experienced it, and one will experience it only if he "is rooted and grounded in love, in order to understand with all the saints the length and breadth and height and depth", which is what truth that is experiential and genuine consists in.'[28] He makes a distinction between this normal spiritual experience and the *raptus*[29] which by a unique privilege mounts above the *status viatorum* and permits the direct sight of the being of God.[30] The ecstasy which belongs to a genuine knowledge of God (which cannot be only 'theoretical') is called, after Denys but using a psychologically richer language, *anagogicus excessus*,[31] 'elevation into the darkness', *docta ignorantia*[32] contemplation in the strong sense of the word, with as its presupposition and its consequence a suspended lifting-up to God (*suspensio*).[33] We have here the Augustinian transcendence of man towards God, strengthened by the influence of Denys: *oportet . . . nos transcendere ad aetemum*,[34] *nullus potest esse beatus, nisi supra seipsum ascendat*[35] in an *ecstaticus excessus*.[36] This taking leave of the faculty of knowledge takes place *in vertice* as *unitio amoris*,[37] in accordance with the text of the Song of Songs, 'I sleep, and my heart is awake'; Bonaventure, advancing beyond Denys' *apophasis*, always understands the *ablatio* of this experience of ecstasy in a nuptial sense. The soul, with Moses, climbs 'up the mountain, enters the darkness, sees the "wholly desirable" Bridegroom; in this unitive love, the person is carried out of himself and united to the Bridegroom, enters God and is lost in him, sees (as far as that is possible) the face of the most beautiful Wisdom, and experiences unheard-of ecstasies of the spirit'.[38] It is certainly possible to apply the word ‘mystical’ to this experience of man’s being overpowered by God in the act of the wondering ecstasy, and one can and must see in it a ‘special’ grace of God’s gift; but, granted God’s loving self-disclosure, this experience is nothing other than the human realisation of the objective revelation. In the same way, the message of a work of art will be truly grasped only by one who is delighted and carried out of himself by it. This is Bonaventure’s ‘fundamental experience’.

This ‘fundamental experience’ finds its crystallisation in the central image of the *stigmatisation of St. Francis* on Mount Alverna, and this from multiple points of view. Let us begin with the object of such experience: the whole tradition from Augustine, Denys, Bernard and the Victorines understood the divine glory as the beauty of his Wisdom: *forma sapientiae est mirabilis, et nullus earn aspicit sine admiratione et ecstasi*.[39] ‘Many love beauty, but beauty is not in external things, which are only her image; the true beauty is in the beauty of Wisdom.’[40] This beauty of Wisdom appears to Francis in the form of the crucified seraph—it is almost as if the crucified one, who appears to the late Gothic (as late as Grünewald) in the form of pure distortion, must here make use of this clothing of Wisdom. But it is still the crucified who is the centre of the apparition: if the six wings of the seraph signify the six flights to Wisdom, yet ‘there is no other path to Wisdom than through the most burning love for the crucified’,[41] and the mystical *suspensio* is itself a reply to the crucified who is suspended ‘between heaven and earth, as if he were unworthy to live or to die upon the earth’.[42] Ecstasy, then, means a suspended transition: ‘Let us then go with the crucified Christ out of this world to the Father.’[43] In this, the man’s experience has a decisive role: the *via negativa et excessus* of Denys, leading to the Neo-Platonic simplicity, is now explained as a Franciscan stripping away of all things, that is to say, as poverty, and this is already understood in a nuptial sense—‘Contemplation can occur only in the highest simplicity (*simplicitas*), and the highest simplicity can occur only in the highest poverty, and thus it is appropriate for this Order. The intention of blessed Francis was to attain the highest form of poverty.’[44] Here above all the relationship between object and subject is made clear, and here we find the basic concepts that characterise the whole of Bonaventure’s aesthetics, distinguishing him from the tradition: *expressio* and *impressio*.

The crucified seraph is not only the object of contemplative loving meditation: he is also active and expresses himself by impressing himself, which is to say his wounds, in Francis. Such wounds are the only true *Christiana sapientia . . . vere divinitus expressa*;[45] but again as the ‘*signaculum* of the crucified’ they are equally *‘in corpore ipsius (Francisci) impressum*, not through the power of nature, nor through the originality of art, but through the wonderful power of the living Spirit of God’.[46] The two words continually answer each other: ‘That apparition of the seraph before Francis was *expressiva et impressiva*’,[47] and, with a change of meaning, ‘So the servant of the Lord bore on his breast *expresse impressam similitudinem Crucifixi*.’[48] It is significant that although the power of the expression goes out from the crucified, the bodily sign is imprinted only because Francis, through grace and his own inflamed love, had already himself become in spirit an expression of the love of the crucified. The stigmata are not in any way produced by his love, but come from God’s power alone; but at the same time, the stigmata are the expression of his loving spirit, for God expressed himself thus only in the soft wax of a man so inflamed. When he saw the seraph, Francis understood that ‘as he was consumed by spiritual fire he would be changed into an expressive image (*expressam similitudinem*) of the crucified. As the apparition disappeared, after a secret and interior conversation, it left his spirit inwardly kindled from a seraphic glow, and outwardly his flesh was branded with a reproduction of the image of the crucified, as if an imprint like a seal had followed the liquefying power of the fire.’[49] Notably the sermons about Francis set great store by this manner of production of the Franciscan *signum expressivum*:[50] even if Francis in no way looked forward to or prepared for anything like stigmatisation, nevertheless the stigmatisation is like a sign of his inward resemblance to the crucified, a sign that demands a bodily visibility; and the inner resemblance, no less than the bodily resemblance, was the work of the crucified God whose love sought to express itself.[51] The man’s love makes the wax of the heart soft, and God’s love imprints the seal; and so every Christian may be urged, ‘Like a seal in soft wax, so print Jesus the Bridegroom on your soul.’[52] Likewise: ‘Long more forcefully for resemblance to God, through an explicit (*expressam*) following of the crucified Jesus.’[53]

It is decisive for Bonaventure’s aesthetic theology that the stigmata were branded on the body precisely while the soul was in an ecstatic rapture: it is when the form of the divine beauty is seen that this divine beauty receives its form in the world. For Bonaventure, it is vital that ecstasy, even in its Dionysian aspects, is not a flight out of the world that leaves it behind, but rather the opening of the world for God, or more precisely the revelation of the fact that the world has already been grasped by God. Light is shed on this by Bonaventure's teaching about the number six, in which the patristic motif of the ages of history coalesces with the mystical motif of the six wings of the Isaianic-Franciscan seraph. For the traditional motif of the ages of history, the axiom *septima aetas currit cum sexta*, which Bonaventure adopts,[54] is characteristic: alongside the sixth age of the world, in which Christ is born and goes to heaven, the seventh age already runs its course. The sabbath of the world has already begun with the Ascension, and will last until the general resurrection; then is the dawn of the eighth day. Because through Christ heaven is now in principle open, mystical-eschatological contemplation and existence are already possible. The six wings correspond to the six-fold course of history as six ways of the knowledge of God, or 'six variations of illuminations', by which the spirit, transported to paradise on the seventh day, 'resting in contemplation and sleeping, is led to the *arcanum* of the spiritual marriage'.[55] In the same way, the *Reductio artium* knows *sex illuminationes*,[56] and the *Itinerarium* knows *sex illuminationum suspensiones*,[57] in which the sixth step already grants what is in substance perfect (*iam venit ad quandam rem perfectam*), so that to look engenders that ecstatic wondering which as such is the transition to the seventh step: *nec aliquid iam amplius restet nisi dies requiei, in qua per mentis excessum requiescat humanae mentis perspicacitas*.[58] 'If by the sixth day someone has already reached the point where he can . . . meditate in the first and highest mediator between God and men . . . so it remains only, as one contemplates this (*haec speculando*), to make the transition.'[59] In the same way the work on the Hexameron arranges the visions in a sixfold scale, while the seventh vision is reserved for God.[60] Bonaventure's preference for the number six comes from its doubling of the number of the Trinity, which (in the creative sphere) is then distributed around two poles, right and left or upper and lower, which reflect each other: this parallel reflection is the ground scheme of Joachim's historical thinking, in which in each case a period of the Old Covenant and a similar period of the New Covenant reflect each other, and in this mirroring allow the Spirit to spring forth as the third age. In a similar way, the soul can realise her six capacities: below herself (as soul) the senses and the imagination, in herself (as reason) the abstract essences and the concrete ones (the angels), above herself (as related to God) speculation and the mystical union with God. If the soul realises these activities which belong to her, ‘then she will become a wonderful mirror, rubbed smooth, in which she sees everything that has sparkle and beauty, just as the image is seen in the mirror’.[61]

All these varied applications should not lead us to forget that the central image is the crucified Christ hanging before Francis, and that here all the divine illuminations unite in this image of the cross, like rays in a lens. The twice three wings are the descent and ascent of the Son of Man,[62] the mystery of his nuptial love which contains both drunkenness and shame: ‘Christ was drunk from love for his bride, and was exposed naked on the cross, and the evil Ham mocked him.’[63] The cross is the true manual of instruction, the only one which Francis continually read, and no one reaches understanding of revelation except through the cross, which we ‘should take on ourselves as the book of wisdom, to contemplate it’.[64] The Christian should always ‘see before him with the eyes of his heart Christ dying on the cross’,[65] and should not only see him, ‘but should enter fully through the door of the wound in his side, as far as his heart’, while he ‘ponders the utterly shameful death of the Bridegroom’.[66] All this takes place inescapably for me: ‘God is mocked, so that you may be honoured; flogged, so that you may be consoled; crucified, so that you may be set free; the spotless Lamb is slaughtered, so that you may be fed; the lance brings forth water and blood from his side, so that you may drink . . . . O Lord Jesus Christ, who for my sake did not spare yourself: wound my heart through your wounds, inebriate my spirit with your blood, so that wherever I may go, I may continually have you before my eyes as the crucified . . . and may be able to find nothing else but you.’[67] The marriage between God and creature takes place on the cross: ‘Christ on the cross bows his head, waiting for you, that he may kiss you; he stretches out his arms, that he may embrace you; his hands are open, that he may enrich you; his body is spread out, that he may give himself totally; his feet are nailed, that he may stay there; his side is open for you, that he may let you enter there.’[68] This is ‘the day of the marriage’,[69] ‘and he could not have a spotless bride before he had formed her out of his side . . . this wedding had to be celebrated in his Passion.’[70] Each Christian must ‘long to become fully like the crucified’,[71] just as ‘the genuine love for Christ transformed the loving’ Francis ‘into the same image’,[72] when the sword of compassionate pain pierced his soul;[73] just as Mary 'stood by that Martyr as a fellow-martyr, wounded together with him who was wounded, crucified together with him who was crucified, transfixed with him who was transfixed'.[74] This is how one abyss expresses itself in the other abyss, echoing the psalm: 'The abyss of the suffering of Christ calls to the other abyss of Christian compassion', for true Christians, 'by the weight of their grief and painful compassion for the suffering of the Lord, are made like him and transformed into the image of the crucified'.[75]

This calling of the abysses to one another is so much the centre and goal of all Wisdom that Bonaventure thinks all other knowledge insipid. '*Non sufficit ad habendam sapientiam scholastica sine monastica*, for it is not through hearing alone but through following that a man becomes wise';[76] 'holiness is the direct aptitude for wisdom.'[77] 'There is no secure passage from learning to wisdom—one must go through an intermediary, namely, holiness. And the passage takes place through experimental practice: one turns from the study of learning and practises the study of holiness, and then again one makes the transition from the study of holiness to the study of wisdom.'[78] The seventh General of the Franciscan Order observed the scholastic rationalism of his time with increasing unease: like Thomas Aquinas, he draws more precisely than before the boundaries between belief and knowledge, but not (like Thomas) in order to safeguard reason's proper rights but, quite the contrary, in order to cause reason to retreat within its own proper limits.[79] This places him in an exceptionally exposed and lonely position between the ages: on the one hand, he sees the end of the sapiential theology drawing near and prophesies the coming of an eschatological epoch, when the defence of the faith through reason will be out-moded and the only valid preaching will be the way of life of the precursor of the end-time, St. Francis;[80] on the other hand, his distrust of the achievements of the autonomous reason means that he can only look with anxiety at the modern period as it dawns: the *mundus hodie*[81] with its secularisation and arrogance really admits only an apocalyptic interpretation, and so Bonaventure points back to the thorough study of Holy Scripture, and, with caution, to the *originalia sanctorum*.[82] 'There should not be so much water of philosophy mixed into the wine of Scripture that wine is turned into water: that would be a truly miserable miracle!. . . Besides, in the early Church they burned the philosophy books.'[83] He allows Thomas his Aristotelian, scientific future, and Augustine his Platonic, sapiential past, and keeps for himself only the stigmatised Francis, whose existence of the end-time in poverty is not yet (or only very imperfectly) attained by his Order.

Because philosophy does not possess Christ, it cannot provide the final *resolutio* which would bring us to the true origins,[84] or at most it can do so *semiplene*.[85] Only one who knows the trinitarian mystery is a 'true metaphysician',[86] only one who knows Christ has the true *ethica generalise*[87] 'the philosophers have no learning that forgives sins, not even in the *Summas* of the Masters.'[88] On the other hand, whoever loves the Christian revelation loves philosophy also, through which he confirms the faith; but philosophy in itself is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil[89]—it remains ambivalent until it is polarised through true (that is to say, existential) theology. If men cling to their researches, they love the darkness more than the light.[90] It is only the man who knows the nuptial mystery of Wisdom who knows also what virtue is: even the cardinal virtues derive from a conduct that imitates the divine;[91] no philosophical ethic has been able to achieve a system.[92] It is only when the teaching of Aristotle on virtue is taken up into a higher Christian sense that it assumes its true form.[93] It is not that reason is incapable of knowing anything: rather, it is precisely the beauty of Wisdom that seduces it to pride in knowing much, to satisfaction with the things of this world, and finally to a Faustian drive to experience: *vult (homo) cognoscere et cognita experiri et per consequens eis uniri,*[94] and therefore the nuptial mystery is perverted into an intellectual harlotry: *Abominatio maxima est, quod filia regis pulcherrima (scil. sapientia) offertur nobis in sponsam et potius volumus copulari ancillae turpissimae et meretricari.*[95] 'The danger of the sciences is that they may so extend themselves in their considerations that they cannot subsequently find their way back to the house of Scripture, but land in the house of Daedalus (the Labyrinth) and never find their way out of it. And it is better to hold the truth than the parable.'[96]

Certainly, the reason is the light that is the basis of all else and makes all else possible: 'Without this light implanted in man, he has nothing, neither faith nor grace nor the light of Wisdom.'[97] But reason is only the precondition of the communicability of God in his Word, both objectified as *Verbum incarnatum*, and interiorly as *Verbum inspiratum*, both having their source in the Word as *Verbum increatum*, which brings the inner being of

God, and thereby the whole world also, to expression. The stigmatisation and the process which it makes perceptible to the senses belong to the *Verbum inspiratum,* for they are a coming of Christ into the human spirit: 'It is not possible to reach a clear revelation of the faith except by the coming of Christ into the rational spirit.'[98] *Verbum . . . inspiratum, secundum quod (Verbum) est in mente.*[99] This Word was 'in the prophets, but we perceive it because the Holy Spirit testifies that Christ is the truth'. The Holy Spirit has 'shone forth into the hearts of the preachers; it is he likewise who brought the Scriptures to birth in the spirits of the elect, and it is he who gives certainty to the Christian faith'.[100] And so the *Verbum inspiratum* can with precision be termed the Holy Spirit, in the whole breadth of his function of revelation and testimony.[101] In a quite central fashion, theology (understood as the comprehension of the objective revelation in the Church and its appropriation in the individual) is his domain: *theologia, tamquam scientia super fidem fundata et per Spiritum Sanctum revelata.*[102] *Verbum inspiratum* is that act of speaking by God *per quod omnia revelantur*.[103] This is why the Christian revelation (or, as Bonaventure usually has it in his later period, Holy Scripture) is 'highest certainty, because borne by the supernatural light of faith or of divine inspiration, which cannot err'.[104]

So *faith* is an inspired, irradiated, imprinted word of God, a ray of the eternal Spirit's light in us: 'Because the truth of the first principle (God) is infinitely greater than all created truth and infinitely more radiant than any light of our reason . . . therefore even what surpasses the reason and contradicts sense-experience is true; if anyone denies this, he refuses to honour the highest truth as he should, because he prefers a judgment based on his own efforts to the command of the eternal light (*dictamini lucis aeternae).*'[105] Faith lies therefore between seeing and not seeing,[106] but it is certain, because it is based on a manifold seeing: 'The first depends on the spirits of the angels, the second on the spirits of the prophets, the third on the spirits of the apostles, and the interplay of these acts of seeing is the certainty of Holy Scripture.' According to Paul, the Law was transmitted to Moses through the angels: 'The angels issued it, they wrote it—they, who looked on the pure truth in the eternal light. And Moses was lifted up above all the prophets to see this . . . to the intellectual act of seeing.'[107] The seeing of the prophets was in images (*imaginariae*), but that of the apostles combines the intellectual seeing with the bodily: so John can say that he has 'seen, heard and touched' the Word of life, 'and the blessed Virgin Mary, the teacher (*doctrix*) of the apostles and evangelists, touched this Word in her womb and at her breast. These three acts of seeing, or certainties, give to revelation the certainty of faith.'[108] In addition, there is the moral witness of the blamelessness of the preachers, the witness of the miracles and that of the martyrs, the full agreement of all the testimonies of Scripture, of the councils and of the writings of the saints, and so on. But these apologetic arguments are only a supplement: in the centre are the twelve mysteries of faith, which like the twelve constellations shine upon the world of faith and rule it. Not all of them are also *per rationem intelligibilia* (e.g., that Abraham begot Isaac), but others are both to be believed and to be understood, if there are strong arguments of reason for them.[109] Here Bonaventure adopts the language of Anselm: *decentissimum fuit,[110] quae omnia necessario consequuntur et exiguntur . . ..*[111] In order for the spirit of man to attain to the knowledge of faith, it is necessary that a due proportionality with respect to God be established in the spirit, and this is produced through the light of faith, which is 'a presence of God in the soul' and 'transmits a kind of knowledge which is like a resemblance: not abstracted, but imprinted (*non abstracta, sed impressa)'*.[112] In the eternal seeing, this same act whereby God imprints himself in the created spirit will take place in a perfect manner:[113] hence Bonaventure loves to cite the aesthetic text of 2 Corinthians in his later writings: *Nos vero omnes, revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes, in eandem imaginem transformamur a claritate in claritatem, tamquam a Domini spiritu* (2 Cor 3.18). The glory is the appearing of the Lord, and through the Spirit of the Lord, the *Verbum inspiratum*, the open seeing of faith and, more essentially, the configuration to the image in a process that stamps an impression are made possible in the unity between expression and impression that was found between the seraph and Francis.[114] This apparent *theologia gloriae*, for all the precision of the resemblance between expression and impression, remains nevertheless for Bonaventure—precisely in its blinding brilliance—a theology of *excessus* as the believer is confronted by the ever greater fullness of God: the superabundance of what may be revealed is the hiddenness that is the true characteristic of the Christian God; the superabundance of light that remains incomprehensible demands faith, the superabundance of love in the crucified demands pure humility and surrender of oneself, and finally the superabundance of the divine prodigality imperiously demands total poverty, which, as the human gesture of giving away everything, is the most exact answer possible for man to God’s act of total abandonment even to the cross.

2. TRINITY, IDEA, *REDUCTIO*

Bonaventure’s intellectual world is in its entirety an interpretation of the revelation of Scripture. Here the world and the spirit of man are each a function within the totality of God’s act of making himself known; there is complete interpenetration and interconnection between his understanding of the world and of God, such that for Bonaventure the world and man are intelligible in their being, and in their being what they are, only on the basis of the being, and the being what he is, of God in himself—and indeed, on the basis of the being, and the being what it is, of the divine revelation in Jesus Christ. If we give the key categories of Bonaventure’s thought their place in this pattern, then we may say that the created world expresses God because at the origin God expresses himself and because, when he reveals himself outwardly, he wishes to make for himself a perfect self-expression in the God-man Jesus Christ: thus every worldly expression is a foreshadowing, an image, material directed to this end.

The cause that makes all things possible is therefore God’s Trinity, in which the relationship of expression is located in the absolute being of God: this relationship is conceived purely in terms of Christian theology and has as little to do with Platonism as it has to do with Aristotelianism; Platonic ideas exist only with regard to the real world, since for any philosophy a relationship of expression based in the absolute is totally inaccessible. And God the Father does not beget the Son with a view to creation, and therefore we may not posit in the Son the beginning of a process of multiplication of the One of a mediating kind (as the Platonising fathers were inclined to suppose). Rather, the many thoughts of creation of God are possible only because the Son is unique, the only-begotten of the Father, and it is with a view to this oneness, and coming from this oneness, that all outward forms of expression and imitative images may be conceived. Bonaventure’s picture of the world is accordingly in the highest degree christocentric—because all the copies that are imperfect expressions must be brought into relation with the one perfect Image of the Father, which expresses him with the highest precision, and so be made transparent in order to be comprehensible. But precisely in this his picture of the world is not Platonic.[115]

The present chapter, which forms a unity with that which follows, examines the relationship of expression in the first instance from three points of view: first, in so far as it is established in perfection in the being of God; second, in so far as this foundation in the Trinity is the root for every outward self-expression of God; third, in so far as every outward self-expression of God that occurs remains embraced and carried by his divine self-expression and must be interpreted, explained, traced back, and analysed with reference to this, so that it may be understood in terms of the conditions that make it possible, and so that it may be granted the conditions for its perfecting. The real structure of the cosmos does not yet come into sight in this three-fold examination: this will be developed in the following chapter, first, as the world in general; second, as man; third, as the God-man who perfects all things and establishes them. We reserve until the conclusion of the last chapter the problem of the freedom of the Incarnation—which must be free, even when the whole construction of the world is to be understood as effectively established in Christ. In the meantime, in the fourth chapter, the category of'expression' is given its place in the ensemble of the theological teaching of Bonaventure about beauty, and in the fifth chapter we shall once again look back at the particular Christian situation of this aesthetic.

1. Only revelation teaches the Christian[116] that God is triune; but revelation indicates to the believer that he must think the highest of God. In the light of this principle,[117] the thinking believer realises that it belongs to the perfection of being to bring forth what is of the same kind as itself; that the highest form of blessedness (which presupposes absolute goodness and selflessness), requires the highest form of self-communication within a perfect communitarian love; yet he also realises that, since God can be only the highest simplicity, a multiplication of his being cannot come into question, and that therefore the otherness of the Person must be compatible with the unity of the actual nature of God; finally, he realises that the plurality of the Persons can come only from a highest originality (*primitas*) of absolute fecundity (*fecunditas*).[118] The old Platonic axiom *bonum diffusivum sui* now in the light of Christian revelation no longer refers simply to God's relationship with the world but to his absolute being itself: and this opens the way for an explanation of the structure that belongs to the natural kinds in the world, makes it possible to trace them back to their

origin without absorbing them monistically into the rays of the light that is their source. But in his thought the believer does not only follow the principle that the highest possible must be thought of God; he is also guided by the multiple reference of the relationships of expression among creatures, which all point to an absolute relationship of expression: ‘*Omnis creatura clamat generationem aetemam*, every creature proclaims the eternal process of generation, and this is expressed and represented by the twelve *generationes* that we find in the creatures.’ Four means of radiation: illumination from light, warmth from fire, flowing from a spring, rain and dew from a cloud. But the ray of light is weaker than the source of light, the warmth is not an inmost part of the fire, the river departs in time from the spring, and only a part of its contents drips from the cloud. Four means of expression: the image of a figure is an expression of the object, the picture of the matrix, the word of the speaker, the concept an expression of the thinking spirit. But the image which appears is not the thing itself, the picture is extended in space, the word is fragmented, the concept is contingent and does not give expression to the whole of the reason. Four means of reproduction: the seed of a plant produces the shoot, the root produces the tree, the mother’s womb produces the child, the father’s seed produces his descendant. The first, however, lacks a clear form, the second lacks equality of the form, the third is mainly passive, and the fourth lacks simultaneity. But all twelve express something (each in its own deficient way) that must include the fullness of the relationship of expression, in an inaccessible point of origin beyond this world.[119]

However, these twelve forms of expression may be reduced in number. The first four deal with the elements, at a stage before organic life. Among the second four, the concept and the picture have a pre-eminence: the concept, as an inner word which is amplified in the outward word, and the picture, to which the type of knowledge that comes from the object may be related back. In the last four, which deal with organic reproduction, everything can be reduced to the perfect natural begetting, fatherhood. So we have left, as decisive hints: word, image and Son. ‘Now the word is nothing other than an explicit likeness which finds expression (*similitudo expressa et expressiva*), brought forth (or conceived through fertilisation = *concepta*) in the power of the rational spirit, when it contemplates and reflects on itself or something else. So it is clear that the content of the word “word”, in addition to the contents of the words “being known”, “generation” and “image”, presupposes a “being known” in the intuition of the rational spirit, “generation” in the inner conception, and “image” in the resemblance which is in agreement on all sides: but the content “word” adds to all of this the content of the word “expression” (*super addit intellectum expressionis).*’ ‘Being known’ (*notitia*) is not applicable to the relationship of expression in the Trinity, because that is an absolute characteristic of God; so we are left with ‘Son’ for the generation, ‘image’ for the express correspondence with the one who proceeds forth, and finally ‘Word’, which contains all this in itself and, in addition, brings in the concepts of expression and revelation.[120]

It will be helpful here, before we go further, to look at the terminology used. *Expressivus* is frequently placed in contrast to *expressus: expressus* corresponds roughly to the German word ‘*ausdrücklich*’ in the sense of ‘precise’, exact in reproduction, while *expressivus* corresponds to the German ‘*ausdrückend*’, in which all the weight is placed upon the relationship of expression itself.[121] *Expressio* (expression) can be understood both in an active sense, as ‘process of expressing’ or as an ‘original’ (*exemplar*) that expresses itself, and in a passive sense, as the copy image which results from this.[122] But it is typical of Bonaventure that the exactness termed *expressus* is always understood and explained (so to speak) in the shadow of the expressive relationship, never *vice versa*: in other words, Bonaventure’s concept of beauty (even when considered as ‘exactness’, as *aequalitas numerosa*) is always deployed in the framework of an ontology of expression (considered as the fecundity, self-abandon, love of being itself). So the copy or image is bound inwardly to the original: ‘Where there is an image, there is imitation’ (deriving *imago* from *imitago*).[123]

However, because only one substance can exist in God, the image which expresses him must be an ‘absolute expression’ (*expressio in summo*): this necessarily implies the uniqueness of this total expression.[124] In the world of creatures, the concept of (inner) ‘word’ comes closest to this, because in it the concept of image is most distinct, and at the same time mention is made of what proceeds naturally from the spirit in the act of knowing: ‘Among all creatures, there is expression most of all in the “image”, and likewise the pictorial relationship of expression is the most expressive of all; but the relationship of expression which resembles the eternal Word can only be the proceeding of the word from the spirit, and this then is the most expressive (*expressissima*), and it is applied in the appropriate way to God.’[125] If the Son from this point of view is *imitatio et similitudo pura non permixta alicui* *dissimilitudini*,[126] in which the being of the truth originally consists, it is likewise true, on the other hand, that this self-expression of God may not depend on his own free whim but must be rooted in his very nature as Spirit: ‘The fecundity which belongs to the nature of the Father is necessarily the ground of his sharing his nature with the Other . . . but this necessity does not contradict his free will.’[127] In the generation of the Son God’s freedom concurs with his nature, while in the spiration of the Holy Spirit the nature of God concurs with his freedom; if in the case of the Son the freedom did not concur with the divine nature, then the spiritual analogies from the world would have no value, but only the natural analogies (and even the natural procreations are works of eros!); and the basis of the principle *bonum diffusivum sui*, or the requirement to think the highest of the self-emanation of God, would remain unfulfilled. The generation of the Son takes place per *modum naturae, nihilominus ut dilectus*;[128] this is decisive for every aspect of theological ontology, and we must hold fast to it. The likeness of the *Verbum* needs here to be expanded by the likeness of the *Filius*, if it is not to be explained in a purely intellectual and logical way.

Originating being (*primitas*) and the fullness from which a spring flows (*fontalis plenitudo*) is the property not simply of the being of God, but rather of the Father as Father.[129] This fundamental spring of the Godhead is so powerful and free in its essence that it is able to reproduce itself out of its whole essence, ‘and only one whose essence can be one and entire in many can do this. Were this not possible for him, it would mean that if the begetter gave his entire essence to the one whom he begat, his whole essence would pass over to the one begotten, and he would necessarily lose his entire essence through the act of generation—but this is impossible. Therefore such a being must be able to be one and entire in many. Further, such a being must be simple in the highest degree, as only the divine being can be; in this essence of the highest simplicity, the one who is subject of the essence is no addition to it, and thereby neither limits nor restricts it, nor multiplies the form.’[130] As far as the Son is concerned, two things characterise this total gift of the divine nature: first, that in him the whole God is expressed, or (put in other words) that he is *God as he is in being expressed*, and thereby is the unsurpassable ‘resemblance’, ‘assimilation’, ‘correspondence’ and so ‘truth’;[131] second, that the one who proceeds is the one with the manner of the proceeding: ‘There are two manners of proceeding, in accordance with the will and generosity (*liberalitas*): the first is the coming forth in the manner of generosity of that which itself is not generosity, but is born or given by generosity—it is in this way that the creatures proceed from God; then second the essential generosity (*ratio liberalitatis*) itself proceeds in this way from love—and it is in this way that the Holy Spirit goes forth as love, he who is the gift in which all other gifts are given. In the same way, there is a double procession in the manner of exemplification (*exemplaritas*): first, that in which what is properly speaking a copy is produced—it is in this way that the creature proceeds from God, as the copied image from the original (and thus the original is the formal cause of the copy); second, that in which that which proceeds in the manner of exemplification goes forth as essential archetypal originality (*ratio exemplandi*)—it is in this way that the Son, who is named the Word of the Father, appears to go forth.'[132] If this is said with a view to the creation, nevertheless it is true first of all in the inner life of God, and this is confirmed by the statement that the Son, by being the expression of the Father, is at the same time *the* expression universally, *i.e.*, the expression of everything: 'The Word expresses the Father as the primal cause which essentially underlies things, and in this way explains and represents the generation of the Holy Spirit and its own generation and the generation of the foundations of the earth.'[133] And if witness is given in heaven from the three, Father, Son and Spirit, 'this witness is expressed only by the Word, for the Word gives expression to the Father and to itself and to the Holy Spirit, and to everything else'.[134] The Son is therefore not only the archetype, of which images are made in the world: he is God as expression, that is, as truth, and therefore he is the principle of the fact that the things in creation have been expressed and of the fact that they express themselves as created essences: '*ratio exprimendi est ipsius exemplaris*: the fact of being an expression (which belongs to the creature) comes from the original . . . . All things are true and have the capacity to express themselves by virtue of the power of expression of that highest light', *i.e.*, of the Word.[135]

As expression in God, the Son is a unifying centre between Father and Spirit:[136] he gives expression both to his having been begotten by the Father and to the Father's and his own spiration of the Spirit. He is thereby the expression of an endless and absolute event of love, and to that extent (precisely *as* expression) the Son himself journeys out of himself into the love itself. Of this love, one can only say dialectically that it is both expressed in the Son and taken up into the expression—but, at the same time, it surpasses the sphere of expression of the Logos, because the divine process finds its perfected end, not in the Son, but in the Spirit. This dialectic runs through Bonaventure's whole system, for while on the one hand he describes the Word from many points of view as the centre of all things, at the same time he describes him as the centre which leads back to the Father (and that means in the spiration of the Spirit), and which surpasses itself, as this happens in love in the form of *affectus, excessus* and *unio* in the silence of the understanding and indeed in the turning-aside of the spiritual gaze (*amovendi sunt oculi spirituales*).[137]

It is quite essential that we keep this in mind when Bonaventure describes the position of the Son within the Godhead not only as the place of truth but as the place of beauty. But in order to make the whole meaning of this statement clear, we must first discuss the position of the Son as archetype of the world.

2. When he speaks of the relationship between the Trinity and the creation of the world, Bonaventure clearly distances himself from Augustine, in favour of the view of the Greek fathers.[138] God behaves externally as he is, *i.e.*, as a trinitarian being: therefore, though all his actions in the dispensation of salvation are common to the Trinity, each expresses the individual position of the Persons; the positions of the Son as expression of God and of the Spirit as the self-giving of God are preserved externally just as much as in the inner life of the Trinity. To speak of appropriation means therefore to indicate the *propria* of the Persons, when we speak of these basic articulations of God's communication of himself.[139] This means nothing less than the grounding of the act of creation in the act of generation within the Godhead—and at this point, we can understand the whole influence of Bonaventure on German mysticism.[140] To base the creation in the Trinity in this way avoids both the danger of subordinationism which is found in the early Greek Fathers, because every appearance of locating the purpose of the generation of the Son in creation is avoided, and likewise the danger of an absorption of the natural order in the supernatural, because the natural order and the reason are unreservedly granted their relative independence.

However, in the generation of the Son, God (the Father) expresses himself uniquely and definitively—he expresses himself, and thereby his whole power and his whole capacity: *dixit similitudinem suam, et per consequens expressit omnia quae potuit;*[141] 'he gave utterance to his whole capacity: to what he was able to do and especially to what he wished to do. And all this he expressed in his Son, in the medium which is at the same time his art-form (*ars*).'[142] Art [*Kunst*] comes from capacity [*Können*], and therefore *ars* here speaks also of the artistic intelligence. But the Son would not be God, if he were not the realisation of the *entire* capacity of the Father and therefore a realisation that surpasses everything that is realised in the world of creatures. At this point Bonaventure applies the Anselmian formula, *Necesse est ut haec diffusio secundum totum posse sit in aliquo, quo majus cogitari non potest*.[143] If, therefore, the Father bestows the Son upon the world, 'then he gives it along with him (the Son) everything that he was, everything that he possessed, everything that he could'.[144] To the Father's capacity belongs everything real, everything possible; but the possible is utterly infinite, and in the power of God it is in fact infinite *actu*, and so it surpasses every created understanding, even that of Christ, *propter immensitatem et improportionalitatem*.[145] If the Father has really given expression in the Son to his whole being and capacity, then in the Son everything that is possible through God has taken on reality: if anything else outside God is realised through God, it can have possibility and reality only through the Son and in the Son. 'The divine truth expresses itself and everything else through the one unique highest expression.'[146] The Son is *ars suprema,*[147] *ars Patris*:[148] thus he is the expression of the entire divine capacity—*posse generate et posse create est posse unicum*.[149]

We come back, therefore, to what has already been said: the Son is archetype, idea, exemplar of all things outside God, not because he is first of all absolute content but because he is absolute expression; Bonaventure never wearies of saying this.[150] This is his sole reason for taking over the Platonic axiom that the creatures 'are true, when they are as they are *in arte aeterna*, or as they find expression there; but because they are not perfectly, matched to the idea which expresses or represents them, every creature is a "lie", according to Augustine';[151] that 'I shall see myself better in God than in myself',[152] that things are more alive in God then in themselves.[153] The precise argument runs as follows: *similitudo quae est ipsa Veritas expressiva .. . melius exprimit rem quam ipsa res seipsam, quia res ipsa accipit rationem expressionis ab ilia*.[154] Bonaventure subordinates his whole teaching on the *analogy of being* (which is very different from that of Thomas) to this central proposition.

A *similitudo participationis* between God and creature 'is entirely absent, because there is nothing in common. The *similitudo imitationis* is quite slight (*modica*), for the finite can imitate the infinite only in an insignificant way, so that the dissimilarity always remains greater than the similarity: *semper major est dissimilitudo quam similitudo'*.[155] What Bonaventure has to say about *proportionalitas* belongs here: unlike *proportio*, which is an analogous relationship between things of the same type (a:b = c:d), *proportionalitas* is a similar relationship between things which do not belong in the same common category and have nothing in common (*non communicantium): proportionalitas* 'posits no common character, for it compares only the relationship of two to two, and so it can exist, and does in fact exist, between things that are utterly different (*summe distantia)'*.[156] Over against this, we have the statement: *Similitudo vero expressionis est summa, quia causatur ab intentione veritatis . . . , quae est ipsa expressio*.[157] In contrast to the scarcely considered upwards-tending *analogia entis*, there is a very strong downwards-tending analogy: the eternal Word of expression knows better and says better what each thing wants to say than the thing itself knows.[158] And the creature receives its power to speak, to set it on its path, namely the *species*, which it emits from itself so that it may be grasped and understood in the sense-perception or intellect of another: but whereas the creature, through the resemblances which it causes itself, can give expression to nothing but itself, and even that only partially, 'the divine truth is able to give utterance to itself and to everything in one unique highest expression',[159] so that the self-utterance of a creature succeeds only when it is embraced by the self-utterance of the eternal light.[160] This is the archetype only because of its being as light, only as *exprimens*,[161] and as such it contains the *splendores exemplares*.[162] The *ratio radiandi* is the basis of the archetypical character, and the *species clarae*, the clear forms or concepts of light, lie in the power of expression, which in God is a spiritual power.[163] It will be clear at this point that Bonaventure's thought takes a middle path between Plato and Luther: his teaching on creatures contains a trinitarian doctrine of ideas which, if applied to christology (as he himself was later to do), supplies the ontological basis for the Lutheran doctrine of justification, including the idea of *Justus et peccator*.

What is decisive here is that it is the one unique Word (*increatum-incarnatum*) who in himself is the sum of all the ideas of the world. He alone, as the total expression of God, gives expression in himself to all that can be created in its infinite multiplicity—and not only in general, but in the smallest particular details (*singulare*), in a *distinctissima expressio*,[164] 'just as the one unique light, for example, gives expression to many different colours'.[165] So 'he represents many things',[166] he is the Sophia of God, who bears in her womb the eternal thoughts of God;[167] 'from God's point of view only one thing corresponds to them—yet it has more power to represent many things than has any created plurality; nevertheless, although the truth is simple, it is infinite'.[168] It is as simple in relation to the many as God's creative power is simple in relation to the realisation of the many.[169] In himself, God possesses all things *sub omnimoda indifferentia reali*, but this does not prevent them from existing outside God *sub differentia multiplici*.[170] For just as the three Persons in God are not in any genuine sense numerable (since the unity does not multiply itself but in each case is related to a hypostasis), so there is no number among the ideas, for the idea is only single, even if it is multiple through its relationship to the various things that may be expressed.[171] This teaching grounds finite being in God's will to expression, in a double way: first, in as much as the archetype in God is itself an expression, and second in so far as the individual being is the goal of a particular intention of expression on God's part, *expressissime* and *distinctissime* chosen to be as it is, and addressed by God with this intention. Thereby it is the destination of a particular act of God's condescension, of a particular form of speech of the eternal Word.

Everything created is therefore based in the generation of the Logos: 'God would never have been able to bring forth a creature on account of his will, if he had not brought forth the Son on account of his nature.'[172] 'Every procession is either a begetting or a consequence of this begetting.'[173] 'In the procession of the Word everything is said, in the procession of the Gift (the Holy Spirit) every other gift is given.'[174] 'If there is such a thing as the begetting of something dissimilar, it presupposes conceptually the begetting of what is similar. This may be proved as follows: the like is related to the unlike as the same is related to the different, the one to the many; but the same necessarily precedes the different, and the one necessarily precedes the many . . . . Accordingly, what is different does not proceed from the eternal substance until that which is the same is begotten.'[175]

Now we may anticipate somewhat and speak about the particular *association of beauty with the Son*, which Bonaventure treats as something wholly taken for granted; and we are aware that 'appropriation' means more in his writings than it does in Augustine and normally in modern theology. Peter Lombard, who serves Bonaventure as a basis for his theology, had already made the equation: ‘The most perfect beauty (*pulchritudo*) is the Son, that is, the truth of the Father, which never in any way departs from him . . . and which is the model (*forma*) of all things.’[176] Later, Lombard takes over from Hilary[177] the appropriation of *aeternitas* to the Father, of *species* to the image (i.e., the Son), and *usus* to the Spirit, and here the Master of the *Sentences* interprets the word *species*, which is predicated of the Son, in the sense of beauty, because between Son and Father ‘there reigns the highest mutual concord and chiefest similarity and chiefest resemblance, deviating in no point, dissimilar in no point, unlike in no point, but responding in identity to him whose image he is’.[178] Thus Bonaventure can rewrite the text from Hilary forthwith as *aeternitas—formositas—jucunditas*;[179] the statement of the Book of Wisdom leads him quite simply to this, when it is said of the Wisdom of God that she is *candor lucis aeternae et speculum sine macula*, she is *speciosior sole* (7:25ff). He comments: ‘Where there is a mirror and an image and brightness, there is necessarily also a representation (*repraesentatio*) and beauty (*pulchritudo)’*, and to this he adds at once one of the Augustinian definitions of beauty: ‘ “*pulchritudo nihil aliud est quam aequalitas numerosa”; ibi autem sunt rationes numerosae ad unum reductae*.’[180] Ascending from the world, where beauty consists (in Augustinian terms) in harmony and proportion, one arrives by a process of reduction at unity—but not an empty unity, rather an absolute *aequalitas* in the Godhead between archetype and image, which, together with the absolute truth as correspondence (*respondens*), is the basis of absolute beauty.

Bonaventure sets this forth in a classical passage,[181] in which he shifts the weight from the concept of harmony to the initially less unambiguous concept of *species*. This has indeed a threefold meaning—the senses of the word seem at first sight to be united more by the word itself than by any conceptual unity: first, expressive image (in the sense of *eidos*, reproduced in Latin by *similitudo*), second, an image which imparts knowledge (as the object emits knowledge and imprints it on the subject’s capacity to know: *species ex*- and *impressa*), finally, simply beauty, as indicated by the adjective *speciosus*. Clearly, the basis of this last meaning must lie in the two other meanings,[182] the first of which speaks of the (passive) character of the expression of an archetype, the second of which adds the idea of the (active) act of expressive mediation of this archetype as it expresses itself to the knowing subject. This, precisely, is the position of the Word in God: he gives expression to the Father who is the archetype, and himself becomes an expressive archetype in relation to the world, precisely in so far as he gives perfect expression to the paternal archetype. The Son is the perfect image of the Father, because he proceeds *per modum naturae*, ‘for the divine nature begets what resembles it and is like it. Since, however, he possesses the content of the expressive likeness, he possesses likewise the content of knowledge, for the likeness which is expressed is the basis of knowledge. And since he is in himself the idea and source-idea (*ratio et exemplar*) of all things, in that he is in fullness the idea of similarity and knowledge, he realises in himself also the content of perfect beauty. For since he is the perfect and expressive form of resemblance, he is beautiful in comparison with him whom he expresses. And since he possesses the content of knowledge, and that not of some one single thing but of the entirety of all that is, ‘he bears the beautiful world spiritually in himself, as the beautiful one’ (Boethius), and he possesses beauty in relation to all beauty that is his image. These two relationships, taken together, result in the most perfect beauty: that particular kind of *speciositas* which springs from both.

We must add that the beauty of the image is twofold: ‘An image is called beautiful if it is well painted, but it is also called beautiful when it perfectly represents the beauty of that which it copies.’ In the first sense, ‘an image of the devil is beautiful if it perfectly represents his ugliness’, *i.e.*, if it exactly copies the original; in the second sense, we have also the luminosity, *i.e.*, the original makes itself clear and expresses itself in the copy itself. *Pulchritudo ita refertur ad prototypum, quod nihilominus est in imagine pulchritudo*: this becomes clear when, beyond the mere *aequalitas numerosa*, the purely formal correspondence between the two, the relationship of expression is added as the fundamental principle: as the principle which makes itself clear (from the Father to the Son) and which makes itself an expression (from the Son to the Father).[183] For here we have passed beyond the relationship of nature and spirit that is found in the world: here we are speaking of the nature of God’s Spirit, where the personal relationships each imply both (with different emphases in the cases of the Son and of the Holy Spirit). Only so can it be understood why the Son, precisely as copied image, stands over against the world as archetype, that is, *species* that mediates knowledge: because as Son he wishes to be nothing else than the image of the Father, he transmits this image (as copy and as archetype) and thereby lays the foundation for every creaturely attitude before God. Such attitudes can be true and beautiful only in so far as they copy the attitude of the Son to the Father.[184]

3. On this view the Word of God, as total expression of God, is the 'archetypical world' in three respects: first, because, considered in relationship to the origin, he expresses this perfectly; second, because he serves the origin as a medium of expression (as the inward concept serves the thinker); and third, because in the Incarnation he is expressed in outward form by the origin, without losing his immanence in the Spirit, as the idea of that which was intended in the creation.[185] This means that every creature, in the distance of its otherness, can be only a 'deficient' and therefore necessarily a multiple copy of the original identical form of the image in God himself. 'In the archetypical world, there is the highest beauty, on the grounds of the absolute unity; but if there were unity in the world perceived by the senses, there would be no beauty, because neither order nor perfection would reign. If this world is to imitate the other in perfection and beauty, it must be multiple, so that the multiplicity may achieve what the unity cannot do.'[186] This is true in the case of the angels, who can imitate the highest hierarchy of the Trinity only through a 'gradation of the dissimilar': 'In the highest hierarchy, the most perfect beauty can reign through sheer equality of form and sheer equality of relationship, because the universal and highest truth holds sway in each of the equally ranked Persons. But since in the hierarchy of the angels each of the spirits who are ranged in their orders does not possess as an individual the highest perfection, a certain harmony of order and beauty must be attained through an appropriate differentiation in a relative gradation: as far as creatures are concerned, this is the highest perfection possible. It is the same in the sphere of holiness within the Church: there is an order of the apostles, another of the martyrs, another of the confessors, and so on, and there exists no absolute equality among them, because it can be said of every single saint, "No one was his like in keeping the commandment of the Most High" (Sir 44:20). . . . Because of the limitation of the created being, order and beauty in the creaturely hierarchy must be joined to difference and indeed to oppositeness, so that what could not be obtained from unity may be derived at least from the multiplicity of many.'[187]

According to Augustine, this drawing near through distance has three stages: trace (*vestigium*), image (*imago*), and resemblance (*similitudo*). In the ‘trace’ the trinitarian mystery of origin expresses itself only in an objective manner; in the ‘image’ this happens expressly in the structure of the subject, which through the form of its being as a spirit enters the relationship to the trinitarian spirit of its origin; in the ‘resemblance’ the archetype dwells in the copied image through sanctifying grace.[188] ‘Just as the creature cannot have God as its origin without being configured to him in accordance with unity, truth and goodness, so it cannot have God as the object of its knowledge without grasping him through memory, understanding and will; and in the same way, it cannot have God in itself as a gift poured into it without becoming like him through faith, hope and love.’[189] The distinction of the various stages derives, then, from the degree of intimacy of the ‘representation’ of God.[190] But it is only in the light of the ‘resemblance’ effected by faith, to which the trinitarian mystery will disclose itself, that the ‘image’ in the human spirit can understand itself as trinitarian; and it is only when this is realised that the real significance of the ‘trace’ in all things can be grasped. Besides this, the insight of faith permits each of the three stages to be interpreted in a double sense (corresponding to the double relationship of the image to the beautiful, discussed above): as a ‘reference’ to the archetype, and as a ‘representation’ (and to this extent a vessel) of the archetype. Thus, the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* is divided into six stages: trace, image and resemblance each as a pointer and as representation (*per speculum—in speculo*). The pointer is in each case prior: the world is ‘as a whole a mirror, through which we come to God . . . wandering over as true Hebrews from Egypt into the promised land’,[191] and in this way one achieves a proper understanding of the pointer as a representation, and an understanding of the self-fulfilment of creaturely being as an immanent sign of the indwelling of its origin in it.[192] The sequence is determinative of this theological aesthetic: the immanent beauty of the things of the world is visible in itself only when the transient pointer to the archetypical beauty is understood and ratified. But in this, the pointer itself must of necessity be named beauty, because the creature can refer to its archetype only through itself. ‘Anyone who is not illuminated by so much glory in created things is blind; anyone who does not awake amid such loud cries is deaf; anyone who does not praise God for such numerous works is dumb; anyone who does not sense the first origin from so many hints is stupid.’[193]

In contrast to the ‘trace’, the *imago* in man is an *assimilatio expressa* and *de proximo* to God:[194] in it, the objective self-expression of God returns subjectively to him—for in as much as the created spirit wakes up to itself, it must of necessity turn to its origin. When it becomes inwardly an illuminated being, its source and its goal must become clear to it. It is *capax Dei*,[195] and therefore *informabilis* by God;[196] it ‘has the most excellent of all capabilities of conceiving the capacity to be united (*unibilitas*) with God’.[197] ‘And for this reason it bears in itself from its origin the light of the divine countenance’, and this precisely ‘in what concerns the origin, order and distinction of its inner abilities, in which it resembles that distinction and interrelation which, in the divine Persons, belongs inwardly to God’s nature’.[198] It is obvious that here lies the central point of Bonaventure’s spirituality and of his aesthetic alike: the spirit of man can find self-fulfilment only in faith, for it is only in faith that he understands himself as the expression of the triune life, and it is only in the explicit turning (per *speculum*) to the trinitarian image that is above him that the image of the eternal God in him (in *speculo*) is truly illuminated. In as much as man is oriented towards the proper image that is in God, he is tending towards the image (*ad imaginem*), ‘whereas the Son, in his whole being, *is* the image of the Father, and therefore *solum est Imago, non ad imaginem*’.[199] The orientation of man’s being as image, for which God is the *objectutn tnotivum*,[200] the *ratio movens*,[201] means that God is not only the transcendental object which is the goal of the created spirit, but is also the object at the source, *objectutn fontanum*,[202] as Bonaventure puts it (using a magnificent formula instead of the pale *objectum formale*), the *fontale principium illuminationis cognitivae*.[203] The more the spirit actuates itself, therefore, the more immanent will it be in God, and God in it. With Augustine, a distinction may be made between an *imago* which shines more in transcendence (*memotia—intellectus—voluntas*) and an *imago* which shines more in the spirit’s act of grasping itself (*mens—notitia—amot*):[204] but in so far as the second is actually realised, it is once again only the relationship to God that becomes a reality: ‘Because the soul is the image of God, and because whatever turns to the image and is configured to it turns likewise to what is portrayed, the soul which reflects on itself does not separate itself from the likeness of form.’[205] ‘And so the reality of the image is from one point of view to be found more in the turning of the soul to God, and from another point of view more in the turning of the soul to itself. It lies more in the turning to God, because therein lies more beauty (*venustas*) and resemblance; but in the turning to itself lies more similarity of being and likeness'[206]—in so far as the single divine substance of the three Persons is more visible in the self-realisation of the human spirit in its three capacities. It is clear thathere reflection on itself is not meant purely theoretically, or even egotistically, but rather as the self-understanding of the being that is man, who does not exist in any way other than in this positing of self. Accordingly, although the image in man is 'substantially' prescribed in advance, and to this extent cannot be lost, nevertheless it can be lost in as much as it must be actualised intellectually,[207] for this actualisation can fail to occur.

Out of this dialectic in the created spirit between the progressive entering into itself and the progressive orientation towards God emerges the conclusion that the existential realisation of the self goes along with the existential polarity between copy and archetype. For this archetype, as the reality of the three Persons, is the highest reality that can present itself to the intellect—it is not in the least a mere 'idea' or 'conceptual realm'. The relation between archetype (the divine Word, as expression of the life of God in his wholeness) and copy is no formal relationship, but a profoundly personal relationship, and in Bonaventure this is even more unequivocal than in Augustine. The realisation by the created spirit of this relationship of persons (which is always real on God's part) in faith, prayer and contemplation is called by Bonaventure *regressus, reductio,* and *resolutio*; this is for him the fundamental act of a thinking and being that is worthy of man.

'If a ray of light strikes a polished object, it must be reflected back along the same path.'[208] 'The ray of understanding must be sent back (*reflectendus*) through meditation, so that it may return to the source of all good.'[209] Things are not simply set forth from God at creation: rather, they exist in a continuous emanation from him, and therefore it is required that they flow back,[210] in a 'pious act of pouring themselves back into their origin'.[211] It is, however, only with the help of the grace of the absolute Spirit that the *plena resolutio* succeeds,[212] while that of philosophy can succeed only *semiplene*.[213] For it is only in so far as the archetype freely discloses itself in the copy, and is recognised and acknowledged there as the 'inner teacher', that the impulse towards absoluteness in all intellectual knowing and striving will be correctly understood, and taken as the goal.

The spirit necessarily comes into contact with this impulse, for the spirit is configured to the *rationes aeternae*.[214] And it is only when these become clear to it that it receives any definitive illumination. ‘Christ is the inner teacher, and it is only through him that the truth is known: not through outward speech as with us, but through inner illumination. He is in the innermost part of every soul, and shines with his wholly bright concepts (*species*) over the dim concepts of our understanding.’[215] The sermon ‘Christ is the one teacher of all’ develops these thoughts in all their aspects.[216] All human theology is only the servant of the teaching of the unique Theologian, and, in accordance with this teacher, all the teachers of Christendom must strive after love, and so must agree in their opinions.[217]

The idea of the presence of the one teacher in all hearts, the idea of the one *Verbum increatum-incarnatum* that dwells in all spirits, known or unknown—this is ancient Alexandrian tradition. God is present to the soul in a much more intimate manner than the soul supposes, and therefore she has a necessary knowledge of him which does not rest simply on abstraction: ‘Through the truth, God is present to the soul and to every understanding, and therefore it is not necessary to fashion an abstract concept of him in order that he may be known. Nevertheless, the reason that knows him receives the form of an image of knowledge (*notitia*), which is a kind of likeness—but this is not an abstraction, but something imprinted (*impressa*).’[218] For God is ‘ever present in the spirit of man’,[219] ‘even if there are few who are willing to believe this, since it seems scarcely credible to the spirit that has not yet risen up to the contemplation of the things of eternity that it has God so present and so near’.[220] God is presence and reality in an absolute sense: *praesentissimum, actualissimum*.[221] Accordingly, ‘the blindness of the understanding is a source of the greatest wonder. It does not notice what it sees first of all, it does not notice that without which it can know nothing. But just as the eye which attends to the difference of the colours does not see the light which permits it to see everything else, or does not notice it if it does see it, so it is with the eye of our spirit . . . it looks at the light of the highest being, but imagines that it sees nothing, and does not understand that it is precisely the darkness that is the highest illumination of our spirit.’[222] In reality, this light is inaccessible to the grasp: *lux est inaccessibilis, et tamen proxima animae, etiam plus quam ipsa sibi. Est etiam inalligabilis, et tamen summe intima*. But only the man who soars up in the highest vision can comprehend this.[223] Bonaventure is not in any sense an ontologist: here below God is not seen face to face, he is not seen openly, he is not seen without images presented to the senses.[224] On the other hand, God is active in every act of intellectual knowing, not merely as *principium et causa*, but as *objectum et ratio motiva*,[225] and we cannot interpret this (with Gilson) in the sense of a purely unknown medium of knowledge which is not objective. It has been said above that the light is not observed by the eye that is absorbed in the things; is it then not seen anywhere? ‘The cause is luminous (*relucet*) in the effect, and the wisdom of the artist is revealed (*manifestatur*) in the work: so God, who is the artist and the cause of the creature, is known through the creature.’[226] The one who interprets the image is drawn to what is portrayed by the image as it points beyond itself,[227] especially in the special case where what is objectively intended coincides with what first arouses the process of knowing, and both aspects together (beyond the distinction of object and subject) flow from the *Objectum fontanum*.[228] Accordingly, we must speak (with Gerken) of an ‘implicit awareness’ of God as the ‘transcendental’ subject-object,[229] which does not exist only formlessly as the primal light, but also as ‘having form’, in as much as the eternal (and then incarnate) Word is the exemplar of all forms in the world, both as light and as form, as we have seen.[230] Naturally, ‘he stands in your midst as one whom you do not know’ (Jn 1:26),[231] but true knowledge can take no other path than that of the progressive clarification of the source-object, the path of the progressive rendering more transparent of the archetypical idea through all the copies. This process is the *reductio*, the theological transcendental reduction, the theological demonstration of the conditions of the possibility of all knowledge and striving. Whereas the researcher who confines his attention to earthly things attains the *rationes aeternae* only *ut moventes*, as presupposed functions, the wise man, whose soul has been purified for this purpose, attains them *ut quietantes*, in their act of shining which has its own finality in itself.[232] This, however, does not change the fact that even the former can know what is contingent (and thereby defective) only on the basis of full being.[233] ‘Thus, no one would know that one thing is better than another, unless he knew that it has a greater resemblance to what is best.’[234] ‘Therefore God cannot be thought of as not existing, as Anselm proves.’[235]

If the *reductio* is our way to God, it is also God’s way to us, for God himself does not wish to see us in any way other than that in which we are conceived in his perfect image, the Son, and through the Son's redemption and our acceptance as God's children we have found our way back to this. Our good works by themselves could not have procured this for us: God had first to come down to us, to give us sanctifying grace. 'First of all he must accept his image and his will, for this is the achievement which comes from man . . . for no one can make himself better than he is, or perform a work that pleases God, unless he himself beforehand is pleasing to God, and God looks with favour first on him, and only then on his works.'[236] Just as for us all things possess the beauty and goodness that is their own when they are illuminated and made transparent with reference to the idea, that is to the divine Word, so the world, for the Father who created it, possesses its full goodness and beauty only in the Son, and in so far as the Son embraces it in himself at its origin as *exemplar*, and as Bridegroom draws it back to himself in nuptial love: 'God is inwardly hidden in everything that is perceived by the senses or intellectually known. And the fruit of all learning is that through all the sciences the faith is edified, God is honoured, and right living is furthered—and that from this, those consolations may be drawn forth which lie in the uniting of Bridegroom and Bride, as this is accomplished through *Caritas*. This is the goal of all revelation.'[237]

3. FIRST AND SECOND ADAM

Up to this point, the phenomenon of ‘expression’ has been considered from a theological, a priori standpoint: we have considered how the expression within the Godhead determines every self-expression of God in the world, sustains this and refers it back to him. Now we must show the same phenomenon from the standpoint of the world, a posteriori, and then demonstrate the synthesis of descending and ascending expression in the God-man. For Bonaventure, man is the crowning of the process of the world’s coming to be, and Christ is the crowning of the historical process: the sixth age of the world, in which God becomes man, corresponds to the sixth day of creation, when man is formed and appointed king of the world.[238] The following passage proves that the word ‘process’ may indeed properly be used here: ‘The impulse (*appetitus*) which is in matter is ordered and directed to spiritual things, so that the process of coming to be (*generatio*) does not reach its term until such time as the spiritual soul is united with organic matter. By analogy to this, we can affirm that the highest and noblest perfection in the universe is not attained until such time as the nature that contains the germs that make for the spirit (*rationes seminales*) and the nature that contains the concepts of reason (*rationes intellectuales*) and the nature that contains the archetypical designs of the world (*rationes ideales*) are united to form one single person: and this happened at the Incarnation of the Son of God.’[239] The seeds that lie in the womb of nature cannot be brought to birth without the light of heaven which graciously imparts its radiance, and, in exactly the same way, man cannot develop to his full stature without the spiritual grace from heaven.[240] We must content ourselves with developing a few aspects of Bonaventure’s teaching about the world, man and Christ which are significant for his aesthetics.

1. Here, for the last time within Christian theology, the doctrine of the *world* is considered in very close relationship to the doctrine of the scriptural revelation. For Adam the ‘book of the creatures’ sufficed, that he might learn thereby ‘to contemplate the light of the divine Wisdom’: and this because he looked at things both as they were in themselves and as they were in the

divine art, ‘for things have a threefold manner of existence: in matter or in their own nature, in the created reason, and in the divine art’.[241] Their existence in the reason is in this way the midpoint and boundary between their existence as such and their existence in God, just as the human spirit at its peak attains to what is above, and has its roots in what is below, and is in this way a mediator between the creatures and God. For this reason, truth possesses in the soul a relationship to that double truth . . . from below, it receives a certainty *secundum quid,* but from above an absolute certainty.[242] Man himself is accordingly the proper ladder that leads to God—from the material existence which he penetrates, via his own intellectual midpoint, to the height of God’s Spirit above him: and Christ unites all three stages in his own Person.[243] He appeared because the book of nature had become illegible to fallen man.[244] ‘In the state of innocence, man possessed a knowledge of created things, and when they were present he was carried to God through them, so that he might praise and glorify and love God. That is why the creatures exist, and it is in this way that they are brought back to God. But when man had fallen and lost his knowledge, there was no longer anyone who could bring the creatures back to God. So that book—the world—was as if dead and obliterated; and thus another book was needed through which man might be enlightened to understand things again as parables: the book of Scripture, which employs the properties of things to make parables. The revelation of Scripture illuminates all things, and sets the whole cosmos free for God, who is to be praised, glorified and loved.’[245] If the world is interpreted in the light of Scripture, it once more gives its proofs of God, as it did at its origin.[246] For ‘the creature is nothing else than a mirror-image of the divine Wisdom, its tangible image’, ‘a reflection of the divine Wisdom, though of course mingled with darkness’, for ‘the ray of sunshine which penetrates through the window-panes breaks up into many colours’. It is ‘only the highest contemplatives’ who can read this book aright, ‘and not the philosophers who limit themselves to this world’s nature, for these know only the nature of things, not the trace of God in them’.[247] Nature is a book with writing on its outside, but the scriptural revelation is a book with writing on its inside, and Christ the God-man is the apocalyptic book with writing on the outside and on the inside.[248]

As a whole, the world in its existence is ordered towards man; in Bonaventure’s theology, matter has an *appetitus* towards form, and this *appetitus* gives it the capacity and disposes it for the taking-on of form.[249]

To this extent, matter is not *privatio pura*, but in its very nature has already something of beauty and light in itself.[250] This is important in all organic life, and especially in that of man: ‘The soul moves the body by means of the power and by means of the disposition of the body, which gives it the tendency to accept the influence of the soul.’ This law is then transposed likewise to nature and grace: ‘. . . and in precisely the same way, God’s light and love move the soul herself and give her life by means of the grace and wisdom poured into her.’[251] ‘The bodies of men are therefore ordered towards the noblest form, the spiritual soul, and every *appetitus* of the sensual and bodily nature is oriented towards this and comes to rest in this.’[252] This means that there is a ‘proportion’ from the outset between body and soul; and because a spiritual soul must demand the highest from its instrument the body, the human body possesses ‘the greatest variety of organs endowed with the greatest beauty and skill and manageableness’.[253] This proportion, this state in which the different parts are constructed in mutual orientation, unites in man ‘natures which are the furthest distant from each other’;[254] moreover, without ‘process’[255] and a gradual assimilation of matter to the spirit this would be quite impossible. ‘Therefore it is absurd to hold that the final form could have been planted in the *materia prima* without a disposition or power [in the *materia prima*] oriented towards the final form, or without some mediating form.’[256] Since animals and plants are but a mediating link between matter and man, their *generatio* can cease in the eschatological age: their cosmic aim has been attained.[257] But until then, the nature of the world shares a common fate with man and is affected in its inner existence by his condition: innocent with him, fallen with him, shaken, judged and purified with him.[258] For Bonaventure, the *light* is the great power that mediates between matter and life, life and spirit: it is illuminated and interiorised matter, it comes from ‘heaven’ and penetrates the shapeless ‘earth’. This illuminating power of light, which appears of itself and requires no other illumination, but illuminates everything else, suddenly unites light and beauty as closely as possible—indeed, identifies them with each other. *Sicut enim rosa pulcher est inter flores, sic claritas lucis inter colores*.[259] Of its nature, light is the mediator, bridging the oppositions between bodies, between matter and life,[260] and thereby we may once again discern the connection between beauty and expression: the unitary light ‘expresses itself’ in the material medium which breaks it (in accordance with the variety of the elements)[261] in various ways as ‘colour’ and, precisely in this, diversifies itself into ‘forms’; hence the summary opinion that every form is beautiful *qua* form[262] may be judged right, for the form possesses that illuminated inwardness which can express itself by presenting itself in a material. Form is the light from above which reconciles the opposition within matter,[263] as it draws on the unity of being.

To this we must add a second dimension of the world, *time and history*, to which Bonaventure (picking up and greatly developing themes from Augustine) accords the highest aesthetic significance. To the rhythm of reconciliation between matter and spirit corresponds in time the rhythm of the generations and of the historical periods, a rhythm that imparts a meaning to time. The first rhythm is the development in space of the species from their principles, the second ‘consists in the bringing-forth of that which perdures through the periods, succeeding itself as it gives way to itself: from the order of this process there comes into being a particular beauty and perfection of unity.’[264] Looked at from the point of view of nature, the death of organic beings is taken account of in this rhythmical ordering: ‘From the first in the conditions of paradise . . . the animals contributed to the beautifying of the whole by their dying on account of the succession of their generations . . . . Also, as they pursue each other and one nourishes itself from the flesh of the other . . . they contribute to making the whole a wonderful poem in which one syllable follows the other.’[265] This last image is from Augustine;[266] the image of the *pulcherrimum carmen* caused by the succession of periods is used again and again, especially in regard to that history which is the history of salvation. ‘Just as a man who does not look at the wholeness of the strophe cannot realise the beauty of the poem, so one who does not contemplate the ordering and government of the world in their wholeness cannot realise their beauty’; but since no man lives long enough to experience the whole of history, the Holy Spirit gives us the outlines of it in Scripture.[267] So true is this that Bonaventure holds that he can derive a kind of survey of world history from Scripture, and so (from the same position as Joachim of Fiore) he draws the most varied insights about salvation-history from the proportions of the Old and New Covenants, of which Christ is the temporal midpoint; for this, one must have the knowledge of the periods in a manner that is both contemplative and prophetic, *tempora scire*. ‘For no one can know what is to come, unless he knows what is past. If I do not know of what tree this is the seed, I cannot know what tree will be produced from it . . . . Thus Moses, when he prophesied the future, through revelation related what was past.'[268] The agreement of the Church's teaching through all interpretations and periods is a proof of the truth of the Church.[269] The arrangement in stages and the ordering in the world's progress (*in profectu mundi*) also requires that the Incarnation of Christ ensues at a determined point of time.[270] Even the temporary disorder in the world that is caused by sin cannot really disturb the beauty of the ordering: 'for the whole has its beauty from the ordering, and this beauty is so constituted that it is a fitting proof of the highest wisdom. Therefore it cannot in any way be frustrated, and likewise there cannot exist even for a moment anything disordered in it—this is why sin is not separable from punishment.'[271]

This teaching about history subscribes in general to an optimism that understands the cosmos as an evolution towards the God-man: 'The development (*processus*) must ensue from the imperfect to the perfect, not the other way round. Therefore the Incarnation had to ensue at the end of time, so that just as man, the crown of all the material world, was created at the end to bring perfection to the whole . . . so also the second man, the fulfilment of the whole in its redemption, in which the first cause was joined to the last, God to clay, came at the end of the ages . . . though not at the very end; for it was fitting that some of his members should precede the Mediator, and some should follow him.'[272] So Christ is the ideal end, as the high point of world and history (this is predominantly the perspective of Augustine's view of history); but precisely for this reason, he moves into the temporal midpoint, so that from the elevated position of the centre he may be able to synthesise the time before him and after him (this is the perspective of Joachim's view of history).[273] In this, he is the higher reflection of the first Adam, likewise appearing at the end of the ages of creation of the cosmos—but he appears in order to establish in himself the harmonious balance of the cosmos towards which the cosmos itself was oriented.

2. For Bonaventure, *man* is essentially the midpoint and summary of the world; this point must be made against anyone who would interpret his doctrine as one-sidedly spiritual, in flight from the world, ecstatic. The *impressio* of the stigmata is God's imprint on the material world. And (as we have already shown) the *excessus* comes about as an act of marvelling in the presence of God's nearness and immanence in the world. Man is the longing of all of nature, and the uniting of spirit and matter which takes place in him

is the opposite of a falling-away of spirit from itself: ‘The action whereby the soul unites itself with the human body and gives it life is neither accidental nor shameful. It is not accidental, because the soul is the substantial form in the body; it is not shameful, because in the body the soul becomes the noblest of all forms, and all the longing struggle of nature finds its goal in this soul. For the human body possesses the noblest constitution and organisation that exist in nature, and therefore it finds its complementary fulfilment only in the noblest form or nature. The character of the soul through which she is able to be united (*unibilis*) to a body is something that touches what is most essential to her and is the most excellent character in the soul.’[274] Of all material systems of organisation, the human body possesses the highest ‘illuminated quality (*luminositas*) and subtlety’, its ‘harmony is greater than that of any other substance’, just as ‘its dignity is great because of the high harmony of the proportion of its parts’; when once it is transfigured, it will be so elevated and perfected that it will most fittingly be given a place in the empyrean above the heavenly natures.[275] And the harmony of the body, through which it is ordered to the soul, ‘is no sameness in every point, but has breadth (*latitudinem*) and stages, in accordance with the different conditions of man’.[276]

In virtue of his position at the centre, man is a summary of the world: ‘Beyond a doubt, we are the goal of everything that exists.’[277] For man is the only being in the world who is free, and his freedom encompasses (*comprehendit*) all his sensual and intellectual faculties in itself, in order to surpass them.[278] His reason is disposed in such a way as to be able ‘to reflect in outline the whole world in itself’.[279] The sensual faculties already are directed to this: ‘See how much the senses can do: for the eye would take in the entire world in the point of the pupil, in the opinion of some, if there was nothing in the way. But the power of the imagination is able to grasp many such worlds.’[280] ‘The spiritual soul is, in a certain measure, everything’, according to Aristotle;[281] and so a body is placed at her service, the multiplicity of which corresponds to the multiple nature of the objects.[282] In this midpoint of the world, which unites both spirit and matter in itself, ‘the divine archetype of the world is better represented’: that is the first reason why God assumes a body here and not in the world of the angels. The second reason for this is that the state of being united to matter ‘makes it easier to accept the kindness of the divine mercy’, or, to express this more deeply, because God’s ‘humble condescension is more clearly expressed in the assumption of mortal man than in the assumption of an immortal spirit'.[283] This is important, because it points both back and forwards to the link in Bonaventure's ethics between glory and humbling: this paradox is built by him into the foundations of anthropology.

Man, as midpoint of the world and its microcosm (*minor mundus*)[284] is the eye of the world that is open to God. As we have already seen, he is *capax Dei*, and he can be given rest only by God.[285] But (and this follows from what we have just said) he is this not as an isolated spirit-soul but as a being characterised as body-soul; therefore he must be eternal as a whole, with body and soul: 'The form of the composite is more perfect than any one part, because the parts are ordered towards the form of the composite. So the form of existence as man is more full and perfect than the form which the soul is by itself; since therefore the perfecting of grace and glory presupposes the perfection of nature, the whole man, not only the soul, must be transfigured',[286] though it is at the same time clear that the condition which permits this to man is his immortal soul, which as such is capable of blessedness (*beatificabilis*).[287] But man in his essence must bring his body into this blessedness, and through his body the whole physical world below which is ordered towards transfiguration through man.[288]

Hence we can understand the teaching about man's double nature, the Janus-like figure, in which Bonaventure admittedly takes over Patristic ideas (found especially in Origen), and yet transforms them in a way that corresponds to his own gifts. The whole man who was placed in paradise had received 'a double range of senses (*duplex sensus*), an inner and an outer, one in the reason and one in the flesh'. Correspondingly, he received 'a double movement: one reigning in the will, one executing the will's decisions in the body. And he received a double possession: one visible, the other invisible.' In addition, he received God's help to interpret God's invisible wisdom in the physical book of nature: the animal sees only the physical, the angel the spiritual, but, 'for the sake of the perfecting of the whole', man had to 'come to be, endowed with a double range of senses, so that he could read the book written on the inside and on the outside: the book of Wisdom and her works'.[289] Thus sin became possible: 'Because his material nature did not press forward to the immutable possession, his striving began to address itself to the mutable possession.'[290] But the path to the material nature is in itself by no means bad or dangerous, so long as man remains in equilibrium. For Bonaventure, man's function of being and of knowing lies so much in this equilibrium that even in the act of knowing God the equilibrium does not separate *sensus* and *ratio*, and he speaks of an *inner* as well as an outer *material nature*. For him, knowledge of God—even when this is ‘negative’—is tied to the form of the world, which can be interpreted by man only with intellect and senses. And the *ratio* has such deep roots in the material nature, indeed releases the senses from itself as its instruments in the world, that it thinks only together with the senses, and only together with the senses perceives the archetypical world through the language of things, and is led by the functions of the senses just as much as by inductive thinking. After the analysis of the outward knowledge of the senses, in which (through the material *species*) a transcendental *reductio* is accomplished to the trinitarian *species* of the Son who reveals the Father, Bonaventure says: ‘Understand therefore that from the highest reason, which can be known to the inner senses of our intellectual reason (*mens*), there has flowed forth eternally a likeness, an image, a Son.’[291] And immediately afterwards, since he has mentioned the delight (*oblectamentum*) in the functioning of the senses: ‘In the same way, the sense of our heart (*sensus cordis*) must longingly seek what is beautiful, or what sounds well, or what smells sweet, or what tastes sweet, or what is soft to touch—must find it with joy, and untiringly strive after it anew. In this way, the divine Wisdom is contained in a hidden manner in sense-knowledge, and the contemplation of the five spiritual senses is wonderful in its correspondence to the bodily senses.’[292]

One can form an idea of what is meant here if one looks at the state of fulfilment of man in heaven, where the body with its senses will have a full share in the overflowing of the joys of the Spirit in God: ‘There all the faculties of sense will be exercised (*in actibus suis*): the eye will see the most marvellous beauty, the sense of taste will savour the sweetest taste, the sense of smell will smell the most lovely fragrance, the sense of touch will lay hold of the most precious object, the hearing will be refreshed by the most joyful sounds.’[293] The departed soul longs for this overflowing of the spiritual joy into the joy of the senses, ‘and it is quite certain that the soul would never strive for the body to be assumed again, if the body, however transfigured it might be, were to disturb the contemplation of God in the least degree once it was assumed again. But as it is . . . the blessed do long for this, because without the body their blessedness cannot reach perfection, their exultation cannot be satisfied; indeed, so great is their longing, that it actually hinders and blocks their contemplation in some measure (*aliqualiter*).’[294]

After reading this statement, one cannot suppose that the outer and inner senses are two faculties separate from one another, perhaps indeed opposed to one another: rather, they must have their common root in the single intellectual-material nature of man, in which the general character of seeing, hearing, tasting, and so forth is based. Nor is this contradicted by the fact that (with Augustine) Bonaventure sees the specific characters of the senses as having taken on their diversity in response to the relationships of the elements of the material world: earth calls forth touch, water taste, air hearing, fire (smoke) smell, quintessence (light) sight.[295] We must add to this that just as the elements themselves (again following Augustine) take on their diverse characters through various mixtures of light with matter, so the five senses are gradations of one single basic faculty, that of sight.[296] Sight is the most intellectual sense, touch the most material.[297] The three senses between the root and the top of the tree of the senses admit the intermediate mixtures. But all the senses, together with their specific qualities, mediate what is held in common, as we find there number, size, shape, rest, movement. ‘The entire material world’ penetrates ‘through the senses as through five doors into man as micro-cosmos’,[298] and in this way man ‘can understand all bodily forms’, because he possesses five organs which correspond to the five elements.[299]

How can the transition be made from this teaching about the senses, which is expressed wholly in this-worldly terms, to the spiritual senses which are exercised upon God? The latter are ‘the range of senses’ for God, bestowed fundamentally with grace and its ramifications (*ramificationes*) in the gifts of the indwelling Holy Spirit: these ramifications are the infused patterns of behaviour (*habitus*), the ‘seven virtues’, the ‘seven gifts’ (which facilitate the practice of the virtues), the ‘seven beatitudes’, which are manifested as acts as the ‘twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit’ and the ‘five spiritual senses’. It is firstly characteristic that the chief texts identify the eternal Word as the object of this experience of God through the senses, the Word in his nuptial relationship to redeemed and sanctified man.

The *Breviloquium*. Through the twelve fruits as ‘the overflow of the spiritual gifts, the holy soul is made glad, and thus man is suited for contemplation and for the mutual beholding and embracing of Bridegroom and Bride, as this takes place in accordance with the spiritual senses. Then the sublime beauty of Christ the Bridegroom is seen, in so far as he is splendour; the highest harmony is heard, in so far as he is word; the greatest sweetness is tasted, in so far as he is the wisdom that contains both, word and splendour; the sublimest fragrance is smelled, in so far as he is the word inspired in the heart; the greatest delight is embraced, in so far as he is the incarnate Word, which dwells bodily among us and gives itself to us to be touched, to be kissed, to be embraced, through a most fiery love that leads our love over from this world through *ecstasis* and *raptus* to the Father.'[300] Here, the tree of the spiritual senses is related to the full height of the form of God in his revelation: not indeed to the transcendent God in himself (as the negative theology of the Areopagite contemplates him), but precisely to the three dimensions of the Word of revelation. The Word as the eternal expression of the Father—ray of light, word, wisdom—is spiritually seen and heard and tasted; as inspired prophetic word—fragrance—he is breathed into the hearts (a subtle use of metaphor!); in his incarnate state he is at last touched fully, and out of this contact on the level of the earth grows the whole tree, up to the height: in the same manner as Francis was caught up into the nuptial ecstasy precisely in the palpability of the contact with the wounds.

The *Itinerarium*. Here the spiritual senses appear at the second of the three stages (contemplation of the world, contemplation of self, contemplation of God, or: below oneself, in oneself, above oneself), and in their second aspect, which contemplates God *in* the image in the soul, not merely *through* the image in the soul. The immanence in the image in the soul comes about through grace, through faith, hope and love. And once again the object of the soul which has received these gifts is Jesus Christ as *Verbum increatum, inspiratum, incarnatum*: 'while she accepts Christ, in her faith in him, as the uncreated Word, word and splendour of the Father, she recovers the spiritual hearing and sight—hearing that she may hear the address of Christ, sight that she may look on the rays of his light. When, further, she sighs in hope of receiving the inspired Word, she recovers the spiritual sense of smell through longing and inclination. When she embraces the incarnate Word in love, receiving pleasure from him and passing over to him through ecstatic love, she recovers taste and touch. Through the recovery of these senses she now sees and hears her Bridegroom, she smells and tastes and embraces him, and can exult like the Bride in the Song of Songs . . . At this stage, the inner senses are restored, in order to perceive what is most beautiful, to hear what sounds most lovely, to smell what is most fragrant, to taste what is most sweet, to touch what is most delightful and through this the soul is laid open to the intellectual ecstasies (*mentales excessus), i.e.*, through devotion, wonder, and exultation'.[301] In comparison with the earlier text, it matters little that here the five senses are arranged more harmoniously (two for the *Verbum increatum*, one for the *Verbum inspiratum*, two for the *Verbum incarnatum*); whereas before *sapere* was related to the eternal *Sapientia* (not least, because of the verbal similarities), here it is more correctly related to the experience of tasting the incarnate Wisdom; but taken as a whole, the object of the senses is the same: the entire vertical extension of the revelation in the Word. What is decisive is the conclusion. If before it was from the *tactus* on the level of the earth that the whole tree of the senses grew up ecstatically, here it is the five-fold sense-experience that brings the soul into the final readiness for the ecstasy: disponitur *anima ad mentales excessus*, and this takes place in the *devotio*, *admiratio* and *exultatio* which are attained in the five-fold experience. This chief text in no way therefore speaks of the spiritual senses as encompassing the experience of God in ecstatic rapture (for example, as an immediate touching of the divine essence), as we find this later in John of the Cross, in the concept of *toques*: the senses remain ordered to the form of the appearance of God in the Word, which of course reaches from his form as man into his very form as divine expression, and can be perceived only in the unity of this *one* inseparable form of revelation, in faith, hope and love.[302]

Thus the spiritual senses are explicitly termed *perceptiones mentales circa veritatem contemplandam*, a *contemplatio* which in the prophets was directed to the actual historical revelation in its three (Augustinian) stages of *uisio corporalis*, *imaginaria* and *intellectualis*, while 'in the other righteous men it occurs in the manner of the *speculatio*, which begins with the senses and from there reaches the imagination, from the imagination goes to the reflective understanding, from the reflective understanding to the contemplating reason, from the contemplating reason to the intuition, and from the intuition to wisdom or even to the ecstatic perception.'[303] Both in the prophets and in those who contemplate, the spiritual senses accompany this entire ascent through the six faculties of knowledge, as these are arranged following Pseudo-Augustine (Alcher of Clairvaux). At the foot of this ascent, the spiritual senses touch the bodily senses, but they endure through all the stages of the intellect's perception until the ecstasy, which springs forth from the highest manner of the employment of the spiritual senses like fire from sticks that are rubbed together.

Bonaventure sometimes distinguishes two kinds of higher knowledge of God, one deriving from the workings of God's grace in the soul (*ex suo effectu*), the other residing in a certain immediacy (*in se,*[304] *per intimam unionem*);[305] but even if the second kind looks to the mystical theology of the Areopagite and to Moses' vision in the cloud, this distinction does not directly affect the spiritual senses. They are without any doubt actuated in the first mode of knowledge, in which a presence of God in the soul (through grace) is experienced; and this experience has the effect of a deepening which permits the contemplative perception of God through the world: 'If I experience God as present to me . . . from his most personal working (*i.e.*, grace), then that is *contemplatio*, which is so much the higher the more a man feels the working of divine grace in himself, or the better he understands, in accordance with this, how to contemplate God in the external creatures.'[306] This grace-knowledge is for Bonaventure the knowledge of a wholly personal presence: 'it is as a holy soul feels when the Bridegroom addresses her, and she melts away because of this.'[307] Beyond such grace-knowledge, there can be the flight up into the 'darkness', if in ecstasy 'the sight of the eye (*oculi aspectus*) can fix itself on God, so that it looks at (*aspiciat*) nothing else, and yet does not perceive (*perspiciet*) him, nor is allowed to see the splendour of his light, but on the contrary is raised up into darkness and attains to the knowledge that Denys . . . calls *docta ignorantia*.'[308] Bonaventure describes this ecstasy as that in which love surpasses all knowledge;[309] in an extravagant way (since other words are lacking) sensory experiences can be adduced to shed light on the ineffable. But in any case, it is not a 'seeing' but rather a hearing of secret words,[310] and above all a touching of one being by another.[311]

Thus on any view which sees the proper location of the spiritual senses as residing in the ecstasy, one would have to credit Bonaventure with all kinds of incoherence and internal disagreements.[312] Their dwelling-place, in which they develop in an organic unity, is not the lowest stage, the world of mere faith, nor the highest, the ecstasy, but the wide middle area of sapiential contemplation, which has as its object the total form of revelation that is the threefold Logos. It is here that the 'eyes of faith' and all the other spiritual senses that belong to them are brought into action. But it is here that they also have their *asceticism*, for their finality is not within themselves and they are not to be cultivated for the sake of their own pleasures but are measured against their object, which essentially is the crucified, who is put to death in all his senses. In the *Soliloquium*, the five senses are individually summoned back from their state of fallenness in the world: they ought really to have Jesus as their object, but they have turned adulterously to outward things.[313] In the rule for novices the *quinque sensuum revocatio* is also found, 'for if the invisible soul is configured to the invisible God, then she must forget all that is visible when she prays to God'.[314] We shall draw attention below to the seductive power of what is perceived by the senses, and to the *custodia sensuum*. At its basis, the mystery of faith is accessible to no bodily or spiritual sense-perception, especially in the wonder of the eucharist, where 'all the senses are disappointed, apart from hearing alone':[315] here all the faculties of knowing are put to shame, the *apprehensio sensitiva, imaginaria* and *intellectiva*.[316] The renunciation of an autonomous, acquisitive experiencing is the only preparation possible for the experiences which the Word of inspiration wishes to mediate itself: 'For no revelation takes place except through the *Verbum inspiratum*. "Daniel understood the speech, for understanding is necessary to vision." If God's word does not sound in the ear of the heart, if the eternal splendour does not shine into the intellectual eye, if the fragrance of the almighty God cannot be felt by the sense of smell, if the sweetness cannot be felt by the taste, if eternity does not penetrate into the soul, then you are not ready to understand the visions . . . . For this, Daniel possessed a very pure soul, on which the divine inspirations breathed, that he might be raised up to the visions of the Almighty, to which nothing that is stained gains entry.'[317] For 'all the spiritual senses, all the spiritual impulses and charisms, stream down from Christ the Head'.[318]

3. *Christ* as *Verbum incarnatum* is the midpoint of all things; there is nothing that Bonaventure declared with greater fondness and detail. But he emphasises with equal force that Christ is the midpoint as mediator, that is, a midpoint that mediates. It is in this sense that the great outline is intended, showing Christ as the sevenfold *medium omnium scientiarum*.[319] Everything is created in him, and therefore everything has its place.[320] From him flows originally the context of meaning of the whole revelation,[321] 'in him lies the treasure of all being, all wisdom, all grace, all glory'.[322] He is 'the recapitulation of the first and the last, of the Word of God which is the beginning of all things, and of the human nature which was the last of all

creatures'.[323] In the dynamic form of his revelation from uncreated Word to revealing (inspiring) Word to Word in the form of man, he is 'the key of all contemplation' and solves in himself the riddle of philosophy, how the many can come to be from the one.[324] As the 'source-principle' of all knowledge, he contains all things, from the 'light of the uncreated Wisdom, which is Christ',[325] and in which alone the changeable truth of the changeable creatures has its final stability (*plenum immutabilitatem*)[326] via the truth of the revelation in history, since without the illumination of his light no one can penetrate into the secrets of the prophetic visions and of the faith,[327] to the nature of man, to which he condescends in his work of redemption and enlightenment so that he may be its inward measure as its 'hierarch'.[328]

The motive of the condescension is emphasised in many ways: the Incarnation is the loving *condescendere* of God, who takes flesh and makes himself visible for sinners, because they cannot any longer grasp his divinity.[329] It is also, quite apart from any intentions of redemption, a drawing-near on the part of love: 'For this reason I became a visible man: so that I might be seen and loved by you; for in my divinity I was unseen and in a certain sense (*quodammodo*) unloved.'[330] 'Men were animal, physical, and thus it was impossible to direct them upwards to the ineffable Word and to fix their eyes on the inaccessible light and the everlasting beauty; therefore the Word must come into the midst of men, or else they must persist in their folly.' Besides this, the Word 'had already created man after his own image, and made himself imitable. Our procreation, constitution, creation was in accordance with the image of the Word . . . and yet man's nature could not imitate the Word in its beauty and wisdom. The first angel wanted to imitate it in its beauty, and so he fell; Adam wanted to imitate it in its wisdom, and so was broken. So the Word deigned to come down in person to mankind, so that we might imitate him and form ourselves anew in following him.'[331] 'He was indeed our strength, but quite out of proportion to us (*improportionabilis*), and so it was fitting that strength should be weakened, and the mighty God become a little child . . . . He was the light, but inaccessible, and so he had to be overshadowed by the flesh, so that men could see and follow.'[332] 'As the word of the mind, when still unspoken, is not yet sensible, but once clothed in the voice can be received by us, so the incarnate Word before his birth was incomprehensible, but after his birth was like a word expressed by the voice, clothed in flesh and perceptible to the senses . . . . Indeed, the Word became visible, not only audible. For in itself it belongs more to the word to be heard than to be seen; but the Word of the Father could be neither seen nor heard, until through his birth he became visible and audible.'[333] This means also that the eternal Word, the expression of the Godhead, when become audible and visible can be understood only as the expression of the Godhead: in Jesus Christ, the whole Trinity gives witness to itself. The Father gives witness to himself in the fact (of the Incarnation), for he is the power; the Son in the utterance, for he is the Word; the Holy Spirit in the intention, for he is the love and the bond.[334] Without God's Trinity, the Incarnation of God cannot be understood, and the phenomenon of Jesus Christ cannot be interpreted: *Incarnatio non cognoscitur, nisi cognoscatur distinctio personarum*.[335]

When God experiences what it is to be man (*ut experiri posset*),[336] he descends and sets himself in that midpoint of the world where the descent to material nature and the ascent to God ensue. The skill of being able to do both, the descent into the act and the ascent into the contemplation,[337] is perfected for the first time in him, and so he becomes our 'exit and entrance', our ascent to God and descent to neighbour, our looking outwards into the book of nature and our looking inwards into the spiritual truth.[338] For he is the book written on the inside and on the outside.[339] And precisely in this he is 'lovely and refreshing to look upon in accordance with man's double power of sight: the inward sight which sees the divinity, the outward sight which sees the manhood'.[340] In that this midpoint of the world is the expression of God's descent, the descent within this world must be emphasised in it: it becomes the midpoint of humility, of poverty, of the cross. And in that God's descent reveals his immeasurable loftiness, the humility of Christ becomes the fundamental divine mystery: 'The depth of God-made-man, his humility, is so great that reason founders on it.'[341] It is part of this essential humility of the Son, precisely because he is and desires nothing else than to be the expression of the Father, that he possesses no other midpoint than one that mediates: and therefore he continually makes himself nothing by pointing back in the Holy Spirit to the Father.[342] It is this perspective which governs the main lines of Bonaventure's entire christological science. In his metaphysics, Christ is the mediation of being along with himself, because he mediates being (as Father) as that which is like himself (*secundum se* = the Son) to the being which exists for himself (*propter se—the* Spirit), and precisely in this explains how there can exist a plurality of things in the world outside God; the christologist is *verus* *metaphysicus*.[343] The cosmologist who researches in the macrocosm and the doctor who researches in the world's microcosm are shown the incarnate Christ as the true sun and man's true heart (or head). If the earth's midpoint is the mathematical point of intersection of all lines, then Christ is shown to the mathematician as the crucified, the one who has descended into hell, the saving and redeeming midpoint of the earth. For the logician, he is the exemplary syllogism in his Resurrection, for from the major term of his divinity and from the minor term of his death on the cross he draws the conclusion which only he could draw, the conclusion to which all the power of logic is reduced. For the moral philosopher, Christ as he ascends to heaven becomes the midpoint, for only the one who continually strives for a goal over and above what has already been achieved is in accord with moral principles, just as the Neo-Platonists had constructed a ladder to heaven from the virtues. For the jurist, he is the midpoint as judge of the world, for there alone is the source and the content of all justice and jurisdiction. For the theologian, finally, who studies the return (*reductio*) of all things to God and the universal reconciliation (*universalis conciliatio*) of the world in God, Christ is the eternally mediating midpoint through his eternal blessedness, for it is through 'the Lamb in the midst of the throne' that 'all blessedness is mediated'.[344] This last idea, of an eternal mediation even in heaven through the incarnate God, is familiar to Bonaventure.[345]

He can give expression to the mediating position of Christ in the midpoint in various ways, for example, by modifying the position of the concept of midpoint within the syllogism-form according to the logical tropes: either by placing it under the first concept and above the second, so that Christ mediates between man and God; or above both concepts, so that Christ mediates between man and angel; or placed below both concepts, so that he (as the last of men) mediates between man and man.[346] Again and again he takes as his starting-point the verse in John, *medius vestrum stetit quern vos nescitis*, and the unknownness of this mediating midpoint is underlined with pathos: 'Thus the eternal Lord stands in the midst of mortal men, the innocent lamb stands in the midst of the threatening sinners, the glorious redeemer stands in the midst of those who are perishing in their wretchedness, the all-wise stands in the midst of fools, the all-holy in the midst of despicable men, the all-blessed in the midst of the damned.'[347]

But when he stands thus in the midst, it is as the one who brings reconciliation, enlightenment, the one who leads back, who measures all things, who makes straight. In this mission lies his beauty: not only because he is the *rectitudo* of all that has deviated, but because he is able to make what has deviated come to resemble himself through the power of the radiance of his omnipotent heart. It is indeed true that as the measurement which appears and judges all things he is already the highest beauty, *perpulchrum*: 'It is this that gives all things their beauty: that he restores fair form to what has lost its shape, that he makes the beautiful more beautiful, and what is more beautiful he makes most beautiful.'[348] At this point, Bonaventure (with less hesitation than any other theologian) builds into his theology the questionable argument of Augustine that ultimately justifies the evil in the world and even everlasting hell on aesthetic grounds.[349] But this 'beauty' of mere righteousness remains in Bonaventure's system as a whole just as provisional as the Augustinian definition of beauty as *aequalitas numerosa*. The full concept requires an *expressio* from God—and fundamentally this is a movement of love in God himself and from God to the world—and from the world comes the answering movement of *resolutio*, which succeeds only as the humble, obedient answer to the radiant light. Thus, in an eschatological contemplation of beauty, the designation of *aequalitas numerosa* is built into the all-embracing process of the shining forth of love and the assimilation of all to this radiating midpoint.

The heavenly Jerusalem needs neither sun nor moon, because the glory of God shines upon it and the Lamb is its light. 'The light of the Lamb gives it beauty and splendour, his divinity shines in the place of the sun, his manhood in the place of the moon . . . . Thus the Son, the Lamb, whose splendour and substance is eternal light and a mirror without spot, beautifies it . . . . If, as Augustine says in the sixth book *De musica*, beauty is *aequalitas numerosa*, because a face is the more beautiful the more its parts are set in relationship and adjusted to one another because of their harmony with one another, how great must be the beauty of that city where the Son, who is the eternal art in all things, in whom from eternity all the principles and ideas of the things created in time are found, offers himself to the blessed spirits and gives them his presence as a most clear mirror, and is grasped by each one according to his power of comprehension and is known in a manifest manner.'[350]

He is primal beauty as the world of ideas, which contains God's pure thought of every deficient being. But he is this because he himself as the world of ideas is the pure expression of the primal divinity, and in himself has brought creation back into the archetypical glory: rising to eternal life, ‘he displays in himself the exemplary beauty of the human bodies which are one day to be raised up’.[351] He is the ‘blossoming again’[352] of the fallen earthly flesh upwards to God. As such, he is the glory of the tree of life in the supratemporal paradise, as Bonaventure loves to term him; the tree which, if not misused through curiosity, is at the same time the tree of knowledge.[353] Round about it in paradise other trees are planted, ‘so that man through the alternation of the fruits, through the varieties of the beauties and tastes, might avoid the boredom which tends to ensue from attention to one single thing, and that he might have the delight that the perceptions of the spiritual senses derive from variety and renewal.’[354] But all other fruits are only the unfolding of faith in the one God revealed in Christ. This tree in the midst is always at the same time the *Vitis mystica*,[355] which must be staked and pruned and fenced in, that it may bear fruit. It is also the book of life, ’in which God the Father has deposited all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: as God’s firstborn and the uncreated Word, he is the book of wisdom and the shining in the spirit of the highest craftsman full of living and eternal first principles; as inspired Word, he is in the spirits of the angels and the blessed; as incarnate Word he is in the reasonable souls that are united to a body: that thus the many-coloured Wisdom of God might radiate forth from him and in him throughout the whole realm, as from a marvellous mirror that contains all forms and lights, and as from a book in which all stands recorded in accordance with the unfathomable mysteries of God.’[356]

4. THE STRUCTURE OF BEAUTY

In what has been so far said, one sees the statements about beauty occupying so important a place in Bonaventure’s theology that one begins to be afraid that there is no unity to give shape to their multiplicity. Externally there is no such point of reference, because Bonaventure nowhere offers a developed treatise on the beautiful. The reason for this may be that his trinitarian-triadic thinking continually uses the three primary *transcendentalia (unum, verum, bonum*) as a scheme of appropriation and as it were systematically cannot manage an enlargement to four by the inclusion of *pulchrum*. Nevertheless, as the sensitive study of Karl Peter has demonstrated, the beautiful can effectively be shown to be a transcendental property of all being, both inductively through its presence in all categories of being and deductively from some occasional remarks (such as, *cum igitur omnia sint pulchra et quodam modo delectabilia*)[357]—and this property is necessarily present in a *circumincessio* in the one, the true and the good. While it is true that these three mutually establish each other within the order of being ‘so that the true presupposes the one, and the good presupposes the one as well as the true’, and thus directly suggest the appropriation to the divine Persons who mutually establish each other,[358] Bonaventure (unlike the treatise on the *transcendentalia* in the Assisi Codex)[359] does not base the beautiful immediately and especially in the good; he rather follows the treatise in the Assisi Codex in the statement that *pulchrum circuit omnem causam et est commune ad ista (i.e., ad unum, verum, bonum*).[360] The beautiful completes the inner development of being as being in itself; it is the expression of its rounding-off in itself; and thus the paths to an understanding of the beautiful lead directly from the one as well as from the true and from the beautiful. But we must ask what the *ratio pulchri* is, over against the other fundamental properties of being.

An important text (*Breviloquium* 1, 6)[361] derives the *transcendentalia* each from a relationship of being to itself (*indivisio*): the one ‘is the basis of its numerability, because it is not separated from itself, the true ‘is the basis of its ability to be known, because it is not separated from its image (*species)*’, the good ‘is the basis of its communicability, because it is not separated from what it itself does’. Everything is what it is through the essence (*essentia*), and thereby an *unum* which is different from all others, gathering in its parts (matter and form) and holding them together in itself. It is precisely on this that its knowability depends, in so far as the form in which it is known corresponds to the form of its being; and in its acts it communicates itself in accordance with the form of its essence and can thereby complement and complete another existing thing that lacks it. If one wished to deduce a corresponding formula for the beautiful from what Bonaventure elsewhere says about it, then (following Peter) this would have to run somewhat as follows: the beautiful is the basis of its physical appearing, because what is is not separated from being. Naturally, such a formula could be achieved ‘at a price which Bonaventure was not willing to pay . . . that of the elevation of sense-perception into the rank of irreducible being’, something that the Platonic-Augustinian depreciation of sense-perception did not allow, even though perhaps no one in the Middle Ages evaluated sense-perception so positively as Bonaventure. If one were to take ‘sense-perception’ as ‘a direct act of permitting to appear’ at all levels (at the level of the five bodily senses, which in this are the opposite of an abstract knowledge; at the level of the intellect, when it simply permits itself to be met as *simplex apprehensio*, before it forms any judgment; and finally at the level of mysticism, where the spiritual senses permit a direct meeting with the divine essence),[362] then one might step beyond the general scholastic manner of thinking and speaking and speak of a ‘transcendental sense-perception’: from this collective term, one might try to solve the puzzles of Bonaventure’s teaching about beauty. If one confined one’s attention to the field of philosophy, this would round things off very satisfactorily.

Our question, however, is theological, and so it seems better to group Bonaventure’s statements round the key theological and spiritual concept of *expressio* if we are to discover their unity. This has the advantage of remaining closer to the text and the period and, at the same time, of drawing out all the content of the category which Bonaventure himself furnished. As with the philosophical enquiry just mentioned, we shall deal with the ‘appearing’ of what is, but the point of departure (as with the one, the true and the good) remains primarily what is itself in the movement of its act of presenting itself, and only secondarily the one who meets it (in the immediacy of its becoming visible). Thus the trinitarian midpoint can be preserved here also.

A few preparatory observations will indicate to us the ramifications of the problem—ramifications that ought indeed to be expected, if a discussion of the beautiful is a discussion of a genuine *transcendentale*. The appropriation of beauty to the Son, which we have already come across several times, hints at a position in the midpoint which can be maintained only by simultaneously surpassing both sides. The triads of appropriation taken over from the tradition are principally two, *modus-species-ordo* and *mensura—numetus—pondus*; these can be placed in relationship to one another, so that the mode of being (substance) becomes the measure of being ordained by God and corresponds to unity and to the *causa efficiens* (or *fortnalis*); the form of being and of knowledge gives this essence its truth and likewise its position in the entirety of things (thus it takes on especially the aspect of beauty[363] and corresponds to the *causa exemplaris*); the order gives it its gravitational pull towards God and, mediating to it the way to God, its pull towards the other creatures (this corresponds to the good and to the *causa finalis*).[364] But apart from the innate ambiguity of the word *species*, which has to cover both 'truth' and 'beauty' at the same time, its position with regard to *modus-mensura* is also unclear, because while the measurement of being is the basis of the unity of the essence, this unity seems to belong again to *species*, as the principle of numerability. At any rate, number as such belongs to *aequalitas*, which must be appropriated to the Son, and this uncovers the problems connected with the concept of unity.[365] Precisely in this, the *species* (as a unity which does not suffice for itself) transcends itself to *ordo-pondus*; one may attempt to introduce a double concept of order, one related to wisdom and the other to goodness,[366] but both must merge into each other, as happens in the Aquinas' concept of *ordo*. In these schemes, therefore, beauty appears formally as a midpoint in suspension, which embraces but surpasses them on both sides.

A second area indicated by the analogy of beauty is the domain formed by the gradation from the physical world to the inner world of the souls and the angels, to Christ, to the triune God: here one may 'see the beauty of the things of the senses, of the rational spirits, of the manhood of Christ, of the divinity of the one and triune God'.[367] Whereas Bonaventure discusses the beauty of the physical in detail, the beauty of the soul, which consists in the inner ordering of the soul and in the realisation of her faculties for virtue, is only mentioned, not shown in its aesthetic essence. This inner beauty is the product of a purification from the stain of sin and the setting-up of a clear mirror, in which it is not first of all the beauty of the world that is reflected but rather (along with its quality as mirror) the created spirit's quality as image that appears, in the reflection of the self which is now possible. Once the purification has taken place, 'the soul, reflecting itself, can become a marvellous clear mirror, in which she looks on everything that radiates splendour and beauty': for this, she must take on the characteristics of a mirror—she must be able to catch the light (through steel or lead under the glass), she must be polished, and finally she must be exposed to the light—and this takes place through the lower, middle and highest virtues.[368] It is important here that the beauty of the soul is explained on the basis of her renewed transparency to her being as an image of God. This does not mean that it is not the activation of the order within the soul (what Bonaventure calls the 'hierarchisation' of the soul) which produces the beauty of this image.[369] The soul thereby finally becomes the heavenly Jerusalem itself, 'where God dwells and is seen',[370] and she is accordingly frequently compared to the apocalyptic woman clothed with sun, moon and stars.[371] So she becomes in this sense a kind of embodiment of the Church, in so far as she rests in this holy gazing on God, 'for the contemplative Church and the soul differ from one another only in this, that the soul possesses all things in herself, while the Church possesses them [distributed] among many'.[372] Thus the universalising of the soul, her power to grasp the whole kingdom of God within herself, belongs to the hierarchisation of the soul—and if this is true, it follows that the reflection of the macrocosm belongs also to her full beauty as a mirror, and so she becomes a fully developed monad. It should be noted, however, that it is precisely to the *anima contemplative!* alone that this beauty is attributed:

'Consider that in the contemplative soul the entire universe together with all the heavenly spirits writes its name, and each of these spirits carries the universe inscribed in himself, and finally that the ray above all being [the Word of God] writes his name in her—he who contains both the universe and all the spirits in himself. Thus wonderful lights and a wonderful beauty reign in the contemplative soul. In the same manner, the universe, which is beautiful from its summit to its depths, from beginning to end, forms a mirror as it inscribes itself in the soul, and every spirit is a mirror, and thus there comes to be in the soul a marvellous multiplicity, a most sublime order, a sublime proportion. The world of the spirits is [likewise] beautiful. And as often as the ordering of the universe, and that of the blessed spirits, and that of the ray above all being shine out in the soul in this manner, a marvellous illumination takes place in her . . . .'[373] The impulse of beauty here lies undoubtedly not in the quantitative; but in the possibility for the totality of being in the world to reflect itself and express itself in the soul which has been purified and trained so that it may recover the original image of God; we have here a monadology, but without a 'pre-established harmony'—a monadology within the framework of a cosmos of wholly mutual expression. For Bonaventure, this beauty of the spirits is the real beauty because it is the nearest to the original world of divine expression: 'There are many who love beauty, but beauty does not dwell in what is external—that is merely its copy; the true beauty dwells in the beauty of wisdom.'[374] But in so far as the incarnate Word is also the beloved Bridegroom, the original objective beauty is joined indissolubly in him to the subjective beauty of eros: he is *sponsus speciosissimus et desiderabilis totus*,[375] he is *pulchritudo pulchrificativa universorum*.[376] But he is this, in the final analysis, because he is *Splendor* and *Verbum*, the expression of the Father.[377]

A third analogy of beauty must be mentioned before we go further. Bonaventure's principal aesthetic text (*Itinerarium* ch. 2), which deals with the perception by the five senses of what is beautiful in the world, and therefore of the mutual workings of object and subject in this perception, makes a number of subtle and original distinctions in its identification of the aesthetic perceptions. The point of departure here, as generally in this great text, is the idea of the entry of the macrocosm into man's microcosm, in this case through the door of the senses. The macrocosmos itself consists of generative forces, the basic elements and especially the light, 'which reconciles the oppositions among the elements' and prompts them to construct minerals, plants, animals and human bodies, which are the things generated. The five senses (following Augustine) correspond to the various mixtures of light with the four elements, as we have set out above: thus the senses, in their specific characteristics, stand a priori in a particular proportionality to the world, and it is this that explains the pleasure which such encounter gives: *omnis delectatio est ratione proportionalitatis*. As things themselves are generated from the elements and light, so they generate themselves once again in the faculty of sense-perception, with their mysterious power of expression through which they generate an image (*species*) from themselves in the medium of air: this image enters the organ, and through this enters the *potentia apprehensiva*. But this encounter (through proportion a priori and generation a posteriori), which in any case creates sensuous joy (*oblectatio*), can now be further distinguished according to whether it is the objective form (*species*) which generates this joy: in the eye, which sees the *speciositas*, beauty in the narrower sense, and identifies it; or the power (*virtus*) of the object which penetrates and dominates the middle ground (between object and subject): in the ear and the nose, which perceive what is soft and sweet (*suavitas*), 'in so far as the active power is not out of proportion to the faculties of the senses it encounters'; or finally, the operation (*operatio, efficacia, impressio*) which is wholly impressed upon the subjective faculty and is proportionate when the active object satisfies a passive need through its impress (*imprimendo*)—as with taste and touch, which chiefly identify what is proper, healthy (*salubre*). In this delicate gradation, while the basic proportion remains the same, the perception of beauty passes over more and more from the object into the subject: the eye sees and identifies the beauty of things, the ear and the nose are in equilibrium between outside and inside, the taste and touch, at their strongest in the service of the vegetative-sensitive life, are primarily concerned with subjective pleasurable sensations. Yet, if the world is open to the eye in the pure act of beholding what is illuminated, the eye sees chiefly an *image* of the world, while step by step up to the faculty of touch it is the substantial *reality* in its resistant character which penetrates the subject, in order to satisfy its needs.[378] The threefold joy of the encounter is immediate; in the intellectual man, the act of judgement (*dijudicatio*) follows this joy, asking *inter alia* why a thing gives pleasure; abstracting from the gradation between *pulchrum, suave* and *salubre*, it identifies the *proportio aequalitatis* as the unifying precondition—but with this Augustinian and mathematical definition of beauty we have reached only an abstract relationship between object and subject, and have done justice neither to the objective catching sight of the beauty of form by the eye, nor to the impulse of the satisfaction of need, which unambiguously points to the realm of the *bonum*. Nevertheless, it is Bonaventure's chief concern to make this whole texture of the aesthetic sense-perceptions transparent to the theological and trinitarian. For if (to begin with) the perceived appearance of the thing is its generally uniform generation in the medium of the air and then in the sense organ, in order to bring the one who perceives into communication with the thing itself, this circumstance clearly points (*manifeste insinuat*) to a generation in the eternal light itself which makes this possible; it points to the eternally omnipresent consubstantial ray of the Father, which is united to the created spirit (as to an organ) through the Holy Spirit and should bring home this created spirit to the principle and object at its source, the Father. In the same way, the threefold joy (at what is beautiful, what is pleasant and what is healthy) points back to a corresponding primal relationship in God, for in the Godhead the basis of everything is laid in an absolute, archetypical *proportionalitas* between Father and Son in the Spirit, which then becomes objective for the eye of the believer,[379] is inwardly assimilated by the believer without *phantasma* through the power (*virtus*) of the word of revelation (as the medium), and as an imprint (*impresso*) into its being banishes and heals all distress and satisfies every need. The joy of the senses, with its three levels, has therefore its theological equivalent in the beholding of the truth, in the experience of intimacy, and in the receiving of the satisfying fullness (*veritas*, *intimitas*, *plenitudo*). But all this takes place no longer on the basis of a relationship *between* man and God, but through man's participation by grace in a proportion and joy within the Godhead; for man experiences thereby 'that the true *delectatio* which is the source of joy is in God alone, and that all other pleasures are for us a signpost, so that we may seek that joy'. The spiritual judgement, finally, points beyond the experience of the senses to man's participation in the absolute and ideal light of the Logos, without whose illumination no absolutely certain thought about what is perceived by the senses would be possible.[380]

This is the rich text which develops the structure of beauty more fully than any other in Bonaventure, by distinguishing the levels first in the object itself, then in the subject, and finally in the relationships of both, to find its ultimate goal in the mystery of expression within the Godhead. Indeed, the only reason for undertaking the whole analysis was to ground the experience of beauty through the senses in a relation of expression of the object to the subject, which in turn is a relation grounded in the eternal expression in God himself.

We have now obtained three ways of approaching the theologically beautiful. The first runs from the concept of being and its transcendental dimensions, which point to the trinitarian mystery; the second from the levels of being and thereby of beauty; the third from the texture of the experience of beauty through the senses, which points to an absolute structure of the beautiful. In the first metaphysical connection, however, the content of beauty was very difficult to grasp, for although it overlapped the traditional location of truth it remained something that circled all the *transcendentalia (pulchrum circuit omnem causam*), and could not be identified unambiguously. The relationship between the stages leads to an important conclusion, which has so far not been drawn: that in each case the lower form of beauty must be abandoned for the sake of the higher, and that since the more spiritual forms of beauty are continually more hidden for earthly man, the ascent to God can appear as a renunciation of all familiar beauty. In the context of the objective—subjective experience of beauty, one may wonder how far the structure accessible to the senses really does expose the trinitarian mystery so ‘obviously’, and what of this mystery is ultimately comprehensible as archetypical beauty. In the metaphysical context, the beautiful appears primarily in the general setting of the problems concerning unity, and the metaphysical definitions of beauty which Bonaventure likes to quote from Augustine all revolve around the question of number, of resemblance, of proportion, of rhythm, and thus of the changes of oneness. In the context of the levels it is the question of truth that presses, because the possibility of unity between beautiful appearance and substantial reality of being becomes stronger from level to level. In the context of the interwoven relationship of object and subject, we have looked to *oblectatio, i.e.*, to the good, to explain this, both in regard to the self-giving of the object and in regard to the need and the satisfaction of the subject. All three points of view find their grounding, and thereby likewise their complete mutual penetration, in the teaching about expression.

1. Definitions of beauty offered on the basis of its relation to oneness assume that the impression of beauty comes from the sight or experience of an objective conformity of things, whether this is merely a numerical distinction of things that are the same (*aequalitas numerosa,*[381] *pluralitas et aequalitas*[382]) or the agreement and proportion of things that are different (*convenientia disparium,*[383] *proportionalitas,*[384] *congruentia partium*[385]). All these definitions envisage not number as such but rather its evidential reference to unity, the appearing of unity in numbers, their being held together by the unity which contains them. The numerable is beautiful only by virtue of its *reductio* to the unity of the divine wisdom and idea, where the *rationes numerosae ad unum reductae* exist.[386] It is only in this sense that, following Boethius, the Pythagorea . . .ate-Platonic maxim may be

stated, *numerus est praecipuum (maximum) in animo Conditoris exemplar*.[387] This is, as it stands, a hint that mere relationships of number, by themselves, would never call forth the delight in the beautiful (they would be more likely to induce the utmost boredom) unless other impulses were also present. Thus even Augustine was careful to add to the 'relationships of the parts' the *suavitas coloris,*[388] *i.e.*, an impulse of that which enchants and casts a spell. The pleasure of the game of numbers does not lie alone or chiefly in the quantitative; in the idea itself there are no actual numbers, just as there is none in the Trinity, which exists *per replicationem ejusdem unitatis circa diversas hypostases*.[389] And the numerical proportions in the world are beautiful to the extent to which they represent their origin which is above number;[390] the periods of time are beautiful only in so far as they are adapted (*aptata*) to the Word of life.[391] What is measured is beautiful if it is measured rightly against the idea, against Christ, against God: in this way everything that is numerable in the world has its measure in the created spirit, which must maintain its proportion to Christ: 'Man fights against his own salvation if he does not understand how to measure himself. For what advantage is it to him to be able to measure the other things, but not to know how to measure himself?'[392] This measure does not lie in number: rather, what is created must become an adequate expression of the idea above number through its ordering (*hierarchizatio*), and thus it transcends itself by virtue of its inner structure. Now this tendency in what is created to reveal the divine points back to the power of God the Word to express himself—and so it points back to a pleasure of the creator; and the Word itself points back to the relationship of expression within the Godhead, to the Father's joy in begetting. The perfect act of generation in God is the ground of the beauty of the absolute equality and unity between Father and Son in the Holy Spirit.

2. In this way light is also shed on the relationship of expression in the sign of truth. For truth is not demonstrated by merely formal agreement (correctness); truth demands the relationship of a generative and creative self-illumination. Truth is found as enlightenment, revelation, expression of the depth of substance: *Veritas est declarativum esse,*[393] and the *intentio veritatis* is *ipsa expressio*.[394] This is based in the absolute self-utterance of God, and so in the absolute relationship of expression: *omnia vera sunt et nata sunt se exprimere per expressionem illius summi luminis*.[395] All Being,

since it is grounded in the Word of God, is revelation, *manifestatio*[396] *similitudo exprimens*.[397] Bonaventure never ceases to wonder at the mystery that the things of the world possess the power to emit an expressive image of themselves into the entire medium which surrounds them, and that thereby of themselves they shine and reveal themselves to a potential knowing subject.[398] The emanation of things, as they mutually offer their *species*, is somehow innumerable, is an immeasurable reduplication of themselves, an ability to be outside themselves, a power to 'appear', in which they of course preserve their boundaries and proportions and let themselves appear as such. In dealing with the illumination of the things themselves, Bonaventure (in contrast to Thomas, who above all marvels at the power of abstraction possessed by the *intellectus agens* in the subject, and makes this the object of his research) is occupied entirely with the mystery of the objective self-disclosure of things. It is in their being light and in their act of self-expression that the substances' resemblance to God lies; in this they express God, though it is rather he who expresses himself in them. This mystery of light as the creative power of revelation is broken up into the colours in their various illuminations, and into the forms, which ultimately are only various stamps of expression.[399]

All this speaks of the success of the divine power of utterance and reveals an infinite power both in the invention of qualitative words of essence and plans of being and in the certainty with which everything is set forth by God into what is not God, and given the power to manifest itself once more, powerfully and inventively, by appearing in what is outside itself and by bearing witness. It is precisely this ability of things to be outside themselves in the creative revelation of their *species* that is equally the danger of beauty—a double danger: that one may find satisfaction in the colourful reflection and neglect the *reductio* to the substance, and second, that one may come to a stop at the finite substance which is expressing itself instead of seeing in it the expression of absolute truth and beauty. This double danger, to which Adam succumbed, was definitively banished only by Christ, who, as the perfect expression of eternal Wisdom, gives expression also to what all things wish to utter in the intention of the divine Wisdom. In his utterance about God he brings all things with him to utterance, he makes them become a word in him, he brings them to be in tune with their idea, which he himself is. As the incarnate art of God (*ars divina*), he is the appearing of absolute beauty, and this appearing is free from all empty outward show, for it is in itself the substantial truth. Everything that appears in it is guaranteed through that which is.

To look on the nature of the world in the *Verbum incarnatum* means to understand this nature for the first time genuinely as an expression, and so to see it in its own proper beauty. So it is said of Francis: ‘He looked at him who is most beautiful of all in the things that are beautiful, and pursued the beloved in the traces he had imprinted everywhere . . . . In the urgency of an unheard-of devotion he tasted that fountain of goodness in the individual creatures as in water-channels; and, as though he perceived a heavenly concert in the harmony of the powers and actions which God had bestowed on them, he exhorted them gently to praise God.’[400] This ability to interpret nature, the flowers and birds, the powers of the elements, the whole of being as it makes its appearance, has its root in God: the eternal Son is radiating light (*splendor pulcherrimus*)[401] as God illuminated and expressed, and Francis gives expression in his *Canticle of the Sun* both to the Father’s joy at having completely expressed all that he is and can do and to the love of the Holy Spirit, in which the illumination of the Son substantially transcends itself in becoming gift and blessedness. Here thinking in images breaks down; for the Son is not the copy of an archetype, which he would therefore have to reproduce as faithfully as possible but the expression of the archetype itself and thereby absolute expression: this makes him the archetype of every further expression of God in what is not divine. One therefore cannot say that the Son is beautiful because he reproduces the beauty of the Father, whereas everything in the world is beautiful because it reproduces the beauty of God expressed in the Son; rather, the Father himself shows himself (as fountain of the Godhead) in the Son, for apart from this act he is not Father. Therefore the action of expressing is integrated into the outcome of the expression; into the ‘Word’ or ‘form’ goes what lies at the source, what is original, what is inventive, what is absolutely unique in the generation. If the trace and image of this were not in all genuine beauty in the world, such beauty could not point to the absolute beauty.

3. Neither harmony nor the revelation of the depth of being would suffice to explain beauty as *expressio*: a third aspect is also necessary, the aspect of disinterested self-giving, the *diffusio sui* which is thereby *impressio* in the other—the aspect of the Holy Spirit. This is far more than a mere relationship of the satisfying of need, more than a mere *salubritas* which by

itself would remain in the sphere of what is useful and thus of what is not selfless. God is not, in respect of his creative self-effusion, under obligation to any passive potency which he needs to satisfy; nor is the primary concern of the things of the world in their mutual self-revelation the satisfaction of need. In every offer of the beautiful there is an element of gratuitousness, of freedom and disinterestedness, which makes itself known in the experience of the receiving of beauty by those in need. The things are able to testify to this gratuitousness only because they are a trace and copy of the trinitarian beauty, which is under obligation to no one in its self-giving. The one who encounters beauty cannot therefore respond to this offer primarily with self-interest but only with reverent marvelling: [*per] stuporem admirationis*.[402] The power of ravishment (*excessus*) of the beauty which reveals itself lies in its objective revelation (*expressio*), in so far as this is seen by the subject (*impressio*). The resulting ecstasy does not exist as a phenomenon of the soul for its own sake, but, as Bonaventure continually insists, in order to bring it back to the essence and to the idea. The Son leads to the Father. The image which gives knowledge (*species*) leads in its beauty (*speciositas*) to the thing itself. This does not mean that disinterested beauty finally becomes subordinated to a goal at this point, for if beauty is interpreted as it presents itself, then the ecstasy which it produces is the act of transition which it wishes to effect. Therefore the true question is: ‘Who is able to interpret beauty aright in its appearing?’ For Bonaventure, only the pure heart can do this, the heart that understands the love which reveals itself through beauty as love and is already prepared to respond with love: the potential sacrifice in the heart of the one who is addressed, touched, and inflamed answers to the gratuitousness of the beauty which offers itself as a gift. There is in ecstasy an element of adoration, directed not to the appearance but to the reality which appears there: *reverentia, adoratio, excessus . . . ad modum inclinationis, genuflexionis, prostrationis*.[403] But adoration implies a letting-go precisely in the ecstatic encounter; it implies a readiness to give back to him who is glorious the glory which offers itself, to leave the Bridegroom who reveals himself full power of disposal over his handmaid.[404] At this point, negative theology (in its Christian intention) is of one voice with aesthetic theology, as we see in the following text.

‘Man must lift himself above all that is of the senses, all that may be imagined and conceived. First of all, he must . . . reflect, and say that he whom he loves is not physical, for he cannot be seen nor heard nor smelled nor tasted nor touched, and therefore he is not physical, but as a whole he can only be longed for. Next he must say that he is not imaginable, for he cannot be held in boundaries, forms, numbers, outlines, nor figures of speech, and therefore he is not imaginable, but as a whole he can only be longed for. Finally, he must say that he is not conceivable, for he may not be proved nor defined, nor can he be the object of choice, nor may a value be set upon him, nor may he be investigated, and therefore he is not conceivable, but as a whole he can only be longed for.'[405] The longing which is caught up above every form that may be grasped is the exact response to the form of beauty in which God reveals himself.

The lower a form of beauty is in the gradation of the substances, the more it must be made transparent; and the more one must renounce it for the sake of a higher beauty. 'Gradually, everything that is outside and is encountered outside begins to be oppressive and tedious, because one perceives that it displeases him who is observed and senses within.'[406] Bodily beauty can be a *causa inducens* to a good marriage, 'because beauty naturally draws the soul to love'; 'thus there may be many *causae inducentes* which draw on without sin, provided that one does not stop there, such as charm, beauty, riches, reward, wisdom, virtue . . . .'[407] If the wise man says, 'Beauty is vain', this applies initially to bodily beauty, which must be given up freely for the sake of the inner, spiritual beauty.[408] And if Paul says that *the figura* of this world is passing away, he means 'the outward countenance or beauty of things, and this will pass away'; in as much as the *word figura* is derived from *fingere*, and is linked to *fragilitas*, it will pass away, while its substance will remain.[409] A call of love from God can give the summons to leave all the beauty of the world and to enter into the immediate nuptial love: 'Give glory, O soul, to God the Father alone in all his gifts and blessings, for it is he who *per occultam inspirationem* called you out of the world with the words, Return, return, O Sunamite!'[410]

Because the beauty of things is the expression of God, it is objectively something that has a further reference. This is true of the spiritual virtues also: 'They have beauty because they achieve a resemblance to God, and through this beauty they delight us and attract us; yet one must not rest and pause at them, for so they lose their beauty. For "virtues which relate to themselves are proud and puffed-up" ' (quoting Augustine).[411] Beauty, as the radiant appearance of the essence, can shine so strongly that the testimony to God in the beauty is overlooked, and thus it 'becomes a mousetrap, for the beauty of the creature allures men';[412] so beauty directly satisfies the lust which strives 'to know what is concealed, to look at what is beautiful, to possess what is lovely and valuable'.[413] Lucifer 'did not consider that he had been created out of nothing, but rather looked at his charm, his beauty', and through this he fell from his own beauty into the utmost ugliness.[414] He took his own beauty and dignity as his highest good and glorified himself in this and took delight in himself:[415] but this was possible only because God had created the angels in the same way as men, so that they must decide for God in freedom, and rise above themselves to him.[416] God himself had not yet revealed his beauty directly to Lucifer, and so the crucial question was whether he would understand how to interpret his own beauty as a pointer to the absolute beauty, and to receive it as such. Because beauty always affirms something final and conclusive (*circuit omnem causam*), it is harder with it than with the other *transcendentalia* to remain in the *analogia ends*. Thus the wise man spoke mildly of those pagans who elevated the glorious constellations in the sky to gods (Wis 13:6f.). For this reason, the Christian must 'keep his senses thoroughly under control' on his path to God,[417] and 'keep his heart free, not imprinting on it any images of visible things, so that it may be alienated from all creatures and rest without hindrance in the creator alone'.[418] If the beauty of the creatures disappears and the light of God remains for a time intolerably bright, a night may fall in which the created spirit seems to pass over into what is dark and empty: 'Why is it that the radiance of God blinds (*excaecat*), where it ought rather to give illumination? But this blinding is the highest illumination, because it takes place at the peak of the spiritual soul, on the far side of anything that man's reason can discover.'[419] For Bonaventure, the final point is not a beauty that is measure but a beauty of that which is immeasurable and expresses itself in measure, coming from the sovereign fullness of God, and received in man in the aesthetical-mystical ecstasy of wonderment and inflamed adoration. God is for Bonaventure, as for Gregory of Nyssa, *anelpiston kallos*, 'beauty past all hope'.[420]

5. THE HEART, THE CROSS AND THE GLORY

It is now time to identify what is decisively Franciscan in the structure of beauty. This is not something superficially imposed but springs from the heart of what has been said. Although Augustine and Dionysius made important contributions to the means of its expression, the intuition itself, around which everything crystallises, does not derive from them.

The Father has given expression to himself in the Son, because he has the incomprehensible power to be one and the same God in another than himself; Bonaventure says that it is only this power that prevents him from ceasing to exist when he makes the total gift of his being as God.[421] Thus it is again the same power which enables God to give expression to himself outside himself, in what is no longer the divine, because the Father has given expression in the Son to everything, and so to every possible world. Because the absolute expression is in God, he may dare to make expression in what is nothing. The act of descending into what is nothing in order to express himself is God's humility, his condescension (*synkatabasis*, *condescensio*), his going outside his own riches to become poor.

Bonaventure speaks continually of this *condescensio* of God:[422] creation, revelation, grace, and Incarnation are all God's humble act of adapting himself to the increasingly diminishing dimensions of the creature. 'The eternal God bends down in humility (*humiliter se inclinans*) when he raises up the clay of our nature into the unity of his Person.'[423] This *humiliias Dei*[424] is the most profound thing that God reveals of himself in his Incarnation and especially in his cross. The cross is absolutely the key to everything; *omnia in cruce manifestantur*,[425] not only sin, not only man, but God himself. Thus it is in the humbling of self (*se ipsum vilificare pro Christo*) that the height of the imitation of God lies.[426] In this imitation, self-humbling is not in the least hypocrisy but truth, and indeed the experiential knowledge of one's own reality.[427] None of this imitation surpasses God's humbling in Christ, 'who willed to serve the servants, and washed the feet of peasants and fishermen',[428] 'bent down even to their feet',[429] 'humbles himself in order to raise others up, even to the shameful death of thieves and murderers',[430] and indeed 'was humbled lower than all men'.[431] 'He was not content to possess his glory alone, and so he went forth (*exivit*), took on the form of a slave, to bring home many sons with him into his glory through his work and instruction.'[432] But the path of descent and humbling of self is the bitter path of abandonment and betrayal: Bonaventure draws up the list, for the first time, of the *traditores Jesu*: 'How many there are who betray you! The heavenly Father has handed you over . . . and you yourself have handed yourself over . . . . O truly marvellous exchange!. . . You have handed yourself over into the hand of the betrayer, the traitorous apostle, and this betrayer handed you over to the Jews. These wicked betrayers handed you over to the Gentiles, to be mocked and spat upon and scourged and crucified.'[433]

This 'stepping out' into what is nothing makes his appearing something hidden, causes his proper beauty to be distorted and deformed. Augustine was the first to speak of the *Christus deformis*, and this is greatly developed by Bonaventure. *Admirare igitur immensam potestatem annihilari, speciositatem decolor ari, felicitatem tormentari*.[434] *Formosus deformis apparuit in conspectu paternae gloriae*.[435] Just as 'no tree is more plain and stunted than the vine, which seems completely useless and contemptible, as though it could never be useful in any way to anyone', so was Christ in his Passion, when, in accordance with what Isaiah said, he had neither beauty nor comeliness. 'Who would look for beauty of form now in such a roughly-handled body? The most beloved Lord is stripped naked, so that you may be able to see the formlessness of the most pure body.' 'But along with the outward formlessness, inwardly beauty was preserved . . . . Men saw the most beautiful of the sons of men on the cross, and since they look only at what is external they saw him as one who possessed neither beauty nor form, for his face was despised and his posture out of joint; yet it was from this formlessness of our Saviour that the price paid for our beauty streamed forth . . . . But who may find words for his inner beauty, since the entire fullness of the divinity dwells in him? So may we outwardly in our body become formless together with the formless Jesus, so that inwardly we may be formed anew together with the most beautiful Jesus.'[436]

We can only touch on the question whether this distinction in Bonaventure between inward and outward goes deep enough; in other words, whether he has taken sufficient account in his christology of the inward suffering of the Son abandoned by God on the cross.[437] But the resolution of all such problems is found in the love of Jesus' heart, which in its solidarity both with God and with men was capable of the uttermost suffering on the cross.[438] For the heart, for Bonaventure, is the true midpoint of man.[439] And as the eternal Word 'was conceived in the heart of the Father . . . so he redeems no one who does not receive him with faith in the heart'.[440] Holy Scripture reveals the 'heart of God',[441] the 'high heart' (*cor altum*) which has become *cor humiliatum et contritum* on the cross, the *cor humillimum altissimi Jesu*.[442] This heart which has been opened and made accessible through the wound in the side contains in itself an insoluble mystery: for whence comes this wound? 'For this reason was your heart wounded, that through the visible wound the invisible wound of love might be made visible to us . . . . Therefore the wound in the flesh reveals a wound in the spirit.' As it says in the Song of Songs, 'You have wounded my heart, my sister, my bride, you have wounded my heart.' Who then is the one who wounds, ultimately—is it the enemies? Or do these merely accomplish externally the work which the sister-bride has already accomplished internally? 'The sister-bride has caused both wounds; it is as though the bridegroom wished to say, "Because you have wounded me with the zeal of your love, I was also hurt by the soldier's lance." '[443] More deeply still, if God's heart were not already in itself vulnerable, how could the love of the bride have wounded it? Thus it is God's going forth into the danger and the nothingness of the creation that reveals his heart to be at its origin vulnerable; in the humility of this vulnerability lies God's condescenscion (*condescensio*) and thus his fundamental readiness to go to the very end of love on the cross.

This entire immeasurable concealment becomes precisely the highest expression of God: it possesses a power of expression which sheds its rays over all other images, draws them to itself, and includes them in itself. The revelation of God's heart in the heart of Jesus discloses the mystery at God's source *a fonte, scilicet cordis arcano profusum*,[444] as had already been expressed thematically in the prologue to the *Commentary on the Sentences*.[445] The stigmatisation of the father of the Franciscan Order forbids even the least doubt of the power of expression of what God said through the cross: for in it the final word about God and man has been uttered. The appearing of beauty in what is nothing is here transfigured in the double mystery of Christ's humility and poverty, and of the humility and poverty of the saint's heart which has been estranged from himself and turned to Christ. The poverty caused by love is a making room, so that the descending ray of God's love as beauty, its *species expressa*, may find no hindrance precisely in the *organon* in which it wishes to imprint itself. Francis himself had understood poverty as nuptial; Bonaventure sees poverty as perfected on the cross,[446] but the cross as 'your wedding-day'.[447] Poverty remains the *consilium principale, fundamentale,*[448] because the total removal of what is multiple in the world creates the presupposition for the encounter with God as the absolutely simple and single: 'Contemplation can take place only in the highest simplicity, and the highest simplicity is unattainable except in the highest poverty, and thus this Order strives for it. The intention of the blessed Francis was directed to the highest poverty.'[449] 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven . . . because that kingdom is the simplest thing of all, but the covetous man is the most complicated thing of all; for he depends on so many things in the world, and thus he is composed of many parts . . . . Further, that kingdom is the thing that of all things is most held in common, whereas the covetous man is the most greedy thing of all, for he wants to make everything his own.'[450] Bonaventure is therefore not dependent on any external beauty of the Church and her liturgy: 'All the ornament of the ceremonies presents nothing other than the sufferings of Christ; while the Mass is going on, there is nothing more important than to think of the death of Christ.'[451] Although he has much to say about the hierarchy of God and of the angels, and about the inner hierarchisation of the soul, he speaks very little, and quite without emphasis, about the hierarchy of the Church, and considers this above all in its usefulness for souls.[452] His sole concern is with the movement of love in the nuptial kiss of the cross between the God who has become poor and the man who has become poor. The embrace of this kiss has its origin in the incarnate Word, 'in whom is accomplished the union of the sublimest love and of the mutual embracing of the two natures, whereby God kisses us and we kiss God'.[453] The entire descent of God is nuptial: *descendit ut sponsus suavissitnus*,[454] and the Bride is the one true Church,[455] and only in her and with her the individual soul;[456] 'but the marriage bed was the womb of the Virgin'.[457] The appearing of the glory of this marriage is eschatological,[458] and for Bonaventure (here influenced by Joachim) this implies something of the end of the *ages*: the religious Order of the end of the ages, as the perfect expression of the history of the world and of salvation-history, will be the true appearing of the cross of Christ in his mystical body[459]—which is the appearing of his glory[460]—by virtue of its contemplative poverty (putting into practice what the Poverello himself wanted). There will be accomplished the mystery of the nuptial uniting of God with the world: in ‘*susceptio, revelatio, unio*, beyond which the spirit can penetrate no further. Therein lies also the embodiment of the Song of Songs: that is, in chaste, more chaste, and most chaste conceptions, in chaste, more chaste, and most chaste beholdings, in chaste, more chaste, and most chaste unitings.’[461]

The cross’s nuptial poverty which reveals the heart of God—this thought flows over in many ways into the mysticism of the Rhineland, which was fascinated by it and refused to know any other beauty than this, giving expression to it in pictorial art also. Pseudo-Tauler’s *Book of Spiritual Poverty* draws the themes together: the imitation of Christ in total poverty is the imitation of God who is poor because he is above simplicity, and the imitation of his love that surrenders everything.[462] This Franciscan doctrine is in Bonaventure the crowning conclusion (and not the breaking-off) of his whole teaching about beauty, in as much as the ecstatic love which is enkindled by the forms of expression of the self-sacrificing love of God penetrates through to the ultimate source from which all beauty in its appearing flows. The name of this source and centre is, without qualification, love, in its incomprehensible passing over from itself into what is other than itself: love as the eternal generation of the Son from the Father, as God’s act of creation directed into the nothingness—a passing over that reveals at one and the same time the absolute power and fruitfulness of God and his disposition of poverty, which wishes to have and hold on to nothing for itself. This disposition becomes visible in the creation, and fully in redemption, as a descent into nothingness and fruitlessness.[463]

But it is precisely in this act of pouring itself into what is nothing that God’s heart glorifies itself, and thereby fulfils all the ‘glory’ of being, as this is based in the transcendental power of self-expression: *Hoc ipso quod despectus fuit, hoc ipso fuit gloriosus*.[464] This is the measure of all Christian and ecclesiastical glory: ‘So all those who are set above others must look to themselves: the higher they stand, so much the more must they bend low in mercy; the more glorious they are, so much the lower must they stand in their own eyes. Princes must carry others, not be carried by them—especially the princes of the Church.’[465] The power of expression possessed by God’s humility requires its concealment, and accordingly requires faith also, for the expressive image which is prepared in his revelation will be understood in its full beauty only in the eschaton; in the meantime, the

Church and the souls stand in the sign of the mystery of the moon, whose closest approach to the sun can occur only at the new moon, and thus in the darkness.[466] The fulfilment of the mystery of the eros of Plato's *Symposium* takes place here also; this eros desires to generate in what is beautiful, but as such is not beautiful. 'As the Bride desires the Bridegroom, as matter desires form and the ugly desires the beautiful, so the soul in the rapture of contemplation desires to be united; then it happens that the outer man loses his form, and man loses speech. And so the saying in the Song of Songs is right, "Do not look on me, for I am black, the sun has distorted my colour"; for precisely then is man most united through inner rays of light . . . . This is what happened to Jacob or Israel, the strong man, who was strengthened in wrestling with the angel, although the sinew of his hip became loose, and he began to limp. For contemplation makes the soul of man seem ugly (*vilem*) when it is united to the highest sun.'[467] But the soul has seen enough in faith to enable it to renounce for a while all glory that appears outwardly. This she does for the sake of the glory of the marriage on the cross which appears only in the eschaton, and thus she completes all the stages of the path of beauty, preferring the highest beauty to the lower; she does not renounce for the sake of renunciation, but so that absolute love may glorify itself in her.

In as much as everything in Bonaventure's theology starts from the central image of the cross and returns there, it is this which forms the proper standard of what is theologically necessary. Therefore, as A. Gerken has shown, the question of another order of world and history than the actual order (and by the same token the question whether the eternal Word would have become man if Adam had not sinned) cannot seriously be entertained by him. He inquires only about the *ratio praecipua* of the Incarnation which has actually taken place,[468] and he affirms nothing other than the highest fittingness everywhere in revelation,[469] but this follows the principle that 'in the actions of Christ it is always what is most appropriate that happens'.[470] This necessity is so far from encroaching upon the free decisions of the creator that it positively exposes the sovereign logic of these decisions to view. The existence of an *ordo naturae purae* is not denied, but this cannot appear even on the horizon of theological thought as a serious thesis: only what is actual is interesting and worthy of contemplation. Only in Christ, as he actually is, do we experience what God's true plan for the world was. Only in his *missio* is the *emantio* within the Godhead revealed,[471] only in him do we know who we ourselves are[472] and so are able to be what we ought to be. For the Son is the image, and therefore our archetype: we are merely directed towards the image (*ad imaginem*).[473] Only in him do we experience the meaning of the lowliness of the earth; precisely because it is so needy, it is a more fitting womb for the descent of God than the more glorious nature of the angels.[474] And finally, to the vexation of every philosophical anthropology, man, who consists of body and soul, bears in himself a ‘requirement’ directed to the creator, that of the resurrection of the body: *requirit natura, . . . partes sunt ordinatae ad resurrectionem secundum ordinem necessitatis*. But it was God who imprinted this requirement on nature (*impressit naturae*), a requirement which it cannot satisfy through its own resources, for it can raise none of the dead; ‘but since the divine providence could create nothing in vain, it is indispensable that the body should be restored through God’s own power . . . *salva tota veritatae naturae’*.[475] Only Christ in his Resurrection can draw the conclusion from these premises of nature, for his whole power comes from the *assumptio minoris*, from the introduction of the minor proposition that is the cross. *Haec est logica nostra*.[476]

End Notes

Irenaeus

[1] *Adversus Haereses* 2, 48.1 (Harvey 1, 369). Books 1, 2, 4 and 5 are cited from Harvey's edition (Cambridge, 1857), Book 3 from the critical edition of P. Francois Sagnard, OP, since regrettably deceased (Irenee de Lyon, *Contre les Heresies*, livre III, Sources Chretiennes 34, 1952 = S), in both cases by page. Quotations from the *Demonstratio* (cited by paragraphs) are based on the translation from the Armenian by L. M. Froidevaux (*Démonstration de la Prédication Apostolique*, nouvelle traduction, avec introduction et notes, Sources Chrétiennes 62, 1959). There is a bibliography on Irenaeus in Altaner, better arranged in Quasten (I, pp. 329f., Paris, Cerf, 1955). Indispensable aids are the two Irenaeus dictionaries by D. Bruno Reynders (Louvain, 1954 and, for the *Demonstratio* and the fragments, Chevetogne, 1958). Back to text.

[2] Leisegang, *Die Gnosis* (4th ed., 1955), p. 289. We can naturally only outline the system as Irenaeus presents it. For Gnosis itself *cf*. in addition to Sagnard esp. the essays by G. Quispel and his book *Gnosis als Weltreligion* (1948), H. C. Puech and Festugière. Back to text.

[3] If Irenaeus' account in 1.2, 5 is combined with that of Hippolytus (*Philos*. 6.31, 2). Back to text.

[4] For Irenaeus' description of the Valentinian system see *Adv. Haer* 1.1-7. There is a study and criticism of this description in W. Foerster, *Von Valentin zu Herakleon* (Beihefte zur *ZNW* 7, 1928), and esp. F. Sagnard, *La Gnose valentinienne et le témoignage de* S. *Irénée*, (dissertation, Vrin, Paris, 1947). Back to text.

[5] In Clement of Alexandria, *Strom*. 4.13, 80f. Back to text.

[6] 1. 303-305. Back to text.

[7] 1. 320. Back to text.

[8] Dom D. Reynders, 'Optimisme et théocentrisme chez S. Irénée', *Rech. de Théol. am. et méd*. VIII (1936), 225f. Back to text.

[9] 2. 144. Back to text.

[10] 2. 356. Back to text.

[11] 1. 275. Back to text.

[12] 1. 272. Back to text.

[13] 1. 255. Back to text.

[14] 1. 344; *para physin*, 1. 85-86. Back to text.

[15] 1. 347. Back to text.

[16] 2. 404. Back to text.

[17] 1. 253, 348; 2. 132, 171, 379; S 400-402. Back to text.

[18] 2. 380. Back to text.

[19] 1. 344; 2. 411. Back to text.

[20] 1. 367. Back to text.

[21] 1. 188. Back to text.

[22] 2. 387. Back to text.

[23] 1. 315. Back to text.

[24] 1. 357. Back to text.

[25] 1. 301, 355. Back to text.

[26] 1. 162. Back to text.

[27] 1. 348. Back to text.

[28] 1. 305. Back to text.

[29] 1. 264 (bottom), 267, 311-12. Back to text.

[30] 1. 299-300. Back to text.

[31] The whole of the third book is devoted to a demonstration of the indivisibility of Scripture, the Gospels among themselves, the Gospels and Acts, Paul's preaching and Luke's, and, constantly, the inseparability of the Old and New Testaments. Back to text.

[32] S 273. Back to text.

[33] 1. 31. Back to text.

[34] 1. 67. Back to text.

[35] S 99. Back to text.

[36] S 241. Back to text.

[37] 1. 273. Scripture must be interpreted on the assumption of its unity, 2. 356. Back to text.

[38] Ibid.; 1. 348 (bottom). Back to text.

[39] 1. 348 (top). Back to text.

[40] S 99. Heresy accepts no institution, S 119. Back to text.

[41] S 185-87. Back to text.

[42] 1. 190f.; Paul and Gnosis: 1. 345. The root of the whole evil is contained in Simon; here it can be seen in the light of revelation: 1. 189. Back to text.

[43] 1. 303. Back to text.

[44] 1. 6. Back to text.

[45] 1. 273. Back to text.

[46] Cf. S 121-23. Back to text.

[47] 1. 345. Back to text.

[48] 1.345. Back to text.

[49] D 3; *cf*. Heb 11.1 and Is 7.9 (LXX): 'If you do not believe you will not understand.' Back to text.

[50] 1. 85-86. Back to text.

[51] D 1. Back to text.

[52] S 100-02. The Gnostics refuse to see, 1. 348. So too the Gentiles; 'They did not lift their eyes to heaven . . . and would not see the light of truth' (2. 404). Back to text.

[53] 2. 215 [that God will be seen by men]. Back to text.

[54] 2. 214. Back to text.

[55] D 7; cf. S 94. Back to text.

[56] D 43: Before the Son revealed himself to us, 'he did not exist for us, for we did not know him.' D 31: 'Eternal life made itself visible so that we might win a share in it in every connection.' Back to text.

[57] 2. 145, 160. Back to text.

[58] 2. 220. Back to text.

[59] *Ibid*. Back to text.

[60] 2. 219. If the incarnate Son's vision had still been prophetic, the Son would not have been what he appeared and we should have to wait for a further coming (2. 316). Back to text.

[61] *Nam prophetia est praedicatio futurorum* [For prophecy is the proclamation of things to come], 2. 216; *cf*. 2. 171 (top). Back to text.

[62] 2. 216. Back to text.

[63] *per fidem speculantibus* [for those who see by faith], 2. 225. Back to text.

[64] 2. 219 (top). Back to text.

[65] 2. 215: *commixtio et communio Dei et hominis . . . quoniam videbitur Deus* [a mingling and union of God and man . . . since God will be seen by men]; 2. *217: participate Dei est videre Deum, . . .et homines igitur videbunt Deum, ut vivant* [To share in God means to see God, . . . and so men will see God that they may live]. Back to text.

[66] D 7. Back to text.

[67] 2. 155; D 8. Back to text.

[68] 2. 354. Back to text.

[69] 2. 314. Back to text.

[70] ’For you and for all who are concerned about their salvation, one thing is necessary, to set out with a firm, confident step by virtue of faith, without deviating’ (D 1). Back to text.

[71] *Cf*. Reynders’ dictionaries, which list more than 400 passages in the *Adversus Haereses* alone, and the multiplication of terms in the prologues to Books 1 and 3, *e.g. 2*. 146-47, 178 (bottom), 218 (top), S 396. Back to text.

[72] *ex scripturis ostensiones* [demonstrations from the Scriptures], S 92; *cf*. S 236: *ostensiones quae sunt in scripturis non possunt ostendi nisi ex scripturis* [The demonstrations contained in the Scriptures cannot be carried out except from the Scriptures]. Back to text.

[73] 2. 219 (top) [the conditioned revelation of God, the manifestation of the Father through the Word]. Back to text.

[74] S 322. Back to text.

[74a] S 126: *seipsum manifestabat; 2*. 231 (top): *semetipsum ostendens*; D 38. Back to text.

[75] 2. 236. Back to text.

[76] S 356 [faith having clear proof from the Scriptures]. Back to text.

[77] D 22. Back to text.

[78] D 8: ‘He opened the testament of our adoption as sons’. S 176: ‘He opened the testament to men’; S 304: ‘to open the New Testament’. Back to text.

[79] D 15. The most common Latin word is *fiducialiter* (S 94 [top]), but *constanter, audenter, cum fide etc*. also occur (S 219, note). Back to text.

[80] *Testificatio . . . vera et . . . manifesto el firma, et nihil subtrahens* [A true and . . . clear and firm testimony keeping nothing back], S 270; *sine fuco est Veritas et propter hoc pueris credita est* [truth is without deceit and therefore has been entrusted to children], S 272. Back to text.

[81] S 328 [what he seemed he was]. Back to text.

[82] S 122. Back to text.

[83] S 125, 223, 245. Back to text.

[84] S 222. Back to text.

[85] 2. 88; 2. 95. Back to text.

[86] S 143, 199f. Back to text.

[87] 2. 427: *coelum novum et terra nova, in quibus (novis) novus perseverabit homo, semper nova confabulans Deo* [a new heaven and a new earth, in which man will continue as new, always in new conversation with God]. Back to text.

[88] D 87. Back to text.

[89] D 89. Back to text.

[90] D 95. Back to text.

[91] 2. 376; *cf*. D 31; S 370. Back to text.

[92] E. Scharl, *Recapitulatio Mundi*, (Freiburg, 1941 with bibliography). More recently J. Lawson, *The Biblical Theology of St. Irenaeus*, (London, 1948); R. Potter, 'Irenaeus and Recapitulation', *Dom. St. N* (1951), pp. 192-200. Back to text.

[93] S 378 (*praeformare*). Back to text.

[94] 2. 147: *Moyses recapitulationem universae legis . . . in Deuteronomio faciens* [Moses . . . making a recapitulation of the whole law . . . in Deuteronomy]. *Cf*. 2. 191. Back to text.

[95] D 28. Back to text.

[96] S 310-12. Back to text.

[97] . . . *In seipsum primatum assumens, et apponens seipsum caput Ecclesiae, universa attrahat ad seipsum apto in tempore* [that by taking to himself the primacy and making himself the head of the Church he might draw all things to himself at the appropriate time], S 292. Scharl, I, c. 28f. Back to text.

[98] D 38. Back to text.

[99] 2. 387: *recapitulans enim universum hominem in se ab initio usque ad finem, recapitulatus est et mortem ejus* [For by recapitulating in himself the whole man from beginning to end, he also recapitulated his death]. *Cf*. S 292. In the same way he takes all hostility into himself (2. 304.) and recapitulates all the blood of the prophets that was shed (2. 361), which puts an end to death (S 392). Back to text.

[100] D 86. Back to text.

[101] D 56. Back to text.

[102] S 380. Back to text.

[103] S 370. Back to text.

[104] 2. 228. Back to text.

[105] S 384. Back to text.

[106] S 372-74. Back to text.

[107] S 328, 348, 362; 2. 266; D 36-37. Back to text.

[108] S 334 [Not only did he have in himself a glorious begetting surpassing all others from the Most High Father, but he also enjoyed that glorious birth from the Virgin]. Back to text.

[109] *servant archetypum, Adae plasmationem* [that he might preserve the archetype, the fashioning of Adam], 2. 279. *opportebat ejusdem generationis habere similitudinem* [It was necessary for him to have a birth of the same pattern], S 372. Back to text.

[110] S 382. Back to text.

[111] [showing how the ancient fashioning was done, . . . for what the Word as maker neglected to fashion in the womb he now made good openly] 2. 365. Back to text.

[112] 2. 297f, 204, 316, 318; S 189. Back to text.

[113] 1. 91. Back to text.

[114] 2. 380. Back to text.

[115] D 30. Back to text.

[116] S 292. Back to text.

[117] 1. 349 [the reliable and true knowledge of God]. Back to text.

[118] 1. 350 [what is true and sure and reliable is close to God]. Back to text.

[119] 2. 52 [only that is true and reliable]. Back to text.

[120] 2. 79 [true, . . . plain and reliable]. Back to text.

[121] 2. 115 [firm and not pretended, but alone true]. Back to text.

[122] 2. 314 [the only true and reliable teacher, the Word of God]. Back to text.

[123] 2. 378 [the true and reliable preaching of the Church]. Back to text.

[124] 2. 426 [and nothing may be turned into allegory, but everything must be firm and true and have substance]. Back to text.

[125] S 116. Back to text.

[126] 1. 200: *portare crucem* [to bear the cross]; 1. 227: *portare magnitudinem luminum* [to bear the strength of the lights]; 2. 293: *magnitudinem gloriae ipsius portare non poteramus* [we were unable to bear the strength of his glory]; 2. 297: *nobis potestatem divinitatis bajulare non sustinentibus* [when we were unable to bear the weight of the power of divinity]. Back to text.

[127] S 282 [man bearing and receiving and containing the Son of God]. Back to text.

[128] 2. 185; *videbitur Deus ab hominibus qui portant Spiritum ejus* [God will be seen by men who bear his Spirit], 2. 217; *portare vitam* [to bear life], 2. 327, 328. Back to text.

[129] 2. 339 [to receive and bear God]. Back to text.

[130] [bear his image] (1 Cor 15.49f); 2. 348-49. Back to text.

[131] 2. 372. Back to text.

[132] 2. 376. Back to text.

[133] 2. 381, 383. Back to text.

[134] See the next chapter. Back to text.

[135] S 306. Back to text.

[136] 2. 389. Back to text.

[137] 1. 349. Back to text.

[138] As R. A. Markus has demonstrated in an important article (‘Pleroma and Fulfilment’, *Vig. Christi*, 1954, pp. 193-224), by comparing the *Corpus Hermeticum* and the *Excerpta Theodoti*, where the character of the Valentinian pleroma seems to be better expressed than in Irenaeus’ description. Back to text.

[139] 1. 251-53, 257; 2. 212. Back to text.

[140] D 8. Back to text.

[141] 1. 368. Back to text.

[142] 1. 344. Back to text.

[143] 2. 211. Back to text.

[144] D 70; 1. 355. Back to text.

[145] 1. 286. Back to text.

[146] D 51. Back to text.

[147] 1. 310. Back to text.

[148] 1. 260. Back to text.

[149] 1. 294f. Back to text.

[150] 2. 212-13. Back to text.

[151] 2. 215, 216; D 47; S 402. Back to text.

[152] 2. 145, 213, 317, 333, 365, 403; D 11. Back to text.

[153] As in the interpretation of Is 61.1 (Lk 4.18): ‘The one who anoints is the Father, the anointed is the Son and the anointing oil is the Spirit.’ Back to text.

[154] S 402. Back to text.

[155] D 10. Back to text.

[156] *Hom. on Isaiah* I, 2 (Baehrens 8, 244-45); *cf*. von Balthasar, *Geist und Feuer*, 2nd ed. pp. 447f., and commentary on Romans 3.8; PG 14, 948. Back to text.

[157] *De cherubim* 27-30 (Colson-Whitaker II, pp. 25f.): ‘While God is truly One, his supreme and first powers (*dynameis*) are two, goodness and royal power, for it is through goodness that he produced the universe and through royal power that he rules over what he has produced . . . . the cherubim are the symbols of these two powers.’ *Cf. De Abrahamo* 24. Dom Emmanuel Lanne (‘Cherubim et Seraphim. Essai d’interpretation du Chap. X de la Demonstration de S. Irénée’, *RSR*, 1955, 524f.) concludes, rightly in my view, that Irenaeus’ idea comes directly or indirectly from the same source, while Danielou (*Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme*, p. 191), followed by Froidevaux (*Demonstration*, p. 47), prefers to think in terms of Jewish Christian apocrypha as sources. *Cf*. S 195-97, 201. Back to text.

[158] D 10. Back to text.

[159] D 8. Back to text.

[160] D 9. Back to text.

[161] D 26. Back to text.

[162] D 96. Back to text.

[163] 2. 217. Back to text.

[164] S 402. Back to text.

[165] 1. 21-22; *cf*. Sagnard, *La Gnose valentinienne*, pp. 155, 313. Back to text.

[166] S 190. Back to text.

[167] 2. 175 [God makes, but man is made, and the one who makes is always the same but the thing that is made has to accept a beginning, a middle state, addition and increase]; *cf*. S 148-50. Back to text.

[168] 2. 184. Back to text.

[169] 2. 296 [perfect because not made]. Back to text.

[170] 2. 175. Back to text.

[171] 2. 297. Back to text.

[172] 2. 213. Back to text.

[173] D 2. Back to text.

[174] D 3. Back to text.

[175] S 398. Back to text.

[176] 2. 209. Back to text.

[177] 2. 178. Back to text.

[178] 2. 212. Back to text.

[179] 2. 216. Back to text.

[180] 2. 217. Back to text.

[181] 2. 314. Back to text.

[182] 2. 343-44, as an answer to a Gnostic objection to 1 Cor 15.50. Back to text.

[183] 2. 299. Back to text.

[184] 2. 333 [they may belong to man, but can in no way be man]. *Neque . . . anima ipsa secundum se est homo* [Nor is the soul itself, of itself, man], 2. 335. Back to text.

[185] 2. 335. Back to text.

[186] 2. 327. Back to text.

[187] 2. 351. Back to text.

[188] 2. 337. Back to text.

[189] 2. 327. Significantly, the tripartite structure of man is divided temporally: man is first body, then soul, and then he can acquire the (Holy) Spirit (2. 351). Back to text.

[190] 2. 326. Back to text.

[191] 2. 367; *imaginem habens in plasmate, similitudinem veto . . . assumens per Spiritum* [having the image in his matter but taking on . . . the likeness through the Spirit], 2. 334. Back to text.

[192] 2. 145. Back to text.

[193] 2. 368. Back to text.

[194] 2. 353. Back to text.

[195] 2. 297, 317, 334, 339, which also means that the 'image and likeness' should only be expected to emerge with time. Back to text.

[196] D 22. Back to text.

[197] 2. 367-68. Back to text.

[198] 2. 374. Back to text.

[199] 2. 289. This is where some of man's image character resides (*ibid*.). Back to text.

[200] 2. 286-89. Back to text.

[201] S 402-403. Back to text.

[202] 1. 264; 2. 160, 163. Back to text.

[203] 2. 346. Back to text.

[204] *Cf. e.g*. 2. 186. Back to text.

[205] 1. 378. Back to text.

[206] 2. 248-49. Back to text.

[207] 2. 151-54. Back to text.

[208] 2. 265. Back to text.

[209] 1. 349. Back to text.

[210] 2. 277, 283. Back to text.

[211] 2. 281. Back to text.

[212] 2. 152-54. Back to text.

[213] 2. 380. Back to text.

[214] S 312. Back to text.

[215] S 326. Back to text.

[216] S 330. Back to text.

[217] As the *Demonstratio* heavily emphasises (D 39). Back to text.

[218] D 41 (and note, p. 95). Back to text.

[219] 2. 360. Back to text.

[220] 2. 362-63. Back to text.

[221] S 158. Everything depends on the 'identity of bodiliness in relation to Adam' (D 32). Back to text.

[222] S 324. Back to text.

[223] S 318. Back to text.

[224] S 336-37. Back to text.

[225] 2. 383, 385. Back to text.

[226] S 326. Back to text.

[227] D 97: ‘salvation, to wit, the visible coming of our Lord, that is, his human life’. Back to text.

[228] S 316. Back to text.

[229] 2. 411. Back to text.

[230] 2. 368. Back to text.

[231] S 322-24. Back to text.

[232] *Credere autem ei est facere ejus voluntatem* [But to believe in him is to do his will], 2. 160, and *infra* the passage on Abraham’s faith. Back to text.

[233] *conantur vestigia adsequi passionis Domini* [they try to follow in the footsteps of the Lord in his Passion], S 322, 320. Back to text.

[234] S 376. Back to text.

[235] 2. 411. Back to text.

[236] D 48 and parallels in the note. Back to text.

[237] D 34, following Justin (1 *Apol*. 55, 60) in a Christianisation of a passage in the *Timaeus* (36 BC) where the demiurge draws a X (chi) over the created world. *Cf.* the Easter homily modelled on Hippolytus which describes the cosmic dimensions of the cross by which the world is held together (Text in *Homélies Pascales*, ed. Nautin, I, pp. 176-78, Sources Chrétiennes 27, 1950). Back to text.

[238] 1. 360. Back to text.

[239] 2. 214. Back to text.

[240] S 232; D 25 (with parallels). Back to text.

[241] ‘Down to the theologians of the “redemptive history” school in the nineteenth century . . . , there has scarcely been another theologian who recognised so clearly as did Irenaeus that the Christian proclamation stands or falls with the redemptive history . . . . Irenaeus is the theologian of antiquity who understood the Greek world in its innermost nature, and yet undertook no . . . violent reductions and reinterpretations of the New Testament message’ (O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time* [1946], London, 1951, pp. 56-57). Back to text.

[242] 1. 269. *Cf.* 1, 267: *Quod si (emissio) non est similis, Salvatoris erit incusatio qui dissimilem emisit imaginem, quasis reprobabilis artifex*. [But if the (work) does not show a resemblance, the blame will be put on the Saviour who put out an unfaithful image and he will be called a bad artist.] Irenaeus interprets the whole theological image character of the creature in aesthetic categories: 1, 266-67. Back to text.

[243] 4. 299-300. Back to text.

[244] S 382. Back to text.

[245] D 38. Back to text.

[246] D 60. Back to text.

[247] 2. 153. Back to text.

[248] 2. 213. Back to text.

[249] 1. 364. Back to text.

[250] 1. 283-85. Back to text.

[251] 1. 307. Back to text.

[252] 1. 269. *Cf*. 1, 304: 'When they say that the pleroma was released by the Father for the sake of the world which was to be created, to enable him to organise its being properly, then the pleroma is no longer made for its own sake, but for the sake of the image which is only to come into being in its likeness . . . . And then creation is higher in status (*honoratior*) than the pleroma.' Back to text.

[253] 1. 305. Back to text.

[254] 1. 304. Back to text.

[255] 1. 270. Back to text.

[256] 1. 296ff. Back to text.

[257] 1. 346. Back to text.

[258] 2. 295; *cf*. 1. 304. Back to text.

[259] 1. 343. Back to text.

[260] 1. 352. Back to text.

[261] S 374 (and Sagnard's note, 377). Back to text.

[262] *Cf*. 2. 326. Back to text.

[264] 2. 330-31. Back to text.

[265] 2. 404. Man (as a microcosm) contains within himself the whole macrocosm. This also includes the angels, who are thus at the service of man: D 11-12. Back to text.

[266] 1. 379. Back to text.

[267] D 2. Back to text.

[268] D 11. Back to text.

[269] S 342. Back to text.

[270] 2. 371. Back to text.

[271] 2. 299. Back to text.

[272] 2. 184. Back to text.
[273] 2. 241; also 2. 192. Back to text.
[274] 2. 219. Back to text.
[275] 2. 299. Back to text.
[276] S 342. Back to text.
[277] 2. 183. Back to text.
[278] 2. 235. Back to text.
[279] 2. 290. Back to text.
[280] S 342. Back to text.
[281] S 392. Back to text.
[282] 2. 246 [capable of receiving the Father's glory]. Back to text.
[283] D 10. Back to text.
[284] 2. 218. Back to text.
[285] S 382. Back to text.
[286] 2. 296. Back to text.
[287] 2. 411. Back to text.
[288] 2. 221. Back to text.
[289] S 302. Back to text.
[290] S 392. Back to text.
[291] 2. 285. Back to text.
[292] 2. 230. Back to text.
[293] 2. 315 (parallels in Reynders). Back to text.
[294] 2. 289; D 55 (with parallels). Back to text.
[295] 2. 299. Back to text.
[296] D 3 (and parallels). Back to text.
[297] 2. 297. Back to text.
[298] 2. 317. Back to text.
[299] D 12; 2. 292-97. Back to text.
[300] 2. 291. Back to text.
[301] 2. 298; *cf*. 2. 323: *peira mathontes*. Back to text.
[302] S 340. Back to text.
[303] *Cf*. supra, vol. I, pp. 399-405. Back to text.
[304] 2. 228; 2. 185. Back to text.
[305] 2. 413. Back to text.

[306] S 302. Back to text.

[307] S 344. Back to text.

[308] 2. 219; 2. 231. Back to text.

[309] 2. 219; 2. 235; 2. 265: *multi unum praeformantes* [many prefiguring one]; 2. 355: *per temporalia praeformante (Domino) aeterna* [(the Lord) using temporal things to make a preliminary form of eternal ones]. Back to text.

[310] 2. 219; *in typo praemeditabantur* [they were trained beforehand in the type], 2. 251; in Abel, 2. 272; the earthly Jerusalem as preliminary training for the heavenly one, 2. 426. Back to text.

[311] S 338. Back to text.

[312] 2. 186 [the precepts of nature]. Back to text.

[313] 2. 1: *in Deo caritas, dives et sine invidia* [in God there is love, rich and without envy]; 2. 185. *Qui autem naturalia et liberalia et communia omnium auxit et dilatavit, sine invidia et largiter (= aphthonōs) donans hominibus* . . .. [But he increased and expanded the things of nature which are free and common to all, making gifts to men without envy and without stint]; 2. 295. Back to text.

[314] 1. 96. Back to text.

[315] 2. 403. Back to text.

[316] 2. 404. Back to text.

[317] 2. 189-90, 201. Back to text.

[318] *Cf. 2*. 300, 302, and so naturally also the role of the Old Covenant as a foundation for the New, which makes it easy for Jews to believe in Christ because everything has been prepared for them down to the last detail (2. 231). Back to text.

[319] S 364f. Back to text.

[320] 2. 400. Back to text.

[321] S 292. Back to text.

[322] S 294 [our Lord brought all things to completion . . . in order and at the right time, at the moment he had determined in advance as suitable; he exists always as one and the same, but is also rich and abundant!]. Back to text.

[323] [each suited to its time], S 240. Back to text.

[324] S 242. Back to text.

[325] 2. 174. Back to text.

[326] D 40. Back to text.

[327] D 45ff. Back to text.

[328] D 52. Back to text.

[329] 2. 179. Back to text.

[330] *patriarcha nostrae fidei* [the patriarch of our faith], 2. 225. Back to text.

[331] D 22. Back to text.

[332] D 20-21, 42. Back to text.

[333] 2. 156. Back to text.

[334] 2. 157. Note the ‘so that’ (*Una*). Back to text.

[335] 2. 183. Back to text.

[336] 2. 157. Back to text.

[337] D 24. Back to text.

[338] 2. 163. Back to text.

[339] 2. 174. Back to text.

[340] S 189, 300. Back to text.

[341] 2. 264. Back to text.

[342] 2. 264-65. Back to text.

[343] 2. 148, 172-73, 234. Back to text.

[344] 2. 148, 168. Back to text.

[345] 2. 193-95, 202; D 90, 93. Back to text.

[346] 2. 189-91; D 25. Back to text.

[347] S 326-28. Back to text.

[348] S 340. Back to text.

[349] 2. 187-89. Back to text.

[350] 2. 240. Back to text.

[351] 2. 181-83. Back to text.

[352] S 342. Back to text.

[353] 2. 150-52; 2. 230. Back to text.

[354] 2. 151-54, 192. Back to text.

[355] 2. 179. Back to text.

[356] 2. 269-70. Back to text.

[357] S 166; K. Prümm, ‘Zur Terminologie und zum Wesen der christlichen Neuheit bei Irenäus’, *Pisckuli* (1939), pp. 192-219; Reynders, s.vv. *novus*, *nouellus*. Back to text.

[358] S 240; 2. 169, 177, 181. Back to text.

[359] S 251-53 (Peter), S 257 (Paul). Back to text.

[360] For the numerous passages see Reynders s.vv. *adimpleo, compleo, impleo*. Back to text.

[361] D 37: ‘fulfilment’ and ‘recapitulation’ coincide in the incarnation. Back to text.

[362] S 308. Back to text.

[363] 2. 180-81. Back to text.

[364] D 94. Back to text.

[365] S 398. Back to text.

[366] 2. 167-68. Back to text.

[367] 2. 231. Back to text.

[368] S 227-29. Back to text.

[369] 2. 231-33; D 41, 96. Back to text.

[370] S 162, 164; D 41; 2. 38, 85, 162. Back to text.

[371] 2. 1S4. Back to text.

[372] 2. 170-71, 291. Back to text.

[373] 2. 353. Back to text.

[374] 2. 175. Back to text.

[375] D 46, 96. Back to text.

[376] 2. 295. Back to text.

[377] S 202-04. Back to text.

[378] Reynders, s.v., *praeconatio, praedicatio, praeconium, trado, traditio*. Back to text.

[379] 1. 92. Back to text.

[380] 2. 378. The strength of form and the intensity of this unity, 2. 236. Back to text.

[381] 2. 334. Back to text.

[382] S 338. Back to text.

[383] D 41-42. Back to text.

[384] S 398-400. Back to text.

[385] S 398-400. Back to text.

[386] 2. 321-22. Back to text.

[387] S 400. Back to text.

[388] S 304. Back to text.

[389] 2. 197-99, 204, 318; S 189. Back to text.

[390] 2. 203. Back to text.

[391] S 195. Back to text.

[392] 2. 178. Back to text.

[393] 2. 192. Back to text.

[394] 2. 270. Back to text.

[395] 2. 210; *cf*. 2. 426. On Moses and the old liturgy, D 9. Back to text.

[396] D 26. Back to text.

[397] *Hist. Eccl*. V. 24, 11-18. Back to text.

[398] 2. 256-63, 269. Back to text.

[399] 2. 271. Back to text.

[400] D 44. Back to text.

[401] D 52. Back to text.

[402] D 45. Back to text.

[403] 2. 165; *cf*. D 46 (with parallel passages), D 91; 2. 420, 424-25. Back to text.

[404] 2. 426. Back to text.

[405] [cannot be taken as referring to an upper, heavenly world] 2. 425. Back to text.

[406] 2. 424. Back to text.

[407] 2. 428. Back to text.

[408] 2. 428-29. Back to text.

[409] *Cf*. my book *Einsame Zwiesprache. Martin Buber und das Christentum* (Hegner, 1958); ET. *Martin Buber and Christianity*. (London, 1961). Back to text.

[410] 1. 368; S 312; 2. 161; 162-64; 229; 249. Back to text.

[411] 2. 244-45, 247, 280. Back to text.

Augustine

[1] The female figure is wisdom: *Soliloquia* 1.22. Augustine’s works are cited in the Maurist edition. The texts on Augustine’s aesthetics in the narrower sense are collected in K. Svoboda, *L’Esthétique de S. Augustin* (1933).

Abbreviations: S: *Soliloquia*; VR: *De vera religione*; LA: *De libero arbitrio*; DO: *De ordine*; QA: *De quantitate animae*. Back to text.

[2] QA:. . . *ut ratio sit quidam mentis affectus, ratiocinatio autem rationis inquisitio, i.e. aspectus illius . . . motio. Quare ista opus est ad quaerendum, ad videndum. Itaque cum ille mentis aspectus . . . conjectus in rem aliquam, videt illam, scientia nominatur*. [And so the reason is a sort of aspect of the mind, and reasoning an enquiry by the reason, *i.e.*, a movement . . . of that aspect. It is therefore needed for questioning and seeing. Thus when this aspect of mind is directed at something and sees it, that is called knowledge.] S 1.14: *Jam aspectum sequitur, ipsa visio Dei, qui est finis aspectus*. Back to text.

[3] Pierre Courcelle, *Recherches sur les Confessions de S. Augustin* (1950), pp. 93f. Back to text.

[4] *Quamquam haec inconcussa fide tenedm, tamen quia cognitione nondum teneo, ita quaeramus quasi omnia incerta sint. . . . Si quis ergo illorum 'insipientium', de quibus scriptum est, Dixit insipiens in corde suo, Non est Deus* (Ps 53.1), *hoc tibi diceret* [Although I accept these things with firm faith, since I do not yet possess them by knowledge, let us conduct our enquiry as though everything were uncertain . . . So, if one of those 'fools' of which it is written, 'The fool says in his heart, "There is no God," ' were to say this to you], what proof of the existence of God could you give him? LA 2.5. The task, as for Anselm, is *rationis vias pietate fretus ingredi* [to set out on the paths of reason leaning on piety], LA 1.14. Back to text.

[5] *quid sentirem* (VR 12). Back to text.

[6] VR 73; *cf*. esp. *De Trin* 12, c. 15.2; *De civ Dei* 10, c. 2; LA 2, c. 8.21; c. 9.26. Back to text.

[7] VR. Jolivet, *Dieu*, *Soleil des esprits* (Paris, 1934) has the texts. Back to text.

[8] In his early works Augustine still makes frequent use of the pagan adjective *divinus*. Back to text.

[9] *De Gen ad litt* 12.59. Back to text.

[10] LA 2.27. Back to text.

[11] [the eye of the mind], S 1.12; QA 6. Back to text.

[12] [the inner eye], QA 23; DO 2.10. Back to text.

[13] [the light of the mind], LA 2.21. Back to text.

[14] S 1.23 Back to text.

[15] VR 57; 105-06. Back to text.

[16] [an eye for things], LA 2.32. Back to text.

[17] LA 3.36. Back to text.

[18] S 1.14. Back to text.

[19] S 1.3. Back to text.

[20] QA 80. Back to text.

[21] LA 2.45. Back to text.

[22] VR 52. Back to text.

[23] VR 54. Back to text.

[24] [His invisible things are seen in the mind through the things he has made], VR 101; *cf. Enarr in Ps* 4.1.6-8 (cols 467, 469). Back to text.

[25] *pie attendere*, LA 3.70. Back to text.

[26] S 1.12-13. Back to text.

[27] S 1.16f. Back to text.

[28] VR 1-11. Back to text.

[29] VR 5-7. Back to text.

[30] VR 8. Back to text.

[31] VR 10. Back to text.

[32] VR 11. Back to text.

[33] VR 46. Back to text.

[34] VR 60. Back to text.

[35] VR 47. Back to text.

[36] [The historical and prophetic order of salvation must be believed so that subsequently (second stage) the way of life corresponding to faith can purify the mind and (third stage) fit it for the perception of spiritual things], VR 13. Back to text.

[37] VR 19. Back to text.

[38] VR 51. Back to text.

[39] VR 50. Back to text.

[40] VR 34. Back to text.

[41] *De magistro* 39. Back to text.

[42] LA 1.34. Back to text.

[43] VR 50. Back to text.

[44] VR 83-93. Back to text.

[45] VR 49. Particularly in his early period, Augustine contructed several such stairways to God. *Cf*. the Ostia vision, QA 70-71, 79; *De Trin* 12, c. 15.25; *De doctr christ 2*, 7, 9-11; *De Gen contra Man* 1, c. 25.43. Back to text.

[46] LA 3.69. Back to text.

[47] S 1.4. Back to text.

[48] LA 2.54. Back to text.

[49] LA 3.1. Back to text.

[50] LA 1.2. Back to text.

[51] [Where the soul originates . . . , how far removed it is from God, what property it has which allows it to alternate between two natures, how far it dies and how it can be shown to be immortal], DO 2.17. Back to text.

[52] LA 3.56f.; *cf. De Gen ad lift* 10; Ep. 162 *ad Marcellinum*, 164 *ad Evodium*; 166 *ad Hieronymum; Contra Julian* 5.17; Op *imp contra Julian* 2.178; 4.104. Back to text.

[53] DO 2.33. Back to text.

[54] LA 2.29. Back to text.

[55] S 1.2 (*omnia . . . tendunt ad esse), Demorib. manich*. 2,6,8: *quae tendunt esse ad ordinem tendunt* [Things which strain to be, strain towards order]. Back to text.

[56] *LA* 1.2; DO 1.24. Back to text.

[57] DO 1.27-28: *ordo est quern si tenuerimus in vita, perducet ad Deum* [It is an order which, if we hold to it in life, will lead us to God]. Back to text.

[58] DO 2.25. Back to text.

[59] QA 55. Back to text.

[60] S 1.1; VR 73; *De trin* 15, c. 12.21. Back to text.

[61] LA 2.7. Back to text.

[62] *Ibid*. Back to text.

[63] VR 97. Back to text.

[64] LA 1.17. Back to text.

[65] S 2.1. Back to text.

[66] [It sees that a choice has to be made], LA 1.20; 2.12. Back to text.

[67] [It dares to put itself first], QA 73. Back to text.

[68] LA 1.20. Back to text.

[69] Things could also be totally different. Back to text.

[70] *Cf. e.g*. LA 2.46. Back to text.

[71] LA 1.8. Back to text.

[72] LA 1.10; 2.12. Back to text.

[73] LA 2.13-14; 8-9: The external sense perceives the objective element, the internal sense (*sensus interior* in animals too) perceives the act of sensing, the mind registers and judges both. Back to text.

[74] Main texts on illumination: S 1.15; *De mag* 38-46; Ep 13 *ad Nebrid (De eo quod apud nos est Deum consulendo* [by asking instruction of God concerning that which is within us]); *De Gen ad litt* 12.59; *De pecc mer*. 1.38; *Deciv Dei* 10.2; *De Trin* 12, c. 15.24; *Retract* 1, c. 8.2. Back to text.

[75] [deeper than my deepest self], *Conf* 3, c. 6.10. Back to text.

[76] VR 25; LA 1.5. Back to text.

[77] [to be sensitive to eternity], VR 19. Back to text.

[78] *Ibid*. Back to text.

[79] DO 1.23. Back to text.

[80] LA 2.28. Back to text.

[81] LA 2.35. Back to text.

[82] LA 2.45. Back to text.

[83] QA 77. Back to text.

[84] 1.25. Back to text.

[85] S 1.26. Back to text.

[86] S 1.30. Back to text.

[87] DiV *Quaest LXXXIII*, 12. Back to text.

[88] LA 2.32. Back to text.

[89] S 1.11. Back to text.

[90] *De mag* 40. Back to text.

[91] *Ibid*. Back to text.

[92] *De mag* 41. Back to text.

[93] *Ibid*. 40; LA 2.4; *summa magistra Veritas intus docens*, [the chief teacher, truth, who teaches within us]; QA 81: *desuper Magister omnium* [the teacher of all on high]. Back to text.

[94] VR 45. Back to text.

[95] *De mag* 46. Back to text.

[96] VR 108-113. Back to text.

[97] LA 3.52. Back to text.

[98] LA 3.54. Back to text.

[99] VR 90; LA 2.53; 2.16f.; 2.28; 2.33. Back to text.

[100] LA 2.33: *miris modis secretum et publicum lumen* [a light in a mysterious way both secret and public]. This is Goethe's 'holy public secret'. Back to text.

[101] QA 78; VR 87; 91; *cf*. S 1.17f Back to text.

[102] LA 2.52. Back to text.

[103] VR 27-28; 44. Augustine quotes Christ's saying, 'The truth will make you free' (LA 2.37). Back to text.

[104] LA 1.25, 27, 29. Back to text.

[105] *Ibid*. 30. Back to text.

[106] *Ibid. 26*. And so God, if he is sought, will infallibly be found (QA 24). Back to text.

[107] S 1.13. Back to text.

[108] LA 3.43, 45-46. This is where the image of the weight of love (*pondus amoris*) comes in, though Augustine occasionally has to be careful about the comparison between the weight of a stone and the downward pull of the weight of the will (LA 3.2). Back to text.

[109] LA 3-7. Back to text.

[110] [does not go beyond the order], VR 13. *Cf. De mus* 6. 56: *Numerus autem et ab uno incipit, et aequalitate ac similitudine pulcher est, et ordine copulatur . . . carissima caritate* [Number not only starts from one, but is also beautiful in equality and similarity, and combines in an ordered way . . . with the most heartfelt love], *i.e.*, in a trinitarian way. Back to text.

[111] VR 35. Back to text.

[112] VR 35. Back to text.

[113] *De Gen ad litt* 5.14. Back to text.

[114] *Cf. Conf* 11.6-7. Back to text.

[115] Gilson, *Introduction à l'étude de S. Augustin* (3rd ed. 1949), pp. 266-67. Back to text.

[116] Thonnard, in the French edition of Augustine, vol. 6 (1941), p. 509, and Gilson himself, *op. cit*. p. 267, n. 1. Back to text.

[117] VR 36; *capacitas inchoata* [an inchoate capacity], LA 3.65. Back to text.

[118] VR 57. Back to text.

[119] *Conf* 4, c. 15.24. Back to text.

[120] DO 2.53. Back to text.

[121] QA 13ff. Back to text.

[122] Such as the speculations about the periphery and the centre, with the centre as the qualitative centre of force, which somehow releases and controls the periphery like a soul (QA 19 and 23-24), and the parallel drawn between the centre of a circle and the pupil of the eye (QA 30 and 69). Back to text.

[123] [What is it in us which enables us to understand inwardly the relation of size between visible physical bodies and that every body, however small, has two halves and that each of its halves innumerable parts, and that consequently every millet seed seems to one of its particles as big as the whole world does to us; that the world as a whole is beautiful by virtue of the proportion of its forms and not of its size, and seems big to us, not because it is big but because we are small—that is, the creatures which fill it are small and in their turn, since they too can be infinitely divided, are not so small in themselves but only, once again, in comparison with others, especially with the universe? With the extent of the ages, too, the principle is no different . . . . We do not judge the beauty of this numerical succession and particular hierarchy of spaces and times on the basis of their spatial or temporal extent, but such beauty is the result of their ordered harmony, VR 80. No mass, whatever its nature, even if it glows with visible light, can be rated highly if it is devoid of life, VR 52.] Back to text.

[124] DO 2.25. Back to text.

[125] *De beata vita* 32-34. Back to text.

[126] *Div quaest LXXXIII* c. 15. Back to text.

[127] *Conf* 10, c. 5.7. Back to text.

[128] But *cf. Deciv Dei* 11.30, where the thesis on the significance of numbers is fully maintained. Back to text.

[129] VR 74, 79. Back to text.

[130] *De Gen ad litt* 5, c. 7.20. Back to text.

[131] *Conf* 11, c. 23.30; 11, c. 26.33: *distensio animi*, the Neo-Platonic *diastema*. Back to text.

[132] *Enarr in Ps* 37.6; 62.6; 65.12; 89.6 (in the Vulgate numbering). Back to text.

[133] VR 20; 40-42; 74; LA 3.42-43; *temporalis pulchritudo rebus decedentibus succedentibusque peragitur* [Temporal beauty is the result of

the decline of things and their supersession, *Div quaest LXXXIII*, c. 44]. Back to text.

[134] VR 74. Back to text.

[135] VR 75. Back to text.

[136] LA 2.43. Back to text.

[137] DO 1.24; S 7.14. Back to text.

[138] *Cf*. the 'index generalis' of the Maurist edition (Migne, PL vol. 46, col. 464). Back to text.

[139] Following the LXX: *et quaererem sapientiam et numerum* [and I would seek wisdom and number], Eccles 7.26. LA 2.24; 2.29, 30-31, 32. Back to text.

[140] *Ep* 3 *ad Nebrid* 4. But *cf*. also *De mus* 6.38. On the Stoic origin and wide currency of the formula and on its history, *cf*. H. Krug, *De pulchritudine divina* (1902); Svoboda, *op. cit*. pp. 53-54. Back to text.

[141] *Conf* 10.49. On the psychological distraction from the contemplation of the eternal numbers caused by the different forms of sensuous rhythms and their pleasure *cf. De mus* 6.39-41. Back to text.

[142] *Enarr in Ps* 41.9; 42.7. Back to text.

[143] VR 52. Back to text.

[144] *De civ Dei* 22, c. 29.6. Back to text.

[145] *De Gen ad litt liber imperfectus* 16.57. Back to text.

[146] VR 45; 51; DO 2.27; LA 3.30. Back to text.

[147] LA 2.45; *Enarr in Ps* 123.2. Back to text.

[148] LA 2.30; DO 2.14. Back to text.

[149] LA 2.42. Back to text.

[150] LA 2.30. Back to text.

[151] S 2.34: *vera figura in intellectu* [a true outline in the mind] as opposed to *phantasia sive phantasma, quam sibi fingit cogitatio* [a phantasy or phantasm produced by the imagination for itself]. Back to text.

[152] VR 96; *cf*. 68, 108. Back to text.

[153] VR 40. Back to text.

[154] S 1.16-18. Back to text.

[155] S 2.18;31. Back to text.

[156] *Enarr in Ps* 5.8; 1. Back to text.

[157] *Div quaest LXXXIII*78: the rejection of poetic fiction is very common in Augustine; *cf. De civ Dei* 2, c. 8; 2, c. 14.2; 4, c. 10.17, *etc*. Back to text.

[158] *Sap* 14.15; *cf. Contra Faustum* 22.17. Back to text.

[159] VR 94-95. Back to text.

[160] *Conf* 10. (35) 55. Back to text.

[161] VR 95. Back to text.

[162] VR 98. Back to text.

[163] *Contra acad* 2.7. Back to text.

[164] *Cf.* esp. the chapters attacking the 'political theology' of Varro and the Roman state in general: *De civ Dei* 6, c. 5.3; 9, cs. 4ff. Back to text.

[165] *De Gen ad litt* 12.49. Back to text.

[166] *Ibid*. 12.61-63; VR 104-05. Back to text.

[167] *libertas, quae quidem nulla vera est, nisi beatorum et legi aeterni adhaerentium* [a freedom, which, however, is no true freedom unless it is that of the blessed (i.e., the truly wise) and those who cling to the eternal law], LA 1.32; *cf.* 2.25f. Back to text.

[168]VR 58; LA 1.15. Back to text.

[169] *De mag* 39. Back to text.

[170] *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (3rd ed.), vol. Ill, p. 106. Back to text.

[171] DO 1.2; *cf. De civ Dei* 16, c. 8.2. Someone who is within an encompassing order as himself a part of it cannot get a view of the whole, or only with difficulty: *De mm* 6.28-30; VR 43. Back to text.

[172] S 1.2. Back to text.

[173] VR 76. Back to text.

[174] LA 3.26. Back to text.

[175] *Ibid*. 24. Back to text.

[176] LA 3.68f. Back to text.

[177] LA 3.20f. Back to text.

[178] LA 3.27. Back to text.

[179] DO 1.16-17. Back to text.

[180] DO 2.11-13. Back to text.

[181] DO 2.23. Back to text.

[182] LA 3.35. Back to text.

[183] DO 1.18; 2.13; *cf. De civ Dei* 11.18. Back to text.

[184] LA 3.24-25. Back to text.

[185] DO 2.13; on the aesthetic justification of evil, *cf*. also *Enarr in Ps* 7.19; *Ep* 140.4. Back to text.

[186] VR 60-61; LA 2.22. Back to text.

[187] VR 64. Back to text.

[188] *De mus* 6.38. Back to text.

[189] Svoboda, *Esthetique*, pp. 37f., 80. Back to text.

[190] *De mus* 6.10, possibly taken from Varro; *cf. De civ Dei* 7, c. 23.1. Back to text.

[191] *De mus* 6.2f. Back to text.

[192] QA 55. Back to text.

[193] QA 27. Back to text.

[194] *Enarr in Ps* 58.18. Back to text.

[195] VR 93. Back to text.

[196] DO 1.19; 2.22. Back to text.

[197] QA 15. The beauty of justice is mentioned in Plato (*Laws* 9.859 D) and Plotinus (*Enn* 1.6, 4), but the Christian fathers also praise the beauty of the virtues (Basil, *In Hex* 3.8; Ambrose, *De offic* 1.67; 2.64). Back to text.

[198] *Sermo* 341, n. 8. Back to text.

[199] [a just beauty], QA 80. Back to text.

[200] *Conf* 4, c. 15.27. Back to text.

[201] *Conf* 10, c. 6.8. Back to text.

[202] *Conf*.3, c. 6.10. Back to text.

[203] *Enchir* 5; *De civ Dei* 9, c. 22; *Sermo* 12.4, 4. Back to text.

[204] S 1.14; DO 1.26. Back to text.

[205] *Contra Faust Man* 22.8-9; *In Joh tr* 14.1. Back to text.

[206] *Conf* 4, c. 12.18. Back to text.

[207] [is known by not being known] DO 2.44. Back to text.

[208] *Cf. DThC* VIII.1, col. 1153. Back to text.

[209] *In Mi* 27.2. Back to text.

[210] *Ep* 65.8. Back to text.

[211] *Dial* 14.8. Back to text.

[212] *Paed* 3, 3.3. Back to text.

[213] *Adv Jud* 14; *De came Christi* 9. Back to text.

[214] *In Luc* 7.12; 183. Back to text.

[215] Origen, *Serm in Mt* 35 (Klost.-Benz. 11.65). Back to text.

[216] *Enarr in Ps* 127.8. Back to text.

[217] *Enarr in Ps* 43.16; 44.14; 103, 1.5; *Sermo* 138.6. Back to text.

[218] *In Joh tr* 10.13. Back to text.

[219] *In 1 Joh tr* 9.9. Back to text.

[220] *De civ Dei* 17, c. 16.1. Back to text.

[221] *Enarr in Ps* 44.3. Back to text.

[222] *Enarr in Ps* 103, I.4-6. Back to text.

[223] [confession and beauty], *ibid*, and *in Ps* 95.6-7. Back to text.

[224] *Sermo* 44.1f; *cf. Serm*. 62.8; 95.4; 138.6f.; 285.6. Back to text.

[225] *Sermo* 254.5. Back to text.

[226] *Sermo* 142.5. Similarly, it is necessary to have spiritual eyes to see the real beauty of the Church, the beauty, for example of the martyrs running with blood, the beauty of faith and all the other virtues of the soul. *Enarr in* Pi 33, 1.6; 33, II.15; 64.8. Back to text.

[227] LA 3.64-65; 71. Back to text.

[228] *Contra fulianum* 4.65-66; 75; *cf. De civ Dei* 22.24. Back to text.

[229] *De mus* 6.49. Back to text.

[230] *Ibid*. 50. Back to text.

[231] *De Gen ad litt* 12.68: *quia inest ei (animae) quidam appetitus corpus administrandi; quo appetitu retardatur quodammodo ne tota intentione pergat in illud summum coelum, quamdiu non subest corpus, cujus administratione appetitus ille conquiescat* [There is in it (the soul) a sort of appetite for administering the body, and this appetite holds it back, as it were, from concentrating all its energy on entering that highest heaven, until the body no longer exists to be administered and satisfy that appetite]. Back to text.

[232] *Enchir* c. 29. Back to text.

[233] VR 81. Back to text.

[234] *Ibid.; cf.* 66. This is where the final answer is given to the question *quemadmodum sit anima sitnilis Deo, cum Deum a nullo factum esse credamus* [how the soul is like God since we believe that God was not made by anyone]. QA 3. Back to text.

[235] *Ibid*. 66. Back to text.

[236] VR 112. Back to text.

[237] *Cf*. LA 1.31. Back to text.

[238] LA 3.31. Back to text.

[239] VR 48. Back to text.

[240] *Ep 138 ad Marcell* 5. Back to text.

[241] *Div quaest* LXXXIII c. 44; *cf. Contra epist Man* 47. Back to text.

[242] *De Gen contra Man* 1.43; *Mot eccl* 1.7. Back to text.

[243] QA 5. Back to text.

[244] S 1.9. Back to text.

Denys

[1] H. F. Müller, *Dionysios, Proklos, Plotinos. Ein historischer Beitrag zur neuplatonischen Philosophic (BGPhMa* XX, 3-4, 2nd ed., Münster, 1926). Back to text.

[2] Hugo Koch, *Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita in seinen Beziehungen zum Neuplatonismus und Mysterienwesen* (Mainz., 1900). (For Koch's earlier writings, see Völker's bibliography.) J. Stiglmair, SJ: *Der Neuplatoniker Proclus als Vorlage des sogenannten Dionysius Areopagita in der Lehre vom Ubel*. (Hist. Jhb. d. Görresges. 16, Munich, 1895). Further details of Stiglmair's work in Volker's bibliography. Back to text.

[3] E. von Ivánka, 'Inwieweit ist Pseudo-Dionysius Neuplatoniker?', *Scholastik* (1956), 393ff. (reprinted in his *Plato Christianus* [1964] 262-289). Back to text.

[4] For different, more recent judgements of this sort see Walther Volker's introduction to his book, *Kontemplation und Ekstase bei Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita* (Wiesbaden, 1958). Back to text.

[5] On the commentaries, commentators and translators and their history, see the many works of G. Théry (listed by Roques), and then Ph. Chevallier (and others), *Dionysiaca*, 2 vols. (Paris 1937 and 1950), in which all the Latin translations are printed line by line with the Greek text and are discussed in the introduction. The first detailed examination of the whole influence of Denys in the East and the West can be found in *DSp*, art. Denys l'Aréopagite (many contributors), vol. 3 (1954), 244-429. Back to text.

[6] Exceptions to this are the three scholars: E. v. Ivanka, who has concerned himself with the proper relationship to the sources (bibliography in Roques, to which should be added the article mentioned in n. 3 and the

selection of translations, *Von der Namen zum Unnennbaren* [Einsiedeln, 1958]); O. Semmelroth, SJ, who has wrestled with the philosophical and theological structure of his thought in seven articles (especially in *Schol*, 1949 to 1954); and Walther Völker, who in his unwearying studies of the ethics, ascetics and mysticism of the Alexandrine and Cappadocian Fathers has now reached Denys and applied to him the method thus developed (see n. 4). Though very worthy, none of these works has really succeeded in infusing any new life into the figure of the Areopagite. Back to text.

[7] The already mentioned *Dionysiaca* of Chevallier contains, beside the synopsis of the translations, an index of Greek and Latin words. Something similar, but more convenient, was produced at about the same time by A. van den Daele, SJ, *Indices Pseudo-Dionysiani* (Louvain, 1941). After protracted preparations (see Roques' introduction) *Sources Chretiennes* have been able to begin a critical edition. The first volume has already appeared: *La Hierarchie Celeste (SC* 58, 1958) with an introduction by Rene Roques, critical text by Günther Heil, and translation and notes by M. de Gandillac. The last mentioned had already in 1943 (Ed. Montaigne, Aubier) brought out a complete translation (not indeed unexceptionable, but very readable). Back to text.

[8] The most important theologically constructive works are those of V. Lossky, 'La notion des analogies chez Denis le Pseudo-Areopagite', *AHDL* 5 (1930), 279-309, and 'La théologie négative dans la doctrine de D.', *RSPhTh* 28 (1939), 204-221; of H. Ch. Puech, 'La ténèbre mystique chez le Ps.-D. et dans la tradition patristique', *Et Carm* 23 (1938), 33-53; and of Rene Roques, *L'univers Dionysien, structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Ps.-D.* (Paris, 1954), which contains a bibliography of his other writings up to 1954. Roques' important short article, 'De l'implication des methodes théologiques chez le Ps.-D.', *RAM* 30 (1954), 268-274, is among the most significant work that has been done on Denys in modern times. Back to text.

[9] For a general view of these theses: Stiglmair (Severus of Antioch), Schepens (time of Athanasius, Egyptian), Quadri (an Egyptian friend of Apollinaris), Pera (a disciple of Basil), Elorduy (Ammonius Saccas), Honigmann (Peter the Iberian), and their refutation, see Volker, *op. cit*. 5-11, and Roques' introduction to the new edition of the *Celestial Hierarchy*. For an account of more recent attempts and a critique, see Jean-Michel Hornus, 'Les recherches Dionysiennes de 1955 a 1960', *RHPhR* (1961), 22-81. The most recent hypothesis has been advanced by Utto Riedinger, OSB, 'Petros

der Walker von Antiochia als Verfasser der pseudo-dionysischen Schriften', *SJP* (1961/2), 135-156.

A critical account of all the recent literature on Denys can be found in: Jean-Michel Hornus, 'Les recherches récentes sur le Ps.-D. l'Aréopagite', *RHPhR* 35 (1955), 404-448; *cf.* also Eugenio Corsini, 'La questione areopagitica, Contributi alia cronologia dello Pseudo-Dionigi', *AAST93* (1958-9), 1-100. Back to text.

[10] CD = *Corpus* of the Dionysian writings which we as usual cite as: CH = *De Coelesti Hierarchia*, EH = *De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia*, DN = *De Divinis Nominibus*, MTh = *De Mystica Theologia*, Ep = *Epistolae* 1-10. The works will be cited according to Migne's edition, PG 3, in the case of CH taking the critical text of the *Sources Chrétiennes* edition as a basis, which follows the numbering of Migne and keeps to the lines of Migne's text. Back to text.

[11] Nor can there be any question of identifying Denys with the extra vert and erudite humanist John of Scythopolis, as I must have 'indirectly suggested' (according to Hornus' comment, *op. cit.*, 446). I had simply made the suggestion ('Das Scholienwerk des Johannes von Scythopolis', *Schol*. 15 [1940], 16f), a suggestion which, I later discovered, had already been made by Irenee Hausherr ('Doutes au sujet du Divin Denis', *OrChrP* [1936], 484-490), that the personality of Sergius of Reshaina should be investigated more closely. That has meanwhile been done by Polycarp Sherwood ('Sergius of Reshaina and the Syriac versions of the Ps.-D.', *Sacris Errudiri* 4 [1952], 174-184), and seems to have produced in respect of his personality yet another negative result. It only remains to say that the unknown author, on account of his christological language, must be set in a Monophysite ambience, without having himself to be accused of Monophysitism. Back to text.

[12] 'Der "Vater der christlichen Mystik" und sein verhängnisvoller Einfluss' (note the quotation marks!), *Stimmen der Zeit* 114 (1928), 241-259. Back to text.

[13] M.-D. Chenu, *Introduction a I'etude de S. Thomas* (Paris, 1956). Turbessi in *DSp* III, 349f. Back to text.

[14] Ep 7. 1077C-1080A. Back to text.

[15] E. v. Ivanka, 'La signification historique du "Corpus Areopagiticum" ', *RSR* 36 (1949), 5-24; and also in his introduction to *Von den Namen zum Unnennbaren*, 20-22. Back to text.

[16] Ep 7. 1080AB. Back to text.

[17] He stands in relation to Denys somewhat as Socrates did to Plato, or, if one wants a modern example which is strangely apt, as Scheuer did to Maréchal. Back to text.

[18] 'Domes au sujet du "Divin Denys" ', *OrChrP* (1936), 484-4.90. Back to text.

[19] [Denys however corrects this position (of Proclus)]: In 1. d. causis, lect. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, 208). Back to text.

[20] EH VII.3.1 (556D-557A). Stiglmair, who finds Denys' style tedious, can find only 'flowery language' and 'stylistic decoration' in this continual recalling of the significance of mystery: see his notes to the translation of EH (Bibliothek der Kirchenväter, 1911) on pages 100, 102, 137. Back to text.

[21] Ep 9.3 (1109B). Back to text.

[22] EH IV.3.1-4 (473B-480A). Back to text.

[23] DN 1.8. Back to text.

[24] Roques, *L'univers dionysien*, part 4, 305ff. Also, Grillmeier-Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* I (1951), the contributions by Lebon and Charles Moeller. Back to text.

[25] DN IV.2. Back to text.

[26] EH 1.2 (372f.); IV.3.6 (481AB). Back to text.

[27] In *DSp* III. 257ff. Back to text.

[28] In the introduction to his translation (*Von den Namen zum Unnennbaren*), 16. Back to text.

[29] *E.g.* Bardenhewer IV.286-7, which also gives the detailed references. Back to text.

[30] Since Denys represents the *Symbolic Theology* as still unwritten in the *Divine Names* and in the last sentence declares his intention of making a start on it, it is sheer absent-mindedness on Stiglmair's part (unfortunately not the only example) when he translates DN IV.5: 'which we have dealt with in the *Symbolic Theology*' (where it only says: *alia tauta men te symbolike theologia*—all this belongs to the *Symbolic Theology*). Back to text.

[31] DN III.2 (681BC). Back to text.

[32] DN III. 3 (684BD). Certainly the title, *Theologikai Stoicheiōeis*, reminds one of Proclus himself and of his technique of definition in his

Stoicheiōsis Theologikē. Nonetheless they cannot be the same, because Hierotheus' *Elements* is said to have been an exposition of Scripture. It is also probable that Denys in his account of his teacher's lectures tended to impose his personal style on them. Back to text.

One might compare Hierotheus' doctrine of the Logos (DN II. 10) with that of Denys (DN VII.4), where the Logos is a name held in common by the Trinity and not, as formerly, designated as 'Jesus', *i.e.*, as one of the usual designations for the eternal Son in Monophysite circles.

[33] DN I.5; II.1; II.3; II.4; II.7; XI.5; MTh III. Back to text.

[34] MTh III (1033AB). Back to text.

[35] Ep 9.6 (1113BC—following Gandillac's tr. which amends the Greek of Migne). Already at the beginning of the letter (1104B) it is said that symbolic theology justifies and explains those expressions Scripture uses of God which appear to us 'monstrous' and give 'an impression of dreadful absurdity'. Back to text.

[36] DN 1.8 (597BC). Back to text.

[37] DN IX.5 (913B). *Cf.* XIII.4 (984A). Identical distinction between DN and symbolic theology in CH III (1033AB), where it adds that the *Symbolic Theology* needs many more words than the *Outlines* and the *Divine Names*, for the more spiritual the object, the more synoptic the method. Back to text.

[38] DN I.3 (589AB). Back to text.

[39] DN IV.35 (736B). Back to text.

[40] 896A. Back to text.

[41] CH VIII. 1 (237CD), and Gandillac's note *ad loc*. in the *Sources Chrétiennes* edition. Similarly EH III.3.11 (441B), and Stiglmair's note in his translation. EH VII.3.1 (557B), EH VII.3.6 (561B). Back to text.

[42] Ep 8.4 (1096B). Back to text.

[43] So at the end of the *Mystical Theology*. Back to text.

[44] Ep 6 and 7 (1077A ff.) Back to text.

[45] Hapax with Denys, from *indallomai*: to appear, to come before the eyes (in order to be seen, *eidenai*). Cordier: *impressio scil. imaginaria, i.e., imago interior* . . . *impressa et expressa* (1159). [an impression, presented, that is, to the imagination, *i.e.*, an interior image . . . impressed and expressed]. Back to text.

[46] EH IV.3.1 (473BC). Back to text.

[47] Ep 6 (1077A). Back to text.

[48] Ep 8 (1084A ff.) Back to text.

[49] *Cf*. n. 8. Back to text.

[50] DN IX.5 (913A). *Cf*. DN I.1: ‘Just as the intelligible can neither be grasped nor seen by the sensible, . . . so by the same law of truth what is boundless and beyond all being transcends all beings.’ [Trans, note: B. sees in the prefix ‘ana-’ an overtone of ascent (which ‘ana’ can mean, though not necessarily), so *anaptyxis* is taken to mean an unfolding that *elevates*, and *anakathairesthai* purification that aids one’s ascent (*auf-klaren*—to raise to a purer comprehension).] Back to text.

[51] DN IX.7 (916A). Back to text.

[52] DN IX.6 (913CD). From such a Platonic point of view it can also be said that ‘things which are caused carry within themselves as far as possible the image of their causes; these causes themselves, however, are transcendent over their effects’: joy and pain create the feeling of joy and pain, but they themselves feel neither joy nor pain (DN II.8; 645CD). Back to text.

[53] DN III. 1 (680B). Back to text.

[54] EH III.3.2 (428C). Back to text.

[55] EH VII.3.5 (560B). Back to text.

[56] See below, n. 156f. Back to text.

[57] EH II.3.2 (397C) and often. Back to text.

[58] EH VII.3.11 (568D). Back to text.

[59] DN IV.13 (712AB). Back to text.

[60] DN V. 10 (825B). Often expressed in the Pauline formula: from him and in him and to him are all things. Back to text.

[61] DN VII.2 (868C-869C). Back to text.

[62] DN I.5: ‘whence as the subsistence of goodness, by his very being, he is the cause of all beings . . . ’ (593D). Back to text.

[63] See below, ‘Theological Mysticism’. Back to text.

[64] DN XI.2 (949D-952A). Back to text.

[65] *Indices* (van den Daele) 128. Back to text.

[66] *Ibid*. 70: the word occurs 42 times. Also *hōs dynaton*, 35 times. Back to text.

[67] *Ibid*. 75: the word occurs 33 times (see Gandillac on CH X.3). Back to text.

[68] *eulabeia*: DN I.3 (589B), DN III.3 (684B). Back to text.

[69] *sophrosyne*: DN I.1 (588A). Back to text.

[70] *hosiotēs: ibid*. Back to text.

[71] EH H.3.3 (397D-400A). Back to text.

[72] DN 1.2 (588D-589A). Back to text.

[73] *Cf. analogia, analogos, analogikōs* in v.d. Daele, 18-19; and Lossky's article on the analogies (*cf*. n. 8). Back to text.

[74] *analogos; pronoia*: CH XIII.3 (301C). Back to text.

[75] *kata tēn hekastou tōn hierōn noōn analogian*: CH III.2 (165B) [according to the analogy of each of the sacred minds]. Back to text.

[76] On this problem of *axia, cf*. Roques, *Univers dionysien*, 61, where *axia* is quite properly discussed together with *symmetria* and *analogia*. Back to text.

[77] In the places where the concept of merit obtrudes, e.g. 557C, 560C, Denys does not in fact use the word *axia*. Back to text.

[78] The divine righteousness is therefore true, 'because it administers to all creatures what is fitting in accordance with the worth of each, and preserves the nature of each in its own rank and power' (DN VIII.7; 896B). *Cf*. EH 1.2 (373B): all beings strive after the same good, 'but it is far from being the case that all participate to the same degree in that good, rather each participates in accordance with the rank it has been divinely allotted.' *Cf*. CH III. 1 (164D); EH II.3.4 (400D), II.3.7 (404C), IV.3.4 (477D). In the last text the creature's working together with God is stressed. Back to text.

[79] Ep 8 (1088A). On festival and feast: Dumezil, *Le festin d'immortalité* (1924). On the theme of the festal dance in Denys and in antiquity: Gandillac, on CH VII.4, p. 118. Back to text.

[80] In his translation of DN, p. 80, n. Back to text.

[81] It occurs, together with its derivatives, 108 times. Back to text.

[82] EH I.1 (372A). Back to text.

[83] CH 1.2 (121B). Back to text.

[84] DN 1.8 (597AC), DN III. 1 (680B), III.2 (681AB), CH II.5 (*entheos entheōn en myēsei ginomenos*, 145C), VI. 1 (200C), and particularly CH 1.5 (376D-377B), where the whole of Christianity is described as a mystery religion. Back to text.

[85] CH II.1 (136D); III.2 (165A); EH I.1 (372A). Back to text.

[86] Denys only uses the word for the ecclesiastical and hierarchical office. Back to text.

[87] DN XI.1 (949A). Back to text.

[88] DN IV.2 (696B), similarly IV.22 (724B). Koch, *op. cit.* 131. Back to text.

[89] DN XIII.4 (981C). Stiglmair's translation does not give this sense. Back to text.

[90] MTh IIIe (1033BC). Back to text.

[91] *Postcommunio* for the Mass of the Epiphany [that what we have solemnly celebrated, we may apprehend with the understanding of a purified mind]. Back to text.

[92] CH X.1 (272D). Back to text.

[93] CH XV.9 (340B). Back to text.

[94] EH III.3.3 (429AB), III.3.10 (440A). A notion which made a deep impression on the medieval understanding of vocation. Back to text.

[95] EH 111.3.14 (445AB). Back to text.

[96] Although Denys is not afraid of drawing practical conclusions: Ep 8.2 (1192BC). Back to text.

[97] EH III.3.6; VI.1 (432C-433B; 532A). Back to text.

[98] EH III.3.11 (440C-441C); IV.3.10 (484B); VII.3.8-9 (565AC), etc. Back to text.

[99] EH 111.3.4.-5 (429C-432B). Back to text.

[100] EH II.3.2 (401D-405A); III.3.12 (444B); V.3.4 (512AB): 'The sign of the cross means the destruction of all fleshly desires, and a life in imitation of God, unwaveringly contemplating the human and most divine life of Jesus who, in accordance with the sinlessness laid down by the Thearchy, went to the cross and death, and those who thus live, imprinted with the sign of the cross, become like him and bear the image of their own sinlessness.' Ep 8.4 (1096AB) portrays the ethic of the monk and the priest as an imitation of the Good Shepherd. Back to text.

[101] DN I.4 (592BC). Back to text.

[102] EH III.3.12 (441C). Back to text.

[103] *Cf.* v. d. Daele. Back to text.

[104] Roques, *L'univers dionysien*, 123. Back to text.

[105] EH III.3.12-13 (444AD). Back to text.

[106] DN X.I (936-937A). *Cf.* the hymn to God as peace, DN XI.2. Back to text.

[107] *Cf.* DN III.2 (684A); XI.1 (949B). Back to text.

[108] EH VI.1.1 (532A); VI.1.3 naturally depicts the ideal state of the monk, but equally in its subordinate rank (*deuterōs*) (533A). Monks do not have, as do priests, an apostolic commission and mission to lead others; they remain in one place in their holy unity, obey priestly directions, and follow the priests like faithful fellow-travellers on the road to divine apprehension of the mysteries which have been committed to them (VII.3.1; 533C). Back to text.

[109] As most recently Dom Jean Leclercq has developed it in his balanced work on the theology of monasticism in the Middle Ages (*L'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu* [1957]; ET. *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God* [1962]). Back to text.

[110] *Cf.* O. Semmelroth, 'Die Theologia *symbolikē* des Ps.-Dionysius Areopagita', *Schol* 27 (1952), 1-11. Back to text.

[111] *Promemēchanēmenois tōn typikōn symbolōn anaplasmois*: Ep 9.1 (1108A). Back to text.

[112] CH XV.8 (337B). Back to text.

[113] DN IX.7 (916A). Back to text.

[114] DN IX.5 (912D-913A). Back to text.

[115] Ep 9.1 (1105D). Back to text.

[116] CH I.3 (121D). Back to text.

[117] CH II.2 (137D). Back to text.

[118] CH II.3 (141B). Back to text.

[119] CH XV.2 (329AC). Back to text.

[120] Above all Ep 9; CH chaps. 2 and 15; in EH in the contemplations concerning the sacraments and ordinations. Back to text.

[121] CH XV.8 (337AB). Back to text.

[122] *Ibid*. (337A). Back to text.

[123] *Ibid*. XV.3 (329C-332D). Back to text.

[124] EH I.4 (376BC). Back to text.

[125] EH II.3.6: *akribēs eikōn* [exact image] (401C); III.3.1: *en taxei* [in order or rank] (428A); II.3.7: *oikeiotēs tōn symbolōn* [properties of the symbols] (404B); II.3.1: *ouden aprepes ē anhieron* [nothing unsuitable or profane] (397A). Therefore too the sacraments and ceremonies are only 'visible images of the invisible, as has been shown in the treatise on sensible and spiritual objects' (397C). Back to text.

[126] EH IV.3.2 (476B). Back to text.

[127] EH III.3.12 (441CD). Back to text.

[128] [contain and cause what they signify]. As is clear in the way the Eucharist fosters unity as a *proodos* of the one Christ into multiplicity and the return of the many into his unity: HI.3.12 (444AB). *Cf*. Semmelroth, *op. cit*. 8-9. Back to text.

[129] EH III.3.6 (432CD-433A). Back to text.

[130] DN I.4 (589D); II.2 (640A) and particularly II.4 (640Dff.); II.5 (644A): ‘Participation is for the whole Godhead something common, united and one, so that each of the participants participates in the whole and complete essence, and not only in a part’; II.8 (645Cff.). Back to text.

[131] DN II.5 (644A). Back to text.

[132] But in a genuinely aesthetic way, because the picture of nearness and distance makes perceptible the *taxis* and hierarchy of the graded structure of the world. Back to text.

[133] DN V.8 (824C). Back to text.

[134] DN XI.6 (953C). Back to text.

[135] DN V.5 (820A). Back to text.

[136] *Ibid*. Back to text.

[137] *Ibid*. (820C). Back to text.

[138] ‘If we call the hiddenness (*kryphiotēs*) which is beyond being ‘God’, or ‘life’, or ‘being’, or ‘light’, or ‘word’, then we mean by that nothing else but the powers which come forth from it to us and effect divinity, or make being, or beget life, or grant wisdom’; DN II.7 (645A). Same teaching in DN II. 11 (649CD); DN XII.2 (969C), CH XIII.4 (304C). Back to text.

[139] DN V.2 (816C). Back to text.

[140] DN 1.6 (396AB); XII. 1 (969A): *apeironymos* (of boundless names). Back to text.

[141] DN V.8 (821B). Back to text.

[142] DN VIII and IX; *cf. Indices*, v.d. Daele. Back to text.

[143] DN LX.8-9 (916BD). Back to text.

[144] The affirmation of true creation by Denys is no problem; Stiglmair refers to it many times, and it is to be postulated from his Christian understanding of God without more ado, exactly as with Augustine, even if both of them use Platonic vocabulary for it. Back to text.

[145] ‘Der Aufbau der Schrift De Divinis Nominibus des Ps.-Dionysios’, *Schol* XV (1940), 386-399 (reprinted in *Plato Christianus*, 228-242). Ivanka

can demonstrate references to the Constantinian triad in Gregory of Nyssa. Back to text.

[146] DN II. 10 (648C). [part and whole is the all.] Back to text.

[147] CH VII.3 (209C) and frequently. Back to text.

[148] *E.g*. DN IV.2-3 (696-697). Back to text.

[149] *amydroū* (CH VIII.2: 240C). Back to text.

[150] DN IV.4 (697CD). Back to text.

[151] CH VIII.2 (240D). Back to text.

[152] CH IV.4 (181A-D, esp. C). Back to text.

[153] *Cf*. Gandillac on CH IX.3 (critical edition, p. 135). Back to text.

[154] 'Inwieweit ist Pseudo-Dionysius Neuplatoniker?' *Schol* (1956), 3931". Back to text.

[155] EH VII.3.6 (561BC). Back to text.

[156] CH X.1 (272D). Back to text.

[157] CH IX.2 (260A). Back to text.

[158] CH XIII.4 (305B). Back to text.

[159] DN IV.3 (697A). Back to text.

[160] Ep. 3 (1069B). Back to text.

[161] CH IV.5 (196B) and Gandillac's note, *ad loc*. Back to text.

[162] DN VIII.9 (897BC). Back to text.

[163] EH VII. 1.1 (553A). Back to text.

[164] Denz.-Sch6n. 302. Back to text.

[165] DN VIII.7 (896B). Back to text.

[166] DN VIII.7 (896A). Back to text.

[167] DN VIII.9 (896D-897B). Back to text.

[168] *Ibid*. 896D. Back to text.

[169] DN XI.2 (949C). In detail in the discussion of the name 'beauty' (*kallos*): DN IV.7 (701C-704C). Back to text.

[170] DN XI. 1 (949AB). Back to text.

[171] DN IV.29 (729C). Back to text.

[172] EH V.3.5 (512B-513B). The determination of office by God is also designated as judgement (*krisis*): EH III.3.13 (445B). Back to text.

[173] EH II.2.3 (393C, *cf*. 513B). Back to text.

[174] DN IV.7 (701D). Back to text.

[175] CH III. 1 (164D). Back to text.

[176] EH V.1.2 (501CD). Back to text.

[177] CH VIII.2 (241C). Back to text.

[178] CH VII.3 (209CD). Back to text.

[179] If ‘confession’ is included in the conversion of baptism (for it is a matter of self-knowlege, renunciation of the devil and shame over sin, EH III.3.4), then there is missing from the ‘seven sacraments’ only marriage, of which as *theomimēsis* Denys can find in himself nothing to say. Back to text.

[180] EH I.3 (373CD). Back to text.

[181] EH I.1 (372A). Back to text.

[182] EH V.1.5 (505B). Back to text.

[183] EH I.1 (376A). Back to text.

[184] EH V.1.7 (508CD). Back to text.

[185] How true that is and how wrong are those who suspect Denys of a kind of occasionalism is shown by his angry reproof of Demophilus and his equally strict requirement that the priest must both possess and be what he mediates and what he requires of others (EH III. 3.14; 445 A). A sign of how little Denys can begin to be numbered with those who dissolve the *opus operatum* in existential factors is his answer to the objection to infant baptism and infant communion: he justifies these by their upbringing in a Catholic spirit (EH Vll.3.11; 565D-568C). Back to text.

[186] CH IV.3: *homotagēs* (181A); VI.2 (201A); VIII. 1 (240A); IX.2 (257C); more explicitly: EH IV.3.7 (481A). If this moment of equal rank is underlined more firmly in the case of the angels than of the Church, it applies here too—indeed, the structure of the heavenly is strictly read off the model of the ecclesiastical hierarchy—and it can be said that the ‘holy people’ belong to the hierarchy (in the defined sense) (EH VI.3.5; 537A). Back to text.

[187] CH XIII.3 (301A), *ibid*. (301C); X.1: *tēs eukosmou taxiarchias thesmon en harmonia theia kai analogia pros tēn hapasēs eukosmias hyperarchion archēn* . . . . (273 A) [the law of the principle of well-ordered structure, established in divine harmony and analogy with the principle beyond all principle of all good order]. Back to text.

[188] CH IX.2-3 (260AD). Back to text.

[189] CH IX.3 (261 A). Back to text.

[190] DN XI. 1 (948D-949B). Back to text.

[191] On this Koch, 18-27: dependence on Plato; and Stiglmair, ‘Die Eschatologie des Ps.-D.’ (ZkTh, 1899, 1-21). (The vision occurs already in Nilus, who repeats it as an ‘old story’.) Back to text.

[192] EH III.3.3 (397D-400A). Back to text.

[193] EH VII. 1.2 (553C). And Stiglmair, *ad loc*. The same in the above-mentioned article. Back to text.

[194] Ep 9 (1105D). Back to text.

[195] DN IX.7 (916A). Back to text.

[196] Ep 2 (1068A-1069A). Back to text.

[197] Ep 1 (1065AB). Back to text.

[198] DN IV.12-13 (709-712). Back to text.

[199] *Cf*. EH III.3 and V.1.3ff. Back to text.

[200] MTh Li (997AB). Back to text.

[201] *Cf. hyperechō*, *hyperochē*, *hyperbolē* in v.d. Daele. Back to text.

[202] CH XIII.4 (304C); DN IV.4 (697C); IX.2 (909C); XI.2 (952A); XII.3 (972C); XIII.2 (977C); MTh V (1048B); Ep 9.3 (1109C); 9.5 (1112C).

God is himself causally superior to any transcendence (including, therefore, that of the understanding mind): DN II.7 (645B). Any measure (*taxis*) and anything beyond measure (*hyperochē*) is from him: DN IV.10 (705C). The application of negative names (such as unreason, lack of feeling) to God is possible *kath’ hyperochēn*, and implies therefore an objective content, *viz*. the ‘transcendence of the light of God over anything visible’ (*ibid*.). His lordship is not only ‘superiority’ (*hyperochē*) over what is subordinated, but simply total possession (DN XII.2; 969B). DN VII.3 (872A) is therefore to be interpreted in accordance with all these texts, where it is a matter of a methodical ascent ‘*en pantōn aphairesei kai hyperochē*’ [in negation and transcendence of all things]: the last word means here nothing else than the objective superabundance of God. Back to text.

[203] MTh V (1048B). Back to text.

[204] CH IV.3 (180C-181A). Back to text.

[205] CH IV.2 (201 A) and frequently. Back to text.

[206] DN I.4 (592BC). And already Tabor is certainly the transfiguration of ‘the veil’ of Christ’s humanity, but not at all its rending (of which Denys never speaks). The greater assimilation to the knowledge of the angels likewise need not point to immediacy. Back to text.

[207] Ep 7.2 (1080AB). Back to text.

[208] One need only go through Gandillac's index of scriptural citations and allusions in the critical edition of CH. Back to text.

[209] Ep 8.4 (1096A-C). Back to text.

[210] EH IV.3.10 (484B). Back to text.

[211] DN VII.4 (873A). As here it is especially a matter of the apostles, martyrdom is certainly included in this witness. Back to text.

[212] EH VI.3.3 (536A). Back to text.

[213] EH III.3.9 (437C). Back to text.

[214] EH VII.1.2 (553B-556B). Back to text.

[215] Ep 8.6 (1100C). Back to text.

[216] The main section on prayer, DN III.I (680AD), seems to say that prayer only moves men to God, in accordance with which it would appear that as God moves himself to himself, prayer moves something in God. Back to text.

Anselm

[1] Anselm's works are cited according to the critical edition by F. S. Schmitt, OSB, six volumes so far (1938-61), the final volume of which, consisting of fragments and apparatus, has yet to appear. To that there should be added the incomplete work, *On Ability and Inability, On Possibility and Impossibility, Necessity and Freedom* ('Ein neues unvollendetes Werk des hl. Anselm von Canterbury', ed. with comments by F. S. Schmitt, in *BGPHM* Vol. 33.3, 1936); Anselm's lecture in Cluny, 1104 taken down by Eadmer: *De beatitudine coelestis patriae (PL* 159, 587-604); Eadmer's biography (*PL* 158, 49-118) and his *Historia novorum* (*PL* 159, 347-525). Finally the collections of similes (*De similitudinibus*) which Anselm was accustomed to use in his lectures to his monks and novices, but also on other occasions, collected by the monk Alexander of Canterbury (*DSp* I.694), which includes another version of the lecture given in Cluny, and repeats material known elsewhere; meanwhile the neglected work remains very illuminating for Anselm. The older literature is cited in *DThC*. Important new contributions of the International Anselm Congress, 1959, in *Spicilegium Beccense* I (1959) (= *SpicBec*). The edition of Schmitt is cited by work and chapter, and then in brackets: volume, page and line, *e.g. CDH (Cur Deus homo*) I.1 (II.48.8-9). Back to text.

[2] *Ibid*. 1.3 (II.51.12). Back to text.

[3] *Ibid*. I.1 (II.49.17-22). Back to text.

[4] *De ver*. 11 (I.191.11-12). Back to text.

[5] *Prosl*. 26 (I.121.22-122.1). Back to text.

[6] Dom Jean Leclercq, *Etudes sur le vocabulaire monastique du MA: Monachus, Philosophia, Theoria* (Stud. Anselm. 48), 1961. Back to text.

[7] *De cone*. III.6 (II.270.21-24.; 271.11). Back to text.

[8] *De lib arb*. 3 (I.211.1). [I believe, but I desire to understand.] Back to text.

[9] *De cas. diab. 16* (1.261.25). [Make me, believing, to know what without knowing I believed.] Back to text.

[10] *CDH, commend*. (II.40.1-2). [established in faith, to exercise oneself in investigation by one's reason.] Back to text.

[11] *Ep de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 6 (II.21.5-6). [that not only by faith, but also by evident reason, they may know the truth.] Back to text.

[12] *CDH*, commend. (II.40.10-11). Back to text.

[13] As, above all, Henri de Lubac has shown in *SpB* 295-312. Back to text.

[14] Both are named together: *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 6 (II.21.1-2); *CDH, commend*. (II.39.3-6); *ibid*. I.1 (II.47.8-11). Often the two goals are also mentioned separately. Back to text.

[15] *Mon*. 78 (I.84.16-17). Back to text.

[16] Or. 5 (III.13.13-14). Back to text.

[17] Or. 10 (III.37.129-30). Back to text.

[18] *Cone. virg*. 23 (II.165.1-2). Back to text.

[19] *Mon*. 1 (1.14.9). [it is open to all who are willing to turn to what is clear.] Back to text.

[20] *CDH* I.1 (II.49.4). [that God may reveal what previously he had concealed.] Back to text.

[21] *Prosl*. 1 (I.97.6-10). Back to text.

[22] *Mon*. 80 (1.87.9-10). Back to text.

[23] *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (first version) 4 (1.283.24-5). Back to text.

[24] *Ibid*. (1.284.27-31). [who will not believe will not experience, and who has not experienced will not know.] The second version (II.9.6-8) adds, more sharply, that through a lack of humility and virtue an 'insight already granted

may be again withdrawn, indeed even faith itself may perish, if the purity of the conscience is neglected’ (*ibid*. 9-11). Back to text.

[25] *Ibid*. (I.283.30-284.3). Back to text.

[26] *Prosl*. 1 (I.98.2-3, 16-17; 99.5-6). Back to text.

[27] *Prosl*. 1 (I.100.8, 12-17). Back to text.

[28] *Prosl*. 14 (I.111.14, 22-112.1). Back to text.

[29] *Prod*. 14 (1.112.3-4), 16 (1.112.24-5). Back to text.

[30] *Prod*. 16-18 (1.113.4-114.2). Back to text.

[31] *CDH, commend*. (II.40.4-5). Back to text.

[32] *Ibid*. II. 16 (II. 117.4). Back to text.

[33] *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 13 (II.31.3-4). Back to text.

[34] *CDH* 1.2 (II.50.12-13). Back to text.

[35] *Prosl*. 3 (1.103.4-6); *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 4 (11.18.6-7). Back to text.

[36] *CDH* I.1 (II.48.18). Back to text.

[37] *Remoto Christo, quasi nihil sciatur de Christo* [Putting Christ on one side, as if nothing was known of Christ]: *CDH, praef*. (II.42.12-14), *cf*. 1.10 (II.67.12-13), I.20 (II.88.3-7), *necessariis rationibus sine scriptura auctoritate* [by necessary reasons without the authority of Scripture]: *Ep de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 6 (II.20.19); *Mon. prol*. (1.7.7-8). Back to text.

[38] *CDH* 1.2 (II.95.1-3; 96.10-12). Back to text.

[39] *CDH* 1.2 (Il.50.7-9), 1.18 (II.82.8-9); *De cone*. III.6 (II.272.1-6). Back to text.

[40] *CDH* II.15 (II.116.11), II. 16 (II.116.17). [Open!] Back to text.

[41] *De ver*. 13 (1.197.14,30); *CDH* II. 17 (II.126.5). [Show!] Back to text.

[42] *De cas. diab*. 3 (1.237.31). [I do not see why, unless you show me.] Back to text.

[43] *De ver*. 5 (1.181.15): *video quod dicis*. [I see what you say.] Back to text.

[44] *De ver*. 13 (1.198.17). Back to text.

[45] *De gramm*. 13 (1.158.22): *sic consequi video*. [I see it follows thus.] Back to text.

[46] *De ver*. 9 (1.189.26). [Now I see clearly what up to now I had not noticed.] Back to text.

[47] *De ver*. 12 (1.194.29). [I see that nothing needs to be corrected.] Back to text.

[48] *De gramm*. 4 (1.148.29-31), 5 (1.149.29), 7 (I.151.11), 14 (1.160.26), 15 (I.161.9), 21 (1.168.6), etc. Back to text.

[49] *Mon*. 63 (1.74.5). [I see something inexplicable.] Back to text.

[50] *Mon*. 67 (1.78.2). [I do not see why.] Back to text.

[51] *De gramm*. 9 (1.153.32), 13 (1.153.10), 14 (1.159.16). [I do not yet see.] Back to text.

[52] *De gramm*. 21 (1.168.8); *cf*. 8 (1.152.11,19). [it does not now appear to me.] Back to text.

[53] De fer. 9 (1.189.8-9). [Although I seem to understand, show me more plainly.] Back to text.

[54] *De conc. virg*. 1 (II. 140.5-6). [If it appears how Christ cannot be subjected to this, it will be clear . . . .] Back to text.

[55] Mon. 49 (1.64.17), 59 (I.71.3), 62 (*sed ne forte repugnet huic assertioni quod intueor* [but lest perhaps what I behold is inconsistent with this assertion.] I.72.6). Back to text.

[56] Mon. 63 (1.73.11). Back to text.

[57] *De ver*. 5 (I.181.30). Back to text.

[58] *Mon*. 6 (51 *cuiforte quod speculor persuadere voluero*, 1.19.19), 67 (*Ipsa [anima] sibimet esse velut speculum dici potest, in quo speculetur . . . imaginem [Dei*], I.77.27-8). Back to text.

[59] *De ver*. 5 (I.181.18; 182.20). Back to text.

[60] *Mon*. 21 (I.38.8). Back to text.

[61] *Mon*. 44 (I.61.7-8). Back to text.

[62] *Mon*. 48 (I.63.18), 69 (I.80.4). Back to text.

[63] *Mon*. 48 (I.63.21). Back to text.

[64] *Mon*. 80 (I.87.8-9). Back to text.

[65] *Mon*. 16 (I.30.12), 18 (I.32.11), 62 (I.72.20). Back to text.

[66] *Mon*. 21 (I.38.17), 44 (I.61.8). Back to text.

[67] *Mon*. 16 (I.30.15). Back to text.

[68] *Mon*. 41 (I.58.11), 55 (I.67.9). Back to text.

[69] *Mon*. 4 (I.17.32), 37 (I-55-14), 50 (I.65.10), 56 (I.68.4) Back to text.

[70] *Mon*. 7 (1.20.27), *Ibid*. (1.22.5: *certissime patet*), 50 (1.65.7); *De gramm*. 16 (1.161.23); *cas. diab*. 13 (1.258.4); *De cone*. 1.6 (II.256.27), 1.7

(II.259.29), etc. Back to text.

[71] *Mon*. 50 (I.65.3). Back to text.

[72] *De cas. diab*. 21 (1.269.7). Back to text.

[73] *Mon*. 48 (1.63.19); *De gramm. 21* (I.168.1). Back to text.

[74] *De cas. diab*. 26 (1.274.5). Back to text.

[75] *Mon*. 7 (1.22.7), 55 (1.67.7); *Degramm*. 14 (1.159.29); De ver. 5 (1.181.27), 8 (I.188.8), 9 (1.189.9); *De lib. arb*. 5 (I.216.11); *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (first version) (I.286.26); *CDH* 1.21 (H.88.28); *De cone. virg*. 7 (II.148.1); 13 (II.155.23), 22 (II.161.24), 26 (II.161.24), 26 (II.169.22); *De cone. virg*. 1.6 (II.256.16); 1.7 (II.259.29), II.3 (II.261.17). Back to text.

[76] *De gramm*. 19 (I.164.16); *CDH praef*. (II.42.14); *De cone*. III.6 (II.272.1); *Medit*. 3 (III.87.79). Back to text.

[77] *CDH* II.14 (II. 114.20), II. 18 (II.129.22); *De cone*. 1.6 (II.257.2-3), I.7 (II.258.8). Back to text.

[78] CDH II.18 (II.127.7). Back to text.

[79] *Mon*. 29 (1.47.12), 18 (I.33.10); *De Inc. Verbi* (second version) 6 (II.20.15); *CDH* I.24 (II.94.21); *De proc. spir. 1* (II.185.16, 27), 14 (II.212.11). Back to text.

[80] *Mon*. 22 (I.40.16); *CDH* II.9 (11.105.26-106.1), II.19 (II.130.22). Back to text.

[81] *De proc. spir. 1* (II.183.15). Back to text.

[82] *Mon*. 54 (I.66.21). Back to text.

[83] *Mon*. 29 (I.47.8). Back to text.

[84] *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 6 (II.21.5-6). Back to text.

[85] *Mon*. 55 (I.67.6-7). Back to text.

[86] *De gramm*. 13 (I.159.1), 21 (I.166.1). [I cannot resist a clear consequence.] Back to text.

[87] *De gramm*. 21 (1.167.3). [It cannot be otherwise.] Back to text.

[88] CDH 1.12 (II.69.31). [I do not know how to resist your reason.] Back to text.

[89] *Mon*. 33 (1.52.2, 8). Back to text.

[90] *Mon*. 4 (1.16.31). Back to text.

[91] *Mon. prol*. (I.7.11), 33 (1-53-20). Back to text.

[92] *De vet*. 13 (1.198.21); *De cas. diab*. 13 (I.257.32). Back to text.

[93] *De cas. diab*. 23 (1.273.28). Back to text.

[94] *Mon*. 4 (1.17.4), 6 (1.19.19); *De gramm*. 17 (I.163.1). Back to text.

[95] *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 6 (II.20.19); *CDH* II.18 (II.126.27). Back to text.

[96] *Mon*. 18 (I.33.6). Back to text.

[97] *Mon*. 17 (1.31.21). Back to text.

[98] *Mon*. 21 (1.38.4-5); *CDH* I.25 (II.96.10). [which is manifest beyond rational and clear necessity.] Back to text.

[99] *Mon*. 16 (1.30.15), *cf. Mon*. 41, *perspicuum* = *certissimum* (I.58.11-12). Back to text.

[100] *Mon*. (1.30.33-31.1). [the intellect is constrained by reason to be aware of it.] Back to text.

[101] *CDH* II. 17 (II. 126.5). Back to text.

[102] *Prosl*. 14 (I.111.13). Back to text.

[103] *Mon*. 63 (I.73.5). Back to text.

[104] *Mon*. 54 (I.66.21). Back to text.

[105] *Mon*. 48 (1.64.2), 71 (1.81.19-20). Back to text.

[106] *Mon*. 70 (I.81.2). Back to text.

[107] *Mon*. 69 (1.80.2). All these keywords in Anselmian language are missing from F. S. Schmitt's new Anselm dictionary. Back to text.

[108] Bp. *de Inc. Verbj* (first version) 10 (1.289.18). Back to text.

[109] *Ibid*. 3 (I.282.23). Back to text.

[110] *In eorum quippe animabus ratio . . . sic est in imaginationibus corporeis involuta, ut ex eis se non possit evolvere . . . nec ea quae ipsa sola et pura ratione contemplari debet, valeat discernere. Ibid*. 4 (I.285.5-11). Back to text.

[111] *Ibid*. 10 (I.289.10). [a simple understanding, not overwhelmed by the multiplicity of imaginations.] Back to text.

[112] CDH I.3-4 (11-51.5-52.4). [First, therefore, there needs to be demonstrated the rational basis of truth, that is, necessity.] Back to text.

[113] *CDH* 11.8 (II.104.24, 28). [these pictures are exceedingly beautiful and rational.] Back to text.

[114] CDH II. 19 (II.131.9-10). Back to text.

[115] *Mon*. 10 (1.25.4-9). Back to text.

[116] *Prosl*. 4 (1.103.18-19). Back to text.

[117] *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 1 (II.10.4-13). Back to text.

[118] CDH 1.19 (II.84.17-21). Back to text.

[119] *Ibid*. (II.85.10). Back to text.

[120] *De conc. virg*. 13 (II.155.15). Back to text.

[121] *Ep de Inc. Verbi* (first version) 10 (1.289.10). Back to text.

[122] *Mon*. 63 (I.73.11-12). Back to text.

[123] *Mon*. 62 (1.72.6). [lest perhaps what I behold is inconsistent with this assertion.] Back to text.

[124] *De cas. diab*. 20 (1.264.22-4). [Your disputation is so bound together by necessary reasons that I *see* it can be dissolved by no reason, unless because I *see* that something follows . . . .] Back to text.

[125] *De cas. diab*. 12 (I.252.2-4). [The task is that you should not be content to understand the things that I say one by one, but that you should collect them all together at once in the memory *as if in a single intuition*.] Back to text.

[126] *De ver*. 6 (1.184.30). Back to text.

[127] *Prosl*. 4 (1.103.20-1). [no one who understands what God is can think that God does not exist.] Back to text.

[128] *Mon*. 67 (1.77.24). Back to text.

[129] *Mon*. 6 (I.19.16). Back to text.

[130] *Mon*. 64 (I.75.11); *De ver. 5* (I.182.26-7); *CDH* I.19 (11.85.2,5), I.21 (11.88.18), II.11 (II.111.6). Back to text.

[131] *De cas. diab*. 20 (1.264.22-3). Back to text.

[132] *Mon*. 19 (I.34.27); *CDH* II. 19 (II.130.2). Back to text.

[133] *Mon*. 19 (I.34-27), 22 (I.41.1), 39 (I-57-12). 45 (I.62.5), 78 (1-85-7); *De cas. diab*. 14 (I.258.31); *CDH I.7* (II.57.9), II.8 (II.104.7, 24), II.9 (II.105.19-20). Back to text.

[134] *Mon*. 76 (1.84.1); *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 10 (II.27.16). Back to text.

[135] *De lib. arb*. 1 (I.209.6). Back to text.

[136] *Mon*. 22 (I.41.18). Back to text.

[137] *Mon*. 22 (1.39.3). Back to text.

[138] Mon. 22 (I.41.18). Back to text.

[139] *De cas. diab*. 23 (I.270.19). [To me there appears to be fittingness rather than unfittingness.] Back to text.

[140] *Ep. de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 10 (II.26.10). [rather it is fitting.] Back to text.

[141] Mon. 46 (1.62.16); *De conc. virg*. 20 (II.160.19). Back to text.

[142] CDH I.12 (II.69.9, 15) and often. Back to text.

[143] CDH II. 16 (II. 119.14). [not only fitting, but also necessary.] Back to text.

[144] Mon. 36 (1.54.16-18). [It can be comprehended most evidently . . . (that it) cannot be comprehended by human knowledge.] Back to text.

[145] *Prosl*. 14 (I.111.25-112.1). [It sees that it can no longer see.] Back to text.

[146] *Mon*. 38 (I.56.11). Back to text.

[147] *Ibid*. 15-17. Back to text.

[148] *Mon*. 43 (1.59.15-16). [a certain plurality as ineffable as it is inevitable.] Back to text.

[149] *Mon*. 64 (I.75.1-12). Back to text.

[150] *Mon*. 65-7 (I.75-8). Back to text.

[151] *Mon*. 8 (I.23.32), 11 (I.26.17), 18 (I.32.7), 20 (I.35.7), 22 (I.39.27), 36 (I.55-6), 37 (I.55-17-18), 66 (I.77-14). Back to text.

[152] *Mon*. 1-6 (I.14.9-18.3), 31 (I.49-50). Back to text.

[153] *Mon*. 10 (I.24-5), 29-35 (1-47-54)- Back to text.

[154] *Mon*. 60 (I.70-1); *Prosl*. 8 (I.106), 10 (I.109.3-4). Back to text.

[155] *De ver*. 13 (I.199.19-20). Back to text.

[156] *Mon*. 70 (1.80-1). Back to text.

[157] *Prosl. proem*. (1.93.12, 18). Back to text.

[158] *Mon*. 6 (1.19.15). [This my meditation suddenly led me to something great and delightful.] Back to text.

[159] *Mon*. 74-6 (I.83). Back to text.

[160] *Prosl. prooem*. (I.93.4-6). Back to text.

[161] *Prosl*. 3 (I.102.10). [that than which no greater can be thought.] Back to text.

[162] *Mon*. 15 (I.28.11-12). Back to text.

[163] *Mon*. 64 (I.75.11-12). Back to text.

[164] *Prosl*. 15 (I.1 12.14-15). [something greater than what can be thought.] Back to text.

[165] *De ver*. 2 (1.179). Back to text.

[166] *Cum dicitur quia homo est aut homo non est, prius concipitur in mente significatum hujus nominis, quam dicatur esse vel non esse, et ideo quod concipitur causa est ut dicatur de illo esse. Si etiam dicimus: homo est animal, est homo causa ut sit [ipse] animal et dicatur esse animal . . . . Hoc enim nomine significatur et concipitur totus homo, in quo toto est animal ut pars . . . . Hoc igitur modo de quocumque dicitur esse sive simpliciter, ut: homo est, sive additamento, ut: homo est animal, aut: homo est sanus: praecedens ejus conceptio est causa, ut dicatur esse vel non esse, et ut intelligatur quod dicitur. Quoniam ergo de quacumque re aliquod verbum pronuntietur, praedicta ratione dicitur facere, quod eodem verbo profertur, non sine omni ratione . . . omne verbum facere dicitur.* (*Ein unvoll. Werk . . ..* pp. 27-8). Back to text.

[167] *De ver*. 2 (1.178.8). Back to text.

[168] *Ibid*. 18.20. Back to text.

[169] Apart from his own testimony in the *Prooemium*, *cf*. the version, exaggerated into myth, in Eadmer’s *Life: PL* 158, 63-4. Back to text.

[170] *CDH* II.20 (II.131.29). Anselm Stolz, in particular, has emphasized the presupposition of the proof from degrees (‘Vere Esse im Proslogion des hi. Anselm’, *Scholastik* IX [1934], 400-9); on *experimentutn* as a mediating concept, Henri Bouillard in *SpicBec*, 191-207. The way in which our interpretation differs from that of Karl Barth (*Fides quaerens intellectum. Anselms Beweis der Existenz Gottes*, 1931) is self-evident. [That (mercy) can be thought neither greater nor more just.] Back to text.

[171] *Mon*. 64 (I.75.11-12). Back to text.

[171a] *Simil*. 167 (*PL* 159. 692C). [The saints will behold God in his glory, but they will not be able to understand the greatness of his divinity or the infinity of his power. For he would not be infinite if he could be comprehended by anyone’s intellect.] Back to text.

[172] *Mon*. 16 (I.31.5). Back to text.

[173] *Mon*. 7 (1.22.8-9). [a multitude so beautifully formed, so varied in an orderly way, so fittingly diverse.] Back to text.

[174] *CDH* I.1 (II.48.8-9). [loveable by reason of its beauty.] Back to text.

[175] *De cas. diab*. 25 (1.273.3-4). [exceedingly beautiful contemplation.] Back to text.

[176] Mon. 6 (1.19.15-16). Back to text.

[177] Mon. 49 (I.64.17). Back to text.

[178] Mon. 43 (1.59.17). [rather it seems to me delightful to withdraw more often into so impenetrable a mystery.] Back to text.

[179] *CDH* I.1 (II.47.9). [that they might be delighted by the understanding and contemplation of the things which they believe.] Back to text.

[180] *Prosl. prooem*. (1.93.20). [I rejoice to have found.] Back to text.

[181] *Ibid*. 12, 16-18. Back to text.

[182] *Prosl*. 24 (1.117-18): 'For if there are many and great delights in delightful things, what sort of a delight, and how great a delight, is there in him who made the delightful things themselves?' Back to text.

[183] *SpicBec* 295-312. His distinction is supported by *Simil*. 164: *Tribus modis sentitur Deus: videlicet intellectu, amore et usu. Per intellectum sapimus, per amorem justificamur, per usum beatificamur. Inquantum quis Deum intelligit, sapiens est; inquantum vero amat, Justus;. . . inquantum utitur, beatus (PL* 159.691D-692A). Back to text.

[184] *Prosl*. 25-6 (I.120-1); *De beat. coel*. 14 (PL 159, 599C-600B); *Simil*. 71 (643A). Back to text.

[185] *Medit*. 3 (III.89.137-44). Back to text.

[186] *De cone*. III. 1 (II.264.9-10). Back to text.

[187] *De beat. coel*. 10-11 (*PL* 159, 596C, 597B); *Simil*. 68 (641C). Back to text.

[188] *Ep de Inc. Verbi* (second version) 15 (II.33.21-3). Back to text.

[189] *De beat. coel*. 12 (598A). Back to text.

[190] *De lib. arb*. 1 (1.208.10, 209.4-5). Back to text.

[191] *Ibid. 2* (I.210.3-4). Back to text.

[192] *Ibid*. 5 (I.214-17). Back to text.

[193] *Ibid*. 5 (I.216.26-7). Back to text.

[194] *De cone*. 1.6 (II.257.24). Back to text.

[195] *Possumus itaque dicere de Christo quia potuit mentiri, si subauditur: se vellet. CDH* II. 10 (II. 107.6-7). [Thus we can say that Christ was able to lie, if we understand: if he willed.] Back to text.

[196] *CDH* II.10 (II.108.20-1). Back to text.

[197] *De vet*. 12 (1.192.9). Back to text.

[198] *De ver*. 12 (1.194.23-4). Back to text.

[199] *De lib. arb*. 3 (1.212.19-20). Back to text.

[200] *Ibid*. 13 (I.225.10-11); *De Cone*. 1.6 (II.256.15-16). Back to text.

[201] *De cone*. III.3 (III.265.28-266.1). [A will is not upright because it wills rightly, but it wills rightly because it is upright.] Back to text.

[202] *De ver*. 12 (1.196.1-8). Back to text.

[203] *Ibid*. 10 (I.189.31-2). Back to text.

[204] *Ibid*. 8 (1.186-7), 12 (1.192.1-5). Back to text.

[205] *Medit*. 3 (III.86.65-6). Back to text.

[206] *De lib. arb*. 14 (I.226.6). Back to text.

[207] *De cas. diab*. 4 (I.242.5-6). Back to text.

[208] *CDH* II. 17 (II. 122.26-8). Back to text.

[209] *Ibid*. 1.12 (II.70.15-17, 24-6). Back to text.

[210] *Ibid*. 1.8 (II.59.11). Back to text.

[211] *Ibid*. II.17 (II.123.12). Back to text.

[212] *Ibid*. 23-24. Back to text.

[213] *Ibid*. (II.125.29-30). [Indeed, no necessity precedes his will.] Back to text.

[214] *De cone*. III.7 (II.273.24). Back to text.

[215] *De lib. arb*. 3 (I.212.30-1). Back to text.

[216] *Ibid*. 4 (I.214.4-5). Back to text.

[217] *De cone. virg*. 2 (II. 142.3-4). Back to text.

[218] *De lib. arb*. 11 (I.223.10-11). Back to text.

[219] *Ibid*. 12 (I.224.15). Back to text.

[220] *De cas. diab*. 16 (I.260.14). Back to text.

[221] *De cone*. III. 13 (II.287.6). Back to text.

[222] *De cas. diab*. 9 (I.246.27-8); *CDH* II. 1 (II.97.17-18); *De cone. virg. 1* (II.141.3-4). Back to text.

[223] *De lib. arb*. 8 (I.220-1); *De cone*. 1.6 (II.256.27). Back to text.

[224] *De lib. arb*. 3 (I.221.19); *De cone*. III.2 (H.265.22-3). Back to text.

[225] *De cone*. III. 14 (II.287.3-8). Back to text.

[226] *Ibid*. III.3 (II.266.2-267.1). Back to text.

[227] *Ibid*. III.4 (II.267.15, 19). Back to text.

[228] *De cone*. 1.6 (II.256.5-7). Back to text.

[229] There is only one suggestion of the doctrine in citations of Rom 7.22 (*condelector legi Dei secundum interiorem hominem): De cone. virg*. 4 (II. 144.17); *De cone*. III. 12 (II.284.26); *Simil*. 163 (691C), 171 (694A). Back to text.

[230] *Simil*. 169 (693 B). Back to text.

[231] *CDH* II. 1 (II.97.10-11). Back to text.

[232] *De cone*. 1.6 (II.257.13-14). Back to text.

[233] *Mon*. 68 (I.79.5-9). Back to text.

[234] *De cone*. III.2 (II.265.1-9). Back to text.

[235] *Prosl*. 23 (1.117). Back to text.

[236] CDH II. 1 (II.97.15). Back to text.

[237] The distinctions between will as *instrumentum quo*, as *affectio* and as *usus* answer exactly to those found in *De cone*. III.11 (II.278-9). Back to text.

[238] *Simil*. 2-8 (605B-607C); *cf*. 70-2 (693C-694C). Back to text.

[239] *Medit*. 2 (III.80-1.11.8-19, 29-31, 33, 39-40). Back to text.

[240] *Medit*. 3 (III.88.118-21). [For this is the freest and perfect obedience of human nature, when he submits his free will freely to the will of God, and when by this work he perfects the good will which he has received by spontaneous freedom without any compulsion.] Back to text.

[241] *De cone*. III.5 (II.270.6-9). Back to text.

[242] *CDH* I.6-7 (II-53-9); *Medit*. 3 (III.85.46-9). Back to text.

[243] Or. 6 (III.16.3); *Medit*. 3 (III.87.95, 99). Back to text.

[244] *CDH* 12 (II.70.6-7). Back to text.

[245] *Ibid*. 1.8 (II.60.12-13). Back to text.

[246] *Ibid*. I.9-10 (II.61-7), II.11 (II.111.23-5), II.16-17 (II.122-6). Back to text.

[247] *Ibid*. II.18 (II.128.1-2); *Medit*. 3 (III.87.89-90). Back to text.

[248] *CDH* II.17 (II.126.5-6); *De cone. virg*. 8-13 (II.149, 155). Back to text.

[249] *CDH* I.23 (H.91.8). Back to text.

[250] *De cone*. III.7 (II.273.26-274.1). Back to text.

[251] *Or*. 7 (III.25.2-3). Back to text.

[252] *CDH* 1.15 (II.73.3-24). Thus already Boethius: 4 *De cons, prosn* 6: *licet in ahum, tamen in ordinem [homo] relabatur. Cf*. Augustine, Ep. 140.2.4. And later Bonaventure: *Brevil*. 3.4 (Opp. V.233). Back to text.

[253] CDH I.18 (II.78-9). Back to text.

[254] *Ibid*. (II.79-81). Back to text.

[255] *De cone. virg*. 6 (II.147.19). [the harmonious order of the universe of things.] Back to text.

[256] Sim17. 7 (607B). [he deprives God himself of what he [God] most properly and particularly ought to have.] Back to text.

[257] *De beat. coel*. (601-2). Back to text.

[258] *Simil*. 44 (624C). Back to text.

[259] *Simil*. 43 (623A). Back to text.

[260] Eadmer, *Vita* I.41 (*PL* 158.73B). Back to text.

[261] *Simil*. 182 (697D). Back to text.

[262] *CDH* 1.10 (II.66.24-6). Back to text.

[263] *Ibid*. I.19 (II.85.11-23). Back to text.

[264] *Ibid*. I.24 (II.93.18-20). Back to text.

[265] *Ibid*. I.24 (II.93.11; II.94.3). Back to text.

[266] Eadmer, *Vita* II.22 (90A). Back to text.

[267] *CDH* II.8 (II.103.9). Back to text.

[268] *Ibid*. II.5 (II. 100.16-20). Back to text.

[269] *Ibid*. 1.5 (II.52.19-23). Back to text.

[270] *Ibid*. II.16 (II.118.18). Back to text.

[271] *Ibid*. I.20 (II.87.23-4). Back to text.

[272] *Ibid*. II.18 (II.128.8-12). Back to text.

[273] *Ibid*. 13-25. Back to text.

[274] *Simil*. 81 (653A). Back to text.

[275] *Ibid*. 82 (653B-654B). Back to text.

[276] *Ibid*. 84 (630A-C). Back to text.

[277] *CDH* II. 18 (II. 129.6-8). [he ought to do it, because what he wills ought to be done; and yet he does not have to do it, because it is not required of him as a debt.] Back to text.

[278] *De cas. diab*. 12 (1.255.5-11). Back to text.

[279] *Ibid*. 3 (1.239.11). Back to text.

[280] *Ibid*. 27 (I.275.30-3). Back to text.

[281] *Ibid*. 6 (I.243.20-2), 25 (1.273.29-30). Back to text.

[282] *Prosl*. 25-6 (I.118-21). Back to text.

[283] *Ibid*. 25 (1.119.7-9). Back to text.

[284] *CDH* I.21 (II.88.18). Temptation insinuates to man: *nec tanti ponderis est peccatum, quantifacts illud* [nor is sin of such great weight as you make it]. *Simil*. 115 (672A). Back to text.

[285] *De cone*. III.8 (II.275.13). [into the bottomless abyss, unless restrained by mercy.] Back to text.

[286] *Simil*. 102 (666AB). Back to text.

[287] *Medit*. 3 (III.89.153). [in descent through the chaos of hell from which there is no return.] Back to text.

[288] Or. 14 (III.60.1-2). Back to text.

[289] *Ibid*. 7 (III.31.77-8). Back to text.

[290] *Medit*. 3 (III.86.65-8). Back to text.

[291] *Ibid*. 84.22-85.3. Back to text.

[292] *Or*. 4 (III. 11.10-19). Back to text.

[293] *Ibid. 6* (III.16.41-50). Back to text.

[294] *Ibid*. 7 (III.23.130-25.176). Back to text.

[295] *Ibid*. 9 (III.30-1). Back to text.

[296] *Ibid*. 10 (III.39-40). Back to text.

[297] *Ibid*. 12 (111.47-8). Back to text.

[298] *Ibid*. 16 (III.66-7). Back to text.

[299] *Ep*. 4 (III.104.21); *Ep*. 6 (III. 106.5-8); *Ep*. 12 (III.117.1-3), etc. [We mutually bear witness to our consciences.] Back to text.

[300] For the whole subject see Y. M.-J. Congar, ‘L’Eglise chez S. Anselme’, *SpicBec* 371-99, esp. p. 380, where *Ep*. 162 (IV.35) is cited: *Sicut enim episcopi servant sibi auctoritatem quamdiu* concordant *Christo, ita sibi earn adimunt, cum discordant a Christo*. Also p. 382 for a presentation of the presence of Peter, the door-keeper of heaven, and his authority in his successors, which is worked out more in a mystical way that transcends the temporal than through a temporal succession. Back to text.

[301] *Ep*. 243 (IV.153-4). Further texts in Congar, p. 391. Back to text.

[302] *Simil*. 165 (692A). Back to text.

[303] Address in Canterbury: Eadmer, *Vita* II.32 (*PL* 158.93). Back to text.

[304] Or. 12 (III.48.106-7). [John, you behold certainly, you behold me. Therefore behold me, Lord, you behold me by knowing me, behold me by having mercy on me. You behold and you know, behold that I may know.] Back to text.

Bonaventure

[1] The works are quoted from the great Quaracchi edition: *Opera omnia*, 10 vols. (Quaracchi 1882-1902); Report A of the Collations on the Hexameron from F. Delorme's edition in *BFSMA* Vol. 8 (Quaracchi 1934); the *Quaestiones disputatae De caritate* and *De novissimis* from the edition of P. Glorieux (*La France franciscaine*, Docum. II, Paris, 1950); the *Quaestiones disputatae De theologia* from the edition by G. H. Tavard in *RThAM*. 17 (1950), 178-256.

Particularly worthy of mention among the literature: on the doctrine of God, Albert Stohr, *Die Trinitatslehre des hi. Bonaventura*, pt. I: *Die wissenschaftliche Trinitätslehre*, Miinster, 1923. On the teaching about the doctrine ideas, J.-M. Bissen, *L'exemplarisme divin selon S. Bonaventure* (1929). On christocentrism, Alexander Gerken, *Theologie des Wortes. Das Verhältnis von Schöpfung und Inkarnation bei Bonaventura* (in course of publication, with bibliography). On the doctrine of illumination, Gilson, *La philosophic de S. Bonaventure*, 3rd ed. 1953. On the doctrine of the spiritual senses, Karl Rahner, 'La doctrine des "sens spirituels" au Moyen-âge, en particulier chez S. Bonaventure', *RAM* 14 (1933), 263-299. On mysticism, E. Longpré, *La theologie mystique de S. Bonaventure* (AFH 14 [1921]). On the theology of history, J. Ratzinger, *Die Geschichtstheologie des hi. Bonaventura* (1959).

On aesthetics, *cf*. especially Edgar de Bruyne, *Etudes d'esthétique médiévale*, 3 vols. (Bruges 1946), on Bonaventure Vol. 3, ch. 6 (III 189-226). Sr. E.J. M. Spargo, *The Category of the Aesthetic in the Philosophy of St. Bonaventure* (FIP.P N.11, 1953). Karl Peter, *Die Lehre von der Schönheit nach Bonaventura* (dissertation, Basel, 1961).

The treatise *De transcendentalibus entis conditionibus* may be a youthful work of Bonaventure (Cod. Assisi bibl. Com. 186): this is the first work to describe clearly the beautiful as the transcendent (edition by Dieter Halcour in *FS* 41 [1959], 41-106). On the development of the high scholastic aesthetic, *cf.* Dom Henri Pouillon, OSB, 'La beaute, propriété transcendentale chez les scholastiques (1220-1279)', *AHDL* 21 (1946), 263-329; Dieter Halcour, *Die Lehre vom Schönen im Rahmen der Transzendentalienlehre der Metaphysik der frühen Franziskanerschule von Paris* (dissertation, Freiburg i. Breisgau, 1957).

The commentary on the *Sentences* is quoted as follows: 3 d34 I, 1 q 3 = In 3. Sent., *distinctio* 34,*pars* 1, *articulus* 1, *quaestio* 3. Further, 3 d35 q4 = In 3. Sent., *distinctio* 35, *articulus unicus* (not identified), *quaestio* 4.

Fund=*fundamentum*; c = *conclusio, dub* = *dubium*; S = *sermo*; a and b indicate the columns (of the Quaracchi edition). Back to text.

[2] Anselm has the last word, at length, in *Breviloquium* VII 7 (*Opp.W* 290-291), but likewise in *De Sc. Chr*. q6 (V 35b), S 2 *Dom*. 5 *p. Pascha* (IX 313b); S 1 *Dom*. 2 *p. Pent*. (IX 359a). *Cf*. 1 dl, 3 q *ad 2* (I 41a). Back to text.

[3] *Sex. al*. S 7 2 (VIII 148a). Back to text.

[4] 1 *Sent, prooem*. q3 (I 13b). Back to text.

[5] On this, *cf*. J. Ratzinger, *loc. cit*. Back to text.

[6] *Legenda S. Franc*, prol. (VIII 504b); for further applications of Rev 7.2 to Francis, *cf*. the scriptural index, Vol. X 263. Back to text.

[7] *Hex*. 13, 1-6 (V 388ab). Back to text.

[8] *Sent. Prooem*. (I 1-5); *cf. Comm. in Eccl*. 1 (VI 13b); S 2 *Dom. 2 p. Pascha* (IX 299b); *Don. Sp. Sti*. 4, 14 (V 476b): revelation is compared to the waters of the sea because of the depth of the mysteries. The sea is deep, man cannot walk through it; and so powerful is the depth of the mysteries of sacred Scripture that man, however enlightened he may be and however much he may strive, is not able to penetrate to the bottom of the mysteries. Back to text.

[9] *Solil. prol*. (VIII 28-29). Back to text.

[10] *Brevil. prol*. (V 201-202). Back to text.

[11] *Ibid. prol*. 6 (V 208b). Back to text.

[12] *Hex*. 13, 2 (V 388a). Back to text.

[13] *Hex*. 10, 1 (V 377a). Back to text.

[14] *Hex*. 14, 3 (V 393a). Back to text.

[15] *Ibid*. 14, 5 (V 393b). Back to text.

[16] So, for example, in the collations on the Hexameron, whose seven planned stages (Coll. 3, 24; V 347) break off incomplete at the fourth stage, but in this the essential has been said. In the same way, one must not press the three stages of the *De triplici via* (VIII 3-18) too hard: the first already leads to the nuptial love and to the elevation above all that is of the senses, all that may be imagined and understood. Back to text.

[17] *Hex*. 8, 6 (V 370a). Back to text.

[18] [the loving wisdom], *Hex*. 19, 2 (V 420a). Back to text.

[19] *Hex*. 11, 21 (V 383b). Back to text.

[20] *Brevil. prol*. 3 (V 205a). Back to text.

[21] *De sc. Chr. q7* c (V 35a). Back to text.

[22] *Ibid*. V 35-36b. Back to text.

[23] *Ibid*. q7 c (V 40a). Back to text.

[24] *Ibid*. V 41a. Back to text.

[25] *Itin. (Itinerarium) prol*. 4 (V 296a). Back to text.

[26] *Itin*. 4, 3 (V 306b). Back to text.

[27] *Perf. vit. ad sot. (De Perfectione vitae ad sorores*) 5, 6 (VIII 119a). These three reasons are taken from Richard of St. Victor, who is quoted in the following passage, *cf*. also S. 3 *Dom*. 3 *in Quadr*. (IX 229b). Back to text.

[28] *De sc. Chr*. q7 (V 433b). Back to text.

[29] *Hex*. 3, 30 (V 348a); *cf*. K. Rahner, ‘Sens spirituels’, *loc. cit*. 279, n. 89; 282, n. 98. Back to text.

[30] 2 d23, 2 q3 c (II 544b)- Back to text.

[31] [anagogical ecstasy], 2 d23, 2 q3 *ad* 6 (II 546a). Back to text.

[32] [learned ignorance], *ibid.; Brevil*. 5, 6 (V 260a). Back to text.

[33] *Hoc autem videre non est nisi hominis suspensi ultra se in alta visione* [but to see this is granted only to a man suspended out of himself in a deep vision], *Hex*. 13, 11 (V 386a). *Contemplatio suspensa* [a suspended contemplation], *Hex*. 20,1 (V 425 a). The *Itinerarium* uses the six wings of the seraph as divisions of the work: the wings are understood as *sex illuminationum suspensiones* [six illuminative suspensions], through which the soul makes the transition *ad pacem per ecstaticos excessus sapientiae christianae* [to peace through the ecstatic raptures of Christian wisdom], *Prol*. 3 (V 295b). Back to text.

[34] [it is necessary . . . that we pass over to what is eternal], *Itin*. 1, 2 (V 297a). Back to text.

[35] [no one can be blessed, unless he ascends above himself], *ibid*. 1, I (V 296b). According to the teaching about the *apex mentis* [summit of the mind], this transition can also be termed *intrare in suum intimum et per consequens in summum suum ascendere* [to enter its inmost depth and consequently to ascend to its greatest height], *Hex*. 2, 31 (V 341b). Back to text.

[36] [ecstatic rapture], *Hex*. 23, 27 (V 449a). Back to text.

[37] [uniting of love], *Hex*. 2, 29 (V 341a). Back to text.

[38] *Hex. princip*. 2, 33, ed. Delorme 32. Back to text.

[39] [the form of wisdom is wonderful, and no one looks on her without wonderment and ecstasy], *Hex*. 2, 7 (V 337b). Back to text.

[40] *Hex*. 20, 24 (V 429b). Back to text.

[41] *Itin. prol*. 2 (V 295b). Back to text.

[42] *Perf. vit. ad sor*. 6, 3 (VIII 121a). Back to text.

[43] *Itin*. 7, 6 (V 313b). Back to text.

[44] Hex. 20, 30 (V 430b). Back to text.

[45] [Christian wisdom . . . expressed in truly divine fashion], *Legenda S. Franc*. 13, 10 (VIII 545b). Back to text.

[46] *Ibid. Prol*. 2 (VIII 505a). *Cf. S de S. Patren. Franc*. 5: *contra naturam . . . supra artem* [contrary to nature . . . above art] (IX 593 b). Back to text.

[47] [expressive and imprinted], *Hex*. 22, 23 (V 441a). Back to text.

[48] [expressly imprinted the likeness of the crucified], *Legenda minor* (VIII 576a). Back to text.

[49] *Ibid*. Back to text.

[50] [expressive sign], *Hex*. 23, 14 (V 447a); S 2 *de S. Patre Franc*. (IX 574b). Back to text.

[51] *Legenda S. Franc*. 13, 5 (V 543b). *Cf*. S 2 *de S. Patre Franc: Signaculum . . . transformatum per incendium dilectionis . . . expressum per exemplum perfectae virtutis, . . . expressivum per zelum supernae virtutis* [a seal . . . transformed by the fire of love . . . made eloquent by the zeal of heavenly virtue] (IX 547b). *Ponam te quasi signaculum, sc. in signis et stigmatibus impressis tibi Verbo Omnipotentis . . . quia servus meus es et humilis* [I shall set you as a seal, that is to say, in the signs and stigmata imprinted on you by the Word of the Almighty . . . because you are my servant, and lowly] (*ibid*. 576a). *Maximam habuit devotionem ad Christi incarnationem et Christi crucem; propter amorem . . . transformatus est in Christum crucifixum et habuit clavos* [he had a very great devotion to the Incarnation of Christ and the cross of Christ; because of his love . . . he was transformed into Christ crucified, and received the nails] (*ibid*. 580a). S 3: *Ipse enim voluit sequi Christum et portare crucem Christi. Unde ipsi . . . apparuit Seraphim unus et tunc apparuerunt in corpore ejus . . . stigmata passionis* [for he wished to follow Christ and to carry the cross of Christ. Therefore . . . one of the Seraphim appeared to him, and then there appeared on his body . . . the stigmata of the Passion] (*ibid*. 584b). S 4: *Sicut est de*

ferro, quod cum bene calet, ita quod liquescit, tunc potest imprimi in illud quaelibet forma vel figura: sic in corde bene fervente per amorem ad Christum crucifixum imprimitur ipse Crucifixus vel crux Crucifixi, et amans transfertur vel transformatur in Crucifixum, sicut fecit B. Franciscus . . . . Signum crucis impressum corpori ejus significabat affectum quem ipse habebat ad Christum crucifixum [In the same way as iron, when it is very hot, liquefies and then any form or shape at all may be impressed on it, so it is with a heart that truly burns with love for Christ crucified: the crucified himself or the cross of the crucified is impressed on the heart, and the lover is carried over or transformed into the crucified, just as blessed Francis experienced it . . . . The sign of the cross imprinted on his body signified the devotion which he himself had for Christ crucified] (*ibid*. 5893b). Back to text.

[52] *Perf. vit. ad sor. 6* (VIII 123b). Back to text.

[53] *De regim. animae* 7 (VIII 130a). Back to text.

[54] [The seventh age runs alongside the sixth], *Brevil, Prol. 2* (V 203b); *Hex*. 15, 18 (V 400b), 15, 12 (400a), 16, 2 (403b). On the tradition of the axiom, *cf*. Ratzinger, *loc. cit*. 17, n.3. Back to text.

[55] *De plant. Par*. 15 (V 578b). Applied to a universal teaching on science: *In omni scientia sine Christo evanescit sciens; Christus enim, replens animam splendoribus, sex facit in ea illustrationes praemissas, in septima quiescens* [In any science that is without Christ, the scientist fades away; for Christ, filling the soul with splendours, sends six illuminations in it, and takes his rest in the seventh] (*Hex. Princip*. 1, Delorme 19). See below, ch. 2. Back to text.

[56] [six illuminations], *De red. art. (De reductione artium ad theologiam*) 6 (V 321b). Back to text.

[57] [six illuminative suspensions], *Itin. Prol*. 3 (V 295b). Back to text.

[58] [nor does anything remain except the day of rest, in which the cleverness of the human mind comes to rest through an ecstasy of the mind], *Itin*. 6, 7 (V 312a). Back to text.

[59] *Ibid*. 7, 1 (V 312ab). The book *De sex alis Seraphim*, treating the qualities of the rulers of the Order, locates these in the imitation of the founder: they must ‘have spiritual wings’ like the seraph which brought the marks of the wounds to Francis (VIII 133b). Back to text.

[60] *Hex*. 3, 24f (V 347ab). Back to text.

[61] *Hex*. 5, 25 (V 358a). If the thought embraces the two seraphim by the ark of the covenant, who are turned one to the other and look to the middle of the sanctuary, then we have a new doubling: here, it is the twice six wings which together give the Biblical number twelve (found in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and apocalyptic), whereby the twelve articles of faith correspond to the twelve apostles. So Bonaventure can speak of a 'double seraphication' of the soul. *Hex*. 8, 8.12-17 (V 370-371). Back to text.

[62] *Hex*. 8, 15 (V 371). Back to text.

[63] *Ibid*. 14, 19 (V 396a). Back to text.

[64] S 2 *in Parasc*. (IX 265b). Back to text.

[65] *Perf. vit. ad sot*. 6 (VIII 120a). The same recommendation is made to the novices: *Regula Nov*. 4 (VIII 480b) and *passim*. Back to text.

[66] *Ibid*. 120b. Back to text.

[67] *Solil*. 1, 33-34 (VIII 39b-40a). Back to text.

[68] *Ibid*. 1, 39 (VIII 41b). Back to text.

[69] *Vitis myst*. 4, 3 (VIII 167a). Back to text.

[70] S 1 *in Coena Dni*. (IX 247b). Back to text.

[71] *Lignum Vitae, Prol*. (VIII 68a). Back to text.

[72] *Legenda S. Franc*. 13 (VIII 543b). Back to text.

[73] *Legenda minor* (VIII 575b). Back to text.

[74] S 1 *Dom. infr. oct. Epiph*. (IX 172b). Back to text.

[75] S 1 *Dom*. 3 *p. Pascha* (IX 307b). Back to text.

[76] *Hex*. 2, 3 (V 337a). Back to text.

[77] *Ibid. 2, 6* (V 337a). Back to text.

[78] *Hex*. 19, 3 (V 420b). Back to text.

[79] *Brevil*. 1, 1 (V 210b). Back to text.

[80] *Hex*. 17, 28 (V 414b); Ratzinger, *loc. cit*. 155-159. Back to text.

[81] [world today], *Hex*. 5, 9 (V 355b), and frequently. Back to text.

[82] *Hex*. 19, 7-10 (V 421a-422a). Back to text.

[83] *Ibid*. 14 (V 422b). Back to text.

[84] *De red. art*. (V 3230-3243). Back to text.

[85] [half-fully], *Hex*. 11, 10 (V 381b). Back to text.

[86] Hex. 1, 13 (V 331b). Back to text.

[87] S 2 *in Nativ. Dni*. (IX 107b). Back to text.

[88] *Hex*. 19, 7 (V 421a). Back to text.

[89] S 2 *Dom*. 3 *Advent*. (IX 63a); *cf*. *Hex*. 17, 27 (V 413b). Ratzinger, *he. cit*. 151f. Back to text.

[90] S 1 *in Asc*. (IX 317b). Back to text.

[91] *Hex*. 6, 10 (V 362 f.). Bonaventure develops here the noble image of the cardinal virtues as guardians of the four compass points of the soul, an image that Claudel took up in his Fifth Ode. *Cf Coll*. 7, 15f. (V 367b). Back to text.

[92] *Hex*. 5, 14 (V 356b). Back to text.

[93] *Hex*. 5, 2 (V 354a-355b). Back to text.

[94] [(man) wishes to know, and to experience what he knows, and consequently to be united to what he knows], *Hex*. 19, 2 (V 420b). Back to text.

[95] [It is a very great abomination, that the most beautiful daughter of the king (i.e., wisdom) is offered to us as a bride, and we prefer to fornicate with a base servant-maid and resort to a prostitute], Hex. 2, 7 (V 337b); *cf*. 5, 21: *luxuriata est metaphysica* [metaphysics is given over to wantonness]. Back to text.

[96] Hex. 17, 25 (V 413ab); cf. 18, 3 (V 415a). Back to text.

[97] Hex. 3, 25 (V 347a). Back to text.

[98] S *theol*. 4, 3 (V 568b). Back to text.

[99] [the inspired Word . . . in accordance with which (the Word) is in the mind], S 1 *in coena Dni*. (IX 249a); *cf*. S 1 *Dom*. *2p*. *Pascha* (IX 249b), S 3 *Dom*. 2 *p*. *Pascha* (IX 301b). ‘It is impossible to arrive at a true revelation of the faith, *nisi per adventum Christi in mentem* [except through the coming of Christ into the mind]’, *S theol*. 4, 3 (V 568b). Back to text.

[100] *Hex*. 9, 6-8 (V 373b). Back to text.

[101] *De Don. Sp. Sti. 1*, 7 (V 458b). Back to text.

[102] [theology, in so far as it is a science founded upon faith and revealed by the Holy Spirit], *Brevil*. *Prol*. 3 (V 205a); *cf*. 5 (207a). Back to text.

[103] [through which all things are revealed], *Hex*. 3, 2 (V 343a); 3, 22 (V 347a). Back to text.

[104] *Qu. de Theol. 1 resp*. (Ed. Tavard *loc. cit*. 212, 12-13); *cf*. 13 *resp.: haec scientia est per divinam inspirationem* [this science is through divine inspiration], *ibid*. 226, 35. Back to text.

[105] *Brevil*. 7 (V 260b). Back to text.

[106] *Hex*. 8, 3 (V 369b). Back to text.

[107] *Hex*. 9, 10-11 (V 374a); the final addition is only in Report A (Delorme 121). Back to text.

[108]*Ibid*. 9, 12-14 (V 374b). Back to text.

[109] *Hex*. 10, 1-4 (V 377-378; Delorme 126-127). Back to text.

[110] [it was most fitting], *Brevil*. 4, 1 (V 241a). Back to text.

[111] [all these follow necessarily, and are demanded logically], *Brevil*. 4,10 (V 251a). Back to text.

[112] 1 d3 I q1 *ad* 5 (I 69-70). Back to text.

[113] *Intellectus informatur (in patria) ad videndum Deum similitudine divinae essentiae impressa in ipso intellectu, non abstracta ab ipsa essentia divina* [the intellect is bent towards the vision of God (in the heavenly homeland) by the likeness of the divine essence which is imprinted in the intellect itself, a likeness that is not abstracted from the divine essence itself], *Qu. de Novissimis* 6 (ed. Glorieux, *loc. cit*. 59). Back to text.

[114] The text is cited at: *Hex*. 2, 19 (V 339b), 10, 3 (V 377b), 11, 1 (V 379ab)> 11, 2 (V 380a), 11,22 (V 383b), 12, 1 (V384a), 15,11 (V 400a); *De Don. Sp. Sti*. 4, 2 (V 474a); *De Plant. Par*. 5 (V 576); *In Eccl*. 1 (VI 13b); *In Sap*. 4 (VI 134b); *Comm. in Joh*. 2 (VI 270b); 4 (VI 295b); 17 (VI 476b); 21 (VI 521a); *Coll. in Joh. Coll*. 62 (VI 61 ib); *In Lk*. 3 (VII 88b); 9 (VII 234b); *Legenda S. Franc*. 13 (VIII 543b: applied to Francis); *Legenda minor* (VIII 576b; likewise); S *feria* 2 *p. Dom*. 2 *in Quadr*. (IX 221b: the face of the contemplating soul should reflect the glory of Christ transfigured on Tabor); S 3 *Dom*. 3 *in Quadr*. (IX 229b); S 10 *Pent*. (IX 345b); S 3 *Dom. 2p. Pent*. (IX 363b); S 5 *Dom. 22 p. Pent*. (IX 446a); S *6 Dom 22 p. Pent*. (IX 449a). Back to text.

[115] In the theological sermon *Christus unus omnium magister*, Bonaventure weighs the achievements of the two Greeks against one another: Aristotle has the gift of science, Plato the gift of wisdom; Aristotle is right to understand human knowledge ‘as arising on the road of the senses, the memory and experience’, and therefore he rightly rebukes Plato, ‘who derives all certain knowledge from the intelligible or ideal world’; but Plato correctly posits the existence of these ideas or eternal grounds of being. The successful marriage of the ideal and the real was only finally achieved in the Old Covenant (Moses) and in the New Covenant (Paul), above all in Christ himself, inasmuch as he was *simul perfectus viator et comprehensor* [at the same time the perfect traveller and the perfect man of understanding] (V

572ab), and thereby possessed full knowledge, both a posteriori and a priori. Back to text.

[116] I d3 I q4 (I 75-76). Back to text.

[117] Already expressed implicitly in 1 d2 q2 (I 53), *ibid*. q4 (I 57), and explicitly in the late period: *fides . . . dictat, de Deo esse sentiendum altissime et piissime* [faith . . . dictates that one should think about God in the highest and most devout manner], *Breuil*. 1, 2 (V 211a), developed in *Hex*. 9, 23f. (V 375b-376b); 11, 5f. (V 381b). Back to text.

[118] 1 d2 q2 *fund*. 1-4 (I 53). Back to text.

[119] *Hex*. *11*, 13-20 (V 382a-383a). Back to text.

[120] 1 d27 II q4 (I 487-488). Back to text.

[121] Hex. 12, 3 (V 385a). Back to text.

[122] 1 C131 II, 1 q21 (I 540a). *Imago* thereby essentially is a copy, and it is an abuse of language to use it of the original (*ibid*. ab). Back to text.

[123] *Ibid*. *fund*. 4. Back to text.

[124] 1 d31 II, 1 q2 c (I 542a). Back to text.

[125] 1 d27 II q4 *fund*. 1 (489a). Back to text.

[126] [a pure imitation and likeness, not mixed with any unlikeness], I d8 I, I q1 c (I 151b). Back to text.

[127] 1 d6 q1 *ad* 4 *et* c (I 126b, a). Back to text.

[128] [the good is diffusive of itself]. . . [through nature's means, nevertheless as the beloved Son], *ibid*, q2 (I 128a). Back to text.

[129] 1 d2 q2 c (I 54a); 1 d7 q1: *non tantum est essentiale appropriatum per additionem, immo etiam dicit proprium personae* [that which is of the essence is not merely appropriated through an *addition*, rather it is the name of something that *belongs* to the person] (I 136a); *cf. ibid*. q2 (1139b); 1 d191 q2 *sol*. 3: *emanatio personae non attenditur secundum rationem bonitatis essentiae, sed magis fecunditatis personae* [when the emanation of the Person is spoken of, this is not to be understood as caused by the essential *goodness*, but more as caused by the *fecundity* of the Person] (1345b). On the *fontalis plenitudo Patris*: I d271 q2 (esp. I 470b-471a). Back to text.

[130] 1 d9 q1 (I 181ab). Back to text.

[131] *assimilatio . . . secundum rationem exprimendi* [an assimilation . . . in accordance with the proper manner of expression], 1 d39, 1 q1 *ad* 4 (I 686b); *expressio luminis non permixta obscuritati* [the manifestation of light, not

mixed with any darkness], 1 d81,1 q1 (115 lb); *aequalitas* (as *quantitas virtutis*) [equality as the quantity of virtue], 1 d19 I q1 (I 343a). *Haec similitudo sive Verbum est Veritas* [this likeness or Word is the truth], *Hex*. 3, 8 (V 344b). Back to text.

[132] 1 d6 q3 (I 129b). Back to text.

[133] *Hex*. 3, 7 (V 344ab). Back to text.

[134] *Hex*. 9, 2 (V 372b-373a). Back to text.

[135] 1 d8 I, 1 q1 *ad* 4, 7 (I 151b). Back to text.

[136] *Hex*. 1, 12 (V 331ab). Back to text.

[137] [the eyes of the spirit are to be turned away], *Hex*. 2, 32 (V 342a). Back to text.

[138] A. Stohr, *Trinitätslehre, lot. tit*. 34 and frequently; A. Gerken, *loc. cit.*, *passim*. Back to text.

[139] *Cf.*, *e.g.*, 1 d31 II, 2 q3 (esp. *ad* 7) (I 348-349). Back to text.

[140] Kurt Ruh, *Bonaventura deutsch* (Berne, 1956). Back to text.

[141] [he has uttered his own likeness, and consequently he has given expression to all that he could], *Hex*. I, 16 (V 332a). Back to text.

[142] *Ibid*. 1, 13 (V 331b). Back to text.

[143] [It is necessary that this total diffusion should be able to occur in something than which nothing greater can be thought of], *Hex*. 11, 11 (V 382a). Back to text.

[144] S 1 *Vig. Nativ*. (IX 89a). Back to text.

[145] [on account of the immensity (of God) and the greatness utterly out of proportion (to the smallness of man)], *De Sc. Chr*. 7, 10 (V 41b); 7, 14 (42a); ic (5a); 1 d35 q5 *ad* 2 (I 612b). Back to text.

[146] I d39, 1 q1 *ad* 4 (I 686b). Back to text.

[147] [the highest art], *De Sc. Chr*. 4 c (V 23b). On the theme of *ars* in general, *cf*. 1 di, 1 q1 *ad* 4 (I 31b); 2 d7 II, 2 q2 (II 202a); *Hex*. 5, 13 (V 356a). Back to text.

[148] [the art of the Father], *De red. art*. 20 (V 324b). Back to text.

[149] [to be able to beget and to be able to create is one and the same ability], 1 d7 q3 c (I 141b). Back to text.

[150] *Cf*. text in the *Scholion*, I 603b-604a. Back to text.

[151] *Hex*. 3, 8 (V 344b). Back to text.

[152] *Hex*. 12, 9 (V 386a), Delorme 143. Back to text.

[153] 1 d36, 2 q1 c (I 623-624). Back to text.

[154] [the likeness which is the truth itself in its expressive power . . . better expresses a thing than the thing expresses itself, for the thing itself receives the power of expression from it (*i.e.*, from the likeness)], 1 d35 q1 *ad* 3 (I 602a). Back to text.

[155] [the unlikeness is always greater than the likeness], *ibid*, *ad* 2 (I 601b). Back to text.

[156] 1 d48, I q1 (I 852b). Back to text.

[157] [But the likeness of the expression is the highest, because it is caused by the intention of truth . . . which is itself expression], 1 d35 q1 *ad 2* (1601b). The concern of Karl Barth is here taken seriously and answered satisfactorily. The relation of the expression to what is expressed is fixed by the original. Bonaventure goes further in the direction of granting Barth's request when he distinguishes the creature's being-as-image *ex propria repraesentatione* [from its own character as a representation] from three other types of image, which are all given in the Biblical revelation: the prefigurations in prophecy, the taking on of an image by angels (*e.g.*, in the Angel of Yahweh), and the symbolic character granted in the act of institution, as in the sacraments, where in addition to the natural power of signifying a new relationship to what is signified is given from above: *bin. 2*, 12 (V 303a). Revelation can raise all things to images (*facit figuras de omnibus), Hex. 17*, 20 (V 412b). Back to text.

[158] *Cf*. n. 154. Back to text.

[159] I d39, I q1 *ad* 4 (I 686b). Back to text.

[160] 1 d8 I, 1 q1 *ad* 4. 7 (I 151b). Back to text.

[161] [giving expression], 1 d36, 2 q1 (I 624a). Back to text.

[162] [exemplary splendours], *Hex*. 12, 14 (v 386b). Back to text.

[163] *Ibid*. 12, 8 (V 385b). Back to text.

[164] [most distinct expression], 1 d3 5 q2 *ad* 3 (1606b); q4 c (1610a); *De Sc. Chr*. 2 (V 9): *lucidissime, expressissime, distinctissime, integerrime* [most clearly, most explicitly, most distinctly, most wholly]. Back to text.

[165] 1 d35 q2 *ad* 2 (I 606b). Back to text.

[166] *Hex*. 3, 4 (V 343b). Back to text.

[167] *Ibid*. 20, 5 (V 426a); *Brevil*. 8 (V 216-217). Back to text.

[168] *De sc. Chr*. 3, 17 (V 16a). Back to text.

[169] *Ibid*. 3 c (V 13b). It is therefore superfluous to ask whether the things are represented in the idea according to their differences, or only according

to what they have in common; an answer is to be found in the superiority of the divine power of expression to every *genus (ibid. obj*. 13 and the reply). Back to text.

[170] [in a general, real lack of diversity]. . . [in a multiple diversity], *ibid*, q3 *ad* 10 (V 15b). Back to text.

[171] *Ibid*, *ad* 8 (V 15a). Back to text.

[172] 1 d.7 *dub. 2* (I 144b). Back to text.

[173] 1 d28 q4 c (I 503a). Back to text.

[174] *Itin*. 6, 2 (V 311a). Back to text.

[175] Hex. 11, 9 (V 381b). Back to text.

[176] Peter Lombard, 1 *Sent*, d 3 *pars 1 cap*. 1 (= I 63a). Lombard’s model here is Augustine’s *De vera religione* c. 55 n. 113, where, however, only *forma*, not *pulchritudo*, is used when speaking of the Son. Back to text.

[177] *De Trin*. II n. 1, conclusion. Back to text.

[178] Lombard, 1 d31 *pars* II *cap*. 2 (= 1 530a). Back to text.

[179] [eternity-beauty-joyfulness], *Hex*. 21, 11 (V 433a). Back to text.

[180] [‘beauty is nothing other than equality in number’; and there the numerous causes are reduced to one], *Hex*. 6, 7 (V 361b-362a); *cf. De tripl. via* 7: *altitudo, pulchritudo, dulcedo . . . . Pulchritudo (attribuitur) Filio propter veritatem et sapientiam. Nam sapientia multitudinem idearum, Veritas autem aequalitatem includit, ‘pulchritudo autem nihil aliud est quam aequalitas numerosa*’ [majesty, beauty, sweetness . . . . Beauty (is attributed) to the Son because of truth and wisdom. For wisdom includes the multitude of the ideas, while truth includes equality (of number), and ‘beauty is nothing other than equality in number’] (VIII 17b). Other passages on wisdom which make the same attribution: S *de Trin*. (IX 352b); *cf. S theol*. 2, 14 (V 542b). Back to text.

[181] 1 d31 II, 2 q$_3$ (I 543-545). Back to text.

[182] Neither takes account of a further meaning of *species*, that of *forma totius (species* is then the opposite concept *to genus* and to *individuum*): precisely from this point of view, the term *species cannot* be applied to the God-man as such: 3 d2, 2 q3 (III 48b). Back to text.

[183] 1 d31 II, 2 q3 (I 544ab). Back to text.

[184] On the reference back to the Father through the Son as a medium of knowledge, which is sent out (expressed) from the object, *cf. De red. art*. 8 (V 322a). Back to text.

[185] 1 d27 II, q4 c (I 490a). Back to text.

[186] 2 di II, 1 q1 *ad* 3 (II 40b). Back to text.

[187] 2 d9 q8 c *et ad* 4 (II 255b-256b). Back to text.

[188] *De sc. Chr*. 4 (V 24a). Back to text.

[189] *Brevil*. 2, 12 (V 230ab). Back to text.

[190] 1 d3 I q2 (I 73ab). Back to text.

[191] *Itin*. 1, 9 (V 2983b). Back to text.

[192] *Itin*. 2, if. (V 299b f.). Back to text.

[193] *Itin. 1*, 15 (V 299b). Back to text.

[194] [explicit assimilation from close at hand], 2 d16, 1 q1 (II 394b—395a). Back to text.

[195] [having a capacity for God], 1 d3 I q1 (169a); *Brevil*. 7, 1 (V 281a); 7,7 (V 289b); *Itin*. 3, 3 (V 304a). *Tantae capacitatis es, ut nulla creatura infra Deum sufficit satiare tuum desiderium* [so great is your capacity that no creature lower than God suffices to satisfy your longing], *Solil*. 1, 6 (VIII 3 lb); *S theol*. 4 (V 571b). Back to text.

[196] [able to be informed], *De Don. Sp. Sti*. 1, 5 (V 458a). Back to text.

[197] S 2 *de Nativ*. (IX noa). Back to text.

[198] *Cf*. n. 194 and, on this point, the *Scholion* (II 396). Back to text.

[199] [he is only the Image, he is not tending to the image], 2 d16 *dub*. 3 (II 407b). Back to text.

[200] [motivating object], S *theol*. 4, 16 (V 571b). Back to text.

[201] [moving cause], *De sc. Chr*. 4 (V 24a); *ratio motiva (ibid*. 23b). Back to text.

[202] *Hex*. 5, 33 (V 359b). Back to text.

[203] [principle from which springs forth the illumination that gives knowledge], S *theol*. 4, 1 (V 567a). Back to text.

[204] 1 d3 II, 2 q1 c: *praecedens fuit per conversionem animae ad Deum, haec est per conuersionem animae supra se* [that which has happened came through the conversion of the soul to God, i.e. through the conversion of the soul above itself] (I 89b). Back to text.

[205] 1 d3 II, 1 q2 c (I 83b). Back to text.

[206] *Ibid*, *ad* 5 (I 84b). Back to text.

[207] 1 d3 II *dub*. 1 (I 93a). Back to text.

[208] *De Don. Sp. Sti*. 1, 9 (V 459a). Back to text.

[209] *De tripl. via* 2, 14 (VIII 6b). Back to text.

[210] *Hex.* 21, 18: *continuatio-reductio* [continuation—reduction] (V 434a); *De Don. Sp. Sti* 1, 10: *reversio-conjunctio* [reversion-conjunction] (V 459a). Back to text.

[211] *Creatura rationalis . . . non est pia, nisi refundat se super originem suam* [a rational creature . . . is not loving (to its creator) unless it pours itself back upon its origin], *De Don. Sp. Sti*. 3, 5 (V 469a). Back to text.

[212] *Itin.* 3, 3 (V 304a). Back to text.

[213] *Hex.* 11, 10 (V 381b). Back to text.

[214] [eternal causes]. *Inquantum est imago Dei . . . aeternas rationes attingit* [in as much as it is the image of God . . . it attains to the eternal causes], *De sc. Chr.* 4 (V 24a). *Portio ilia, in qua est imago Dei, quae et aeternis regulis inhaerescit* [that portion in which is the image of God, which clings to the eternal rules] (*ibid.*). Back to text.

[215] *Hex.* 12, 5 (V 385a). Back to text.

[216] *S theol.* 4 (V 567-574). Back to text.

[217] *Ibid.* 4, 24-26 (V 573b). Back to text.

[218] 1 d3 I q1 *ad* 5 (I 70a). Back to text.

[219] *De sc. Chr. 4*, 13 (V 25b). Back to text.

[220] *Ibid.* 4, 19 (V 26a). Back to text.

[221] [most present, most active], *Itin.* 5, 7 (V 309b). Back to text.

[222] *Ibid.* 5, 4 (V 309a); 1 di, 3 q2 (I 41a); *De sc. Chr.* 4, 31 (V 20b). Back to text.

[223] *Hex.* 12, 11 (V 386a), Delorme 143. Back to text.

[224] S *theol.* 4, 18 (V 572a). Back to text.

[225] [principle and reason . . . object and moving cause], *ibid.* 4, 17 (V 571b). Back to text.

[226] 1 d3 I q2 (I 72a). Back to text.

[227] 1 d3 II, 1 q2 (I 83b). Back to text.

[228] [object that is the source], *Hex.* 5, 33 (V 359b). To understand this concept aright, *cf.* 1 di, 3 q2 *concl.* 2: *objectum intelligible excellens* (in God) *juvat et confortat, quia influentia talis cognoscibilis procedit ab intimis et intrat ipsam potentiam . . .; cum sit intimum ipso intellectui, in ejus perceptione virtus non dispergitur sed colligitur, et quanto virtus est magis unita, tanto fortior* [the object that is intelligible and most noble (in God) gives joy and consolation, because the influence of such a knowable object

proceeds from the inmost depths (of God) and enters the power (of knowing) itself . . . because it belongs intimately to the intellect itself, in the act of perceiving the power (of the intellect) is not diffused but rather is gathered into a unity: and the greater the unity of the power, the greater is its strength], (I 39b). Back to text.

[229] A. Gerken, *loc. cit.*, Part I, ch. 2 II, 2. Back to text.

[230] *Cf*. n. 163. Back to text.

[231] *Hex. 1*, 20 (V 332b). Back to text.

[232] *De sc. Chr*. 4 *sol. 2* (V 24b). The eternal light shines for the researcher and the philosopher indirectly even in the general principles of natural knowledge, in a certain universal validity which as such belongs to the structure of knowledge: *non sequitur quod ipsa sit nobis nota secundum se, sed prout relucet in suis principiis et in sua genetalitate* [it does not follow that it is known to us as it is in itself, but rather it shines forth in its principles and in its generality], *ibid. sol. 16* (V 25b). Back to text.

[233] *Itin*. 3, 3 (V 304a), 3, 4 (V 305a). Back to text.

[234] *Ibid*. 3, 4 (V 304b). Back to text.

[235] *Hex*. 5, 31 (V 359b); *Itin*. 5, 3 (V 308b); 5, 6 (V 309b). Back to text.

[236] *Brevil*. 5, 2 (V 254a). Back to text.

[237] *De red. art*. 26 (V 325b). Back to text.

[238] *Brevil. prol*. 2 (V 204a). Back to text.

[239] *De red. art*. 20 (V 324b). Back to text.

[240] *Ibid*. 21 (V 324b). Back to text.

[241] *Brevil*. 2, 21 (V 230b). Back to text.

[242] *De sc. Chr*. 4 *sol*. (V 26b). Back to text.

[243] *Itin*. 1, 2-3 (V 297a). Back to text.

[244] *Hex*. 2, 20 (V 430a). Back to text.

[245] *Hex*. 13, 12 (V 390a), using Delorme 150. Back to text.

[246] *Ibid*. 10, 10-18 (V 378-379). Back to text.

[247] *Ibid*. 12, 14-16 (Y 386b). Back to text.

[248] *Ibid*. 14-17 (V 386b-387a); *Brevil*. 2, 11 (V 229a). Back to text.

[249] *Hex*. 2, 2 (V 336b). Back to text.

[250] 2 di I, 1 q1 *ad* 2 (II 17b). Back to text.

[251] *De sc. Chr*. 5 *ad* 11 (V 31a). Back to text.

[252] *Brevil*. 2, 4 (V 221b). Back to text.

[253] *Ibid*. 2, 10 (V 228ab). Back to text.

[254] *Ibid*. (V 228a). Back to text.

[255] *Hex*. 4, 9 (V 350b). Back to text.

[256] *Ibid*. 4, io (V 351a). *Nec alicui corpori unitur rationalis potentia absque vegetali et sensibili* [and the rational faculty is not united to any body without the physical and sensual faculties]: 2 d17, 2 q1 *fund*. 3 (II 419a). Back to text.

[257] *Brevil*. 7, 4 (V 2850-2863). Back to text.

[258] *Ibid*. 7, 4 (V 2840-2853). Back to text.

[259] 5. *fer. 2 p. Pascha* (IX 283a). Back to text.

[260] [As the rose is beautiful among the flowers, so is the clearness of light among the colours], *Itin*. 2, 2 (V 300a); 2 d17, 2 q2 *ad* 1: *Lux ex aequalitate complexionis generata consurgens, et haec est ilia lux quaefacit corpus esse susceptibile vitae* [Light arises, born from the equality of the composition of the parts, and this is that light which makes the body capable of receiving life] (II 423ab). Back to text.

[261] 4 d49 II *sect*. 2, 2 q1 *fund*. 3 (IV 1025a). Back to text.

[262] *Omne autem, quod habet aliquant formam, habet pulchritudinem* [everything that has some form, has beauty], 2 C134, 2 q3 *fund*. 6 (II 814a). Back to text.

[263] *Brevil*. 2, 3 (V 220b-221a). Back to text.

[264] 2 d15, 2 q3 (II 387a); at *Hex*. 3, 6 *ordo naturae* and *ordo temporis* [the order of nature, the order of time] are derived together from eternity (V 344a). Back to text.

[265] 2 d15, 2 q1 *ad* 4.5 (II 383b). Back to text.

[266] Cif. *Dei 11*, 18; *Ver. rel. c*. 22 *n*. 42; *c*. 41 *n*. 77. Back to text.

[267] *Brevil. prol. 2* (V 204b). Back to text.

[268] *Hex*. 15, 11 (V 400a). ‘If anyone wishes to see how much evidence God gives concerning himself in his works, he must pay attention not merely to what he sees in the present but likewise to that which is past and that which is future, just as the beauty of a metre will not be perceived from one single syllable.’ 2 d32, 3 q2 (II 774b). Back to text.

[269] *Hex*. 11, 19f. (V 375ab). Back to text.

[270] 3 d1, 2 q2 *fund. 2* (III 31-32). The reasons are developed in the conclusion. Back to text.

[271] 2 d36, 2 q1 (II 848b); I d44, 1 q3 c (I 786-787). Back to text.

[272] *Brevil*. 4, 4 (V 2440-2453). Back to text.

[273] On this, *cf*. J. Ratzinger, *op. tit*. Back to text.

[274] 2 d1 II, 3 q2 c (II 50b). Back to text.

[275] 2 d17, 2 q2 c *et ad* 6 (II 423ab); *cf*. 2 d2 II, I q2. Back to text.

[276] 2 d17, 2 q3 c (II 425b). Back to text.

[277] *Brevil*. 2, 4 (V 222a). Back to text.

[278] *Ibid*. 2, 9 (V 227b). Back to text.

[279] Hex. 4, 6 (V 349b). Back to text.

[280] *S. theol*. 2, 9 (V 541b). Back to text.

[281] 2 d17, 2 q1 *fund*. I (II 419a). Back to text.

[282] *Ibid*. c (II 419b). Back to text.

[283] 3 *d2*, 1 q2 *c ad* 1 *fund*. 2 (III 40b—41a, 40a). Back to text.

[284] *Ibid*. 40b. Back to text.

[285] *Cf*. nn. 195f. Back to text.

[286] 4 d43, 1 q1 *fund*. 5 (IV 883a). Back to text.

[287] *Brevil*. 2, 9 (V 227a). Back to text.

[288] 2 d17, 2 q1 (II 420a). Back to text.

[289] *Brevil*. 2,11 (V 229a). *Cf. duplex sensus* in the sense of childish-sensual and adult-spiritual, *S. 2 Dom*. 1 *in Quadr*. (IX 208a). Back to text.

[290] *Brevil*. 3, 3 (V 232b). Back to text.

[291] *De red. art*. 8 (V 322a). Back to text.

[292] *Ibid*. 10 (V 322b). Back to text.

[293] *Solil*. 4, 20 (VIII 63 a). Back to text.

[294] *Ibid*. 21 (VIII 630-643). Back to text.

[295] *Brevil*. 2, 9 (V 227a) and n. 5 there. Back to text.

[296] *De red. art*. 3 (V 320a); 2 d13, 2 q2 *contra 2*, and n. 8 there (II 319b). Back to text.

[297] 4 d49 I *sec*. 1, 3 q1 *arg*. 5 (IV 1018a). Back to text.

[298] *Itin*. 2, 3-4 (V 300ab). Back to text.

[299] *De red. art*. 3 (V 320ab). Back to text.

[300] *Brevil*. 5, 6 (V 259b). Back to text.

[301] *Itin*. 4, 3 (V 306b). Back to text.

[302] I disagree here with the interpretation of the spiritual senses in Bonaventure given by Karl Rahner, *La doctrine . . .* , *loc. cit*. Back to text.

[303] *Brevil*. 5, 6 (V 260a). Back to text.

[304] [in itself], *In Joh. coll*. 1, 43 (VI 255-256). Back to text.

[305] [through intimate union], 3 d24 *dub*. 4 (III 531). Back to text.

[306] 2 d23, 2 q3 (II 545a). Back to text.

[307] *Ibid. ad 5* (II 546a). Back to text.

[308] [learned ignorance], *ibid, ad* 6 (II 546a). Back to text.

[309] *Hex*. 2, 29: *in vertice est unitio amoris* [at the summit is the uniting of love]. 2, 30: *sola affectiva vigilat et silentium omnibus aliis potentiis imponit, et tunc homo alienatus est a sensibus et in ecstasi positus et audit arcana verba quae non licet homini loqui, quia tantum sunt in affectu* [only the affective faculty remains awake, and imposes silence on all the other faculties, and then man is estranged from the senses and set in ecstasy, and hears secret words which a man may not utter, because they exist only in the affective sense]. 2, 32: *mens oculis intellectualibus aspicere non potest, et ideo amovendi sunt* [the mind cannot see with the eyes of the intellect, and therefore they must be removed] (V 341ab-342a). Back to text.

[310] *Cf*. preceding note. Back to text.

[311] 3 d28, 2 q1 *ad 6*: *respectu objecti increati nobilior est modus apprehendendi per modum tactus et amplexus quam per modum visus et intuitus* [in respect of an uncreated object, the mode of perception by means of touch and embrace is nobler than that by means of sight and beholding] (III 604b). The basic reason for this is that (following Bernard) the spiritual senses of seeing and hearing are to be related more to the soul’s faculty of knowing, while the three others are to be related more to the affective faculty, so that the sense of smell perceives the object from afar, the taste in its drawing-near, and touch in the highest uniting, *et sic tactus . . . est perfectior inter omnes sensus et spiritualior propter hoc quod maxime unit ei qui est summus spiritus* [and so touch . . . is the most perfect among all the senses, and the most spiritual, because it gives the greatest uniting to him who is the highest spirit]: 3 d13 *dub*. 1 (III 292a). So in the presence of God, the worldly tree of the senses seems to be inverted, and the lowest sense becomes the highest: for Bonaventure this is justified, because for him the earth is the most unpretentious, the humblest element and precisely for this reason was chosen to be the midpoint of the world and of the proofs of God’s grace: 2 d17, 2 q2 (II 420a), 2 d15 *dub*. 2 (II 389a), *Hex*. 1, 22 (V 333a). It must also be borne in mind that in actual fact the senses developed not from the eye (as Augustine would have it), but from the sense of touch. Back to text.

[312] As Karl Rahner is obliged to do: *op. cit.*, p. 276 (‘un peu force’), p. 290 (‘un peu arbitraire’), etc. The problem of the spiritual senses in Bonaventure cannot be solved (*cf.* J. Bonnefoy, *Le S. Esprit et ses dons selon S. Bonaventure*, Paris 1929, p. 212) until one adopts the viewpoint which I have developed in the first volume of this work. Back to text.

[313] *Solil*. 1, 10-18 (VIII 33-35). Back to text.

[314] *Reg. Nov. 2*, 2 (VIII 477a). Back to text.

[315] *S*. 1 *in Coena Dni*. (IX 248b). Back to text.

[316] S. 2 *in Coena Dni*. (IX 252a). Back to text.

[317] *Hex*. 3, 22 (V 347) and Delorme 43-44. Back to text.

[318] *Ibid*. 1, 20 (V 332b). Back to text.

[319] [midpoint of all the sciences], *ibid*. 1, 11 (V 331a); *cf*. as a preliminary stage to this *Coll. in Joh*. 1, *Coll*. 4 (VI 640-642). There is a short summary in *S. 1 Dom*. 22 *p. Pent.*: ‘Christ is the source-principle and the origin of every human science. As the one sun sends out many rays, so the numerous and varied sciences proceed from the one spiritual sun, the one teacher’ (IX 332a). Back to text.

[320] *Brevil. prol*. 4 (V 205b). Back to text.

[321] *Ibid. prol. init*. (V 201ab); *Hex. 14, 16ff*. (V 306f). Back to text.

[322] S. *theol*. 3, 30 (V 563a). Back to text.

[323] *Brevil*. 4, 1 (V 241a). Back to text.

[324] *Hex*. 3, 2-4 (V 343ab). Back to text.

[325] S. *theol*. 4, 9 (V 569b). Back to text.

[326] *Ibid*. 4, 7 (V 569a). Back to text.

[327] Airf. 4, 3 (V 568a). Back to text.

[328] *Brevil. Prol*. 3 (V 205a); *Hex*. 3, 12 (V 345a). Back to text.

[329] *Brevil*. 4, 1 (V 241b). Back to text.

[330] *Vitis myst*. 24, 3 (VIII 1893b). Back to text.

[331] S. 2 *Dom*. 3 *Advent*. (IX 60ab). Back to text.

[332] *S*. I *Vig. Nativ*. (IX ooab). Back to text.

[333] S. 1 *Nativ*. (IX 103a). Back to text.

[334] S. *theol*. 1, 8 (V 536b). Back to text.

[335] [the Incarnation is not recognised unless the distinction of the persons is recognised], *Hex*. 8, 11 (V 371a). Back to text.

[336] *Ibid*. 3, 15 (V 345b). Back to text.

[337] *Ibid*. 20, 18 (V 428b). Back to text.

[338] S. *theol*. 4, 14 (V 571ab); *Franciscus . . . aut ascendebat ad Deum aut descendebat ad proxitnum* [Francis . . . either ascended to God or descended to his neighbour], *Legenda* 13, 1 (VIII 542a). Back to text.

[339] *Vitis myst*. 24, 2 (VIII 188a). Back to text.

[340] *S*. 1 *Dom. infr. Oct. Epiph*. (IX 171b). Back to text.

[341] *Hex*. 8, 5 (V 370a). Back to text.

[342] *De don. Sp. Sti*. 1, 10: *Istam reversionem servat humilitas . . . Humilis continuatur cum sua origine . . . Christus reduxit se in suum originale principium per humilitatem* [Humility preserves that turning-back . . . . The humble man is in continuity with his origin . . . . Christ through humility reduced himself to his fundamental principle of origin] (V 459ab). Back to text.

[343] *Hex*. 1, 12-13 (V 331ab). Back to text.

[344] *Ibid*, 1, 11-38 (V 331a-335b). Back to text.

[345] *Cf*. 12 d2 II, 1 q 1 *sol*. 1 (II 72a). *Ipse est principium infiuentiarum, per quas vivemus in futuro saeculo* [he is the principle of existence of the influences through which we shall live in the age to come], Hex. 3, 19 (V 346b). On this theme, *cf*. A. Gerken, *op. cit*. Part 2, appendix 1 to ch. 4. Back to text.

[346] *Coll. in fob. c*. 1 *coll*. 4, 5 (VI 5400-5413 and note there). Back to text.

[347] *S. 2 Dom*. 3 *Advent*. (IX 64b). Back to text.

[348] *Hex*. 1, 34 (V 335a). Back to text.

[349] The ‘antitheses’ belong to the beauty and perfection of the cosmos, the dark hue (evil) belongs to the beauty of the picture: 1 *de* 46 q6 (I 832a, 833b); 4 d44 II, 1 q1 (IV 921b); S. *theol*. 2, 45 (V 552b). Punishment suffices to guarantee the beauty of the order of the world at every moment: 2 d32, 3 q1 (II 770a); 2 d36, 2 q1 (II 848b). Part of this is the idea that more men are damned than redeemed (*Brevil*. 1, 9; V 218b), that at the *descensus* only the *electi* are saved (3 d22 q5; III 461b), and that intercessory prayer has therefore its boundaries in the fact of predestination: *incassum orarent* [they would pray in vain] (*Ep. de Imit. Chr*. 5; VIII 500b; and 4 d45, 3 q1ff.; IV 947ff.), that Christ will be angered at the last judgment (*Lignum vitae* 42; VIII 83b), that the redeemed rejoice in the presence of the damnation of the others because they are not damned along with them (*Solil*. 4, 2; VIII 58ab). This and similar passages indicate a limitation in this otherwise joyful and

loving thinker that alienates, a barrier that comes from Augustine but that cannot be felt in Anselm. Back to text.

[350] 5. 2 *Omn. Sana*. (IX 601b). Back to text.

[351] *Lignum vitae* 35 (VIII 81b). Back to text.

[352] *S. fer*. 3 *p. Pascha* (IX 281f.; 286f.). Back to text.

[353] *Lignum vitae*: VIII 68-86; tree of knowledge: *ibid*. 69b; *De plant. Par*. 9 and 12 (V 577ab). Back to text.

[354] *De plant. Par*. 9 (V 577a). Back to text.

[355] *Vitis myst*.: VIII 159-189. Doubts have been raised about the authenticity of this work, especially because all sixteen manuscripts come from Germany. Back to text.

[356] *Lignum vitae* 46 (VIII 840-853). Back to text.

[357] [since therefore all are beautiful and in some manner delightful], *Itin*. 2, 10 (V 302b); *ibid*. 2, 9: *formosa omnia* [all are beautiful] (V 302a), *cf*. also the statement that all form is beautiful: 2 d34, 2 q3 *fund*. 6 (II 814a). Back to text.

[358] *Brevil*. 1, 6 (V 215a). Back to text.

[359] *Nam pulchrum praeintelligit bonum, et bonum verum, et verum unum, unum autem ipsum ens* [For the beautiful presupposes the good, and the good the one, and the one presupposes being itself], a 1 q1 (ed. Halcour, *loc. cit*. p. 65, lines 14-15). Back to text.

[360] [The beautiful includes every cause and is common to those things (*i.e.*, the one, the true, the good)], *ibid*, lines 19-20. Back to text.

[361] V 215a. Back to text.

[362] For this analogy of the sense-perceptions (as an analogous *sentire*), we may cite 2 d8 I, 3 q2 *ad* 4 (II 222b), where there is a gradation of knowledge of the immediate presence of a thing, knowledge of its *hic et nunc*, and knowledge through the sense-organs of the body. Back to text.

[363] *Ut autem comparator ad res alias, sic attenditur in ea (re) species, sicut attenditur pulchritudo partium secundum situm, quern habent in toto* [when it is compared with other things, ‘species’ in the thing is understood to mean the same thing as the beauty which the parts have according to the position they occupy in the whole], 2 d35, 2 q1 (II 829b). Back to text.

[364] Apart from the text cited here, *cf*. 1 d3 I *dub*. 3 (780-793), *Itin. 1*, 11 (V 298a): *pondus quoad situm ubi inclinantur, numerum quo distinguuntur, et mensuram qua limitantur* [weight, in relation to the location where they

lean down, number, by which they are distinguished, measure, by which they are bounded]. *Cf. Hex. 2*, 23 (V 340a) and S. *de Trin*. with the appropriation: *mensura respicit Pattern, ut a quo creatura deficit propter Cteatotis immensitatem, . . . numerus vero respicit Filium propter ejus sapientiam omnia distinguentem et cognoscentem, . . . pondus vero respicit Spiritum Sanctum propter sui bonitatem omnia terminantem . . . Et istis tribus respondent alia tria . . .: modus, species et ordo, ita quod modus mensurae, species numero, sed ordo ponderi attribuuntur* . . .. [measurement looks to the Father, as it is that by which the cresture falls short because of the Creator's immeasurability . . . number looks to the Son because of his wisdom which distinguishes and knows all things . . . weight looks to the Holy Spirit who sets an end to all things because of his goodness . . . . And to these three correspond another three . . .: manner, *species* and order, such that manner is attributed to measurement, *species* to number, but order to weight . . .] (IX 353a). In this last text, the problems connected with the *transcendentalia* become especially obvious through the combination of 'distinguishing' and 'knowing' (in the case of the Son), because *species* has to stand for the true and for the good. Back to text.

[365] Bonaventure is wholly aware of this: there is a unity towards what is below as communicability, and this is negative; and there is a unity towards what is above (grounded in the incommunicability of the form), and this is positive: I d24, 1 q1 (I 421b); *cf. 1* d8 II, q1 and q2 (I 165-169). Back to text.

[366] 1 d3 I *dub*. 4 (I 80ab). *Cf*. likewise the distinction between *ordo partium in toto* [the ordering of the parts as a whole] and *ordo partium in finem* [the ordering of the parts towards a goal], and a corresponding double beauty: an unchanged beauty of the substances, and a beauty that is historical and makes for a goal: 1 d44, 1 q4 (I 786a). Back to text.

[367] S. *theol*. 2, 14 (V 542b). Back to text.

[368] *Hex*. 5, 25 (V 358a). Back to text.

[369] *Hex*. 20, 22 (V 429a); *Hex*. 22, 24 (V 441a); 22, 36f. (V 442D-443). Back to text.

[370] *Hex*. 23, 2 (V 445a). Back to text.

[371] *De plant. Par*. 4f. (V 5750-5763). Back to text.

[372] *Hex*. 23, 4 (V 445b). Back to text.

[373] *Hex*. 20, 8 (V 426b). Back to text.

[374] *Hex*. 20, 24 (V 429b). Back to text.

[375] *Brevil*. 5, 6 (V 260a). Back to text.

[376] S. 2 *Nativ. Virg*. (IX 709a). Back to text.

[377] *Brevil*. 5, 7 (V 261a). Back to text.

[378] *Cf*. n. 311. Back to text.

[379] This link, because it is implicitly included in the train of thought, must be introduced here, so that the parallel between the material copy and the theological archetype becomes fully obvious (*Itin*. 2, 8; V 301b, lines 19-20). Back to text.

[380] *Itin*. 2, 1-9 (V 299b—302a). The differentiation of *pulchrum-suave-salubre* has an approximate parallel in the triad of appropriation of *altitudo* (Father), *pulchritudo* (Son), *dulcedo* (Holy Spirit), where the first should be rendered by 'excellence' (dignity, sublimity, glory), the second by 'beauty' more in the sense of attractiveness, and the third by the subjective emotion of 'pleasure', 'delight' (*De tripl. via* 3§7 n. 12; VIII 17b). Back to text.

[381] [equality of number], I d31 II, 1 q3 *ad* 5 (I 544b); *Itin*. 2, 5 and 2, 10 (V 300b, 302b); *Hex*. 6, 7 (V 362a); *S. theol. 2*, 14 (V 542b), etc. Back to text.

[382] [plurality and equality], 2 d9 *praenot*. (II 238a); Brevil. prol. 2, 4 (V 204b: *varietas, multiplicitas et aequitas, ordo, rectitudo et pulchritudo* [variety, multiplicity and equity, order, Tightness and beauty]). Back to text.

[383] [the agreement of things dissimilar], 2 do q8c and *ad* 2 (II 256ab). Back to text.

[384] [proportionality], *Itin. 2*, 5 and 6 (V 300b-301a). Back to text.

[385] [the agreement of the parts], 4 d49 II *sect*. 1 a 2 q1 *ad* 4, 5 (IV 1016b). Back to text.

[386] *Hex*. 6, 7 (V 362a). Back to text.

[387] [number is the chief (greatest) exemplar in the mind of the creator], *De sc. Chr*. 3, 8 (V na): *Itin*. 2, 10 (V 302b). From *lib*. I *Arithmet*. ch. 2. The Pythagorean element appears at *Brevil. 2*, 3, where the structure of the universe and the intervals of the spheres are described: *universum, quod secundum numerales proportiones ordinatum dicitur* [the universe, which is said to be ordered following arithmetical proportions] (V 221a). *Cf*. also the *Scholia* of the Quaracchi Edition, Vol. I 58-59; Vol. II 253, n. 4. Back to text.

[388] [sweetness of colour], *Civ. Dei 22*, 19; 4 d49 II *sect*. 2 a2 q1 *fund*. I (IV 1025a); *Itin*. 2, 5 (V 300b-301a). Back to text.

[389] [by the replication of the same unity in regard to the different hypostases], *De sc. Chr*. 3, 8 (V 15a). Back to text.

[390] *Brevil. 2*, 3 (V 221a). Back to text.

[391] *Itin*. 1, 12 (V 298b). Back to text.

[392] *Hex*. 1, 24 (V 333a). Back to text.

[393] [truth = to possess the character of making affirmation], 1 d3 I *dub*. 4 (I 79b), following Hilary but in a free formulation. Back to text.

[394] [the intention of truth is the expression itself], 1 d35 q1 (I 601b). Back to text.

[395] [all things are true and are born to express themselves through the expression of his supreme light], 1 d8 I, 1 q1 (I 151b). Back to text.

[396] [manifestation], 1 d3 I, q1 (I 69a). Back to text.

[397] [a likeness that makes expression], 1 d35 q2 *ad* 3 (I 606b). Back to text.

[398] *Objectutn in toto medio suo generat similitudinem* [the object generates a likeness in the whole of its medium], *Itin*. 2, 7 (V 301b). '*Et hoc est mirabile, quomodo talis species generatur* [and the manner by which such a *species* is generated is marvellous]. . . . It occurs out of a *naturalis fecunditas* [natural fertility] given by God to accompany it on its path' (*Hex*. 11, 23; V 383b). Back to text.

[399] *Pulchritudinem autem rerum, secundum varietatem luminum, figuratum et colorum* [the beauty of the things, in accord with the variety of lights, forms and colours], *Itin*. 1, 14 (V 299a). Back to text.

[400] *Leg. major* 9, 1 (VIII 530a). Back to text.

[401] [most beautiful splendour], *Hex*. 21, 1 (V 431a). Back to text.

[402] [through the astonishment of wondering], *Itin*. 6, 3 (V 31 ia). *Cf. Perf. vit. ad sor*. 5, 8: *summae pulchritudinis admiratione suspensa tam vehement stupore concutitur* [caught up in wonder at the highest beauty, it is stunned by so mighty an astonishment] (VIII 119b). Back to text.

[403] [reverence, adoration, ecstasy . . . directed to bowing, genuflection, prostration], *De tripl. via* 2§3, 6 (VIII 9a). Back to text.

[404] *Perf. vit. ad sor*. 5, 4 (VIII 118b): *valde indecens est . . . ut dimidiuscor dirigatur in coelum et dimidius retineatur in terra* [it is highly unfitting . . . that half of the heart should be directed towards heaven, and half kept back on earth]. Back to text.

[405] *De tripl. via* 1§3, 17 (VIII 73b). Back to text.

[406] *De* 5 *Festiv*. 1, 1 (VIII 89a); *Epist*. 25 *memorab. prol*. 1 (VIII 4913b). Back to text.

[407] 4 d30 *dub*. 6 (IV 713b). Back to text.

[408] 4 d24 I, 1 q1 *ad* 3 (IV 609a). Back to text.

[409] 4 d48, 2 q3 *ad* 1 (IV 993b). Back to text.

[410] *De* 5 *Festiv*. 5, 3 (VIII 94b). Back to text.

[411] 1 d1, 3 q2 *ad 4* (I 42a). Back to text.

[412] *Hex*. 17, 17 (V 412a). Back to text.

[413] *De tripl. via* 1§1, 5 (VIII 4b); *cf. S*. 1 *Dom*. 1 *Quadr*. (IX 207a). Back to text.

[414] *Perf. vit. adsor*. 2, 2 (VIII nob). Concerning the way in which Lucifer's ugliness appears, *cf*. 2 d5, 2 q2 *ad* 1 (II 153b). Back to text.

[415] 2 d5, 1 q1 (II 145f.); *Brevil*. 2, 7 (V 225a). Back to text.

[416] *Brevil*. 2, 7 (V 226b); *cf*. Henri de Lubac, *Sumaturel* (Paris: Aubier, 1946), and Karl Peter, *op. cit*., 'Schönheit und Sünde'. Back to text.

[417] *Ep. de* 25 *Memorab*. 10 (VIII 494a). Back to text.

[418] *Ibid. 17*(VIII 495a). Back to text.

[419] *Hex*. 20, 11 (V 427a). Back to text.

[420] *Hom*. 12 *in Cant*. (*PG* 44, 1037C). Back to text.

[421] *Cf*. n. 130 above. Back to text.

[422] *De perf. evang*. I (V 121b); *Brevil*. 4,1 (V 241b), 5,1 (V 252b); *Hex*. 7,7 (V 366b); 9, 4 (V 373a). Many texts are cited by Alexander Gerken, *op. cit*. Back to text.

[423] *S*. 2 *Nat. Dni*. (IX 106b). Back to text.

[424] [humility of God], *S. 1 Dom. Oct. Epiph*. (IX 172a). Back to text.

[425] [all things are revealed in the cross], *De tripl. via* 3§3 (VIII 14a); *cf. S. 2 Parasc*. (IX 2653b). Back to text.

[426] *De perf. evang*. 1 (V 117-124). Back to text.

[427] *Ibid*. 123. Back to text.

[428] *S*. 1 *Dom. 22 p. Pent*. (IX 442b). Back to text.

[429] *Ep. de imit. Chr*. 4 (VIII 500a). Back to text.

[430] *S*. 5 *Dom. p. Pascha* (IX 305b). Back to text.

[431] *Vitis myst*. 2, 2 (VIII 161a). Back to text.

[432] *Sex al. seraph*. 3, 5 (VIII 133b). Back to text.

[433] *Vitis myst*. 5, 5 (VIII 1703b). Back to text.

[434] [Marvel therefore at the immeasurable power as it is destroyed, at the beauty that is robbed of its colour, at the felicity that is tortured], *De tripl.*

via 3§3 (VIII 13a). Back to text.

[435] [The beautiful one appeared ugly in the presence of the Father's glory], *Lignum vitae* 29 (VIII 79b). Back to text.

[436] *Vitis myst*. 5 (VIII 168-171). Back to text.

[437] This appears at least questionable in the light of statements such as *Vit. myst*. 10 (VIII 175-176). The depth of his suffering is all too easily explained by means of his *complexio tenerrima* [most tender disposition] (*S*. 2 *Parasc*, IX 264a; *cf*. V 250b). The description of the Passion in *Lignum Vitae* confines itself to the external, and for this reason may easily appear sentimental (VIII 75ff.); reference to the abandonment by God is lacking at decisive passages (*Perf., vit. ad sor*. 6; VIII 120f); suffering in the superior part of the soul seems at first impossible (*Brevil*. 4, 7; V 248a), but is then allowed by means of a curious distinction—the Spirit of Christ is at one and the same time 'as *ratio*' and because of its unity with God in the highest delight in God, and 'as nature' and because of its unity with what is lower 'in the deepest suffering' (*ibid*. 4, 9; V 250b). Back to text.

[438] *Ibid*. 250b. Back to text.

[439] *Hex*. 1, 19 (V 332b). Back to text.

[440] *Brevil*. 6, 8 (V 272b). Back to text.

[441] *Hex*. 12, 17 (V 387a); *cf. Hex*. 21, 33, the statement that the love of the seraphim is *usque ad cor Dei penetrativus* [penetrates even to the heart of God] (V 436b). Back to text.

[442] [the most lowly heart of the most high Jesus], *Vitis myst*. 24 (VIII 187-189). Back to text.

[443] *Ibid*. 3 (VIII 163-164). Back to text.

[444] [from the fountain, *i.e.*, from the secret place of the heart, flowing forth], *Lignum vitae* 30 (VIII 79b). Back to text.

[445] 1 *Sent. prol*. (I 4a). Back to text.

[446] *Pauper in nativitate, pauperior in vita, pauperrimus in cruce* [poor in his birth, poorer in his life, poorest in the cross], *Vit. myst*. 2, 3 (VIII 161b). Back to text.

[447] *Vitis myst*. 5, 4 (VIII 170a). Back to text.

[448] [the basic, fundamental counsel], *De perf. evang. 2*, 1 c (V 129a). Back to text.

[449] *Hex*. 20, 30 (V 430b). Back to text.

[450] S. *theol. 2*, 25 (V 545b-546a). Back to text.

[451] *Praep. ad miss*. 10 (VIII 103a). Back to text.

[452] 2 d9 q9 c (II 257ab): ‘The multitude in the Church is so constituted that it can err, and therefore it needs a head and a government; and since one man cannot do everything, the ecclesiastical offices and authorities must be distributed according to what is greater and what is less’: 4 d24 I, 2 q1 c (IV 614b-615a). Back to text.

[453] Comm. *in Luc*. 15, 34 (VII 395b). Back to text.

[454] [he descended as a most sweet bridegroom], S. 22 *Dom*. 1 *Adv*. (IX 44a). Back to text.

[455] *Ecclesiam unicam Christi sponsam* [the Church, the sole bride of Christ], *Brevil*. *6*, 5 (V 270a). Christ is the only one who can make the Church fertile: 5. 2 *Dom*. 3 *Adv*. (IX 65a). Back to text.

[456] *Sponsam, scil. totam Ecclesiam et quamlibet animam sanctam* [the Bride, *i.e.*, the whole Church and in a sense the holy soul], *Itin*. 4, 5 (V 307b). Back to text.

[457] S. *theol*. 2, 38 (V 549b). Back to text.

[458] *Lignum vitae* 44 (VIII 81ab). Back to text.

[459] *Hex*. 22, 23 (V 441a): *Et dicebat (Bonaventura) quod ilia apparitio Seraph beato Francisco, quae fuit expressiva et impressa, ostendebat, quod ille ordo illi respondere debeat, sed tamen pervenire ad hoc per tribulationes* [and he (Bonaventure) used to say that that appearing of the Seraph to blessed Francis, both giving an expression and imprinted on him, show what that Order ought to do as response to him (*i.e.*, Francis); but the Order would attain this through tribulations]. Back to text.

[460] *Cf*. n. 458. Back to text.

[461] *Hex*. 22, 27 (V 441b). Back to text.

[462] Edited by Heinrich Denifle, 1877. Back to text.

[463] *Cf*. the sublime exposition of the vanity of Christian action in *De sex alis Seraphim* ch. 3 and 4 (VIII 136-140). Back to text.

[464] [He was glorious in what caused him to be despised], S. 1 *Epiph*. (IX 148a). Back to text.

[465] *Ibid*. (148b). Back to text.

[466] *Hex*. 20, 16f. (V 428ab). Hugo Rahner, ‘Mysterium Lunae’, *ZKT* (1939), pp. 311-349, 428-442; (1940), 61-80, 121-131. Back to text.

[467] *Hex*. 20, 19 (V 428b-429a). Back to text.

[468] 3 d1, 2 q3 (III 28f.). Back to text.

[469] *Ibid.*, closely following Anselm; *cf*. 3 cte, 1 q1 *fund. 1* (III 37a), *ibid, qi* (III 40f). Back to text.

[470] *Hex*. *princip*. *coll*. 1; Delorme 14. Back to text.

[471] 1 d15, 1 q4 (I 265b); *cf*. also I 484f., I 230f; I 245; I 279. Back to text.

[472] *Cf*. 1 d6 q3 *ad* 4 (I 130b). Back to text.

[473] 2 d16 *dub*. 3 (II 4073b). Back to text.

[474] 3 d2,1 q2 *ad* 1 (III 413). *Quia terra inter cetera elementa minus est decora, ideo magis indiguit decorari* [since the earth is the least beautiful among the elements, it had the greatest need to be made beautiful], 2 d15 *dub*. 2 (II 389a). Back to text.

[475] [preserving the whole truth of the nature], *Brevil*. 7, 5 (V 287a). This is Bonaventure's continuous teaching. *Cf. Brevil*. 7, 7: 'The soul cannot be fully blessed without the body, because she has *inclinationem naturaliter insertam* [an inclination which is integrated in her by nature] oriented to being reunited with the body' (V 289b). *Hex*. 7, 5: 'Full peace is found only in the reuniting of body and soul—this is certain. For if the soul has an essential inclination towards the body, then she can never come fully to peace unless the body is restored to her' (V 366a). 4 d43, 1 q1: 'The form of manhood is more complete and more perfect than the form of the soul alone. Therefore, since the perfecting of grace and glory presupposes the perfecting of nature, it is necessary that the whole man—not only the soul—be glorified' (IV 883a). *Cf*. IV 1013a; *Solil*. 4, 21 (VIII 630-643). Back to text.

[476] [This is our logic], *Hex*. 1, 30 (V 334b). Back to text.

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THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Hans Urs von Balthasar

THE GLORY OF THE LORD:
A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

By Hans Urs von Balthasar

VOLUMES OF THE COMPLETE WORK

Edited by Joseph Fessio, S.J., and John Riches

1. *SEEING THE FORM*
2. *STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: CLERICAL STYLES*
3. *STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: LAY STYLES*
4. *THE REALM OF METAPHYSICS IN ANTIQUITY*
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6. *THEOLOGY: THE OLD COVENANT*
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HANS URS VON BALTHASAR

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Que chaque type soit réalisé dans son exactitude et dans son plein. Que chaque type de pensée soit réalisé dans sa plus belle forme. Que chaque type de pensée soit récolté à son point, ἐν ἀχμῇ, dans sa plus haute et sa plus parfaite maturation. Et que celui qui a trouvé la faucille soit chargé de rapporter le blé.

Péguy

DANTE

1. UNTROD PATHS

Dante wrote his major works in the vernacular in about 1300 and, in so doing, was conscious of taking a momentous step in the history of mankind.[1] He was, of course, the inheritor of Latin scholasticism, but that tradition lay behind him. Apart from Thomas Aquinas (and even he was more of a philosopher than a theologian), and if we exclude Nicholas of Cusa's 'experiments' in theology, no theologian writing subsequently in Latin made a really significant contribution to the history of the human spirit. Even Suarez was of influence principally as a philosopher; the successive generations of commentators on St Thomas up to the Enlightenment are manifestly imitators of their master. Dante studied the Schoolmen, just as he studied Aristotle, Averroes and Siger, but when he meets scholasticism in the heights of Paradise, in the sun, in the lowest of the 'higher spheres', the impression left on him by the round dance of the 'twice twelve teachers of wisdom' (the two groups led by

[1] To facilitate accessibility, all citations from the works of Dante are from the complete *Inselverlag* edition (*Dantis Alagherii Opera omnia*, ed. H. Wengler, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1921). There is little point in providing even a brief survey of the immense literature devoted to Dante; but see: *Bulletino della Società Dantesca Italiana*, 1890–1921; the Dante bibliography of N. D. Evola: 1920–1930 (Florence, 1932), 1931–1934 (Milan, 1938), 1935–1939 (Aevum IV, 1941); and A. Vallone, *Gli studi danteschi dal 1940–1949* (Florence, 1950).

With regard to the *Comedy*, much research has gone into Hermann Gmelin's six-volume work, *Die Göttliche Komödie* (Klett, 1949–1957), but the emphasis is on the literary aspects. I know of no reliable work on Dante's theology in the strictest sense. Concordances: for the *Comedy*, E. Allen Fay (Cambridge, Mass., 1888); for the Latin works, Rand-Wilkins (Oxford, 1912); for the other Italian works, Sheldon-White (Oxford, 1905).

Abbreviations: Inf = *Inferno;* Pg = *Purgatorio;* Par = *Paradiso;* Canz = *Canzoniere;* VN = *Vita Nuova;* Conv = *Convivio;* M = *Monarchia;* VE = *De vulgari eloquentia.*

[The English translation of *The Divine Comedy* used throughout is the prose version of John D. Sinclair, rev. ed. (London, 1948); of the *Vita Nuova*, that of Barbara Reynolds (Harmondsworth, 1969); of the *Convivio*, the somewhat archaic version of W. W. Jackson (Oxford, 1909).]

Thomas and Bonaventure) is of the subtle interlocking mechanism of a clock with its chimes (*come orologio . . . che l'una parte l'altra tira ed urge, tin, tin, sonando*),[2] or of a holy mill (*santa mola*).[3] And so the Dominican sings the praises of Francis, and the Franciscan praises Dominic. Finally, Dante, entranced, sees a third round dance detach itself from the other two—'just as on the approach of evening new lights begin to appear in the sky so that the sight seems and seems not real' (*si che la vista pare e non par vera*).[4] This dance appears to him to be the 'very sparkling of the Holy Ghost' (*vero sfavillar del Santo Spirito*). His eyes, overcome, cannot bear the sight, and Beatrice, laughing, draws him on to another sphere. It is not inconceivable that Dante considered himself to be the originator of this new, third theology, taking his lead perhaps from Joachim of Fiore, whom he saw as the twelfth (and last) Doctor of the Church in the second group, just as Siger was the last of the first group. But even the fleeting sight of this third group dazzles Dante, and he tells us nothing of its actual character. For this we must turn to his work itself.

This work of his, inseparable both from its unique divine mission and from its historical existence, carved out like a statue or monument, Dante regarded as a venture into the new, the unknown. 'I want to demonstrate truths that no one else has dared to attempt (*intemptatas ab aliis ostendere veritates*). For what kind of contribution would it be if a man were merely to prove once again a theorem of Euclid, or to demonstrate for the second time the nature of happiness, which Aristotle has already done?'[5] And he says this at the beginning of the *Monarchy*! The opening sentence of his treatise on the mother tongue begins: 'Since we have found no one before us who has in any way tackled the subject of vernacular eloquence, and since we regard such eloquence as extremely necessary for all. . . .'[6] Since Dante lived in an age of discovery, images of putting to sea abound in his writing. Again and again, even in the heights of Paradise,[7] the legend of the Argonauts fascinates him: in Hell Jason arouses his admiration,[8] and even more so, Odysseus, who seems to him to be the bold explorer *par excellence*—thus anticipating what Columbus comes to mean for Bloy and Claudel. No one could conquer within Odysseus 'his passion to gain experience of the world' (*a divenir del mondo esperto*);[9] 'I put forth on the open deep with but one ship and with that little company, the few who never deserted me', travelling on past the columns erected by Hercules as a danger signal, in 'mad flight' (*folle volo*), in the sun's track (*diretro al sol*), to 'experience the unpeopled world' (*l'esperienza del mondo senza gente*).[10] Likewise, in Hell Dante follows a 'mad path' (*per la folle strada*)[11] and enters on 'the deep and savage way' (*lo camino alto e silvestro*).[12] He warns the great crowd, which attempts to follow him on his journey 'in his tiny craft'[13] (*in piccioletta barca*), to turn back in good time, for only 'ye other few' can 'hold my furrow before the water returns smooth again', for 'it is no passage for a little bark, this which the daring prow goes cleaving, not for a pilot that would spare himself'[14] Then follows the realistic, breathtaking descriptions of mountain climbing: in Hell, scrambling over rough boulders, the debris of demolished mountains,[15] and on to even dizzier heights, to the sheer face of the Mountain of Purgatory.[16] Dante experiences and describes what it is like to subsist on no more than the resources of the will, all bodily strength having drained away: 'I rose then, showing myself better furnished with breath than I felt, and said, "Go, for I am strong and fearless".'[17] Finally, come the images of flight: flying on the back of the fantastic monster Geryon, in whose presence Dante felt a greater dread (*maggior paura*) than did Phaethon and Icarus when they realized their wings were melting:[18] both images of tragic hubris. Few indeed respond to the call of infinite space:

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[2] Par 10, 139, 142–143.

[3] Par 12, 3.

[4] Par 14, 72.

[5] M 1, 1.

[6] VE 1, 1.

[7] Par 33, 94. *Cf.* E. R. Curtius, *Das Schiff der Argonauten*. Kritische Essays zur europäischen Literatur, 1950, 398–428.

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[8] Inf 18, 85f.

[9] Inf 26, 98.

[10] Inf 26, 116–117, 125.

[11] Inf 8, 91.

[12] Inf 2, 142.

[13] Par 2, 1–12.

[14] Par 23, 67–69. The image constantly recurs: in the prelude to the *Purgatorio* (1, 1–3); in the second treatise of the *Convivio* (2, 1): 'With the mainsail of reason adjusted to the breeze of my desire I launch on the deep with hope of pleasant voyage.' *Cf.* Pg 24, 3.

[15] Inf 24, 1–60. On Dante's mountaineering imagery, see W. Heilermann von Heel, 'Der Bergsteiger Dante', *Dt. Dantejahrbuch* xiv (1932), 82–99.

[16] Pg 4, 22–51.

[17] Inf 24, 58–60.

A questo invito vengon molto radi:
O gente umana, per volar su nata,
Perchè a poco vento così cadi?[19]

Dante is the first to undertake the flight to heaven,[20] although in Hell he follows in the footsteps of Virgil and Paul. Others may have been caught up to God in ecstasy, but no one else has undertaken a methodical exploration of Paradise or acquired *esperienza* of the hereafter. This last word—*esperienza*—recurs frequently, oscillating between its ancient meaning of 'mystical experience of God'[21], the even more ancient Irenaean sense of 'experience of grace through experience in the flesh of its opposite'[22] and a third, new sense—'experiential exploration of reality'—which looks towards modern times.[23] There is, of course, a long tradition, both in Antiquity and in the Christian era, of journeys to the hereafter, of transcendental adventure stories and reports of ecstatic experience.[24] However, Dante should be seen in stark contrast to this whole literary tradition because of his awareness, both theological and aesthetic, that he was setting down something that had never existed before and that in its own way is inimitable, a work that raises him high above his own age, plants him in the future (*s'infutura la tua vita*),[25] in eternity itself (*s'eterna*).[26] His sense of mission is without parallel in Christian history, inasmuch as it is not only lived out (as in the case of many saints) but is energetically impressed upon men and is ratified by the greatest poets of Antiquity as well as by the representatives of Christianity. How could Dante's sense of being a new constellation have been so real to him, if he had not experienced the medieval synthesis he represents as something qualitatively new, open to the future?

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[18] Inf 17, 79–82. See also U. Donati, *Il volo nella Div. Comm.* (Milan, 1942).

[19] Pg 12, 94–96.

[20] Par 2, 7.

[21] Par 1, 72.

[22] *Cf.* Inf 28, 48: Dante is led through Hell *per dar lui esperienza piena*. Pg 26, 74.

[23] Inf 26, 98, 116; Par 2, 95. Bibliography in Gmelin, *Komm.* I, 389f; Allen Fay, 240.

[24] A. Rüegg, *Die Jenseitsvorstellungen vor Dante*, 2 vols., 1945.

[25] Par 17, 98.

[26] Inf 15, 85.

Synthesis—that is just what Dante is: a synthesis of scholasticism and mysticism, of Antiquity and Christianity, of the sacral concept of Empire and the spiritual Franciscan ideal of the Church, and—even more stunningly—a synthesis of the courtly world of the *Minnesang* and the very different world of scholastic wisdom. In his own way we can class Dante with the great cathedral builders of the Middle Ages, with whom for the last time ethics and aesthetics peacefully coexisted and furthered and strengthened one another. And yet, whatever view one takes of the integration achieved by Dante, there is always an excess over and above the constitutive elements; despite its structure, his work is not a sum-total but an indivisible prime number, and it is this insoluble mystery that has bestowed upon him his power over history. This will be our concern in the following pages; and as our point of entry, let us try to discover, from the outside, what is new about Dante.

a. Conversion to the Vernacular

Dante saw and portrayed conversion to the vernacular as an innovation of the greatest historical significance. It is true, of course, that for more than a century there had been poetry in the vernacular—Gottfried's *Tristan* and Wolfram's Grail epic were already in the past. But Italy lagged behind, and, what is more important, for Dante it was not a question of composing verse romances (not even if their subject was an exalted symbol like the Grail). No, Dante was concerned with translating the knowledge of reality—hidden in the seven liberal arts, in philosophy, theology and history—from dead, fossilized Latin into the living, spoken language. The problem did not arise for the courtly poet of the *Canzoniere*, and scarcely for the prose writer of the *Vita Nuova*, but it arose suddenly and sharply for the author of the *Convivio*, who set himself the task of writing a philosophically orientated allegorical commentary on his *Canzoni*: but Latin in its grandeur is ill-suited for the role of servant of the vernacular, which is what the commentary must be vis-à-vis the text; Latin lacks the necessary obedience.[27] 'A Latin commentary would not be a servant but a lord, full of nobility, virtue and beauty. Full of nobility—for Latin is eternal and unchanging, while the vernacular, on the other hand, is unstable and subject to change. In the ancient comedies and tragedies, which can no longer change, we see the very same Latin we have today. This is not true, however, of the vernacular, which changes with the mood and mind of the age. Thus, in the cities of Italy, if we look back only fifty years, we see many words become extinct or newly coined or change their meaning. If a short passage of time produces such changes, how much greater will be the effect of a long time!'.[28] Dante, who in his work never lost sight either of his poetic reputation or of eternity, nevertheless threw caution to the winds and launched out on the inconstant, surging, unstable ocean that is the vernacular. He wrote a book specifically designed to justify this step. And whereas in the *Convivio* Latin seemed to be superior in nobility and beauty to the simple vernacular, in this new work he changed his point of view: the mother tongue is superior (*nobilior*), since it is 'natural, while the other is more artificial'; it is 'the original language of men and spread out throughout the world'; that language 'which children learn from those who look after them, when first they begin to form sounds', and which they accept 'without any rules, imitating their nurse'.[29] It is the language given to the first man by God himself, together with the original divine Word, to which Adam had responded (*per viam responsionis*).[30] At this time Dante believed that the primal language was preserved in Hebrew, because the Jews had not taken part in the building of the Tower of Babel, and that the incarnate Son had conversed with his heavenly Father in this God-given vernacular.[31] Later on he gave up this delightful theory. In Paradise Adam himself puts him right on the matter when he informs Dante that the primal language disappeared long before the building of the Tower and the confusion of languages, for, like everything else given over to man, it is subject to change.[32]

[27] Conv 1, 6–7.

[28] Conv 1, 5.

[29] VE 1, 1.

[30] VE 1, 4.

[31] VE 1, 6.

[32] Par 26, 124–129.

But Dante loved his mother tongue. It is that, not Latin, which is the contributory cause of his existence and which flows through his veins. 'This mother tongue of mine was the connecting link between my parents, and it was in this language that they spoke to one another. Just as the blacksmith's fire prepares the iron for him to make a knife, so my mother tongue took part in my begetting and is a contributory cause of my being'.[33] And because he loves it as part of himself, because its growth within him unites him more closely with the race itself, and every man 'loves best the soil upon which he dwells',[34] he wants to 'glorify' (*magnificare*) it and reveal its inner quality, its nobility.[35] It will be 'the new light, the new sun, which will rise where the old (scholastic Latin) sets'.[36] And indeed Dante now seeks for a vernacular that is *illustre, cardinale, aulicum et curiale*[38] amongst the countless Italian dialects (even the suburbs of Bologna had each their own langauge!)[37] but remains conscious of the fact that the imperial court was abroad; and when he sets out on the sea of dialects, it is with the secret ambition of creating for himself, out of the raw material of an unstable, historically conditioned language, a valid form of language that will unite two qualities: that of being alive and that of being valid. Professional theology will go on speaking Latin as before, but Dante does not want to be a professional; he wants to be the legislator of a living culture, as Virgil was for ancient Rome. To this end he makes use of all the learning of his age, but such learning is at the service of his action, not vice versa. His eyes are set on history; in opting for the common tongue, he is conscious of his specific responsibility to the people.[39]

b. Conversion to History

The Aeneid, for Dante, is history in the strictest sense, the history of a foundation. For Dante, conversion to history means from the very beginning rising above the *Minnesang* (which could also on occasion include political songs), scholasticism and every other philosophical 'study of essences' that did not concern itself with the history of the Empire or of the Church. Dante, however, did not intend to write the history either of the past or of the present; no, from the lofty vantage point of one who has made an historic decision, he strives to leave his mark on present and future history. For this reason, in the *Divine Comedy* the history happening on earth is divided in two by a vertical stroke, which goes from Heaven to Hell and lays bare the absolute standards. But the stroke itself is a fact of history, an event of the year 1300 A.D.. Everywhere, from Hell to the highest Heaven, real history is present; individual historical personalities appear, beyond death, in their true light and importance; the lines of their historical destiny are traced right to the end, their form has left its mark on the earth. And like the individuals, so the families, cities, regions, countries, finally the whole Empire, the complete Church, come into view, are all weighed on the eternal balance and found to be too light, condemned and righted, rejected and endowed with new promises. Wolfram's *Grail* is a timeless story, but the poems of Dante refer very precisely to the history of the world. Man is not pure spirit; as an organic body, he loves the place and time of his birth.[40] The *kairos* of his appearing is determined partly but decisively by his horoscope. This is something the *Vita Nuova* already knows. Nothing is described more minutely in the *Divine Comedy* than the various astronomical constellations. If the most exalted spiritual faculty of man is *la discrezione*, the power of discernment, that true 'eye of the soul',[41] then the most terrible punishment of the damned is that they can recognize only past facts, possibly future events, but nothing in the present.[42] If the understanding of the present moment, of qualitative-cosmic time, is of fundamental importance, then so also is the utilization of time, as the *Divine Comedy* unceasingly reminds us: on the highway of time there can be no daydreaming or aesthetic dawdling.[43] Thus Dante has a special interest in the ages of man's life and the canon of *virtù* relevant to them; what is suitable for the child is something quite different from what befits the youth, the grown man, the greybeard.[44] And yet time does not dissolve into merely empirical facts; in heaven, Dante's ancestor, Cacciaguida, sees the whole of historical time present in God in a single point,[45] without prejudice to the contingency and freedom of what occurs above, for here the times unite to form a *dolce armonia*.[46]

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[33] Conv 1, 13.

[34] Conv 1, 12.

[35] Conv 1, 10.

[36] Conv 1, 13.

[37] VE 1, 16. On this whole subject, see B. Nardi, *Il linguaggio, Dante e la cultura medievale* (Bari, 1949).

[38] VE 1, 9.

[39] Conv 1, 11.

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[40] Conv 3, 3.

[41] Conv 1, 11.

[42] Inf 10, 69f; 10, 103–108.

[43] Inf 9, 13f; Pg 12, 84; 17, 84; 18, 130f. (*Ratto, ratto, che il tempo non si perda!*); 23, 4f; 24, 91f. (*che il tempo è caro/In questo regno . . .*), etc. 'When we look into

Yet while Dante takes seriously all the important personalities of his epoch, all the cities and regions in their individuality, his real concern bears finally upen the historical totality, which for him has two aspects: the *imperium* and the Church. His obstinate attachment to the Empire—expressed in the *Convivio*, the *Monarchy*, the *Divine Comedy*—goes against all the national aspirations of the late Middle Ages, especially in Italy. Such attachment could only be seen as mere romantic Utopianism or nostalgia, were it not linked with an image of the Church that has its living source in St Francis and the Spirituals and leads towards a much more rigorous distinction between the two realms than the Middle Ages had ever known. No, we can go even further and say that in the *Monarchy* Dante expresses a vision of a supranational unification of mankind, still thought out and expressed in medieval categories, of course, but more up-to-date than all the nationalisms of his age. With this vision in mind he first of all gives precise formulation to what Thomas Aquinas quite deliberately left in suspense: the doctrine of the double end of man, earthly and heavenly. Man is earth and Heaven, he is the 'horizon' between the two, he 'tastes the nature of both realms' (*sapit utram naturam*). And so, unique in all creation, the ultimate goal of man is twofold; 'man . . . is the only being who is ordered towards two ultimate goals. One of these constitutes his goal in so far as he is subject to change and decay and the other in so far as he is indestructible. Unerring Paradise has therefore set man to attain two goals: the first is

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the cause of what annoys us, we find that in every case it comes from not knowing how best to use time (*dal non conoscere l'uso del tempo*).'

[44] The whole of the end of the *Convivio* (4, 23–30) is concerned with this question.

[45] Par 17, 16–18.

[46] Par 17, 37–43, 45.

happiness in this life, which consists in the exercise of his own powers and is symbolised by the earthly paradise; the second is the happiness of eternal life, which consists in the enjoyment of the divine countenance (which man cannot attain to of his own power unless aided by divine illumination) and is signified by the heavenly paradise'.[47]

The *Empire* is the perfect realization and representation of earthly order and human law: *imperii fundamentum jus humanum est.*[48] This in turn is rooted in the unity of the human race, a unity that is both real (the story of Paradise) and ideal (Plato's idea of man).[49] However, human law is founded upon what is most positive about man, his struggle for justice, and what is right and just in human terms is the renunciation of egotism, man's openness to the universal; in other words, love. This is magnificently expounded by the Emperor Justinian in the Sphere of Mercury:

Che, per voler del primo amor ch'io sento,
D'entro le leggi trassi il troppo e il vano.[50]

And this is affirmed once again by the great imperial eagle in Jupiter.[51] Just as in the order of things the individual is related beyond himself to the family, the family to the village, the village to the city, the city to a particular kingdom, so the different kingdoms must be integrated in a universal kingdom of man, for *totum humanum genus ordinatur ad unum.*[52] This unity is not the empty form of abstract power, but, as became clear, a true integration. But nonetheless it is *forma ordinis*, and, as the supreme form, it leaves its imprint upon all: imperial man begets beneath him a humanity marked by his nobility.[53] If the particular subordinate authorities are characteristically dominated by concupiscence, envy, ambition and party spirit, the Emperor, who possesses everything and has no rival, is essentially disinterested and stands free above all as the supreme embodiment of justice, for he rules men as men and so can be the embodiment of selfless love—*caritas*, Dante explicitly says.[54] His power is universal in its scope, and at the same time it represents the whole before God, and so, viewed from this most exalted and unambiguous point, the whole of ethics assumes the form of free, selfless service.[55] For Dante, the principle of human love and of human law can only be made effective in the natural domain when particularism—which he sees devastating the Italian cities—is surpassed in favour of the universal. But, as at every stage in the realization of the Kingdom of God, Dante can think of the universal only in terms of personal love, so the unity of the earthly empire is secure only if the centre of unity is occupied by a person. Dante is perfectly well aware that, in saying this, he is proposing only the best possible *form*, which does not itself guarantee its authentic realization; he speaks constantly only of *posse*, of *debere*,[56] and thus of an opportunity that the form of the monarch's dignity gives him, an opportunity that he can let mankind in its totality share. This form does not exclude the kind of progressive particularization in the lower echelons of society that gives expression to the individual characteristics of the governed nations and states; on the contrary, it makes full provision for them.[57] Nevertheless, the ethical point of view, the justice embodied in the monarchical will, outweighs any purely political consideration. Only thus will humanity be able to achieve that oneness that enables it to stand as man before God, for man needs the *voluntas una, domina et regulatrix* if the desires that draw him towards the particular are to be dominated and mastered in a way that is worthy of him.[58]

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[47] M 3, 16.
[48] M 3, 10.
[49] Conv 4, 13.
[50] Par 6, 11–12.
[51] Par 18, 116–117.
[52] M 1, 5.
[53] M 1, 13.
[54] M 1, 11.

This order is the rights of man, implanted at the time of creation, and so, for Dante, the tree of Paradise is at the same time the tree of the Empire,[59] and Christ alone is greater than it. It was stripped of its foliage by original sin, it received the power of rejuvenation from the Church of Christ, but it remains a mystery of creation,[60] which springs directly from God, and needs no ecclesiastical intermediary. Ancient Rome existed, in all its power, before the Church;[61] God conferred upon it the office, and also the power, of embodying universal justice and, in consequence, the universal spirit, for *quicumque finem juris intendit, cum jure graditur*.[62] Yet only God can justify and order the interplay between the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God. Dante sees the supreme legitimation of the imperial power (much higher than any the Church could ever confer on the emperor)[63] in the fact that Christ, who bore the guilt of all mankind, is condemned to death by the lawful representative of all mankind, is, that is to say, therefore lawfully condemned by the emperor. In Paradise Justinian will expound this doctrine once again, with this addition: that if the deicide of Golgotha was 'lawful', so also was the vengeance of God wrought by Trajan on Jerusalem.[64] This is a knot (*nodo*), that Dante cannot untie, and that, as the emperor points out, only finds its resolution *nella fiamma d'amor*, in the flame of God's love, in the mystery of his loving decree.[65] This is the vital point, because now the key to the problem of the relationship between the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God, which in human terms remains for ever insoluble, is constituted not only by God as such (*ipse Deus, in quo respectus omnis universaliter unitur*),[66] but by the God of incomprehensible love, who has not only established all human justice but has used it, beyond itself, for his own purposes.

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[55] M 1, 12. *Quamvis consul sive rex respectu viae sint domini aliorum, respectu autem termini aliorum ministri sunt, et maxime Monarcha, qui minister omnium procul dubio habendus est.*

[56] M 1, 11, 12, 13.

[57] M 1, 14 in connection with Aristotle and with Plato's theory of the state.

[58] M 1, 15.

[59] Pg 32, 38–60.

[60] Pg 33, 56f.

The task given to the emperor of uniting the world in justice and love, of stamping upon it the most sublime human form through the power of representative service, is a task given at creation and so is one that cannot be abandoned. The Donation of Constantine, which Dante regarded as historical, is null and void twice over—even though made by the emperor in good faith[67]—because it tried to concede a right that emperors cannot concede, and that the Church, by its very nature, cannot accept.[68] For 'the Church was in no sense properly fitted

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[61] M 3, 13.

[62] M 2, 6.

[63] M 2, 12.

[64] Par 6, 91–93.

[65] Par 7, 58–60.

[66] M 3, 12.

[67] Par 20, 55–57.

[68] M 3, 10–13.

(*indisposita*) to receive temporal things, on account of the express prohibition recorded by Matthew: "Possess not gold nor silver, nor money in your girdles, nor purse for your journey, et cetera". And although the severity of this precept is tempered in certain respects in Luke, still I have been unable to discover that permission to possess gold and silver was granted to the Church subsequent to that prohibition.'[69]

The *Church*, for Dante as for Francis, is shaped solely by the form of Christ: 'The form of the Church is none other than the life of Christ, including both his deeds and his words. Now his life was the model and exemplar (*idea et exemplar*) for the Church militant, for its pastors in particular, but above all for the chief pastor whose office is to feed the lambs and the sheep. For this reason in John he himself gives his life to his disciples as the form of their lives: "I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you"; and in the same Gospel we read what he said specifically to Peter after bestowing upon him the office of pastor: "Peter, follow me." But in the presence of Pilate Christ expressly renounced the kind of power we are discussing: "My kingdom," he said, "is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, that I might not be handed over to the Jews; but my kingdom is not from the world." This must not be taken to mean that Christ, who is God, is not lord of this kingdom . . . but it means that, as the supreme exemplar of the Church, he has no responsibility for this kingdom.'[70]

This is why the great lover of every embodiment of form, of all radiant beauty, has no interest at all in the visible beauty of the Church on earth. For its beauty consists entirely in its humility and obscurity, and not at all in its structure. Dante, who in the heights of Paradise dedicates two songs to the nine angelic hierarchies of Dionysius the Areopagite, nowhere in his works echoes the idea of their earthly reflection in an 'ecclesiastical hierarchy', whose grades, offices, sacred duties might lay claim to a beauty of their own and might deserve, because of their representative function, to be put into the light. It is with bitter irony that he applies the title of *servus servorum* to his arch-enemy, Boniface VIII.[71] He will forgive neither him nor his successor Clement V, for their theocratic ways, and he certainly shows no mercy to Boniface's predecessor, Celestine V, for his 'great refusal' (*il gran rifiuto*) to render service to the Church, which, for the Pope, would have been the real 'great renunciation'.[72] The majority of the Popes are in Hell; he meets only two of them on the Mountain of Purgatory and only one in Heaven. Dante's criticisms of the worldliness of the medieval Church are unending; from the Empyrean Beatrice and Peter pour out their reproaches on the decadent Church, and, in a terrible image, the poet sees the transfigured Peter suddenly become incandescent with anger, fulminating against the 'atrocious' Boniface VIII, who has turned the apostle's tomb into a cesspit of blood and excrement. All heaven is coloured the same angry red, Beatrice grows pale and the spheres are darkened because 'the Bride of the Lord' has become a cheap whore, to be bought with gold.[73] Peter reproaches the popes for their ambition and their passion for pomp,[74] which divide the Church, and for their abuse of the power of the keys for the purposes of earthly warfare and of excommunication for political ends;[75] he reproaches them for their simony.[76] They commit adultery with the Bride of Christ;[77] they turn her into the whore of Babylon and permit the kings of the earth (especially the King of France, who will soon haul the popes off to Avignon) to commit fornication with her. Once purified by his confession before Beatrice, Dante is entrusted with the task of observing the full horror of Church history through the medium of symbolic images, viewing thus the gradual transformation of the pure Bride into the *Magna Meretrix*.[78] Moreover, in Paradise he is solemnly charged by Peter to make heaven's wrath known on earth, and 'not to hide what I hide not'.[79] And he spares the bishops and clergy no less than the popes; the clergy find themselves in Hell specially placed among the hypocrites,[80] the avaricious,[81] the homosexuals:[82] 'O divine Patience, that endurest so much.' [83] Later, the decadence of the religious orders is bemoaned, even, or rather, particularly, the great new mendicant orders,[84] and there is a denunciation of the wretched sermons that no longer expound the gospel, so that 'the poor sheep that know nothing return from pasture fed on wind'.[85] A constantly renewed lament rings out from the Kingdom above over the Church below. Alas, 'the good plant that was once a vine . . . is now become a thorn',[86] the holy city is laid waste;[87] Rome, bent on uniting the two powers, has sunk deep into the mire.[88] Even in the spiritual realm the successors of Peter do not exercise their functions in conformity to their mandate, for they imagine that divine authority has been granted to them, mere servants, in their own right. Boniface VIII, the 'prince of the new Pharisees', takes a terrible share of the guilt for the damnation of Guido da Montefeltro, whom he incited, allegedly by means of preventive absolution, to treachery.[89] If the Pope were omnipotent, 'he would be able to absolve me even if I were not penitent; which even God himself cannot do'.[90]

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[69] M 3, 10.

[70] M 3, 15.

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[71] Inf 15, 112.

[72] Inf 3, 60.

[73] Par 27, 19–45.

[74] Par 21, 127–135; Pg 16, 106–111.

[75] Pg 3, 133–135; Par 18, 127–129.

[76] Inf 19. The whole canto deals with the Simonists, who 'prostitute' the gifts of God: v 4; Par 18, 122–123; 27, 52–54.

[77] Inf 19, 57; 19, 100–114; Par 9, 142; M 3, 3: *matrem prostituunt.*

[78] Pg 32, 142–160.

[79] Par 27, 66.

Dante is devoted, in a childlike way, to the Church of Christ, to her sacraments, to the divine Word that she dispenses. And just as he hopes for a saviour-emperor, so he longs for the purification of the Church.[91] His anger over her defects (not so much over the private sins of ecclesiastics, towards whom, as in the case of the Abbot of San Zeno or Hadrian V, he can adopt a respectful tone.[92] as over the deep-seated perversion and exploitation of the august Bride of Christ) has nothing sectarian about it, nothing of the heterodoxy of a Joachim; it springs solely from the loving zeal of a Christian layman, who sees himself cheated of his rightful inheritance of the Spirit and of the riches of Christ, and who, on behalf of those who have been led astray, indeed on behalf of the Lord of the Church himself, laments the dereliction of the holy city.

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[80] Inf 23, 58f (the whole passage is full of clerical terms).

[81] Inf 7, 46–48.

[82] Inf 15, 106: *In somma sappi che tutti fur cherci.*

[83] Par 21, 135.

[84] Par 11, 118–139 (against the Dominicans); Par 12, 106–124 (against the Franciscans); Par 21, 119 (against the ruination of the cloister); Par 22, 73–99 (St Benedict's speech about his rule, which has become a useless piece of paper).

[85] Par 29, 85–126.

[86] Par 24, 111.

[87] Pg 33, 1.

[88] Pg 16, 129.

[89] Inf 27, 100–102.

[90] M 3, 8.

[91] Par 27, 61–63.

[92] Pg 18, 113f; Pg 19, 91f.

c. Conversion to the Laity

For Dante, conversion to the laity means turning away from the scholastic study of essences to reflection on the reality and the conditions of the possibility of an authentic Christian existence; indeed—and this in contrast to the mendicant orders and the mysticism of the day—of an ethicopolitical existence in the world. From Dante to our own times this has been the route taken by every theology that has made its mark on history. For himself, such reflection has three components: it deals with his own personality, his own destiny, his own *eros*—three immensely portentous issues.

At the centre of Dante's work stands his personality—in extreme contrast to Thomas Aquinas, with whom personality completely and intentionally disappears—a personality to which nothing human, but also nothing divine, is alien, a personality that stretches out to the furthermost limits of the cosmos and pursues its own Christian fulfilment within the cosmic context of the fulfilment of the Kingdom of God. This leads directly to the central paradox that, as a created reality, this person will attain the heights of fame, but as a Christian reality, he will at the same time be thrust down into the profoundest humility and humiliation. Behind this paradox lies what Dante refers to as nobility (*nobiltà*, *onestade*) and vocation, from which it is clear that for him the concept of higher rank signifies equally greater grace and, in consequence, a greater vocation and responsibility. The fourth treatise of the *Convivio* strives to clarify the notion of nobility and, respectfully yet resolutely contradicting a saying of the venerated Emperor Frederick II, arrives at the conclusion that nobility does not depend on 'ancient wealth and gracious manners' (*antica ricchezza e be'* *costumi*), and so not on anything passed down within particular families.[93] Neither wealth nor any exterior power can confer nobility of soul, and it is difficult to see how a common herd could become noble simply through the progress of time.[94] Nobility is primarily an individual matter and denotes the perfection of an individual member of a particular class.[95] Following Aristotle, Dante argues that this perfection is found first of all in the attainment and possession of one's own proper virtue (*aretê, virtù propria*), and this includes the 'moral virtues', as the 'fruits most truly peculiar to man', which, again following Aristotle, are given as courage, self-control, liberality, love of splendour (*magnificenza*), greatness of soul (*magnanimità*), proper ambition, gentleness, sociability, veracity, good humour (*eutrapelia*), justice.[96] But all these virtues spring from an attitude, a fundamental predisposition (*abituale elezione*), as effects from their cause (*siccome effetto da sua cagione*). This attitude is the foundation of personal nobility, which is 'thus a more comprehensive notion than that of virtue'. The virtues are like stars, but nobility is the heaven in which they appear: 'The intellectual and the moral virtues shine in it; good dispositions given by nature shine in it, namely tenderness and religion, and the praiseworthy emotions, namely chasteness and compassion, and many others. There shine in it the excellencies of the body, namely beauty, courage and unspoilt health. And so many are the stars that extend over this heaven that it is no wonder that human nobility produces so many and various fruits, so manifold are its natural characteristics and potentialities, comprised and united in one simple substance; and in them, as in different branches, it bears different fruits. Indeed I venture to say that human nobility as regards its fruitfulness surpasses that of the angels, although the angelic be more divine in its unity.' But it is the task of divine grace and of the cosmic constellation to determine how the individual soul is receptive to the forces and faculties God has breathed into it, and it is the degree of this receptiveness that decides its intrinsic and habitual nobility of soul. 'For the divine seed does not fall onto the race or tribe but comes down upon the individual. And so it is not the race that makes the individual noble, but the individuals make noble the race.' According to the ancient doctrine of procreation to which Dante subscribes, the heavenly powers are the decisive agents in drawing out living reality from the potency of matter, God only completing the cosmogonic work by stooping in love before nature's miracle: 'Know that as soon as the articulation of the brain is perfected in the embryo The First Mover turns to it, rejoicing over such handiwork of nature, and breathes into it a new spirit full of power, which draws into its own substance that which it finds active there and becomes a single soul. . . .'[97] For this reason, the nobility of soul derived from nature and that derived from grace can only be thought of in strict union; the cosmological aspect, which has the Aristotelian virtues in view, and the theological, which is concerned with the gratuitous infusion of the Spirit's gifts into the soul, are well-nigh two aspects of the same process.[98] Thus Augustine and Aristotle are together invoked as witnesses to the truth that man must boldly lay hold of his own nobility by realising the good that he is (*s'ausi a ben fare*), trusting the *hormê* in his heart, the *hormê* that at first sight seems like a purely natural instinct but, when pursued, can be seen increasingly clearly to be an impulse received from divine grace.[99] It is now that it becomes clear also which souls possess personal nobility, and which not, as the apostle says: 'All the runners compete, but only one receives the prize.' Here Dante's own self-understanding becomes clear: the noble soul, following its own flight, discovers that it must reach out beyond itself; its apparently natural *magnanimità* requires it to submit to the ways of grace and to take upon itself the burdens of its Christian vocation. We shall see later how much Dante experienced his election as an incomprehensible and superabundant grace. But this grace is counterbalanced by the weight of the commission: 'The day was departing and the darkened air releasing the creatures on the earth from their labours, and I, alone, was preparing to endure the conflict both of the way [through Hell] and of the pity of it. . . . O my spirit, that noted what I saw, here shall be shown thy worth (*la tua nobilitate*)!'[100] Dante demands inner greatness of himself and relies on it to be a match for his countermovements. The *Convivio* says magnificently: 'The man who has true largeness of soul always makes himself great (*sempre il magnanimo si magnifica in suo cuore*), and the small-souled man makes himself less than he is. . . . And because with the same measure with which a man measures himself he measures the things that are his, which are as it were part of himself, so it is that the large-souled man's things always seem to him better than they are, and the things of others worse; and the small-souled man always thinks his things of little worth, since he overvalues the things of others.'[101] The vision of the unity of natural and Christian greatness of soul is, for Dante, the presupposition of his sense of vocation, and Virgil, Beatrice and the three chief apostles confirm this for him. It is also the reason why his hope is directed simultaneously toward both earthly and heavenly glory, so that right into old age he is still hoping for the poet's crown at the Florentine baptistery[102] as well as the crown of faith from Peter.[103] Such a sense of nobility is quite distinct from mere hereditary nobility (*O poca nostra nobilità di sangue!*);[104] rather, Dante is aware that he is profoundly indebted to his spiritually noble ancestor, despite all the unworthy intervening generations, and that through his ancestor, in the noble blood itself, Dante can become more than he is himself (*voi mi levate sì, ch'io son più ch'io*).[105] The ancestor gives tongue to this sense of nobility with a tenderness that knows the inseparability of love and blood (O *sanguis meus, o superinfusa gratia Dei!*[106] *O fronde mia . . . , io fui la tua radice*),[107] but which, on the other hand, bases all its interiority on Dante's charismatic vocation. Such a sense of nobility stands in a unique place between the Middle Ages and modern times at a moment of truth, a *kairos*, completely fulfilled in itself and seemingly unrepeatable. It is the same moment at which intellectual scholasticism stoops to drink at the deep fountains of the mother tongue and recognizes there its source, while the popular poetry of the *Minnesang* discovers its own redemptive truth in the sublime lovesong in honour of Beatrice. It is also the same moment when ancient culture and Christian theology flow smoothly together, when Virgil, at the end of his protégé's first journey, can place him unquestioningly in the hands of Beatrice. Now, of course, this conjunction, which constitutes the entire inner structure of the *Convivio*, the *Divine Comedy* and the *Monarchy*, is Dante's own conscious creation; it is in no sense something that was merely 'in the air' or that was produced, as it were, by simply taking a cross-section at random through the main stream of the evolution of the Middle Ages into the Renaissance. It is the creative work of an adventurous spirit, who, in bringing it to completion, has boldly seized hold both of himself and of his vocation and has drawn both Virgil and Beatrice into his own orbit. Antiquity has an unsurpassable value for him; he *loves* Virgil and Statius and Aristotle and all the other great figures of the past as the fathers of his soul; during his journey, in moments of terror, he clings to the maternal breast of his sacred friend, Virgil, and truly lets him be his conscience.[108] Christianity has ultimate value, because the love of Dante for Beatrice can be fulfilled nowhere but in Heaven. If pre-Christian Antiquity has its proper place in Hell, and if the mythological figures of the classical *Walpurgisnacht* are its true population (Charon, Minos, Cerberus, Pluto, the Megaera, the Minotaur, the Centaurs, Chiron, Geryon, Cacus, the giants (but none of the gods)); if the Christian saints and angels, who have taken the place of the ancient gods (planets and stars) reign in Paradise, then the mountain of Purgatory is properly the place for the two worlds to meet and intermingle: The audacity with which Dante systematically places Antiquity and Christianity in parallel, for example by offering to the penitents a model of virtue drawn in each case from mythology, and from the Bible,[109] is a further advance on the *Secunda Pars* of St Thomas's *Summa Theologiae*. For Dante the poet, like Aquinas, makes the ethics of Antiquity in its abstractness the broad basis of Christian morality; but he does more than that; he takes over all its

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[93] Conv 4, 3.

[94] Conv 4, 10, 14.

[95] Conv 4, 16.

[96] Conv 4, 17.

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[97] Pg 25, 68–74.

[98] Conv 4, 21.

[99] Conv 4, 22.

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[100] Inf 2, 1–9.

[101] Conv 1, 11.

[102] Par 25, 7–9; Par 1, 28f; first eclogue, 42f.

[103] Par 25, 10–12.

[104] Par 16, 1.

[105] Par 16, 18.

[106] Par 15, 28–29.

[107] Par 15, 88–89.

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[108] Inf 19, 34–36; 23, 37f; 23, 51; Pg 8, 42. Virgil as conscience: Inf 30, 130–148.

[109] E.g., Pg 12, 25–63.

historical and mythological substance as well. If poetic inspiration is the province of Apollo and the Muses, then Apollo and the Muses must be summoned, even if it be to sing the praises of the Christian Heaven.[110] There is no flowery rhetoric or 'conventional wisdom' about this (as there was so often in the preceding centuries); it is not even a matter of broadening one's 'cultural range'; no, it is the work of the *eros* in Dante's soul, that in the last analysis knows itself indebted to both worlds, that loves both with a perceptive and appreciative love, that, it is true, clearly recognizes the relative hierarchical positions of Christianity and Antiquity—Beatrice sent Virgil to Dante, and Virgil takes him to Beatrice and then leaves him—but that never repudiates the rightful value of nature to the advantage of supernatural values. Moreover, for Dante 'nature' means cosmos, which as such is thoroughly permeated by the divine *eros*, as indeed we saw when we considered the question of the relationship between monarchy and Church; without *amor* (Dante even says *caritas*) there is no order in the kingdom and so none in Antiquity, philosophy or poetry.

Since the knot that ties together the different parts of Dante's work is to be found in his personality, his personal destiny also becomes a matter of some urgency. Dante wrestled with the problem of when and how far it was right for him to speak of himself. His name only appears once in the *Divine Comedy*: at the climax of his meeting with Beatrice, when, still veiled, she looks at him and calls him (. . . *suon del nome mio, che di necessità qui si registra*).[111] And yet the whole *Divine Comedy* is a poem written in the first person. Dante refers to Boethius, who, 'in a pressing situation, to save himself from the eternal shame of his captivity', found himself also compelled to use the first person; he refers to Augustine and his *Confessions*, where the saint speaks of himself 'because his assessment of himself was a lesson for others and so of great benefit'. He observes a total silence on the subject of Abelard's *historia calamitatum*; here existence cannot serve as a lesson, here the personal destiny is not sufficiently illuminated by Christian love. But Boethius is close to him; like Boethius unjustly condemned politically and deprived of his liberty, Dante passed his life in humiliating exile, in 'poverty', a 'pilgrim, almost a beggar', 'a vessel without sail or helm'.[112] Like one of the giants in chains, Dante groans under the terrible injustice and does not tire of exposing it and, in the process, by his own example, of exposing all the ethical and political injustice of Italy and the world. But at the same time his own destiny must enable him to grasp the Christian account of the meaning of existence: 'O my brother, we are every one citizens of one true city; but thou wouldst say that thine lived in Italy a pilgrim.'[113] In Paradise Dante's ancestor speaks prophetically about the banishment and uprooting that are coming to him, the loss of what is dearest to him, the 'salty taste of the bread of strange lands', the 'hard way up and down another man's stairs', the wickedness and senselessness of his companions, the difficult task of reconciling the prudence and wisdom incumbent on one who has been politically humiliated with the fearlessness demanded by his mission.[114] This whole prediction nevertheless depends on a vision of what God has foreordained for Dante, which gives it the tone of a *dolce armonia*,[115] while 'that lady who was leading me to God' wondrously speaks the concluding word: 'Change thy thought; think that I am in his presence who lightens the burden of every wrong'.[116] Earth is *esilio di Babilon*, to be at home is to be with God.[117] One so attached to the earth as Dante was would never have discovered the meaning of Christian resignation if it had not been for the glaring injustice of his humiliation; it is this to which he must bear witness. This is the price he pays for being able to look down from the spheres on the *insensata cura dei mortali*, with their *deffetivi sillogismi*, and to rise above the concerns of the four faculties: 'One was going after law and another after the medicine, one was following the priesthood and another seeking to rule by force or craft, one was set on robbery and another on affairs of state, one was labouring in the toils of fleshly delights and another given to idleness; while I, set free from all these things, was high in heaven with Beatrice, received thus gloriously.[118] Whoso laments that we die here to live above has not seen there the refreshment from the eternal showers of grace.'[119] From this height man's hectic life on earth appears as a universal immersion in *cupidigia*. 'O covetousness, who so plungest mortals in thy depths that none has power to lift his eyes above thy waves! The will blossoms well in men, but the continual rain turns the sound plums withered and sour.'[120] But what is more, this bitter privation makes a hope surpassing all human calculation grow within him, a hope that is the reason for his being given the privilege of visiting the royal mansions of God: 'So that, having seen the truth of this court, thou mayst with that strengthen in thyself and others the hope that begets true love below. . . . The Church militant has not a child more full of hope . . . therefore it is granted him to come from Egypt to Jerusalem that he may see it before his warfare is accomplished.'[121] Thus Dante arrives in Heaven like the Nordic barbarian in Rome who marvelled at the superhuman grandeur of the Lateran, like the pilgrim who looks about him *nel tempio de suo voto* and 'hopes to tell of it on his return'.[122] Pilgrim here below, pilgrim above, Dante is given, by his exile, the right distance from which to measure everything in its true value.

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[110] Par 1, 13f.

[111] Pg 30, 63.

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[112] Conv 1, 3.

[113] Pg 13, 94–96.

[114] Par 17, 46–142.

[115] Par 17, 44.

[116] Par 18, 4–6.

[117] Par 23, 133–135.

[118] Par 11, 1–12.

There is however a third and most important aspect of Dante's conversion to the laity to be considered. In addition to the preoccupation with individual personality and destiny, there appeared, for the first time in Christian theology, the theme of individual, personal and fateful love. Dionysius and Bonaventure had indeed found divine Eros in the cosmos, and in his *Confessions* Augustine had recognized and confessed personal Eros, but the first was not personal, and the second was not in the least degree theological. Likewise, the amorous adventures of the heroes of Artus made no claim to theological relevance. But this is the claim that Dante makes for Beatrice. The thoroughly earthly love of the *Vita Nuova* is carried as far as the heights of Heaven; indeed, it is extolled as the motive power for the whole journey through the hereafter. The love, which began on earth between two human beings, is not denied, is not bypassed in the journey to God; it is not, as was always, naturally enough, hitherto the case, sacrificed on the altar of the classical *via negativa*; no, it is carried right up to the throne of God, however transformed and purified. This is utterly unprecedented in the history of Christian theology. As Charles Williams rightly saw, it transcends the whole neo-Platonic scheme of *via positiva, negativa, eminentiae.*[123] It is true that the figure of the beloved is enriched with symbolic content, but it would be ridiculous to maintain that she is only a symbol or allegory—of what? of faith? of theology? of the vision of God?. Only dusty academics could fall for something as abstruse as that. No, the figure of the beloved is a young Florentine girl of flesh and blood. Why should a Christian man not love a woman for all eternity and allow himself to be introduced by that woman to a full understanding of what 'eternity' means? And why should it be so extraordinary—ought one not rather to expect it—that such a love needs, for its total fulfilment, the whole of theology and Heaven, Purgatory and Hell?

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[119] Par 14, 25–27.

[120] Par 27, 121–126.

[121] Par 25, 40–45, 53–57.

[122] Par 31, 31–39, 43–45.

One can surround the real figure of Beatrice, as also Dante's real life of love, with as many question marks as one wishes. Nevertheless, the principle is established for the first time, and never again so magnificently: for the sake of infinite love, it is not necessary for the Christian to renounce finite love. On the contrary, in a positive spirit, he can incorporate his finite love into that which is infinite—but at the cost of terrible sufferings, of course, as Dante shows us.

It is only in the light of this principle, which justifies the life and work of Dante, that one can resolve the enigma of the *Convivio* (with which Gilson was so concerned, though without resolving it):[124] why does Dante, in harsh and almost incomprehensible opposition to his masters Aristotle and Thomas, declare that the supreme philosophical discipline is not metaphysics but ethics? Dante establishes a parallel between the sciences and the ten heavenly spheres that surround the earth. For the seven planetary spheres there is no difficulty; they represent the seven liberal arts: the *trivium* of grammar, dialectic and rhetoric, and the *quadrivium* of arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy. The tenth sphere, the Empyrean of God, is reserved for theology. But the eighth and ninth spheres, the heavens of fixed stars and crystal, must accommodate the highest philosophical disciplines: the science of the nature of the world (physics), of right conduct (ethics), and of the being of existents (metaphysics). However, an abstract science can simply lay no claim to a place in Dante's cosmos; by following an Aristotelian and Thomist path, Dante sees in physics the science of visible (material) essences, symbolized by the visible pole star in the sky, and, on the other hand, in metaphysics the science, known only by deduction; of invisible essences—the celestial intelligences, First Matter, divinity—symbolized by the invisible pole star. Thus, physics and metaphysics form, henceforth together, the sphere of the fixed stars, dominated by the heaven of transparent crystal, the *Primum mobile*, which moves all things, even metaphysics: this is ethics.[125]

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[123] *The Figure of Beatrice.* A Study in Dante (1943, 7th impression, 1958).

[124] *Dante et la philosophie* (1939), pp. 100–113.

For Dante, however, ethics or the science of right conduct, means, as we have already seen, the building of one's individual perfection (*virtù*) on the foundation of the soul's perfection, its nobility, a nobility that is the 'divine germ' in man, derived from both nature and grace. It is infused into man by celestial intelligences and, beyond them, directly by God; and, as *hormê*, it directs man towards his eternal good; in other words, it is Eros. In long expositions of the nature of philosophy (to which we shall return) Eros is defined as the union of the two moments of love (*philo-*) and wisdom (*sophia*), whose encounter is loving, erotic and, for that very reason, aesthetic.[126] This Eros, supreme principle of the world, *l'amor che muove il sole e l'altre stelle*,[127] cannot, for the poet Dante, refer to 'principles of being', but only to beings that actually exist.

The correct attitude towards all things can also be expressed by the supreme ethical concept of *giustizia* (with whose glorification Dante intended to conclude his *Convivio* and, though subordinated to it, by all the Aristotelian virtues, above all the cardinal virtues, which can also be represented by the courtly virtues, preeminently *cortesia*. In adult life Dante recommended *temperanza e fortezza*, or *magnanimità*, which, in 'Virgil, our greatest poet', Aeneas shows when he leaves Dido, or even when he 'hardened himself to enter alone with the Sybil into Hell and search for the soul of his father Anchises, in the face of so many perils'. But Dante adds immediately that, to be perfect, this period of life 'needs without question to be loving' (*d'essere amorosa*), which he also illustrates by the example of Aeneas.[128] Dante, the political man of cosmic-Christian justice, and Dante, the erotic man in quest of Beatrice, are one and the same, and above this ethical two-in-one-ness he knows of nothing except the inner mysteries of the Godhead. This primacy of ethics in Dante's thought should not be construed as the primacy of *praxis* over *theoria*, of action over contemplation, since he often stands up for the old hierarchy of values, but rather as the primacy of concrete personal existence over the essentialist world view of scholasticism. That is Dante's new way.

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[125] Conv 2, 4; 2, 14–15.

[126] Conv 3, 14–15; *cf.* the next chapter.

[127] Par 33, 145.

2. EROS AND AGAPE, OR WHO IS BEATRICE?

Dante must be interpreted from the summit of his work. The *Comedy* remains the key to the *Canzoniere* and the *Convivio*, which means that the Beatrice of the *Comedy* is the key to the earlier writings. The *Vita Nuova* is symbolic and melancholy, the *Convivio* is philosophizing and fragmentary, but the *Comedy* achieves a completeness of expression that raises the two previous works above themselves, liberates them and leads them to their true realization. At every stage of his life Dante strove for integration. The *Vita Nuova* is already qualitatively much more than what his poet friends, Guinizelli, Cavalcanti, Lapo Gianni, had achieved. And it is only in virtue of this 'more' that Dante, who meets these friends at various stages on his journey through Heaven, can greet them and put in their mouths the songs of his youth: Casella—'*Amor che nella mente mi ragiona*';[129] Bonagiunta—'*Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*'.[130] But in the case of the former, Cato warns the indolent, negligent spirits who hang on his words in rapture to 'haste to the mountain', and the latter is a poet of the old school, who concedes preeminence to the other. Dante climbs past both of them to a higher level. But if he is to study philosophy, he must first of all seek a superior point of view:

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[128] Conv 4, 26.

[129] Pg 2, 112.

[130] Pg 24, 51.

'We are not to call any man a real philosopher who is friendly with wisdom for the sake of pleasure, as are many who delight in composing odes and who zealously devote themselves to rhetoric and music. . . . We are not to call him a real philosopher who is a friend of wisdom for profit, as are lawyers, physicians, and almost all the clergy, who do not study in order to know, but in order to get money or office; and if anyone would give them that which it is their purpose to acquire, they would linger over their study no longer.' Beyond the delightful (*delectabile*) and the useful (*utile*) there is a love for wisdom for its own sake; wisdom alone is worthy of man (*honestum*). And just as love between men is genuine when each loves the other without reserve, so the true philosopher embraces wisdom in her totality, and wisdom in her totality opens herself to the whole man. 'And just as real friendship, abstracted from the individual soul and considered only in itself, has as its object the knowledge of right action, and for its form has the striving for right action, so philosophy considered in itself, apart from the individual soul, has as its object understanding, and as its form an almost divine love for the intellect (*quasi divino amore allo 'ntelletto*).'[131] So it is that the *Convivio*, which provides a philosophical exposition of the *Canzoni*, seeks a standpoint raised above the Eros of the run-of-the-mill poets and philosophers. And just as divine *hormê*, that gift of grace, is gradually distinguished from a purely natural drive or instinct by virtue of the superior goal for which it strives,[132] just as the developing embryo at first assumes the form of a plant, sponge and animal before there is revealed in it the spiritual form, which nonetheless was already in it as its motive power,[133] so the Eros of the poet rises up with a sudden start (the *Convivio* was left unfinished) to the height of its realization in the *Comedy*. The love referred to in the *Vita*

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[131] Conv 3, 11.

[132] Conv 4, 22.

[133] Pg 25, 49–51.

Nuova, which in the *Convivio* sought, by means of philosophy, to gain interior space, only comes to itself when it is exteriorized and enlarged till it assumes universal proportions, whereby the universe itself receives its true form, the form of love. Whoever the consoling *Donna gentila*, on whom Dante depended after the death of Beatrice, may be, whatever the place in his earthly life occupied by Gemma, whom he married and who bore him sons and daughters but who (according to Boccaccio) did not follow him into exile, the *Comedy* proves that Dante wants to see his life and work, indeed his whole Christian existence, as resting on an unshakeable fidelity, which he preserves from the dreamlike days of his youth, and which persists, purified, right on to the summit of his holy faith. If Helen were Gretchen, Faust would be a counter to Dante; but Helen's garments are dissolved, in dionysiac fashion, into the All, and while Gretchen can intercede for Faust to Mary, she cannot be his muse. And in Hegel's unending degrees of mediation there is no eros and no fidelity, because what is mediated is only ever the Absolute Spirit mediating itself to itself. Only Claudel's *Le Soulier de Satin* again achieves Dante's dimension, in which personal love and the shaping of the universe are mutully conditioned, taking the same path through the hell of the hardest renunciations and the purgatories of expiated infidelity. As Augustine says, 'Etiam peccata'. And yet the woman Claudel loves is not dead, so everything remains that much more passionate. Philosophy, which came to Dante's aid, is not at Claudel's disposal, and so a tragic dualism between the two images of women becomes inevitable in his work (*cf.* among the *Grandes Odes*, *La Muse qui est la grâce*). This muse could and ought to carry out Beatrice's work, but instead the muse dashes herself on the erotic defiance of the poet. Beatrice's purificatory and redemptive power in the end remains unique; she alone leads from Eros to Agape, or rather she is that Eros that is transfigured into agape. 'For the lady who guides thee through this divine region has in her look the same virtue as had the hand of Ananias.'[134] And the poet replies by referring to the integrating power of heavenly love, whether *quanta scrittura* refers to the *Minnesang* or philosophy or both: 'The good that satisfies this court is alpha and omega of all the scripture that love reads to me in tones loud or low.'[135] The disciple John, who in Heaven examines Dante's love, asks him to enumerate the elements of which his ultimate love is composed, out of which it achieves wholeness. 'Therefore I began again: "All those things whose bite can make the heart turn to God have wrought together in my charity; for the world's existence and my own, the death he bore that I might live, and that which every believer hopes for as I do, with the living assurance of which I spoke [of the good], have drawn me from the sea of perverse love and have brought me to the shore of that love that is just."'[136] Dante has been suspected of Averroism, in the respect that for him, to an increasing extent, all good activity originates from Heaven, while the human heart—as it were, the stuff into which the heavenly forms are embedded—is again and again compared to a passive 'wax' which can at most contribute a greater or lesser pliability to the form.[137] But this, however, is only one side of the dialectic of love, in which the ascent of the love results both wholly from the grace bestowed upon him by the beloved and from his own efforts, is as much an unmerited favour as his own deserts, as much an unfathomable absolution as his own repentance and conversion. That is why the full concept of love in Dante cannot be adequately described either as Eros (striving upwards) or as Agape (condescending); from the first, love is seen and described as lying beyond this opposition, and this 'beyond' becomes ever clearer in the successive stages of the work.

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[134] Par 26, 10–12.

The *Canzoniere*, and more especially the *Vita Nuova*, are, as Dante says in the *Convivio*, like 'presentiments in a dream' (*quasi sognando già vedea*);[138] they are in the strictest sense an 'aesthetic anticipation' of the later, consciously accepted totality. Dimly and sadly aware of the value of the treasure that is still hidden from him, the young lover enshrines it in a prose whose subtlety verges on preciosity. The real vision of the girl, who at their first meeting was nine years old, carries on in the form of a dream, in a *miravigliosa visione*, in which Amor, lordly and terrible and yet full of the promise of inner joy, appears and addresses the poet with the words, *Ego dominus tuus*: 'In his arms I seemed to see a naked figure, sleeping, wrapped lightly in a crimson cloth. Gazing intently I saw it was the gracious girl who had bestowed her greeting on me the day before. In one hand the standing figure held a fiery object, and he seemed to say, *Vide cor tuum*. After a little while I thought he wakened her who slept and prevailed on her to eat the glowing object in his hand. Reluctantly and hesitantly she did so. A few moments later his happiness turned to bitter grief, and, weeping, he gathered the figure in his arms and together they seemed to ascend into the heavens.'[139] The apparent favour he subsequently bestows on other women assists the poet in concealing his true love from the world. The first lady, who at Amor's bidding had served as a screen, leaves the city. Amor then reappears 'like a traveller, dressed in simple, humble clothing' and tells him of a second lady who will be his defence. But the homage he now gives her gets the poet talked about, so that Beatrice refuses to greet him in the street. He implores Amor for mercy. The latter appears to him while he sleeps and says, *Fili mi, tempus est, ut praetermittantur simulacra nostra*, but then bursts into tears. Dante, dismayed, then asks him, 'Lord of all nobility, why do you weep?' Amor replies with the prophetic words: *Ego tamquam centrum circuli, cui simuli modo se habent circumferentiae partes: tu autem non sic.*[140] Amor is at the centre and from there surveys all the paths that should lead the lover, still on the circumference, to the centre, and when he considers their height and their depth, he weeps. Death, everywhere present in the *Vita Nuova*, stalks these paths, death which from moment to moment comes ever nearer and finally snatches away Beatrice herself. Meanwhile, the poet remains ensnared by the bittersweet dialectic of erotic preexistence. Love is good, because it turns the faithful lover's mind away from all that is less worthy; it is not good because it brings more and more pain; and yet, on the other hand, it is good, because such pain is itself sweet and the beloved is unique.

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[135] Par 26, 16–18.

[136] Par 26, 55–63.

[137] Conv 1, 8; 2, 10; M 2, 2; Inf 11, 49f; Pg 18, 38; 33, 79f; Par 1, 40–42; 8, 127; 13, 67–69; 13, 73–75. A. S. Cook, 'Dante's Figure of the Seal and the Wax', *Mod. Lang. Notes* (1900), 511f.

[138] Conv 2, 13.

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[139] VN 3.

[140] VN 12.

The sight of the beloved, the pleasantries she exchanges with others about him, make him say, mysteriously: *io tenni li piedi in quella parte della vita, di là dalla quale non si può ire più per intendimento di ritornare.*[141] Anyone who thought of returning would not be able, or rather would not be permitted, to go out beyond that extremity. But what would it mean to return? What one day will it mean for Dante to return from Heaven? Everything presses him toward the final truth. The poet decides from then on to compose only 'what was praise of this most gracious being', and at once inspiration complies with that decision in the famous canzone, *Donne ch'avete intelletto d'amore*, in which the angels and the blessed souls in Paradise ask that Beatrice return home to God. But God in his mercy grants the lover still on earth a short reprieve; for all women who look upon her she is the archetype, but none can resist her eyes or her smile.[142] And yet these eyes make beautiful everything they survey.[143] Beatrice's father dies, the poet falls seriously ill, and, as if in delirium, there appears to him the unavoidability of his beloved's death, and other hallucinatory figures whisper to him: 'You too are already dead'. In a dream Beatrice lies dead before him, her face full of gentleness and humility; she seems to say: 'I now go to behold the fountainhead of peace.' Then he too calls passionately on death: 'Sweet death, come to me ... see, I already wear your colour.' Soon after that Amor says to him: 'Bless now the day I took you in my power for this you must surely do.' The poet then sees, coming first, Giovanna, the 'mistress of his best friend', and behind her, Beatrice. The name of the first reminds him of the Forerunner, 'who preceded the true light. ... And afterwards Amor seemed also to say these further words: "Anyone who thought carefully about this would call Beatrice Amor because of the great resemblance she bears to me."'[144] Now Beatrice dies, yet the fact is just registered. The poet is not capable of describing it, and, what is more, he would have to put himself in the limelight, which must be avoided at all cost, perhaps because, in dying, Beatrice

[141] VN 14.

[142] VN 19.

[143] VN 21.

[144] VN 24.

has let him know she returns his love? It is possible; we do not know. The number nine has constantly accompanied her to the point where she becomes the very embodiment of the number, 'that is, a miracle, of which the root is nothing other than the glorious Trinity itself. Perhaps a more subtle mind could find a still more subtle reason for it'.[145] If, as three times three, she has been God's radiance, has grace, then, as the next canzone says, hers is no ordinary return to God, but rather God's calling back to himself what is his own. Then follows the account of the anniversary of Beatrice's death when the poet first catches sight of the *gentil donna*, who, full of compassion, watches him from a window. For the sake of this compassion he becomes fond of her, seeks her presence, is bewildered by it and is brought to that state of division that the first canzone of the *Convivio* will describe and allegorically interpret. The *Vita Nuova*, however, does not embark on this allegorical path but returns 'with bitter regret' and 'a heart full of shame' to the most lovely Beatrice. The book closes with two sonnets of longing and pilgrimage. They sing of the 'new understanding, which Love, by weeping, gave him' and which draws him up above the highest heavens, where he sees the transfigured Beatrice. But the 'pilgrim spirit . . . speaks of what it sees in subtle words I do not comprehend within my heart forlorn': 'Yet of that lady sweet I know it speaks, for oft it brings my Beatrice to thought; and this, dear ladies, well I understand.' The last vision reveals to the poet things which make him decide to write no more of the beloved 'until I could do so more worthily'. 'If it shall please him by whom all things live that my life continue for a few years, I hope to compose concerning her what has never been written in rhyme of any woman. And then may it please him who is the Lord of courtesy that my soul may go up to see the glory of my lady, that is of the blessed Beatrice, who now in glory beholds the face of him *qui est per omnia secula benedictus*.'[146]

Fundamental Christian ideas run through the whole book. Above all, the idea of humility constantly recurs: Beatrice herself is crowned with *umilità*, and at the sight of her the poet's heart becomes humble. The grace of the woman whom he adores is immediately characterized, here and in the *Canzoniere*, by *pietà*, compassionate love. To meet Beatrice means for Dante, to enter in upon the heart of Christianity: 'Whenever and wherever she appeared, in the hope of receiving her exquisite salutation I felt I had not an enemy in the world. Indeed, I glowed with a flame of charity that moved me to forgive all who had ever injured me.'[147] It is Christianity but, as it were, in an atmosphere of aesthetic reverie, whose distinctive charm is the deliberate failure to distinguish between dream and reality. The Platonic motifs, from which the *Convivio* branches off, and which regard the beloved as an idea, a heavenly power, an emanation from the Godhead, at the same time provide a philosophical justification for this half-real dream-like existence. It is possible to offer an interpretation of Dante principally in terms of this early stage, to present the Christian element in his work in mythical-Platonic terms and to see the associated doctrine of love, which emerges at precisely the same time as the *dolce stil nuovo*, as the hypostatisation of an enclosed, self-contained world of human emotion. This is how he was treated in the symbolism of Rossetti in England and of all those like Rossetti on the continent; the atmosphere of Tristan, of Petrarch's, Michelangelo's, and Shakespeare's sonnets is not far away. Indeed, the same wind was blowing in the circle of Dante's friends, where Eros ruled over the heart as an all-powerful *fatum*, a sweet calamity, and this problem was not really overcome by Guido Guinizelli, where the Platonic tendency breaks through, the contemplation of heavenly beauty in the nobility of form, in the eyes, mouth and words that reveal the *cor gentile*. Dante has this air in his lungs; he exhaled it once again, with inner sympathy and passion, in his song in Hell about Francesca da Rimini,[148] only to leave it behind him, once and for all, in Hell. He preserves something of it in Purgatory and Hell—apparently a great deal, because even the divine Eros in Paradise is clothed in the language of the *dolce stil nuovo* and could never have been expressed without that

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[145] VN 30.
[146] VN 42–43.

[147] VN 11.

[148] Inf 5, 73–142.

language.[149] Yet what is preserved is a transfigured Eros, cleansed of all tragedy and the melancholy of decay.[150]

But one must not overlook the fact that, in the dream world of the *Canzoniere*, essential themes of the *Comedy* are announced. The hardness of Hell is anticipated in the terrible '*canzoni* of stone', which portray the stony, pitiless heart of the beloved; for example in *Amor tu vedi ben*, whose hammered rhythm Dante boasts of having invented, and in the truly formidable *Così nel mio parlar*, which cruelly depicts Eros as a vampire and kindles a war without mercy. Many of the punishments and forms of torture that the damned suffer in Hell are inflicted on the lover in the *Canzoniere*. The heart, turned to stone, glass and ice,[151] is first smashed, then healed again for its further undoing.[152]

L'imaginar dolente che m'acide
Davanti mi dipinge ogni martiro. . . .[153]

Seen here in advance, the torments of Hell are also a function of heavenly Eros, as can be read on the gate of Hell (*fecemi . . . il primo Amore*), and it is from there that they derive their meaning.

The *Convivio* is Dante's attempt to find a bridge that will take him to his beloved, now disappeared. The first intermediary was the *donna della finestra* at the end of the *Vita Nuova*. But the Platonic doctrine of love, there already sketched out, presents a second intermediary: philosophy, love of wisdom. And because Dante always works like an architect, he establishes an interior connection between the two: the songs to the *donna pietosa* are interpreted, in the 'allegorical sense', as expressing love for *sophia*. There is in all this a measure of existential obscurity and intentional mystification. The most important canzone, *Voi che intendendo il terzo ciel movete*, describes the conflict in Dante's heart between the old love, which lifted up his thoughts to the 'glorified lady' and filled him with a longing for death, and a new love, which struggles bitterly against the old. This new love fills his heart with anxiety until he understands that there is only one Eros, the Eros which assigns to him the new, noble love, the Eros to which he must respond.

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[149] Pg 18, 1–75; above all, Par 27, 88–99, where the *Minnesang* style is transferred to the heavenly realm.

[150] For this whole theme, see B. Nardi, *Filosofia del amore nei rimatori del duecento e in Dante. Dante e la cultura medievale* (Bari, 1949), pp. 1–92.

[151] Sestine, '*Al poco giorno*', Canzone, '*Io son venuto*', '*Ai fals ris*', Str. 3.

[152] Canzone, '*Amor dacchè convien*', Str. 4.

[153] Canzone, '*Ion non posso celar*', Str. 2.

Amor, signor verace,
Ecco l'ancella tua, fa che ti piace.

Words, literally, of manifest infidelity and near blasphemous in their presumptuous use of other, most sacred words; only allegorical interpretation could remove the double scandal. But this interpretation remains profoundly ambiguous, especially if one considers Dante's bitter confession in Purgatory, when he acknowledges the insanity of his life since the death of Beatrice. In the *Convivio* there is willful dissimulation: does the literal sense have historical reality, the allegorical being secondary and metaphorical? Or is the allegorical the only true sense,[154] the literal being only its poetic garb? Or, finally (and this might be the solution), is the allegory intended to justify the historical reality? Beatrice has been carried away to be inaccessible above the highest spheres; even love for her threatens to evaporate into unintelligibility. In order to live, this love needs mediation, and since these intermediaries are only functions of the ultimate love, the poet believes he is permitted to identify them with it. Another woman, who embodies all the noble qualities of *umilità*, *pietà*, *cortesia*, keeps alive the reality of the beloved, and philosophy, by means of its universality, provides a bridge to the one who is now so far away. Philosophy teaches us about the cosmic system, the circling spheres and the intelligences that govern them, upon which the poet climbs to the Empyrean. It teaches us to see the symbolism of all the cosmic forms and to perceive, through them, the ultimate Beloved, the *eschaton orekton*. Philosophy also teaches us to understand man's ethical and political behaviour, according to the Platonic/Aristotelian doctrine of *politeia*, as of a piece with his philosophical Eros, and to apply such understanding to the way we live. Beatrice, as the goal of both intermediaries, is in Heaven—Dante knows this through a 'revelation of love'. There is no need to speak further of her, for all things, even the *Convivio*, go on their pilgrim way to find her.[155]

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[154] '*E da procedere all, esposizione allegorica e vera*' (Conv 2, 13).

We can leave the question of Dante's love life on one side. It is certain that the *donna pietosa* is someone other than his wife, Gemma, and both the poems and the *Comedy* make us suspect that there were other women too who kept alive the image of Beatrice for him as much as they obscured it. It is the problem of 'Platonic love', inasmuch as the *via positiva* Dante follows had to demand the compatibility of both the contemplation of the beautiful and the renunciation of its possession—and here, of course, we meet the problem of Dante's marriage. Gemma can be only the woman passed by and humiliated by the poet-genius. But about all this the *Convivio* is silent.

On the other hand, it speaks abundantly about philosophy, especially of those sciences that together give it completeness: physics the science of the cosmos, metaphysics the science of the intelligences and ethics. This is the *donna pietosa* who takes pity on him and by whom he moves upward to the highest love. We must take seriously the description of the erotic-anagogic beauty of philosophy, the transfer to it of all the praises of the *Minnesang*. Her eyes and her glances, when they are 'turned to her lovers', are overpowering, they 'enflame the soul when it is inwardly free',[156] make 'a great fire from a spark', a longing for vision, even in the depths of sleep.[157] A glance is a revelation of the soul that lies hidden within, and the glances of philosophy flash before the thinker like incandescent revelations of the absolute, like eruptions into this present world of what is eternal and essentially hidden. 'The sight of this lady has been dispensed to us so bountifully not only through beholding her face which she shows to us, but through the longing to acquire the things that she keeps hidden from us.'[158] 'At the window of the eyes' appear the interior dispositions of the soul, and likewise, in her smiling mouth, 'the soul shows herself . . . like colour under glass (*siccome colore dopo vetro*)'.[159] 'I do not say without good cause "where she taketh heed of me", and not "where I take heed of her". But hereby I wish to intimate the great power (*virtù*) that her eyes exercised over me, for their rays pierced through me on all sides as if I had been transparent.'[160] This piercing can also seem to 'kill', precisely when, in dialectic, philosophy's dilemmas seem to be torn in two.[161] Here she can behave unfeelingly as the beloved rejecting her lover and thus not reveal herself.[162] This does not prevent love being 'the form of philosophy', and this love manifests itself in its dealings with wisdom, which 'brings in its train wondrous beauty'.[163] In brief: 'Philosophy has wisdom for her material object and love for her form',[164] and since wisdom is ultimately eternal, the love that loves the eternal can also only have the character of eternity. Just as 'the divine light radiates into the intelligences without any intermediary (*senza mezzo*) . . .': because it is eternal, so also must its objects be, and *vice versa*. This is why love of philosophy confers on man a resemblance to divine love.[165] This personal view, both of the divine wisdom that looks and smiles upon us and of love's answer, leads Dante to link this same love with faith and hope. Through philosophy's revelatory glance of love, which, like a flash of lightning, fleetingly reveals for us the obscurity of God's mysteries, 'we are helped to believe that every miracle may be accounted for in a more lofty understanding and consequently may exist. Whence our excellent faith has its origin, and from faith comes the hope that dares to long for things foreseen, and from hope springs the workings of charity. And by these three virtues men rise to the pursuit of philosophy in that celestial Athens where Stoics and Peripatetics and Epicureans through the skill of eternal truth willingly complement each other in harmony of spirit'.[166]

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[155] Conv 2, 9.

[156] Conv 2, 16.

[157] Conv 3, 1.

[158] Conv 3, 14.

[159] Conv 3, 8.

From philosophy comes both the clear-eyed glance, the convincing demonstration, and the 'enigmatic smile': the *persuasioni*, the persuasive force of the beautiful woman, who 'seduces' us into what is higher, who veils and unveils her charms, only veiling with the promise of unveiling. And what is

[160] Conv 3, 10.

[161] Conv 2, 16.

[162] Conv 4, 1.

[163] Conv 3, 13.

[164] Conv 3, 14.

[165] *Ibid.*

[166] *Ibid.*

unveiled is so overwhelming for us that Dante can regard the final communion of lover and beloved as simply the conclusion, of the yearning and striving, which have now assumed form and shape. For Dante 'eternal striving' is a contradiction, an impossibility, in fact a moral outrage.[167] Of course, Eros draws us upward ever higher, purifying, humbling and demanding renunciations, for the simple reason that the beloved is with God, and philosophy implants in us the love of what God himself loves. But this is only for the sake of the discovery and vision of that ultimate figure, which Dante reveals to us in the image of the Celestial Rose.

For Dante, looking truth or wisdom in the eyes—and that can mean seeing oneself in *reflexio completa*[168]—means not stopping before one has encountered the object of God's approval and love. But Beatrice is precisely the definitive object of God's approval and love, a part of eternal wisdom, and since one cannot really speak of a part where all things interpenetrate, she is that wisdom herself. In fact, now it becomes unimportant whether it is the *donna gentile* who symbolizes philosophy; all that matters is that the ineffable grace, which once and for the first time was encountered on earth in Beatrice, is the manifestation of that eternal grace, which loved us in advance, from eternity: 'Open your eyes and perceive that before you were made she loved you, guiding and ordering your whole life, and after you were made, in order to direct you aright, she came in your own likeness to you.'[169] Is this meant to refer to Beatrice? Or Wisdom incarnate, Christ? At this point does the blasphemy of offering the *Ecce ancilla* to the god, Eros, become intelligible and pardonable?

Dante cannot be suspected of having hypostasized eternal Sophia, which for him is nothing other than the means of eternalising Eros in God, of understanding Eros not merely as the love of the heart striving toward God or as God's love of the world pouring itself on creation, but as the fulfilled archetype of the erotic reciprocity between man and woman. On the one hand, God recognizes himself when he recognizes his love for the world, for the things he intends to create, and his love is so great that it is not troubled by his foreknowledge that some creatures will perish, no more than would nature prevent a tree from blossoming, supposing that it had consciousness and knew that some flowers would fall off. On the other hand, 'although God in beholding himself sees all things as one (*insiemente tutto*), he nonetheless also sees all things as distinct from himself and from one another, *in quanto la distinzione delle cose è in Lui*'.[170] And so wisdom is God himself and yet is not God himself (just as Eve, taken from his rib, was Adam and yet not Adam). Thus

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[167] Conv 3, 15.

[168] Conv 4, 2.

[169] Conv 3, 15.

> God, who comprehends everything in a unifying manner (for his comprehension is his encircling) sees nothing so gentle as he sees when he looks where this philosophy abides. . . . For if we recall to memory what has been said earlier, philosophy is a loving converse with wisdom, which is found in God most of all, since in him dwell highest wisdom and highest love and highest act (*atto*), and it cannot exist elsewhere except in so far as it proceeds from himself. Divine philosophy is therefore part of the divine essence . . . and she exists in him in true and perfect fashion as if eternally wedded to him (*quasi per eterno matrimonio*). In the other intelligences she exists in lesser degree, almost like the beloved prostitute (*quasi come druda*) of whom no lover has complete enjoyment, but in whose aspect he finds satisfaction for his desires and enthusiasm (*vaghezza*).[171]

This is the key word in the *Convivio*: philosophy is 'prostitution' as long as it is still on the way to the highest love. However, it becomes a perfect participation in the eternal nuptials the moment Beatrice is discovered to be the one who is in God, the one whom God loves, and who is just as God loves her to be. For this reason, once she is found, she can never be lost.[172] But, on the other hand, 'philosophy not only lodges in the wise, but also . . . wherever the love for her finds lodging . . . whose true home is in the Holy of holies of the divine Mind.'[173]

The *Divine Comedy* realises the truth of the *Convivio*, which was left unfinished, probably because ultimate Christian truth and transparency cannot be attained through the distinction

[170] Conv 3, 12.

[171] *Ibid.*

[172] Par 33, 100–105.

[173] Conv 4, 30.

between literal sense and allegory. For if the literal sense was true, it was infidelity to Beatrice, and no allegory could disguise the fact that it was an illusory form of self-redemption and not the receiving of divine grace. But if the literal sense was not true but purely fictitious, then the plane of existence had not been fully attained, and the study of philosophy was really just Dante's way of consoling himself for the loss of Beatrice. Only a totally new starting point could clarify this blurred distinction. From now on, all mediations between Heaven and earth are seen in principle as the ways of grace, occasioned by Christian, not philosophical, powers. Beatrice then proves herself to be a reality (not a symbol), for, in her *pietà* for Dante and in graciously sending Virgil to him, she is stirred into action by the highest creaturely sanctity: Mary is the one who has taken pity and who sent St Lucy to Beatrice in order to spur her into helping her beloved. Thus stirred, Beatrice descends into Limbo and beseeches Virgil to hurry to the aid of her 'friend': 'I fear he may already be so far astray that I have risen too late to succour him. . . . Love moved me and makes me speak.'[174]

The *Comedy* begins with Dante being lost in the dark wood of sin. This would have been fatal to him, and no self-constructed philosophy could have helped him out of it had not grace thrown him both a life-belt and a fish-hook. Love alone led him to the terrible warnings of Hell and to purification in Purgatory, at the end of which he must encounter, withstand and declare himself for love. The key to the whole journey, as Virgil says to the poet, is to be found in Beatrice: 'When thou art before her sweet radiance whose fair eyes see all, thou shalt know from her of thy life's journey.'[175] If in the *Convivio* the eyes and the smile of philosophy flashed like lightning and led the poet upwards, the whole of the *Comedy* is filled with the eyes and the smile, indeed laugh (*riso*), of Beatrice. The thought of it was enough to lead Dante up to her; but the sight of her leads him to the vision of God. The whole journey is constantly called a grace, indeed an unimaginably exalted grace. That Dante, a living man, a citizen of this world, should proceed through the kingdom of the world to come 'is so strange a thing to hear that it is a great token that God loves thee'.[176] Thus speaks Sapia, and immediately after, Guido del Duca: 'Thou makest us marvel . . . at the grace given thee.'[177] Likewise, Hugo Capet: 'I will tell thee . . . because so great grace shines in thee even before thy death.'[178] Dante gives this reply to the lustful: 'I go up hence to be no longer blind. A lady is above who gains grace for me by which I bring my mortal part through your world.'[179] And to the angry, recalling the unique mission of Isaiah: 'I came here through the anguish of Hell; and since God has so received me into his grace that he wills that I see his court in a way quite strange to modern use. . . .'[180] *Per modo tutto fuor del moderno uso.* Cacciaguida, however, on seeing his 'son', cries out: 'O grace of God poured forth above measure! To whom as to thee was heaven's gate ever opened twice?'[181] Justinian addresses him thus: 'O born for good, to whom grace has given to see the thrones of the eternal triumph.'[182] His own constellation, Gemini, 'light pregnant with mighty power from which I acknowledge all my genius, whatever it be', speaks to Dante of the same 'grace' granted to him 'to enter into the high wheel that bears you round'.[183] Finally, his protectress herself:

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[174] Inf 2, 64f.

[175] Inf 10, 130–132.

E Beatrice cominciò: 'Ringrazia,
Ringrazia il Sol degli angeli, ch'a questo
Sensibil t'ha levato per sua grazia.'[184]

Bernard, who tells him to look up finally at Mary, addresses him as 'child of grace'.[185] It is a grace that imprints upon him the visible signs of election[186] and grants him nothing less than that special grace of certainty of salvation, which Thomas Aquinas confirms for him.[187] All this divine grace flows down, as Bernard's prayer in the final canto proclaims, from Mary, the womb of the incarnation of God: 'Thou, Lady, art so great and so prevailing that whoso would have grace and does not turn to thee, his desire would fly without wings . . . in thee is mercy, in thee pity, in thee great bounty, in thee is joined all goodness that is in any creature.'[188] It is the grace of God flowing down to him through Mary, the mediatrix of graces. But this grace is also mediated by the whole of the 'Jerusalem above', by the community of the saints, who were and are entirely real, historical human beings, and from whose midst arises a multitude of helpers, guides and intercessors, each of whom, in his own way, expresses the community of love in its totality. Beatrice, formed by God as the poet's eternal beloved, has, without doubt, the same degree of reality as the other saints. Here is no allegory or symbol; here we are simply dealing with the laws of the *communio sanctorum*. This fact constitutes the foundation of the *Divine Comedy*, which is, therefore, not just one of the transcendental adventure stories of the Middle Ages. There is nothing about the *Comedy* of that curiosity found in the visionary literature of this and later periods. It is existential theology.

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[176] Pg 13, 144.
[177] Pg 14, 13–14; likewise, 14, 80–81.
[178] Pg 20, 41–42.
[179] Pg 26, 58–60.
[180] Pg 16, 39–42.
[181] Par 15, 29–30.
[182] Par 5, 115–116; likewise, the apostle James, Par 25, 40f.
[183] Par 22, 112–120.
[184] Par 10, 52–54, 'And Beatrice began: "Give thanks, give thanks to the Sun of the angels, who to the visible one has raised thee by His grace".'
[185] Par 31, 112.
[186] Pg 21, 22–24.

From Dante's point of view the journey through the three realms is two things at the same time: first, the history of his redemption from perdition, his progressive realization of what it is to be a Christian; and second, his discovery of how his first and deepest love can become, in a Christian way, truly eternal. For Dante these two are one. The possibility of man's fulfilment existentially demands eternal life. But this is not given as a kind of vague hope, the object of which would always be beyond man's grasp, quite unrealizable in terms of his actual experience of mortality. No, what man, the creature of God, is given, or more specifically, what the Christian is given, is an anticipated incorporation, even in the experiential sense, into eternal life, for he is already a real partaker of divine life in that Christian grace received in the sacraments of the Church. Whoever truly wishes to be a Christian must keep his psychological experience open and allow it to be determined, to the very last, by the experience of eternal realities. And of course, as Dante knew only too well, that does not mean bypassing the theological virtues, but realizing their inner depth. Even in the heights of Paradise the poet submits to an examination by the chief apostles on the orthodoxy of these three virtues of his. Indeed, on his journey he must also seek to realize what, from the perspective of faith, the experience of life beyond death is as such. What he said of that is of unprecedented profundity and could spring only from a most pure and humble Christian contemplation. It is sufficient to recall how he bathed in the rivers Lethe and Eunoe, how he was able to forget all his past faults without detriment to his own spiritual integrity and yet to remember all that is good and of grace. The words of Cunizza in the sphere of Venus recall her manifold amorous adventures and affairs on earth: 'Yet here we do not repent; nay, we smile, not for our fault, which does not come back to mind, but for the power that ordained and foresaw. Here we contemplate the art that makes beautiful the great result and discern the good for which the world above wheels about the world below.'[189] These words are essentially forgetful only of the experience of sin and lust, and they transfigure all events in the light of God's grace, which, setting aside the former, depraved manner of life, is the true and definitive way by which the blest may appropriate and realize their own earthly life. But such immersion in the correct perspectives of existence would have been difficult for a poet like Dante had he not been able to contemplate at length the spirit, soul and total character of his beloved in glory. Just one look at her was enough for him to perceive in his heart the moral taste and discernment that regulate, in a Christian and definitive way, situations on earth; just one look was enough to communicate that courtesy of heart that sets the tone *nell'aula più segrata* of the heavenly Emperor and his court.[190] This has never been tried in poetry before or since. It would be ludicrous to say that Dante is indeed a great poet but 'still' bound by the dogma of the Middle Ages or of Catholicism in general: as a poet he can be interpreted only from the centre of this dogma; he identifies himself existentially with it, plunges his inspiration into its waters in order to receive that same inspiration anew from it. Thanks to the concrete, Christian reality of grace, his poetic preexistence in the *Vita Nuova* and his philosophical explorations in the *Convivio* are subsumed without remainder in this new inspiration. Even his political passion, his judgment on his own era and cities and provinces, can be interpreted only from this dogmatic centre.

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[187] Par 10, 82–87.

[188] Par 33, 13–15, 19–21.

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[189] Par 9, 103–108.
[190] Par 25, 40–42, 'in the inner chamber'.

In this Beatrice is his model. She is what is called, from Origen to the medieval commentaries on the Canticle, the *anima ecclesiastica*,[191] the soul whose experience and sensibility, thoughts and desires have been assumed into the universality of the *Sponsa Christi*, the bride of the Lamb, the heavenly Jerusalem, the company of all the living and of the saints. Dante is given complete Christian authority to identify his beloved, whom he knows to be with God, with this incarnation of the loving Church, and, in so far as she is this, to expect from her mediation of divine grace for his redemption, purification, illumination and union. In the earthly Paradise appears the triumphal procession of the Church, her chariot drawn by Christ in the form of a griffin, accompanied by the four living creatures from Ezekiel, the four and twenty elders, the theological and cardinal virtues and the hagiographers of the Bible. All sing: 'Blessed art thou among the daughters of Adam and blessed forever be thy beauty!'—a paraphrase of the Ave. When the chariot, the 'seven-starred constellation of the first heaven', stands still, three times the cry is heard, '*Veni sponsa de Libano*', without doubt intoned by the author of the Canticle. Hundreds of angels descend from the chariot, strewing flowers to the cry of *Benedictus qui venis* and *Manibus o date lilia plenis*. Then, 'girt with olive over a white veil, clothed under a green mantle with the colour of living flame', Beatrice comes down from the chariot like the sun rising. Dante recognizes this veiled figure immediately by the mysterious power that she radiates, and *d'antico amor sentì la gran potenzia . . . cognosco i segni*

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[191] *Cf.* my '*Wer ist die Kirche?*' in *Sponsa Verbi* (1960), pp. 148–202.

dell'antica fiamma . . . il santo riso a sè traeali con l'antica rete.[192] These are words from the world of the *Minnesang*, recalling his youth when first the lovely one appeared to him. The poet does all he can to impress upon his reader the identity of the one who appears now with the completely real Florentine girl; there is no question here of allegory. And yet the mariological and, frankly, christological attributes, together with the cardinal virtues, are later[193] presented as Beatrice's handmaidens, who serve her before she descends to earth—as if she were the Church preexistent with God. The theological virtues form a circle around her: 'Beatrice, turn thy holy eyes. . . .'[194] When the festal procession has gone on to the tree of Paradise, she descends once again from the chariot,[195] and later (Dante sleeps between this and the disappearance of the procession) she is seated 'beneath the new foliage' of the tree of the kingdom, 'upon its root', in the company of the virtues. Now begins the transformation of the Church-chariot, the history of the Church in the form of symbols. Beatrice intervenes here only to drive away the lean fox, the image of heresy.[196] She plays no part in the transformation of the Church into the Great Harlot, but while the virtues sing their lament about the ruin of the holy city, she listens to them 'sighing and compassionate . . ., so altered that Mary changed little more at the cross'.[197]

All this can have only a theological interpretation; any other kind of interpretation, especially of a simply aesthetic-symbolic kind, would have to convict the poet here of extreme bad taste. And if Dante has done everything he can to make us believe in the identification of his *antica fiamma* with the heavenly Beatrice now merged with the Spirit of the Church, if, consequently, he directs his earthly Eros, in all seriousness, at this heavenly object, he is also willing to pay the existential price for it and to submit himself, in confession, to the sacramental judgment of his beloved, who now—across the purifying water—looks down upon him from the heart of the Church.

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[192] 'Felt old love's great power. . . . I know the mark of the ancient flame. . . . so did the holy smile draw them to itself with the old net.' The procession of the Church: Pg 29. The cries: Pg 30, 11, 17; the acknowledgment of love's great and ancient power: Pg 30, 39, 48. The old net: Pg 32. 6.

[193] Pg 31, 106f.

[194] Pg 31, 133.

[195] Pg 32, 36, 86f.

[196] Pg 32, 122.

[197] Pg 33, 4–6.

3. *PURGATORIO*, CONFESSION AND INSPIRATION

The whole of the *Divine Comedy* is unequivocally constructed around Dante's meeting with Beatrice in the *Purgatorio*. The journey through Hell is motivated by the compassion of Beatrice, who sees no other way of setting Dante free from his *follia*,[198] and the various levels of the Mountain of Purgatory are, for Dante, preliminary stages of, and preparation for, that meeting. Aesthetically, it is Paradise that is in the most difficult position. To pass muster as poetry, it must disclose the inner dimensions of Dante and Beatrice's first reunion, for that is where the sole centre of gravity in the drama is to be found and where the decisive catharsis occurs. This scene is fashioned with the utmost aesthetic and theological tact and seriousness, for in it Eros must strip itself bare even to the point of a complete and supremely humiliating nakedness of soul; it must consent to Christian *katorthôsis*, amendment and restoration, which means inseparably both confession and Purgatory. Dante has understood that confession must be precisely a purifying, cauterizing fire, and that Purgatory after death can be no less than the final existential confession: confrontation with love, as it is, really and in Heaven, the total destruction of all on earth that presumptuously called itself by that name. And this ideal-typical, eschatological confession cannot even be practised by man himself; instead it must come down upon him like a judgment, as true love reveals itself to man. That is how Jesus confessed the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, when he seized upon her evasive, allusive replies and told her everything that she had done. This purification of Eros before its final transfiguration is possible only in the Church, and so the beloved must assume the objective and inexorable countenance of Ecclesia. Here the whole world of Tristan is transcended, as is that of Wolfram's *Parzival* with its symbolic twilight and its existentially insoluble ambiguity (*zwîvel*), its objective and fateful guilt. Here the soul is illuminated like a crystal and can and must, without reserve, face up to its baseness and cowardice (*viltà*).[199] There no longer can be any question of an aesthetic 'slurring of the notes', of invoking the ideas of destiny and tragedy. During judgment there can be no side-glance at other people who are also sinners, perhaps greater sinners, no side-glance at mitigating circumstances, no side-glance at the forgiveness that is soon to follow. Existence in its entirety must force itself into the judgment of confession like a river through a narrow gorge.

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[198] Pg 1, 59.

The central scene is already prepared for in the *Inferno*, and the whole ascent up the cliffs and ledges of Purgatory is a preparation for it. Hell begins with the gloomy anguish (*paura*) of the one who has gone astray in the *selva oscura* of guilt, who has lost the *verace via*. The beasts, the symbol of sins, press him hard. He could deal with them if there were only two of them, but not three. The sight of the she-wolf arouses such fear (*paura*) 'that I lost hope of the ascent'; she drives him back 'to where the sun is silent'. What good is it to the sinner that it is 'the beginning of the morning and the sun is mounting with those stars that were with it when Divine Love first set in motion those fair things' if the fear (*paura*) he had known all through the night 'in the lake of his heart' still continues?[200] He only returns to the light when love makes him set out on 'the journey to the end of night', when the man without hope enters the gate beneath which 'all abandon hope'.[201] The whole journey seems like a dream,[202] and from that dream-like quality the landscape of Hell derives the strange conjunction of great plasticity and ultimate elusiveness. Nonetheless again and again there is an awakening from the snares of sleep,[203] and his own reality is constantly brought before his eyes: the weight of his body makes Charon's boat cut deeper into the water than it was wont;[204] he alone casts a disconcerting shadow in Purgatory. For his salvation and to his horror, he will have to see damnation, but not without, by way of suggestion, experiencing it first hand. Before the city of Dis, where the demons guard the entrance, he must experience the impotence of Virgil,[205] and he thinks of having to return 'alone on his mad way'.[206] 'Judge, reader, if I did not lose heart at the sound of the accursed words; for I did not think I should ever return home.'[207] Shortly after, the travellers meet the Furies, who call upon Medusa to turn Dante to stone. Virgil commands him to hide his face: 'For should the Gorgon show herself and thou see her, there would be no returning above.'[208] Fear must unceasingly overwhelm him: during his mad flight on Geryon's back, when it shakes him like the shudder of an intermittent fever;[209] when the devil accompanies him to the pit of boiling tar;[210] again in the pit of the hypocrites, where fear ruffles his hair,[211] and then at the sight of the wrestling giant, Antaeus, when fear nearly kills him.[212] Before crossing the portals of Hell, Dante has given his consent to all that is to come; he entreats Virgil: 'In order that I may escape this evil and worse, lead me where thou hast said, that I may see St Peter's gate.'[213] It is the gate of confession in the middle of Purgatory. This is the mountain of penitence, expiation and confession in one. At the bottom Dante begins by washing himself in the dew of Heaven to cleanse himself of the soot of Hell and by donning his ascetic garb of rushes.[214] Then follow the terraces of the mountain, and each step upward is like a 'shedding of skin' (*spogliarvi lo scoglio*),[215] a stripping away of the darkness of the world,[216] the untying of a knot,[217] and thus the opening of his heart to the waters of peace,[218] a self-purification in order 'to return fair to him that made thee'.[219] It is an ascent, that would not be possible 'on foot', but only 'with the swift wings and plumage of great desire',[220] only with the singleness of purpose of one who does not have the time to look to right or left, but stands 'like a firm tower that never shakes its top for blast of wind'.[221] The higher one goes, the easier the climb.[222] But for Dante climbing can be only by day,[223] in stark contrast to the way of purification shown in St John of the Cross, a way that can be walked only by night. The *via purgativa* is at the same time *illuminativa*; hence, Virgil's beautiful, ancient prayer to the sun.[224] The ascent is speeded by the intercession of the living, thanks to which penitent love can accomplish in a single flight what otherwise would occur so slowly.[225] Dante also discovers that one can be carried away by grace, as if in a dream or rapture, like Ganymede, which enables one to leap over the terraces.[226] As in Hell, Dante shares, more or less, in the pains of the penitent, depending on how strongly aware he is of having fallen into the kind of sin in question. He knows himself to be almost free of envy, but he has far more to fear from the punishment of pride;[227] he walks there in the company of a penitent who carries a heavy burden of stone on his back 'as oxen go in a yoke',[228] and finally he will have to pass through the naked fire of the lustful.[229]

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[199] As self-accusation: Inf 2, 45, 122; Inf 9, 1.

[200] Inf 1–60.

[201] Inf 3, 9.

[202] Inf 1, 11; *cf.* Par 32, 139: 'But since the time flies that holds thee sleeping. . . .'

[203] Pg 15, 115f.

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[204] Inf 8, 30.

[205] Inf 9, 1f.

[206] Inf 8, 91.

[207] Inf 8, 94–96.

[208] Inf 9, 56–57.

[209] Inf 17, 85f.

[210] Inf 21, 94, 127f.

[211] Inf 23, 19f.

[212] Inf 31, 109.

[213] Inf 1, 132–134.

[214] Pg 1, 121f.

[215] Pg 2, 122.

[216] Pg 11, 30.

[217] Pg 23, 15.

[218] Pg 15, 131.

[219] Pg 16, 31–32.

What, however, gives Purgatory its proper form is the gate of confession, which at the beginning of the Inferno already beckoned as the gate of St Peter and the hoped-for destination of the penitent's journey. The silent doorkeeper is an angel with clothes the colour of ashes, a face and sword so brilliant that Dante is drawn again and again to look in his direction but cannot. He sits upon the diamond threshold, to which three steps lead: the first, smooth and shining, made of white marble that mirrors the sinner's face and opens up his conscience to him; the second of deepest purple, of rugged and burnt stone; and then the third—repentance—porphyry 'flaming red like blood that spurts from a vein', the absolution that flows from the wounds of Christ. '"Say from there, what would you?" he began. "Where is the escort? Look that the ascent be not to your hurt."' That is the almost brutal question; the angel of confession incarnates the objectivity of the sacrament. Dante must throw himself at his feet and humbly (*umilemente*) beg the doorkeeper to withdraw the bolt. Beating his breast, he begs for mercy (*misericordia*). With the point of his sword the angel traces seven *P*s on Dante's forehead signifying the seven deadly sins (*peccata*), each of which must be atoned for on a cornice of the mountain. Two keys, one of gold, the other of silver, are brought out, *quarum una pertinet ad judicium de idoneitate ejus qui absolvendus est, et alia ad ipsam absolutionem* (St Thomas).[230] These are the keys of Peter, which have been entrusted to the angel. The door creaks and opens; the way of penance begins.

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[220] Pg 4, 28–30.
[221] Pg 5, 14–15.
[222] Pg 4, 90.
[223] Pg 7, 44, 49–51; Pg 27, 74–75.
[224] Pg 13, 16–21.
[225] Pg 6, 37–39.
[226] Pg 9, 1–69.
[227] Pg 13, 134–138.
[228] Pg 12, 1–2.
[229] Pg 27, 10f.

Nevertheless, the liturgy at St Peter's gate lacks the main element in confession: acknowledgment of sin and absolution. These are reserved for the meeting with Beatrice. Before that happens Dante must climb the cornices, and as he leaves each one, an angel wipes away with its wing one of the *P*s, or sins, from his forehead. In contrast to Hell, sins here are classified from the point of view of love. Love can fail its purpose, and such failures are the most serious sins; reparation for these sins—pride, envy, anger—must be made at the bottom of the mountain. But love can also be lacking in proportion—through defect (sloth, *acedia*), or through excess (avarice, gluttony, lust). The last of these, as the most easily excusable of sins, stood at the entrance to Hell; likewise, according to the same evaluation, it stands by the exit to Purgatory. But whereas in Hell the poet was overcome by pity for tragic lovers, here in Purgatory, on the seventh terrace of purification, he must himself pass through the trial by fire, which seems to him like molten glass. The angel sings, 'with a voice far clearer than ours', 'Blessed are the pure in heart': 'Then: "There is no way farther, holy souls, unless first the fire's sting is felt; enter into it and be not deaf to the singing beyond."'[231] Dante grows numb and rings his hands. He seems to see bodies burning in the flames. Virgil encourages him, and seeing that he is still somewhat dazed and abstracted, 'he said a little impatiently: "Look now, my son, between Beatrice and thee is this wall."' Now his longing soars upward. Virgil strides forward, with Statius following behind, and in the flames speaks unceasingly of Beatrice. He says: 'It seems as if I see her eyes'. On the other side they are received into the earthly Paradise, at which point Virgil takes his leave, for Dante no longer has any need of a guide. He has been purified; he has come of age in those natural virtues about which antiquity can instruct him: 'No longer expect word or sign from me. Free, upright and whole is thy will, and it were a fault not to act on its bidding; therefore over thyself I crown and mitre thee.'[232] From now on Dante can stroll freely round the glorious garden of Paradise, which the ancient poets celebrated under the names of the 'Golden Age' or 'Parnassus'; the tops of its trees rustle in the breeze of the spheres circling so near. The passage that serves as a sign of the hiatus between this natural perfection—indeed of its rejection—and the great confession scene that is still to come, is one of the strangest and yet one of the most expressive in the whole of the *Comedy*. The man now become autonomous has not yet been justified in the sight of God and of love. For, meanwhile, the procession of the Church has approached, and Beatrice, still veiled, has come down from her chariot. Dante, distressed by the disappearance of Virgil, bursts into tears, but Beatrice raises her voice for the first time and gives him this warning: 'Weep not yet, for thou must weep for another sword.'[233] The words that she now utters plunge him deeper and deeper into shame, to its bottommost limit—*tanta vergogna!*[234] 'So does the mother seem harsh to her child as she seemed to me, for the savour of stern pity tastes bitter.'[235] *Amaro*, *acerbo*—the words are repeated. Without tears Dante stands before the veiled figure, until, moved by the compassion of the angels' song, the ice cracks into sighs and tears. But the confession must pitilessly follow its course. What a gift—no, what a summons from grace—was here squandered! And the higher the demands of heaven, the greater the fall. Scarcely had his beloved died than he betrayed her and entered the service of others,

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[230] *S. Th.* 3, Suppl. 17, 3. 'Of which one relates to the perception of the fitness of the one who is to be absolved. And the other to the absolution itself.'

[231] Pg 27, 10–12.

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[232] Pg 27, 139–142.

[233] Pg 30, 56–57.

[234] Pg 30, 78.

[235] Pg 30, 79–81.

'following after false images of good that fulfil not promise'. No prayer for his enlightenment had been of avail; only one thing would work: he had to be shown the damned. Here is the place for self-knowledge, repentance, confession. 'God's high decrees would be broken if Lethe were passed and such a draught were tasted without some scot of penitence and shedding of tears.'[236] For this reason the confession discourse relentlessly proceeds on its way, and now, like the point of a sword, the word points straight at the guilty man. So serious a charge demands an admission. An agitated, scarcely audible Yes forms itself on his lips 'such that to hear it there was need of sight'. What obstacles have you met with, asks cruel Love, what ditches, what chains, have prevented your love from rising up to me? 'And what attractions and advantages showed in the aspect of other things for which thou must be at their service?' The sinner's acknowledgment that he has been led astray by the treachery of false pleasure profits him nothing but is accepted as a matter of course, in fact is shrugged off as being of no importance. 'And she: "Hadst thou kept silence or denied what thou confessest, thy fault would be not less plain, by such a judge is it known."' And so that the useless tears might be of some benefit to him, the bitter consolation of confession is given, that if ever again he is 'enticed by the Sirens' he will feel terror before them in his very members. After Beatrice's departure, everything, compared with her, could only be a movement downward. The grace of being permitted to meet the most beautiful of all women entails the renunciation of all other seductive beauty. This is the asceticism of the *Minnesang* and takes us a long way beyond the allegories of the *Convivio*. Beatrice speaks of 'a young girl or other vanity' (*pargoletta o altra vanità*) and admits that, while a 'young chick' (*nuovo augelletto*) may well be ensnared twice or three times, no full-fledged bird would be. This convinces Dante that he has committed an unpardonable offence. Then, finally, comes the final blow: 'Since by hearing thou art grieved, lift up thy beard and thou shalt have grief by looking.' Beatrice turns to look at Christ. When Dante sees her do that, he is stung by the nettle of remorse, he becomes like a sturdy oak tree uprooted by a storm. Everything he once loved he now hates, what he has just seen eats away at his heart, and he collapses, vanquished, to the ground. 'What I became then she alone knows who was the cause of it.'[237]

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[236] Pg 30, 142–145.

No other part of the *Comedy* has anything like the force of this scene; it is the heart of the whole work. Here Eros has grown out of its subjectivity and into the objective form of a sacrament. On the other hand, here too we see sacramental, ecclesial form unveiled and justified and convincingly shown to be love. This is ecclesiology of a most modern kind. Supremely personal love breaks forth from the centre of the Church, but it will not tolerate subjectivity unless it has been purified, ordered, overcome and gathered up in the subjectivity of God himself. That is why 'perverse love' (*amor torto*)[238] is trained by all kinds of methods to conform to the all-embracing norms of true love. Moreover, such 'methods' may be as much ancient and natural as Christian and supernatural. Penitents weighed down by their heavy burdens move round the mountain, the ground of which is paved with images of the virtues and authentic love. Voices cry out and spur them on, watchwords imprint themselves on the memory of the soul, the Beatitudes entice them ever higher. The fact that representatives of Antiquity make their appearance not only in Hell but also on the mountain of purification underlines the gravity and inescapability of the punishments and purifications. The Christian commandment might easily appear to be heteronomous were it not for its accord with the natural law of human existence, an accord that the constitutions of Caesar and Justinian and the poetry of Virgil and Statius express.

The confession scene is not just an episode in the *Comedy*; it is the dynamic goal of the whole journey. And yet it is just as much the point of departure for Paradise. The fire of Beatrice burns Dante's soul to the quick and recasts it in pure light, and the immediate result is an unprecedented intimacy and boldness of access. When Beatrice has finished confessing Dante and has seen him break down before her, three things happen. First, Matilda, the sovereign of the earthly Paradise, draws Dante through the river, and a very drastic affair it is, with his head ducked under 'so that I needs must drink the water'; it is the symbol of an eschatological absolution, whereby earthly sin definitively becomes a thing of the past, trivial and rightly forgotten. Second, straightway there follows the contemplation of Church history. Dante, who henceforth has a pure and shriven heart, can now become, indeed must become, the observer and father confessor of the sinful, historical Church that has degenerated into the Whore of Babylon.[239] Third, Dante's relationship with Beatrice is raised to the level of intimacy: 'I no longer call you servants but friends.' Having shattered Dante, Beatrice now calls him to her side 'so that, if I speak with thee, thou shalt be ready to listen to me.' And as he approaches: 'She said to me: "Brother, why dost thou not venture to question me, now thou comest with me?" As with those that are too reverent before their superiors with whom they seek to bring the voice distinctly to their lips, so it was with me, and with imperfect utterance I began: "My lady, you know my need and what will meet it." And she said to me: "From fear and shame I will have thee free thyself henceforth, that thou mayst no longer speak like one that dreams."'[240] And so, as his last action in Purgatory, Dante must drink from the second river of Paradise, Eunoe, which replaces the negative forgetting of guilt with the positive knowledge of all the good he has done on earth, the indispensable foundation of his existence not just as a poet but as a man. After the confession Beatrice does away with artificial respect and distance and admits Dante into Paradise and so into the essence of love. And the *cortesia* of that love is not a kind of formality but nature elevated. It is that tenderness of the heart, that, so to speak, at every beat, as an expression of innermost emotion, looks at the beloved in order to glean and receive from her the meaning and form of existence. At first Beatrice had perforce to represent for Dante the hard form of the Church, but now in Paradise she is inspiration at its freest, at once both the love of his heart and the polestar high above him. For Dante, poetic inspiration and Catholic veneration of the saints flow effortlessly and necessarily together, and if anyone were to protest that St Beatrice was an obstacle to his vision of God, Dante would count him worthy of no more than a pitying glance. In the *Paradiso* all formality has disappeared from the relationship of the lovers. Beatrice is nothing but blessed and eternal laughter (*riso*), an abyss of gaity, from which Dante sees his own happiness pouring down towards him: 'Within her eyes burnt such a smile that I thought I touched with mine the depth of my grace and of my paradise.'[241]

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[237] Pg 31, 1–90.

[238] Par 26, 62.

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[239] Pg 32, 145–160.

[240] Pg 33, 20–33.

Beatrice's gaity is not without a certain sovereign humour, as, for example, in the scene with the somewhat exaggeratedly emotional Cacciaguida, whom Dante, his great-great-grandson, conscious of his ancestor's celestial nobility, decides to address with the honorific 'Voi', 'At which Beatrice, who stood a little apart, seemed by her smile like her who coughed at the first fault written of Guinevere.'[242] Beatrice smiles indulgently and with a gentle irony, like Dame Malehaut in the old courtly romance, drawing attention to herself with a slight cough when Guinevere wants to kiss Lancelot. At the end, when Beatrice returns to her place in the Celestial Rose, high above Dante, yet unremotely near—for in the Rose there is no more space—this intimacy does not prevent the poet from addressing a heartfelt prayer to the saintly object of his love.

O donna in cui la mia speranza vige . . .
Tu m'hai di servo tratto a libertate . . .
La tua magnificenza in me custodi.[243]

Love's inspiration takes this constantly recurring form, namely, that whenever Dante has before him a thought, word or deed to conceive or carry out, he first searches with his eyes for the gaze of his beloved to assure himself that it is right. And this turning toward love, well nigh imperceptible yet each time almost ceremoniously reported, does not mean for Dante that he is a stranger and slave, but rather that he is truly autonomous and free. 'I turned to Beatrice, and she heard before I spoke and smiled to me a sign that made the wings grow on my will.'[244] Or when Dante has a question for someone on his lips: "Therefore my Lady said to me: 'Pour forth the flame of thy desire, so that it may issue marked clearly with the internal stamp. . . .'[245] When Beatrice is silent, then the poet recognizes that it is time for him to be silent too, but only while there is no sign. 'But she on whom I wait to know how and when to speak and when to be silent keeps still, so that I do well, against my desire, to ask no question. She, therefore, who saw my silence in seeing Him who sees all said to me: "Satisfy thy eager desire." '[246] Beatrice looks at God, Dante looks at Beatrice and sees in her, as in a clear mirror, the sign from God. The beloved does not imprison the poet within herself; on the contrary, she opens up for him the perception of all reality. *He* would be tempted to confine himself to her; he feels himself to be bereft of word and thought whenever it is a case of describing the love that breaks forth from her sacred eyes. 'So much I can tell again of that moment, that, as I gazed at her, my heart was freed from every other desire so long as the eternal joy that shone direct on Beatrice satisfied me from the fair eyes with its second aspect. Overcoming me with the light of a smile, she said to me: "Turn and listen, for not only in my eyes is Paradise." '[247] This greater world to which Beatrice points him is the world of the testimony of faith, the world of politics and the empire, the world of the cosmic orders that ascend to God himself. She thus becomes his sole muse and far outpasses the muses to whom Dante appeals in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, even though in Paradise Virgil is once again gratefully acknowledged as *la nostra maggior musa*,[248] and at the beginning of the *Paradiso* mention is made of the guidance of Apollo, the inspiring breath of Minerva, and the nine accompanying muses.[249] For Dante the ancient gods are only 'principles'; Beatrice, on the other hand, is pure, personal reality.

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[241] Par 15, 34–36.

[242] Par 16, 13–15.

[243] Par 31, 79, 85, 88. 'O lady in whom my hope has its strength. . . . It is thou who hast drawn me from bondage into liberty. . . . Preserve in me thy great bounty.'

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[244] Par 15, 70–72.

[245] Par 17, 7–9.

[246] Par 21, 46–51.

[247] Par 18, 13–21.

[248] Par 15, 26.

[249] Par 2, 7–9; Par 1, 13f.

4. *PARADISO*. ANCIENT COSMOS AND CHRISTIAN COSMOS

If Dante's Paradise is being considered from the perspective of a theological aesthetic, then one cannot avoid the question as to what kind of world view it rests on and presupposes: is it the mythological world view of Antiquity or the Christian world view of the Bible? The organization of Hell with its concentrically descending circles and pits, of the Mountain of Purgatory with its ascending cornices and the Earthly Paradise at its summit—all this one might accept as poetic licence, the poet's freedom to give what shape he likes to the invisible. But then we have the ten spheres of the *Paradiso* revolving round the earth, the furthest of them, also the most rapid in its orbit, embedded in the divine Spirit of creation and love. All ten represent so very clearly the heavenly cosmology of Antiquity and, to all appearances, are too bound up with its philosophy and theology for the question not to be asked in the most urgent manner, But it also applies retrospectively to the Platonic aesthetics of the *Vita Nuova* and, even more so, to the *Convivio*. In these two works we have Beatrice as the celestial 'intelligence' and angelic being whose heavenly radiance shines down on earth, and Philosophy as the *gentil donna* who leads the intelligences into the cosmos and who in that capacity alone can act as the intermediary between earthly and glorified reality. We must look at the theology implied by this image of the cosmos; then we must ask what Christian theology of both the Middle Ages and today can and should take from it.

Let us understand an initial point. During the Middle Ages the cosmic powers were believed to constitute, in their entirety, the way God's power and activity are present and transmitted in the universe and could be called the 'world soul'. Moreover, on earth they were thought to determine the existence and way of life of all living things, of plants and animals, even of man himself, except in so far as the 'apex of his spirit' was a direct emanation from the breath of God; these powers were also thought to determine the destiny of the individual and of all history. This view was universally accepted during the Middle Ages. Dante could have derived it from Boethius as well as from

Albert and Thomas and the Arabs; with even stronger astrological emphasis it also held sway in Byzantine theology. The cosmic powers, ruled by special intelligences (angels), are active, fundamental qualities of reality; each intelligence makes its mark on its constellation and thereby on an aspect of the cosmos and of the history of the world.[250] This qualitative aspect of Dante's cosmos (this also applies, incidentally, to Hell and Purgatory) prevents an exaggerated emphasis being given to the moment when the soul climbs higher, the systematic, mystical 'ascent' from sphere to sphere. Justinian in the lower sphere of Mercury does not fundamentally have less dignity than the emperors in the sphere of Jupiter, and so on. A definite group of souls belongs to each of the fundamental cosmic qualities that have been marked by an angelic intelligence. These souls set out toward their earthly destiny under the sign of Mars, Venus or Saturn and, having accomplished it, return to their star in order thereafter (here the Christian doctrine of the communion of saints comes in) to influence the destinies of those still on earth. But Dante makes a precise distinction between the abode of the blest, which is with God and so in the highest heaven, in the Empyrean, transcending any concept of space, and their 'stars', which are only, as it were, the places of their appearing and the centres of their activities. Thus, on his arrival in the sphere of Venus, he sees the lights of the Venus souls descending, like high winds,[251] from the Empyrean to greet him. *Tutti sem presti al tuo piacer.*[252] For this reason Dante also makes a clear distinction between, on the one hand, what man owes indirectly to God and directly to cosmic life and, on the other hand, what he receives directly from God. But since God's direct and indirect actions are one and the same, so also are its effects: man as nature and person. With this qualification Dante can show himself very well disposed toward Plato's *Timaeus*; Plato might well have had the right idea about the connection between soul and star, or at least one can fairly interpret it thus.[253] The Empyrean is the place of blessedness, the star is the place of mission. When the blest turn from the Empyrean to the constellation, it is their own free, loving cooperation with the providence that governs the world. That is how Dante understands the matter when St Peter Damian comes out to meet him:

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[250] Par 2, 130–132.

[251] Par 8, 22f. Similarly, St Peter Damian in the Sphere of Saturn, Par 21, 64–66.

[252] Par 8, 32–33. 'We are all ready at thy pleasure, that thou mayest have joy of us.'

> 'I see indeed, holy lamp,' I said, 'how free love serves in this court for fulfilment of the Eternal Providence'.[254]

But when the blessed souls go from the place of God's glory to the place of their mission, they bring their blessedness with them, which is the reason why the stars shine as they do. It is the shining forth of their eternal origin, like the beam of joy from radiant, living eyes.

Per la natura lieta onde deriva
La virtù mista per lo corpo luce
Come letizia per pupilla viva.[255]

There can be no doubt about it: the most sublime and impressive passages in the *Paradiso* invariably portray the cosmos as being embedded in the glory and peace of divine love, shot through with angelic and spiritual powers that shine forth and are sent out by God as his living organs. And here Dante stresses alternately the chain of loving forces (Eros), that emanates from God or ascends from the world up to him; they receive their strength from above, they operate below:

Questi organi del mondo così vanno,
Come tu vedi omai, die grado in grado,
Che di su prendono, e di sotto fanno.[256]

The *Paradiso* begins with the praise of 'the glory of him who moves all things' and concludes with the same universal movement, this time ascribed to Amor. The theology of Dante

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[253] Conv 3, 5; 4, 21 = Par 4, 49f. Commentary and bibliographical references in Gmelin, *Kommentar zum Par.* 84–89.

[254] Par 21, 73–75.

[255] Par 2, 142–144. 'By the joyous nature whence it springs the mingled virtue shines through the body as joy through the living pupil.'

[256] Par 2, 121–123. 'These organs of the universe proceed thus, as thou seest now, grade by grade, each receiving from above and operating below.'

presents itself, perhaps more than any other, as a theology of glory. The light of the stars, the inaudible music produced by the harmony of their everlasting orbit,[257] enflames the heart with ardent desire for God: 'The newness of the sound and the great light kindled in me such keenness of desire to know their cause as I had never felt before.'[258] But this departure and return to God is in no sense a process of exteriorising and reassuming the Absolute; on the contrary, the order of the cosmos is itself an expression of divine love and is loved by individual beings for its likeness to God. Just as all beings tend toward God, so they tend *con istinto* towards this order, and both movements—the one toward the Absolute beyond all form, the other toward the eternal form—are one and the same.[259] Being at the same time attached to both of these, love for one's fellow creature can become a permanent and positive way to love of God, and conversely, everything outside of God is a ray of light from God, and so radiant goodness is loved in all, and without the All needing to be denied for the sake of the One.[260] The 'beginning and end' of the 'nature of the world' is not only, as Aristotle saw, the love of the cosmos for God; it is also the Divine Mind itself which is the 'light of love' by which the movement and activity of the world is enkindled.[261] In this respect it can be said of the angelic hierarchies that eternal love (Eros) has revealed itself in new loves[262] and that their orders, as mediators of the love of God, have a contemplative function as they gaze at God above and an active ministry below.[263] But while eternal art plays on, without obstacle, in Heaven and among the stars, it does run against opposition from inert matter, which can turn *l'intenzion dell'arte* from its course, and upright love can be deformed into a *torto e falso piacere*,[264] bitter fruit can sprout from sweet seed.[265] But perfect reception of the divine seed effected by 'the one almost divine', and the unsurpassable fruit 'of which the earth was made worthy (*degna*)' is the Son of God himself.[266] Here all things are held together in a great bond of simultaneity, as scripture says: *creavit omnia simul* (Ecclus 18.1)—from pure form, pure matter and their union arise all things that come into existence and pass away.[267] That is why even the angelic world cannot exist before the creation of matter, for it is upon matter that the angels work and thereby find their perfection.[268] When Dante sings an authentically medieval song about the 'goddess' Fortuna and her turning wheel,[269] he has in mind the eternal movement, composed of elements of both chance and order, between the heavenly forms and matter, which as a 'third arrow' proceeds from God. Men, of course, often curse Fortune: 'But she is blest and does not hear it. Happy with the other primal creatures, she turns her wheel and rejoices in her bliss.'[270] In fact, why should the heavenly intelligences, whom the people call angels, not be called 'gods'[271] if elsewhere their created status is clearly affirmed? What we find in Dante is not the Greek gods, but the powers that represent whatever reality they have, which is why there can be real giants in Hell who 'chose to try their strength against supreme Jove'. Ephialtes stands in chains, because he 'made the great attempt when the giants put the gods in fear'.[272]

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[257] Par 1, 76–78.

[258] Par 1, 82–84.

[259] Par 1, 103–126.

[260] Par 26, 28–36.

[261] Par 27, 106–114.

[262] Par 29, 18.

[263] Par 28, 127–129.

[264] Par 1, 135. 'Distorted and false pleasure.'

[265] Par 8, 93.

[266] Par 13, 73–84.

This cosmos, permeated with divine energies, is understood in a Christian way. Its entire aesthetic power of expression serves to support a Christian theological aesthetic. We may seriously ask whether such an undertaking is justified. There can be no doubt that the world view of Antiquity gives the poet marvellous advantages in terms of vividness, and the daring images, that he himself creates to make his journey in the hereafter credible, fit comfortably into the framework prepared for them. This in marked contrast to others like Milton and Klopstock. Ancient astronomy in conjunction with a geography enlarged to cosmic proportions gives the whole work an imaginative power that approaches the hallucinatory. To recall just one image, though an important one: before the lovers risk the *passo forte* from the last of the planetary spheres to 'ultimate salvation' (*ultima salute*), Beatrice demands that the poet look back once again 'down' (*in giù*) on the way he has now traversed. 'With my sight I returned through every one of the seven spheres, and I saw this globe such that I smiled at its paltry semblance; and that judgment that holds it for least I approve as best. . . .'[273] Here the ascetical *de-spicere* is given its properly geographical sense. Once more there follows, at the moment of ascent from the fixed stars to the sphere of crystal, one final look back: 'and see how thou dost turn'. This time it is the revolution of the stars, which is portrayed with conscious art: 'So that I saw on the one hand, beyond Cadiz, the mad track of Ulysses, and on the other nearly to the shore where Europa made herself a sweet burden; and more of the space of this little threshing floor would have been disclosed to me but the sun was moving on beneath my feet and was a sign and more away.'[274] Here is a journey through space to induce vertigo, following the revolutions of the concentric spheres, astronomically exact, and yet soaring out of space, for the sphere of crystal, which is pure invisible transparency, adjoins what is beyond space; Dante is conscious, with the ancients, of the paradox he thereby expresses. This and other passages raise a question as to what extent Dante did or did not understand this cosmic symbolism fully and consciously as *symbolism*; in other words, to what extent does the spiritual sense predominate over the image that expresses it. This is very beautifully made clear at the time of the sudden great tremor that shakes the Mountain of Purgatory. Statius explains its significance to the poet: the physical laws of the terrestrial world no longer apply here; the mountain quakes every time a soul feels itself purified, whenever the purifying punishment ceases to weigh down upon it like a law imposed from outside but is accepted by the soul in complete freedom. Thus the soul reaches the end of its purification, and the whole of Purgatory greets this breakthrough into everlasting freedom with a cry of 'Gloria' that shakes its very foundations.[275]

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[267] Par 29, 22–24.

[268] Par 29, 45.

[269] Inf 7, 91–96.

[270] *Ibid.*, 94–96.

[271] *Ibid.*, 87; Par 5, 123; Conv 2, 5: '*intelligenze, le quali la volgare gente chiama angeli. . . . E chiamale Plato Idee, che tanto è a dire quanto forme e nature universali. Li Gentili le chimavano Dei e Dee, avvegnachè non così filosoficamente intendessero quelle come Plato.*'

[272] Inf 31, 91–96.

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[273] Par 22, 133–137.

[274] Par 27, 82–87.

[275] Pg 21, 40–75.

Another example, no less magnificent, is the wind of the spheres, which blows through the treetops of Paradise. The astronomical image, in its exactness, has a much deeper significance: this constant wind scatters the seeds of the trees of Paradise unceasingly—yes, even now—on the sinful world below.[276] The third and most important example is the detailed explanation, again given by Statius, of what for Dante is a paradoxical fact; namely, that Dante sees the souls in the hereafter in bodily form and that it is from their bodily appearance—their tears, their thinness, and so on—that he can read the state of their soul. The explanation given is that the soul, as the substantial form of the body, has an attractive power over matter even after death. When the solid matter slips from its grasp, it takes hold of the air that surrounds it and gives it form, and from this fashions for itself new, shadowy limbs in expectation of the future resurrection of the solid body.[277] But this means that the souls of the departed are not separated from the world but are inserted into the community of this single, real cosmos, and as cosmic beings help to determine, in their turn, the destiny of the world. Even a demythologized theology will find it difficult to waive aside this idea so boldly maintained by Dante against Platonism and against St Thomas.[278] What these examples show is that one can at least question whether, with the demythologization of the cosmos by modern natural science, the ideas behind the 'cosmo-theology' of Plato, Aristotle and Scholasticism have been superseded.

It may be that what in fact has been removed is precisely what hinders, rather than helps, the development of an authentically Christian theological aesthetic. Dante has gone to the limits in extracting from the imaginative resources of the ancient cosmos what can be of service to theological and Christian poetry. But in so doing he has inevitably had to take on, at the same time, things that are prejudicial to it. To omit these can only assist the emergence of other, new mysteries of the Christian revelation.

Such geographical distance from earth, earth sinful and in the grip of death, cannot remain without existential consequences, despite the steep ascents and intoxicating raptures of the *Paradiso*. In his Paradise Dante can work only with the materials of pure light and love and blessedness, contrasting light with even deeper light, surpassing love with even more ardent love, and because he allowed himself to acquiesce in a prefiguration of the resurrection body, he can offer unprecedented delights to the five bodily senses: symphonies of exquisite melodies, fragrances, sweetnesses, spectacles of an unparalleled kind for eye and ear, the intermingling and mutual enrichment of the sensory impressions, even the most unlikely syntheses and works involving all the arts. His fantasy here verges on the fabulous and has hardly been surpassed by any of the modern symbolists. Nothing remains abstract; as if under a spell, everything has form and is perceptible by the senses. Choreography on a grand sale is unrolled; the teachers of Wisdom dance around Dante, then a second and finally a third round dance flows forth. In the sphere of Jupiter the souls form first of all a living inscription, *Diligite Justitiam*. From its final *M* there develops the living image of the imperial eagle, which proclaims, through a choir speaking in unison, the triumph of justice. In the sphere of Mars the souls of the martyrs come together in the shape of a cross, and in the sphere of Saturn the souls of the contemplatives, all together, form Jacob's ladder 'to such a height that my sight could not follow it'.[279] Just like the strings of triumphal processions in late Renaissance drawings, two processions, one with Christ, the other with Mary, pass through the heaven of the fixed stars, and finally, the souls surge upward, like snowstorms, into the Empyrean, where the nine choirs of angels encircle the luminous heart of the Godhead in a kind of 'metaphysical carousel of light'.[280] In the lower part of the Empyrean the light from the bodies of the blest is so blinding that Dante's mortal eyes cannot discern in them any bodily form. But they reveal their inner mobility in that they revolve round one another like 'wheels in the structure of a clock', or glass balls.[281] All these displays affect the reader like a breathtaking drama—theatre, ballet, and fireworks rolled into one—and yet behind it all there is a certain embarrassment, even emptiness. It is as if the poet were sparing no pains to satisfy a traditional *representation* of Heaven, which nonetheless is still more a representation than an idea with profoundly Christian content. However, what gives rise to this feeling of emptiness are precisely the elements of neo-Platonism and Antiquity, the remoteness from earth and that remoteness of the heart which, at least in part, follows from the geographical distance, and which then easily degenerates into a didactic reasoning. Dante works hard at putting dramatic life into every scene, but the threefold examination of his faith (by Peter), his hope (by James) and his love (by John) succeeds only in being boring. Other motifs are more in the nature of weaker repetitions. For example, there is the scene where Dante drinks from the river of fire;[282] whatever its justification, it inevitably calls to mind the occasion when the poet drank from the Lethe and Eunoe.

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[276] Pg 28, 88–120.

[277] Pg 25, 88–105.

[278] *Cf.* K. Rahner, *Zur Theologie des Todes*; ET, *On the Theology of Death*, 2nd ed. (1965).

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[279] Par 21, 30.

[280] Gmelin, *Komm. zur Par.*, 479.

[281] Par 24, 13f, 151, etc.

Nevertheless, within the framework of the world view he inherited, Dante explores every possibility of taking up what is neo-Platonic into what is Christian. We see this whenever he shows us Heaven bending down to Earth and contributing to its destiny. Only the Christian heart of Dante could overcome all his scholastic prejudices and portray Beatrice, in heavenly bliss, pouring out bitter tears for the sake of the world. This fact is mentioned three times, first of all by Virgil at the entrance to Hell when he explains that he has been sent by Beatrice: '*Gli occhi lucenti lagrimando volse*.'[283] It is again mentioned by Virgil when Dante, come of age, is released from Purgatory. Now he must wait for the woman with the beautiful eyes, 'which weeping made me come to thee.'[284] Finally, it is mentioned by Beatrice herself, who, during the confession scene, reproaches the guilty man for having forced her to lead him through Hell. 'For this I visited the threshold of the dead and to him who has brought him up here my prayers were offered with tears.'[285]

Amor, the weeping god of the *Vita Nuova* and the whole *Minnesang* tradition may have been of influence here, but, from a Christian point of view, such influence is only to the good. In

[282] Par 30, 73f.

[283] Inf 2, 116.

[284] Pg 27, 137.

[285] Pg 30, 139–141.

this way Dante breaks with the abstract scholastic theology of the *visio beata*, but he acts in line with a long tradition that is Patristic, even medieval, and especially modern, a tradition to which we will return when we come to Péguy.

Moreover, to this tradition belongs the blood-red anger of Peter and, with him, of the whole incandescent company of Heaven at the shame of the Church on earth. Dante is not afraid to let the final explosions of wrath go before him into the highest spheres of Heaven—first, the fulmination of the Prince of the Apostles in the heaven of the fixed stars,[286] then that of Beatrice in the Crystalline Sphere.[287] Indeed, even in the Empyrean, in the immediate presence of God's throne, it breaks out once more in a devastating attack on the Popes. And Beatrice's final words in the *Comedy* push Boniface VIII even further down into his fiery pit.[288]

However, once again the decisive question is inevitably about the reality of earthly/heavenly Eros. The earthly component was recast in the confession in Purgatory; in order to evolve into objective reality, Eros had to submit, through death, to a final humiliation. But, thus transformed, it is compatible with Heaven. *Il terzo cielo*, the Sphere of Venus, had already played a leading role in the *Canzoniere* and the *Convivio*;[289] in the *Paradiso* it becomes the abode of the purified and transfigured courtesans. By means of marvellous symbolism Dante explains how, according to Alfragan, the earth casts its shadow as far as the third heaven, thus establishing a mysterious bond of destiny between earth and Heaven. Cunizza da Romano, the sister of the notorious Ezzelino, reigns here, like a transfigured Magdalene, after her many intricate amorous adventures on earth. Dante has known her in addition as a respectable old lady in Florence. In her we see the joint effect of Lethe and Eunoe: she 'can gladly pardon herself',[290] for 'here we do not repent; nay, we smile, not for our fault, which does not come back to mind, but for the power (*valore*) that ordained and foresaw'.[291] Here also we find Folco of Marseilles, a fervent troubadour of love, then a monk and leader of the crusade against the Albigenses.

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[286] Par 27, 10f.

[287] Par 29, 88f.

[288] Par 30, 128–148.

[289] Conv 2, Canzone v. 1f. and commentary.

[290] Par 9, 34.

[291] Par 9, 103–105.

Finally, we come upon Rahab, the prostitute of Jericho, outside of whose house there is no salvation, and who has been, from of old, the great *figura Ecclesiae*: 'she was taken up before any other soul at Christ's triumph.'[292] While there are no prominent virgin figures to enliven Dante's Paradise, these women occupy a place of honour, and the same is true, in the sphere of the moon, of those women who through compelling fate—family or politics—have been prevented from fulfilling their vow of virginity. Dante goes into great detail about the theological problems raised by such a fate, especially by the commutation of a vow. It is clear that this question exercised him at the personal level a great deal: can a human being who has given himself for eternity to the love of God and pledged his troth be dispensed from that vow? Dante's solution is severe and unequivocal: whoever has given himself away cannot take himself back. At most, what has been vowed (the 'matter' of the vow) might be commuted by the Church with her power of the keys, but the vow itself can never be.[293] 'Whatever, therefore, is of such worth that it weighs down every balance cannot be made good by other outlay.'[294] This is directed against any too casual exercise of the keys. If the Eros that unites man and woman is as eternal and definitive as the love between Dante and Beatrice, how on earth could the marriage bond between humanity and God be untied or replaced by something else?

Eros *concludes* the covenant. For Dante, it only opens up into the infinity of God because at the same time it completes the relationship. It is form and gives form. Ultimately nothing remains unaccounted for, indeterminate; everything that is nebulous is clarified and given a recognizable form. Thus there remains in all the blest in Heaven a longing for the risen body, *disio dei corpi morti*,[295] for the immortalization of flesh and blood and thus also of the solidarity of the generations. Yes, there is a longing 'not perhaps for themselves alone, but for their mothers, for their fathers, and for the others who were dear before they became eternal flames'.[296] In a profound speech Solomon explains that the present shadowy or luminous body of the souls in Heaven receives its radiance from spiritual beatitude. One day, though, it will be the other way: the transfigured resurrection body will react upon the glorified soul's beatitude and power of vision, thus raising it to new heights.[297]

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[292] Par 9, 119–120. *Cf.* the section on the Rahab motif in my 'Casta Meretrix', in *Sponsa Verbi* (1961), pp. 222–239.

[293] Par 5, 34f.

[294] Par 5, 61–63. Here Dante takes up a position opposed to that of St Thomas. *Cf.* Gmelin, *Komm.* 3, 102–103.

[295] Par 14, 63.

The luminous bodies in Paradise are so radiant that they blind Dante, and this blinding reaches its maximum intensity in the vision that greets Dante on his entry into the Empyrean, the seat of the Godhead and of all the blessed angels and souls. Beatrice shows Dante the highest heaven in its definitive form, but the light so overwhelms him that at first he can see nothing at all. But then, endowed with a new power of vision, he becomes aware, albeit indistinctly, of something quite overpowering: 'And I saw light in the form of a river pouring its splendour between two banks painted with marvellous spring. From that torrent came forth living sparks, and they settled on the flowers on either side, like rubies set in gold; then, as if intoxicated with the odours, they plunged again into the wondrous flood, and as one entered, another came forth.'[298] Beatrice praises the high desire this blurred vision evokes in the poet. Nevertheless, he must first drink of this water and bathe his eyes in it; then he will see what the river of fire with its swarms of sparks and the flowers on its banks really are. As soon as his eyes are moistened he is given all the power of sight that he requires, and the unendingly flowing river then becomes a lake (*di sua lunghezza divenuta tonda*).[299] Like men who appear first behind masks that distort their faces but then cast them off, so now all is disclosed: the sparks that fly hither and thither are in reality angels emerging from God's sea of light; and the riverbanks decked with flowers, upon which the sparks settle only later to plunge back intoxicated into the river, in reality are the vast outer circle of the white, Celestial Rose, which, reflected in the sphere of crystal, is formed by the assembled company of all human souls in bliss. And so this Rose, the final image of Paradise, is perpetually visited by the angels, who swarm down upon it like bees; they bring it divine life and thence return that life anew to God. This is the supreme image of Dante's inspiration. It is dominated by notions of rank and the strictest order, which Dante painstakingly describes; and yet no spatial distance separates the various ranks. Beatrice, having returned to her heavenly place in the third circle of the highest rank, is, *sì lontana*, nonetheless not remote from Dante, who looks up at her. She seems to smile at him before turning completely towards the *eterna fontana*. The *Doctor marianus*, Bernard, directs the gaze of the poet towards the highest created beauty, the *pacifica orifiamma*,[300] the Mother of the Lord. Everything has now assumed form: 'In all the breadth of this kingdom nothing of chance can find a place . . . for all thou seest is ordained by eternal law, so that here the ring exactly fits the finger.'[301] In the *Convivio* Dante has already attacked every kind of unresolved, aimless infinity in human desire. Precisely because his love for Beatrice is *final*, he is the foe of all that moves in the direction of Faust or Don Juan. His understanding of the will in terms of form is based on Aristotle's: the law of the form of being, with its living entelechy, is not aimless and uncertain; it is clear and definite and demands obedience.[302] Man's *desiderium naturale* may tend toward God and the vision of God, but because it is nature, it has a goal to attain, at which to come to rest, beyond which it cannot reasonably strive. Time and again the words *termine*, *terminato*, *finito*, *misurato* are repeated. If a certain kind of knowledge is impossible for our nature, then we may not 'naturally desire to have this knowledge'.[303] For 'this world exists without certain limits. . . . The jurisdiction of universal nature is therefore limited within certain bounds, and consequently the particular nature likewise'.[304] In Dante we see the modesty of Antiquity in its estimate of man and the limitations of his existence transferred, without qualification, to a Christian ethos. He describes the soul of the child, 'setting forth on the new and ever untrod path of life', endowed at the same time with the thought of a final and supreme goal. The soul thinks first that it can find this goal in all the paltry little good things of life; what is nearest seems to it to be the pinnacle of all that is worth striving for, while he who is truly the most high, God, seems far away. This false evaluation leads to the vice most severely censured by Dante, the 'thirst for more and more', avarice and *auri sacra fames*.[305] The same applies to spiritual things; even striving for knowlege is essentially finite, just as all man's natural tendencies have a definite goal (*certo fine*). He even invokes St Paul, who said: 'I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment' (Rom 12.3). Yes, insatiable desire is Hell, as Virgil, from his own experience, teaches his protégé: '"Foolish is he who hopes that our reason can trace the infinite ways. . . . Rest content, race of men, with the facts; for if were you able to see all, there would have been no need for Mary to give birth, and you have seen the fruitless desire of men such that their desire would have been set at rest which is given them for an eternal grief—I speak of Aristotle and of Plato and of many others." And here he bent down his brow and said no more and remained disquieted.'[306] In Paradise Thomas Aquinas gives a similar warning, though without the sense of the tragic that surrounds the man excluded from the vision of God.[307] And as the poet is admitted to the threshold of the vision of God, he experiences the bliss of the End.

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[296] *Ibid.*, 64–66.

[297] *Ibid.*, 37–60.

[298] Par 30, 61–69.

[299] Par 30, 90.

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[300] Par 31, 127.

[301] Par 32, 52–57.

[302] Conv 1, 7 discusses the 'obedience of nature'. Conv 4, 9 deals with obedience to imperial authority. Such obedience is strictly limited according to the powers invested in the Emperor.

[303] Conv 3, 15.

[304] Conv 4, 9.

Ed io ch'al fine di tutti i disii
Appropinquava, sì com'io dovea
L'ardor del desiderio in me finii.[308]

To see all this aright, we must not lose sight of the fact that, throughout his journey, but especially in Paradise, Dante is continually overcome and overwhelmed by what he experiences. He constantly asserts that what he has seen is far more splendid that he could possibly describe. Not only is the dazzling brightness of the blest more intense than he can bear, but the beauty of Beatrice, growing more and more from sphere to sphere, reaches such proportions that finally, in a long and solemn passage, he lays down his poetic office before her, for he is certain not only that he cannot say how beautiful she is, but also that she is far more beautiful than he understands, and only her creator may enjoy that beauty to the full: 'I own myself beaten at this pass more than ever comic or tragic poet was baffled by a point in his theme. . . . From the first day I saw her face in this life until this sight the pursuit in my song has not been cut off; but now must my pursuit cease from following longer after her beauty in my verse, as with every artist at his limit.'[309] There is thus a limit to being overwhelmed, and even this renunciation has still a poetic form! For the poet does not turn away from Beatrice, but rather stands his ground in the face of the immeasurable. This theme is magnificently realized when, at the very end of his whole journey, Dante prepares to look up into the luminous abyss of the Godhead itself. Only by steadfastness in the face of the immeasurable can he survive. To turn away for self-preservation would be fatal: 'I think, from the keenness I endured of the living flame, that I should have been lost if my eyes had been turned from it.'[310] Dante's moderation is born of withstanding the immoderation of the object; it comes of submitting, in an act of blessed renunciation, to the overwhelming force. It is to this mystery that the central doctrine of the *Paradiso* points, the doctrine, namely, of human subordination to the divine will, which is not only recommended to men on earth but actually constitutes the form of eternal blessedness. Every desire is taken up into the divine form; obedience coincides with a blessed fulfilment that is beyond desire. 'Brother, the power of charity quiets our will and makes us will only what we have and thirst for nothing else. Did we desire to be more exalted, our desire would be in discord with his will who appoints us here, which thou wilt see cannot hold in these circles if to be in charity is here *necesse* and if thou consider well its nature. Nay, it is the very quality of this blessed state that we keep ourselves within the divine will, so that our wills are themselves made one. . . . And in his will is our peace. It is that sea to which all things move, both what it creates and what nature makes.'[311] The human mind finds rest in this will like the beasts in their lairs.[312] For this will—as Dante is instructed when he raises a question about predestination—is identical with eternal wisdom. The mind can understand this, and for this reason God's will applies to it *a priori* as the norm of the good; to ask for anything beyond this norm is folly. 'Whatever accords with it is in that measure just'.[313] In Heaven the lovers precisely love the incomprehensibility, the impenetrability (even for them) of the divine plan of salvation. 'And this very lack is sweet to us, because in this good, our good is perfected, that which God wills we will too.'[314] Because of its creative depth and diversity (*creando . . : diversamente*), God's will is different for each individual creature, and this differentness is part of the beauty and delight of the world.[315] Moreover, the cooperation of creatures with God's will is necessary and indeed expected by God. In their eternal happiness the souls of the blest can contemplate the proportion of grace and merit and thereby come to see the supreme justice that lies at the heart of love. Indeed, precisely because that proportion itself rests entirely upon love, it is a part of eternal happiness. It is Justinian who expresses this profound truth and then adds: 'Thus the living justice sweetens our affections so that they can never be warped to any evil.'[316] But finally, the humble subordination of the human to the divine will is also a Christian mystery, the mystery of love, and so something very different from the ancient idea of submission to fate. Just as man, out of love, says Yes to God, so from eternity has God, in love, said Yes to the creature. And it is in this exchange of love between such dissimilar partners that we find the mystery of God's hearing of our prayers: God lets himself be conquered by man in accordance with the original decree of his loving will: '*Regnum coelorum* suffereth violence from fervent love and lively hope, which conquer the divine will, not as man masters man, but conquer it because it would be conquered, and, being conquered, conquers with its own goodness.'[317] This doctrine (Thomist, albeit orchestrated with the distinctive sounds of Dante's Eros) takes up the old Augustinian formula, that God, by rewarding, crowns his own grace. Dante has built into this Christian schema the entire cosmos of Antiquity: the Platonic doctrine of Eros, which already in the *Symposium* bases human Eros on a primordial, descending grace; and the Aristotelian doctrine of form and matter, according to which the complete fulfilment of form depends on the maximum receptivity of matter. This pliancy of matter Dante understands as grace: the grace of the astronomical hour, the grace of a noble vocation and mission, upon which any merit on man's part depends.[318] All man must do is boldly reach up to the high level of his vocation.[319]

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[305] Conv 4, 12.

[306] Pg 3, 34–45.

[307] Par 13, 112f.

[308] Par 33, 46–48. 'And who was drawing near to the end of all desires, ended perforce the ardour of my craving.'

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[309] Par 30, 19–36.

[310] Par 33, 76–78.

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[311] Par 3, 70–87.
[312] Par 4, 127.
[313] Par 19, 88.
[314] Par 20, 136–138.
[315] Par 32, 65–66.
[316] Par 6, 121–123.

And so we are left with this final image: the Celestial Rose. It is people who form the calyx of the flower, and in its lower part are the fragrant souls of children, who are there by pure grace. Its bees are the angels, who bring God's descending love to the company of the blest. We are left with the final reciprocity of Eros and Agape, which for Dante are but two names for the same thing: Amor, God's most truly proper name. This reciprocity is nuptial, and the existential experience of this ultimate reality is called—if we are to judge the matter on the poet's level and by his criteria—Dante and Beatrice. This criterion is explicitly subordinated to the criterion of the glorified Church: Mary, not Beatrice, is the final image; Bernard, not Dante, speaks the last word of prayer. But what Bernard cannot say and cannot be, the archangel can make visible—the divine Eros itself, which, by the mediation of the angel glowing with love, rushed down upon the Virgin. Already in Mary's triumph in the sphere of the fixed stars we see Gabriel configured to her: 'There descended through the sky a torch that, circling, took the likeness of a crown that encircled her and wheeled about her. . . . "I am angelic love who encircles the supreme joy which breathes from the womb that was the inn of our desire."'[320] In the Empyrean the figures that further down appeared to the poet as no more than lights now appear with their proper characteristics revealed. The poet asks Bernard about the figure of the angel: '"Who is that angel that gazes with such rapture on the eyes of our Queen, so enamoured that he seems on fire?" . . . And he answered me: "All confidence and gallant bearing that can be found in angel or in any soul are in him; and we would have it so".'[321] Dante would like to have been this angel. It can therefore be said that ultimately his Paradise has a Marian form. Christ stands higher, dwelling in the heart of the Trinity. Only 'in the mirror and enigma' of supreme rapture can man have an inkling of him as the humanly incomprehensible 'quadrature of the circle'—the dazzlingly glorious identity of God and man. His triumphal procession through the eighth heaven makes only a faint impression,[322] and if his outline is to be seen in the great living image in Mars, the cross formed of souls, it is still only an image, to which Dante is not prepared to concede the full presence.[323] The cross of Christ, in all its reality, is met nowhere in the *Divine Comedy*.

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[317] Par 20, 94–99.

[318] Conv 4, 20.

[319] Conv 4, 21.

5. *INFERNO:* BETWEEN THE TIMES

This last affirmation opens the way to a proper appreciation of the *Inferno*, which until now has not been taken into account in our interpretation, and which now finally calls that entire interpretation into question, perhaps explodes it. The central scene of the *Comedy*, we said, was the conquest of the inner, psychological world of Dante's personality by the demands of a heavenly Eros. This corresponded to the objective Church, to humanity redeemed and reunited by God, and finally to the Eros of God, which imprints itself and burns through her with the fire of love. Such transcendence of the narrow and sinful 'I', such liberation for 'thou' and for love, was worth all the sufferings and humiliations. These humiliations could also produce the humble act of postponing the poet's own blessedness for the sake of consenting to the incomprehensible, loving decrees of divine predestination. But what if that mystery involves eternal damnation? And what if the Eros that shapes and governs all worlds also rules over a kingdom from which love is totally and eternally excluded? And if Dante's theological aesthetic is based precisely upon the resemblance of *amor* and *bellezza*, then is a poem about Hell at all conceivable? In the first place it must be said that it is aesthetically possible only if and insofar as it is theologically possible (that is to say, as it can be justified by Eros). It must therefore be as much aesthetically questionable as it is theologically problematic.

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[320] Par 23, 94–96, 103–105.

[321] Par 32, 103–105, 109–111.

[322] Par 23, 19f.

[323] Par 14, 103f.

In an impressive book on *Die Rechtsmetaphysik der göttlichen Komödie* (1942) (*The Metaphysics of Law in the Divine Comedy*) Hugo Friedrich has shown that Dante is dependent upon the same objective cosmology of order and law as Thomas Aquinas, Boethius and Augustine, and before them in Antiquity the great defenders of the *theios kosmos*. The *Convivio* was to have concluded with the glorification of *giustizia*; the *Monarchia* defines it as much ethically and politically as metaphysically—in this last respect it is the earthly expression of the *lex aeterna*, '*similitudo divinae voluntatis*; therefore nothing out of accord with the divine will can be right, and everything consonant with the divine will is right'.[324] Guilt or sin is contrary to right, and because it is the disruption of that ordered right or right order (*rectitudo*) implanted by the Creator in the nature of things, it contains within itself its own punishment. Indeed, the order perverted by the creature still affirms itself in its very perversion: when No is said to God, the louder Yes resounds; in the pain of chastisement, the unity of goodness and pleasure is acknowledged. The affirmation of the cosmos in its totality, with both its light and shadows, was the supreme and admirable achievement of the ancient theodicy; it was also without doubt the main reason why Dante entrusted himself unhesitatingly to the guidance of Virgil in his journey through the realm of darkness.

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[324] M 2, 2.

However, one cannot avoid the question—and we have already asked it in the case of Augustine—as to whether this ancient theodicy, which regards the world as a universe of law, could be quite so easily adopted by a Christian theology burdened not only with the problem of suffering in general, but also with the specific problem of eternal Hell. Friedrich, while seeing that, as a matter of fact, this adoption took place in the work of Augustine and his medieval successors, does not ask himself whether it was necessary or right for it to take place. He has not considered the other traditions of Christian theology, that of the Greek fathers and of the medieval mystics who did not think along the same lines as Augustine. Likewise, he regards the Augustinian-Thomist cosmos as no more than an edifice of 'eternal law' and hence does not do justice to the fact that the Christian gospel is above all one of redemptive love. Augustine certainly tried to incorporate even eternal Hell in his aesthetic justification of creation: the world is a 'marvellous poem' (*pulcherrimum carmen*) adorned with the antitheses of good and evil, light and darkness. Moreover, he was able to cite a scriptural text to this effect, albeit one that shows clear signs of Hellenizing influence: 'Good is the opposite of evil, and life the opposite of death; so the sinner is the opposite of the godly. Look upon all the works of the Most High; they likewise are in pairs, one the opposite of the other' (Sir 33.14f). Augustine, the former Manichaean, could let this text pass without comment and takes it to include even the New Testament opposition of the two eternal kingdoms of light and darkness, love and hate, thus also proving that ultimate unity and harmony come from God.[325] Aristotelian influence through St Thomas, as well as neo-Platonic influence through Boethius, heightens the cosmic and philosophical aspects of this vision without essentially altering it. On the other hand, it lessens the biblical and dramatic aspects, such as we see, for example, in the Eastern Church's image of the Redeemer descending into Hell and conquering the powers of darkness. Here, then, we have a quite unprecedented objective sense of the order and goodness of being in its totality, a totality before which every particular point of view must give way—whether in knowledge, in faith or in face-to-face vision. This objectivism forms, as it were, the pedal note of all the images of the world that have had decisive influences on Dante. Their strength lies in 'their regard for the whole, in their renunciation of subjective individualism. What counts is not man but order, or rather, with respect to man, only what validates order, by means of a participation as much positive as negative'.[326]

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[325] *Civ. Dei* 11, 18.

However, perhaps it is that Augustine and Thomas had just not reckoned with the possibility of a man, with his living body, descending into Hell, and there meeting, face to face, the individual souls of the damned, his former friends and enemies, the great and admired men of Antiquity and Christendom, popes and emperors. In the realm of abstract thought the aesthetic justification of Hell could be carried out without special difficulty, but not so easily when Scholastic theology was transformed by a layman into existential theology. Thus Dante's journey into Hell turns out to be a crucial test for that entire Christian theodicy derived from Antiquity. Can it stand up to this test? More to the point, can it stand up to the test when it is considered as what it claims to be, as Christian theology? This searing test of Christian existence, or more precisely, this searing test of Scholastic theology through Christian existence, is taken so seriously by Dante that he does not hesitate to transform its paradoxes into lived reality. To do that, he has to make real two very different things at the same time: true and living encounters with his fellow human beings, now damned, and their final and absolute deprivation of all relationship with him—both the establishment and the breakdown of communication. Communication is restored in the all-inclusive framework of divine order. Surprisingly, this Hell is older than mankind, as old as the world, and a work of art of the triune God (this is indicated by the three names of God inscribed on the gate of Hell: *divina potestate*, *somma sapientia*, *primo amore*, although *giustizia* is set above all three).[327] This Hell is *di giustizia orribil arte*,[328] a construction of the Almighty,[329] an artistic creation of supreme Wisdom as good as Heaven and earth.[330] It is significant that, when Cato sees the two travellers emerging out of Hell, he cries in his astonishment: 'Does order thus no longer rule in the abyss? *Son le leggi d'abisso così rotte*?'[331] Communication is established by the form of punishment (*contrappasso*) appropriate to the offence, its every detail full of significance. This form of punishment so lays hold of the sinner from within that the punishment becomes the complete expression of his guilt. In fact, content and form are so intertwined that the sinner himself presses toward the place of his punishment and eagerly embraces its particular form: 'Divine justice so spurs them that fear turns to desire'.[332] This is why there is a confessional at the entrance to eternal Hell: for the acknowledgment of one's own guilt (*tutta si confessa*) before the judge of Hell, Minos, and the apportioning of suitable punishment; confession in the full sense, but without any love or absolution, a sacrament without grace.[333]

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[326] Friedrich, 121.

[327] Inf 3, 4–6.

[328] Inf 14, 6; *cf.* Inf 11, 100.

[329] Inf 10, 37; 12, 23; 15, 12; 31, 85.

But if Hell is the artistic creation of love, it is nevertheless only of a rigidified, petrified love, of which there remains only the 'form', only punitive justice. This work can, therefore, only be traversed and inspected in an attitude of complete objectivity, devoid of any emotion of the heart, only with a rigidified and petrified heart. That is to say, communication in the form of pure justice and truth—and without this form there would be no dialogue between Dante and the damned—is at the same time the breakdown of personal communication, which cannot occur except through the self-giving of the heart, except, at least partly, through love. It is of course true that in the *Inferno* there are many memorable encounters that resoundingly display greatness of soul, indeed, greatness of heart, tenderness and respectful veneration. But it must in fairness be pointed out that all these scenes take place within the unrelenting grip of Hell. They thus rest on the presupposition that Dante can offer nothing to these lost souls, nothing Christian, nothing personal, nothing except that strangest of gifts: a little bit of posthumous fame when he returns to earth as the poet of Hell. This is truly an idea from Antiquity, but equally a truly Augustinian idea, drawn from the *Civitas Dei*. On the other hand, nothing Christian can be given them; not even a little hope, a little love, can be procured for them.

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[330] Inf 19, 10.

[331] Pg 1, 46.

[332] Inf 3, 124–126.

[333] Inf 5, 7–8.

For this reason the journey through Hell, despite all the conversations there, is a matter of getting information, of observing and remembering. Virgil presses on like an impatient museum guide. Delay is pointless, because nothing can be gained from it. '*Guarda e passa.*'[334] '*Vassi per veder le vostre pene*',[335] '*a veder lo strazio*'.[336] '*Ma Virgilio mi disse: Che pur guate? . . . Ed altro è da veder che tu non vedi.*'[337] This becomes especially obtrusive in the lower reaches of Hell, where the damned, like animals, lie in ditches into which the travellers look down from above, 'just as we look at wild animals in their enclosures, for example into bear pits, which the cities of Dante's time had already constructed'.[338] For Dante, his progress through Hell would therefore mean initiation into pure objectivity and thus his weaning away from an excessively human compassion not yet in conformity with the supreme order of the world. Friedrich has shown that for Augustine compassion, although admittedly not condemned as it was by the Stoics, is nonetheless subordinated and rigorously brought into line by reason; compassion is only admissible when the movements of the passions correspond to law and to justice. As mere sensible emotion, as philanthropic fellow feeling, compassion in itself is neither good nor evil; to attain ethical value, it must first allow itself to be guided by the *cor rectum* to the objective *rectitudo* of divine order. But when it is a case of God having damned, compassion for the souls of the damned would plainly be a secret revolt against the wisdom of God. When the poet weeps over the terrible deformity of the diviners, whose heads have been turned round on their shoulders so that their tears drop down their backs, Virgil reprimands him: 'Art thou too as witless as the rest? *Qui vive la pietà quand'è ben morta*. Piety here consists in no longer having pity. Who is more guilty than he who has pity on the damned?'[339] Dante wept because he saw 'our beautiful image so distorted', the image of divine resemblance here mutilated by God himself as the just and exterior punishment for the interior sin. Here it is a question of understanding, even of admiring, the fitness, the beauty of all this. At the very entrance to Hell Dante knows that the hard 'battle' he will have to fight is against his own pity (*la guerra della pietate*).[340] After the story of Francesca da Rimini he swoons out of pity.[341] Likewise before Ciacco,[342] with the avaricious[343] and especially with the suicides,[344] his pity makes itself felt. And then, when in the lower reaches of Hell he catches sight of the horrific mutilations, the demonic metamorphosis of man into snake, the stinking infirmaries of the sick, when he listens to the severed head of Bertran de Born speaking to him, with acres of souls in torment stretching beyond what the eye can see, he still wishes only to weep: 'The many people and the strange wounds had made my eyes so drunken that they were fain to stay and weep.'[345] Virgil, for his part, in fore-Hell, his own dwelling place, had been overcome with compassion for those who yearn eternally without hope.[346] But now he reproves the poet, for Dante's tears have no point, 'and only a little time is given us'. It is as if in the nethermost regions Dante has at last learnt impassibility, for he listens to Ugolino's story without any expression of emotion, indeed as if turned to stone within (*dentro impietrai*).[347] It is left to Ugolino himself to appeal to his compassion. 'Thou art cruel indeed if thou grieve not now . . . if thou weep not now, at what dost thou ever weep?'[348] But the poet can also express other feelings and passions: disgust, contempt, anger, and even with these at first purely earthly reactions, it is a case of adapting them to the all-inclusive, divine order. When God is angry, then man can and must be angry alongside him. In one strange scene the poet promises Alberigo, the traitor and murderer of his own kin, that he will break away the frozen tears from his eyes so as to stir him into telling the poet his name. But he does not do it, for this reason: *E cortesia fu lui esser villano* ('it was courtesy to be a churl to him').[349] This scene may refer to a verse from the Psalms: 'With the pure thou dost show thyself pure; and with the crooked thou dost show thyself perverse (*et cum perverso perverteris*)' (17.27; 2 Kings 22.27, Vulg). It may well be only through inadvertence that Dante strikes with his foot against the head of one of those frozen beneath the lake of ice, one who is shown to be Dante's brother:

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[334] Inf 3, 51; *cf.* Inf 30, 60, *Guardate ed attendete.*
[335] Inf 12, 21.
[336] Inf 13, 140.
[337] Inf 29, 4, 12.
[338] Gmelin, *Komm. zur Hölle*, 280; Inf 18, 1–18.

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[339] Inf 20, 27–30.

[340] Inf 2, 4–5.

[341] Inf 5, 140–142; 6, 2.

[342] Inf 6, 58f.

[343] Inf 7, 36.

[344] Inf 13, 36f, 84.

[345] Inf 29, 1–3; *ibid.*, 36, 43–44.

[346] Inf 4, 13f, 21.

[347] Inf 33, 49.

[348] Inf 33, 40, 42.

> *Guarda come passi!*
> *Va sì che tu non calchi con le piante*
> *Le teste dei fratei miseri lassi.*[350]

Or it could be that this chance is also 'fate or will'?[351] On the other hand, there is also the incident where Dante comes to blows with the frozen man and angrily tears out a few tufts of his hair in order to find out his name.[352] It can even happen that Virgil praises this display of indignation, whereupon Dante expresses the desire to see the sinner, Filippo Argenti, thoroughly punished, a wish that Virgil in his turn grants.[353] The standard by which all these emotions are measured remains the will of God ruling over the damned. It is into the mystery of that will that the poet is initiated, and it is there that every human emotion finds its measure and limit. This is *apatheia*, which surpasses the *apatheia* of the Buddhist, for whom compassion is the supreme norm of morality, precisely because no being can be totally and definitively lost on the wheel of Samsara.

What, then, we must ask, is the net result of this existential testing of theology? Does it prove it to be biblical, evangelical, Christian, or not? It may be that the dialectic of the establishment and breakdown of communication is not a real possibility from the Christian point of view, because it is neither prescribed nor conceivable. But should this turn out to be the case, the blame would not lie with Dante, but with the system, which he tried to put to the test. Then the *Inferno* would at the same time be both the system's *reductio ad absurdum* (through the test) and its spiritual full stop, even though in later centuries it would continue to be tested. All artistic depictions of Hell—from Orcagna to Breughel, from Bosch to Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* and Rubens' forays into of Hell, to Milton also, and right up to Rimbaud's *Saison en Enfer* and Sartre's *Huis-clos*—all these depend, though less consciously and systematically, on a dialectic, the essential content of which Dante exposed, and this he carried out with extreme and relentless clarity, even though it was not he who invented the dialectic.[354] It only remains to ask whether he was able to carry this out in complete consistency with his theological and aesthetic presuppositions, or only in contradiction to them, thus exposing a fatal flaw in his Christian poem about the cosmos. But once again we must say that it is not the poet who is responsible for this flaw, but the system handed to him. As a layman he simply took up the system imparted to him and to the best of his ability defended and glorified it.

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[349] Inf 33, 150.

[350] Inf 32, 19–21.

[351] Inf 32, 76.

[352] Inf 32, 103f.

[353] Inf 8, 43–60.

Nothing can happen in Dante's Hell, because love is absent. And according to his own doctrine, as well as that of Antiquity, of Augustine and of Thomas, love is the interior motive force of all living things. No matter how much feeling and imaginative power is imparted to the dramatization of the scenes, they take place entirely within the mighty grip of damnation and second death; thus, from the existential point of view, they demonstrate total meaninglessness. The symbol of this is that the damned can have no knowledge of the present; all they can know is past and future, so long as the future remains at all. For this reason what passes for their spiritual life is but a function of earthly events and will be completed extinguished on the last day when those events come to an end.[355] As we shall presently see, within the grip of Hell there are enormous differences of value, but they must all be seen in relation to the eternal standard: what has been excluded for eternity from the vision of God must together constitute a single realm of shadows and sorrow. This affirmation becomes fundamental for subsequent ages. For Luther and thorough-going Protestantism, as well as for Jansenism, the sinful world in its entirety is removed from the light of divine Eros and has fallen into a state of general damnation—with the exception of those for whom Christ died on the Cross. Here then Dante's infernal confines are generalised; they have become the confines of the world itself. Within them, of course, there may well be all the degrees of value, of true and false, good and evil, beautiful and ugly and so on. But none of these has the absolute sense they had in ancient philosophy, because none is animated by the Eros of divine truth: in damnation philosophy is an impossibility. Within its confines there is only deadness, only 'material', only 'facts'; even philosophical thought itself becomes 'fact', a filing cabinet for facts. Philosophy sinks to the level of the other profane sciences. But then, as a consequence, theology becomes disincarnate, for it lacks its proper connection with the transcendence of human reason. And so, as was argued in the first volume, every theological aesthetic becomes impossible.

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[354] See, for example, the *Disputationes* of Simon of Tournai (ed. J. Warichez, 1932), where the question of Christian communication with the damned is constantly and fervently discussed.

[355] Inf 10, 100f.

It follows inescapably from this that in Hell the love of God is completely veiled by justice, and the divine beauty can only consist in the right proportioning of punishment to guilt. Thus the divine *vendetta*,[356] a word that constantly recurs in Dante, signifies the divine recompense; to experience this produces, even in man, a profound satisfaction.[357] And so we find ourselves transported to a religious world entirely dominated by law, in conformity, on the one hand, to Antiquity and, on the other, to the Old Testament and its *lex talionis* (this is the *contrappasso*); and wherever Hell is enlarged to become a kind of model for the whole of worldly existence, Christian juridical thought necessarily has its back against the wall.

Dante has two lines of resistance against the logic of his *Inferno*, which seemed to him to be demanded by theology. The disparity of these two ways shows us the extent to which his poem on Hell stands at a turning point between eras. The first way is the aesthetic attempt to go as far as possible toward relaxing the remorseless grip of Hell, and this aesthetic attempt is consequently also theological. But first of all, the poet proceeds aesthetically, giving as a backdrop to his journey through Hell the most magnificent landscape. His imaginative power as a poet is inflamed and at the same time held in check by his great models from Antiquity—Virgil, Ovid, Statius—but beyond all these it is fed by his own inexhaustible spring. He constructs stage sets, one after the other, of titanic and hallucinatory power: rocks by night, heaps of boulders, bridges, walls, rivers of fire and of blood, cities aflame, glowing pits, flights through the air on the backs of monsters, lakes of ice, the circle of giants like the battlements of a fortified city, finally the icy blast of wind from the bat wings of Lucifer. On these stage sets he presents a profusion of diverse figures, each sketched with its own unique characteristics. The travellers meet these figures and hold the briefest of conversations with them on matters of the greatest importance. In so doing they learn more and more new and strange things about Hell, but also about the past, present and future of the world above. This torrent of events, as it sweeps along, completely captivates all the senses, all feeling and thinking, and so allows no respite in which to call to mind the vice-like grip in which everything is held. But the course of events is not just enlivened at an aesthetic and external level; the emphasis on differences in value generates a spiritual and philosophical excitement. These differences are so marked that Dante gives the impression that Hell has hardly any unity, that fundamentally it is an analogical, perhaps even equivocal, construction. The poet has every reason to give these equivocations full scope and takes full advantage of them.

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[356] The instances are listed by Gmelin, *Komm. zur Hölle*, 139–140; *cf.* also 428.

[357] Pg 20, 94–96; *cf.* Pg 33, 34–36.

Virgil is the guide through Hell, not least because in the sixth book of the Aeneid he himself created a journey through Hell for his hero. Indeed, he was familiar with Dante's Hell at first hand, for he was already one of the dead, in its lowest depths, before the birth of Christ.[358] For this reason, and because for Dante the whole ancient, pre-Christian world is excluded from the vision of God, Dante's Hell has just as many features derived from the Hades (Sheol) of Antiquity (and thus of the Old Testament) as those of Christian inspiration. It is inhabited and literally articulated by figures from ancient mythology, who here appear as people just as real as the poets and philosophers in the Limbo and Elysium of the fourth canto. The dwelling place of the great luminaries of Antiquity seems like an island of light in the sombre ocean of Hell. Its predominant manners are those of courtesy of the heart; the noblest human values are not only known but practised, and Dante is welcomed by the great poets into their circle and is honoured as their equal.[359] Here, as elsewhere in Hell, there reigns the authentic nostalgia of Antiquity for the beautiful life above, close to the sun, *la vita serena*,[360] *la dolce terra latina*,[361] and fame, in the sense of earthly immortality, as for Dante himself, is considered to be one of the supreme values.[362] Of course, this ancient image of Hell is given certain characteristics that foreshadow the Christian idea, but not such as would deprive it of its own characteristics. It is located, admittedly, inside the first gate of Hell, which has remained open since Christ's descent into Hell, but it is outside the second gate, which the devil and the shrews keep so tightly shut. Outside the second gate there is first of all—theologically strange but how characteristic of Dante!—the numberless host of futile existences who are too insubstantial for either eternal reward or eternal punishment. Neither the mercy nor the justice of God can do anything with them (*misericordia e giustizia li sdegna*). All that the poet can do is let them run round in circles for eternity behind a banner—a slogan, an ideology. And they are so numerous 'that I should never have believed death had undone so many'.[363] We also meet outside the second gate those who have succumbed to earthly, mythical Eros. As befits the this-worldly sublimity of that love, these souls are driven onward by the hurricanes of Hell like starlings and cranes—Paris, Tristan, Dido's troop, *le donne antiche e i cavalieri.*[364] Within Hell itself the distances are no less great: between the great heroes, like Odysseus and Jason; the presumptuous, like Farinata; those who were nearly saints and missed Heaven for the sake of a single sin, like Guido da Montefeltro and other Florentine nobles led astray by the Pope; tragic figures, like Piero delle Vigne and even Ugolino; those whom Dante respects for their intrinsic merit or their art, like Bertran de Born[365] and the aforesaid Montefeltro[366]—between all of these and those crafty scoundrels who inhabit the lower circles of Hell the distance is small. There would seem to be no limit to the number of distinctions the poet makes in his value judgments. Compared with the subtlety of his power of moral discernment, the overall confines of damnation seem almost external and artificially contrived. When considered in the light of these intra-infernal differences, the true reason why one nobleman is to be met with in Hell and another in Purgatory can no longer be made plain. By contrast, the decisive factor is the seriousness with which the poet in general takes the perspective of eternity. This is applied to earthly destinies and historical developments and leads to the great series of examples distributed among the three kingdoms of the hereafter without, however, any compelling reasons being given for the ultimate destiny that has befallen each.

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[358] Inf 9, 22f. On this, see F. von Falkenhausen, 'Erichthos Beschwörung', *Dt. DanteJahrbuch* xxi (1939), 144–147.

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[359] Inf 4, 97–105.

[360] Inf 15, 49.

[361] Inf 27, 26.

[362] Inf 16, 31, 85. For Dante it is a sure sign of the destruction of the hierarchy of values that in nethermost Hell the thought of posthumous fame no longer has any appeal, that the sinners desire only to be forgotten. Inf 18, 46; 18, 118f; 19, 64f; 23, 112; 24, 133f; 27, 61f; 32, 92f.

[363] Inf 3, 50, 56–57.

Something that goes even further in this direction is the strange communication that exists between the kingdoms, and which is not simply set up by the wandering poets. It is astonishing enough that the angels can dive into Hell,[367] but what is even more surprising is that Beatrice herself can go down to Virgil from highest Heaven[368] and 'leave her footprints in Hell',[369] or that an inhabitant of Hell, Virgil, can leave Hell and go as far as the earthly Paradise and the vision of the glorified Church—by way of an extended interpretation of the prophecy in the fourth eclogue.[370] Greetings are exchanged between the kingdoms; for example, on his return Virgil brings back the greetings of Cato, who has been transferred from Limbo to ante-Purgatory, for his wife Marcia who remains behind.[371] And precisely in the personal circle of Virgil there is undoubtedly human communication established on the basis of the noblest values of mind and heart. The conversation between Virgil and Statius[372] (who was a secret Christian and as such has passed through Purgatory) takes place in the light of love. The word 'love' recurs several times and in different forms in that conversation; it is a real bond of love that leads to Statius' finding faith through Virgil's eclogue.[373] Thereupon Virgil gives him information about fore-Hell where dwell the great poets of former ages whom Statius loves so much, and where they often speak of Parnassus,[374] which is in truth the earthly Paradise[375]—what heartfelt thought for one another across the borders of the kingdoms! There are also some, like Cato whom we have mentioned, who dwelt first in the kingdom of darkness and have now been transferred to the kingdom of hope or the kingdom of fulfillment. Adam did penance down below for more than five thousand years;[376] now he sits on a throne in the heaven of the fixed stars.[377] Cato, though a suicide, is allowed to join the souls led out from Hell by Christ at his descent; this is because of his Roman virtue and because he is the representative of man's freedom of conscience. So likewise we meet two pagans in Heaven. First there is the Emperor Trajan, who was redeemed by the prayer of Pope Gregory I. In fact, the Pope was moved to prayer by the *gran valore del romano principato* and his *viva speme*,[378] so that now in Heaven Trajan experiences the opposition of the two kingdoms (*per l'esperienza di questa dolce vita e dell'opposta*).[379] The other pagan is the mysterious Trojan, Ripheus,[380] who came from Hell into Heaven simply as an example of the election of divine grace,[381] but he too is not without a certain merit, for he sought moral justice *per tutto suo*

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[364] Inf 5, 67, 71–72, 85.

[365] VE 2, 2; Conv 4, 11.

[366] Conv 4, 28.

[367] Inf 9, 64f.

[368] Inf 2, 50f.

[369] Par 31, 81.

[370] Pg 29, 57.

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[371] Pg 1, 82f.

[372] Pg 22, 10, 15, 16, 19, 24.

[373] Pg 22, 73.

[374] Pg 22, 104.

[375] Pg 28, 141.

[376] Pg 33, 61.

[377] Par 26, 82f.

[378] Pg 10, 73–76; Par 20, 106–117.

[379] Par 20, 47–48.

[380] Par 20, 67.

[381] Par 20, 68–72.

amor.[382] For Dante there is such a thing as baptism of desire in the sense of an anticipated sharing in the theological virtues before the coming of Christ.[383] This participation is not sharply distinguished from natural morality, which is why any transition from Hell to the kingdoms above is motivated by these two factors taken together. All this relaxes the grip of Hell, indeed finally submits its existence to the providence of God. What are we to think if Beatrice in Heaven before God's throne proclaims the praises of Virgil?[384] What if, at the entry to Paradise, Virgil after such a long and intimate association with Dante discharges him as a pupil come of age but without really taking leave of him? Perhaps such a leave-taking (for eternity) could not be made existentially credible within the framework of this theological aesthetic. We may not be able to demonstrate convincingly that Dante bequeaths his Virgil any sort of chance, because like all the noble souls of Antiquity 'he secretly regarded him as worthy of redemption',[385] but the opposite cannot be proved either. For the human heart may well be able to transcend its limitations and enter into heavenly love (despite all the suffering that involves), but to transcend those limitations in order to achieve an understanding of Hell remains unattainable at the existential level. Dante has come up against this limitation, and he is very clearly aware of it.

So, if Dante is not able to follow the first way right to the end, there remains only the second. And while the first (which took place within the continuing objective confines of Hell) betrays its roots in the historical past, the second looks historically forward. At the command of a weeping Beatrice, Dante is guided through Hell, because no other way leads to his conversion. He must see where his life is leading him. And if this obligation humbles him, it is accompanied by a privilege—the privilege, by virtue of a unique election, of descending into that kingdom reserved for God most high, and of coming to know it and of telling about it. Aeneas, whom Dante regards as an absolutely historical figure, was able to undertake this journey into Hell in virtue of his status as founder of Rome: 'In the heaven of the Empyrean he was chosen to be father of glorious Rome and of her Empire.'[386] And Rome was chosen as the seat of both the Empire and the Papacy. 'By this journey for which thou honourest him he heard things which fitted him for his victory and prepared for him the Papal mantle.'[387] According to the medieval *Visio Pauli*, a second founder descended into Hell,[388] in order to see the torments of the damned; he too was reproved by an angel for his misplaced compassion: was he trying to be more merciful than God? Dante was clearly familiar with this text.[389] According to him, Paul, the *vas d'elezione*, had descended into Hell 'that he might bring thence confirmation of the faith'.[390] Dante, who feels himself to be unworthy—'I am not Aeneas; I am not Paul'—is afraid that he will be thought presumptuous. The response to this, which does not diminish Dante's mission but only renders it, as it were, psychologically bearable, refers to Beatrice's command; the election is at the same a humiliation, 'may' is also 'must' and what grace does for Dante is to unite these two meanings: 'Necessity brings him here, not pleasure.'[391] Because he is a sinner, Hell is bound to terrify and deter him; because he has been specially chosen, he is bound to proclaim that terror on his return. He plunges deep into the mysterious, objective judgments of God, there to be purged; then, later on, with the accent now on the objectivity of theology and the Church, he conveys to sinners the message of divine justice. What he reports is not conjecture but first-hand experience, and just to recall it makes him shudder and tremble. When Dante remembers the dark wood of sin in which he lost his way, the mere thought of it renews his fear.[392] He breaks into sweat when he thinks of the earthquake in Hell.[393] His blood runs cold when he thinks back on the hideous throng of snakes and naked men in the seventh ditch.[394] And when he reflects on what he saw in the eighth ditch, 'it pains him even today', and he tightens the reins on his mind, lest it run away with him and deprive him of his mission.[395] When on one occasion he eavesdrops, out of curiosity, on the quarrel of two of the damned, Virgil angrily reprimands him, and Dante looks upon him 'with such shame that still it haunts my memory'.[396] Very understandably, he has never forgotten the men frozen up to their heads beneath the lake of ice, with only their faces, blue with cold, projecting out: 'shuddering comes over me, and always will, at frozen pools.'[397] Correspondingly, when he remembers the Mountain of Purgatory, he says: 'May I see it again!'[398] St Bernard, with 'Beatrice and so many of the blest', prays the Mother of God to keep his affections pure, as befits one who has seen Paradise.[399] The existential turmoil expressed in these passages is more than just a poetic device to give a semblance of reality to his journey; it has the same degree of reality as that passage in the *Paradiso* where Dante in Heaven is confirmed in his mission of proclaiming on earth what he has seen above. When confronted with aesthetic visions of such theological rigour, the reader has no hesitation in accepting the theological seriousness of the aesthetics, and vice versa. It is not as if Dante had followed his personal inclinations, making Hell an outlet for his hate and Heaven the embodiment of his love and desire. Dante's mission is to throw eternal light on temporal affairs, to place human destiny on the scales of eternity, to raise up to full and clear definition what is blurred and incomplete and therefore, from the earthly point of view, unintelligible; such definition befits man's true meaning, and, through God's justice and grace, is his due. Already in the *Canzoniere* and *Vita Nuova* we find that no aspect of love can become an object of faith except through 'the intelligence of the third sphere'. This is even more true of the *Comedy*, where the reality of faith, which, for the Christian, alone gives meaning to existence, is not only believed in by the poet, but is seen in the light of faith to such an extent that in the perfected figure of truth he can present an aesthetic vision that anticipates the heavenly vision. If it is true that this vision is the poet's divinely ordained mission, then it is only logical that it should at the same time become the most terrible kind of moral exhortation to the whole of Christendom and be regarded as such by the poet.

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[382] Par 20, 121.

[383] Par 20, 127–129.

[384] Inf 2, 73–74.

[385] Gmelin, *Komm. zur Hölle*, 82.

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[386] Inf 2, 19–21.

[387] Inf 2, 25–27.

[388] Bibliography in Gmelin 1, c. 51; Rüegg I, 255–291.

[389] Rüegg 391.

[390] Inf 2, 28–29.

[391] Inf 12, 87.

[392] Inf 1, 6.

[393] Inf 3, 131–132; *cf.* also Inf 14, 78; 16, 12; 22, 31.

[394] Inf 24, 82–84; *cf.* 25, 4.

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[395] Inf 26, 19–25.

[396] Inf 30, 133–135.

[397] Inf 32, 71–72.

[398] Pg 2, 16; *cf.* 2, 114.

[399] Par 33, 34–39.

The experience of the hereafter is made relevant to the man who experiences it; he in turn, in obedience to his mission, makes it relevant to the experience of those to whom he addresses himself, his fellow Christians. The reality of what he has seen is still, of course, completely objective (it is not in any sense a mere function of the subject's power of imagination or, for that matter, hallucination), but its objectivity consists now entirely in its kerygmatic function, which is also true, as we shall see, of the visions in the Johannine Apocalypse, whatever differences there might be in the theological quality of the two visions. Both testify to what they have seen, and both have seen not only Purgatory and Heaven but also the lake of fire and the monsters from the abyss. But the total realism of the vision prevents neither seer from seeing 'images', or rather effigies, of evil. For Dante's encounters in Hell can be nothing else, if one considers the existential dialectic into which such encounters draw the traveller who witnesses them. Effigies have no *motus*, no vital interior conative life in the Aristotelian and Thomistic sense, no entelechy, no hope, no *amor*; they are without rapport. That is why the rapport Dante establishes with them is intrinsically impossible. Bernanos sees the full implications of this when his country priest describes Hell for the Comtesse: 'Alas, if God's own hand were to lead us to one of these unhappy things, even if once it had been the dearest of our friends, in what language could we address it? Truly if one of us, if a living man, the vilest, most contemptible of the living, were cast into those burning depths, I should still be ready to share his suffering, I would claim him from his executioner. To share his suffering! . . . The sorrow, the unutterable loss of those charred stones which once were men, is that they have nothing more to be shared.'[400]

And it is only because they are effigies that they can be looked at. In no sense, then, as Bernanos, being a true Christian, knew well, can they be compared to our suffering, fellow human beings. This is why Hugo Friedrich's analysis of the *Inferno* misses the essential point when it presents us with the alternative: either sentimental, humanitarian compassion or (in company with Dante) rising above such compassion to the point of view of divine and cosmic justice. This alternative is Hegelian, at best Spinozist; it is not Christian. It overlooks the third possibility: the Cross, the substitutionary death of Christ. Or perhaps Friedrich has subsumed this third possibility and Christology under the heading of an *amor fati* and has drawn for us the image of a Christ who, in his surrender to the Father's cosmic will, was always prepared to abandon the redemption of mankind.[401]

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[400] *Journal d'un curé de campagne* (1936), p. 181.

The *Divine Comedy* is so very much a transverse section through the cosmos that the historical event of Christ's redemption of mankind (which can be shown only in longitudinal section) makes hardly any appearance at all. Hell is as eternal as the creation of the world and will be as eternal as the heavenly Paradise. There is no question, absolutely no question, of Hell in its innermost structure having been transformed by Good Friday and Holy Saturday—the two days during which Dante carries out his journey through Hell—while Easter morning finds him precisely in the Earthly Paradise. The Eastern Church's image of redemption is alien to Dante. Christ has opened the outer door of Hell and led out a few souls from fore-Hell, but the inner door remains as tightly shut as ever.[402] And the wretched memorial of his progress through the interior of Hell is a geographical image: a landslide, which Virgil observes with amazement, since the last time he came that way the road was still clear.[403] Dante does not distinguish theologically between the pre-Christian Hades (Sheol) and the Hell of the New Testament, nor does he grasp the connection between this Hell and the distinctive kerygma of the New Testament. This journey through Hell, therefore, follows in the footsteps of Virgil rather than of Christ, which for the Christian would be the only possible way of entering this 'place'.

[401] Friedrich cites Hugh of St Victor as a shocking example of such a christology (pp. 164–165). Unfortunately, there are other examples.

[402] Inf 8, 126.

[403] Inf 12, 34–45.

The mythological image of the world was able to fit the redemptive events tidily and neatly into the geographical and astronomical structure of the cosmos—in very much the same way that Thomas Aquinas does in his great eschatology in the *Commentary on the Sentences*. The inadequacies of that image of the world now stand out as theological. The lack of christological (and thus also of trinitarian) influence on the *Inferno* (the inscription above the gate is far from being sufficient) has its effect on the *Purgatorio*, which places much greater emphasis on the moral restoration (*katorthôsis*) of man than on the imitation of Christ and the inexorable confrontation with his Cross. Above all, it affects the *Paradiso*, where the reality of Christ as universal mediator is almost entirely absent. Glory here is indeed the glory of a Heaven aflame with the Eros of God, but the distinctively Christian quality of this—God's descent into death and Hell, his humiliation to the point of complete kenosis, God taking our place and bearing the sin of the whole world—this kind of glory does not come into view. For this reason the *Comedy*'s image of God is not really trinitarian but an extraordinarily intensified, Christian version of the Eros of Antiquity. And it is quite clear that the relationship of Dante and Beatrice, of Gabriel and Mary, of earthly and heavenly love, of Eros and Agape within an Eros that is regarded as embracing all, is the last word of the poet.

6. THE ETERNAL FEMININE

The classical and Patristic notion of the beauty of the cosmic order does, of course, hold sway in Dante's work, but the question, prominent in Bonaventure, of how that beauty is to be expressed is stressed to the point where it becomes the dominant concern. It is the question of whether the ineffable ground of being can express itself in the form of created being: the two, ground and form, meet in the human beauty of Beatrice. Even in Dante's early work her earthly figure is an expression of Heaven—so precious indeed is she that Heaven is always on the point of recalling and reclaiming this image of itself, and in the *Comedy* there is nothing greater than her on earth: 'Never did nature or art set before thee beauty so great as the fair members in which I was enclosed. . . .'[404] But it is the eyes of Beatrice in which this beauty is concentrated, like lightning, those eyes, which even from behind the thick veil that conceals her before the confession, enflame the poet,[405] and which in Paradise transport him upward from sphere to sphere. Beatrice looks up to God, and her eyes mirror Heaven. Dante looks into that mirror and finds himself gradually carried up above.[406] The Eternal Feminine that draws us up is more than just a symbol, far more than an allegory; it is reality and extends, without break, up through all the gradations of reality, from the tangible, earthly body of the beloved, past her glorified figure, as far as St Lucy, who represents the *Ecclesia sanctorum*, as far as Mary, the archetype and foundation of the receptive and virginally fruitful Church. This principle has nothing to do with any passing, mythological image of the world; it can be justified by Catholic theology so long as one does not aestheticise it but rather recognizes that in it is mediated the full seriousness of the biblical message, the seriousness of the Cross and the remission of sins, the seriousness of conversion and confession.

It cannot be said that Dante has, as it were, 'sexualised' Christian Eros, even though it is by erotic similes that he constantly tries to illuminate the most profound relationships of human existence. For example, he distributes the transcendental qualities of truth and goodness between man and woman, and makes beauty the fruit of their union. Then again he ties a bond of friendship between nobility of soul (*nobilitade*; husband) and philosophy (wife), a bond that unites so inseparably in Eros that Eros becomes one with philosophy and at the same time, as love for philosophy, constitutes true nobility.[407] In the *Canzoniere* there is still a certain dualism between the two supreme values, virtue and beauty, and the question is asked how the heart, without infidelity, can serve two mistresses:

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[404] Pg 31, 49–51.

[405] Pg 30, 66.

[406] Par 2, 22f; 5, 86f; 8, 15f; 10, 37; 14, 79f; 18, 52f; 21, 1f; 22, 100f; 27, 97f; 30, 13f.

[407] Conv 4, 30.

Parlan bellezza e virtù all'intelletto,
E fan quistion: come un cuor puote stare
Infra duo donne con amor perfetto.[408]

The answer is that beauty can be loved for the sake of joy, and virtue for the sake of noble deeds, but this is not satisfactory. The more profound answer, already in outline in the *Canzoniere* and developed in the *Convivio* and the *Comedy*, sees in beauty the expressive form of the good and the true. For one who has still not had access to the deeper mysteries there is the reflected splendour of beauty, in all its colours, concealing within it, of course, a sacred mystery, just as a sacrament contains a hidden grace.[409] This relationship determines philosophical Eros: 'Morality is the beauty of philosophy, for just as the beauty of the body follows from the proper disposition of the members, so the beauty of Wisdom, which is the body of philosophy, as has been said, follows from the disposition of the moral virtues that enable her to give pleasure perceptibly to the senses (*che fanno quella piacere sensibilmente*).'[410] The body of truth and goodness is beautiful, but for Dante the three are inseparably connected, because Eros has also been characterized as form (soul) and Sophia as the matter (body) of philosophy (or truth). There can be no ethics without Eros and thus without beauty, but even more so, there can be no beauty without ethics, for the latter, according to Dante, constitutes the highest of the intellectual spheres that lie closest to God. Thus, for Dante, the ethical and the aesthetic remain a tightly intertwined unity. This is important with regard to the objection that for Dante erotic beauty has displaced ethics and that everything is absorbed in an ecstatic and ultimately irresponsible kind of contemplation. On the contrary, the *Divine Comedy* is also a proclamation of penitence, a rigorous initiation into just ethical and political behaviour, into a supreme sense of responsibility on the part of every individual with regard to this present world. Thus Dante's relationship with Beatrice is in no sense intended as an aesthetic libertinism; the Francesca episode shows how seriously he takes the ethics of the state of marriage. But it is true that Eros for Beatrice goes beyond the states of this life and indeed unites the two of them, though only when they are seen in the vanishing point of Paradise. Dante praises those men, who after a life in the state of matrimony, or indeed even during that life, turn toward the religious state. 'No one ought to excuse himself by reason of the marriage tie that still binds him in extreme age; for not only does he who assumes a habit and rule of life like that of St Augustine, or St Francis, or St Dominic, join the ranks of the professed, but a man may also become truly and properly professed while married, for God does not require us to be professed save in heart.'[411] Here, then, we have Dante, the married layman with the image of his eternal beloved on his heart. And here too we may apply the words of the canzone that the one for whom the meaning of the figure is not disclosed must carry that figure respectfully. And so in the kingdom of beauty there is an image of truth when Beatrice, in the place of Christ, leaves her mark on the kingdom of the lost:

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[408] Sonetto, '*Due donne in cima*'.

[409] Final strophe of the canzone for the second book of the *Convivio*. *Cf.* Pg 33, 73–78.

[410] Conv 3, 15.

O donna in cui la mia speranza vige,
E che soffristi per la mia salute
In inferno lasciar le tue vestige. . . .[413]

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[411] Conv 4, 28.

[412] Par 31, 79–81. 'O lady in whom my hope has its strength and who didst bear for my salvation to leave thy footprints in Hell. . . .'

ST JOHN OF THE CROSS

THE PERFECT ADVENTURE

Between Dante and St John of the Cross come Luther and the Reformation. But also in between come Columbus and the new experience of a spherical earth, and Copernicus and the opening up of space, which was to render the old theological image of the cosmos obsolete. The Carmelite reform is a conscious response to the first of these revolutions and reflects the second in passing; the third will not be confronted until Pascal. The Reformers banished aesthetics from theology; John of the Cross, the uncompromising ascetic, and Pascal, the man influenced by Jansenism, respond to that banishment with a new aesthetic theology that stands in sharp confrontation with the German Reformation.

The effect of both the new sense of the earth's spherical nature and of the new science of the cosmos was to destroy the myth of the 'perspicuity' of the *analogia entis* as presupposed and developed in Dante's cosmos—the analogy between earth and Heaven, the former age and the new age, the world of the body and the world of the spirit, nature and grace, knowledge and faith, man and God. And the destruction of the *analogia entis* prepares the way for the Lutheran dialectic between the kingdoms and for the principle of *sola fide*. The latter was not only a declaration of war against the philosophizing of the Middle Ages but also an act of defiance against the approaching new era. The two authors we are now to consider resist *sola fide* but daringly combine its Christian radicalism with a new form of perspicuity, a profound aesthetic experience. Christian tradition makes its contribution to this new aesthetic. John of the Cross reforms an old contemplative order with its roots in Palestine; he responds, fundamentally, with the theology of the Christian East. If we are to see St John in his right setting, we must never forget that as a young theological student in Salamanca he sketched out a programmatic treatise on the nature of Christian mysticism. In this—evidently to find firm ground from which to combat Illuminism and everything for which it had been condemned by the Church[1]—he draws upon Patristic tradition, 'especially on Dionysius and Gregory the Great'.[2] It is precisely in these two theologians that he finds his justification for representing the mystical way as absolutely *the* way to God: it is the Christian way that contains within itself the truth of Platonism, even the whole Far Eastern quest for God, including Buddha and Lao-tse. And, although mysticism is a way taken by only a very few, it is nonetheless the model for every way of faith, precisely because it is the way of the one and only faith. The challenge and the scandal of the Carmelite response to Luther lie in the fact that it incorporates the whole of monastic tradition from the Greeks up to and including the Middle Ages into the new Christian radicalism; indeed, with its modern orientation toward personal, experiential and psychological categories, the Carmelite response makes the new radicalism more radical than ever.[3]

In contrast, Pascal responds to the Reformation from the perspective of Luther's own Augustinian, Western tradition, which he combines (this had never been done before) with the outlook of modern science to form something unique and remarkable. However, both John of the Cross and Pascal stress, albeit in different ways, the aspect of the experience of faith over the Reformers' assurance of faith. This experience of faith is a verification, at once both subjective and objective, of the Christian mystery in the believing person and, for both authors, stands in outright opposition to the light of reason. The *illuminatio* of Plato and Augustine is no longer a mediating link between philosophy and theology; the distinction has clearly become a division, and only from above, from the point of view of faith, can the two orders be understood as a unity. Natural theology may be possible 'in itself', but it no longer has any existential force. 'The truth is that one must ever adhere to Christ's teaching, and that everything else is nothing.'[4] The shadowy notion of God that natural reason can gain from its own resources does not interest John. He desires God as he is in himself, and this God can be known only through God. Pascal, likewise, does not deny the 'God of the Philosophers', but concerns himself only with the God of Abraham and of Christ.

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[1] On the Index of 1559, beside John of Avila, Francis of Osuna and Luis of Granada, we also find the Spanish translations of Tauler, Dionysius the Carthusian and Heinrich Herpff.

[2] Crisogono de Jesus OCD, *Vida de San Juan de la Cruz*, cited from the text in *Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos* (BAC), *Vida y Obras de S. Juan de la Cruz*, 2nd ed. (Madrid, 1950), 85.

[3] This tradition is described in a book, in the tradition of Abbot Butler's *Western Mysticism*, by A Benedictine of Stanbrook, *Mediaeval Mystical Tradition and St John of the Cross* (Burns & Oates, 1954).

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[4] A ii, 22, 8. The works will be cited as follows: A = *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*; N = *The Dark Night*; C = *The Spiritual Canticle*; L = *Living Flame of Love*; Ep = Letters; P = Poetry.

Except for C, all works will be cited according to the text and paragraph numbering of P. Silverio de S. Teresa, 3rd ed. (Burgos, 1943). This same numbering is used in the BAC edition mentioned in n. 2.

The *Canticle* exists in two redactions: the shorter (A) and the longer (B). Since the critical work of Dom Chevallier (*Le Cantique Spirituel de St Jean de la Croix*, Notes historiques, Texte critique, vers. française, 1930), Redaction B, though still reproduced in Spanish editions, has been considered by an increasing number of scholars to consist of later interpolations into the Redaction A, the genuine redaction. Our quotations will be from Chevallier's text, and the commentary on each of the thirty-nine five-lined strophes is cited as in Chevallier, according to strophe and line number.

[The English translation used throughout is that of Kieran Kavanaugh OCD and Otilio Rodriguez OCD, *The Collected Works of St John of the Cross* (Washington, 1963).]

The most important studies: For biography, P. Crisogono (seen n. 2), P. Fr Bruno, *St Jean de la Croix* (1929); E. Allison Peers, *Handbook to the Life and Times of St Teresa and St John of the Cross* (1954); *ibid, Studies of the Spanish Mystics* (1927–1930). For personality and works, Jean Baruzi, *St Jean de la Croix et le problème de l'expérience mystique* (1924; 2nd ed., 1931), a standard work written from a neo-Kantian perspective, which Georges Morel SJ (*Le sens de l'existence selon St Jean de la Croix*, 3 vols, 1960–1961) has attempted to refute from the perspective of a quite definite neo-Hegelianism. For general interpretation, Irene Behn, *Spanische Mystik* (1957).

Standard authorities today on the aesthetic aspect of St John's work: Damaso Alonso, *La poesia de San Juan de la Cruz* (Madrid, 1942), as well as two sensitive French studies, Max Milner, *Poésie et vie mystique chez St Jean de la Croix* (Seuil, 1951); Michel Florisoone, *Esthétique et mystique d'après St Thérèse d'Avila et St Jean de la Croix* (Seuil, 1956). Further literature on the aesthetics: P. Crisogono (BAC, 2nd ed., 515, n. 12); many articles in the journal *Études Carmélitaines*. A good, though not comprehensive, concordance has been produced by Fr. Luis de San José, *Concordancias de los Obras y Escritos de . . . S. Juan de la Cruz* (Burgos, 1948).

God alone suffices. Man is created, called, endowed with grace, for the sake of the vision of God, for participation in the inner, triune life of eternal love. Man, who is relative, is what he is for the sake of the Absolute, and inasmuch as the Absolute outweighs the relative, so in human desire God must outweigh all created things. God for his part is pure, radiant love, a love that is open to the creature and desires its participation in the absolute and ontological unity of the Godhead. Such participation is possible when divine love becomes the loving action of the creature itself. 'So great a union between God and the soul is caused that all the things of both God and the soul become one in participant transformation (*unas en transformación participante*), and the soul appears (*parece*) to be God more than a soul. Indeed, it is God by participation (*y aun es Dios por participación*). Yet in truth its being (even though transformed) is naturally as distinct from God's as it was before.'[5] This, this alone, is 'man in truth'. Compared with this idea of God as man's origin and destiny, all other representations of human nature are lifeless abstractions.[6] Man is the 'image and likeness of God', but compared with the truth, he remains an image and a likeness.

What does it matter if only a few recognize and respond here on earth to this natural vocation, which everyone else will attain one day after terrible purification and retraining in the fire of Purgatory? Since when has the 'little flock', the 'strait gate', the 'narrow way' been any kind of objection or counterargument in a Christian context?[7] There are only a few, but 'not because God wishes that there be only a few of these spirits so elevated; he would rather that all would be perfect, but he finds few vessels that will endure so lofty and sublime a work'.[8] And yet this work is also a commitment to the unrelenting imitation of Christ, the *vida apostolica*, by which the world is crucified to me, and I to the world, and here John is faithful to tradition, which sees such imitation as transcending the opposition between contemplation and action.[9] Elsewhere John acknowledges that

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[5] A ii, 5, 7.

[6] Morel, vol. ii, ch. 5: *L'homme en vérité: Dieu par participation* (229—261).

[7] N (Introduction, Silverio, 322); N i, 8, 1; N i, 11, 4; L i, 24; L ii, 12; L ii, 27.

[8] L ii, 27.

[9] Ep 7.

God selects specific individuals to share in this ultimate 'truth about man', those namely who in turn are destined to be imitated themselves, men who must be, like Moses, Elijah, Paul, 'sources of the spirit in the church',[10] spiritual 'founding fathers', whose 'virtue and spirit are to be diffused among their children'.[11]

The challenge of St John of the Cross is that he flings the old slogan, 'God alone suffices', in the face of a world increasingly convinced of its own importance, and he does this with an exclusiveness that effectively makes the realization of 'man in truth' the preserve of a few. It is certainly the case that throughout all his works there is an unrelenting reductionism that knocks down everything in its way. All truths, every good and worthy object, anything that is not 'God in himself' is relativized and set in motion, and must be abandoned and transcended for the love of God. That the good things of creation should be in this category is not especially surprising from a Christian point of view, but it is surprising that in this he includes no less emphatically, even more emphatically, all that is supernaturally valuable and good, everything that is in any sense God's 'operation' in the world or in man yet which, as such, can be distinguished from God himself: virtues, charisms, illuminations, consolations, visions, and so on. Indeed, in this respect the reformer of Carmel seems to want to be more radical than Luther, because he too, without any suggestion of scepticism, interprets everything with objective form in the historical relevation utterly and completely in terms of the making present of God's interiority. Such a devastating and sweeping programme was unheard of in the Church since the days of Evagrius Ponticus. And we may reasonably ask whether such an attempt to pierce through the historical form to the Absolute does not already bring us close to the spirit of the Enlightenment; certainly the comparison with Hegel becomes unavoidable. And yet, for all that, John of the Cross has been raised up to be a Doctor of the Church, not least because of his remorseless power of discrimination.

John goes along, and points us toward, the essential way to

[10] A ii, 24, 3.

[11] L ii, 12.

God, and so he too, like Dante, brings the 'hereafter' into existence in this world, or rather, since in Christ the hereafter has entered the here and now, he shows us the depths of eternity within life itself. He too, like Dante, must enter the night of Hell, for only in the absolute distinction between the sinful creature and the absolute God in his total purity can the divine in its truth be perceived. But it is a demythologized night; there is no Virgil for a guide, no conversations with the damned; I myself am Hell. 'Sometimes this experience is so vivid that it seems to the soul that it sees Hell and perdition open before it. These are the ones who go down into Hell alive.'[12] Placed before the naked reality of the Absolute, which presents itself to her in the mode of privation and dispossession, the soul endures an 'infinite death' in her languishing and suffering, 'a living image of that infinite privation'.[13] This experience clarifies for John the meaning of the Old Testament, and he quotes in long passages from Job, Jeremiah and Jonah, whose lot it was to experience the wrath of God, total abandonment by God. '"Your wrath weighs upon me, and all your waves you have let loose" . . . for in truth the soul experiences the sorrows of Hell, all of which reflect the feeling of God's absence, of being chastised and rejected by him. . . . The soul experiences all this and even more, for now it seems that this affliction will last for ever.'[14] The soul 'feels terrible annihilation as an event in its very substance',[15] her hope in God vanishes, and with it any prospect of an end to the night,[16] she 'resembles one who is imprisoned in a dark dungeon, bound hands and feet, and able neither to move, nor see, nor feel any favour from heaven or earth'.[17] 'She must feel a withdrawal, deprivation, emptiness, and poverty regarding these blessings. And a person must be brought to think that he is far removed from them, and become so convinced that no one can persuade him otherwise or make him believe anything but that his blessings have come to an end.'[18] Prayer becomes impossible for the soul; it cannot be that God hears.[19] We must have great compassion for a soul such as this,[20] pursued in such a manner by the fire of God,[21] for what happens to her remains beyond her understanding until the end: the darknesses cannot comprehend the light.[22]

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[12] N ii, 6, 6.

[13] L iii, 22.

[14] N ii, 6, 2–3; *cf.* ii, 7, 4.

[15] N ii, 6, 6.

[16] N ii, 7, 2–3.

[17] N ii, 7, 3.

[18] N ii, 9, 9; *cf.* 10, 8.

[19] N ii, 8, 1.

Abandonment is experienced subjectively as the fire of Hell, but from God's perspective it is the fire of Purgatory.[23] For St Thomas Aquinas the two fires were but one.[24] And John says that the agonies of the soul abandoned by God are 'almost like the agonies of Purgatory'.[25] The trials, which the soul on the way to total union with God has to undergo here on earth, correspond to the fire that the rest will face in Purgatory.[26] Souls in both cases suffer great doubts about whether they will ever be released from these afflictions[27] (an idea that Pascal will defend). Thus we are invited to 'form an idea of the sufferings of Purgatory'[28] from this experience of night. We should not see all this as mere simile; no, as regards the suffering, there is an identity between the two states, even if objectively the 'dark fire' that purifies here below is a 'dark, loving spiritual fire'.[29]

This love penetrates and purifies the soul. Its effect is like that of fire on wood. First, the fire blackens and dries the wood, causes it to sweat and this envelops it with smoke, but then, when it has been purified in this way, the wood is burnt through from within and transformed into fire.[30] So too, when the living flame of love in which the soul burns has reached its goal, heaven is anticipated. It is, first of all, an 'earthly paradise' resulting from the purgation of the senses and of the spirit in which the soul attains baptismal innocence and complete subjection to God.[31] But later it becomes an anticipation of eternal blessedness itself, from the final perfection of which the soul is separated by only a thin veil, while at the same time she is already bathed in its glory.[32] St John's work reaches its peak in the description of these explosions of glory (*gloria*) from the fire of unifying love. This flaring up of divine sunlight, this ‘flashing of sparks and flames’,[33] this eruption of the habit of love in the act of love[34] promotes ‘love full of divine sweetness and power’ in the soul; ‘it is as if [the soul] were being given eternal life to taste, since it raises her up to the activity of God in God’.[35] It is a direct touch (*toque*) of the soul by God, and she would be bound to die, were it not for the fact that the hand that wounds her very being at the same time preserves her life.[36] ‘And thus this soul will be a soul of heaven, truly heavenly and more divine than human.’[37] Her life consists in being transported to glory, and ‘God is constantly on the point of finally giving her eternal life’.[38]

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[20] N ii, 7, 3.
[21] N ii, 6, 5.
[22] L i, 22.
[23] *Cf.* L i, 25.
[24] Suppl. q. 74 a 8.
[25] L i, 21.
[26] L ii, 25.
[27] N ii, 7, 7.
[28] N ii, 10, 5.
[29] N ii, 12, 1.
[30] N ii, 10, 1–4; ii, 12, 5; C 38, 5; L i, 19–21.
[31] A iii, 26, 5; C 31, 5; C 37, 2–5.
[32] L i, 29f.

Here is a Dante deprived of all images and concentrated in a single interior experience. Instead of ditches, cornices and spheres there is nothing except God: the purifying God of the night, who transfigures the soul, raising her higher and higher. And this is the message: it really exists, this way out of the sombre prison of human nature, this flight that the first stanza of the poem of the *Dark Night* describes:

En una noche oscura
Con ansias en amores inflamada’
¡Oh dichosa ventura!
Salí sin ser notada,
Estando ya mi casa sosegada.
A oscuras, y segura
Por la secreta escala, disfrazada,
¡Oh dichosa ventura!
A oscuras y en celada
Estando ya mi casa sosegada.[39]

Yes, this is the night, this is love’s venture in darkness and disguise, by a secret stair, leaving everything behind and passing over to attain another, divine and unlimited world. John’s whole work is a summons to this unique and necessary adventure. In place of Dante's images there are images of world discovery with all the pathos of the age of the Conquistadores. The Bridegroom is asked to look at the companions of the Bride, who go 'with her through strange islands' (*de la que va por insulas extrañas*),[40] which are interpreted as 'modes and ways that are foreign to all the senses and to common natural knowledge'. Elsewhere the Bridegroom is compared to 'lonely wooded valleys' and 'wonderfully strange islands'. This is explained as follows: 'The wonderfully strange islands are surrounded by water and situated across the sea, far withdrawn and cut off from communication with other men. Many things very different from what we have here are born and nurtured in these islands; they are of many strange kinds and powers never before seen by men, and they cause surprise and wonder in anyone who sees them. Thus, because of the wonderful new things and the wonderful strange knowledge (far removed from common knowledge) that the soul sees in God, she refers to him as "wonderfully strange islands". A man is called *strange* for either of two reasons: he is withdrawn from people, or, compared with other men, he is singular and superior in his deeds and works. The soul calls God "strange" for these two reasons. . . . It is no wonder then that God is strange to men who have not seen him, since he is also strange to the holy angels and to the blessed. For the angels and the blessed are incapable of seeing him fully, nor will they ever be capable of doing so.'[41] Thus the image of the strangely seductive island is lost in the image of the all-engulfing ocean: 'to assert that the way and the road to God by which the soul travels toward him is in the sea and her footsteps in many waters and the way thereby is unknowable is to say that the way to God is as hidden and secret to the sensory part of the soul as are the footsteps of one walking on water imperceptible to the bodily senses';[42] the joy that she finds in God 'is like the sea, which does not diminish for all the water that is drawn of it or for the rivers that run into it'.[43] And the image of the sea in

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[33] L Prologue.
[34] L i, 3.
[35] L i, 4–5.
[36] L i, 8; i, 27.
[37] N ii, 13, 11.
[38] L iii, 10–11.
[39] ‘One dark night, / Fired with love’s urgent longings / —Ah, blessed adventure— / I went out unseen, / My house being now all stilled; / In darkness, and secure, / By the secret ladder, disguised, / —Ah, blessed adventure— / In darkness and concealment, / My house being now all stilled.’

[40] C 32, 5.
[41] C 13, 3.
[42] N ii, 17, 8.
[43] C 29, 5.

turn blends with that of darkness (*esta agua tenebrosa*),[44] and of the unending wilderness (*un immenso desierto*).[45] The existentially interpreted images of the Old Testament are also taken up here: the exodus from Egypt, the drowning of the foe in the sea of contemplation so that the soul may be brought 'into the freedom and holy rest of the children of God, into the wilderness',[46] and likewise the rocky mountain of Carmel, upon which 'our holy father Elijah' found his God.[47]

Whatever its diversity, the only function of the imagery is to point to the *conquista* that leads the soul, which feels its way through the darkness, *per caminos nuevos nunca sabidos*[48] to a *sabiduria oscura*.[49] The notion of secrecy is central to the thought of St John of the Cross, although his doctrine betrays no trace of any kind of 'secret knowledge', is infinitely far removed from all Cabbalism, from Böhme and Swedenborg, for it makes no claim to anything particular or definite by way of experience and encounter; all it offers is the imageless, limitless expanse of the incomprehensible God. What is secret here is precisely what is proclaimed and taken for granted in all public places and (especially) in every part of the Church. And yet no one knows the secret, no one can make it his own. Of its very nature it can be recognized only as a mystery, and an eternal mystery it remains and becomes so more and more for one who encounters it once and eternally. John retains the traditional term 'mystical theology', used from Denys onward; indeed, there are several explicit references to the Areopagite. For John 'mystical theology' is not primarily a subjective, secret learning, but rather, knowledge about the objective mystery of God.[50] The *skotous aktis*, the 'ray of darkness',[51] is dark precisely because the soul is not adapted to the extreme light, but the adaptation, so far as it is possible, consists in being caught up in the essential mystery. But the soul's adaptation and initiation can be only secondary reasons for this learning being secret,[52] and the distinction from ordinary knowledge consists not in the knowledge as such, but in the love that it alone mediates and in which it selectively operates.[53] What God communicates directly to the soul of himself 'always remains secret and ineffable . . . the soul is like a man who beholds an object never before seen in itself or in its likeness: he understands, he finds satisfaction in it, and yet he cannot give it a name. . . . The language of God has that trait'.[54] His wealth is all the greater, because it is 'concealed in his infinite unity and simplicity'.[55] It is an 'absolute secret between the spirit and God',[56] a haven and hiding place in the face of God: 'You dwell permanently hidden within them. . . . As a result "you hide them in the secret of your face", which is the Word, "from the disturbance of men"' (*cf.* Ps 30.21).[57] The soul then understands the meaning of the text from the Apocalypse: 'To him who conquers . . . I will give . . . a precious stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one can read except him who receives it' (2.17).[58]

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[44] N ii, 16, 13.

[45] N ii, 17, 6.

[46] L iii, 38.

[47] A ii, 8, 4; ii, 24, 3; C 13, 5; L ii, 17.

[48] N ii, 16, 8.

[49] N ii, 16, 10.

[50] A ii, 8, 6; N ii, 12, 5.

[51] N ii, 5, 3; C 13, 5; L iii, 49.

[52] *La ciencia sabrosa . . . es la teologia mística que es ciencia secreta de Dios, que llaman los espirituales contemplación.* C 18, 2; *cf.* C 38, 4.

This secret alone is the absolute 'refuge' (*refugio*)[59] beyond all worldly danger and the soul's own acts and habits, the 'concealment' (*escondrijo*),[60] where she remains in great security (*seguridad*), surrounded by the 'wall' (*muro*) and 'enclosure of peace' (*vallado de paz*),[61] and thus in 'great solitude away from all things' (*gran soledad de todas las cosas*).[62] It is the solitude into which God led his people to speak to them and to marry them (Hos 2.16),[63] the silence in which the words of infinite wisdom are heard.[64] What is hidden is also secure: 'If the soul possesses these things in secret [*a solas*], she also understands them in secret; her desire is that her secret may be very hidden, very deep, as far as possible from any external communication. In this she is like the merchant with the pearl, or even better, like the man who found a treasure hidden in a field, covered it up and then went off in joy to buy that field.'[65] This is not secrecy for its own sake; no, it is of the nature of love that she 'reveals her mysteries only to her friends'.[66] So the soul presses for permission to go deeper and deeper into the 'thicket' (*espesura*)[67] of God, 'which is so deep and immense that no matter how much the soul knows she can always enter it further'. This fact must always be taken into account and considered whenever one is dealing with the revelation of God in Christ and the interpretation that in the course of the Church's history the revelation has been given; God's triune wisdom is 'so well concealed that however numerous are the mysteries and marvels that holy doctors have discovered and saintly souls have contemplated in this earthly life, far more is yet to be said and understood. There is much to fathom in Christ, for he is like an abundant mine with uncounted recesses of treasures, so that however deep men go they never reach the end or bottom, but rather in every recess find new veins with new riches everywhere'.[68]

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[53] N ii, 17, 2.

[54] N ii, 17, 3; *cf.* L iv, 6, the discovery of the 'incomparable newness of God', of his absolute vivacity (he is 'more mobile than all mobile things' [according to Wisd 7.24], more active than all active things), and the contemplation of all creatures within this eternal newness.

[55] L iii, 17.

[56] N ii, 23, 3.

[57] L ii, 17.

[58] L ii, 21.

[59] N ii, 23, 4.

[60] N ii, 23, 1.

[61] C 30, 4.

[62] C 24, decl; C 34, 2–3.

[63] L iii, 34; C 34, 5.

[64] L iii, 67.

Medieval ways to God were, for the most part, 'ascents', ladders that were meant to lead the soul closer to God by means of an ingenious series of spiritual acts and habits (active renunciations and contemplative dispositions). St John of the Cross lived within this tradition and even availed himself of entire sections of these schemes of ascent in his works (such as the *decem gradus amoris sec. S. Bernardum* of pseudo-Thomas Aquinas).[69] Nonetheless, his criticism of all acts and habits places him far beyond these ways of ascent. His approach is no matter of cleverly dovetailing the *via negativa* and the *via positiva* into the *via eminentiae*. No, John is much closer to the original rhythms of Denys, although he is much more consistent and relentless in his logic: everything is gained when everything is abandoned, the ship lands when it is wrecked, you leap on to firm ground when all the rungs of your ladder break. It is like St John of the Cross's own leap when he escaped by night from the Toledo convent after nine terrible months in the custody of the

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[65] C 32, decl.

[66] C 18, 1.

[67] C 35, 5.

[68] C 36, 3.

[69] N ii, 19–20; Opusc. 54, ed. Vivès, vol. 28, 351–367.

Calced Carmelites. He improvised a rope by knotting together his sheets, but it did not reach far enough, and so he had to jump down onto the ramparts, narrowly missing the chasm of rocks by the banks of the Tajo, where he would have been dashed to pieces. It is true that the 'night' is a way through, a purifying emergence into an exceedingly great light,[70] and yet it is the permanent means of making the decisive spiritual jump, and it remains absolutely identical with contemplation. If the commentaries pay more attention to the first aspect, the poems concentrate more on the second, and the poems, as we shall see, are decisive. This is true of the powerful poem, composed in the Toledo prison, with its refrain about the night:

> *Que bien sé yo la fonte que mana y corre*
> *Aunque es de noche*—[71]

the spring known well only through faith (although it is night), whose origin is unknown, because it has none, and yet from it, it derives its whole being (although it is night), and there is nothing so beautiful, Heaven and earth drink refreshment there (although it is night); it is a bottomless abyss and no ford to cross it can be found (although it is night), its clarity is never darkened, and from it proceeds all light (although it is night):—'Rich are the streams and full—this know I well; / They water nations, heav'ns and depths of Hell, / Although 'tis night.'[72]

With this we should take the other poem from the time of John's imprisonment, perhaps the most daring he wrote, a transposition of the psalm 'By the waters of Babylon'. Babylon here is the world (including the earthly Church in her external aspect), Sion is God, the soul's true homeland, for which she longs. 'The strangers (outsiders, *extraños*) among whom I was captive rejoiced; they asked me to sing what I sang in Sion: "Sing us a song from Sion, let's hear how it sounds." I said: "How can I sing in a strange land where I weep for Sion, sing of the happiness that I had there?" I would be forgetting her if I rejoiced in a strange land. May the tongue I speak with cling to my palate . . . if I celebrate one feastday or feast at all without you.' In place of the original Jewish conclusion ('O daughter of Babylon, you devastator, . . . happy shall he be who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rock!'), there is a profound allegory:

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[70] This notion of a 'way through' is most clearly emphasized in L ii, 28–31.

[71] 'For I know well the spring that flows and runs, / Although it is night.'

[72] P viii (Silv. 809). [These lines quoted in the text are taken from the English version of E. Allison Peers, *St John of the Cross: The Complete Works*, vol. ii (London, 1934), p. 454.]

¡Oh hija de Babilonia,
Misera y desventurada!
Bienaventurada era
Aquel en quien confiaba,
Que te ha de dar el castigo
Que de tu mano llevaba.
Y juntará sus pequeños,
Y a mí, porque en ti lloraba,
A la piedra que era Cristo,
Por el cual yo te dejaba.[73]

Accursed Babylon must be dashed, with her children, on the rock of Christ; that is all that can be sung when deprived of Sion. But the singer's revenge, the punishment he wants to inflict on his tormentress, is the revenge of eternal love, and the singer himself wants to suffer that with her—indeed, he is already in the midst of suffering, for he too has been dashed.

This is an adventure in the atmosphere of extreme secrecy—escaping to Sion from captivity in Babylon, by night, disguised, on a secret stair, not approaching by degrees, but dancing to the rhythm of *nada-todo.*

To reach satisfaction in all
Desire its possession in nothing.
To come to the knowledge of all,
Desire the knowledge of nothing.
To arrive at being all,
Desire to be nothing.
To come to the pleasure you have not,
You must go by a way in which you know not.

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[73] 'O Daughter of Babylon, / Miserable and wretched! / Blessed is he / In whom I have trusted, / For he will punish you / As you have me; / And he will gather your little ones / And me, who wept because of you / At the rock who is Christ / For whom I abandoned you.' P xiv (Silv. 817–818).

To come to the possession you have not,
You must go by a way in which you possess not.
To come to be what you are not,
You must go by a way in which you are not.[74]

This has a dramatic force beyond that of any human drama. The soul goes into the night of the All. First she enters the night, then she is swallowed up in it. Thus she learns that the All that she walks toward is not a Something. God is not only the 'wholly other'; he transcends the most extreme opposition as the *non-Aliud*. The soul has herself to realise something that transcends the distinction between subject and object, and yet which, of her very nature, she can realise only by means of that distinction. But if she is to do this, the soul is required to come out from all the confines of life, and such emergence is possible only through a love stronger than Hell, a life stronger than death. This love does not attain the beloved by its own powers, but jumps and is caught by the open arms of the love of God, who transforms the soul from being a lover into a beloved. But this happens only when love of itself goes to the outer limit, like the love of Mary Magdalene who sought the beloved alive among the dead. Beatrice lives, and Dante, by practising penance and renunciation, can live and approach her. But Christ has died and withdrawn himself from the Bride, and she must seek him in real death by dying with him. What Mary Magdalene does at Simon the Pharisee's banquet is bold and shows the enthusiasm of her love, but what she does by the tomb flies in the face of reason, 'yet it is of the nature of love to regard everything as possible'. That is why the Bride in the Canticle likewise goes out into the streets to ask about her lover when he disappears. She is like 'the lioness or she-bear that goes in search of her cubs when they are taken away and cannot be found. So the soul in her loss goes out in search of her God. Since she is immersed in darkness, she feels his absence and that she is dying with love of him. She is like Rachel in her longing to bear children when she says to Jacob, "Give me children, otherwise I will die"' (Gen 30.1).[75] The nights she spends going hither and thither serve not only to purify her but, above all, also to give her that breadth of vision required of her if she is to see that 'he is nothing of all that I know and am, and only if all becomes nothing for me can he become my All'. 'Whoever refuses to go out at night in search of the Beloved . . . but rather seeks him in his own . . . comfort . . . will not succeed in finding him.'[76]

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[74] A i, 13, 11.

[75] N ii, 13, 6–8.

2. THE PARADOX OF MYSTICAL POETRY

The love that survives every death but which also has to undergo every death in order to survive: this is the solution of the agonizing paradox of how supreme poetic beauty can blossom forth from such negation. For there is no doubt about it: the reformer of Carmel responds to the negation of the Protestant reformers with beauty; to the destructive dialectical Word with the constructive poetic Word. The poems are the decisive statement in St John of the Cross's work. Compared with the poems, the commentaries are of a lower level; by his own admission they are quite inadequate and incapable of doing justice to the content of the inspired words in all their simplicity.[77] The commentaries refer the reader to the more compact, more pregnant *figuras, comparaciones y semejanzas*. These disclose their meaning, says the poet, only if read 'in the simplicity of the spirit of love'; otherwise they 'seem to be absurdities rather than reasonable utterances', as is true of the poetic parts of the Bible. 'Since these stanzas, then, were composed in a love flowing from abundant mystical understanding, I cannot explain them adequately. . . . Though we give some explanation of these stanzas, there is no reason to be bound to this explanation. For mystical wisdom, which is the subject of these stanzas, is understood through love and need not be understood distinctly in order to cause love and affection in the soul, for it is given according to the mode of faith, through which we love God without understanding him.'[78] And lest we be tempted to think that this poetry is the mere product of a heart tormented by overflowing love, John brings it all back to the revelation of God, to the Word in scripture: he 'submits himself in advance . . . unconditionally to the judgment of our holy Mother the Church'. 'I do not intend to affirm anything of myself nor trust in any of my own experiences nor in those of other spiritual persons whom I have known or heard of. Although I plan to make use of these experiences, I want to explain and confirm at least the more difficult matters through passages from sacred Scripture.'[79] And this can be seen not only in the prose commentary, which seeks to safeguard, as it were, the boldness of the verse by means of scriptural quotations, but also in the poetry itself. The poems consist of a paraphrase, in the case of the Spiritual Canticle, of the Song of Songs (although precisely how much of it is paraphrase, it is impossible to say), an adaptation of one of the psalms and the transposition of themes from the gospels, especially St John's prologue (as in the case of the great romance on the Trinity and the Incarnation). But scriptural influence is particularly evident in the most characteristic creations of St John of the Cross's genius: the poems of the *Dark Night*, the poems of the *Living Flame*, the verses about the ecstatic hunt for divine game.

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[76] N ii, 24, 4.
[77] C Prol. 1.
[78] C Prol. 2.

Here the literary problem presents itself, although as yet we are only on the threshold of St John's work. St John's poems are praised by many as the crown of Spanish lyric poetry: consequently, they have a certain affinity with other poetry of the period. Ramon Lull, in his most interior work (*The Book of the Lover and the Beloved*), consciously imitated the forms of the Sufi mystic poets. Similarly, St John explicitly refers to the great lyric poet Garcilaso, who died young (+ 1536. It is true that John speaks of Garcilaso's friend, Boscan, who died in 1542, but the poetry of both writers appeared together, and both are founders of the Italian style in Spain). We find in Garcilaso's work the pastoral motifs familiar to us from St John: springs and thickets, nymphs, sirens and nightingales, shepherds and shepherdesses; indeed we even find themes that we tend to think of as being peculiar to the mystic. In Garcilaso we find the stanza:

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[79] C Prol. 4.

Finally on the fifth night my cruel fate departed,
to lead me to where the thick texture of life
was to be broken up
and my little house was to leave me
in the silence of the dark night.

Alonso,[80] however, has shown that there was an intermediate link, the work of a certain Sebastián of Córdoba, *Las Obras de Boscán y Garcilaso trasladadas en materias cristianas y religiosas* (Ubeda, 1757), in which, for example, the lament of two shepherds is transformed into the allegorical lament of the divine shepherd Christ, which, like St John's magnificent pastoral poem, even speaks of 'a shepherd, lifted up upon that tree, his face and forehead wounded and crowned with thorns'. But it was not only in these naive, complicated allegories that the synthesis of classical/worldly and biblical/spiritual poetry was already established and taken for granted. It was also an accepted part of the late-humanist, early Baroque *milieu* Juan de Yepes encountered in the Jesuit College at Medina del Campo and, above all, in the 'Castilian Athens', the University of Salamanca. The great Fray Luis de León, who in the most difficult periods of the Inquisition and the Index sought to translate the Bible (especially the poetic books) into Castilian, at the same time translated the Eclogues and Georgics of Virgil, Pindar, Horace and Tibullus, and wrote the sublime, neo-Platonic Ode to Salina (who had published a work on music) on the subject of the harmony of God in the world.[81] Other elements that contribute to this synthesis in St John's work are the old folk songs with their *coplas* (stanzas with refrains) and romances (epic poems on themes of national history). The latter too had undergone spiritual transposition (*glosas a lo divino*) and echo throughout nearly all of John's poetry. Like Theresa of Avila, John was a great lover of song. 'He used to sing as he walked', testifies a brother who often accompanied him on the stony path from Beas to the hermitage of Calvario. Folk poetry spoke directly to the heart and had none of the affectation of the theological travesties of Garcilaso. John's refrains—'I know not what', 'Dying because I do not die'—have their origin in simple love songs, now transposed into the highest sphere.

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[80] For the following see the summary in Max Milner 1, 61f.

[81] *Obras completas castellanas de Fray Luis de León*, ed. Gardia, BAC, 2nd ed. (1951), 1436–1438. Translated (and abridged) in Irene Behn, *Spanische Mystik*, 262–263.

It is precisely against this background of a synthesis of biblical/theological, classical/humanist and popular/national elements that the Song of Songs emerges in all its original, pastoral freshness. This was the imperishable jewel for which the Christian tradition had forged an inestimably precious monstrance of spiritual commentaries in mystic filigree. And the Song of Songs, in its turn, does not stand alone, but is a treasury of images and symbols, whose effectiveness depends on their place within the total meaning of divine revelation. Thus they require no 'strange speech' (*allegoria*) to make them religiously comprehensible and tolerable. No, their authenticity derives from the *conubium* between God and mankind. The word of the old covenant has, ultimately, a rigidity and narrowness from which it is set free when the new and everlasting covenant, the totality of revelation dawns, in which the Logos of scripture is expounded in the freedom of the Holy Spirit. This whole free treatment of the biblical *Canticum* in the Spanish mystic's *Cantico* (for which he claims divine inspiration) is a reflection of what is certainly an unprecedented and audacious achievement: the 'appropriation' of the entire sphere of the Logos by the Holy Spirit of the Church. All manner of creatures come into this new poem, although they are inconspicuous in the commentary and do not even receive any particular emphasis: 'the nymphs of Judaea' (St. 31), the 'singing sirens' (St. 30), the 'sweet nightingale' (St. 38). Likewise, completely unemphasized (as so often with great poets), the whole worldly/spiritual atmosphere of folk song comes into the work.

It would be absurd to deny these influences, as would be the attempt to exclude specific literary names in favour of a merely indefinite atmospheric influence in order to prove that St John's inspiration was not profane but purely spiritual, purely mystical.[82] To resist such attempts is not to deny the fact now to be considered; namely, that all these influences do not, do not in any way, place in doubt the creative power of St John's genius. He soars like an eagle up to the lofty solitude of his experience of God, and thence alone is born the language that will be the vehicle for his equally solitary artistic works. Eckhart describes the divine birth of the eternal Son in the soul. It is the same Word of God, encountering and dwelling in the soul together with his Spirit, which constitutes the only sphere from which, in the final analysis, Eckhart's word and John's poetry originate. But how are the spheres within this larger sphere of influence to be distinguished? There is, first of all, the direct perception of 'substantial locutions'[83] from substance to substance, the evocations of man's most primitive symbols—night, light, water, ringing sounds—flowing almost directly from the same profoundly interior source. Then there is the recalling of the hallowed words and images of the Bible, which are theologically interwoven and caught up to the heights of interior inspiration. Finally, there is the whole range of expressive material formed by natural images and the beloved and long-cherished symbols familiar from literature. Who can confirm this and neatly separate the various levels? Who can divide the spheres of supernatural and natural inspiration? Why shouldn't the direct in-spiration of the Holy Spirit at the same time awaken all of the powers of artistic enthusiasm and creative inventiveness where such powers exist? And who would want to maintain that such elevation of man's creative ability to the service, both passive and active, of the divine Word is impossible or inadmissible from a Christian point of view or incompatible with supreme holiness? On the contrary, this poetry claims to be a direct expression and incontrovertible testimony to such engraced holiness, a reflection of its splendour. The expression as such, of course, is not 'necessary', because the holiness could occur without poetry, but the two originate from the same sphere of loving freedom in the soul's relationship with God; both are the overwhelming splendour of grace, an 'inundation with glory' (*toda la sustancia del alma bañada en gloria;*[84] *aquella llama, acada vez que llamea, baña al alma en*

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[82] Thus argues P. Emerito de Jesus Maria, 'Las raices de la poesia sanjuanista y Damaso Alonso' (in the journal *El Monte Carmelo*, Sept. 1950). *Cf.* Milner 1, 125–134.

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[83] A ii, 31; C 13, 5.

[84] C 37, 1–2.

gloria).[85] Baruzi tried to insert a clearly defined series of stages between the symbolism, in the strict sense, of the poems of the *Dark Night* and the allegorical imagery of the *Canticle* and the *Living Flame*; only the former spring from the highest and most interior sphere. But the transition (which in several places is noticeable) is much smoother; it is precisely the *Canticle* that contains stanzas or at least lines of supreme symbolic inventiveness, such as the incomparable eleventh:

O cristalina fuente
Si en esos tus semblantes plateados
formases de repente
Los ojos deseados
que tengo en mis entrañas dibujados.[86]

It is entirely logical that the prose commentary should interpret the flowing spring as faith (we must, of course, recall what this word means for St John) and the 'silvered-over face', the 'external appearance', as the individual 'propositions of the faith', which here on earth are 'silver' and only in the life to come will reveal the gold that lies beneath. Equally logically, the 'eyes I have desired' are interpreted as 'divine rays' and 'divine truths', which here below enlighten us through the articles of faith, though still obscurely. The fact that these eyes are 'hinted at', 'sketched', within the heart of man means certainly that in the infused virtues the heart possesses these truths, albeit obscurely and imperfectly. Besides this, says the commentary, there is another sketch, the sketch of love. The lover carries the image of the beloved in his heart, and 'transforming love produces such likeness in the lovers that one can say that each is the other and both are one'. All this is beautiful and true, but how hopelessly it limps behind the vision! How wonderful is that unresolved, ardent 'yes': if only it could happen, if only on that smoothly flowing, simmering surface (and yet it is the surface of the spring itself, which is crystalline and transparent to the depths and for that very reason is unfathomable) you would suddenly (*exaiphnês*) let the real vision, the unfathomable depths of the eye, burst open—*videntem videre!*—those depths, whose shadow, outline, intimation lies in the eye and spring of my own soul; if only you would stand in front of me and yet be in me, if only before my eyes and yet in my eyes you would open up your own eye. The commentary does well here to point, by restricting and defining, to the Credo in all its objectivity. For it is only when the objective dimension of the revelation of the triune God in the incarnate Son is opened up that this mutual regard of God and the soul in the Holy Spirit can be understood in all its true breadth and depth and can be preserved from all misleading identification.

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[85] L i, 3.

[86] 'O spring like crystal! / If only, on your silvered-over face, / You would suddenly form / The eyes I have desired, / Which I bear sketched deep within my heart!'

This is but one example among very many of the qualitative superiority of the poetic statement over the prose restatement, although the poet is always aware that even the most accomplished poetic statement, together with its inspiration, is only ever an echo, an ardent pointer toward the original divine *spiratio*. The centre of the mystic act is beyond the centre of the poetic act. The centre of the latter is on the periphery of the former, even though the poem is conceived in the more secret womb of mystical experience; the poem is the echo of the experience, testifying and referring and pressing back to it. In no way does the mystic's poetry go beyond the word of revelation itself; his activity is confined to the sphere of imitation, the sphere of the Holy Spirit who infuses his existential interpretation into the soul and so sets it down deep inside the womb of Christ's Bride, the Church.

This means, then, that poetry at this high level must not be considered in separation from holiness. But holiness in this qualitatively distinctive sense has no other origin except the imitation of Christ, the total stripping away of everything, the following of the evangelical counsels, the affirmation of everything that the man of this world experiences as a renunciation of the aesthetic, dissatisfaction with all this-worldly, creaturely delights, and with all enjoyment of them, whether intentional or unintentional, sinful or lawful. It is precisely to the renunciation of the 'aesthetic' that this poetry must bear witness, if it is to be an authentic witness, in the Holy

Spirit, to the bridal love of Christ and the Church, of God and the world on the Cross. We are now a long way from Bonaventure and the whole neo-Platonic ascent by stages from type to archetype. We are closer to Francis, but closer still to the remorseless sword of the Gospel word, which for the love of the One demands the hatred of everything else. And the sword must pierce to the division of the joints and marrow of the soul, to the division of the soul from itself, before the promise of the hundredfold can be fulfilled on earth. To bear witness to this, poetry must therefore begin inside the division, as the scream of the vivisected soul in the middle of the night, in order to end in the song of praise of the soul, even more fully alive at a deeper level, wounded in the fire of glory. It is the fiery arrow of the seraph (John explicitly quotes this) that pierces the souls of Francis and Theresa—beyond pain and pleasure, wound and health, life and death: *¡Oh cauterio suave! ¡Oh regalada llaga!*[87] 'The very same cautery that touches the wound also heals it, but it heals only by penetrating deeper within it.'[88]

It is only in this context that we see the full paradox of this 'mystical aesthetics'. John's whole work strives to isolate the individual components of this paradox with extreme clarity so that no doubt is left as to the point, the height, at which these diverse factors are reconciled and indissolubly merged. We must now consider these factors one by one.

1. Throughout all of St John's works there runs a massive *negation*, or more precisely, reduction. No created thing is God, and because every created thing has form, all forms must be surmounted and abandoned if the vision of God is to be possible. It is self-evident that the senses do not comprehend God.[89] But, for John, it is no less self-evident that the intellect (*entendimento*) can only think something by means of the senses (*solo lo que alcanza por los sentidos*),[90] and so it needs the 'figures and forms of objects, which are present either in themselves or in their likenesses'. And so 'nothing which could possibly be imagined or comprehended in this life can be a proximate means (*medio*

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[87] 'O sweet cautery, O delightful wound!' L ii.

[88] L i, 25; L ii, 7–10, 13.

[89] A iii, 24, 1–3.

[90] A ii, 3, 1–2.

proximo)[91] of union with God. In our natural way of knowing, the intellect can only grasp an object through the forms and phantasms of things perceived by the bodily senses. Since these objects cannot serve as a means, the intellect cannot profit from its natural knowing. As for the supernatural way of knowing, the intellect, according to the possibilities of its ordinary power and while in the prison of the body, is neither capable nor prepared for the reception of the clear knowledge of God. Such knowledge does not belong to this state, since death is a necessary condition for possessing it.'[92] Thus faith takes the place of the intellect and acts, like a guide for the blind,[93] to lead us to things 'we have never seen or known, either in themselves or in their likenesses; in fact nothing like them exists'.[94] We know them, literally, only by 'hearsay', for 'as St Paul says, "faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes from the preaching of Christ"'.[95] This has all the appearance of a Nominalist/Lutheran/Kantian starting point, which now leads directly to the sweeping critique of all means and ways to God that are not those of 'pure faith'.[96] This is a 'mystagogical', not a philosophical, critique, which therefore begins by drawing a line between relative and absolute being, an opposition to be instilled into the soul like the ABC. If God is being, the creature is nothing;[97] if God is beauty, the creature is ugliness;[98] if God is pleasure, the creature is aversion; if God is goodness, the creature is evil; if God is wisdom, the creature is folly;[99] if God is freedom, the creature is slavery.[100] God has one kind of taste, the creature has another, and the palate of the soul cannot experience two tastes at a time.[101] '"The animal man does not perceive the things of God; they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them" (1 Cor 2.14). By the animal man he means here the man who still lives with natural appetites and gratifications.'[102] The fragrance of God is lost in a soul not wholly concentrated on him, just as the fragrance of a salve is lost when it is exposed to the open air.[103] 'Creature' here always has the meaning of that which is radically other than God, which for that very reason must transcend itself, if it is to attain that participation in the Godhead that God bestows upon it. From its tasting of the finite it must draw no 'conclusions' about how the Absolute may taste; what it must do is taste it at first hand.[104] It must, by whatever means possible—by its own utmost exertions, though knowing all the time that ultimately what it seeks must be experienced passively—give God noetically and existentially the predominance in its own self that he always has ontically.[105] This can be only a work of love, for in terms of being, the creature remains eternally the 'other than God'. But in transfiguring, nuptial love, the mutual otherness of God and man makes possible exchange and reciprocal indwelling.[106] Thus the idea of flight, of rapture, plays a decisive role, although ecstasy must be thoroughly purified and transformed from its present imperfection as a bodily or physiological state of rapture into a substantial, habitual state of being borne off.[107] This results when the soul—*me hice perdidiza y fuí ganada*—makes itself lose its very self and its way and so makes itself found by God. This *hice* is a reflection of the harsh anti-Reformation element in St John's life and work, although he is very much aware that the effort involved in what the soul does depends entirely on God's prevenient grace, the grace that flows from the crucified Son of God. Despite the negativity of what it undertakes, the achievement of human Eros in causing itself to be overwhelmed by the divine Eros is something very positive, though it is from the outset always a response to God's creative and elective word of grace.[108] Man, with all his intellectual capabilities, who 'cannot know, of himself, what God is like, must necessarily approach him like a vanquished man'.[109]

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[91] It would not be surprising if the Scholastic *proximo*, which one finds frequently but is also on occasion absent, turned out to be a prudent addition made by the editor.

[92] A ii, 8, 4.

[93] A ii, 4, 3.

[94] A ii, 3, 3.

[95] *Ibid.*; on *fides ex auditu* see A ii, 27, 4.

[96] A ii, 24, 8; *la pura fe*

[97] A i, 1, 3–4.

[98] A i, 1, 4; Ep 10.

[99] A i, 1, 4.

[100] A i, 1, 5.

[101] A i, 5, 3–4.

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[102] L iii, 65.

[103] A i, 10, 1.

[104] N ii, 9, 1–2.

[105] C 38, 4.

[106] C 11, 5.

[107] C 12, 2a, where John refers to Theresa's descriptions of rapture.

[108] A ii, 31, 1–2.

[109] L iii, 58.

The work of demolition, of world critique, is thus, through the transcendent power that sustains it, something quite positive, the work of a love that has been chosen by God and that, for its part, responds by making a choice of its own (and thus excludes everything else from its love). The others, who seek their gratification and glorification in this world together with God, have their reward here below.[110] To many, of course, 'observing how we annihilate the faculties in their operations, it will perhaps seem that we are tearing down rather than building up the way of spiritual exercise'. In reality, though, it means for the 'beginner' that his faculties are to be 'drawn away from their natural props and capacities and raised above themselves'.[111] And if it seems to be 'the destruction of the natural activity and use of the faculties so that man becomes like the beasts, then we must not forget that this work is undertaken at God's initiative and for his sake, and that 'God does not destroy, but perfects nature'.[112] The image of the peel and the core is constantly repeated; the divine fruit of the core must be extracted from the creaturely peel.[113]

The attack, then, is against attachment to creaturely values, the attempt to quench man's essential 'thirst' at the murky waters of human transience. The whole abstract ontology of the God-world opposition, the law, formulated time and again, of their mutual exclusiveness,[114] subserves the purpose of educating the particular, fallen man with his disordered appetites.[115] The fault of this attachment does not depend on quantity: *one* grain of sand is sufficient to obstruct the vision of the eye, one thread to prevent a bird from flying.[116] Yahweh trained his people in the exclusiveness of love: St John cites many a passage that reveals the pointlessness of trying to find pleasure in something other than God.[117] In so doing he succeeds in satisfying the aspirations of the great Asian mystics to free men from their 'thirst', a thirst that is tragically intensified by the experience of human transience. Thus, at first sight, John's demands that the soul be detached from all 'forms' and 'images' can seem like the unquestioning adoption of the Platonizing mysticism of the Desert Fathers, especially that of Evagrius Ponticus. The notions of *nous katharos*, the *gnôsis aneidês*, *haplê*, *aülos*, recur freely, and many of St John's dicta, if translated into Greek, could be incorporated directly into the *Gnostic Centuries* of Evagrius.[118] And since John, like Evagrius, writes for contemplatives, the struggle is above all against the higher, spiritually disguised forms of the capital vices (Evagrius, *De octo vitiosis cogitationibus*=John, *Dark Night*, I, 2–7). And in connection with these concealed attachments and desires for possession, the conflict is also about the renunciation and abandonment of all supernaturally imparted 'forms', be they visions of the phantasy, or definite, clearly delineated insights of the intellect, or consolations and gratifications of the will, or reminiscences for the memory to store up and hark back to.[119] In so far as peel and core are here taken together, there is always danger of confusing the peel with the core. But even in the most exalted visions, consolations and insights, the peel remains creaturely and for that very reason, unless discerned by some higher criterion, can harbour a good or an evil or at least an ambiguous spirit. St John's intention is to train the soul away from all these treasures to complete poverty and destitution, to prevent love from resting content with and clinging to the enjoyment of the form in which the divine manifests itself, so as to hurl it in complete nakedness into the naked reality of God. For the beginner, representative images may be helpful, indeed indispensable, for meditation;[120] even the proficient, whom God is already beginning to wean away from images, may have to return to them from time to time, to receive further help.[121] But the means toward the transcendence of love that are useful at the beginning later on become harmful when God himself causes essence to outweigh sign, the core to outweigh the peel.

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[110] A iii, 28, 5–6.

[111] A iii, 2, 1–3.

[112] A iii, 2, 7.

[113] A ii, 14, 4; A iii, 13, 6.

[114] A i, 4, 2; A i, 6, 1; A ii, 17, 5; A iii, 6, 1; A iii, 7, 2; A iii, 12, 2; A iii, 15, 1; A iii, 19, 4; N ii, 5, 4; N ii, 6, 1; N ii, 7, 5; N ii, 9, 3; C 8, 2. The law is very often expressed in comparative form, e.g. A i, 5, 6; N ii, 8, 2; N ii, 16, 3; N ii, 16, 11, etc.

[115] A i, 6, 6; A i, 15, 1; A ii, 5, 3–4; A iii, 16, 2.

[116] A i, 9, 3; A i, 11, 4; L iii, 72.

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[117] A i, 6, 6.

[118] The soul must be *pura* (*kathara*) *y sencilla* (*haplous, monoeidês*), *non limitada* (*apeiros*) *naitenida a alguna intellegencia particular, ni modificada con algun limite de forma* (*typos*), *especie* (*eidos*) *e imagen* (*eikôn*) (A, ii, 16, 7). Thus the soul attains likeness to God, who endows her *con su sencillez y pureza . . . que la deja limpia y pura y vacia de todas formas y figuras* (C 17, 3). *Cf.* C 31, 4; 35, 4 (*agua pura al entendimiento limpia y desnuda de accidentes y fantasias*); 38,4; L ii, 8 (*toque solo de la divinidad en el alma sin forma ni figura alguna intellectual ni imaginaria*); L ii, 20 (*el Verbo . . . ajena de todo modo* (*schesis*) *y manera* (*tropos*) *y libre de todo tomo, de forma y figura y accidentes*); L iii, 52; L iv, 14, etc, as well as many of the *Maxims* and *Counsels*.

[119] The whole of Books ii and iii of the *Ascent* are devoted to a critique of this kind.

Thus John lays down the following inexorable, broad rule of practical conduct with regard to 'forms and figures', all the supernatural ones as well as the natural: they must all, without exception, be rejected, be they from God or the devil or the soul's own powers, so that the soul may hold exclusively to the formlessness of the theological virtues. If the forms come from God, then they produce their effect *in actu primo* even before the soul has given her assent.[122] From the high vantage point of divine absoluteness John does not tire in his attempts to throw light on the relative nature of those gifts of God that have a definite, perceptible form. For example, he points to the relativity of the charisms, which can be bestowed even on the unworthy; of prophecy, the content of which is so often thought out hypothetically and can depend for its fulfilment on unknown factors; of spiritual apprehensions, which can be in part the product of man's secret desires; of spiritual admonitions, which would have to be passed on to the Church, and their apparently quite definite wording which would have to be understood in an extensive, heavenly sense. The trouble here is that the better a man thinks he has understood his mission the more incapable he is of understanding these gifts in their higher senses. To penetrate this supernatural universe seems to ordinary Christians a supreme honour, but John teaches the God-seeking soul to emigrate from it. All privileges with definite form that may come her way must be treated as if they were nothing; when confronted with them, the soul must remain uncommitted and indifferent, so that always and everywhere she can distinguish the Giver from the gift and seek and see only him in it.

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[120] A ii, 12, 5.

[121] There are later interpolations that try to argue thus; *cf.* the interpolation at the end of N i, 10 (Theatine edition, 47).

[122] A ii, 16, 10–11; A ii, 24, 8; A iii, 13, 3 (A ii, 11, 6).

On this point John is not in perfect accord with St Theresa, who was preoccupied with the configurations of visions and experiences for much longer and more deliberately than he was. Her ardent Eros was enkindled and purified precisely by the abundance of these particular graces, and in this connection she labelled John, whom she loved and treasured so much, as a spiritualist: 'God deliver us from people who are so spiritual that they want to turn everything into perfect contemplation, come what may.' She compares St John's method with the *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius (apparently with regard to their fundamental agreement). 'It would be a bad business for us if we could not seek God until we were dead to the world. Neither the Magdalene, nor the woman of Samaria, nor the Canaanite woman was dead to the world when she found him.'[123] This high-spirited statement suggests a possible starting point for an anti-critique of St John's critique of all worldly forms. Whether it is justified or not, we shall see only at the end when we have gained an overall view of the way in which different aspects of John's system balance each other out.

2. The critique of forms and states in its full context is connected with the positive element of transcendence; it is for this that John makes his critique, and it is this that John, in one of his great architectonic simplifications,[124] identifies with the theological virtues. For him these are fundamentally a single reality (only differentiated by the three powers of the soul), the reality of participation in God. Faith is the transfer of all criteria for truth from the I that understands to the eternal Thou. Hope is the renunciation of all memories of humanly consoling subjects and themes. Love is the surrender of the whole of our being to the God we love. This triune attitude of a faith that

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[123] *Obras de S. Teresa*, ed. Silverio, *Bibl. mist. carm.* (1915–1924), vi, 67; ET, E. A. Peers, *The Complete Works of St Teresa of Jesus*, vol. iii (London, 1946), p. 267.

[124] H. Delacroix calls him one of the '*grands simplificateurs du monde*' (*Études d'hist. et de psych. du mysticisme*, 1908, p iii, cited in G. Morel, 1, 180).

loves and hopes and of a love that believes and hopes is, however, now defined by John at both the *experience* of God (beyond all actual psychological experience) and as the state of *contemplation*. In making this assertion John refers especially to Denys and to Denys's identification of *thêôria* and *theologia mystikê*, which is fulfilled beyond all *gnôsis* in *pistis*. *Pistis* here has the (biblical) double emphasis of a total, trusting surrender of all personal security, and of a final certainty (*pistôsis*) beyond all finite reason in the divine. Together, this *pistis—thêôria* is *night* and *cloud* (*gnophos*), again with the double emphasis of genuine darkness for the finite subject and supereminent brightness in the infinite Godhead. All this follows the rhythm of God's ever-greaterness already established by Denys and taken up by Bonaventure: 'Faith, manifestly, is a dark night for man, but in this very way it gives him light. The more darkness it brings upon him, the more light it sheds. For the night by blinding illumines him.'[125] The reason for this lies ultimately in the nature of God: 'The loftier and clearer the things of God are in themselves, the more unknown and obscure they are to us.'[126] To this John applies the image so dear to him of the sun's ray and its shining upon the speck of dust that stands in its way. 'The more it is purified of these specks of dust, the more obscure and impalpable it seems to the material eye.'[127] It is in terms of this image that John explains the Areopagite's angelic hierarchies: they transmit the light of God to one another rather like totally pure panes of glass placed in a line, through which a single ray streams uninterruptedly.[128] Loving faith makes the world transparent to God, makes it disappear in its objectivity and configurated character. But because its light no longer strikes against anything, and because God himself is not an object, God can be experienced by the soul only as dark night. In loving and hoping faith the soul looks out into openness, indeed she becomes that openness, the open mouth that God alone can fill.[129] Faith is an 'infused virtue', that is, a 'divine, flowing spring',[130] so much something from God that the substance of faith will be preserved even in the vision of eternal life.[131] Faith is the 'secret stair' that leads from this closed world into the divine openness[132]—darkness and certainty at the same time.[133]. All finite and individualistic 'wanting-to-see-for-myself' and 'wanting-to-make-sure-for-myself' would only disturb this infinite, dark and open light. For John, *intellectus fidei* does not consist in such finite assurances; to want to understand too much deprives faith of its meritorious character,[134] robs the adventurous quest for God in the Absolute of its 'force',[135] which grows only in the night; it weakens courage,[136] boldness,[137] which bestows upon faith all its nobility. It is precisely from worldly emptiness that security and stability in the absolute sense grow. The successors of Denys called this *hidrysis* and *bebaiotês*; John, for his part, called it *seguridad* (being secure),[138] *sosiego* (relaxed repose).[139] But in so far as faith is one with contemplation, John extolled it as 'loving obscure knowledge' (*noticia oscura amorosa*).[140] This is the interiorization of the ecclesial *fides ex auditu*, as in the young Augustine; it becomes an attentive forgetting of all exterior impressions, so that 'in silence only the ear of the spirit is open to listen to God'.[141] It no longer utters words with definite form, but 'substantial' words, which God communicates to the substance of the soul, and these far transcend any possibility of illusion.[142]

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[125] A ii, 3, 4.

[126] A ii, 8, 6.

[127] A ii, 14, 9; *cf.* A ii, 5, 6; A ii, 16, 10; N ii, 8, 3–4; L iii, 34.

[128] N ii, 12, 3–4.

[129] Ep 11 (published also as a fragment appended to the *Ascent*; ed. P. Gerardo, A iii, 46).

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[130] C 11 expl. and 1.

[131] C 11, 2.

[132] A ii, 1, 1.

[133] A ii, 3, 1.

[134] A ii, 27, 5; A iii, 31, 8. Thus God works miracles for the strengthening of faith only 'out of necessity' (A iii, 31, 9). 'When the soul detaches her will from sensory testimonies and signs, she is exalted in a purer faith' (A iii, 32, 4).

[135] C 22, 1–2; N ii, 11 (the whole chapter).

[136] N ii, 11, 3.

[137] N ii, 20, 2; C 4, expl.; C 20, expl. and 1–3.

[138] Numerous passages: *Concordancias* 997–978. The soul is protected against possible deception by the devil, but also protected against herself (*amparada se si misma*, N ii, 16, 13).

[139] Numerous passages: *ibid.*, 1030–1032.

[140] A ii, 24, 4.

[141] A iii, 3, 5.

[142] C 13, 5.

For this reason the fulness of open faith/contemplation is again and again characterized, in contrast to the particular form, as *general*. 'The more spiritual [the soul] is, the more she discontinues trying to make particular acts with her faculties, for she becomes engrossed in one general, pure act.'[143] This gives a *noticia general y confusa*,[144] a *luz espiritual tan sencilla, pura y general, no afectada ni particularizada a ningun particular inteligibile, natural ni divino.*[145] And to 'such great poverty of spirit' the words of St Paul can be applied: *Nihil habentes et omnia possidentes.*[146] Particular knowledge can be inserted into this universal knowledge or experience[147] without danger, as in a *cognitio matutina* placed in the background. At the end of his final work[148] John gives a magnificent illustration of this possibility. The reality that truly attains to this universality is the 'love' that has set the soul free from all particular knowledge; as it soars upward to God this love is given the privilege of experiencing the downward sweep of the Three-in-One, the light of the Trinity.[149]

Nevertheless, this dark universality remains, for one who is only an aspirant, the experience of pure night: privation, annihilation, crucifixion; the experience of that process which John, with St Paul, describes as the stripping and dispossession of the old man and the putting on of the new man conformed to Christ (Eph 4.24)[150]; elsewhere he uses the bold phrase, 'the inner resurrection of the spirit'.[151] At first the night is subjectively death, although objectively it is already resurrection; but as the way of the soul's dying, it has its twilight, midnight and dawn that ushers in eternal life,[152] when the veil that separates her from the vision of God is stretched to the breaking point.[153] And yet

[143] A ii, 12, 6.
[144] A ii, 14, 6.
[145] N ii, 8, 5; *cf.* L iii, 49.
[146] N ii, 8, 5; *cf.* ii, 12, 4.
[147] N ii, 9, 5.
[148] L iv.
[149] N ii, 25, 4; C 38, 1f.
[150] N ii, 3, 3; N ii, 13, 11; L ii, 33; *cf.* on John 1.13 (*ex Deo nati*); A ii 5, 5.
[151] Ep 5.
[152] A i, 2, 1–5.
[153] A ii, 9, 3; A ii, 3, 4–5; A ii, 4, 6.

the midnight is already objectively the brightest of light, just as the *shekina* of the wilderness was a dazzling darkness above the temple.[154] All the time John stresses that God's light shines unchangingly and constantly, that it is only the unpurified state of those who approach that makes them experience it as darkness and purgatorial torment. This idea must not be interpreted in a weaker, neo-Platonic sense, as if the *bonum diffusivum sui* was shining in eternal serenity high above all the suffering destinies of man. One must rather consider that in this affirmation John has entirely in view the living, elective God of the Bible, who 'descends into Hell and leads back out again'; even the Cross, upon which the Son is abandoned by the Father, as seen by the Father, is purest light, the light that is glorified even *in extremis*.

Thus the following two statements can be reconciled: that God himself is prepared to open the way of perfection (contemplation) to all; but in fact, only the elect, as we saw, who for their part must be springs of life within the Church, attain it.[152] If the qualifications given to the light ('hell fire', 'purgatorial fire', 'heavenly flame') arise from the state of the soul, nevertheless at every stage the divine light is the active principle that produces true illumination by means of the night. And it matters little at what moment the soul begins to understand 'what sort of work is being accomplished within her'.[155] Equally unimportant is how many psychological factors (perceptible 'stages') are to be discerned in this entry into the night of God; this is primarily because leaving the night (the 'dawn') constitutes no kind of counterpart to entering it (the 'twilight of evening'). Perhaps in this respect John is asking a little too much when he gives the course of his own life a universal application (thus inducing his imitators to construct simplistic schemata). Nevertheless there are other factors that correct the picture and restore the balance. The 'active night' (to which the *Ascent of Mount Carmel* introduces us) and the 'passive night' (as described in the *Dark Night*) are not successive phenomena), but impinge extensively on one another; indeed, they are only two aspects of a single process. Moreover, the 'night of the senses' and the 'night of the spirit' (which may on occasion be separated by many years[156]), though distinguished with the same systematic lucidity, are nonetheless so thoroughly intertwined that 'the purgation of the sensory part is never adequately accomplished without the spiritual . . . and is not in earnest until the night of the spirit has at least begun'.[157] In the same way it is not possible to distinguish between the *via purgativa* and *illuminativa*. The illuminating light is in the first instance predominantly purificatory.[159] The loss of taste for the things of the senses and the finite is as such already the beginning of a tasting of God as he is in himself.

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[154] L ii, 27; L iii, 46; *cf.* L iii, 11 (*Dios no se mueve*); A ii, 5, 4; N ii, 9, 11; N ii, 10, 6; N ii, 13, 10: 'The darknesses and evils the soul experiences when this light strikes are not darknesses and evils of the light but of the soul itself. And it is this light that illumines it so it may see these evils. From the beginning the divine light illumines the soul.'

[155] N ii, 10, 6.

The relevance of this to the project of a theological aesthetics is as follows. Bathed in an obscure light, this present world is darkened as if at twilight and grows pale in an incurable state of disillusionment. But when the time comes, it will be in that same obscure light that the world rises anew, to go forward to the vision of God, to meet the God of the new Heaven and the new earth. However, this 'generality', the negation of the particular, of that which has specific form, is not in any sense an abstract universal, however much, to begin with, it exercises its power of reduction and abstraction on the particular. We must take special note here of the fact that St John of the Cross is not proposing a philosophical mysticism; he wants only to open up the experience of the living God of the Bible, the God of love, a dimension in which the theological virtues emerge into consciousness, in so far as they are infused, Trinitarian life, the realm of the Holy Spirit. At most one can ask whether the *beata nox* that he describes implies more a *theologia crucis* than a *theologia gloriae*. It is not easy to answer this. Following the tripartite division given at the beginning of the *Ascent*, a process is unfolded that passes through the glory of the Cross to the dawn of eternal life and eternal vision. And John stresses the gulf

[156] N ii, 1, 1.
[157] N ii, 3, 1.
[159] N ii, 7, 4.

between the highest earthly experience of God and eternal, heavenly vision with great vigour,[160] simply because a certain systematic logic (not just love's absolute longing for ultimate embrace) tends to suppress the lines of distinction. At the highest stages of spiritual progress, essentially it expresses something like the beginnings of eternal life,[161] when the face of God becomes transparent,[162] a shadow made of pure light (*resplandores*), for which the poet, stammeringly, finds the name *obumbraciones.* 'Finally, [the soul] enjoys God's glory in the shadow of his glory, which gives knowledge of the measure and property of God's glory.'[164]

The 'night' is like a great curve. It begins with the asceticism of radical and active renunciation of the world and continues with the passive deprivation of all delight in things and even in God himself. Then it curves round the midnight of pure sightless faith until it reaches the dawn of a new substantial delight in the ways of God, the beginning of transparent vision. If this, then, is the 'curve' of the night, we must now ask what common features such different phases and experiences have. The answer of the poems is clear: it is love—without love John cannot for a moment even conceive what he calls faith. It is a love that has chosen her one and only beloved and therefore in a single flight soars audaciously above all created things, but also sinks humbled beneath them.

> *Cuanto mas alto llegaba*
> *De este lance tan subido*
> *Tanto mas bajo y rendido*
> *Y abatido mi hallaba.*[165]

It is love whose intrepidity withstands everything, even God himself, who takes her seriously and transfers her from All to Nothing so that she might find there the one whom alone she loves. Finally, it is a love as much robbed as ravished, whose only longing is to do the will of the beloved, whether that means Hell or Heaven—'she has no more worldly hopes, no more spiritual longings'.[166] This love, which seeks in the void and is found 'in the hunt', is union; it is also the vehicle of contemplation and of what one must call vision in nonvision. Here John identifies himself with the teaching of the schools of Bernard and Bonaventure. As love, the will surpasses the intellect and leaves it behind.[167] One must remember that in ancient psychology the will/love occupies to a large extent the place of the biblical 'heart' and thus denotes what we mean today by 'person' and the 'centre of a person'. That is why, according to John, this transcendent will of love is quieted by God by means of what John calls 'substantial touches', by means of an immediate (*amesôs*) contact that surpasses all the particular acts of knowledge, feeling and desire, a contact between substance and substance, between person and person. God alone can enter into such substantial communion with his creatures, not only in the natural ontological sphere of the universal *analogia entis* (which to some degree can also be realized by mystics outside the Christian tradition), but also—and John quite explicitly distinguishes the two—in the supernatural sphere, in the reality (which emerges in the personal experience of love) of the loving grace of the triune God, who reveals himself to man, a reality that, in the theological virtues, is infused into the soul. That this touch of substance by substance does not in any way tend toward the pantheistic *unión esencial o sustancial*[169] John says with as much clarity as one could wish. John in no sense remains at an abstract level in his conception of substance, everything is set in the sphere of spiritual and personal actualizations. But these do not emanate just accidentally from the soul's obscure and undisturbed substance; no, they inflame and wound the soul at its very centre. The *toques*, the touches of substance by substance, that make present the heart of Thou in the heart of I are an experience, time and again described, that surpasses all delight and is almost mortal in its effect.[170] It is to be compared with the kiss at the beginning of the Canticle,[171] with fiery arrows,[172] with a wound, a 'death', which is at the same time 'a very deep knowledge of the Godhead,[173] sometimes descending as if from the serene heights of heaven,[174] or, like a wind sent from God, stirring up all God's gifts in the soul.[175] The very substance of the soul is wounded: *hiere en la sustancia del alma este . . . amor.*[176] Love brings the soul that ultimate, substantial openness that is beyond pain and pleasure,[177] and it tunes her to the key of divine love and wisdom. At first the wound seems like a severe and mortal attack on the soul's creatureliness, but when it has become her second nature, it becomes almost a game. 'The wounds imparted to the soul are the games of divine Wisdom.'[178]

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[160] C, 1 expl.; C 6, 2; C 13–14 expl. (end). John expresses himself in very cautious terms even about something that was almost universally taken for granted by Scholastic theology; namely, the direct vision of God of Moses and Paul.

[161] L iii, 10.

[162] L iv, 7.

[163] L iii, 12f.

[164] L iii, 15.

[165] P 6, stanza 3.

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[166] C 29, 5.

[167] N ii, 12, 7; C 17, 2 (in Redaction B of the *Spiritual Canticle*, stanza 26, 2); C 18, 2; L iii, 50; Ep 11.

[168] A ii, 5, 2–3 (in Redaction B of the *Spiritual Canticle*, stanza 11, 1, which is not found in Redaction A).

[169] A ii, 5, 3.

Now it becomes clear why St John's mysticism achieves its complete form only in a Trinitarian context. His entire system struggles energetically against two opposed and false solutions: the pantheistic solution, which would be an unimaginable horror to him, and that other inadequate solution, which would limit loving union with the God of revelation to merely accidental acts. From work to work John's ship, sighting its destination ever more clearly, sails between and past these two rocks. He sets off from an idea that is still philosophical; namely, that God is the centre of the creature's sphere, into which God draws him in the deepest secrecy of night (at the end of the *Dark Night*).[179] Then he encounters the blissful amazement of the Bride in the Canticle, when the wind of the Holy Spirit blows into her all the perfumes and treasures of the Beloved, so that here already the mystery of the Holy Spirit shared by Bride and Bridegroom is glimpsed as the mystery of the infusing of the Spirit common to Father and Son, and creaturely love, through grace, becomes a participation in the divine *spiratio*[180] itself; then finally he arrives at the sovereign exposition of this doctrine in the *Living Flame*.[181] From now on, at the level of the triune life, in which the creature through grace may participate actively and passively, we have passed beyond separating distance and the identification that threatens personal existence. Now the breathtaking miracles, the substantial touches of I and Thou, the awakening of Thou within I and of I within Thou, which only a miracle of grace can prevent from being mortal—now all this becomes the content of the life of love. The end of the *Living Flame* describes the disconcerting experience of Christ awakening in the heart and centre of the soul: 'Thou wakest, O Word, O Spouse, in the centre and depth of my soul, in its pure and most intimate substance.'[182] Christ awakes as Thou, as the 'only master' of my substance, in a *movimiento de tanta grandeza y señorío y gloria y di tan íntima suavidad*, in a movement *de tan gran Emperador*,[183] so that with this awakening of the absolute in the heart, with this absolute awakening of the heart, everything, the entire creation, must awaken also. It is of crucial significance that the word *identity* is discarded as being abstract and much too weak. The one who awakens in the innermost part of the soul's substance is the Master, the sublime prince and emperor, and it is only as master that he is beloved. His awakening, therefore, raises up the soul in this ineffable way to her beloved and divine overlord only because at the same time it plunges her into the abyss, into the absolute distance of nothingness. Only now can we understand why disillusionment with the world, absolute distance, in which the descent of night teaches and immerses the soul, can already be the hidden glory of love. The distance of person in God in the womb of substantial unity is the presupposition of all love, both eternal and created. And so not only in the purifying night but also in the night of bliss we can say: 'He obtains more joy and recreation in creatures through the dispossession of them. . . . In detachment from things he acquires a clearer knowledge of them so that he has a better understanding of both natural and supernatural truths concerning them. ... He then whose joy is unpossessive of things rejoices in them all as though he possessed them all. ... He possesses them, as St Paul states, with great liberty (2 Cor 6.10).'[184]

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[170] *Concordancias*: *Toques* (1061–1064), especially A ii, 32, 2–3; N ii, 12, 6; N ii, 23, 11 (*toques sustanciales de divina union*), 12 (end).

[171] N ii, 23, 12.

[172] C 1, 4.

[173] C 7 expl.

[174] C 16, 3–5.

[175] C 26, 3.

[176] N ii, 13, 3.

[177] L ii, 13.

[178] L i, 8.

[179] N ii, 20, 6 and chapters 15–25 *passim*.

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[180] C 38, 1.

[181] L ii, 16; L iii, 17.

[182] L iv, 3.

[183] L iv, 4.

We are a long way here from seeing man's relation to God as either one of opposition or immersion. Within the formless itself we can see once more something like a form emerging out of the Trinitarian distance of the persons. But this form is one with the formless glory of substantial union in love. The Son is 'the splendour of the eternal light, the unspotted mirror and image of the goodness' of the Father.[185] And so as 'touch', he makes the touching 'hand' of the Father perceptible. But the 'cautery applied with force' is again neither the hand nor the touch, but the third person, the Holy Spirit.[186] Thus God as set against man now takes on Trinitarian 'form' in so far as this relation is transcended by a pure indwelling in the fire and the wound. Similarly, when the soul is thrust into an (objective) encounter with God, she discovers the fundamental attributes of divinity, which she experiences as 'lamps of fire' (*lamparas de fuego*), burning torches. They make their appearance as much in their actual, clear and distinct form as in their reciprocal circumincession and mutual intensification, as much in their sovereign state of being *per se* as in their loving disposition of being *pro me*. 'Since (God) is the virtue of supreme humility, he loves you with supreme humility and esteem and makes you his equal, gladly revealing himself to you in these ways of knowledge, in this his countenance filled with graces. ... (He says to you:) "I am yours and for you and delighted to be what I am so as to be yours and give myself to you."'[187]

John searches for images to illuminate the unity of confrontation and indwelling, which seems to him here to be particularly 'indescribable'.[188] The 'splendours' of the lamps are the 'loving knowledge' that the divine attributes communicate to the soul by their radiance and by which the soul too is resplendent, transformed in such 'loving knowledge'. The illumination of the splendours is, for this reason, 'not like that produced by material lamps, which through their flames shed light round about them, but like the illumination that is within the very flames, for the soul is within these splendours.... More than that, it is itself transformed in them. It is like the air within the flames, enkindled and transformed in the flame, for the flame is nothing but enkindled air. The movements and splendours of the flame are not from the air alone, nor from the fire of which the flame is composed, but from both the air and the fire. And the fire causes the air, which it has enkindled, to produce these same movements and splendours. We can consequently understand how the soul with its faculties is illumined within the splendours of God.'[189] For St John it is never a case of the creature being engulfed by God; it is rather the incorporation of the creature in the whole of his being, with all his powers (and thus with his merit), into the depths of grace. 'The movements of these divine flames ... are not alone produced by the soul that is transformed in the flames of the Holy Spirit, nor does the Holy Spirit produce them alone, but they are the work of both the soul and him, since he moves it in the manner that fire moves the enkindled air. Thus these movements of both God and the soul are not only splendours, but also glorification (*glorificaciones*). This activity of the flames and these flares are the happy festivals and games which ... the Holy Spirit inspires in the soul.'[190] In this 'game' the only purpose of what may seem like identity is to render possible the reciprocity of giving, so that for the soul its supreme bliss is to be able to give back God (whom she has received and whom she bears within her) to God. 'Having him for her own, she can give him and communicate him to whomever she wishes. Thus she gives him to her Beloved, who is the very God who gave himself to her.'[191]

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[184] A iii, 20, 2–3.

[185] L iii, 17; L ii, 16.

[186] L ii, 16.

[187] L iii, 6.

[188] L iii, 8.

3. If we can now see clearly to what extent St John's faith is the experience of love, we should also understand, as a consequence, the justification of what at first sight seems surprising—the identification of his faith with *contemplation*. For

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[189] L iii, 9–10.

[190] L iii, 10.

[191] L iii, 78.

faith is depicted as nonvision and noncomprehension, whereas contemplation means vision. Where the two are identified, then the act of 'mystical theology', with all its nonvision, dispossession, privation and night, must nevertheless involve vision: vision in the mode of nonvision, vision of someone present in the mode of absence or as through a veil or a quest, which is so absolute, tends so much towards the Absolute itself, that it cannot do other than ultimately find, 'hunt down', the Absolute; then again, the vision is love, which is set so much on the ultimate that it discovers the ultimate being itself as the mystery of love. One cannot say that it is the power of searching love that creates or forces out its object into the emptiness of the Absolute (like Rilke's idea that 'we . . . plan the gods' and grant the prayer of him who at the end hears ours).[192] For though love may throw herself into an encounter with the unknown, she knows that she has been taken hold of and carried further; rather than emptying herself, she is emptied; it is less a matter of her acting than of God's acting upon her. For this reason the basis of the soul's contemplation is the experience of being contemplated, as we saw in the stanza quoted earlier where the eyes of God are only 'sketched' in the soul, and she waits impatiently for the divine eye to make its appearance in the fluidity of faith. And yet what the soul desires is at the same time what she cannot endure, and so she has to implore her Beloved:

Apártalos, amado,
Que voy de vuelo.[193]

'Withdraw your eyes, Beloved, I am taking flight'; 'what she longs for so ardently . . . she cannot receive at the desired moment, save almost at the cost of her life'.[194] She implores her Beloved not to look at her while she takes flight; that is, while she hastens towards God with her love, and while she keeps her (unseeing) eyes of love fixed on him. This prayer of hers combines two thoughts: the soul knows by anticipation the unbearable beauty of God's eyes, and also acknowledges her incapacity for vision on account of her lack of strength.

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[192] Sonette an Orpheus ii, 24.

[193] C 12, lines 1–2.

[194] Cant. 12. 1.

Nevertheless, she knows that at the heart of the mystery of the night lies the generous, creative eye of God himself:

> *Cuando tú me mirabas,*
> *Tu gracia en mí tus ojos imprimían,*
> *Por en eso me adamabas*
> *Y en eso merecían*
> *Los míos adorar lo que en ti vían.*[195]

'When you looked at me', your contemplation rested upon me, 'your eyes imprinted your grace in me', for the *esse* of grace, *sequitur agere*, is produced by the divine gaze, divine love, and 'thus my eyes deserved to adore what they beheld in you'; the contemplative gaze is thus only made possible by the preliminary gaze of grace. Elsewhere this looking at God is called the 'unique eye' and is identified with faith.[196] Nonetheless, this unseeing faith is suspended between the gaze of the love of God, who by grace makes the soul beautiful (*que la hermosea*), and the gaze of the engraced soul at God, whom she adores as nothing less than the source of beauty.

The word and concept 'beauty' inevitably come in at this point. The 'general' (*general*) nature of the night of faith is in no sense a nothingness; it reflects the radiance of the invisible stars of love. It is itself the fluidity of love that passes all finite understanding, the fluidity that is in itself already the glory of God, so that it is only a question of time, of patient, expectant vision, before this obscure glory is transformed into a manifest, self-glorifying splendour. If the night is the *flight* of love, then it is the opposite of immobility. In the twilight gloom of this world we may still plot love's mobility by reference to the disappearing features of the earth's landscape. In the midnight of faith, however, love no longer has any such markers and can appear as pure *soledad* and *pura y oscura contemplación*.[197] Nevertheless, the greater the privations, the more the flight presses on toward the beloved, as the first part of the Canticle shows. The same night transfigures the experience of God from reprobation in Hell, through the severe torments of Purgatory, to the liberation of love's desire. This fact shows that the night is a drama, the most intense kind of activity in the darkness. This fulness of the night, which is at once both pure faith and contemplation, is in itself a vision, *inchoatio visionis*. It is the nonvision that comes between initial vision—when we hear the gospel preached and recognize that this is the truth and that God died on the Cross for us—and terminal vision, to which unseeing faith directly flies, and it is the anticipation of such terminal vision that enables us to withstand the darkest dereliction by God. Only thus is the beauty of this night comprehensible; only thus do we discover the transcendent spring from which the tremendous power of this lyricism flows. The spring is 'beyond all beauty (*sobre toda hermosura*) of what is, was or will be'. And for the sake of this 'beyond', which remains an 'I-don't-know-what', the poet knows that he will never be able to lose himself in the beauty of the world. No worldly magic can ensnare one whose 'noble heart' (*corazón generoso*) finds the Only One in pure faith outside of all law and necessity. Yes, as if by luck or chance (*por ventura*), he finds the Only One, the formless One, *solo . . . sin forma y figura*, 'without prop or stay'.[198]

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[195] Cant. 23, stanza. ('When you looked at me / Your eyes imprinted your grace in me; / For this you loved me ardently; / And thus my eyes deserved/ To adore what they beheld in you.')

[196] Cant. 22, 5.

[197] N ii, 3, 3.

It is the fact that St John of the Cross is given an anticipation of eternal vision (while remaining crucified to this world) that explains the paradox that, for him, the world, definitively abandoned and lost in God, is regained. In the *Spiritual Canticle*, which contains more Augustinian motifs than the other works, this idea emerges clearly for the first time. It is not a question of raising oneself to God by means of the ancient and mediaeval anagogical contemplation of creatures; no, it is the rediscovery of the creature in God, in the vision of God alone, in a sort of anticipation of the *cognitio matutina*. The only anagogical method in John is love; he even explicitly gives it that name. According to P. Eliseus of the Martyrs, 'he used to say that one could resist the vices in a manner at once more simple, more fruitful and more perfect' than direct attack. 'The soul combats and destroys in this way all the temptations of the enemy . . . by using only anagogical acts inspired by love without any other alien practices.' Thus one must 'instantly resist by means of an act or movement of anagogical love, as one raises the heart to union with God. . . . Then the soul is no longer where the enemy wanted to strike and wound it; it has slipped away.'[199] But this anagogical love finds Trinitarian love, and in it God's decision to create the world. One of the Romances recounts this, and the Canticle draws certain conclusions from it:

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[198] P 16 (Silv. 819–821).

Mil gracias derramando
Pasó por estos sotos con presura
Y yéndolos mirando
Con sola su figura
Vistidos los dejó de hermosura.[200]

'Pouring out a thousand graces', 'passing by' as if 'in haste', God has created the natures and elements. God gives his real attention to what comes second which he regards as first. God surveys (*mirar*) what he has created, and 'with his countenance (*figura*) alone [he] clothed them in beauty'. 'St Paul says, "The Son of God is the splendour of his glory and the form [or countenance: *figura*] of his substance"'. It should be known that only with this figure [countenance], his Son, did God look at all things; that is, he communicated to them their natural being and many natural graces and gifts and made them complete and perfect.' But not only that: 'with this countenance of his Son alone, he clothed them in beauty by imparting to them supernatural being. This he did when he became man and raised human nature, and with it all creatures, to the beauty of God, since in human nature he was united with them all. Accordingly the Son of God proclaimed: "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."' . . . 'In addition to all this, from the viewpoint of contemplative experience, it should be known that in the living contemplation and knowledge of creatures, the soul sees such fulness of graces, powers and beauty with which God has endowed them that seemingly all are arrayed in wonderful beauty and natural virtue. This beauty and virtue is derived from above and imparted by that infinite supernatural beauty of the countenance (*figura*) of God; his look clothes the world and all the heavens with beauty and gladness, just as he also, upon opening his hand, fills every living thing with blessing, as David says (Ps 144.16).'[201]

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[199] Cited in Francois de St Marie, *Initiation à St Jean de la Croix* (1945).

[200] C 5, stanza. ('Pouring out a thousand graces, / He passed these graces in haste; / And having looked at them, / With his image alone, / Clothed them in beauty.')

Is the Son the face of the Father turned towards the world? Or is he the Father's facial expression, whom the Father contemplates? Is it in the Son, because of his love for the Son, for the sake of his love for the Son, that the Father loves all the creatures he has made in the Son? Is it because of the grace and beauty of the Son that he sees creatures as beautiful and full of grace? The two senses of *figura* come into play together: the sense that dominates the text of the Bible (expression, figure), and the other sense, which John brings to the fore (countenance, vision). But whichever aspect we emphasize, for this lover of contemplation the world gains its beauty from above: from divine love, which for its part, through the reflection of the persons, one in the other, is the archetype of all beauty. The contemplative sees not only the beauty of God and in it the beauty of the world; he also sees in the moment of vision, as it were, the *analogia entis*: 'Although the soul in this state is indeed aware that all things are distinct from God in so far as they have created being, and sees them in him with their power, their root and their tension, nonetheless, she knows precisely that God, by his being all these things with infinite eminence (*eminencia*), is such that she knows these things better in God's being than in themselves.'[202]

This statement does not come from the *Spiritual Canticle*, but from the last stanza of the *Living Flame*; with regard to what it says about the experience of God and the world, this is the supreme gift among everything we have received from St John. As if all the flights of the soul, all the love and knowledge up till now had been nothing, he describes this final experience as the awakening of God in him.

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[201] C 5, 3.
[202] L iv, 5.

¡Cuan manso y amoroso
Recuerdas en mi seno¡

But if the absolute being opens his eyes in the heart of the creature, how then should the creatures, who depend on him for life, keep their eyes shut? The world awakens in the soul at the same time as God. When the divine Word awakens within her, 'it seems to the soul that all the balsams and fragrant spices and flowers of the world are commingled, stirred and shaken so as to yield their sweet odour, and that all the kingdoms and dominions of the world and all the powers and virtues of heaven are moved; and not only this, but it also seems that all the virtues and substances and perfections and graces of every created thing glow and make the same movement all at once. Since, as St John says, "all things in him are life", and "in him we live and move and have our being", as Paul declares, it follows that when, within the soul, this greatest of monarchs moves (whose principality—which consists of the three spheres, celestial, terrestrial and infernal, and the things contained in them—as Isaiah says, he bears upon his shoulders, upholding them all, as St Paul says, with the word of his power), all things seem to move in unison. This happens in the same manner as when at the movement of the earth all material things in it move as though they were nothing.'[203]

The description goes further. The soul sees not only how all creatures move in unison with God, but also how they too reveal themselves in unison with him when he reveals his glory, when he reveals his heart. God is the source of their being and duration, their power and perfection; it is also from God and together with God that all the value of creatures is revealed. 'Here lies the remarkable delight of this awakening: the soul knows creatures through God, and not God through creatures. This amounts to knowing the effects through their cause, and not the cause through its effects. The latter is knowledge *a posteriori*, and the former is essential knowledge.' And further: as God opens his eyes in the soul, it seems to her that God does indeed move 'in an incomparable newness', a newness that creatures also now share: 'The being and harmony of every creature . . . with its movements in God, is revealed to her with such newness, it seems to the soul that it is God who moves and that the cause assumes the name of the effect it produces.' Does not the book of Wisdom say: 'Wisdom is more mobile than any motion'? And rightly so, for 'it is the principle and root of all movement. "While remaining in herself", the wise man goes on to say, "she renews all things" (Wisd 7.24, 27). Thus what he wishes to say in this passage is that Wisdom is more active than all active things.'[204]

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[203] L iv, 4.

In all this vision the soul contemplates the face of God as if through a transparency, for not all the veils have been withdrawn. She sees how, by his power, he himself moves all creatures. His effects appear to the soul together with God and inseparable from him; he himself seems to be in motion in them, and they in him, perpetually.[205] This is a contemplation of the *analogia entis* in the terms fixed by Denys but with that Augustinian sense of a transparent *cognitio matutina* bestowed on earthly faith. From here until the end of the stanza everything is increasingly dominated by the *kabôd* of the Old Testament; the visionary, like Job, is afraid of being 'crushed by the weight of glory', unless he too be transformed into that same glory—*porque la gloria oprime al que la mira, cuando no le glorifica*;[206] the overwhelming glory is incomprehensibly 'gentle and full of love' and sustains all living creatures in their meekness; this glory is at the same time the gentle blowing of the Holy Spirit, whom the soul breathes in and out, that little breeze in which Elijah discovered God on the mountain—how else could a Carmelite conclude his work?

Thus the paradox is clarified and we can see how this most radical renunciation of the world, this systematic weaning away of the soul from all created form and figure, even in the deepest recesses of the heart and its attachments, even in the heights of the most exalted visions and locutions—how all of this can be compatible with a spirituality that can truly be called aesthetic. For this spirituality, *hermosura* signifies the supreme affirmation about God. 'Beauty' for John is an obsession; it is not only the end, it is also the means.[207] He may have rediscovered the beauty of the world through the beauty of God, but he could never have done this had he not known about beauty from the beginning; otherwise he would not even have been able to renounce it. Aesthetic sensitivity is part of his nature and accompanies him on the whole of his spiritual journey no less than it does his spiritual sister, the great Theresa. We know the love that both of them had for nature. For Theresa open country, running water, flowers are a 'book' in which she reads God. She wants convents to be, where possible, by the side of rivers. On one occasion she writes: 'The position of a convent is so important that it would be madness to worry about the cost. For a river and view I would be very glad elsewhere to give far more than this convent cost.' And again: 'I have a hermitage from which one can see the river, and a cell in which even from my bed I can observe what for me is such an agreeable sight.'[208] John fills his spiritual songs with all the detailed images of the open country, which are not just the requisites of bucolic verse but stem from direct and affectionate observation. Above all, he had, by nature, a love for the night, as is witnessed by the very large number of accounts that have been handed down. 'In the peace of the night he spent [according to the testimony of P. Alonso] many hours in solitary prayer. When he had finished, he fetched his companion, sat down on the green meadow and, with his eyes on the river flowing by, conversed with him about the beauty of the heavens, of the moon, of the stars. At other times he spoke about the gentle harmony of the moving spheres of Heaven and raised himself up to the Heaven of the blest, whose beauty and glory he praised in lofty words.' Others describe him 'praying all night long beneath the trees with arms outstretched'. Wherever he stayed, and right to the end of his life, he always sought out the open country to pray and instructed his *confrères* above all to pray outside in nature, in gardens, in fields, on cliffs and in forests; he knew the plants, the animals, he observed them and described their characteristics in his works. In the pastoral *Spiritual Canticle* his observation of nature is revealed in mystical form: 'My Beloved is the mountains [says the Bride] and lonely wooded valleys, strange islands and resounding rivers, the whispering of love-stirring breezes, the tranquil night at the time of the rising dawn, silent music, sound solitude, the supper that refreshes and deepens love' (St. 13–14). The imperceptible transition from simple natural imagery to mystical paradoxes (*la música callada, la soledad sonora*) shows that we are not dealing here with conventional anagogic contemplation of the world, but that John contemplates his God really, directly, in nature, and that he sees the natural images as only a function and elucidation of the divine attributes. *Mi amado las montañas*: the mountains *are* my Beloved, and of course precisely not in the pantheistic sense, but in that other sense given clear verbal expression in the fourth stanza of the *Living Flame*. In itself, nature is only a *dibujo*, a sketch or outline;[209] the completed picture is seen only in God, for only in him do the individual notes sound together in that symphony that only the substances of things, not their exterior accidents, can join together to perform. It is significant that the verse from the book of Wisdom is quoted: *Spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum, et hoc quod continet omnia, scientiam habet vocis* (Wisd 1.7). Only in the Spirit of God does 'the testimony to God that, in themselves, all things give' ring forth in the music that harmonizes the individual voices.[210] This is why the rigorous ascetical demand is made of the beginner not to submit to any illusions and not to desire to ascend immediately from the symphony of the accidents to the symphony of the substances: 'No one who has not yet mortified his pleasure in sensory things should dare to look for notable benefit from the vigour and activity of his senses regarding these goods in the belief that they are a help to the spirit. For the forces of the soul will increase more without these sensible things.'[211] The first movement of the soul must be to raise up all sensory things immediately to God. This will yield 'a truly extraordinary increase of joy and bliss'. For when the soul herself is purified, 'she experiences a totally spiritual delight in turning directly (*luego*) toward God the joy she has in everything she sees'.[212] For as long as she is incapable of doing that, she must renounce all gratification, for one is not meant to 'celebrate oneself more than God'.[213]

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[204] L iv, 5–6.

[205] L iv, 7.

[206] L iv, 11.

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[207] *P. Crisogono de Jesus Sacramentado*, cited in Michel Florisoone, *Esthétique et Mystique d'après Ste Thérèse d'Avila et St Jean de la Croix* (1956), 161. We base what follows on this excellent little book.

[208] Florisoone, 17, 19.

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[209] C 11, 5.
[210] C 14, 3–4.
[211] A iii, 26, 7.

St John of the Cross not only had the soul and perception of an artist, but, as is proved by the hastily sketched little drawing of the posture of the crucified Lord, whom he saw in a vision, he also possessed the technique of a master. In early youth, between six and eight years of age, he learnt different crafts, one after the other. He was apprenticed first to a carpenter, then to a tailor, a woodcarver and a painter. As a novice he spent his periods of recreation carving wooden crucifixes, and he continued this custom until the last years of his life. In his writings he used numerous images drawn from the different arts and crafts to illustrate the art of spiritual direction.[214] He loved music, sang a great deal and himself played at least one instrument. It is very clear that when he forsook the values of art, he was making a very hard decision, for him perhaps the hardest decision of all, and was performing a work of love, that can be justified neither by contempt for the world nor ascetical discipline, but which was solely in response to the call of Christ and out of love for him.

His attitude to ecclesiastical art, to its legitimacy and utility and to its dangers, can be understood only on the basis of this fundamental decision of his. It is a radical decision and yet profoundly different from the iconoclasm of Protestantism. He fought on two fronts: against the Reformation's depreciation of all religious images, of all church ornament, he defends the spiritual utility of these icons and refers to the mind and practice of the Church; against the development of a more passionate style of art in the Renaissance and early Baroque he advocates a rather medieval view of religious art. It is not, he argues, the enhancement of and submission to aesthetic values that in a work of art guarantees the communication of religious experience; no, that can be achieved only by a certain indeterminate transparency and, above all, simplicity. For the

[212] A iii, 26, 5.

[213] A iii, 38, 2.

[214] L iii, 42–43.

work is not meant to tie the soul down to itself but should point away from itself to God. This dialectic is authentic despite the doubts that can be raised about the authenticity of certain passages in the *Ascent*. Its powerful critique of devotional objects is played down at the end of each chapter by words whose unctuousness and feebleness seem to reveal that they are a later addition.[215] But even if these additions are authentic or contain a core of authenticity, they nonetheless do no more than temper the force of what is said in the third book of the *Ascent*, which critically examines artistic and other devotional aids. The whole book, pressing toward its conclusion like a rapidly flowing stream, proclaims unequivocally: Don't stand still! Climb higher! Seek God alone! Images? Certainly, the Church authorizes them and makes use of them, 'and yet there are many who pay more attention to the painting and decorating of the image than to what is represented'. Miraculous statues? Perhaps, but how outrageous to dress and undress them like dolls, so that for many they have become 'idols'. 'They are as attached to these images as were Michas and Laban to their idols'. The genuinely devout man 'has little need for many statues and uses those that conform more to the divine traits than to human ones'. 'Indeed, since some statues are truer likenesses than others and excite more devotion, it is fit to be attached more to some than to others.' But if the senses cling to this higher art, 'then what should be a help to the soul becomes a hindrance'.[216] What 'stupidity' to place one's trust more in this statue than another! God 'looks only upon the faith and purity of the prayerful heart.

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[215] Examples of this are, in particular, the conclusion of A iii, 15, 2, where it is said that 'images will always help a person towards union with God' (which is precisely what John does not say); the conclusion of A iii, 42, 5–6, where it is said of holy places, such as Monte Gargano, the site of the miracle of snow at Sta Maria Maggiore, etc, that 'there is much greater chance of being heard by God in those places consecrated to his cult, since the Church has so marked and dedicated them'; and especially the conclusion of A iii, 44, 5, where the later interpolation is quite obvious: 'I do not condemn—but rather approve—the custom of setting aside certain days for devotions, such as novenas (alternative reading: 'fasts') and other similar practices. . . . ' These texts appear to be, at the very least, retouched. Of course, we have no originals and know that the text has been frequently mangled and interpolated.

[216] A iii, 35, 1–6.

If God sometimes bestows more favours through one statue than through another, he does not do so because of its greater ability to produce this effect . . . but because the devotion of individuals is awakened more by means of one statue than the other.' According to John's explicit statement, this also applies to 'images of extraordinary grace'. The image in itself 'is no more than a painting'. God 'works miracles only because of the faith and devotion shown toward the saint represented'. Moreoever, 'experience teaches that if God grants some favours and works miracles, he does so usually through statues that are not very well carved or carefully painted or that are poor representations (*imagines non muy bien talladas ni curiosamente pintadas o figuradas*), so that the faithful will not attribute any of these wonders to the statue or painting'. Images of special grace may now and then seem to move, to change their expression, give signs or communicate words: all of this may be good and genuine, but it may just as well come from the devil.[217] Rich decoration of oratories and churches is indeed fitting, but not if the beauty of churches is loved in place of the beauty of God. People who treat the objects of worship without respect ought, of course, to be 'reproved very sharply', but so should those who 'carve so inexpertly that the finished statue subtracts from devotion rather than adds to it. Some artists, so unskilled and unpolished in the art of carving, should be forbidden to practise their art'. 'Still, what pertinence has this to the possessiveness, attachment and appetite you have in these exterior decorations?' Ought one not to think of the wrath of Yahweh, the wrath with which he looked down upon so many of the religious festivals of the people? They were celebrated in his honour, 'yet men sought only their own ends in them'.[218] Christ told the Samaritan woman that genuine prayer does not depend on the temple and the holy mountain. He himself used to pray in the still of the night, in lonely and barren places, 'which raise souls to God such as the mountains that are raised above the earth and usually barren of the objects that would provide recreation for the senses'.[219] God places little value 'on your oratories and other places consecrated for prayer'; what he desires is 'the living temple', the interior recollection of the heart, spiritual poverty.[220] Likewise, no one should tie himself down inwardly to a place in which he once received a grace from God. God is free of all that, and man too is meant to be free.[221]

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[217] A iii, 36.
[218] A iii, 37–38.
[219] A iii, 39; A iii, 44, 4.

The final criticisms of the *Ascent*, at which point it breaks off uncompleted (unless the conclusion has been lost), are directed against preaching. It shows best where John wants to place his affirmative and negative emphases. Without doubt the preacher is a 'means' that God employs to bring his Word home to men. But 'the force and efficacy of preaching depend entirely on the interior spirit'. No matter how well chosen his words or how sublime his thoughts, the preacher usually only obtains an effect 'proportionate to his own interior spirit. God's word is indeed efficacious of itself . . . yet fire also has power to burn but will not burn if the material is not disposed. And so a twofold disposition is required if a sermon is to achieve its effect: that of the preacher, and that of his hearer. And usually the effect is commensurate with the interior preparedness of the preacher.'[222] 'The holier the life of the preacher, in so far as we on earth can judge, the more abundant the fruit, no matter how lowly his style, poor his rhetoric, and plain the doctrine.' The eloquence of a preacher sounds in the ears *como una música concertada o sonido de campanas*, but 'it does not possess the power to raise a dead man from his sepulchre'.[223] Thus nowhere (in sharp contrast to the Byzantine theology of icons) is there any emphasis on a quasi-sacramental 'presence' in images, holy places and customs, ceremonies and parts of the liturgy. To prevent any magical abuse of the creaturely means of grace, John refers everything back to the great open freedom of the Spirit—of the Holy Spirit, the intermediary between Heaven and earth. And if one were to try to point out the primordial sacramental reality and efficacy of the incarnate Image of God, the Son, then John's answer would be: 'Our Lord was indeed a living image during his sojourn in this world; nevertheless, those who were faithless received no spiritual gain, even though they frequently went about with him and beheld his wondrous works. This is why he did not perform many mighty works in his own country.'[224]

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[220] A iii, 40.

[221] A iii, 42.

[222] A iii, 45, 2.

[223] A iii, 45, 1–4.

The one motif is constantly repeated: the true abode of beauty is contemplation, contemplation raised up above all limited, worldly forms, contemplation that is identical with faith, with the night, with love. Not in the subjective sense of an act of contemplation, but in the sense of the all-embracing reality of the God who communicates himself and the reality of his grace, of God's triune life infused into man (in the theological virtues). It is against the dark night's golden back drop of love, hope and faith that the finite forms are illuminated in their true and everlasting beauty. It is only when the lover longs for the unique beloved's eyes to open that his own eyes are opened to all of beauty's reflected splendour, which the beloved, through the gaze of his eyes, has brought to birth in the world. The communicating link between the world's beauty and the beauty of God is love of God, by which the soul is conformed to God and thus transformed in grace. Now the word *beauty* flows unceasingly from John's pen. It is as if he were intoxicated by it: '*Y vámonos a ver en tu hermosura*—and let us go forth to behold ourselves in your beauty. This means, that we should be like one another in beauty and that this occurs in your beauty, so that when one looks at the other, you alone appear in your beauty, and each sees the other in your beauty, which happens when you transform me into your beauty; hence I shall see you in your beauty, and you shall see me in your beauty, and I shall see myself in you in your beauty, and you shall see yourself in me in your beauty; and I will resemble you in your beauty, and you resemble me in your beauty, and my beauty shall be your beauty, and your beauty my beauty; wherefore I shall be you in your beauty, and you shall be me in your beauty, because your very beauty shall be my beauty.'[225]

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[224] A iii, 36, 3.

[225] C 35, 2.

3. VALUE AND LIMITS

Considering the dizzying heights to which St John soars, we cannot avoid the question as to the validity of such criteria in the Church of Jesus Christ. Nowhere is one so aware of the dubiousness of norms which reduce all to the same level as in the thought of this man, who is nonetheless a Doctor of the Church. Where the unique one, Jesus Christ, is the absolute norm, consideration of what is average or democratic has no place. What it truly is to be a Christian one learns from him, and secondly, one learns it from the few, the very few who in faith and love have chosen him as the exclusive law of their existence and have remained faithful to that choice to the end. If one man in a hundred thousand were a norm in this sense, because in this one man Christ's grace and the demands of his Gospel could be seen with all humanly possible purity, this would not be an objection to the value of the norm.

Faith, hope and love for Christ (which, in turn, through Christ and in the Spirit, is love for the Father) become the one and only law of existence and John, as one of the *grands simplificateurs du monde*,[226] believed it was his duty to concern himself with this kind of fundamental ideal of Christian life. The question still remains, however, whether such an ideal could be put into practice in the way John believes necessary. He defines 'pure faith' in two ways. First, there is the negative sense, the elimination of every *figura*, every finite form, that faith, as faith in God and for God alone, transcends in its formal object. Then there is the positive sense, when he identifies the 'night of faith' with the night of contemplation, which as such represents an existential relationship with God, a state in which one is affected by God—in other words, an experience of God, albeit formless, whether negative (in the night or privation) or positive (in the dawn of eternal vision). In both definitions John is dependent on the great spiritual tradition—Evagrius, Macarius, Denys, Gregory, Bonaventure and (especially where the night is concerned) Walter Hilton.[227] For the first, negative aspect we may really have to go back as far as Evagrius to find a similar radicalism—unless one follows Asín Palacios and looks for a connection with Sufism.[228] But for the second, positive aspect, it must be said that John goes beyond the great tradition the notion represents and turns toward the modern age; his emphasis is on his own experience, on the way to God he himself has pursued. It is this experience, superimposed on tradition, that leads John to make the enormous demands he does. The fact is, in Denys especially and his medieval commentators or modifiers, the philosophical foundation is so dominant that the reproach is constantly made against them that they taught a superficially Christianized neo-Platonism, that they laid down the steps to be followed in the soul's ascent to God according to an altogether abstract schema of the dialectical relationship between God and the world, between divine transcendence and immanence. Especially in Aquinas, Denys takes his place as a philosophical authority alongside Aristotle and Augustine; and in Nicholas of Cusa and the Platonists of Florence later on, he performs a similar service. In comparison with all of this, the philosophical background in St John of the Cross disappears or rather is fully absorbed in the personally 'experienced' night of faith and contemplation. The 'I' whose experience is recounted nowhere explicitly steps into view, but no less than for St Theresa it is the necesary presupposition and invisible point of reference for all his statements.

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[226] See note 124.

[227] It matters little whether John was familiar with Hilton's doctrine directly or indirectly or whether there is just circumstantial affinity.

The two simplifications, the negative and the positive, will now be considered in detail.

1. The faith that loves and hopes is that infinite, divine power that allows and requires all finite figures, objective as well as subjective, to be surmounted. For the earthly man the surmounting is crucifying; for the heavenly man it means the freedom of love. Here the question arises as to the religious value of all the figures of revelation—above all, of the form of God incarnate; then of the Church as a visible institution of salvation, as the communion of saints; and of Scripture in its objective, multiform facticity. Does not this mysticism fly past the incarnate Christ as it plunges, without mediation, into the

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[228] *Huellas del Islam* (Madrid, 1941).

furnace of triune love? Still more, is not the Church as a concrete community of love left behind? Is not God's configured Word irresistibly reduced to a single, superhuman, ineffable Word?

There can be no doubt whatsoever that the incarnate Son of God, or more specifically, the crucified Son of God, determines the whole mystical way of this man who carries the cross even in his name. For him everything depends on the call of Christ in the Gospel, which is, of course, immediately heard and understood in the most radical manner. 'Christ, our Lord, instructing us about this way of renunciation, stated, according to St Luke: "Whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple." This statement is quite clear, for the doctrine the Son of Man came to teach is contempt of all things (*fué il menosprecio de todas las cosas*) that we may receive the gift of God's Spirit. So long as the soul fails to rid herself of these possessions, she is incapable of receiving God's Spirit to work its pure transformation.[229] This essential definition of Christianity, reduced in this form, is found everywhere.[230] It is a call to the Cross, as the programmatic Chapter 7 of the second book of the *Ascent* shows in words of steel. 'A man makes progress only through imitation of Christ. . . . No one goes to the Father except through him.' He is door, way, truth, life. In what sense? 'First, it is clear that during his life he died spiritually to the world of the senses, and that at his death he died naturally. He proclaimed during his life that he had no place whereon to lay his head. And at his death he had less. Second, at the moment of his death he was certainly annihilated (*aniquilado*) in his soul, without any consolation or relief.[231] He was therefore compelled to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thout forsaken me?" This was the most extreme abandonment that he suffered in his life. And in this way (*y asi*) he accomplished the most marvellous work (*obra*) of his whole life, surpassing all the works and deeds and miracles that he had ever performed on earth or in Heaven, that is, he brought about the reconciliation of the human race with God through grace. The Lord achieved this, as I say, at the very moment in which he was most annihilated in all things': in his reputation before the men who mocked him, in his human nature by dying and with regard to the Father, who left him without consolation or help, 'forsook him so as to pay the full price of sin.' For this reason the verse from the psalm applies to him: *Ad nihilum redactus sum et nescivi.* 'Union with God does not consist in recreations, experiences or spiritual feelings, but in the one and only living, sensory and spiritual, exterior and interior, death of the Cross.'[232]

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[229] A i, 5, 2.

[230] A ii, 6, 4 (Lk 14.33 again); A ii, 7, 4 (Mk 8. 34–35); A ii, 7, 6 (Mt 10. 39; John 12. 25).

[231] The words *segun la parte inferior* and *sensitivamente* may be the prudent interpolations of an editor.

According to the *Ascent*, Book I, Chapter 13, the foundation of all spiritual life is 'the habitual desire to imitate Christ in all things' by 'mortification and renunciation of self for the love of Christ, who in his life on earth had no other gratification, nor desired any other, than the fulfilment of his Father's will, which he called his meat and food.' And this mortification begins with the active choice and preference of 'the more difficult' instead of 'the easier,' and 'the less pleasant' instead of the gratifying, of 'the unconsoling' instead of the consoling, of 'the lowest and most despised' instead of the higher and more precious—in short, of 'total poverty in all the things of this world.'[233] For so long as we live, the depths of the mystery of Christ cannot be plumbed.[234] Imitation takes place in humility, which knows very well, and never forgets, that I myself was 'the cause of the Passion and death of Christ',[235] that if 'the knife is raised above our head',[236] we should not feel ourselves to be innocent victims. It is sufficient that we succeed in 'losing ourselves completely for Christ's sake',[237] and that we 'choose for love of Christ all that is most distasteful, whether in God or in the world.'[238]

One of the most magnificent chapters in the *Ascent* (II, 22) shows from what perspective John makes this last statement. It is God the Father's address to the man who hankers after new and personal revelations and answers from God. The discourse proceeds as follows: 'I have already told you everything in my Word, who is my Son. I have nothing more to reveal, no further answer to give you, there is nothing to add to him. Fasten your eyes on him alone, because in him I have spoken and revealed everything. *Ipsum audite.*'[239] 'If you desire me to answer with words of comfort, behold my Son, obedient and subject to me racked in pain, and you will see how much he answers. If you desire me to declare some secret truths or events to you, fix your eyes on him, and you will discern hidden "in him the most secret mysteries and wisdom, the wonders of God. . . ." These treasures of wisdom and knowledge will be far more sublime, delightful and advantageous than what you want to know. The Apostle, therefore, gloried, affirming that he had made it plain that "he knew no other than Jesus Christ and him crucified." And if you should still seek other divine or corporal visions or revelations, behold him, become human, and you will encounter more than you imagined, because the Apostle also says, "In him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily".'[240]

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[232] A ii, 7, 8–11.

[233] A i, 13, 2–5; *cf.* C 3, 3 and 5.

[234] C 36, 3.

[235] Ep 10.

[236] Ep 9.

[237] C 20, 3.

[238] A ii, 7, 5.

All this proves unequivocally that St John's mysticism is meant to be understood christocentrically, and only through Christ is it theocentric. It is not philosophical but theological, grounded in the imitation of Christ, and all the words of the Bible, of both Old and New Testaments, are arranged concentrically around the annihilation of the Word of God on the Cross. John is a great lover of the Bible, and he knows the Bible. He quotes it in a wonderfully personal way, with vigour and penetration, but his choice of quotations, especially from the Old Testament, is wholly determined by his existential experience of love's death on the Cross and by the imitation of Christ, in grace, that goes as far as the Cross (or its inspired prefigurations in the Old Covenant). Abraham's, Moses' and Elijah's encounters with God in the darkness of faith, the dereliction by God experienced by Job, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jonah and others, are placed at the centre.[241] The Bible is concerned with neither 'spiritual sense' nor 'allegory', but with the Cross of Christ; everything else proceeds from it or leads to it. 'In place of Israel St John of the Cross substitutes every "chosen" soul whom God wants as his Bride. It is the same event, identical with the divine guidance.'[242] We will have to return to the pressing question of whether this selective arrangement of texts around the night of the Cross does not perhaps have a constrictive effect, so that the night of the Cross itself, in its existential reflection in the mystic, is taken as the object and standard.[243]

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[239] A ii, 22, 5.

[240] A ii, 22, 6.

[241] Jean Vilnet, 'Bible et Mystique chez St Jean de la Croix', *Études Carmélitaines* (1949).

The authentic image of God in the world is the image of crucified love—nothing else. All the profusion of imagery in the *Spiritual Canticle* can only be explained and justified as the deployment of the 'hidden treasures' of this one image. John carved crucifixes, but more than that, he drew a little oval sketch in Indian ink, about five centimetres in diameter, to explain to one of his brethren the vision he had of the crucified in the chapel gallery. The sketch shows the hanging body with such staggering foreshortening that the technique alone 'presupposes long practice'.[244] The image only becomes comprehensible if we picture the body to ourselves hanging not vertically (as it usually does in representations of the cross) but downward by its hands and feet, with the crossbeams lying horizontally, downward into the darkness of God's night, the night of the world and the night of Hell.

> It is in full downward flight that Christ appears to John; a stupendous vertical movement hurls him down, like a rock, the head first and straining the chest behind it, the neck vertical, the nape of the neck bent over, the arms distended and dislocated, the shoulder blades arched. The face is hidden, only the nape of the neck, the hair falling down in front of his face, the cranium, the upper part of the back, the hip, are visible. The lighting is violent, cast from above. A certain brutality produces this effect, while the lines of the drawing are supple and soft. The work has two main features: the first appears to be imposed upon the artist, the other is his own contribution. What is imposed is the soaring vision, the apparition hurtling madly downward in the light, the divine body with specks of shadow, made of nerves rather than

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[242] Vilnet, 111.

[243] '*Ainsi la Bible . . . ne se présentera dans la composition des traités que sous l'aspect exact et limité où elle est intervenue dans la propre expérience intérieure de leur auteur*' (Vilnet, 160).

[244] Florisoone, 95.

> bones. What is imposed is to be seen in the arms composed of wounded, painfully swollen tissue, the suppleness of the narrow chest, which appears to be in flight from the unyielding wood, to be trying to detach itself and throw itself onto the ground. Under the force of gravity the left wrist has been torn, and the nail has been reinserted into the swollen soft hand. The heart bleeds in a long blackish stream on to the rigid chest . . . John's own personal contribution is the sovereign allure of this vibrant sketch, full of intensity and at the same time almost relaxed, so delicately and with such quickness of touch has the artist worked. Artistic effectiveness is completely subordinated to the significance of the event. The impression almost of cruelty is revealed in an uncompromising anatomical representation (we must not forget that the young Juan de Yepes, at the age of twenty, was an orderly at the hospital . . . of Medina del Campo)'.[245]

Florisoone reflects on the opportunities John might have had, at the time the sketch was drawn (1572–1577 in Avila), of seeing imitations of Italian originals in vertical perspective: Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, which was imitated by Spanish artists, the early works of Tintoretto (El Greco only appears later). Elements of pictures, or of their copies, that John had seen may well have entered into his vision and its depiction, for 'God speaks the language of time and place'; 'yet in power of dramatic expression and in technical skill St John of the Cross surpassed the innovations of Michelangelo, Correggio, Tintoretto and El Greco, remarkable enough though they are'.[246]

The sketch of the crucifixion is illuminating in many respects. First, it shows that John was no iconoclast, that his characteristic doctrine of transcending configured imagery must be understood not in the letter but in the spirit. Seen like that, it points forcefully toward the central image, which, in its exaltation, draws all other images to itself, to judge and adjust them. For St John of the Cross it is the only 'possible' image, while in St Theresa there are many sensible visions of the body of the risen Lord. According to John, who here relies on an ancient Patristic view, Christ almost never appears personally.[247] And yet there is a third idea indicated by the image of the Cross with its almost devastating force: the solitude of the one who walks toward Christ by imitating him, and the impossibility of placing the work of imitation on the same level as the work of Christ. This may explain the remarkable lacuna in St John's thought, the yawning gap where the Church should be.

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[245] *Ibid.* 98–99.
[246] *Ibid.* 104.

An almost inexplicable modesty or reserve prevents John from presenting the 'work' of contemplation in its social aspect, as Theresa does so ingenuously and as little Thérèse does even more ingenuously. For the Little Flower, the self-oblatory Carmelite is the 'heart of the Church', 'mother of souls', the drive wheel of the entire motive power of the Church. It is an integral part of the bridal-nuptial love of the soul for God that she places at the disposal of God, her one and only beloved, everything that she is and thereby everything she might be able to accomplish. She never even raises the question of whether what she is doing is significant or fitting for God, let alone *how* he employs and distributes what she places at his disposal. Of St John's apostolic prayer and oblation there is hardly anything to see. It does not even seep through in the 'Prayer of a Soul Taken with Love'.[248] This culminates in the jubilation of absolute possession of God in love, in which—in the *cognitio matutina* already mentioned to which an *amor matutinus* here corresponds—all the world belongs to the loving soul. 'With what procrastinations do you wait, my soul, since from this very moment you can love God in my heart? Mine are the heavens and mine is the earth. Mine are the nations, the just are mine and mine the sinners. The angels are mine, and the Mother of God, and all things are mine; and God himself is mine and for me, because Christ is mine and all for me. What do you ask, then, and seek, my soul?'

Even in the passage from the *Living Flame* we have already considered, where one would undoubtedly expect the argument to turn toward the apostolate, it is absent. 'Having God for its own, it can give him and communicate him to whomever it wishes. Thus it gives him to its beloved, who is the very God who gave himself to it. By this donation it repays God for all it owes him, since it willingly gives as much as it receives from him.'[249] The omission may, of course, just reflect a profound intention on the author's part. But even then is it not rather strange, disturbing? Where, in the whole of John's work, is the neighbour? Where is the communion of saints? Where is the Johannine criterion for love of God: love of the brother? This is taken for granted and receives no special emphasis, just as the Church in all her visibility is taken for granted; it is not forgotten but presupposed and so does not need to be specially mentioned, because every Christian knows about it from the Catechism. But he has not sufficiently reflected on the other matter—the seriousness of the Cross, the exclusiveness of God's demanding love. And yet—why is the *image* of God and of Jesus Christ, the human Thou in its misery and hidden glory, not taken up into transcendence, into the wind of the Holy Spirit? Does John take sufficiently into account the *reality* of the images, the reality of the God who *descends*, who comes down into flesh and pain and death? For it is that same God who decrees that the images are valid, definitively valid, for John. Are we not rather too close to the ancient neo-Platonic aversion (radicalized by Evagrius) to forms and figures, the *typoi* and *morphai* and *eidê*, from which the soul must be freed in order to attain as a *nous katharos* the *gnôsis aeidês* and *aülos*, which can also be called *apatheia*, *praotês* and *agapê*.

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[247] N ii, 23, 7.

[248] Silverio, 745.

2. The second identification leads to a similar crisis. Here it is the identification of faith and contemplation. In this, as we have seen, the notion of contemplation is associated with that of experience in a measure that far outstrips that of the Patristic and medieval periods—experience, of course, in a very special, critically purified sense: experience of the Absolute in the nonexperience of all finite content and activity and thus, in truth, the transcendence of natural psychological criteria of experience, of a positive as well as a negative kind. In active purification, first of all, positive experiences—pleasurable sensory, spiritual and religious feelings and impressions to

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[249] L iii, 78.

which the soul, consciously or unconsciously, again and again becomes attached—are renounced. This is a correct analysis, as is the statement that, to begin with, the negative ways of penance are to be preferred. However, John deliberately puts the emphasis on the absence of pleasure, not out of a desire for yet more suffering, but for 'complete poverty in all worldly things'; not to increase the negative aspect, but so that everything, positive as well as negative, may become transparent in the unique, obscure light of God.[250] But then, on the plane of the Absolute, 'experience in the Absolute' and 'experience with the Absolute' return, transferred from the plane of accidents to the plane of substance. The substance of the creature is affected, feels the privation to its roots, experiences in the night the touches (*toques*) of God in the core of its being, is conscious of the divine, triune life and love awakening within itself. And this 'experience with God' has a history, an evolution of the simplest kind, and refers to the simplest facts of religious philosophy as expounded in the West by neo-Platonism: the way of purgation, illumination and union. In the Christian mysticism of St John it becomes a way that, more and more predominantly, God himself takes in company with the soul. It is a way in which all 'techniques' are surpassed by God's gracious action, while the soul's only active task is to remove obstacles, and the spiritual director's, to clear the way for God.

It is the way up Mount Carmel, the way of the exclusive, contemplative vocation. Thus the question posed at the beginning is posed again: is it one particular way alongside other Christian ways, or is it absolutely *the* way, which contains the experience of God that is normative for all? The question is as old as Christian spirituality. The answer is more difficult and nuanced than the one usually given, whether it be affirmative or negative. It will depend on whether the special experience upon which John's mystical doctrine is based is understood as typical and normative or just illustrative; it can at least scarcely be denied that for John it is both of these at the same time. He describes *his* way to God, his unique experience with God, but he also describes it, partly out of humility, partly with exultant assurance, as *the* way *par excellence*. This, according to his schema, was the way of biblical man, the way of Augustine, of Francis of Assisi and of his sister Theresa. It can be argued (with Baruzi) that the four treatises do not consist of a series of self-contained stages, but rather that each in its own way contains the whole on different levels that are not logically commensurable (so that, for example, the *Spiritual Canticle* cannot be placed simply between the *Dark Night* and the *Living Flame*). Nevertheless, the internal coherence of the entire corpus is so great that, despite all the open-ended freedom it imparts, it appears as *the* way to God.

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[250] A i, 13.

It is possible, of course—especially for the noncontemplatives in the Church—to pass through the great purgative night in piecemeal fashion over the course of years. However, the way in which John speaks of this possibility shows that it is precisely only a remote participation in the real thing.[251] At this stage we must question the identification of the theological virtues with experiential contemplation (however fundamentally and generally this is to be understood). The possible varieties of perfect faith and contemplation cannot be canonically determined by one single experience, and within this variety the various forms of active Christian life must be allowed to make their contribution. It is equally mistaken (John does not do it directly, but defenders of his system may be tempted to) to argue that the theological virtues are founded upon the hypostatic union of the God-Man and thus also upon the consciousness of God by Christ in his human nature, which can be considered, rightly, as the archetype of all contemplation of the Father (in the immediacy of the Night). Inasmuch as this archetype provides the ultimate Christian rationale for the way of the 'ascent of the Mount Carmel' (which is 'redemptive contemplation' directed at the Father), we must reverse what we said earlier, since the 'redemptive action' includes the *renunciation* of divine experience by the Son in *forma Dei*; it leaves it behind and, for the sake of the sinner's redemption, is content with the *schêma anthrôpou* (Phil 2.7), the condition of the 'ordinary' man, who in his believing, hoping and loving does not possess the experiential element of the contemplation enjoyed by the chosen.

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[251] N ii, 1, 1–2.

Christ, the archetype, in this way is beyond the ways of contemplation and action, and love can be perfect in both ways. If this is so, then the contemplative way of those few who are chosen for it enters the realm of the charismatic. Although such unique experience points the way to the Church, it is now seen as one charism in the economy of grace in the mystical Body, as little Thérèse, above all, perceives. This charism, like others, even more than others, has representative and thus normative value for the whole Body. To this extent, then, John's doctrine becomes normative for the whole Church, but analogically, not as literally as he himself wanted this norm to be understood. The charismatic aspect of John's experience (and thus its individuality) is clarified by its relation to the only ultimate and normative archetype—Christ. Thus we can distinguish several degrees of its possible relevance: (1) In so far as it gives religious actuality to the philosophical *analogia entis* on the highest plane of revelation, it is in the broadest sense normative for every religious man who seeks to realize existentially the relation of absolute being to relative being. There can and must be analogies here with the great forms of human religion. (2) In so far as it makes real, by way of example, the infused and transcendent character of the Christian theological virtues, John's doctrine is normative for every Christian, even the active. The exclusively contemplative way has the special mission of making visible, with a purity that can be observed ('contemplated'), the form of Christian life. (3) In so far as it bears witness to an especially exalted and pure realization of the contemplative way, this doctrine in a stricter sense can be a guiding star for the contemplative ways in the Church, provided always God is given the freedom to lead other souls on other paths and according to different rhythms; guiding stars such as, for example, the founders of the religious orders, those founts of charismatic life, must not be presented by their successors as imitable in the literal sense, and even less should they present themselves as such. In any case little Thérèse set Carmel free from such a dangerous obsession.

If this analogical value of St John's doctrine is valid in the

Church, then the aesthetic character of his work is even more prominent. For what he gives the Church in the deadly earnestness of his personal struggle and his consciousness of being taken seriously by God constitutes for it a simile, a parable, a poem. And John was absolutely right to present the didactic part of his work as an unsuccessful, defective commentary on his poems, which constitute his message in the proper sense in a way that prose cannot rival. If we trust and agree with the correctness of John's judgment of himself, then we must see that it is as a poet rather than as a prose writer that he is a Doctor of the Church. He thus refers in an original and profound manner to the character of the Word of God itself, which is not simple prose nor can adequately be translated into prose. No, it is in its simplicity, like the meaning contained in an inexhaustible symbol, that the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily.

PASCAL

Pascal's lonely genius, which finally does not want to identify itself with any particular school of thought—*je suis seul*[1]—nevertheless links us with the many ways that find their meeting in him. He is a humanist in Erasmus's sense: as an enemy of Scholasticism and monkery (for him it is the Jesuits, for Erasmus it was the older orders), he marks out the same bold path between the primitive, evangelical and patristic tradition and modern knowledge; as Erasmus was one of the founders of modern philology, so is Pascal one of the founders of modern, exact, natural science; and as with Erasmus the same religious pathos binds together the two sides of his nature, so with Pascal the same religious sense of structure bridges the tension between an ascetic Augustinianism, which embodies for him the primitive ecclesiastical tradition, and exact, scientific research—that is what marks Pascal off in a decisive and exemplary way, from all that stems from Descartes' approach to philosophy which, in itself dualistic, has led to the modern schizophrenia between exact science and imageless inwardness. Pascal, clearly aware of the poles that have to be united, but just as clearly aware of the rising power of the demonic, is possessed of an insurmountable will to draw all together into a single structure and has his place, by virtue of his achievement, among the supreme figures of theological aesthetics. He belongs to the ranks of those acerbic, ardent spirits of the French baroque, who, as laymen, ventured to force the sheerly impossible into the unity of a single visible form: combining the early Christian and Stoic pathos of death, of renunciation, of the spirit's world-conquering power with the spirit's own imperial claim to form in the ideal of the 'honnête homme'—the shaped and rounded personality manifest in ethical and aesthetic attitude—in the art of living, in the structure of drama, of palaces, of the state, even of the Church, whose deepest forming energies and claims about form, often inadequately represented among the clergy, would be perceived and tended by these great masters of form. It was not for nothing that these, the war of the Huguenots in their blood still, had the elemental impulse not to become the counterreformation party, but to carry forward in themselves the strongest impulses of the opposition party in the Church's political struggle in a creative way, in whatever variations this harsh, often almost iconoclastic earnestness found expression in them: in the mysticism of sacrifice of the 'French school' of Bérulle and Condren (whose views Pascal on occasion adopted unreservedly[2]), in the harsh, Christian Stoicism of Corneille and finally in that dark and gloomy Augustinianism of Port Royal, which glimmers from the pictures of Philippe of Champaigne and into whose all-too-powerful wake Pascal was drawn, although in the end—objectively and temporally—he distanced himself from it: *Je suis seul . . . , je ne suis point de Port-Royal.*[3] It is the France of the time before the Peace of Nijmegen, fired with the consciousness of a spiritual mission for Christendom and culture in its totality, fired with a will to carve out a Christian form for which no sacrifice is too great, a France that will give the world a living proof that Christianity is the sacrifice and self-oblation of life, and only at this price can it claim to be the representation of the divine in the world. It is in this claim that Pascal transcends that constricted form of the Augustinian tradition that is associated with the name of Jansen. Or, to put it another way, it is much more important to show clearly how far in Jansenism, despite its narrowing, the greatness and breadth of

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[1] *Lettres Provinciales* 17, 867. The works are cited by page number after the new one-volume edition of the *Oeuvres Complètes*, edited by Jacques Chevalier with a commentary (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1954). The *Pensées* (= P) are cited after the same edition, but by the number in Chevalier's enumeration, to which the number in the Brunschwicg Edition (= B) is added [and also the number in the Lafuma Edition (= L), from the translation of which (by A. J. Krailsheimer, Penguin, 1966) the English version is taken—Translator].

We have rejected the *Discours sur les passions de l'amour* as inauthentic; the best refutation of the thesis of authenticity is in E. Wasmuth, *Pascal, die Kunst zu überzeugen* (1950), 139–160. Also the fragment on the theatre (Pensées 208, B 11 L 764); *cf.* Louis Lafuma, 'Mme de Sablé et les dangers de la Comédie', *Ecrits sur Pascal* (1959), 117–124.

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[2] The famous letter to Gilberte Périer and her husband on the death of his father, Etienne Pascal, written in the style of the ancient *consolatio*, renders exactly and in detail the doctrine of sacrifice of the French School; 490–501.

[3] *Lettres Provinciales* 17, 867. [I am alone . . . I do not belong to Port Royal.]

Augustinianism was sought, sighted and actually realized, than to nail Pascal to a condemned theological position and to derive from this the right to ignore him. Pascal comes to Port Royal from something of his own that is greater, and he finally passes beyond Port Royal to something of his own that is greater yet. Through the greatness he transcended both that party in the Church which had already been censured in his lifetime and which after his death was fiercely persecuted and finally, with the destruction of Port Royal in 1709, stamped out, and also that other party which he himself had so frontally attacked and exposed with a verve perhaps never seen in the Church since the days of Tertullian: the Society of Jesus, whose lax moral theory was as frequently and as fundamentally condemned by the Church as was Jansenism; and which received from Pascal a wound from which it had not completely recovered when it was suppressed a century later. The terrible, inexorable polemicist, who with his war of letters created the first masterpiece of modern French prose, raised himself, despite all the conflict, above both parties; according to him, everything hangs on enduring the tensions between the contraries: 'Both Jesuits and Jansenists are therefore wrong to conceal them; but the Jansenists more so, because the Jesuits have been better at professing both [opposites].'[4]

1. THE BASIC THEMES

1. Like all great creators of form Pascal strives to get back to the *source*. A letter, six years earlier than the Memorial, reveals this basic experience: God and the divine is the ever new. Worldly learning can be learnt once and for all and held in the memory.

> To hear [in Holy Scripture] that secret language, a language foreign to those who are foreign to Heaven, it is necessary that the same grace, which can alone give the first understanding, continue it and make it always present by imprinting it unceasingly in the hearts of the faithful to keep it alive forever, just as among the blessed, God continually renews their

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[4] P 790 B 865 L 786.

> blessedness, which is an effect and a result of grace, and just as, too, the Church holds that the Father begets the Son continually and maintains the eternity of his essence by an effusion of his substance that is both without break and without end. Thus the continuation of the righteousness of the faithful is nothing else than the continuation of the infusion of grace and not a single grace that subsists forever; and it is this that teaches us perfectly the perpetual dependence on the mercy of God in which we find ourselves, since, were he to interrupt its flow by however little, we would necessarily run aground. In this predicament it is easy to see that one must continually make new efforts to acquire this continual newness of spirit, since one can conserve the former grace only by the acquisition of new grace, and that otherwise one would lose what one thought one was retaining, just as those who want to trap the light catch only darkness. . . . Without uninterrupted renewal one is not capable of receiving the new wine that is not poured into old vessels.[5]

In man's relation with God there is only an ever-new love which it is the essence of being a Christian to strive after and preserve alive. 'The children of God must not put limits to their purity or their perfection. . . : "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect." It is therefore an error, very prejudicial and very ordinary among Christians and even among those who make profession of piety, to persuade oneself that there is a certain degree of perfection that, once achieved, makes one safe and beyond which one need not pass; since any degree becomes bad if one remains there, and one can prevent oneself falling only by climbing still higher.'[6] Now one can understand the acceptance of Condren's theory of sacrifice, according to which Christ presents before the Father 'an everlasting and continuous sacrifice', which is certainly offered on earth, but which is eternally consumed in the heavenly fire of the resurrection and the glory.[7] One can further understand the evangelical zeal to get back beyond all established and settled forms and 'uses' to primitive Christianity, which is evidenced in his burning essay, 'Comparison of the Christians of the First Ages with Those of Today.' At that time Christians had to realise the leap out of the world into the kingdom of God existentially in order to preserve sacramental baptism, whereas after the introduction of infant baptism any taking seriously of the demand that baptism makes is put off until later, is regarded as secondary and is often forgotten altogether.[8] One can understand above all the bitter struggle against Jesuit casuistry, which was basicaly concerned with a moral minimum, whereas for Pascal to be a Christian was to be concerned with the maximum. 'I will allow him no rest either in himself or in another, so that with no place to settle or rest . . .',[9] so a fragment begins. The casuists, who sought to allow in the practice of the confessional as much as was feasible, even what appeared to the undistorted consciences of the faithful as already a serious failure, and in their excesses went so far as to dispense from the love of God, to describe loving contrition as 'an obstacle rather' and then to set forth the attrition due to fear as sufficient even if there is no spark of love in it, to describe the commandment to love as a 'painful duty', a 'heavy and wearisome burden' that Christ has performed in our stead in the New Testament and which is replaced by the receiving of the sacraments[10]—such casuists seem to Pascal like the false teachers of the last days. It is 'a total reversal of the law of God, it attacks the very heart of piety, takes away the spirit that gives life and says that the love of God is not necessary to salvation. It goes so far as to pretend that the benefit that Jesus Christ brought into the world was to dispense from the love of God! Such is the height of impiety. The price of the blood of Jesus Christ was to obtain for us a dispensation from loving him. . . . Here is accomplished the mystery of iniquity.'[11]

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[5] Letter 4 (5 November 1648), 488.

[6] Letter 3 (1 April 1648), 485–486.

[7] Letter 5 (17 October 1651), 493–494.

The opposition comes to the surface in the Augustinian ethic, which measures everything by the either-or *caritas* and *cupiditas* as the final ethical criterion; in consequence a natural ethic that takes no account of the orientation of an act towards the ultimate source of the divine love is from the outset determined by *cupiditas*, sinful self-love, as Pascal discloses. 'While the casuists replace the precepts of Scripture, which oblige us to relate all our actions to God, with a brutal permission to relate them all to ourselves . . . they fan the flame of concupiscence and put out the love of God.'[12] What Pascal finally holds against the Jesuits is the way they have of 'accommodating the precepts and rules of Jesus Christ to the interests, the pleasures and the passions of men',[13] which is meant to accredit the Church and especially the Society of Jesus among men—*autrement ils nous quitteraient*[14]—just what Dostoyevsky attributed to his 'Grand Inquisitor'. 'What is the relation, Father, between this teaching and that of the gospel?'[15] Pascal demands either a fundamental reform of the Jesuits or their suppression,[16] for it seems to him that they have departed completely from the attitude of their founder.[17]

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[8] *Opuscules* V, 555–559.

[9] P 332 B 419 L 464 (trans. slightly modified).

[10] *Lettres Provinciales* 10, 776–778.

[11] *Ibid.*, 778. In the same eschatological tone, the justification, written by Pascal, for the protests of the Paris clergy against casuistry; above all the 'Cinquième écrit des curés de Paris' (928–938) and the 'Projet de Mandement', found among his remains (938–945).

The return to the source that Pascal seeks is not only a return to the patristic sources, but a return to the life of Jesus and through the undistorted facts of that life to the mystery of the suffering love of God. The first is served by the 'Outline of the life of Jesus Christ' that presses through all the veils of theological speculation to the basic phenomena and thereby knows that 'such a holy life . . . can be written only by the same spirit as brought about the birth [of Jesus]';[18] this spirit is then also necessary if the historical form is to be caught sight of. So Pascal accompanies any of the enumerated 'facts' with an interpretative contemplation: the cry of dereliction from the Cross, for example, that can be understood only soteriologically; or at the time of Christ's resurrection, the resurrection of the bodies of the saints which 'are raised in eternal glory' as witnesses and harbingers of the general resurrection of the dead; or the marks of the wounds in the body of the Risen Lord, which remain displayed forever before the Father.[19] This way into the centre of the fact, which is at the same time the mystery of all history, is completed in the 'mystère de Jésus', of which more will be said here.

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[12] 'Factum pour les curés de Paris', 908.

[13] *Ibid.*, 911.

[14] *Lettres Provinciales* 6, 720.

[15] *Ibid.*, 10, 772.

[16] 'Cinquième écrit des curés de Paris', 935.

[17] *Lettres Provinciales* 13, 817.

[18] *Abrégé de la vie de Jésus-Christ*, 626.

Such a return to the source leads finally to the ever-recurring closeness, indeed identity, between death and the end of the world. Pascal, who in his life was always sick and who died young, lived a life oriented toward the end of the world, and this feeling for life is expressed in his 'Prayer for a Right Use of Sickness': 'Grant that I may consider this sickness as a form of death, separated from the world, deprived of the objects to which I am attached, alone in your presence, so that I may implore of your mercy the conversion of my heart.' 'I praise you, my God, and will praise you all the days of my life, because you have been pleased to give me, for my own benefit, a foretaste of that dreadful day . . . on which you will consume Heaven and earth and all creatures that are in them . . . by removing all things from me by the weakness to which you have reduced me.'[20] Similarly in the treatise on 'The Conversion of the Sinner', which is probably correctly attributed to Pascal, and which depicts the way into love as an insight into not only the transience of things but into their 'having already passed away' and a breaking up of the earthly world.[21] Above all, the letters to Mlle de Roannez emphasize the thought, which he introduces right at the beginning: 'Because everything that happens to the Church happens to each individual Christian', what the Lord prophesied about the end of the world must be applied to the conversion of man to Christ: with the old man the old world as a whole perishes, with the temple the 'reprobate' is cast down in dust and ashes, no stone remaining on another.[22] And as the last judgment is the 'shaking of the universe', so there is in every conversion the 'universal shaking of the person'; only the merits of Christ, who on the Cross took upon himself for our sakes the eternal punishment, prevent this day of judgment on earth from being the beginning of eternal dissolution.[23] All these themes taken together already lead into a second, penetrating vision into the first causes, something peculiar to Pascal that he occasionally expresses in Platonic language, but which, as will be shown, has a structure that is quite other.

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[19] *Ibid.*, 649, 650, 653.

[20] *Ibid.*, 606–607.

[21] *Sur la conversion du pécheur*, 549.

[22] First letter to Mlle de Roannez, 505–506.

2. Pascal, in contrast to Descartes the thinker, is essentially a 'Seer'. The famous fragments on the 'thinking reed', on thought (*pensée*) as man's dignity and distinguishing characteristic,[24] in no sense contradict this, for the question is what Pascal means by thought. The first of Brunschwicg's fragments, that on the distinction between the mathematical and the intuitive mind (*l'esprit de géométrie et l'esprit de finesse*), makes this quite clear:

> With the intuitive mind, the principles are in ordinary usage and there for all *to see*. There is no need to turn our heads, or strain ourselves: it is only a question of good sight, but it must be good . . . one needs very clear *sight* to see all the principles as well as an accurate mind to avoid drawing false conclusions from known principles. All mathematicians would therefore be intuitive if they had good sight . . . and intuitive minds would be mathematical if they could adapt their sight to the unfamiliar principles of mathematics. . . . The reason why mathematicians are not intuitive is that they cannot see what is in front of them: for, being accustomed to the clear cut, obvious principles of mathematics and to draw no conclusions until they have clearly seen and handled their principles, they become lost in matters requiring intuition. . . . The thing must be seen all at once, at a glance. . . .[25]

Those who are devotees of the mathematical mind cannot see things in a single glance, '*voir d'une vue*'.[26]

These two ways of thinking, the one starting from clearly perceived principles, the other seeing things as a whole, are at first simply juxtaposed without any evaluation. Yet for Pascal the power of insight soon asserts its preeminence, as it is this that has the power to perceive causes behind things. 'All these people saw the effects but did not see the causes. In comparison with those who have discovered the causes, they are like those who have only eyes compared to those who have minds. For the effects can, as it were, be felt by the senses, but the causes can be perceived only by the mind. And, although these effects can be seen by the mind, this mind can be compared to that which sees the causes as the bodily senses may be compared to the mind.'[27] There are three levels, therefore, the middle one of which is, seen from below, between the (relatively) perceiving mind and, seen from above, the relatively unperceiving senses. And with this one has already attained an insight into the heart of the *Pensées*, the fragment that draws the whole work together, the fragment on the three orders—Bodies-Mind-Charity—and the values that are realised in each order: 'All the splendour of wordly greatness lacks lustre for those engaged in pursuits of the mind. The greatness of intellectual people is not visible to kings, rich men, captains. . . . Great geniuses have their own power . . . they are recognised not with the eyes but with the mind, and that is enough. Saints have their power, their splendour . . . and do not need either carnal or intellectual greatness. . . . They are recognised by God and the angels. . . . With what great pomp and marvellously magnificent array Jesus came in the eyes of the heart, which perceive wisdom!'[28] Visible to the senses, to the mind, to the heart enlightened by love, but in each case visible on a new level! But if the things of the mind are hidden and remain dark to sense, and if the things of the love of God are hidden and remain dark to the mind, then the glory that the enlightened heart beholds is no other than that of love—the glories of the mysteries and humiliations of the divine love, and therewith the glories of the hidden one and the hiddennesses of the glory. But how can one see 'the presence of a God who hides himself'? All Pascal's interpretative skill is given to the question, the whole secret of his person is a response to it, the unveiling of which can take place only gradually. For the moment we have to be satisfied with the assertion that man, as he now is, is granted only a veiled vision, but still a real vision: 'He may not see nothing at all, nor may he see enough to think that he possesses God, but he must see enough to know that he has lost him. For, to know that one has lost something, one must see and not see. . . .'[29]

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[23] Ninth letter, 518.

[24] P 264 B 347 L 200; P 263 B 365 L 756.

[25] P 21 B 1 L 512.

[26] P 23 B 3 L 751.

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[27] P 452 B 234 L 577.

[28] P 829 B 793 L 308.

This form of vision is for Pascal so essential that having been dissolved at one level it appears again at another; at every level there is a seeing in not-seeing, a true seeing that pressupposes a not-seeing, a seeing as a unity of things that are equally seen to be irreconciliable, a seeing 'of two situations' that are mutually exclusive and yet which 'one must know equally, if one is to see the truth',[30] or, more exactly, a seeing of two opposites 'that cannot exist alone because of their deficiencies, nor be united because they are contradictory, and which therefore destroy and annihilate one another in order to give place to the truth of the gospel—for it is that which reconciles opposites by an art wholly divine'.[31] Only in theology is the otherwise undemonstrable demonstrable, and therefore it is 'the centre of all truths . . . , because it embraces so visibly [*visiblement*] all truths that exist in [mutually exclusive] opinions. So I do not see how anyone can refuse to follow it.'[32] But this highest form of seeing, which contemplates the highest manifestation of divine art, does not simply transcend matters that are purely unintelligible, as, for example, concepts that destroy one another in a purely dialectic way; rather, it rests on deeper orders, at bottom on the science of bodies, geometry, which was always a form of seeing in not-seeing. Pascal's strange battle for the 'mathematical [or geometric] mind' against the abstractly logical mind is concerned precisely with this. The school logic against which he fought was a galimatias of mere abstractions, a deduction for principles not really perceived, which could not therefore see in its deduction the operation that it performed and so could mediate no fruitful knowledge. 'One must therefore ask how the thought exists in the mind of the thinker. . . . I would therefore ask of reasonable men if the proposition: "Matter is naturally and insuperably incapable of thought"; and that other, "I think, therefore I am", are really the same in the mind of Descartes and that of Augustine, who said the same thing twelve hundred years before.' It is of course possible that Descartes too, without having 'taken it over' from Augustine, had really coined these sentences, 'for I know what a difference there is between simply writing something down without long and extended reflection and perceiving [*apercevoir*] in a saying a wonderful chain of consequences'. 'For one will say something spontaneously, without understanding its excellence, while another will grasp a marvellous chain of consequences, which leads us to say rashly that it is not in both cases the same saying. . . . The same thoughts sometimes develop quite differently in the mind of another than they did in the mind of the one who first thought them: infertile in their natural soil, they blossom when transplanted. But more often it comes about that a good mind produces himself from his own thoughts all the fruit of which they are capable, and that later others, having heard them esteemed, borrow them and deck themselves out with them, but without understanding their real excellence.'[33] For his apology Pascal frequently gathered material from secondary sources—from Montaigne, from the *Pugio fidei* of the Spaniard, Raymond Martin, et cetera, but he was quite clear that this constituted no objection to his own original vision and insight. 'Let no one say that I have said nothing new; the arrangment of the material is new. In playing tennis both players use the same ball, but one plays it better.'[34] Pascal's dexterity is of such an order that he not only plays with the greatest precision of each of the three levels of geometry, of mind and of the genius of love, but he also trained himself in the precision appropriate to mathematics and natural science as such, so as to attain that quite other precision appropriate to the realm of being and to the Christian realm. So he says that those who can 'see clearly [*verront clairement*]' the problems of spatial extension can therefore consider [*regarder*] their situation in the whole realm of being, and through this achieve self-knowledge and learn to value themselves at their own worth.[35]

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[29] P 602 B 556 L 449.

[30] *Entretien avec M. de Saci*, 571.

[31] *Ibid.*, 572.

[32] *Ibid.*, 573.

3. There is yet another theme that must be considered before

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[33] *De l'art de persuader*, 599–600.

[34] P 65 B 22 L 696.

[35] *De l'esprit géométrique*, 591.

any more detailed analysis is done, even though this theme appears to belong to Pascal's intellectual formation: his introduction to the world view of *Augustine*. Pascal's theology will always be associated with Jansenism, and historically that is right. As a lay theologian, first in Rouen through two disciples of Saint Cyran and later in Port Royal through Nicole and Arnauld, he received his initiation into a theology and spirituality from the dark side of which he cannot be abstracted. Of this his 'Writings on Grace' give proof enough, for despite their attempt to see the Augustinian-Jansenist doctrine of grace as a middle way between Calvinism on the one side and a Molinist Pelagianism on the other, they cannot shake themselves free of the constricting effect of Jansenism, which took over and developed only a completely one-sided Augustine. The way the first of the writings on grace begins with the 'dogma'—'*IL EST CONSTANT, qu'il y a plusieurs des hommes damnés et plusieurs sauvés*',[36] makes it amply clear how much the very manner in which the question is posed remains stuck in the context of the Middle Ages and the Reformation.

But there is quite another question, and one too rarely asked: how far did Pascal, with his remarkable gift for grasping the nature of great spiritual figures, achieve his intuition into the fundamental structure of Augustine's doctrine despite the constrictive teaching of Port Royal, and how far does this intuition, once it has been achieved, correspond to his own innermost aspirations? How far then does Pascal himself represent the original, creative tradition of Augustine? How much Pascal had read of the original text is uncertain but relatively unimportant, because already the many citations from Augustine in his writings show how much he was able, from fragments, to make out the spirit of the whole.[37] Jeanne

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[36] *Op. cit.*, 948 (Pascal's underlining). [It is unshakably true that some men are damned and some are saved.]

[37] The following are cited in the Pensées alone: sermo 141 (*quod curiositate cognoverunt, superbia amiserunt* [what they knew through curiosity, they lost through pride]: P 5 B 543 L 190); ep. 48 (49) (on the use of force in religion: P 9 and B 185–186 L 172, 591); *de Civ. Dei* 21.10 (on the impossibility of grasping the connection between the soul and the body: P 84 B 72 L 199); ep. 120 (on the reasonableness of acquiescence in faith: P 462 B 276 L 983); *de Gen. contra*

Russier's intensive research into the sources of Pascal's theory of faith,[38] like so much work in the field, examines only the literature of Port Royal, where the parallels are so many that Pascal's originality seems to appear only in a few nuances. That may be so if one looks at the problems one by one under a microscope, but if one stands back and takes an overall view, the picture changes in important respects.

Here we can only mention in passing the decisive features of the spiritual relationship of the two world pictures. *Le cœur* (in contrast to *esprit*, *raison*) can be understood only in the light of the Augustinian *cor*, and not at all as pointing to a theology of feeling;[39] *cœur* is *sensorium* for the whole (the principles), the religious, for God[40]—whence the heart, guided by God (*inclina cor meum*),[41] made upright and ordered toward God (*cor rectum*),[42] whence the demand to return into the heart (*redire ad cor*), whence the definition of faith as *Dieu sensible au cœur*.[43] But only God can turn the heart to himself, only God can give to it *caritas*, the love of God. If the heart does not love God, then it loves itself and relates all its values to self-love, *cupiditas*. Theology therefore must essentially be *confessio*: conversation with God as the gracious Thou, who before all else gives with love the true knowledge of the Thou. Theology is necessarily

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Manich. (on the six ages and their respective beginnings: P 549a B 655 L 283); *de Doctr. Christ.* (on the meaning of Scripture that can only be ascertained from Scripture itself: P 550 B 900 L 251); *de Civ. Dei* 11.22 (on the light of the Scriptures that is sufficient to enlighten the elect and blind the reprobate: P 582 B 578 L 236); *de Civ. Dei* 22.9 (on the essential role of miracle: P 625 B 812 L 169); *Enarr. in Ps 137* (for the doctrine on Jerusalem and Babylon and the meaning of the river of Babylon: P 696–697 B 458–459 L 545, 918). To that add a quotation from Augustine that has not been verified in P 659 B 513 L 930 for the Jansenist doctrine of grace, and many quotations in the letters and the writings on grace.

[38] *La foi selon Pascal*, 2 vols. (1949).

[39] *Ibid.*, 153f.

[40] P 478–479 B 281–282 L 155, 110.

[41] The verse of the psalm continually cited by Augustine (Ps 118 (119).36); *cf.* P 470 B 252 L 821; P 835 B 284 L 380; P 840 B 287 n. 2 L 382. [Incline my heart.]

[42] *Cf.* P 600 B 737 L 793; *cf. Vie de Pascal* by Gilberte Périer, 14. [An upright heart.]

[43] P 481 B 278 L 424. [God perceived by the heart.]

dialogic and existential.[44] The anti-Pelagian incapacity to attain to grace and love of oneself controls the structure of all that follows; it demands the radical reduction of ethics—personal ethics just as much as social and political ethics—to the two principles of *caritas* and *cupiditas*. Personal history and the history of the world is divided into the two cities: the city of God and the earthly city (*civitas Dei*, *civitas terrena*). The origin of this (anti-Manichaean) dualism must be explained in terms of the original fall of the human heart from God and of its incapacity to remove from below the difference in levels between the heavenly kingdom and the earthly kingdom. But because the earthly kingdom is only to be built up out of the elements of God's good creation (which elements carry from their creation his image and likeness), the *civitas terrena* must also be an image and likeness of the kingdom of Heaven, but outside it—that is, outside *caritas*. The relationship of the kingdom of God to the kingdom of the world can be determined only dialectically from the two elements: estrangement (fall) and image/likeness. Therefore the genuine dramatics of existence, its historicality, lie much less in the historical, horizontal sequence of the ages than in the vertical distention of the 'conditions' (*katastaseis*, as Origen and his school would say) of the heart between pristine state, the state of sin and redemption and the final state.

Thus one of the master keys for any understanding of Pascal, is the Augustinian *civitas dei* (not its Jansenist oversimplification, but an idea purely Augustinian in its structure), taken with the doctrine of the two states in the *Enarrationes*, which are cited so centrally in the *Pensées*.[45] Not even the position of Israel between pagans and Christians can change anything essential in the dualism of figure and reality. Israel is prominent only in so far as it is a divinely appointed figure of Christ, and in that the dialectic is only intensified, reflecting the reality more exactly, but just for that reason more clearly revealing the lack (of grace and love). And because Israel is the divinely determined figure and foreshadowing of Christ, the New Covenant is already hidden among the pictures of the Old Covenant: the *civitas Dei* has existed on earth since the time of Abel, and Pascal proves in an exactly similar way the *perpétuité* of the true religion of love,[46] and so the Jewish dialectic between the image and the truth of love becomes for him an essential piece of the apology. The strange thing is that there can be a *figure de liberté* without true freedom,[47] a state of affairs on the whole achieved by the earthly state. The analyses of secular ethics, which in the social realm appear to border on Machiavellianism—where the power of justice cannot be enforced, then at least the justice of power should hold sway!—do not go ideologically beyond Augustine. But in the dialectic of the *katastaseis* there is found something that with Augustine, as with Pascal, can be called the 'method of immanence': the analysis of human existence in its concrete historicality as the place, or at any rate the starting point, of a theology of revelation. Man's not being in himself (as *divertissement* and *cor inquietum*), the way the mind has fallen under the powers of deception, of the senses, of imagination, of custom, and of all earthly vanities—all this is good Augustinianism. But it is also the relativisation of philosophy by the higher criterion of truth found in the illumination of grace; no thought and no ascetic-mystical practice can offer a way of redemption. Augustine, like Pascal, emphasises the vicious circle between gnosis, pride (*superbia*) and the darkening of the mind. Truth is—again a phrase from the Psalms—*adhaerere Deo* (cleaving to God), which is the beauty, ever ancient and ever new.[48] The schema, truth-image, reveals itself finally, according to Augustine, as the formula for the relationship between God and the creature, between absolute being and never-absolute becoming, which latter is continually held to be, as compared with God, merely unreality and untruth—an oriental and Platonic comparison. The young Augustine had passed through what Pascal calls Pyrrhonism, something which deeply influences both systems. If Augustine the philosopher saves himself from universal doubt by means of his theory of intuition and illumination, there remains Augustine the existential theologian of, say, the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, tuned to that pitch which echoes purely in one of Pascal's fragments: 'Everything here below is partly true, partly false. Essential truth is not at home here for it is wholly pure and wholly true. Such mixture dishonours it and reduces it to nothing. Nothing is purely true, and so nothing is true in the sense of pure truth.'[49] Both Augustine and Pascal see the abyss that the analogy of being opens up between the qualities of eternal and of creaturely truth. And for Pascal, whose image of God is intended consciously to bear purely biblical traits and not those of the 'God of the philosophers', the Augustinian doctrine of illumination is forbidden at the levels of nature and philosophy as a bridging operation. For him, who derives his philosophical descent not from Plato and Plotinus but from Epictetus and Montaigne, the bridge over the gulf of the analogy of truth can only be built by the supernatural grace of the free, electing and reprobating God. While Descartes continues and establishes anew the line of the Augustinianism of Illumination and the Ideas, Pascal (in this closer to the Reformers) finds his point of departure in the Augustine of free grace and *caritas*, and

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[44] P 602 B 556 L 449: 'The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of the Christians is a God of love and consolation; he is a God who fills the soul and heart of those whom he possesses; he is a God who makes them inwardly aware of their wretchedness and his infinite mercy, who unites himself with them in the depths of their soul, who fills them with humility, joy, confidence and love, who makes them incapable of having any other end but him.' P 102 B 536 L 99: 'Man carries on an inner dialogue with himself which it is important to keep under proper control. *Corrumpunt mores bonos colloquia prava*. [Evil communications corrupt good manners—1 Cor 15.33]. We must keep silence as far as we can and only talk to ourselves about God, whom we know to be true, and thus convince ourselves that he is.'

[45] *Cf.* n. 38. T. Spörri, *Der verborgene Pascal* (1955), has (147) referred to the significance of the *Civitas Dei*.

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[46] P 771–777 B 613–614, 616–617, 646, 851–852 L 280–282, 390, 573, 859, 903.

[47] P 569 B 683 L 268.

[48] '*Elle implore de sa miséricorde les moyens d'arriver à lui, de s'attacher à lui, d'y adhérer éternellement. Toute occupée de cette beauté si ancienne et si nouvelle pour elle.*

. . .': *Sur la conversion du pécheur*, 552. [She begs of his mercy the means by which to reach him, to be joined to him, to cleave there eternally. Completely absorbed in this beauty, so ancient and so new for her. . . .]

[49] P 228 B 385 L 905. *Cf.* too the passage crossed out by Pascal in P 438 B 434 L 131: 'Who will unravel such a tangle? This is certainly beyond dogmatism and scepticism, beyond all human philosophy. Man transcends man. Let us then concede to the sceptics what they have so often proclaimed, that truth lies beyond our scope and is an unattainable quarry, that it is no earthly denizen, but at home in Heaven, lying in the lap of God, to be known only in so far as it pleases him to reveal it. Let us learn our true nature from the uncreated and incarnate truth.'

therefore continues in the Augustinianism of the Hiddenness of God and the Night of the Heart, in which only the light of the Cross of Christ still shines.[50] But while here the divergence between Augustine and Pascal begins to open up, the consequences of which for theological aesthetics will be shown to be of great importance, the two are still close to one another in the realm of aesthetics in the narrower sense, for the beautiful is something that is found for the young Augustine wholly in the pattern and play of numbers, and indeed in a doctrine of an ordered system of numbers rising from matter to the soul; something that is, of course, found again as the foundation of any doctrine of the beautiful in the Pascal of geometry and scientific experiments, certainly without any conscious dependence on Augustine, but strikingly parallel to him and to the whole Pythagorean tradition. And for both the completed pattern of a Christian aesthetic must oscillate between the poles of the beauty of number and the beauty of grace as this is illuminated by the God who elects and rejects in a way beyond our understanding.

2. THE FIGURE IN THE INFINITE

In noticing the themes—a return to the sources, a graduated vision, an Augustinianism of figure (as creaturely and sinful form)—we have simply gathered the elements and have not attempted to put them together to form a structured world. If we are to perceive Pascal's unique achievement, we must consider again his position in intellectual history. He finds himself caught between modern science, rapidly and powerfully developing, and the thinking of the Reformers and the Jansenists, which is entirely governed by faith. What is missing from both poles is the unifying centrepiece of the philosophy of being. Pascal, schooled in his father's hostility to Scholasticism, falls irretrievably into the harsh dualism so characteristic of the future: the dualism between exact science and supernatural piety. In the interests of purity of method, both seem to demand the renunciation of philosophy. What might in spite of that bring them together is something handed down from the time of the troubadours and from Dante and taken up again by the humanists: the ancient ideal of the *cor gentile*, nobleness of the heart, of *cortesia*, of the *honnête homme*.[51] It is the period when the last great wave of Platonism has ebbed away and a new Stoic humanism holds sway, a humanism promoted by Justus Lipsius and du Vair, popularised though not approved of by Montaigne, and taken up by the great dramatists of France as well as by the theatre of the Jesuits.[52] 'Reticence, proportion, poise, *savoir faire* and *savoir vivre*, all that in unity and in accordance with law, restrained passion without emphasis, ordered according to the heroic, but the heroic only thinkable when it is revealed in the beautiful . . .: that is the aesthetic discipline that lies as the roots of the age. Ethics and aesthetics seek for once to be in complete agreement, even if they can never entirely succeed.'[53] This 'Stoic' anthropology, which for Pascal occupies the central position where earlier philosophy had held sway, he develops within the range of expression that is characterised by the opposite yet united poles of Epictetus and Montaigne. In conversation with M. de Saci he ingeniously characterises these extremes as dogmatism and scepticism, and also as anthropological optimism and pessimism, and they are for him as it were the nursery of Christian existence. It is a picture of man, contemplated with Christian eyes and filled from afar with Christian substance, which in its way contains within itself much latent philosophy; which through its ethical-aesthetic form, through its splendour and its worth, is the place from which Pascal forces into an astonishing unity a world that, under the force of dualism, is disintegrating into the here and the hereafter. It is a form made visible in man of a latent, lived philosophy, which allows Pascal in the structure of the *Pensées* to dispense with the metaphysical proofs of the existence of God in a quite offhand manner, so that almost playfully it is left open whether they are valid in themselves or not; it is enough that they lack the existential power of attraction[54] that Pascal requires of them. His aim is not to lead his reader from an abstract finitude to the absolute, but from an exact understanding of man's situation and condition to the living God: *anthropologia ancilla theologiae christianae.*

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[50] E. Przywara, *Augustinus, Die Gestalt als Gefüge* (1934), Introduction, 42–53. [Reprinted (the introduction only) as *Augustinisch: Ur-haltung des Geistes* (1970), 45–49.]

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[51] M. Magendie, *La Politesse mondaine et les théories de l'honnêteté en France au 17e siècle de 1600 à 1660* (Paris, 1925).

[52] Still fundamental: Léontine Zanta, *La renaissance du Stoïcisme au 16e siècle* (1914).

[53] Carl J. Burckhardt, 'Der Honnête Homme', in *Gestalten und Mächte* (1941), 80.

All this helps to explain whence, despite the disappearance of philosophy, a concept of sufficient metaphysical power could develop that could embrace the disintegrating parts of human existence and bind them into unity. The form that must be seen and which Pascal seeks to make visible is at its core man himself, who from his transitory position at the centre can look down and espy the scientific form, but who can also, looking up in faith, transcend himself and attain to the form—of the God-man—that makes him comprehensible to himself for the first time in his impossible middle position and therefore raises him up so that he can catch sight of himself. Therefore all orders have, in their basic form, a measure, and with it a certain finitude, to destroy which would be lacking in objectivity and, in consequence, unscientific, even though it were done in the name of 'the spirit of pure science': '*Ecrire contre ceux qui approfondissent trop les sciences,*' (as Descartes wrote).[55] Any tendency in searching out the origins of things to lose sight of or to dissolve the form arouses Pascal's deep suspicion: '[Man is] a middle point between all and nothing, infinitely remote from an understanding of the extremes . . . equally incapable of seeing the nothingness from which he emerges and the infinity in which he is engulfed. What else can he do, then, but perceive some semblance of the middle of things ... ?'[56] And so the method of proof cannot run in a straight line, but is essentially circular: 'For what we are trying to prove always seems obscure, and what we use for the proof seems clear; for when we put forward something to be proved, we first imagine that it must therefore be obscure, whereas the thing that is to prove it is clear. . . .'[57] What more contradictory of Descartes could be said!

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[54] P 5–6 B 543, 243 L 190, 463; P 366 B 242 L 781; P 728 B 549 L 191; P 730 B 547 L 189; P 602 B 556 L 449.

[55] P 193 B 76 L 553. [Write against those who probe science too deeply.] *Cf.* P 262 B 340 L 741, where the limitations of the adding machine are pointed out: it certainly appears to have more intelligence than the beasts, but it, like the beasts, can do nothing of its own will—from which one can add that Pascal does not agree with Descartes' mechanistic theory of animals. This is more important than might be thought, for it is in the realm of animal life that it is decided whether a philosophy can conquer not only matter and intelligence but also the forms of life that are transitional between the two.

According to Pascal 'exact science', which he calls geometry,[58] cannot prove its own principles. It has to presuppose that we know naturally what space, number, movement, correspondence and time is;[59] the idea of a *mathesis universalis*, that defines all its concepts and presupposes nothing can certainly be imagined as an idea, but to put it into effect is 'absolutely impossible'.[60] Any definition of man is more obscure than what everyone knows spontaneously about him; and a definition of being is impossible, because it would presuppose its being known.[61] Exact science remains bound to the experience of the senses—*expérience*—and therefore to the testing of this experience by fresh experience—*expériment*. All rational conclusions are deduced from experience only and mediate fresh experience,[62] but thereby the inner presuppositions of experience are illuminated. In his 'Treatise on Conic Sections' by developing the projective geometry of Desargues, Pascal had derived all modifications of conic sections from the possible variations of perspective, and had equally discovered a simple and ingenious geometrical formula that corresponded to this simple, sensible, point of view. From this the sixteen-year-old Pascal had been able to derive all the properties of conic sections.[63]

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[56] P 84 B 72 L 199.

[57] P 67 B 40 L 527.

[58] In a broad sense geometry covers for Pascal that science that is distinguished within itself into arithmetic, mechanics and geometry in the narrower sense: *De l'esprit géométrique*, 583.

[59] *Ibid.*

[60] *Ibid.*, 577–578.

[61] *Ibid.*, 579. *Entretien avec M. de Saci*, 566.

[62] *Préface pour le Traité du Vide*, 530, 535.

[63] Of this treatise there is only an extract and a table of contents preserved by

But the forms of the sections—circle, ellipse, parabola, hyperbola—are developed in a basically infinite and therefore formless space. This space is characterised by an unlimited divisibility (into the infinitely small) and a corresponding extensibility (to the infinitely big). This proposition appears to Pascal to be quite evident and perspicacious, although the *process* of such a division into infinity is wholly unimaginable. Any physicist who wishes ultimately to stop the process of division at some determined point, because he has reached the indivisible, the atom, shows, according to Pascal, his complete lack of the most elementary geometrical intelligence: 'For what could be more absurd than to pretend that in dividing space one will at last arrive at a division such that the two bits thus divided are indivisible and without any extension, so that the two nothings (as regards extension) together form something extended?'[64] The imaginable and intelligible figure therefore presupposes for its imaginability and intelligibility a double infinite—the infinitely small and the infinitely large—which as such cannot be experienced and are beyond understanding and yet which must be posited, because if they are not posited, what is comprehensible remains incomprehensible. In no sense are these two infinities simply subjective modes of conception, as for Kant. For Pascal they can be read off the phenomena themselves (as their objective presupposition); the cosmological antinomies are therefore not to be resolved by 'transcendental idealism'.[65]

The discovery that the finite figure has need of an infinite medium for it to exist and be understood became for Pascal the key to much else. If one takes the form as the centre, then the infinite appears to extend on two opposite sides: into the infinitely great and the infinitely small. But if one sets the form in the, so to speak, already-posited medium, then this form is a single thing in itself: there is nothing about it that is large or small, and one can put the figure in any place one likes in the medium without anything being changed. The finite is in the

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Leibniz, 60–70. On this see Jacques Chevalier, *Pascal* (1923, cited according to the edition of 1957), 49f.

[64] *De l'esprit géométrique*, 586.

[65] Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Insel 1922), 389 (In Norman Kemp Smith's trans.: *Critique of Pure Reason* (London 1933), 439).

infinite without being in any way fixed; it slides, it is fragile, indeed, unstable, it falls into the abyss. *Il n'a pas de bornes dans les choses.*[66] Here perspectives open up into a possibly infinite repeatability of the *universum* in the dimensions of space (the atom as a new solar system, et cetera);[67] why not with time too? That is the initial sense of the title, *disproportion de l'homme*, Pascal's heading for the long fragment 84, a sense that may not be simply left behind, but which must be included in all developments that seek to go further. The condition of everything finite (including therefore man) can in an exemplary manner, be read off the geometrically infinite. Between the geometrical figure and the infinite space in which the figure stands, there reigns disproportion, just as there does between the finite figure of man with its differentiation into orders and the infinities in which he stands. There is in man no necessity that he should stand in one place rather than another: 'Why have limits been set upon my knowledge, my height, my life, making it a hundred rather than a thousand years? For what reason did nature make it so, and choose this rather than that mean from the whole of infinity, when there is no more reason to choose one rather than another, as none is more attractive than another?'[68] '[I do not know] why I have been put in this place rather than that, or why the brief span of life allotted to me should be assigned to one moment rather than another of all the eternity that went before me and all that will come after me.'[69] From this follows what is fundamental: 'I feel that it is possible that I might never have existed. . . . I am therefore not a necessary being. I am not eternal or infinite either, but I can see that there is in nature a being who is necessary, eternal and infinite.'[70] The accidental penetrates every aspect of infinite form; even the most important is dependent for its life on accidental conditions.[71] Is not then the finite form itself threatened by the infinite, is it not patient of infinite division, on the brink of a destruction that would allow it no unchangeable core of its own?[72] 'Nothing can fix the finite between the two infinites that enclose and that yet evade it.'[73] If no necessary place can be assigned to the finite within the infinite, then it follows that no relationship subsists between the two, and that therefore, viewed from the absolute, 'all finites are equal'.[74]

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[66] P 229 B 380 L 540. [There are no boundaries in things.]

[67] P 84 B 72 L 199 (p. 1106 in Chevalier).

[68] P 89 B 208 L 194.

[69] P 335 B 194 L 427.

[70] P 443 B 469 L 135.

[71] P 127 B 97 L 634.

The status in being and truth of all creaturely being, and especially of man, is an indefensible middle position between the nothing and the Absolute (God): 'Such is our true state. That is what makes us incapable of certain knowledge or absolute ignorance. We are floating in a medium of vast extent, always drifting uncertainly, blown to and fro.'[75] 'Everything here is partly true, partly false. Nothing here is essentially true. . . .'[76] The status of being in the sliding middle position makes any radicalism impossible: 'It is not man's nature always to go on in one direction; it has its ups and downs . . . *itus et reditus*.'[77] Extremes turn into their opposites, lead back to the point from which they started. The wish to be extreme betrays madness; moderation (*médiocrité*) alone is good: 'It is deserting humanity to desert the middle way.'[78] No category of worth can be given absolute value and set above the others. Power, beauty, intelligence, piety—each has its own realm.[79]

The dread that Pascal lets his 'unbelievers' feel before the infinite spaces of the cosmos[80] is for him unconditioned by the geometrically infinite as such—spatial extension would never have terrified a soul such as his: 'What is there in the vacuum that could make them afraid? What could be baser and more ridiculous than such fear?'[81] The spatially infinite is for him only a pointer (which even the dim-witted can grasp) to a metaphysical status in being that makes it impossible for the finite being to come to terms with its ultimate cause, so that all its being and knowing rests on a foundation of something that it neither essentially is nor grasps.

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[72] P 305–306 B 322–333 L 104, 688.

[73] P 84 B 72 L 199 (p. 1109 in Chevalier).

[74] *Ibid.*, (p. 1110 in Chevalier).

[75] *Ibid.*, (p. 1109 in Chevalier).

[76] P 228 B 385 L 905.

[77] P 318–319 B 354–355 L 27, 771.

[78] P 323–327 B 353, 357, 359, 378–379 L 57, 518, 674, 681, 783.

[79] P 244 B 332 L 58.

[80] P 91 B 206 L 201; P 88 B 205 L 68.

[81] P 191 B 75 L 958.

Only so, in the context of the whole of Pascal's testimony, is his penchant for the sceptics' argument about dreaming to be understood. Finite reality itself, compared with the infinite, possesses the coefficient 'unreal': 'Life is a dream, but somewhat less changeable.'[82] And so the category of 'image' is again suggested: 'we perceive an image of the truth',[83] indeed the infinities of the most diverse orders that our finite being presupposes are for us as such an image and likeness of God, who in this way has imprinted upon all things the stamp of his incomprehensibility.[84] The beginning and the end of everything, even of finite beings, remains hidden.[85] So the hiddenness of God is nothing surprising to the understanding, but rather a confirmation that he is genuinely perceived.[86] Therefore, genuine knowledge of God and the world is united with a genuine ignorance. Pascal embraces alternately one and the other, dogmatism and pyrrhonism; he can say with complete seriousness: 'All their principles are true, sceptics, stoics, atheists, et cetera ... but their conclusions are false, because the contrary principles are also true.'[87] Only from this point of view does this assertion become comprehensible: 'Incomprehensible that God should exist and incomprehensible that he should not; that the soul should be joined to the body, that we should have no soul; that the world should be created, that it should not. . . .'[88] Everything comprehensible manifests itself against a background of incomprehensibility.

It would not be surprising if Pascal's experiments as a physicist, in repeating and developing Torricelli's experiment and drawing from it a wide range of conclusions, laid the foundations of hydrostatics and led to the invention of the hydraulic press; if his bitter fight against a concept of the *horror vacui* in nature—which rested on pure speculation—had its metaphysical starting point here. Not for Pascal the fear of the vacuum and of nothingness! Being has been utterly nullified, so why should not the vacuum and nothingness occur experimentally and be rendered comprehensible in the realm of beings?

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[82] P 380 B 386 L 803.

[83] P 438 B 434 L 131 (p. 1207 in Chevalier).

[84] P 84 B 72 L 199 (p. 1107 in Chevalier); *cf.* P 416 B 580 L 934.

[85] P 335 B 194 L 427 (p. 1175 in Chevalier).

[86] *Ibid.*, (pp. 1172–1173 in Chevalier).

[87] P 389 B 394 L 619.

[88] P 447 B 230 L 809.

However, the whole foregoing consideration stems from the notion that the finite is set—in a place that is never necessary—in the medium of the infinite. But what if we start with the opposite notion? What if God wished to posit finite things, and if both infinite greatness and infinite smallness should receive their meanings and realities as the mediums of these finite things only when viewed from the central positions that they occupy? And indeed greatness and smallness are meaningful only in relation to this regulating central position. Without it, infinite division would not reach nothing (the negative infinity), nor would infinite addition reach the positive infinity. And the regulating central position, as the great fragment on the disproportion of man (84 B 72 L 199) eventually concludes, is man in his incomprehensible composite unity of body and soul, man who for this reason can neither grasp the material in itself apart from the soul, nor the soul in itself apart from the material, but who combines matter and soul in an essentially intermediary being, which certainly renders their difference and their interrelatedness, but neither of them in their purity.[89] The figure that man forms is composite, made up of two elements or orders, and possesses no other instrument for measurement, either of matter or of soul, than this figure. Thus the fundamental concepts, which geometry has to accept as given without proof, are the ways in which the material world presents itself within the finite, composite figure. Only from this perspective can we posit the point, beyond any infinite division of space, as the indivisible that all divisions approach asymptotically; that is, essentially without ever being able to reach it. The indivisible point is necessarily presupposed and yet is of another order than the line, just as the line is presupposed for space and is yet of another order than space; and just as, on another level, zero is presupposed for the numbers that 'copy space, though so different by nature'.[90] This thoroughly analogous relationship, which led Pascal to the threshold of the differential and integral calculus, appears within the mathematical realm on a purely quantitative level, and in this sense he set out the nature of these mathematical hierarchies in his research into the sum of the series of powers of a number:

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[89] Ernst Wasmuth, the profound writer on Pascal in Germany, who, more than any other, has laid bare in his careful analysis the philosophical system immanent in the fragments, draws attention to an important thought, later crossed out by Pascal, at the end of the fragment, that has otherwise never been noticed. 'Instead of receiving ideas of these things [matter and spirit] in their purity, we colour them with our qualities and stamp our own composite being on all the simple things we contemplate'—so runs the sentence now. But originally Pascal had written: '. . . empreignons de notre être composé toutes les choses simples qu'il (man!) contemple. . . . C'est ainsi qu'il borne l'univers parce qu'étant borné il borne l'univers et . . .' (*Pensées*, Edition paléographique by Z. Tourneur, Vrin 1942, 244). [. . . let us stamp our composite being on all the simple things that he (man) contemplates. . . . It is thus that he limits the universe in that being limited, he limits the universe and. . . .] *Cf.* E. Wasmuth, *Die Philosophie Pascals* (1949), 87. See further his 'Abhandlung über die Lehre von den Ordnungen und von der Vernunft des Herzens', the appendix to the

> In continuous quantity, whatever quantities of a certain order are added to a quantity of a higher order, they add nothing to it. Thus points add nothing to lines, nor lines to surfaces, nor surfaces to solid figures; nor, in the case of numbers . . . are roots commensurate with squares, squares with cubes, nor cubes with the fourth power, et cetera. Thus the inferior grades do not come into consideration as being of no significance. These things are familiar to those who study indivisibles: I have mentioned them here so that in this example that close union might become apparent in which the nature desirous of unity draws into one things that seem most remote—a close union that can never be sufficiently wondered at.[91]

It is clear now what an immensely compelling image this absolute order of different grades, even in matters quantitative,

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translation of the shorter writings of Pascal (*Die Kunst zu überzeugen*, 2nd ed., 1950) and the afterword to the translation of the *Pensées* (Über die Religion, 5th ed., 1954).

[90] P 31 B 119 L 698. The analogy of equal relationships is raised in *De l'esprit géométrique*, 590.

[91] *Potestatum numericarum summa*, 171.

presents for philosophical consideration—since every being in each possible summation remains for ever 'as nothing' over against being itself—and hardly less for theological consideration—since everything natural, even the greatest achievement of the created mind, remains 'as nothing' over against the being of grace, for neither 'carnal nor intellectual greatness . . . has any relevance' to the kingdom of the saints, 'for it neither adds nor takes away anything.'[92]

But for the moment the point he wishes to make is that the subdivisions within the quantitative order occur only because of the qualitative otherness of the finite, regulating figure that engenders the 'two infinities' in their opposition through its own being and which at the same time, by virtue of its own division into spirit and matter, soul and body, makes something like a figure possible at all, a figure that itself presupposes the '(bad) infinities' of its own medium. In the quantitative 'in between' (between zero and infinity) man should, in Pascal's opinion, 'come to know himself . . . and learn to assess himself according to his proper value and entertain considerations that are more valuable than all the rest of geometry.'[93] This 'is the finest craft in the world, but in the end it is only a craft. And I have often said that it is a good way of testing our power but not of putting it to effect.'[94]

In the foregoing line of thought the finite figure appears set in an already existing, infinite (material) medium, and there the 'dread' before 'the eternal silence of these infinite spaces' finds its place. But it was the dread of the atheist—today we would say of the evolutionary materialist, for whom the form of the universe has emerged from formless matter—whom Pascal undertook to convert. Although Pascal, like a great dramatist, draws this opponent and partner in the conversation from out of his own soul ('It is not in Montaigne but in myself that I find everything I see there'),[95] and one can therefore call Pascal the first 'dramatic theologian',[96] yet this dread is only a feeble echo of a quite other dread, which comes not from looking up but down and is derived from the fact of the *distance* of spirit from all orders of lower nature. The world is not as such a 'strange' place for man, but only for those men who bring to it a sense of strangeness from themselves, who have lost their sense of being at home and having a home. The decisive fragment '*Infini-rien*' (wrongly called 'The Wager') situates man between the infinite (where he is truly at home) and nothingness, which as such yawns before him only because he has lost the true infinite. The qualitative distance (between spirit and body) is the point of departure for the recognition of all quantitative distance, and the lack of relationship between the lower and the higher quantitative orders (between point and line, or between zero and number, et cetera) is only the strange echo of a quite different lack of relationship that there is at the qualitative level. But is the distance between the orders so great that no ascent from the lower to the higher is possible, but only a jump? The question about the measure of the distance tormented Pascal.[97] And yet it was a problem he had to make his own, a problem especially for him. He, the Augustinian theologian, who knew in his heart that any intensification of a lower order could not produce the least effect on a higher order, he who had originally discovered this *theologumenon* in the realm of geometry—it fell to him to establish the relationship between such separated orders and to discover ways of calculating them.

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[92] P 829 B 793 L 308.

[93] *De l'esprit géométrique*, 591.

[94] Letter to Fermat, 522.

[95] P 79 B 64 L 689.

[96] Mesnard, *Pascal, L'homme et l'oeuvre* (1951), 156.

The solution can only be found from a point of view that looks from above downward. For in fact the line presupposes the point; the number, zero; space, the surface: the approximation unobtainable from below has already been taken for granted from above. So the intellectual order includes in itself the carnal order, and the order of charity includes both. By being thus sustained and presupposed, the order that is embraced becomes a figure of the higher. The figuring is therefore not simply a matter of a lower order closed in itself in a horizontal extension; it contains in itself at the same time a vertical relation, which admittedly cannot be discerned from below, but only from above.

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[97] 'I cannot judge a work while doing it. I must do as painters do and stand back, but not too far. How far then? Guess . . .' P 28 B 114 L 558. That this point is not to be found in the existential is stated by another fragment: 'If we are too young our judgment is impaired, just as it is if we are too old. . . . If we look at our work immediately after completing it, we are still too involved; if too long afterwards, we cannot pick up the thread again. It is like looking at pictures that are too near or too far away. There is just one indivisible point that is the right place. Others are too near, too far, too high or too low. In painting the rules of perspective decide it, but how will it be decided when it comes to truth and morality?' P 85 B 381 L 21.

An early letter of Pascal's to his two sisters develops in a completely Augustinian way the idea that God had given to the children within the family both the figure and the reality of the spiritual family, of God's covenant in Christ, 'for, as we have often said amongst ourselves, corporeal things are only an image of spiritual things, and God has represented the invisible things in the visible. This idea is so general and so useful that no significant period of time ought to be allowed to pass without our thinking of it attentively. We discussed in great detail the relationship between these two sorts of things . . . , a relationship too *beautiful* for it not to remain in your memory, and what is more, it is absolutely necessary that it should, in my opinion.' And now Pascal spells out that the fall has transposed man from the order of truth into that of images, and that 'it is necessary that we should make use of the place into which we have fallen, in order to raise ourselves from our fall.' God in his goodness 'has always left for us to contemplate an image of the goods that we have lost'; we are 'like criminals in a prison full of pictures of their redeemer and the instructions that have to be followed if they are to escape their servitude, but it has to be confessed that these holy signs cannot be perceived without a supernatural light'.[98]

This theological aesthetic rests therefore completely on a relationship that is established from above. *Rapport* and *proportion*, *mesure* and *correspondance* are the key concepts. Relationship (*rapport*) between our nature and the thing that pleases it establishes 'a certain model of delight and beauty. . . . Everything that conforms to this model delights us, be it a house, a song, a speech, verse, prose, a woman, a bird, rivers, trees, rooms, clothes, et cetera'; the model is unique; failures to measure up to it can, however, be infinite.[99] On the knowledge of this relationship rests the art of rhetoric, so highly prized by Pascal (as it was in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Baroque period), the nature of which was aptly caught by Gilberte in her biography of her brother: 'He conceived this art to consist in certain proportions between the mind and the heart of those to whom one is speaking, and the thoughts and expressions that one uses, whereby, however, the proportions could only be properly attuned one to another by the creative turn that one gave them [*par le tour qu'on y donne*].'[100] Similarly, again as Gilberte tells us, the rational proofs of the existence of God, in contrast to those of the Holy Scriptures, did not seem to her brother to be 'sufficiently proportioned to the man's heart'.[101] This aesthetic proportion plays a role that penetrates right into the analysis of faith;[102] it clarifies also the possibility that there can be for Pascal, completely on the margin, on the basis of genius in being able to discern relationships, something like a *fides naturalis* without any supernatural illumination.[103] It is moreover the motto of the '*honnête homme*' who strives to find the right relation, attainable in this world, between the harmonious 'whole man' and the whole spiritual world.[104] Proportion even becomes the soul of the 'argument of the wager' and thus removes the accidental character of the fictitious presupposition that God's existence is unprovable and that one must therefore opt either from him or against him: 'The proportion between the uncertainty of winning and the certainty of what is being risked is in proportion to the chances of winning or losing.'[105] This sentence, torn from its context and thus here not completely comprehensible, is intended to show simply how for Pascal, who had also discovered how to measure probability, the concept of proportion sets, as it were, from above the realm of the 'accidental' into the framework of that which is regulated by law, as indeed he proudly points out against the Paris Academy: *Sic matheseos demonstrationes cum aleae incertitudine jungendo . . . stupendum hunc titulum jure sibi arrogat: aleae geometria.*[106]

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[98] Letter to Gilberte and Jacqueline (1. iv. 1648), 484.

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[99] P 37 B 32 L 585.

[100] Mme Périer, *Vie de M. Pascal*, 14–15.

[101] *Ibid.*, 16.

[102] J. Russier, *op. cit.*, 164.

[103] *Ibid.*, 200–202.

[104] P 40–44 B 35–37, 14 L 195, 605, 647, 652.

[105] P 451 B 233 L 418 (p. 1215 in Chevalier).

It remains however a proportion that is established from above and that thus provides no insight into vertical symmetry but only into horizontal symmetry.[107] From a vertical perspective man can only survey what lies beneath him, what he has either naturally or spiritually fashioned. In his relation with God he can fashion nothing—rather is he fashioned—and therefore he understands his relationship to God only in the measure that he understands the grace of his own fashioning, in faith and love.

This explains the searching conversation at the beginning of the fragment 'Infinity-nothing' between the Christian and the atheist.[108] It is given here, reduced to its essentials.

Atheist: Our soul is cast into the body where it finds number, time, extension; it reasons about these things and calls them natural, or necessary, and can believe nothing else.

Christian: Unity added to infinity does not increase it at all, . . . the finite is annihilated in the presence of the infinite and becomes pure nothingness. So it is with our mind before God, with our justice before divine justice. There is not so great a disproportion between our justice and God's as between unity and infinity. [The quantitative gap is a likeness of the qualitative gap between God and the world, and yet, according to the Christian, this gap allows a certain relationship, *aliqua proportionalitas.*]

Atheist: God's justice must be as unproportioned as his mercy. Now his justice toward the damned is less vast and ought to be less startling to us than his mercy toward the elect. [The atheist wants to destroy even the appearance of a proportion between God and man; if there is such a slight relationship between merciful love and sin, then it will be equally slight at the level of justice.]

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[106] *Celeberrimae Matheseos Academiae Parisiensi*, 74. [Thus by joining mathematical demonstrations to the uncertainty of the die . . . he justly arrogates to himself this stupendous title: the geometry of the die.]

[107] P 50 B 28 L 580.

[108] It is only comprehensible if the parts of the dialogue are correctly distributed. Decisive for an understanding here is Jean Levillain, 'Exégèse du Fragment sur le Pari', in *Ecrits sur Pascal* (1959), 125–154.

Christian: We know that the infinite exists without knowing its nature. [Thus we know that there is an infinite number, but because it can be neither odd nor even, something that every (finite) number must be, we do not know its nature.] Similarly, we may well know that God exists without knowing what he is. [This is the old patristic distinction between the 'that' and the 'what', supported with an arithmetic simile.] Is there no substantial truth, seeing that there are so many true things that are not truth itself? [The Christian extends the conclusion from the being of the world to the unknown being of God by means of the Augustinian-Thomistic *argumentum ex gradibus*, moving from truth by participation to essential truth.]

Atheist: We know the existence and nature of the finite because we too are finite and extended in space. We know the existence of the (quantitatively) infinite without knowing its nature, because it too has extension but unlike us no limits. But we do not know either the existence or the nature of God, because he has neither extension nor limits. [The atheist calls into question the analogy between proportion (over the gap) in the mathematical and the proportion (over the gap) in the metaphysical. There is missing any common medium between the magnitudes, which the *analogia entis* only presupposes but does not prove. Thus we remain within the confines of the world.]

Christian: But by faith we know his existence, through glory we shall know his nature. . . . [This retreat to theology dispenses with any rational proof of the existence of God.]

Atheist: Let us for the time being continue to talk in terms of natural reason. If there is a God, he is infinitely beyond our comprehension, since, being indivisible and without limits, he bears no relation [*rapport*] to us. We are therefore incapable of knowing either what he is or whether he is. That being so, who would dare to attempt an answer to the question? Certainly not we, who bear no relation [*aucun rapport*] to him.

Christian: Who will then condemn Christians for being unable to give rational grounds for their belief . . . ? They declare that it is folly in expounding it to the world, and then you complain that they do not prove it. . . . It is by being without proof that they show that they are not without sense. [The Christian has now abandoned the metaphysical proofs and has retreated to the good sense of faith, which would be senseless if it allowed itself to be enforced by reason.]

Atheist: Yes, but although that excuses those who offer their religion as such, . . . it does not excuse those who accept it.[109]

Now the Christian offers a justification of faith by means of the proof that choice and decision are demanded by existence itself and that (this is explained by a parallel drawn from the calculation of probabilities, which, however, as a geometrical method is not itself probable but certain) only the decision for God can be regarded as rational.

In the prelude to the new existential argument that the Christian brings forward, he is pressed hard by the atheist. The atheist refuses to accept his metaphysical proof of God's existence, because between God and man there is no common medium of 'extension'; that is, no common concept including both. Nor will the argument from degrees of being work. In his retreat to faith, the Christian's 'folly' is readily conceded, but that everyone has to succumb to such folly is disputed. The negative aspect of the mathematical analogy is admitted: that one, added to infinity, does not add anything to infinity. But the positive aspect is rejected and with it the whole traditional patristic and Scholastic idea of an 'ascent to God' and of a negative theology understood as ecstasy is rejected as well. If we include also the subsequent attempted proof from the analogy of the game of chance we can say that Pascal, who here appears to espouse a reformed, fideist theology, remains nevertheless faithful to his geometrical analogy, inasmuch as such a theology presupposes that the higher orders can in no way be derived from the lower (not the line from the point, nor infinity from the unit), but that on the contrary the lower orders are included in the higher and determined thence. Man cannot understand God, but through God he can understand himself—but not, precisely, by means of the 'God of the philosophers' and the *analogia entis*, but through the free, living God of inconceivable grace, as he has been manifest in the Cross of Jesus Christ. It is really by contrast with Descartes's *cogito* that Baader's *cogitor (diligor) ergo sum* is made distinct. If this is posited as an a priori, then Pascal will permit any thought process within this presupposition: he has amply undertaken such himself in the apology. Philosophy as a function of a personal relationship to God, at most as an existential training in such a relationship through demonstration of the gaping disproportion that cannot right itself—that is the post-Reformation situation that Pascal embodies.

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[109] P 451 B 233 L 418.

3. PROPORTION OF THE DISPROPORTIONS

'*Disproportion de l'homme*' is the heading of the already much-quoted fragment. Pascal had at first written '*incapacité*', but he wanted to emphasise the objective lack of harmony more than any subjective inability. The philosophical anthropology that the piece develops and which is developed in many other fragments to the same purpose is unfolded in two stages: first as an inventory of facts, without any metaphysical or theological elaboration, and second as the grounding of the state of being that had been shown to exist: *raison des effets*. The presupposition of both steps is that it is possible to read man as a form. The result of the first part is that this form cannot be grasped simply by the analysis of being, for what emerges is formlessness, contradiction (*contrariété*), monstrosity. So the second part must raise the question: from what perspective must man be seen so that the deformed is integrated into a true form, the disproportion into a true proportion? This second part will in turn also be accomplished in two stages: first, the cause of the disproportion has to be indicated, but that is not enough; the cause of the transcending of the disproportion must be shown, which is something quite other. The first part ends in the blindness of dialectic. But Pascal does not deduce from this the blindness of faith, for it is a fundamental demand of reason that it should be able to see. The understanding of faith (*intellectus fidei*), that he works toward, is true vision in true blindness.

A wonderful fragment expresses this aesthetically: 'We think playing upon man is like playing upon an ordinary organ. He is indeed an organ, but strange, shifting and changeable, with keys that do not follow the scales. Those who only know how to play an ordinary organ would never be in tune on this one. You have to know where the keys are.'[110] There is then a certain knowledge, and consequently a harmony that can be produced by playing that appears unmethodical but is in reality superlatively methodical. Similarly, on the higher historical levels the same image as before repeats itself: as the geometrical figure presupposes unimaginable infinity as a medium, so the true image of God in man, which will be called Jesus Christ, becomes delineated against the background of the imagelessness, the lack of harmony and the absurdity of existence.

We need not trace the development of the disproportions here, for they are lodged in the memory of even the casual reader of the *Pensées*. They form—whatever Pascal's conception of the complete structure of the work—the first part, to the

[110] P 172 B 111 L 55.

working out of which Pascal gave most detailed attention.[111]

Man cannot place himself—not only because, like all finite beings, he is suspended at the level of being within the infinite,

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[111] So much so that L. P. Couchou (1948) has attempted to isolate this anthropological part and stamp it Pascal's main concern: originally he had intended to make it alone the content of his apology and put it forward as a 'Discours sur la condition de l'homme'; only the objections of one of his theological friends had moved him to add the second, biblical and historical, part. This unprovable thesis would certainly destroy the decisive articulation of the structure of the whole which we have sought to prove, and would stamp Pascal not only as the father of the 'method of immanence'—as something he thoroughly approved—but of a 'system of immanence' of a Schleiermacherian colouring.

The exact plan of the apology cannot be reconstructed. It does not seem that Pascal, who had a clear *idea* of the work before his mind, worked out this plan in detail. Recent philologically orientated research into Pascal has certainly established that Pascal had himself classified almost half of his fragments into twenty-seven sections with headings (something that has been long known) and that we have the original transcript, which follows this order unchanged (see the preface to the *Edition de Port Royal* by Etienne Périer [1670], p. 1468), in MS Bibl. Nat. 9203 (something only known for certain since Louis Lafuma's research). But this first disposition of the material took place in all probability with a view to the lecture that Pascal gave at Port Royal in 1658 to communicate a first outline and idea of the work; it had necessarily therefore a quite limited aim and leaves the greater number of fragments unordered. One can try, as Lafuma did in his first edition (Delmas 1947), to distribute the unclassified fragments over the twenty-seven classified groups or, because this is not satisfactory, simply reproduce the 'first copy', with the classified and then the unclassified fragments (as in the *Collection Astrée*, no. 19, 1958). One can also try, as did, most ingeniously, Jean Mesnard (*Pascal, l'homme et l'oeuvre*, 1951), to demonstrate 'a cunning interweaving of themes, a subtle, almost musical mode of composition' (p. 139 ET p. 148) in Pascal's classification, something which cannot however be done without much supporting elaboration.

There remains, therefore, the older method, represented today most credibly in Chevalier's edition, still the best despite everything: by various converging ways to approach a never completely simple basic plan (1) through the inner criteria contained in the fragments themselves, which allow one to recognize in their cross-references the main lines of the thought; (2) through Pascal's provisional classification; (3) through the detailed plan of the whole work, as it is explained by Filleau de la Chaise, one of those who heard Pascal's lecture in Port Royal, though not without examining the remaining fragments of 1672 (*Discours sur les Pensées de Pascal*, ed. Chevalier, 1474–1501). The inner logic, as well as the external witnesses, clearly show that the proof moves from the disproportion of man to the express posing of the religious but also because, at the epistemological level, he hovers as a spirit in a void that he cannot understand, and therefore is unable to root his (real) knowledge in the Absolute. 'I see too much to deny and not enough to affirm.'[112] So self-knowledge is required,[113] and yet concretely self-knowledge is rejected as something vain and impossible.[114] If man were to know himself, he would need to know the world, but that is impossible, for 'how could a part possibly know the whole?'[115] Besides, such knowledge would distract one from what one sought to know. Through knowledge of the world one cannot attain self-knowledge.[116] Man is as body one with the world, and as spirit he is the other; yet he is both at the same time and this, at the level of being, puts him out of relation with regard to things: *Concevons donc que ce mélange d'esprit et de boue nous disproportionne*.[117] 'Limited in every respect, we find this intermediate state between two extremes reflected in all our faculties.'[118] In *all* our faculties, not only in our less-than-spiritual faculties and attitudes, as Augustine and the more Platonist fathers pointed out—in the outer senses that deceive us, in the imagination that makes a fool of us, in 'opinion', the *opinio* of 'convention', or 'illusion', that rules the private and public lives of men and their social intercourse—but also in the spirit that remains for the most part enclosed in a 'circle' of 'opinions'.[119] Pascal frequently makes reference here to the dialectic between 'healthy popular opinion', enlightened criticism and the insight that, transcending the criticism, perceives the deeper truth of popular opinion, which is certainly

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problem, and, after eliminating the other attempts at religion, to the historical proof of the truth of the biblical religion. The beginning (man's situation) and the end (the religion of Jesus Christ) are laid down with absolute clarity, while the middle cannot be reconstructed with complete plausibility; even for Chevalier it exhibits certain obscurities and discrepancies.

[112] P 414 B 229 L 429.

[113] P 81 B 66 L 72; P 210 B 146 L 620.

[114] P 76 B 62 L 780.

[115] P 84 B 72 L 199 (p. 1110 in Chevalier).

[116] P 80 B 144 L 687.

[117] Deleted sentence in P 84 B 72 L 199 (n. on p. 1111 in Chevalier).

[118] *Ibid.*, (p. 1108 in Chevalier).

[119] P 26 B 6 L 814.

open to objection: 'There is certainly some truth in these opinions, but not as people imagine [*se figurent*].'[120] In practice it applies above all to the social order of representation and of law, which can nowhere be realised in its pure form, which expresses itself in power and is figured by it, in such a way that one cannot simply say that naked power can replace an illusory, unavailable law.[121] Pascal expects—say, in his 'Three Discourses to a Prince'—that one who possesses power should array himself in the mere imaginary (even illusory) display of the social order and then affirm this as the true human condition.[122]

Here it is again characteristic of Pascal that all this does not lead to scepticism but to a truth, everywhere pointed to but never grasped. This is expressed for religion as follows: 'Men could not possibly have imagined so many false religions unless there were a true one.'[123] 'We have an incapacity for proving anything that no amount of dogmatism can overcome. We have an idea of truth that no amount of scepticism can overcome.'[124] So the Platonic idea of images and copies appears again; from Montaigne Pascal takes over a quotation from Cicero: *veri juris germanaeque justitiae solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus; umbra et imaginibus utimur* (*De Offic.* 3.17).[125] And yet it is not Platonism, for the images are not illuminated by any natural light whether from above or below. Pascal envisages no *anamnesis* of the heavenly truth. Rather, everything is concentrated on demonstrating the coexistence of the opposites of *grandeur* and *misère*, toward which already the dialectic in the conversation with M. de Saci had been directed—to the never-ceasing change of one into the other, the exhibition of the one by means of the other, the mutual reflection of the one in the other: 'Man's greatest humiliation is the quest for glory, but it is just this that most clearly shows his excellence.'[126] 'If he exalts himself, I humble him. If he humbles himself, I exalt him. And I go on contradicting him, until he understands that he is a monster that passes all understanding.'[127] If Pascal calls man *monstre*,[128] *chimère*, *chaos*, *prodige*, *contradiction*,[129] he does so not to emphasise man's dreadfulness or depravity but the indecipherability as a whole of his figure. Every feature is brought into prominence by its opposite, but also held in check, both fostered and threatened.

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[120] P 310 B 335 L 92; *cf.* P 287, 295–297, 307–312 B 313, 320, 324–325, 327–328, 330, 335–337 L 26, 83, 90–94, 101, 525, 977.

[121] P 104 B 82 L 44; P 238 B 299 L 81.

[122] *Trois discours sur la condition des grands* (c. 1660), 615–621.

[123] P 825 B 817 L 734.

[124] P 273 B 395 L 406.

[125] P 235 B 297 L 86. [We possess no solid and express image of true law and authentic justice; we are shadows and images.]

[126] P 276 B 404 L 470.

If one asks about the 'reasons for these effects', then the sole solution offered, which is constantly and exclusively invoked, is the doctrine of original sin, or, more exactly, the patristic doctrine of *katastasis*, radically understood. Man is not in his rightful situation; he is, at the level of being, in a situation of self-estrangement. Here, in this vertical relationship between the higher being that he is by right and the lower being that he has now unnaturally assumed, can be found a first line of approach to the deciphering of his form. 'Man's greatness is so *obvious* that it can even be deduced from his wretchedness, for what is nature in animals we call wretchedness in man. . . . He must have fallen from some better state that was once his own. Who indeed would think himself unhappy not to be a king except one who had been dispossessed?'[130] 'Man's dualism is so *obvious* that some people have thought we had two souls.'[131] That we should find the word 'obvious' throughout this discussion is notable. Here lies 'the knot of our condition':[132] in this '*double capacité*', these '*deux états*', these '*deux natures*'.[133] The often-quoted '*l'homme passe infiniment l'homme*'[134] is nothing else than the expression of the normal teaching of the early fathers that man transcends the human in his participation by grace in God in his primordial state, in redemption and in glorification, and that only in this transcendence can he be understood. In this way a proverb like '*se moquer de la philosophie, c'est vraiment philosopher*'[135] is taken to refer to the transcendence of the true (theological) philosophy over the passing endeavours of immanent philosophy; and this also renders intelligible the statement that the whole of human ethics and politics is but a '*fausse imitation*' of true love,[136] a construction from the *débris* of the original wholeness, '*mais quelle différence, que de vides, que de disproportions! Ce n'est qu'une misérable copie de ce divin original*'.[137] But it is still a sign of human greatness that, outside love, man has achieved '*un tableau de la charité*'.[138]

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[127] P 330 B 420 L 130.

[128] *Ibid.*; P 144 B 406 L 477; P 438 B 434 L 131.

[129] P 438 B 434 L 131 (p. 1206 in Chevalier).

[130] P 268 B 409 L 117.

[131] P 315 B 417 L 629.

[132] P 438 B 434 L 131.

[133] P 482 B 430 L 149.

[134] P 438 B 434 L 131 (and the different, deleted versions: pp. 1206–1207 in Chevalier).

It is only in this context that we can understand the saying about the '*moi haïssable*',[139] which Pascal frequently and carefully explains. Man must unconditionally hate his estrangement from God and from himself,[140] for what he is then hating is his lack of love, his abysmal egoism, which is ultimately hatred. On the other hand, man, who has a double nature, should both love and hate himself: 'Let him love himself, for there is within him a nature capable of good. . . . Let him despise himself because this capacity remains unfulfilled; but that is no reason for him to despise this natural capacity. Let him both hate and love himself.'[141] What is important is that he should 'hate the self-love within him and the instinct that leads him to make himself into a God',[142] 'that makes himself his own centre',[143] 'the bias toward self'.[144] The member severed from the mystical body of love, which wills to be its own life-principle,[145] deserves our hatred, 'but as we cannot love what is outside us, we must love a being who is within us but is not our own self. . . . The kingdom of God is within us, universal good is within us and is both ourselves and not ourselves.'[146] Therefore, here too we have to do with a relationship between two orders of image and reality separated by a gap, so that the private and public order of self-love is '*une fausse image de la charité, car au fond ce n'est que haine*'.[147]

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[135] P 24 B 4 L 513.

[136] According to Filleau de la Chaise's expression, 1493.

[137] *Ibid.*, 1500. [But what a difference, whether in vacuums or disproportions! It is only a miserable copy of the divine original.]

[138] P 284 B 402 L 118.

[139] P 136 B 455 L 597; P 707 B 476 L 373; P 564 B 676 L 475; P 689 B 545 L 271; P 700 B 468 L 220.

[140] P 130 B 100 L 978: '*La nature de l'amour propre et de ce moi humain est de n'aimer que soi.*' [The nature of self-love and of the human ego is to love only the self.]

[141] P 331 B 423 L 119. Similarly, P 435 B 494 L 450.

[142] P 434 B 492 L 617.

[143] P 483 B 430 L 149.

[144] P 703 B 477 L 421.

[145] P 710 B 483 L 372.

This is true even if it has to be conceded that it is a sign of man's greatness '*d'avoir tiré de la concupiscence un si bel ordre*',[148] '*d'en avoir fait un tableau de la charité*'.[149] 'We have established and developed out of concupiscence admirable rules of polity, ethics and justice, but at root, the evil root of man, this evil stuff of which we are made, is only concealed; it is not pulled up.'[150] Therefore, an inner dialectic prevails between image and reality, which does not at all destroy the character of image, but which means that it is just in the contrariness, which emphasizes the gap between the orders, that the similarity must emerge. *Corruptio optimi pessima*. The man who does not seek his true greatness in God must seek it in himself, something that is at the same time both a perversion of his true greatness and a caricature of his true humility and lowliness.[151] In this context we find those words that designate man as *nouveauté*, *monstre*, *chaos*, *contradiction*: 'We perceive an image of truth and possess nothing but falsehood.'[152] The image is in reality reversed, as in a mirror, whence follows the perpetual dialectical change, '*renversement continuel du pour au contre*'.[153]

Here is rooted the concept of madness, *folie*, which in a similar dialectic to that developed by Erasmus expresses the self-estrangement of reason from its (Christian) self—whether it be our existence as in a sunken mirror (as fancy and imagination)[154] that is thus described, or whether this worldly reason sees its own restoration as reason in the Cross of Jesus Christ as a heightened *folie*.[155] The relationship appears again in a dialectical way when the Christian appears as subject to the *folie* of the world out of obedience to God,[156] and so in the end the *folie* of the Christian emerges incomprehensibly exalted above the *sagesse* of all apologetic proofs of its truth.[157]

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[146] P 712 B 485 L 564.

[147] P 134 B 451 L 210. [A false image of charity, for essentially it is just hate.]

[148] P 283 B 403 L 106. [To produce such excellent order from his own concupiscence.]

[149] P 284 B 402 L 118. [To make it the image of true charity.]

[150] P 135 B 453 L 211.

[151] P 276 B 404 L 470; P 284 B 402 L 118.

[152] P 438 B 434 L 131.

[153] P 309 B 328 L 93; P 312 B 337 L 90. [Constant swing from pro to con.]

Finally too the profound ontological concept of *divertissement* belongs to the doctrine of *katastasis*; it has the same significance as the concept of *kinésis* in Origen and Evagrius: becoming distracted, slipping from the centre, through diversion, through turning away. The mysterious range of associations of *se divertir* is always present to his mind: the apparent harmlessness of amusement, deeper still the apparent natural necessity of games and exercise which for the organism itself are in fact functional. But always there is to be found, whether conceded or not, the flight from being present to oneself; that is, from communion with God, from the '*redire ad cor*'. From sport, to any form of communal entertainment, to scientific work, Pascal sees all human striving as coming under the law of this secret, nonsensical flight—to life in the past or to hope for the future, to escape at all cost the present.[158] For, present to himself, a man begins to feel 'his emptiness, nullity, boredom, his despair, and gloom, depression, chagrin, discontent'.[159] From himself—that is, without grace—he can never rediscover the lost source, there remains no other way open to him than self-deception through activity. 'Man is so unhappy that he would be bored, even if he had no cause for boredom, by the very nature of his temperament.'[160] Take away from men their diversion, 'and they will be bored to extinction, for they feel their nullity without recognizing it'.[161] Without grace there is in this emptiness no sort of longing for God; here Pascal turns away from the Middle Ages and its natural *desiderium* to the Modern Age, to existentialism. Man's emptiness of love is *as such* the opposite of loving longing. Everyone indeed seeks happiness, but this is only 'the empty print and trace' of the lost love, which man 'vainly tries to fill with everything around him'. But this void can be filled only by God.[162] In everything nature points to a God who has been lost.[163] It is not that man is as such incapable of comprehending God, but that he no longer has that dignity that would render him proportionable to the divine love.[164]

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[154] P 185 B 414 L 412; P 294 B 331 L 533; P 297 B 330 L 26; P 334 B 195 L 428; P 364 B 257 L 160.

[155] P 448 B 445 L 695.

[156] P 313 B 338 L 14.

[157] P 827–828 B 587–588 L 291, 842.

[158] P 168 B 172 L 47.

[159] P 201 B 131 L 622.

[160] P 205 B 139 L 136 (p. 1142 in Chevalier); P 217 B 171 L 414.

To have fallen from love is the mystery of original sin, something rationally insoluble and yet nevertheless the illuminating presupposition for an understanding of the human condition. But for Pascal such a reference to original sin is already the content of the Christian revelation. Anthropological analysis brings us only to the point where we recognise the incomprehensibility of the situation, where we renounce any attempt to build a thought pattern out of the contradictions. Original sin as the *nœud de notre condition*[165] cannot be discovered by our unaided reason.[166] But even as revealed, it is not the last word in wisdom, for while it reveals our remoteness from our true nature negatively, it cannot justify it positively. It cannot break through the '*cercle sans fin*' between the greatness and the misery of man.[167] Within the human realm, the greater the insight one achieves, the wider gapes the opposition between *grandeur* and *bassesse*[168]—so much so indeed that for Pascal the conclusion of the way of philosophy consists in this: in conceding to both Epictetus and Montaigne their conflicting views, both that which demands greatness of man and that which shows that he has no such greatness: accepting them as contraries that cannot be made to complement one another in a picture of a harmonic or tragic-heroic majesty of man, as a contradiction, the opposing extremes of which expressly destroy one another instead of complementing one another.[169] Pascal's 'method of immanence' therefore tends in no way to derive Christian truth from existence, for, in his opinion, not even original sin can be proved immanently—it is the most obscure, unbelievable dogma that no one could hit upon except through revelation. And if that is true of the doctrine of original sin, it is even more true of the Incarnation.

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[161] P 211 B 164 L 36.

[162] P 370 B 425 L 148.

[163] P 421 B 441 L 471.

[164] P 603 B 557 L 444.

[165] P 438 B 434 L 131 (p. 1208 in Chevalier).

[166] '*Tout son état dépend de ce point imperceptible. . . . Le péché original est folie devant les hommes.*' P 448 B 445 L 695.

[167] P 314 B 416 L 122.

[168] P 427 B 443 L 613.

And yet the 'method of immanence' is correct in so far as the content of revelation, the fact of the love of God and its formulation, strikes the heart immediately as truth. 'Those who believe without having read the Testaments do so because their inward disposition is truly holy and what they hear about our religion matches it. They feel that a God made them, they want to love only God, they want to hate only themselves. They feel that they are not strong enough to do this by themselves, that they are incapable of going to God, and that if God does not come to them they are incapable of communicating with him at all. They hear it said in our religion . . . that God made himself man in order to unite himself with us. It takes no more than this to convince men whose hearts are thus disposed.'[170] Love therefore—beyond the knowledge of original sin and the dualism of the conditions of nature—is that element in which nature becomes whole and consequently understands itself—but love in its truth, as grace from God, and so with the insight that apart from God it cannot be attained, but the love that comes from God is Jesus Christ, and therefore he is man's possibility of wholeness and the restoration of the proportion that resolves in itself all lack of proportion, embracing it and drawing it into itself.

Christ is for Pascal the human image that can evidently only be established by God and which is unattainable, even impossible, in the world. For if Christ is to be understood, he must be read as God's free act of grace that nothing in the world could demand or suggest or construct. What in man is by nature irreconcilably contradictory, in him is bound together into a unity, the meaning of which was not the revelation of man as such, but the revelation of God's love for man. The synthesis, which draws everything together immanently, has its possibility manifested in the transcendent. 'In Jesus Christ all contradictions are reconciled.'[171] The *bassesse* is not done away with for the sake of a one-sided *grandeur*, but the *bassesse* becomes the expression of *grandeur*. 'As man and as God he has been everything that is great and everything that is abject in order to sanctify everything in himself.' Death 'without Jesus Christ is horrible. . . . In Jesus Christ it is wholly different: it is lovable, holy, and the joy of the faithful.'[172] Everything finds its true proportion, the right temperature: 'The grace of the redeemer . . . so nicely [*avec tant de justesse*] tempers fear with hope . . . that it causes infinitely more humiliation than mere reason, but without despair, and infinitely more exaltation than natural pride, but without puffing us up.'[173] And although the teaching of Christ is 'so contrary to nature', it does everything so 'gently'[174] because it restores everything inwardly to its proper place.[175] 'There must be impulses of abasement prompted not by nature but by penitence, not as a lasting state but as a stage toward greatness. There must be impulses of greatness, prompted not by merit but by grace, and after the stage of abasement has been passed.'[176] The undiscoverable in Christ remains the revaluation of lowliness in love: the Cross. And that is the act of God. Here and only here is established 'the harmony of the two opposing truths', here all names fit: 'righteous sinners, living dead, dead living, reprobate elect—*élu réprouvé*'.[177] Therefore the Cross is beyond all the wisdom of apology—'*après avoir étalé tous ses miracles et toute sa sagesse*'—

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[169] '*Il ne résulterait de leur assemblage qu'une guerre et qu'une destruction générale.*' *Entretien avec M. de Saci*, 574.

[170] P 837 B 286 L 381.

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[171] P 558 B 684 L 257.
[172] Letter on the death of his father (17.10.1651), 493.
[173] P 439 B 435 L 208.
[174] P 487 B 289 L 482.
[175] P 75 B 527 L 192.
[176] P 392 B 525 L 398.
[177] P 788 B 862 L 733.

you it may no more be I who live and who suffer, but you who live and suffer in me, O my Saviour.'[185]

This is for Pascal the rational justification of existence: the embracing of all contradictions and nights of being in the mystery of Christ. The 'Memorial's' sole aim is this: to keep alive this thought, once grasped. 'Certainty, heartfelt joy, peace' is not explained by itself, oscillating, as it does, freely between feeling and experience, but by the following line: 'God of Jesus Christ. "My God and your God".'[186]

The 'empty trace' of lost love in the sinner does not allow him to calculate the distance that separates him from his authentic, 'original' condition. The relationship between the two conditions yields therefore no shape. This occurs only at the moment when the hypostatic union, the essential unity of God and man, of redeemer and sinner, of reprobate elect and elect reprobate, embraces both conditions, drawing them into one another, and by revaluing them transcends them. The act of the love of God not only confers meaning, but a form: it creates and at the same time fulfills the figure.

4. HIDDENNESS AND LOVE

In the revelation of Jesus Christ the crucified, two things are revealed at the same time, each in its own way essentially something hidden: the ever-greater love of the incomprehensible God, and the sin of man that appears ever greater in its light. Thus the revelation that takes place in Christ is in the highest degree paradoxical: the double hiddenness is that which, manifest *as such*, becomes really *manifest*. All a priori objection to such a possibility can arise only from the unhistorical realm of constructive reason, but this is contradicted by the 'history of truth'.[187]

Our task is thus to treat successively: (1) the revelation of the hiddenness of God, (2) the revelation of this hiddenness in the hiddenness of sin, (3) the true, historical way of reading and depicting this hiddenness, and (4) the relation of love and figure.

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[185] *Prayer for a right use of sickness*, 610f, 614.

[186] *Memorial*, 554.

[187] P 778 B 858 L 776.

1. God is in his nature *deus absconditus*; 'this is the very name that he gives himself in Scripture', and if men complain about God's obscurity, then they forget that 'the obscurity in which they find themselves and which they use as an objection against the Church simply establishes' its teaching.[188] The usual proofs of God's existence are, from this point of view, naive: 'to tell [men] that they have only to look at the least thing around them and they will see in it God plainly revealed; to give them no other proof . . . than the course of the moon and the planets,' is much too feeble. 'This is not how Scripture with its better knowledge of the things of God, speaks of God. On the contrary, it says that God is a hidden God,' and 'only through Jesus Christ is any communication with him possible: *Nemo novit patrem*. . . .'[189] God cannot completely hide himself; otherwise, faith would be impossible. Still less can he become completely manifest, for then there would be no merit. 'But he ordinarily hides himself and rarely reveals himself. . . . He remained hidden beneath the veil of nature, which concealed him from us, until the Incarnation; and when he had to appear he still more hid himself by concealing himself in humanity. He was much more recognisable when he was invisible than when he made himself visible'. And finally, he hid himself in 'the strangest and most obscure secret of all, in the eucharistic forms of bread and wine . . . the last secret place where he can be'.[190] So increasing hiddenness corresponds to an increasing manifestation of what is essential; that is, of love. This gives the decisive key to Pascal's discarding of the rational proofs of God's existence: God is here too little hidden, for them truly to make him manifest; on the other hand, the final hiddenness of the truth in the proofs is for him a decisive indication of their truth, just as he interprets the obscurity of the prophets as an important way of drawing attention to the truth that they contain.[191] God, as the highest value, wills to be sought, for such seeking is alone

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[188] P 335 B 194 L 427 (pp. 1172f in Chevalier).

[189] P 366 B 242 L 781.

[190] Fourth letter to Mlle de Roannez, 509f.

[191] J. Russier, *La foi selon Pascal* (1949), 389.

worthy of him.[192] And God, as love, wills to be found only by love, 'perfect clarity would [only] help the mind. . . . Their pride must be humbled.'[193] But it is the 'between' that is truly humbling, for just as perfect clarity satisfies reason, so would perfect obscurity satisfy the radicalism of faith. 'I may well love total darkness, but if God plunges me into a state of semidarkness I am displeased by such darkness as is there, and because I fail to see in it the same merits as in total darkness, such a state does not please me. This is a fault and a sign that I am making an idol of darkness, separated from God's order. Now we should worship only his order.'[194] There must therefore be enough light available for the darkness of the true religion to be *seen*, and contrariwise, darkness enough for the image of God that is appearing not to be rendered improbable. This hiddenness of God certainly allows his revelation always to remain subject to objection,[195] but it also allows the encounter between God and man to take place in the freedom of the heart and without the reason being compelled by logic.[196] There is thus 'evidence and at the same time obscurity . . . , enough evidence to condemn [the refractory] and not enough to convince by force.'[197] 'I am angry with those who absolutely insist that one believe the truth when they have demonstrated it, something Jesus Christ did not do in his created humanity.'[198]

And because God revealed himself in Christ in this unity of evidence and hiddenness,[199] there truly lies in this the divine mystery of predestination; in the same figure, which he sets up before the world, he chooses the one and rejects the other. Pascal, who was greatly agitated by this *theologumenon*, believed that he could discern it in the phenomenon of revelation itself. It was for him, moreover, the exact expression of the incomprehensibility of his own election, of which he never

[192] P 579 B 574 L 472.
[193] P 596 B 581 L 234.
[194] P 597 B 582 L 926.
[195] P 776–777 B 613–614 L 280–281.
[196] P 637 B 795 L 237.
[197] P 831 B 564 L 835.
[198] Fragment d'une lettre, 526.
[199] *Cf.* P 599 B 586 L 446; P438 B 430 L 149 (pp. 1227f in Chevalier).

doubted. The acts of judgment in the Old and New Testaments assured him that he was himself not in the realm of the God of the philosophers (according to which all is a vain harmony), but in that of the living God of love.[200] It is a strange mystery of the Western heart that it flees back, past all the lights offered it by philosophy, even by Christian philosophy, ever again to the moment of decision in this darkest region of the biblical message of judgment, as if it were only then, when it returned from the furthest horrors of dereliction to the heart of God, that it could be finally assured of love.

2. The hiddenness of God in Christ bears the colours of judgment because of sin; God hides himself not only in being raised above sin, he hides himself in lowliness and humility among forms that can be confused with the accustomed forms of sin. 'For thirty of his thirty-three years he lives without showing himself. For three years he is treated as an impostor. The priests and rulers reject him. Those who are nearest and dearest to him despise him. Finally he dies betrayed by one of his disciples, denied by another and forsaken by all.'[201] 'Just as Jesus remained unknown among men, so the truth remains among popular opinions with no outward difference.'[202] In contrast to Mohammed, he did not place himself in the light; he was 'wretched and alone'.[203] He did not kill but let himself be killed, he did not wish to be 'humanly successful' but to 'perish humanly', and this had to be if he was to be recognised as the hidden one.[204] For the proportion between ordinary human '*médiocrité*' and the dazzling darkness of God, manifest as veiled in it, appears now to be strangely exact. But *médiocrité* means for actual, historical man the inextricable dialectic in himself between *grandeur* and *misère*,, exaltation and lowliness. And this dialectic is not destroyed by Christ but fulfilled and thereby revalued, and in such a way that he too, in order to be true man, must be 'doubled', must be both the one brought low from his

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[200] P 563 B 675 L 503; P 582 B 578 L 236; P 589 B 758 L 255; P 613 B 735 L 347.

[201] P 636 B 792 L 499.

[202] P 638 B 789 L 225.

[203] P 404 B 596 L 1.

[204] P 402 B 599 L 209.

majesty, and the one exalted because of his humiliation: *deux avènements*.[205] The unity of this doubling is uniquely love—nothing else. And everything capable of form and figure can refer to nothing else than love, for love alone embraces its opposite, the condition of the sinner, and enfolds it into itself. '*Elu réprouvé*, et cetera.'[206] And from out of this unity of love in Christ there can be only two types of men: 'the righteous who think they are sinners, and the sinners who think they are righteous'.[207]

3. The unity of dialectical and figurative thought makes Pascal seem to be predestined to bring the traditional *theologumenon* of the Old and New Testaments to its consummation as *the* proof of the truth of Christianity. The whole apology of the *Pensées* leads up to this point. The anthropological perspectives, which served to unsettle sated reason, are completely overshadowed by the great sign that God has himself unmistakably buried in the public history of the world. Here all the motives in Pascal's thought converge: exact perception of the actual proportions combined with sharp separation of the mutually related orders, in both of which the evidence and the incomprehensibility of God is equally manifest. The relationship of the Old and the New Testaments, of Jew and Christian, is the 'double witness' of God's historical truth.[208] They form together, as a diptych, a comprehensible figure, but only because one of the wings prefigures the other, which is itself beyond the figurative. Figure is here therefore used in an internally analogous sense: on the one hand as prefiguration (*typos*) by the Old Testament of the New, which is beyond figure, and on the other as a manifest relationship between the figurative and what is beyond the figurative. Both aspects belong intrinsically together, because figurativeness in the first sense is a function of the whole figure.

This leads to two assertions: (1) 'Charity is not a figurative precept. It is a horrible thing to say that Christ, who came to replace figures by the truth, came only to set up the figure of charity. . . .'[209] (2) 'Everything that does not lead to charity is figurative. The sole object of Scripture is charity. Everything that does not lead to this sole goal is figurative.'[210] From these two propositions together it follows that charity is of an order qualitatively different from that of figures, but that the figures, which belong to a lower order and can attain to love by no approximation, are born and made possible by a striving after love that penetrates their being. Therefore again it is the higher order that bears the lower and interprets it, although by comparison it is 'as nothing'. This strange dialectical relationship, which is necessarily so, is illustrated now by the whole historical actuality of the history of salvation and is set up before our eyes as an historically located occurrence in the past and yet—because the Jews continue to exist and perpetuate this relationship in history—as a '*miracle subsistant*'[211] for all times and places. For Pascal this historical form is the integration of all the other proofs; the individual miracles take second place to it.[212] Occasionally the whole evidentiality of the Christian religion is summed up in this single picture, '*le reste doit en être cru*';[213] In any case, this picture distinguishes the Christian religion from all others, which can produce nothing similar.[214] Pascal has hardly brought forward any new biblical material—this must be said against Filleau[215]—but he has handled the already available material in such a way that even Lagrange, who draws attention to the outmoded character of his exegetical approach, can identify himself completely with Pascal's fundamental thought[216] as it was expressed in the two theses just outlined.

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[205] P 566–567 B 678–679 L 253, 260.

[206] P 788 B 862 L 733.

[207] P 681 B 534 L 562.

[208] 'Les deux Témoins': P 772 B 852 L 859.

The problem to which these theses give rise is, at the level of reason, only representable dialectically—that is, not concretely—but the biblical relationship of the Testaments makes this dialectic obvious beyond contradiction in the public realm of history. The dialectic lies in this; that the promise to Israel, in order to be proportioned to fulfilment, must belong to the order of charity—it must spring from it and move towards it and therefore must be understood in a sense that is alone not 'unworthy of God'[217]—but still the order of promise must leave that door shut, the opening of which can only be the work of the redeemer, and must therefore remain by contrast with him picture, figure, *typos*. Pascal is concerned that the intrinsically dialectical character of prophecy (to which also the law belongs) be manifest as exactly as possible; it promised completely unmysterious earthly goods, and yet the prophets remain obscure, they say that the meaning of their utterances cannot be grasped; indeed, their sayings 'are contradictory and cancel one another out ... sometimes in the same chapter'.[218] The contradiction lies in the fact that in everything the order of love is intended, but that as a form of pedagogical concession by the Word of God parables and indirect reflections of love are at first set up, which, as something for the time being only comprehensible by the 'carnal people', must be misunderstood carnally, in the sense of *concupiscentia*. The blame for this lies with the carnal heart, for which the carnal promise is a temptation, leading to conviction and judgment, while the spiritual heart, which was hoped for in Israel and presupposed by the economy, would indeed have been able to interpret the picture as a picture pointing to a religious reality. Pascal distinctly says: 'Each man finds in these promises what lies in the depths of his own heart; either temporal or spiritual blessings, God himself or creatures; but with this difference, that those who are looking for creatures there find them indeed, but with many contradictions: they are forbidden to love them, bidden to worship and to love God alone (which comes to the same thing), and finally they find that the Messiah did not come for them; whereas those who are looking for God find him, without any contradictions, and find that they are bidden to love God alone and that a Messiah did come at the time foretold to bring them the blessings for which they ask.'[219] The picture becomes a means of judgment separating *caritas* from *cupiditas*, and in this sense it is very easy to hold the view that God, who as a form of concession by the Word sets up this picture before the heart, wishes 'both to blind and to enlighten'.[220]

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[209] P 608 B 665 L 849.

[210] P 583 B 670 L 270.

[211] P 526 B 706 L 335; P 620 B 830 L 718.

[212] P 407 B 619 L 454.

[213] P 581 B 576 L 594. [The rest of them ought to be believed.]

[214] P 393 B 693 L 198; P 400 B 598 L 218.

[215] '. . . *la découverte de quantité de choses* [*dans l'Ecriture*] *qui avaient jusques ici échappé à tout le monde*': *Discours sur les Pensées*, 1477.

[216] M. J. Lagrange, 'Pascal et les prophéties messianiques', *Revue Biblique* 3 (1906), 533–560.

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[217] P 556 B 659 L 501.

[218] *Ibid.*, with Lagrange's remarks; *loc. cit.*, 543f.

The picture that the Old Testament formed had therefore, in God's eyes, to be a picture of love—hence, a picture derived from love and drawing men to it, indeed containing it—without, however, excluding its opposite. 'Two supernatural foundations of our wholly supernatural religion, one visible, the other invisible. Miracles with grace, miracles without grace. The synagogue, treated with love as figurative of the Church and with hate as being merely figurative, was restored when about to collapse, when it stood well with God, and was thus figurative.'[221] The synagogue was a figure, and to that extent it did not perish; it was only a figure, and to that extent it perished. It was a figure that contained the truth, and it continued to exist until it no longer contained the truth.[222] But that means that the synagogue united in its visible form things that in the invisible order are opposed, things that could only be united at the level of the figure and that, when the truth came, had to be separated: 'Nothing is so like charity as greed, and nothing is so unlike. Thus the Jews, rich with possessions to flatter their greed, were very like Christians and very much unlike them. And thus they had the two qualities they had to have: being very like the Messiah in order to prefigure him, and being very unlike so that they should not be suspect witnesses.'[223] The figure, that the Messiah will form himself and that only would reveal man's sublimeness and his humiliation in their unity, could not be anticipated by any picture; thus the Jews were deceived both as to the true greatness of the Messiah (they did not think of him as God) and as to his true lowliness (they did not regard him as mortal: Jn 12.34).[224] Only in Christ 'are all contradictions reconciled',[225] and this includes the essential contradiction between the image and Christ himself and, hence, also the contradiction of the image in itself. And so the Old Testament must be both 'pleasing [to God] and displeasing': displeasing, in so far as it absolutizes itself though only a picture—that is, as it understands itself as the reality that it prefigures—but pleasing, in so far as it is a picture of reality and, hidden within the reality, is justified by it.[226]

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[219] P 563 B 675 L 503.
[220] P 581 B 576 L 594.
[221] P 771 B 851 L 903.
[222] P 772 B 852 L 859.
[223] P 575 B 663 L 615.
[224] P 577 B 662 L 256.

Therefore Pascal loves, next to the word 'figure', the word 'cipher', because this is an encoded figure that can be interpreted only when the code is broken. 'Figure includes absence and presence, pleasant and unpleasant. Cipher has a double meaning, of which one is clear and says that the meaning is hidden.'[227] Pascal's accompanying theory, that the prophets knew that they were talking only in pictures and that they had glimpsed beforehand the mystery of the Messiah, need not be taken over and would rightly be rejected by modern exegesis. But it is not necessary that they should have themselves used the code to produce the cipher; it is enough if the Christian has found the key in the New Testament and 'in the picture seen the thing represented'.[228] 'The Old Testament is a cipher',[229] certainly in the first place in so far as it relates to the New as nature does to grace, and therefore it is full of visible miracles so that the invisible miracles of the Messiah might be believed,[230] but more deeply it is not simply pure nature, but the incomprehensibly encoded medium (*le milieu*) between nature and grace, between paganism and Christianity,[231] which can produce no picture of itself except when it passes over into the truth to which it refers.

In so far, however, as the Messiah appears in a hidden way in the Jewish world of images and in his death participates in the collapse of the faithless Jerusalem, so far the Christian reality too is still half veiled in images so that there emerge (at least) three orders: 'As nature is only an image of grace, . . . even grace is only figurative of glory. . . . It was prefigured by the law and itself prefigures glory.'[232] And this glory too has its degrees, because the Church as the kingdom of the Holy Spirit is already the revelation of the mystery of the Messiah. For the Church the relationship of Old and New Testament has been decoded and can be understood, and yet it too partakes of the hiddenness and becomes an image of the eschatological glory. The retrospective view of the history of salvation from the point of view of the Church in itself constitutes an imposing apocalypse: 'How beautiful it is to see with the eyes of faith Darius and Cyrus, Alexander, the Romans, Pompey and Herod, working unwittingly for the glory of the Gospel!'[233] 'How beautiful to see with the eyes of faith the story of Herod or Caesar.'[234] Charles Péguy later, in his 'Eve', develops this world historical contemplation on the grand scale. What in truth is to be seen is something Augustine contemplated in his *de Civitate Dei*: the presence of piety, of love from the beginning, but also of the struggle between 'Jerusalem' and 'Babylon' from the beginning,[235] and therefore too of the struggle between the figurative and the transfigurative order, which yet includes all images within itself as the source and justification of all images—just in so far as these are *only* images and therefore inimical to it. Rightly taking as his guide the hermeneutical principle that 'to understand an author's meaning all contradictory passages must be reconciled',[236] must be made clear from a point of unity as an inner unity, Pascal construes the tensions and incompatibilities of the Old Testament from the perspective of the New. Such a procedure is for him, on the level of the interpretation of revelation, a thoroughly exact science that renders the historically extant material in the highest degree 'intelligible'. He has no need of any artificial allegorization; he mistrusts one-sided allegory.[237] It is for Pascal no contradiction of this notion of an exact science that the decisive light that makes things visible and comprehensible comes from revelation itself (and therefore from faith itself), and that the love of God can be perceived only by a heart with at least an inchoate love, which is at least set on love. If it is already true in the Old Testament that the one who loves God can distinguish the relativity of law and ceremony and can also see beyond the promises of earthly happiness to the reality of love, how much more in the New Testament will love be the decisive presupposition of true knowledge! 'We make ourselves an idol of truth itself, for truth apart from charity is not God but his image and an idol that we must neither love nor worship.'[238] That is also the final reason why the God of love wills to be hidden: only the pure heart penetrates beyond the truth to love, because precisely in God love is also the heart of truth. So the reciprocity of Old and New Testament remains in its inextricable criss-crossing the eternally valid, eternally actual, inexhaustible picture in which may be read by all men the dialectic of image and truth, of sin and redemption, of nature and grace, of earth and Heaven.

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[225] P 558 B 684 L 257.
[226] P 559 B 685 L 259.
[227] P 565 B 677 L 265.
[228] P 566 B 678 L 260.
[229] P 558 n. B 691 L 276.
[230] P 560, 563 B 643, 675 L 275, 503.
[231] P 496 B 608 L 289.

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[232] P 560 B 643 L 275.

[233] P 544 B 701 L 317.

[234] P 545 B 700 L 500.

[235] P 696–697 B 458–459 L 545, 918.

[236] P 558 B 684 L 257.

[237] '*Parler contre les trop grands figuratifs*': P 551, *cf.* 552 B 649f L 217, 254.

4. Truth is love, which is beyond the figurative. But love is God's love for us in his surrendering his Son for the life of the world. So what is beyond the figurative is God's action that makes him manifest—for this reason the Son is the making visible of the Father—and so all love that flows from the Son's action and which, in following him, returns to it, also shares in this making visible of God, taking shape from his fulness. Christ is the fulfilment of all images,[239] and so one can ask: 'Why did Christ not come in an obvious way instead of proving himself by previous prophecies? Why did he have himself foretold figuratively?'[240] He did this presumably in order not to put himself in the light, but rather to illuminate everything else from his own hiddenness, to judge by separation, to do things in God's way. Thus he is the manifestation of the hiddenness of God, who, without manifesting himself, makes every manifestation his image and likeness. 'Beautiful deeds are most

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[238] P 597 B 582 L 926.
[239] P 619 B 766 L 607.
[240] P 632 B 794 L 389.

admirable when kept secret. When I see some of them in history . . . , they please me greatly . . . , [and] the most beautiful thing about them was the attempt to keep them secret.'[241]

Here the poor man becomes the epitome of Christian figurativeness. He is the hiddenness of Christ, but the Christian's love enables him to read in the poor man the image of the presence of Christ, the sacrament of Christ, and, most particularly, to read it in the act of love. The poor are the permanent presence of the picture world of the Old Testament; and to encounter Christ in the poor is the realisation of this '*miracle subsistant*', the always already-accomplished transition from the Old to the New Testament, the fulfilment of the promise. Pascal had, especially at the end of his life, grasped this with the utmost exactness. He visited the poor and gave them alms. He took them into his own house. He refused to support charitable, social institutions with financial contributions, although he recognized that this was a right and worthy activity for others; but such a way was not for him; rather, he sought to meet Christ in personal encounters with the poor. When he was denied communion in his mortal sickness in spite of his pleas because his condition was not regarded as hopeless, he said: 'Since I am not to be granted this grace, I would like to make good its lack by some good work, and not being able to communicate in the Head, I would like to communicate in the members, and for that purpose I have thought to have some poor, sick person brought here to whom can be rendered the same services as to me. . . . Go, please, and ask such a one from the priest.'[242] And in the *Pensées* he wrote: 'I love poverty because he loved it. I love goods because they afford me the means of helping the needy'—and this with an un-Jansenist universalism: 'I love all men as my brothers, because they are all redeemed.'[243]

In fact, the mystery of predestination is divine and does not concern the loving man. It affects Pascal existentially only at the point where he feels himself personally elect and therefore knows that of him the highest is demanded. But this highest is the universalism of love (while all desire is particular), through which the heart opens itself to what is beyond images, to the Holy Spirit.[244] Here there develops for Pascal the idea of the Church. It is the integration—through self-opening love—of persons who exist for themselves: *un corps plein de membres pensants*.[245] '*Adhaerens Deo unus spiritus est*: he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. We love ourselves because we are members of Christ. We love Christ because he is the body of which we are members. All are one. One is in the other like the three Persons.'[246] In so far as someone is covetous (and that means hating), he must hate himself and seek that other whom he can love. 'But as we cannot love what is outside us, we must love a being who is within us but is not our own self. And this is true for every single person. Now only the universal being is of this kind; the kingdom of God is within us, universal good is within us, and is both ourselves and not ourselves.'[247] This heart of the Church, which builds itself up in the love of Christ—a Church that is always built up already in the head, Christ—does not seduce Pascal into a mysticism of the invisible. But he sees the Church as bound up in a living way in the redemption of the world: 'For it is the Church that merits, with Jesus Christ, who is inseparable from it, the conversion of all those who are not in the truth; and these converts are then those who help the Mother who has delivered them.'[248] That is said specifically of the visible, institutional Church, for in the next sentence unity with the Pope is emphasized; there is never any question for Pascal of a Church other than the Roman, in spite of all the persecution of Jansenism by Rome and despite all the qualms of conscience he endured as a result. 'I will never separate from her communion, . . . else I would be lost forever.'[249] Thus for Pascal the visible and invisible aspects of the Church are wholly inseparable, and by the same token he can in no way hypostatise the visible aspect alone in an image. But he does see in the model of the kingdom of God that the Church represents, that the ratio between the outer and inner, between the institution and the event, can vary in accordance with the capacity of the individual. 'For the people must understand the spirit of the letter, while the educated must submit their spirit to the letter.'[250] The model of the Church must be preserved intact through all variations and even all practical defections; this ideal spurs Pascal on to struggle against laxity in essentials. 'For it is an evil much less dangerous and much less general to permit irregularities while at the same time upholding the laws that forbid them, than to pervert the laws and justify the irregularities.'[251] In accordance with his view and intention Pascal placed himself, in this resistance to any fundamental weakening or false reassurance, in the phalanx of the saints who, for him, in the closest unity of the Spirit with Christ, form the frontline of the *résistance*, of the militant kingdom of God. The saints must not be thought of as 'renowned demigods'; they were simply men like us. 'St. Athanasius was a man called Athanasius, accused of several crimes, condemned by such and such a council for such and such a crime. All the bishops agreed, and in the end the Pope. What are those who resist told? That they are disturbing the peace, causing schism, et cetera. . . . They are excommunicated by the Church but yet save the Church.'[252] 'And is it not obvious [*visible*] that, just as it is a crime to disturb the peace when truth reigns, it is also a crime to remain at peace when the truth is being destroyed?'[253] The saints are the core of the *ecclesia militans* just because they love the true peace. Pascal at the end of his life consciously enlisted in their ranks at the same time that he withdrew himself from the *résistance* as he had understood and practised it in the *Provinciales*, and from the still sharper conflict (comparable to Kierkegaard's last struggle) over the subscription to the anti-Jansenist formulary, in a retreat that one should see neither as a retraction of his faith in its sympathy for Jansenius (though he never held the 'five propositions') nor as a hardening of it, but as in reality the naked, heroic transcending of his own particular standpoint as he achieved a new standpoint within the unseen totality of the Church. This is indicated in his final letter, probably sent to Domat:

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[241] P 148 B 159 L 643.

[242] Mme Périer, *Vie de Pascal*, 33.

[243] P 732 B 550 L 931.

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[244] P 703 B 477 L 421.
[245] P 704 B 473 L 371.
[246] P 710 B 483 L 372.
[247] P 712 B 485 L 564.
[248] Letter 6 to Mlle de Roannez, 513.
[249] *Ibid.*, 514.

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[250] P 834 B 251 L 219.

[251] *Factum pour les Curés de Paris*, 907; *cf.* P 796 B 894 L 679: 'Some who love the Church complain when they see morals corrupted, but at least the laws survive. But these people corrupt the laws. The model is spoilt.'

[252] P 803 B 868 L 598.

[253] P 822 B 949 L 974.

> When we want by our own power to bring something about, we are irritated by obstacles, because we feel in these hindrances something that is not inspired by the motive that moves us to act, and we find things that our own spirit, which moves us to action, has not formed. But when God truly moves us to act, we sense nothing outside ourselves that is not inspired by the same principle that inspires us . . . the same mover who prompts us to act encourages others to resist us, or at least he permits them, so that . . . this agreement does not disturb the peace of a soul and is one of the best signs that one is moved by the Spirit of God. . . . And as there is no doubt that God permits hindrances, one has the right to hope humbly that it is God who inspires our passions. And yet! One acts as if one had a mission to cause the truth to triumph, instead of simply having a mission to fight on behalf of the truth. The desire to conquer is so natural. . . . One thinks one is seeking the glory of God, when one is in reality seeking one's own.[254]

Thus has Pascal again, within the Church, indeed within its very highest rank, struggled out of a purely figurative sanctity, which could conceal its opposite beneath the image, to its imageless and invisible truth, most deeply perfecting his own doctrine by a true leap from one order to another. He remains the theologian of both image and leap, taken together, because in the wake of Augustine and the Reformation he undertakes to unite the concept of incomprehensible grace (interpreted as election and reprobation) with the concept of the universalism of love. At each stage then there is the figure that transcendentally justifies the invisible and infinite of the lower order as well as being deeply marked and threatened by this order that embraces it. Man is the figure in and above the two infinities, which question him so deeply, and Christ is the figure in and above man, who without Christ would be incomprehensible chaos, but who in the Passion draws him down into his night. But even Christ remains an unintelligible mystery without his Holy Spirit, who gives us 'the eyes of faith' that we may truly see in love what *is*, not however in ourselves but in the Church, to which we must ascend by renouncing our own standpoint. And so the leap to the higher order that makes sight possible is in every case a leap into the invisible, and so and only so is the ever-new daring of the heart ultimately the self-glorification and self-understanding of absolute love.

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[254] *Fragment d'une lettre* (1661), 524–526.

It is only in this context that the celebrated 'argument du pari',[255] in which Pascal uses the form of the reckoning of probability to lead man to God, can be justified. This attempt, the details of which we cannot discuss here, rests on the triumphant insight of the mathematician that what on a lower level is not subject to law can be grasped, held and transformed from above by a geometry subject to law, 'and thus by joining mathematical demonstration to the uncertainty of the die' (*et sic matheseos demonstrationes cum aleae incertitudine jungendo*), in the midst of uncertainties certainty can be attained.[256] But the analogy goes no further. Man is confronted with the inescapable necessity of choosing on the basis of his being thrown into existence, his *Geworfenheit*, to decide either for or against the existence of God. In this choice the possibility of a rational proof of the existence of God is systematically bracketed off, for such a comfortable resolution is to be denied to man; his eternal happiness, which is God, is to be attained by the movement of his heart, by the daring of a man's staking himself, for it is through this that the certainty of truth is perceived: '*à chaque pas . . . vous verrez tant de certitude du gain et tant de néant de ce que vous hasardez, que vous connaîtrez à la fin que vous avez parié pour une chose certaine, infinie, pour laquelle vous n'avez rien donné.*'[257]

5. PASCAL'S AESTHETIC

Pascal wrote no aesthetics, and if one sets his *Discours sur les passions de l'amour* on one side as inauthentic, there remain only a few fragments in his work to indicate what its outline might have been. On the other hand, a concern with beauty and harmony is found in his whole work, and indeed in such a mysterious and unique way that there will always be the temptation to seek more from the reflection of what he achieved with such simplicity. Because his aesthetic is at its deepest theological, drawing hardly at all on other, extratheological traditions, such an attempt is all the more profitable in our context. It may help us finally to overcome the romantic picture, which ever bewitches the Germans, of a Pascal 'torn apart' in himself.[258] But such rents and gaping distances are not the greatness of this soul—it would be a cheap idea of greatness! His greatness is that of Romanesque architecture, throwing bridges across abysses and indeed incorporating the void within its structures. Recent French research has shown that in his *Pensées* Pascal thinks and writes more dialectically than had been thought, and that many of the expressions of terror, which had been taken as the deepest confessions of his heart, are only meaningful on the lips of his atheist partner. He himself never doubts the truth of Christianity.

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[255] P 451 B 233 L 418.

[256] *Cel. Matheseos Academiae Parisiensi*, 74.

[257] P 451 B 233 L 481: 'At every step . . . you will see that your gain is so

The embryo of the *Pensées* is embedded in an amniotic fluid of the most general considerations, to which Pascal would most likely have given the name of rhetoric in its all-embracing sense—considerations of right form, of the right measure of presentation, of utterance, and also of deporting oneself generally; teaching about the *justesse* of the expression, not only of the literary but of existential expression too, and that again not simply in the sense of an ethic of conventions but of an unwritten wisdom in which converge ethics and the logic or metaphysics of existence. Such a wisdom certainly finds Epictetus and Montaigne on its flanks, and yet the central position is still left free. This teaching about *justesse* remains a bare idea that floats before Pascal, both for himself, so that he

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certain and your risk so negligible that in the end you will realize that you have wagered on something certain and infinite for which you have paid nothing.'

[258] As Reinhold Schneider depicted it, projecting himself into his hero, in the introduction to his selections from Pascal (Fischer-Bücherei, 1954), or as Hans Ehrenberg (*In der Schule Pascals*, 1954) expressionistically and ecstatically sketched it.

may have the 'right taste' (*goût bon*) in thinking and speaking (*da nobis in Spiritu recta sapere*), and also for his partner, to whom he wishes to communicate wisdom with good taste. The credibility of the Christian truth should finally be grasped by a judgment of taste. That is to say, one must come not only to a conviction that it could not have been discovered by men,[259] but also to a conviction in its inner measuredness and its outward fitness.

If there is an objective measuredness of the thing in itself, a fitness for the subject whom the thing pleases, then there emerges in the relationship between the object and the observer the decisively right measure. 'There is a certain model of attractiveness and beauty based on a certain relation between our nature, weak or strong as it may be, and the thing that pleases us.'[260] According to Pascal this model is given expression in different contexts—it can be a house, or a poem, or a woman—and it will always please and will always be, as a model, one and the same. The ideal/model imposes itself therefore on the faculties; it is in accordance with it that 'geometrical beauty' or 'medical beauty', just as much as 'poetical beauty', are formed, the more so even, in that we can much better discern the relationship between ideal and realisation in the case of mathematical or medical correctness than in the case of the poetic, where the ideal remains obscure to us.[261] This leads Pascal inevitably to the '*homme universel*' or the '*honnête homme*' who, instead of being a specialist in a particular field, corresponds in the completeness of his relation to reality to the model or correct relationship. 'This universal quality is the only one I like.' 'It is much better to know something about everything than everything about something.'[262] But Pascal properly never considers the *honnête homme* from an aesthetic point of view—that is to say, as a complete work of art—but from the point of view of his effectiveness—that is to say, 'rhetorically' or, if one wishes, apostolically. '*Il faut donc un honnête homme, qui puisse s'accomoder à tous mes besoins généralement*',[263] who can awaken in me the truth, who 'has shown us not his own wealth but that which we have in common, and this kindness makes him agreeable to us, quite apart from the fact that our shared insight necessarily moves us to like him'.[264] The fashionable definition of the *honnête homme* by the Chevalier de Méré required of him the 'art of pleasing', of 'making oneself loved',[265] but for Pascal this amiability soon takes on earnest, Christian tones. It is a matter from the very beginning of a model that is both subjective and objective: '*Il faut de l'agréable et du réel; mais il faut que cet agréable soit lui-même pris du vrai.*'[266] Only then does such 'pleasing' (*plaire*) make contact with the *esprit de finesse*, which in a glance takes in the overall proportions of things and from that standpoint forms a judgment,[267] as also with the *sens droit* and the *esprit de justesse*.[268] But then it suddenly becomes clear, that the secret model, in accordance with which the heart takes pleasure in and judges

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[259] Filleau de la Chaise has in his somewhat garrulous manner revealed Pascal's intention in placing before his reader the complete picture of the Bible. 'What a beautiful system that is! . . . Could there be a man of sense and good faith who would not recognize that nothing could ever be said approaching this, and that those who have thus spoken, however little proof there be, assuredly merit being believed? There are indeed many men for whom it would already be a powerful proof that this had been said at all, for indeed it would not seem easy to one who examined it closely that it had been invented; it would only be necessary to look at what the most skilful of those who had wished to discourse on this subject had said. . . . In truth these are not their ways, and it is strange that they have not noticed it and that they have not availed themselves in this of a certain delicacy of discernment that they show in other matters. For there is no one who would deny that in regard to those things that fall beneath our senses we have in ourselves a certain sense that enables us to judge, simply by their manner, whether what is presented to our eyes is a work of nature or of men. . . . Why not extend this principle that thus guides us and not discern, by what we feel in ourselves and by what we experience, that these great ideas have a character quite different from what the human spirit is capable of producing [1485–1486]?

[260] P 37 B 32 L 585.

[261] P 38 B 33 L 586.

[262] The last sentence is crossed out. P 40, 42 B 35, 37 L 647, 195.

[263] P 41 B 36 L 605. [What I need is an all-round good man who can adapt himself to all my needs generally.]

[264] P 44 B 14 L 652.

[265] J. Mesnard, *Pascal* (*op. cit.*), 52f (ET p. 48).

[266] P 47 B 25 L 667. [There must be elements both pleasing and real, but what is pleasing must itself be drawn from what is true.]

[267] P 21 B 1 L 512.

[268] P 22 B 3 L 751.

things, is determined by the innermost inclination of the heart, and that the great either-or between *cupiditas* and *caritas* cuts right through the norm of beauty. The 'whole' of fitness is either open to the love of God as it is, or it is closed to it so as to be purely worldly.[269] Pascal is relentless in his exposing of the way the heart succumbs to the powers of worldly delusion and of the entanglements of personal and social conventions; he attempts to loose the heart of the Christian individual from them in order to bind it to the true wholeness as measure and model. On the other hand he is enough of a realist to know the power of automatism over a soul sunk in the realms of matter and also to demand in the service of the highest synthesis that 'we must combine the outward and inward . . . we must go down on our knees, pray with our lips. . . . If we expect help from this outward part we are being superstitious, if we refuse to combine it with the inward we are being arrogant.'[270] 'Custom and habit provide the strongest proofs and those that are most believed. They influence the automaton, which leads the mind unconsciously along with it. . . . *Inclina cor meum, Deus.*'[271] And so finally there is required, as a formula for aesthetics, a model in which the higher order of love informs the lower order of sensible pleasure without prejudice to the far-reaching judgment of *caritas* over *cupiditas*. Pascal, to whom one vainly imputes the Cartesian absolute dualism between matter and spirit, who did not regard animals as automata and who knew about the role of vital powers,[272] here does not overlook the unifying role of woman and Eros.[273] The 'heart' is the organ of the aesthetic and the ethical alike, because it is at every level the organ of love.[274] Correspondingly, Pascal does not demand in the social sphere the abolition of all ceremony (on which rests any beauty in political and public life), but its being rendered transparent, through the most profound ascesis in the heart of the prince, to the archetype of the kingdom of *caritas*. He therefore demands much: beyond naive popular piety (which is relatively in the right) and the critique of the enlightened (which is relatively in the wrong), the *ignorance savante qui se connaît*, which without succumbing to it, can justify the beauty of appearance.[275] What he demands as a Christian, is what, after Philip II, the French Baroque of the *grand siècle* had demanded for its own order: an aesthetic that has room in its heart for the most demanding asceticism. And this not purely as a matter of individual preference but as the presupposition for allowing and recognising earthly beauty. It is just this hierarchical ordering of illusion, disillusion and again an embracing illusion in the power of love that forms the fundamental Catholic response to the Lutheran dialectic. It is the attempt—which in its way the great German romantics continued—of human sensibility,[276] employing all its resources of judgment and taste, to depict reality at every level of being without abridgement or concealment. This ideal of a heart attuned to every level of the universe—*le cœur a son ordre*—manifests itself to Pascal as the human imitation of that archetypal and inimitable consuming of the heart of God in the death of love and in Christ's eternal transfiguration of love, for '*la grandeur de la foi éclate bien davantage lorsque l'on tend à l'immortalité par les ombres de la mort*'.[277]

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[269] *Cf.* E Wasmuth, 'Von der Vernunft des Herzens', appendix to *Pascal: Die Kunst zu Überzeugen* (1950), 356f.

[270] P 469 B 250 L 944.

[271] P 470 B 252 L 821.

[272] P 260, 262 B 342, 340 105, 741.

[273] P 37–38 B 32–33 L 585–586.

[274] J. Russier, *op. cit.*, 163–165.

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[275] P 308 B 327 L 83; *Trois discours sur la condition des grands*, 615–621.

[276] On Pascal's *sensibilité* and *tendresse raisonnable* and the relationship of *charité* and *amitié*, *cf.* Gilberte Périer, *Vie de Pascal*, 25f.

[277] Letter of 17 October 1651, 498. [The greatness of faith is much more brilliant when one approaches immortality through the shadows of death.]

HAMANN

1. ON THE EVE OF IDEALISM

Hamann, with his theological *Aesthetica in nuce*, stands in the background of the whole idealist movement, which he mysteriously overshadows yet equally mysteriously supersedes and frames, for no one, not even his closest friend Herder, not even Jacobi and the Münster circle, still less Kant, really understood his purpose; he points to a dimension that has never been filled, reaching out his hand over the decades, to Søren Kierkegaard and to the Léon Bloy of *Salut par les Juifs*. Hamann, more than anyone, has always been a solitary, indeed unique, figure in German letters: 'I work alone—with nobody to come to my aid with his understanding, judgment, even taste.'[1] And again: 'I have a feeling . . . that those who write for a few have more sense than those who write for many; unless you first have the few on your side, you will never win over the many.'[2] Christianity is the front on which he takes up his outpost, and he defends it from sinking in any way into humanism: from breaking down into poetry (Herder), philosophy (Kant), agnosticism for the sake of faith (Jacobi), pseudobiblical humanism (M. Mendelssohn) or pseudomystical freemasonry (Starck)—(to say nothing of the vapid Enlightenment of Nicolai and the 'Nicolaites;, or that 'crowned philosopher',

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[1] Written to Lindner, 30.12.1760 (Z 2, 55). Throughout, when quoting Hamann's works, I shall refer to Nadler's critical edition (Vienna, 1949–57) = N. Quotation of letters follows the critical edition of Ziesemer and Henkel (Inselverlag, 1955; so far 4 vols.) = Z. Quotation of letters to Jacobi follows Gildenmeister: *Hamanns Leben und Schriften V* (1868) = G. I also use the valuable but as yet incomplete edition with commentary published by Fritz Blanke and Lothar Schreiner (*Hamanns Hauptschriften erklärt*, Hrsg. von Fritz Blanke und Lothar Schreiner, Bertelsmann, 1956; so far 3 vols.) = H. Josef Nadler: *J. G. Hamann. Der Zeuge des Corpus mysticum* (Mueller, Salzburg, 1949) = Na.

[2] To Lindner, 5.5.1761 (Z 2, 85). Cf. the letter to Herder of 3.4.74: 'I live as though in the wilderness. I cannot endure any society. . . . Not one friend do I possess—except in Lindner an analogon and pillar of salt of friendship' (Z 3, 76).

Salomon de Prusse in Berlin, whom he courted so ardently and finally damned as the Antichrist). Yet these men are his friends, the circles in which his spirit moves, so that he fights with 'flesh and blood' and at the same time with the 'mighty despots of this darkness'. The friend must be the bitter foe; Hamann must, for example, spare Mendelssohn when, as the conscience incarnate of German idealism in its advance, he may not do so. 'Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, o ye my friends; for the hand of God hath rested upon me also.' And here he bids farewell, already in the twilight of death: 'Think not to add one single ell to me or to my stature. Let not the measure of my "greatness" be that of a giant or an angel, no not a handsbreath more than the common human ell. Lest the world be plundered to disguise and transfigure a putrid sinner with the aureole of a saint, make me, I beg you, no moustaches in my life, so long as I can still laugh with the rest of you. I myself will strip off my clothes, spread forth my hands as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands, and swim over the quiet-flowing waters of the past, or sink beneath them.'[3] In this, his last testament, Hamann speaks of undressing because, throughout his life, he went under masks and pseudonyms, as Kierkegaard was to do; but Hamann's disguise was even better. Both fight the religious fight in the heart of the hostile camp of the aesthetes, and thus Hamann can say that his testamentary 'undressing' will likely enough only make him more obscure to his critics than his masks.[4] Kierkegaard used *aesthetic* as a sharply defined concept, with an exact place in his triadic system. Hamann's concept has much the same range of meaning, but almost always with a touch of irony to it; for him, *aesthetic* means the jejune, bodiless attitude, typical of the Enlightenment, that finds the crude, physical, earthly quality of Christianity, its fleshliness, its crucifixion and resurrection and *corpus meum* too unrefined, preferring to withdraw to the airy castles of rationalism, or, indeed, into the 'ethereal edifice' of the 'purisms of Pure Reason'.[5] Few thinkers have demanded conceptual clarity with Hamann's insistence, and the climax of his critique of Mendelssohn's *Jerusalem* comes when he accuses Mendelssohn of being vague in order to deceive.[6] But this ironical use of the concept *aesthetic* is only part of the story; while Kierkegaard, who to begin with had sharply distinguished between the *aesthetic* and the *ethical*, subsequently strives toward a balance of the two,[7] Hamann allows the aesthetic to regain, without further transposition, the religious and Christian fulness of dimension inherent in it, and he even feels free to speak of the 'aesthetic obedience of the Cross'.[8] The title *Aesthetica in nuce* also makes use of this fully developed concept. A sentence like the following well illustrates the affinity and subtle difference between him and Kierkegaard: 'Talking to half-blinded art critics . . . I have to use what they give me, an aesthetic language of their own, with only one difference: theirs are the marks of arid fibres, mine, the better marks of a fresh green wood, theirs are trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots (Jud 12), mine, such as are planted by streams whose waters flow out of the Sanctuary.'[9] Hamann thus confronts a withered aesthetic with one that is full-blooded, finds his way straight back from the one to the other; but without having to espouse a Kierkegaardian dialectic to do so, for it was Hamann's belief that the act of *aisthēsis*, if it is not curtailed, is the original religious act itself, for all things are God's word and language, and therefore one who apprehends these things hears God himself speaking. For both Hamann and Kierkegaard, Socrates is a mythical and paradigmatic figure, but what seems to be a meeting point between the two men turns out to demonstrate the gap better, perhaps, than anything. For Kierkegaard, Socrates, the Socratic art of midwifery and Socratic ignorance are all the marks of the human, in sharp contrast to the divinely human, that which is of Christ. For Hamann, however, Christ himself appears directly through Socrates and his maieutic art, and Socratic ignorance is transfigured, becoming the 'oracular utterance of the great teacher of the heathen. If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him.'[10] And this brings Hamann directly to the inference 'that the grain of all our natural wisdom must decay, pass into ignorance, and . . . out of this death, this nothing, there must spring forth, in new creation, the life and being of a higher knowledge.' That is a sentiment that German mysticism and Kierkegaard's sworn enemy, Hegel, would have echoed.[11] Kierkegaard had no liking for Hamann's idea that the Christian and theological may appear directly through the secular and philosophical: 'Sometimes there seems to me to be an element of blasphemy involved.'[12] For Hamann, the Socratic *daimōn* and *Scheblimini*, the good Christian 'homely spirit', are secretly one and the same, and Socrates is, all unwitting, a Christian humorist. Hamann is speaking at the beginning of German idealism, and the hope that one could show how the mythical *in toto* led into, was transparent to revelation—the great theme of the old Schelling, upon whom, according to Horst Fuhrman, Hamann exerted a decisive influence[13]—belonged as yet to the future; Kierkegaard, writing at the end of the era, will have to set in order the borders of Christianity because of the infringements that have occurred.

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[3] *Fliegender Brief, 1. Fassung* (N 3, 404).

[4] *Ibid.*, 366.

[5] *Anzeige der Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (N 3, 279).

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[6] *Fliegender Brief, 1. Fassung*. 'The πρωτον φευδος, or principal mask, of the whole of that play of Mendelssohn's "in which our reason is deceived" consists in the way clear, definite concepts are missing.' (N 3, 394)

[7] 'Either-Or', II. Two of the titles are: 'The aesthetic validity of marriage', and 'The balance between the aesthetic and the ethical in the development of the personality', (in Hirsch's edition 3 and 165).

[8] *Zwey Scherflein I* (N 3, 234).

[9] *Fliegender Brief*, 1. Fassung (N 3, 378).

Hamann never wrote a philosophical aesthetic; even in his *Aesthetica in nuce*, which constitutes the main part of *The Crusading Philologist* (*Kreuzzüge eines Philologen*), he is speaking as a 'philo-logist', that is, as a lover of the Word, understood by him in its unity as divine and as human word. Since his conversion experience (in London, Easter 1758), which all his life he treated as undeniably an act of supernatural grace, since his great 'memorial', *The Diary of a Christian* (*Tagebuch eines Christen*), he could see the world only as the glory of God's love, emptying and abasing itself. All creation is *schechina*, a gleam from the glory of the presence of the Lord, and at the same time a pillar of clouds and fire; just as the visible word and the Scriptures are the invisible thought of the Spirit made gloriously manifest: '*Schechina*, tabernacle and *merkaba* of our feelings, thoughts and ideas through audible and visible signs of language.'[14] 'Speaking is a translation—from the language of angels into the language of men—so that thoughts become words, objects become names, images become signs; these may be poetic or kyriological, historic or symbolic or hieroglyphical, and philosophical or characterical.'[15] *Kyriological* means 'taken in its proper sense', but underneath we have Hamann's idea that this proper meaning is the Logos of the *Kurios*, the Word of the Lord Christ, and that also pertains for the 'poetic' words, the 'historic' words, and so on. For it is God who speaks, speaking as Creator and creating through the Word. And thus he is 'the powerful Speaker' and 'free Potter',[16] 'the poet at the beginning of days',[17] and the word is, as Herder and Novalis will also say, a poem, (Claudel's *art poétique*) in a wider sense than the word had hitherto possessed. But God 'crowned the physical revelation of his glory (*schechina*) with his masterpiece, man. He created man in the form of God—in the image of God created he him. By this decree of the Creator's, the most intricate knots of human nature and destiny are loosed. Blind heathens have recognised that invisibility is something man has in common with God. The concealed shape of our bodies, the countenance of our heads and the extremities of our arms, these are the visible form in which we go our way'—here he alludes not just to the hidden spirit that appears by means of the body, but to the trinitarian nature of the body's form: the Father begetting in secret, the Son appearing, and the Spirit as active extremity. 'But the creation of the scene relates to the creation of men as does epic to dramatic poetry. The former came about through the Word; the latter through action.'[18] The outside world has had its place given to it, but through his freedom man is intrinsically destiny and event, a truth that already comes to light in the creation myth. Not until man does the profundity of existence unfold itself and yield a present with the scope of history, of past and future, each being an expression of Spirit. Man comes from God and goes to God, and as present he can be interpreted only protologically and eschatologically; and so, when Hamann speaks of man as the highest word of the Poet-God, at once he must also speak of the Fall and of how man came to clothe himself with the skins of animals, which he explains derives originally 'from the general durability of animal characters,[19] which became known through Adam's association with the Old Poet, (whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue Apollyon)'. When the Devil too is a poet, 'the aesthetic' is again being understood in its fashionable meaning, as fiction and unreality; in the Fall, aesthetics of this sort made chaos of the ordered poem, so that we were 'left with only a jumble of verses and *disiecti membra poëtae* for our use. The scholar's role is to collect them up; the philosopher's, to interpret them; and the modest role of the poet is to imitate them—or, yet more daring! . . . to give them a destiny'.[20] But it is not quite clear what Hamann means by *poet* here. Is it the poet in the narrower sense who thus becomes a renewer of the divine creative act? Such an idea would be quite typical of Hamann. Nevertheless, the task of reassembling a fragmentary world and giving it a destiny is not simply the privilege of the poetic individual, but of man as such—for Hamann, ethics and religion have an essential part to play, for only thus can man and creation be healed. 'But how are we to raise up the extinct language of Nature from the dead?' Hamann answers by showing us 'a shortcut via hyperbole', (a reference to 1 Cor 12.31); here we have an exuberant aesthetic, embracing the whole man and his whole existence. 'Let us now hear the conclusion of the whole' of the 'newest aesthetic, which is the oldest: Fear God, and give glory to him for the hour of his judgment is come, and worship him that made Heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters!'[21] In this aesthetic, then, beauty is treated unequivocally as a trascendental concept constituted by analogy, and analogy is given the status of its central method, so that no objective or historical sphere of existence is excluded nor given open or secret identification, for although he bounds from one step to another, or rather, precisely because we can see him doing so, we are nonetheless shown an all-embracing beauty that can ultimately be none other than the glory, the *schechina*, of God.

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[10] *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten II* (N 2, 74).

[11] Quoted by Hegel in *Über Hamanns Schriften* (Werke [1835] XVII, 64).

[12] *Nachlass-Papiere 1833–43*, p. 142 (quotation from H 1, 49).

[13] H 1, 40f.

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[14] *Zwey Scherflein II* (N 3, 237). For some reason the meaning of this fundamental concept of Hamann's escaped Nadler, who identifies the *schechina* with the tabernacle (N 6, 337).

[15] *Aesthetica in nuce* (N 2, 199).

[16] *Ibid.*, 200.

[17] *Ibid.*, 206.

[18] *Ibid.*, 198, 200.

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[19] *Ibid.*, 198.

[20] *Ibid.*, 198f.

Now we have an outline, however hasty, of the area and can measure it out more carefully and trace the hidden proportions of theological aesthetic. Let us begin this time at the centre.

'The revelation in the flesh is the midpoint of everything. This is the meaning of the divine Word in its entirety, and the reason why it is given to us.'[22] 'The best part of heaven ... containing the heart and bowels of God's mercy ... is in the sending of his only begotten Son.'[23] 'Thus even the furnishings and animal housekeeping of our bodies are a prophecy; everything is made through him who has redeemed us. Had he not wanted to redeem us, nothing would be there; this life, this existence in him and in his love, is the light of men.' Thus is 'Christ the head' of the *whole* body, thus the 'measure of each part'.[24] This he is both as creator and as redeemer, and therefore as representative, of each man, who has his measure and his rightness in him and through him. 'The witness of the Holy Spirit in our souls is not dependent on memory, and even if we forget everything, Jesus the 'Crucified represents all wisdom and all strength, all reason and all senses. It would be more possible to live without one's heart and head than without him. He is the head of our nature and all our powers and the source of the movement that in a Christian can no more stand still than the pulse in a living man. But only a Christian is a living man, an eternally immortally living man, for he lives, moves and exists in God, with God, indeed, for God.'[25] Christ is in the fullest sense 'the only man upon whom the Spirit of the Lord rested, just as Gideon's fleece alone lay soaked in dew amid the barren land all about',[26] 'and all the Scriptures are the life story of the only righteous man, who came into the world to atone for the crooked ways of men and restore the royal way through his suffering and life'.[27] We, however, 'cannot answer God, appear before his judgment, reply to his questions, without first consulting with the Spirit of his Son and in faith, in trust in his intercession, seeking hearing and forgiveness, grace and freedom'.[28] From *Biblical Reflections* (*Biblische Betrachtungen*) to *The Final Page* (*Das letzte Blatt*), Hamann never deviated one iota from this consistent and unbroken Christocentricity; the commentary on Mt 22.42 'What think ye of Christ?' is a good example of this:

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[21] *Ibid.*, 211, 217.

[22] *Biblische Betrachtungen* (N 1, 242).

[23] *Ibid.*, 263.

[24] *Ibid.*, 237.

[25] *Gedanken über meinen Lebenslauf* (N 2, 48).

> Man is a thinking creature. The Fall cost him his brain, his spiritual brain. For us, all thoughts of Christ or God are hidden, indeed repugnant. A supernatural change of heart, a beatific illumination, is indispensable if we are able to think rightly of Christ. We men must expect God to examine and test us through thoughts as well as actions—above all, we must test and examine our thoughts of Christ, for God will base his judgment on them. . . . What think ye of Christ? . . . Of his glory? . . . Whose son is he? What think ye of his person? What think ye of his anointing—of him who anointed him, the Father; of the office to which he was anointed; of the Spirit with which he was anointed; of the measure of his anointing; of the spices and sweet odours thereof; of the beauty and charm; of the worth and delightfulness; of the virtue and power your redeemer has to soften your hearts and heal your wounds? . . . Without right thoughts of Christ, it is impossible to think rightly about God. . . . This question is the best guide to self-examination. . . . This question puts a gag on all impertinence and useless curiosity. . . . This question overturns all prejudices and errors in respect of Christ himself and of all other things. And at the same time this question clarifies Christ's thoughts towards us. As we think of him, he thinks of us, and as he thinks of us, we become, for his thoughts are creations, secrets and miraculous. . . .[29]

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[26] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 48).

[27] *Ibid.*, 120.

[28] *Ibid.*, 134.

[29] Written around 1760 (N 4, 249f.).

2. BEAUTY AND KENŌSIS

The God-Man is the key to God as to the World. 'None but the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, has given an exegesis of his fulness and grace of truth', in that in his unity he represents both the unity and the trinitarian nature of God and, likewise sums up within himself the unity and multiplicity[30] of the world: 'Omnes-Unus πανταϛ-Εἷϛ.'[31] In that he is the visibility of God, the truth of the world and man, the Incarnation of the Word of God becomes the absolute canon of all aesthetics in accordance with its principal qualities: (1) to have become man in an act of gracious freedom, (2) to have done so in a most pristine act of self-emptying, (3) to have embraced the flesh through becoming flesh and through the flesh to have healed the spirit, and (4) to have superseded all the unreality in human thought and imagination through his reality in the flesh, bringing them back into the realm of reality. These are the four principal aspects of Hamann's theology, and they open the way for a formulation and critique of his idea of beauty as a whole.

1. God's appearance in Christ is free. It is grace, not nature, and therefore cannot be reduced to the schema with which we are familiar within the world, 'ground and appearance', 'content and form'. Although his emphasis on the senses borders on pure empiricism, he never, not even in the secular sphere, acknowledges a mere schema of matter and form. The language of men, unlike that of animals, always unites two things, an organic relationship and a free determining act, so that it is possible for men 'to join together quite opposing ideas using the external signs and sounds of words' and 'to express a single image of our souls using quite different signs. Here we find simultaneously a reminder of the likeness of God and of the Fall. To the first belonged Adam's freedom to name the animals as he wished; through the second, the misuse of this freedom arose and with it all the inconvenience that it caused.'[32] And if it is true that all subhuman nature contains an abundance of images of

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[30] *Golgotha und Scheblimini* (N 3, 315).

[31] *Das letzte Blatt* (N 3, 410).

[32] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 220).

human life, Providence and the properties of God—indeed 'that the whole of man's physical nature, from his conception to his decay'—is 'a typical history' of mankind, 'still the only key to their understanding is redemption itself', God's free, forming intervention from above. 'All our limbs are claves [i.e., violin pegs] for our souls, which exist in a wonderful relationship to the merely audible sounds. Their harmony is not the wood, not the strings, nor the fingers; yet it is brought forth by all three in union.'[33] There is harmony, then, between the expressing body and the expressed soul, and yet a lasting freedom in the relationship of expression; if this is true even of the spirit within the world, how much more so of the divine spirit.

Here is the basis of Hamann's entire linguistic philosophy, which, incidentally, develops further after his reading of Aristotle; it is a philosophy in which there is clearly a peripatetic element. Repudiating Herder's enthusiastic naturalism in a devastating caricature,[34] he moves directly from the organic character of man to the 'judicial and magisterial dignity' that corresponds to his freedom, and it is here that Hamann perceives the essential quality of the spirit. 'So do neither instinct nor *sensus communis* define man, neither natural nor national rights the prince.' 'Consciousness, attentiveness, abstraction and even moral conscience seem largely to be energies of our freedom', but again, this is the freedom of a body and soul; 'thus there is nothing in our understanding that was not first in our senses, just as there is nothing to our entire bodies that has not at one time been through our or our parents' stomachs. The *stamina* and *menstrua* of our reason are therefore, in the truest sense, revelations and traditions that we receive and make our own. The analogy provided by animal metabolism is the only ladder to the anagogic knowledge of the spiritual economy.'[35] 'The secret of the marriage between such contrasting natures as the outer and inner man, or body and soul', true receptivity and free spontaneity, this genuinely Aristotelian mystery of a free spontaneity within the very process of reception, of a spiritual apprehending, then, of sensible material, of a transformation into spiritual revelation of what arrives as sensible revelation is the reason that 'man is not just a living soil, but also the son of the soil, and not jut soil and seed (according to the systems of the materialists and the idealists), but the king of the field'. Applied to language, this means that 'man *learns* to use and direct all his limbs and senses, including, of course, his ear and tongue, because he *can* learn, he *must* learn, and he is glad to, *wants* to, learn. It follows that the origin of language is just as natural and human as the origin of all our actions, skills and arts. Yet despite the fact that every apprentice contributes to his instruction ... *learning*, in the true sense of the word, is no more invention that it is mere recollection.'[36] Man has freedom, then, to self-determination, yet predetermination to be free; the necessity of interpreting sensible revelation through the spirit, by analogy logically brings with it the possibility of failing to apprehend that revelation. If man's language is a function of this peculiarly human factor, the possibility and necessity of freedom, his word will always be a right or wrong answer to the word he receives from the self-revealing Creator, and he himself is, to the depths of his being, intended for and disposed to dialogue. For all its Aristotelian and sensualist foundations, Hamann's theory of language is a Christian anthropology quite without parallel in its time; neither Herder nor the idealistic theory of language (of Humboldt) showed any interest in it, and it was not taken up again until our own century by the masters of the dialogical principle. Here it must be said (in refutation of Unger's interpretation) that this theory is ultimately unified; Hamann's logic leads him to understand the Creation and nature as God speaking and proclaiming himself, but man as fallen, unable to achieve his self-determination, no longer able to respond with interpretation, and thus coming to need the revelation of Christ in the form of inward grace and outward history of salvation (as it appears in the Scriptures) in order to apprehend what God intended the world to mean.

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[33] *Ibid.*, 228f.

[34] *Philologische Einfälle und Zweifel* (N 3, 42f.).

[35] *Ibid.*, 37–9.

When Hamann says that God has revealed himself to men 'in nature and in his word', 'each revelation declaring and supporting the other',[37] or when he declares that 'nature and history are . . . the two great *commentarii* on the divine Word',[38] this doctrine of the 'Two Books' should not be taken in a neutral sense, for Hamann explicitly decrees that the Book of Scripture is to be ranked higher than the Book of Nature; he 'shows the primacy of the former'.[39] 'Is there any book, indeed, is even the Book of Nature itself like unto that which alone can uncover for us the veil of nature and her own heart, yes, the heart of her Creator?'[40] 'Nature vanishes before thy word. Here is the Holy of Holies; the whole of creation is but a forecourt.'[41] 'This is the Tree of Life, whose leaves are to heal the peoples, whose fruits are to nourish the souls.'[42] In God's Word lies 'the only key that can open to us the knowledge in both books'.[43] 'I found the unity of the divine will in the redemption of Jesus Christ, so that all history, all miracles, all commandments and works of God converged upon this midpoint.'[44] Therefore 'all history is . . . like nature, a sealed book, a concealed witness, a riddle that cannot be solved unless we plough with some heifer other than our reason'.[45] If the two revelations relate to each other as what is general and open relates to what is particular and secret, still 'the unity of the Originator' is reflected 'in the very dialect of his works—in all a single Note of immeasurable height and depth'[46]—and that note is the eternal Son, who as the Word, is the end toward which all things begin truly to speak, including even man.

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[36] *Ibid.*, 40f.

[37] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N I, 8f.).

2. If the Word of God in Creation finds interpretation in the Word of Christ in his Incarnation, and if this note rings on in the Word of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, then the immeasurable height and depth of the One Note are the simultaneity of exaltation and abasement, 'a proof of the most glorious majesty and most empty depletion—a single miracle of such endless repose, likening God to nothing, that you must in

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[38] *Brocken* (N 1, 303).
[39] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 202).
[40] *Ibid.*, 119.
[41] *Ibid.*, 49.
[42] *Ibid.*, 92.
[43] *Brocken* (N 1, 303).
[44] *Gedanken ueber meinen Lebenslauf* (N 2, 40).
[45] *Sokr. Denkw.* (N 2, 65).
[46] *Aesth.* (N 2, 204).

all conscience deny your existence or be a dumb beast; but at the same time of such infinite power, which fills all in all, that you are caught up helplessly in fervent devotion'.[47] And this is so because freedom is 'the maximum and minimum of all our natural powers',[48] and because God speaks to his creature as befits its limits and laws: in the 'condescension' to very nothingness, even thus to reveal his all. Even in Creation, not just in redemption through the flesh and the Cross, this was a fundamental law, yet it involves no paradox, because in the guise of the utmost humility God really does show his utmost love and glory, and because 'Golgotha', God's final *kenōsis*, already contains within itself '*scheblimini*': 'Sit thou at my right hand.'[49] Here Hamann, in Luther's footsteps, makes his strongest statement, which at the same time governs the whole form of his aesthetic, saying that God 'condescends to the blindness of Adam', that 'a dissimulation by God toward men'[50] takes place, that he hides himself in the form of wretchedness just as King Saul did 'amid the refuse and the sweepings',[51] that he 'sought out' for himself 'the most contemptible of nations',[52] that he left 'Heaven and everything to cleave to his wife' and share 'with her her fate, her poverty, her sin and shame'.[53] But the same wonder that fills Hamaan at the depletion of God in the servant figure of Christ fills him when he contemplates it in the Holy Scriptures, for there 'old rags' are twisted into ropes to pull man out when he lies trappped like Jeremiah, in the miry pit,[54] and one must, with Paul, venture to speak of the foolishness and infirmity of God,[55] because 'God has adapted as much as he could, condescending to man's tendencies and thoughts, indeed, even to his prejudices and weaknesses'.[56] 'The

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[47] *Ibid.*

[48] *Philol. Einfälle und Zweifel* (N 3, 38).

[49] *Cf.* L. Schreiner's commentary on *Golgotha und Scheblimini* (N 3, 291f.; H 7, esp. 47, 136).

[50] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 19).

[51] *Ibid.*, 97.

[52] *Brocken* 3 (N 1, 303).

[53] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 211).

[54] *Ibid.*, 5.

[55] *Ibid.*, 6.

[56] *Ibid.*, 10.

Holy Ghost became an historian of actions such as men perform, foolish, nay sinful', and like David, whose pose as a madman was sheer cunning, 'he daubs the doors of the gates so that no Achish could make any sense out of them, signs people took for the handwriting of an idiot, and, worse still, he lets his spittle run down onto his beard. The inspiration that he gave as God's word makes him seem to contradict and pollute himself. He has the lies of an Abraham, the bloodguilt of Lot, he distorts the man pleasing to God into the figure of one who, as is thought, lies under God's greatest punishment.'[57] 'Thus the Scriptures are the *kenōsis* of the holy *pneuma* in an empty 'wind' that has become an invisible 'nothingness',[58] 'the still small voice that we . . . hear in our hearts',[59] so small that it has shrunk to the voice of 'the small understanding of men'. He lays this principle down forcibly: 'It is an aspect of the unity in the divine revelation that the Spirit of God abases itself through the human pencil of the holy men that it itself impells, divesting itself of its majesty just as much as does the Son of God through the servant figure, and in the same way as the entire Creation [of the Father] is a work of the highest humility. Merely to admire God, who alone is wise, in the Creation is an insult perhaps not unlike the abuse accorded to an intelligent man when the rabble estimates his worth by the coat he is wearing. If, then, the divine style, to put to shame the strength and ingenuousness of all profane scribes, even chooses the foolish, the trivial, the ignoble, it must be admitted that the eyes of a friend, a confidant, a lover, illuminated, enthusiastic, armed with jealousy, are needed if the rays of heavenly glory are to be perceived in such a disguise. . . . The sublime in Caesar's style is its carelessness.'[60] Clouds in Hamann always have a deliberate ambiguity; they refer to the

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[57] *Ibid.*, 99.

[58] *Golgotha und Scheblimini* (N 3, 310). Also the symbolic 'Apology for the Letter H' (N 3, 91f.); this has to do with a neologist who was anxious to do away with this letter because it cannot be heard (in speech), and in defending it Hamann was defending both himself and the breath of the Spirit, thus dismissed by the Enlightenment as superfluous.

[59] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 121).

[60] *Kleeblatt hellenistischer Blätter 2* (N 2, 171). On the whole subject, see Helmuth Schreiner's *Die Menschwerdung Gottes in der Theologie J. G. Hamanns* (Tübingen 2, 1950).

Jewish pillar of cloud, Aristophanes' satirical play, and the clouds of glory upon which the Son of Man comes to judgment.[61] If faith is to be possible, offence must always be possible. God has emptied himself so he could write a children's book for us, and Hamann is fascinated by the thought that his friend Professor Kant should be commissioned to write a physics book for children; he gives encouragement and instruction in two magnificent letters: 'To win oneself praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings!—to share in this ambition is no mean task, and one must not begin by stealing brightly coloured feathers, but by divesting oneself of all superiority in age and wisdom of one's own free will and renouncing all vanity. A philosophical book for children would therefore have to appear as simple, foolish and tasteless as a book written by God for men.' 'The greatest law involved in the method for teaching children therefore consists in condescending to their weakness. However, nobody can understand this practical principle or put it into practice unless, to use a vulgar expression, he is crazy about children and loves them without really knowing why.'[62] Thus in the simpleness of childish stammerings, the simplicity (*monotēs*) of the infinite God becomes visible and comprehensible, although, of course, only for an understanding that through *kenōsis* of itself in the simple act of faith, has itself become a suitable organ for the divine simplicity. This is where Hamann's entire Socratism belongs; the point is not just to clear a space for the unpretentiousness of the senses and imagination in the face of the lofty claims of the reason, but to have reason itself pass away in Socratic ignorance, which is only Pauline ignorance (1 Cor 8.2), gnosis finding expression in faith, in concealed form. For 'the grain of all our natural wisdom' must 'decay, pass into unknowingness', so that 'out of this *death*, out of this *nothingness* the *life* and *being* of a higher knowledge can spring forth in new creation'.[63] The fact that 'the father of modern philosophy was forced to forget, deny and reject all that he knew and saw this as the only means of finding the truth'[64]—although it shows that this is the law that governs our natural thinking—cannot by itself guarantee that any alternative will be found other than 'newly polished errors'; the question is what *spirit* lies behind this self-denial. 'What is meant by the distinction between natural and revealed religion? To my mind nothing is involved other than the difference between the eye of someone who sees a picture without understanding at all painting or drawing or the story being depicted and the eye of a painter, between the natural ear and the musical ear. When Socrates referred to his familiar spirit, could one not say the same of him as we read of Peter: he knew not what he said?'[65] For he was inspired by a prophetic spirit. 'Socrates entices his fellow citizens out of the labyrinths of their learned sophists to a truth that lies in a hidden realm, . . . to the service of an unknown God.'[66] Socrates's ignorance was a feeling',[67] says Hamann, meaning the organ for the reality of the living, hidden God, called by him elsewhere *faith*.[68]

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[61] Cf. *Wolken* (N 2, 108); *cf.* N 1, 204, 221.

[62] *Zugabe zweener Liebesbriefe* (N 2, 372f.).

[63] *Sokr. Denkw. 2* (N 2, 74).

It is this organ that enables man to transcend reason, which has fallen into the distinction between good and evil, and find his way back to a complete affirmation of the world and of God in the world. Here Hamann is close to Augustine's aesthetic theodicy, while having a clearer insight into the inner analogy of the concept *aesthetic*. It is 'the Father of lights' who 'declares the darkness to be his creature'.[69] 'God is everywhere—in Heaven, on earth, in the miracles of Moses, in the obstinacy of Pharaoh; he caused the serpent to speak and Adam to eat; by him Israel was sent into Egypt and led with glory out of slavery there; he made the children of his anger into children of his grace. If God has his prophets, his Church, his altars, then he has granted some to Satan as well.'[70] In pictorial language: 'The carpenters of Solomon and of Hiram had a common share in the building of the temple and the city of Zion. Light and darkness, earth and water, were equally necessary for the Creation of the earth. . . . Esau was after all blessed for the sake of Isaac and Abraham. . . . There was, then, the spirit of Wisdom in Israel and in Tyre; it taught Moses the secret story of creation and redemption. . . . It prospered the Tyrian craftsmen in their brass work, filling them with wisdom, understanding and invention.'[71] In the first place, certainly, these words are spoken against the aesthetics of the Enlightenment, which called for a mere imitation of 'the beautiful' in Nature; Hamann's answer to that was to restore the *whole* of nature, the universe, complete with its 'left-hand side', especially its physicality and irrationality, its *Sturm und Drang*. But with him this contradiction is only in the foreground, and he means much more: the unity of the supernatural world, in which the 'left-hand side' is the state of fallenness, and the 'right-hand side', God's redemptive movement descending even to the darkness, his wisdom become foolishness. Here, then, Dionysus does not stand over against him who was crucified but becomes rather his mask, the mask of him who is the true 'critic' and who 'will shiver the aesthetic bow of the fine arts into pieces in the valley of beautiful nature. Idols of porcelain and glazed earth, these are the ideas of our fair spirits; their brightest notions, springing from the tenderest feeling and hurrying back to the sensations, are filthier than the soiled garb of a treader in the wine press, whose eyes laugh like the doves that pull Venus's chariot, who hath washed his coat in the blood of the grapes and hath teeth like a dragon; pitch-blacker than the black juice of Circe . . . through which the reflections of the fair spirits, whose object is always the fairest beauty, achieve their noblest expression'.[73] With Hamann, the aesthetic rules of Enlightenment poetry are set on a level with the Old Testament law, and when one transcends it to enter into the truth, that is called 'becoming naked of all dramatic rightness' and being delivered up 'to the God of love', 'who never ceases to be a child, though his little arm performs great wonders. . . . The prize of his bow is the fulfilment of the entire law, the sting of his arrows is the heart and death of every commandment.'[73] This is evangelical *Sturm und Drang* of the Holy Ghost: 'When Diderot rejects the burlesque and the marvellous as dross, things human and divine lose their truest character. Breasts and loins of the art of poetry dry up. The *mōron* of the Homeric gods gives his muse the quality of marvel, is the salt of her immortality. The foolishness of the *xenōn daimoniōn* that Paul seemed to be proclaiming to the Athenians was the secret of his joyous message of peace'.[74] To understand Hamann and his aesthetics one must not stray far from the miracle of 'divine foolishness'; the whole world is a free descent by the divine spirit into the hells of createdness and materiality, and it is this very descent, this humility and poverty of God, that radiates forth in glory from all things: that is what is actually manifest and therefore the heart, too, of all beauty. If Christ reveals the Trinity in the flesh,[75] the entire creation of the Father and the entire writings of the Holy Ghost reveal the glory of the Son's humiliated love—and the art of men receives no other canon from Hamann.

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[64] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 222).

[65] *Brocken* 3 (N 1, 303f.).

[66] *Sokr. Denkw. 2* (N 2, 77).

[67] *Ibid.*, 73.

[68] *Cf.* H 2, 139; 'Thus there is no distinction between faith and feeling' (Blanke).

[69] *Einfälle über die Begierde, ein Original zu sein* (N 2, 378).

[70] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 96).

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[71] *Ibid.*, 117f.

[72] *Leser und Kunstrichter* (N 2, 346).

3. With this in mind, we can understand why in the descent of the Logos the principal stress is laid on the flesh, and therefore on senses and physicality. Hume's empiricism becomes the ally in the struggle against the citadel of rationalistic Enlightenment in a Babylonian Berlin. 'Not just the whole warehouse of the reason, but even the treasury of faith, rest upon this staff', upon the 'five loaves of barley', the 'five senses'.[76] By means of our senses we make contact with reality, and although it is true that the reason has the power to abstract concepts from it, these cannot replace or vie with that experience. 'Thus the foundation of religion lies in our existence as a whole',[77] and this 'sensing' of reality is expressed chiefly in images. 'Senses and passion speak and understand nothing but images'.[78] Hamann agrees with Herder's 'oldest document' to the extent that the first creation,

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[73] *Fünf Hirtenbriefe 4* (N 2, 362f.).

[74] *Ibid.*, 5 (N 2, 367).

[75] Texts in Na, index under 'Trinität' (p. 507).

[76] *Brocken* (N 1, 298).

[77] *Zweifel und Einfälle* (N 3, 191f.).

[78] *Aesth.* (N 2, 197).

the first statement of reality, necessarily found expression in images in the Genesis story; in the way he receives images from the world and in the way he creates images man is an analogous fellow creator with God[79]—'hence that mythical and poetic vein in all religions, their foolishness and offensive form in the eyes of an heterogeneous, incompetent philosophy, cold as ice and lean as a hound.'[80] Hamann is profoundly anti-Gnostic; the flesh, if it was chosen by God, can least of all be called impure.[81] By the same token, he is no sensualist à la Heinse, for he means 'the senses of a Christian',[82] those senses that can see, hear and feel God through the flesh. 'The witness of the ears, of the eyes, of the feelings, this is the foundation of the Gospel. How can any revelation be surer that these?'[83] If God expresses himself physically in the Creation, Christ's becoming man and the incorporation of the world within him are the fulfilment of God's poetry. Therefore all theology was originally poetic, and Hamann quotes the words of Martin Opitz: 'In the beginning, poetry was none other than a concealed theology and an instruction in divine matters', and he deduces from this: 'for this reason drama was a part of the heathen liturgy.'[84] 'Poetry is the mother language of the human race'[85]—but only when our senses rest with simplicity in the Word of God, and the peace of God on earth is not 'made too salty' by the 'whoring taste of Reason'.[86]

But that is the state of affairs the Fall has brought about. That absolute poetry in which everything belonging to the senses was God's Word to man and man's reply to God is a paradisial and lost state. 'All tasted and saw, at first hand, the deed still fresh, the goodwill of the Craftsman as he played in his own earth and delighted in the sons of men. Not yet was any creature made subject against its will to the vanity and slavery of the transient system. ... All that nature displayed was a word—the sign, symbol and pledge of a new, secret, inexpressible, but for that all the more intense union, communication and association of divine energies and ideas. Everything man in the beginning heard, saw with his eyes, looked upon and with his hands touched was a living word; for the Word was God.'[87] If one wishes to understand the fundamental meaning of man, broken apart in sin and dualistic as he is, one must always bear in mind this lost protological state in which everything was unity of body and soul, God and man, and was therefore word and dialogue.

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[79] *Ibid.*, 206f.

[80] *Zweifel und Einfälle* (N 3, 191f.).

[81] *Aesth.* (N 2, 200).

[82] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 118).

[83] *Ibid.*, 244.

[84] *Fünf Hirtenbriefe* 5 (N 2, 365).

[85] *Aesth.* (N 2, 197).

[86] *Konxompax* (N 3, 224).

Language, taken in its original meaning, is the reason that *ab origine* always either hears words by means of the senses or else expresses itself in the realm of the senses by means of words; by contrast the realm of the senses is for Hamann centred in the act of begetting and giving birth. Thus the original biblical idea of *knowing*, that is, begetting, is taken seriously again. But it is this same original unity that has disintegrated in the Fall, becoming a dualism—empty reason and sensuality bereft of reason—that originally expresses itself in knowledge as 'knowledge of good and evil' (that is, man's departure from a naive acceptance of faith in goodness) and in the realm of the senses as the emerging 'nakedness' of sexual distinction. Not that Hamann would wish paradisial man conceived of, in Gnostic fashion, as sexless—after all, as we saw, the power to beget and bring forth is the most original image of God;[88] but even upon this image disorder and devastation have fallen, as is proved by the phenomenon of shame. 'The knowledge of good and evil and the sufficient reason of a system depending upon this contradiction—in these is the oldest and highest problem of reason . . . Furthermore, the basic concept of good and evil is as undifferentiated and transcendent as the natural difference between the sexes is a *verum signaculum Creatoris*';[89] this contradiction permeates reason and sex alike. And again: 'The secret parts of our nature, upon which all taste for, all enjoyment of beauty, all truth and goodness are founded, bear relation, like that tree of God's in the midst of the Garden, to *knowledge* and *life*. Both are causes as well as effect of love. The coals thereof are coals of fire and a flame of the Lord; for God is love, and the life is the light of men. These three bear witness for us in Heaven and in earth. Innocence knows of no difference between good and evil and therefore knows of no disgrace or shame. Guilt, dreading neither witness nor avenger, is not sullen or ashamed; but mounts up to marriage with a Hel when God dwells within. In the same way as one can speak of *burning cold* and *cold fire*, two opposing effects can be deduced from any cause and two opposed causes from any effect.'[90] Thus Hamann settles the ancient dispute of the Church fathers—whether the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life in Paradise were one or two trees—in favour of the one tree; usurped knowledge is usurped sex, when, according to the will of the Creator, both should have fallen out of grace and in faith. Life and light could have been one, as love, but with sin there enters into both, Logos and sex alike, the contradiction of burning cold and cold fire. Hamann had profound things to say about the insatiable curiosity of sinful reason,[91] in the face of which the spirits of Scripture and nature remain, 'like the Saviour before Herod', dumb, and there can be no doubt that he is also referring to his own, insatiable lust for knowledge and reading, just as, in sexual lust, he depicts the other side of his inner infirmities.[92] Together the two are the issue of 'the oldest pet sin of self-idolatry'.[93]

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[87] *Ritter von Rosenkreuz* (N 3, 32).

[88] 'To be a father is the highest authorship . . . ' (Z 3, 98).

[89] *Schürze von Feigenblättern* (N 3, 212).

In the case of reason it is easy to show its contradictory dialectic: the 'dilemma' between 'nothing and something', which become 'opposed like good and evil'; 'the perception of the One in the many', which nourishes[94] 'the extra and suprasensual, or transcendental, light of reason' in its empty abstraction—these false mysteries (naked reason is by definition absolutely without secrets, as *Konxompax* shows) are revealed by Socrates, but in fact they reveal themselves in the end as clearly as they did to the couple in Paradise who had to perceive their nakedness. But while Enlightened and Kantian reason meets this crisis by putting on a fig leaf, it is in fact Socrates who, having brought about the stripping of reason in her sin and shame, is truly chaste. The thirst for knowledge (in terms of the distinction between good and evil) is a usurping of divine judgment, for 'the true element of right and wrong are unknown to us',[95] and the will to achieve what is right by one's own efforts 'turns into the greatest wrong';[96] only when the reason becomes dependent upon Socratic and Pauline ignorance can it be brought into the realm of salvation.

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[90] *Das stellenlose Blatt* (N 3, 213).

[91] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 10f.). From birth the sinner is without a sense of hearing; *ibid.*, 14, 91 and *cf.* 116. We must renounce the superstition of human darkness if our eyes are to be opened; *ibid.*, 218f.

[92] To M. Mendelssohn, 13.9.70: 'Meanwhile there still dwells in my breast the original sin of scholarly curiosity, addiction to reading and a kind of ill-defined lust for things that are not worthwhile, or at any rate beyond my horizon at present.' (Z 3, 4). *Cf.* to J. F. Reichardt, 28.7.82: 'I am always afraid that my heart evaporates away or has its taste spoiled because it can only communicate via the retort of a brain that, alas, is burnt out; yet love atones for all these sins, many though they are.' (Z 4, 408). To F. H. Jacobi, 12.8.82: 'But really my whole life is more stupefying than cultivating—builds up rather than breaks down the seat of the evil' (Z 4, 416).

[93] *Konxompax* (N 3, 224).

But how is the dialectic of sex (and with it the whole realm of the senses) to be approached? Here Hamann's groping speculation reached its summit, but inevitably this was at the same time its crisis. Two tendencies struggle for supremacy, and neither can show the way independent of the other. In the one tendency (prominent in the early period) there is an eagerness to return to the innocence of the original state; shame would be reduced to mere convention, and sex would have the poison taken from it and the naturalness of Paradise restored. Hence the constant reference to sexual matters, to the pudenda, seen as man's good and fruitful natural source—a kind of Lutheran Freudianism. But at the same time Hamann knows that reintegration is not a matter for fallen man, for he as sinner is the real pudendum of Creation, the disgrace of God himself:

> The human race and the Fall are the nakedness of God, the shame of Creation—the drunken Noah is simultaneously a symbol for the human race, whose natural corruption is expressed through

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[94] *Ibid.*, N 3, 218.

[95] To Herder, 18.11.82 (Z 4, 462).

[96] *Golgotha und Scheblimini* (N 3, 299).

> an intoxication and the consequent inability to be aware of its own disgrace. Let us no longer join Ham and jeer at the nakedness of our father and our own nature in the barbarians, savages, et cetera. What did the Jews and the wiser heathens—Shem and Japheth—achieve? Did the law and philosophy they had suffice to repair the Fall of Adam? They went both of them backward (Is 44.25). They knew neither of them the corruption of their nature—they did no more than spread a coverlet over it, a cloak so much their shoulders were able to bear. Further than that their justice, their strength, their wisdom did not go. What Ham was mocking when he jeered at the nakedness of his father and attributed it to wine was, like all sin, a mystery of God's, who used it to reveal his wisdom, power and goodness and justice. It was the same spirit of Ham that fell into mockery when it heard the disciples talking in tongues.[97]

'A dying man is like Noah when he awoke from his drunkenness, for things of the senses and the growth of our vineyard take possession of our heads, and we are no longer aware of ourselves. Happy he who upon this awakening finds about him a cover to rescue him from eternal shame and disgrace—and who sees how greatly he needed it.'[98] There can be no covering up, then, of this shame through human effort—in that sphere the truth would inevitably be revealed—but as the end shows, only covering through the cloak of the grace of Christ, for he has already uncovered and borne the real disgrace in his flesh.

And thus the later Hamann turns his gaze away from an unattainable protology to the eschatology toward which man and the world are making their way. Thus, as Nadler in particular had depicted, the thought that *sexus* (and with it the split between *logos* and life) might be overcome becomes increasingly prominent, especially in *The Flying Letter—Undressing and Transfiguration.*[99] And yet Nadler forces the Magus into a systematic development that ends up with almost Gnostic or Origenian traits, abandoning what matters, the centre: the incarnation of the *Logos*, which is 'the one mystery of

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[97] *Betrachtungen über Newtons Abhandlung* (N 1, 316f.).

[98] *Ibid.*, 318.

[99] *Fliegender Brief, Entkleidung und Verklärung* (N 3, 347–407).

Judaism and the *prolēpsis* of his hidden name, the thousand-tongued mystery of the Gentiles. But the unification of both these tinctures, the New Man, after the likeness of the Creator', is simultaneously the unification of man and woman, head and body. This was why the Song of Solomon was so sacred to Hamann and why he translated it.[100] The Bridegroom, who has taken away all our badness and given us all his goodness, who is therefore 'so near to us that nothing can part us from him; bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh', in whom, as our true neighbour, we truly love ourselves:[101] he is the original image of man. 'Every sinner bears on himself the likeness of the crucified Saviour. Behold the man! said Pilate. As God said: Behold, Adam has become as one of us. We all have upon us not only the image of God, but of him who takes away sin.'[102] Thus and only thus are we 'the betrothed of God. The adultery of sin, when we go a-whoring after the spirits of darkness, divorces us from God. . . . Not till the first-born has won shape in us, till Jesus is brought forth in us and we are born again in the Holy Ghost, does God once more acknowledge our souls as his true and lawful wife.'[103] So fulfilment is 'the marriage of the human race, or rather, of the Church of God, with Jesus'. This is 'indisputably more than a mere figurative idea. . . . As Mary became a mother and yet remained a virgin, not having known a man, thus too must we imagine the spiritual marriage of the Church with her bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Our being already capable, here in the world, of feeling the raptures of a heavenly love for our saviour is an anticipation by faith of the bliss to come.'[104] Hamann cannot in this context leave out a reference to the sexuality of the Redeemer (which is certainly virginal), for this, in view of Paradise, the Song of Solomon, the eschatological marriage and fulfilment of the reality of Creation, is indispensable.[105] The way Eros thus finds shelter in Agape is crucially important for Hamann's aesthetics. Even when we have repudiated anything that might suggest an excessive interest in the sexual sphere or an underrating of the Catholic idea of virginity, it still remains valid. He never finally settled the question—who could? But the dotted lines pointing out beyond this fragmentary scheme indicate the right direction.

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[100] N 4, 251–6.

[101] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 212).

[102] *Ibid.*, 213.

[103] *Ibid.*, 199.

[104] *Betrachtungen zu Kirchenliedern* (N 1, 255f.).

[105] Thus—rightly—Nadler's interpretation of the beginning of *Schürze von Feigenblättern* (N 3, 207).

Language, however, is a begetting by the spirit within nature, (for even free language is no arbitrary contrivance but a body born of the stamina of feelings and sensible traditions). As much and more, language is a begetting by nature into the spirit in that in the spirit sensual experience of the world and of God become understood statement. This two-in-one, primary phenomenon is the basis for Hamann's criticism of all philosophy, especially Kant's: 'Now to what purpose such a violent, unwarranted, wilful divorce of what nature has joined together (namely, sensibility and understanding)?' Why is the 'common root' split up in this way, when it can only lead to both stems drying up? The branches come forth from a single root, which is the organic and spiritual (what the epigones will call the imagination); 'music was the oldest language, and along with the sensible rhythm of the pulse beat and the breath in the nose, the original embodied image of all measure of time and its numerical relationships'.[106] This Pythagorean and Augustinian element, no longer infected with Platonic spiritualism nor with the naturalism of a Herder or the parallelism of a Leibniz, has in consequence a colouring all Hamann's own; for the rhythm that unites body and soul is language itself in its origins, and consequently the place where the paradisial, christological-pneumatic revelation of God occurs. In so far as language in its unity with begetting and birth is understood as an expression that creates only in fellowship and by imitation, this very revelation is also the central mystery of what it means to become man: the state of marriage.

4. For Hamann, the jurisdiction of reason (as conceived in the Enlightenment) does not extend into the decisive areas of truth; as we define this thesis more closely it becomes apparent how near to and how far from Kant he is. Reason is absolutely

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[106] *Metakritik* (N 3, 286).

dependent on the senses, and its knowledge does not go beyond their sphere. As early as 1758 he had written in *Biblical Reflections*: 'The nature of objects provides the *material*; and the laws according to which our souls experience, think, conclude, decide and compare provide the *form*. It follows that all natural knowledge is as old as nature herself, and, since she remains unchanging, in the real sense nothing new can occur in our experience of her.'[107] Here he means that something truly new, and not just a permutation of whatever happens to be present in man already, can originate only with God's revelation. Man's longing for novelty is therefore ambivalent: it is either sinful curiosity, 'an itch that all external satisfactions and earthly medicine can make only more dangerous, burning and rife', or a true longing for God, 'the thirst of one who is weary, parched', one who longs for 'a pure spring'.[108] But if reason were limited to the process of 'forming' sensible reality, there would be another sense in which its jurisdiction was restricted: in its formalising *reality*; that is the real God and the real, historical man slips through its hands, for these can be grasped in their reality and relationship only by faith, 'faith in a single, independent and living truth that, like our existence, can only be older than our reason', for the latter cannot possibly penetrate 'the entire historical riddle of our existence, the impenetrable night of its *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem*'.[109] Reason cannot be esoteric, for its forms are common knowledge—that is the blow aimed at Starck's false masonic neoreligion in *Konxompax*[110]—but when it does have pretensions to mystery it becomes 'the very sign of contradiction', the inept fig leaf that reveals its own need and shame even as it tries to conceal them.

Here what is original and anti-Kantian is the idea that in *faith* the two are brought together, immediate experience of reality proclaiming itself immediately and sensibly; this description of faith as 'sensation' goes back to Hume, for whom experience of existence is based upon an instinct. 'Our own being and the existence of all things outside us must be believed, and cannot be worked out in any other way'.[111] Socrates is in possession of the organ whereby reality may be perceived and expresses it as 'ignorance'; therefore Socrates's ignorance is hidden faith.[112] Because it is rooted in the senses, this faith is reminiscent of Hume, but its transcendence into the religious sphere associates it with Kant; Hamann can accomplish this seemingly impossible synthesis by virtue of his philosophy of language: the immediate experience of reality is word and dialogue. For the same reason, language is human freedom expressing itself, the personality put into action; therefore Hamann identifies faith with 'fidelity and trust', *fides* with *fidelitas*, seeing in this the actual foundation that makes reason—individual and sociopolitical alike—possible.[113] The wide arc thus performed by the concept faith is for Hamann neither strained nor artificial, if the statement that 'Original being is truth, imparted being is grace'[114] is correct, if, that is, contact with reality (through hearing, sight, touch) and revelation are inevitably one and the same. 'Experience and revelation are one . . . meaning and history are the foundation and ground.'[115] And therefore the 'analogy of man to the Creator confers upon all creation its content and form, and on this are dependent fidelity and faith in the whole of nature',[116] which again is only the converse of the statement that in this 'fidelity and trust' the basis of reality, analogy, truth and grace is truly to be found. Thus following the Church fathers and adopting the Ancient Greek idea of faith, the Aristotelian Δει γαρ πιστευειν μανθανοντα[117] as well presents no problems. All this shows the contrast with Jacobi too, for there is no question of a desperate attempt to burst out of the prison of reason, to attain to faith in a *salto mortale*; rather does one with each simple experience abide ever, childlike, in the truth that is God, and from this vantage point alone look down upon our reason and its desperate inability to capture reality in concepts. Hamann's simple answer to Jacobi's torments is enjoyment: 'There can be no existence in words and concepts, that being a property of things and objects alone. Enjoyment never broods—and all things, among which, logically, even the *ens entium* must be included—are there for enjoyment, not speculation. The Tree of Knowledge costs us the Tree of Life, which ought yet, ought it not, to be the dearer; do we then wish to become children, to take to us flesh and blood, take upon us the Cross, like the new Adam? The upshot of all metaphysical terminology is this historical *factum*'.[118] And why should not then the way of reason for once be right as well, if only there is faith? 'To the pure all things are pure; any method, mystical, logical or mechanical. Everything human and earthly is liable to misuse; and what God has made pure ceases to be common. . . . Not our love, but his inexpressible love in the Son of love, this is the node, the sun of our system. What I write to you is always the same; I am sorry. I would so like to be able to extricate you from the labyrinths of worldly wisdom, and set you down in the childlike simplicity of the Gospel . . . to make you sick of that arid ὄν.'[119] 'Not *cogito ergo sum*, but the other way round, or, yet more Hebraically, *est, ergo cogito*.'[120] Here it should be remembered that Hamann, like Herder and many other contemporaries, does not acknowledge that the Hebraic and Greek worlds are in conflict; he sees Hellas rather as being completely rooted in the Orient,[121] so that the conflict is for him one of attitude (which is all-pervasive), and not of culture.

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[107] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 222f.).

[108] *Ibid.*, 224.

[109] *Zweifel und Einfälle* (N 3, 191f.).

[110] *Konxompax* (N 3, 217ff., esp. 220).

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[111] *Sokr. Denkw.* (N 2, 73).

[112] *Cf.* F. Blanke's commentary (H 2, 136ff.).

[113] *Golgotha und Scheblimini* (N 3, 300f.). *Cf.* the commentary by L. Schreiner (H 7, 84f.).

[114] To Jacobi, 1.12.84 (G 21).

[115] *Ibid.*, 14.11.84 (G 16).

[116] *Aesth.* (N 2, 206f.).

[117] *Fliegender Brief, 1. Fassung* (N 3, 370).

But how can Hamann's concept of faith reconcile the immediacy of sensible experience with the historical factor emphasised previously, which after all lies in the past and beyond our grasp? The question sets the stage for the decisive encounter between Hamann's philosophy and aesthetics and those of the Enlightenment. On the first page of the *Aesthetica* we read how overpowering is the 'experience of the presence of things'.[122] But this is a presence of the Infinite, necessarily transcending the fragile creation that is the vehicle of his glory; a present that needs past and future, and therefore, as Hamman says, not only the spirit of observation, but also the spirit of prophecy, if it is to be approached. 'Spirit of observation and spirit of prophecy are the pinions of human genius. Everything present belongs to the sphere of the former; everything absent and of the past and future, to the sphere of the latter.' And now we come to the important definitions: 'The philosophical genius expresses its power by means of abstraction, by striving to render absent what is present; by *undressing* real objects, so that they become mild concepts, mere tokens of the mind, more appearances and phenomena. The poetic genius expresses its power by means of fiction, by *transfiguring* the visions of absent past and future so that they become present depictions.' The true attitudes, which, unlike philosophy and poetry, do not each perform vanishing tricks with a side of reality (and to which Hamann here gives designations at first sight scarcely comprehensible, 'criticism and politics'), 'resist the encroachments of both powers and ensure that they are in balance through the same positive forces and means, those of observation and prophecy'.[123] This in practice means a demand that present reality be experienced in its historical, ontological dimensions, pointing to creation (protology) and transfiguration (eschatology); these dimensions alone can give a true account of experience in all its profundity. But these are dimensions of reality and as such *historical*, for that which is present is absolutely an historical instant.

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[118] To Jacobi, 14.11.84 (G 15).
[119] *Ibid.*, 23.1.85 (G 55).
[120] *Ibid.*, 2.6.85 (G 81).
[121] Unger, *Hamann und die Aufklärung*, p. 259.

In this resides the whole force of Hamann's argument, developed in *Golgotha and Scheblimini* and *The Flying Letter*, against Moses Mendelssohn's construction of an enlightened Jerusalem, timeless and ideal. The *analogia* between God and man of which we have just spoken finds concrete interpretation in an *analogia temporum*, which, when known and understood, yields the key of truth. 'With what precision God has determined the periods of time in their symmetry and equal relation!'[124] '*In periodis temporum, divinitus definitis, perpetua est Analogia.*'[125] Because time and states of being are established by decree, the use of magical, philosophical and aesthetic tricks with mirrors to create the illusion that Jerusalem's present state is anything other than nonbeing cannot succeed; 'the spirits of observation and prophecy', 'by turns assuming each other, relating to one another and cooperating', and 'expressions of a single positive force. ... What would the most precise and painstaking knowledge of present things amount to without a divine renewal of what is past, a presentiment of what is to come?'[126] The Old Covenant without the New therefore shares the same basis of unreality as mere philosophy (without theology), and *law* and *idea* are both of them alive only through love; but the measure of that love is the Golgotha between Paradise and *Scheblimini*. The interpretation of 'the literal fragments of the archetypal Jerusalem' can be only a Christian one, just as Hamann himself could make sense of the collapse of his own existence only in Holy Scripture. 'Should anyone care to compare the map of Israel's journey with the course of my life, he will see how exactly they correspond.... It was the story of my life that I read there.'[127] Of the real Jerusalem we read: 'The prophetic riddle of a theocracy is mirrored in the shards of this shattered vessel, like the sun "in the droplets on the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men", for *yesterday* the dew of the Lord was upon Gideon's fleece alone, and it was dry upon the whole earth; *today*, dew upon the whole earth, and dryness upon the fleece alone.'[128] By this majestic image Hamann means that God himself, using the example of sacred history (whose image is the fleece), reveals what is meant by fulfilment; 'manifestness of real fulfilments',[129] 'glorious progress of [that] life that enacts its own development in depictions "from glory to glory", until in the apocalypse comes the complete uncovering of the mystery, at first hidden and

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[122] *Aesth.* (N 2, 197).

[123] *Fliegender Brief, 1. Fassung* (N 3, 382–4).

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[124] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 193).
[125] Taken from Bengel; to his brother, 21.3.60 (Z 2, 13).
[126] *Fliegender Brief, 1. Fassung* (N 3, 396–8).
[127] *Gedanken über meinen Lebenslauf* (N 2, 42, 40).
[128] *Golgotha und Scheblimini* (N 3, 311).
[129] *Ibid.*, 305.

believed, in the fulness of the beholder, face to face';[130] the reference to the central text of Pauline aesthetics (2 Cor 3) is well justified here. Here, then, is biblicohistorical *and* existential interpretation of reality, through 'observation' (also called experience, sensibility) and 'prophecy' (*daimonion* and '*Scheblimini*, spirit of the home') in one, and each in and through the other, since both 'the whole mythology of the Hebraic economy'[131] and that of the fallen and redeemed individual were nothing other 'than the type of a more transcendent history, the horoscope of a heavenly hero, through whose appearance everything is already completed, yet still to come'.[132] And thus he can say, with a Lutheran emphasis: 'Unbelief, in the most literal and historical understanding of the word, is therefore the only sin against the *spirit* of the true religion, whose heart is in Heaven, whose Heaven is in the heart. The mystery of Christian bliss does not consist . . . in services, offerings and vows; but rather in promises, fulfilments and sacrifices that God has made and performed for the benefit of mankind.'[133] Thus for Hamann the 'eternal truths of reason' concerning man and God lie in these selfsame 'chance truths of history', although (bearing in mind the *analogia temporum*, the relationship of promise and fulfilment) not in what by its nature is destined to pass away, such as Heaven and earth, but in what even then does not pass away, being earlier and the origin of all things: the Word[133]—word not yet as letters, but as that abundance of address through all created things. 'Everything that in the beginning man heard, saw with his eyes, beheld, and his hands touched, was a living word.'[135] If letters then become the vehicle of this word, it must be true that 'the literal or grammatical, the fleshly or dialectical, the Capernaitic or historical sense are all mystical to the highest degree . . . so that without going up to Heaven one cannot bring down the key to their understanding'.[136] The letter itself contains the holy spirit of prophecy; in *Aesthetica in nuce* we find the quotation; 'The testimony of Christ is the spirit of prophecy' (Rev 19.10). In that real reality shows itself to be fulfilment of divine promise, it becomes the pledge of divine glory; just as Eve is the glory of the man, and the new Jerusalem is the glory of the new Adam, that glory that throughout the whole history of the world, the earth and salvation is in the process of coming, of propagating itself. This is how the *Aesthetica* puts it: 'The hieroglyphic Adam is the history of the whole race in a symbolic cycle—the character of Eve, meanwhile, the original for beautiful Nature and the systematic dispensation, not written with methodical holiness upon a plate borne on the brow, but wrought in the lowest parts of the earth and lying in secret in the bowels—in the reins of things themselves.' Eve, the glory of man, is the new aeon, born out of the Golgotha of the Old: 'The next aeon will awaken like a giant from his cups and embrace your muse [that is, the muse of the "virtuosi of the present aeon"], joyfully crying out to her and bearing witness: But that is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh!'[137] Thus when men follow Christ into the begetting hour of Golgotha they enter the actual birthplace of the highest art, brought about by the believing and holy man as instrument of grace, although its glory is only to be revealed eschatologically, as Hamann piously reflects in *The Magi from the East*:

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[130] *Ibid.*

[131] He means the *oiko-nomia*, the divine order of salvation.

[132] *Ibid.*, 308.

[133] *Ibid.*, 312.

[134] *Ibid.*, 304–7.

[135] *Ritter von Rosenkreuz* (N 3, 32).

[136] *Aesth.* (N 2, 203, n. 23).

> There are actions of a higher order for which an equation cannot be produced using the elements (rudiments) of this world. That very divinity that makes signs out of the wonders of nature and original works of art sets apart the ways and deeds of those called to be saints. Not the end alone, but the whole winding course of a Christian is the masterpiece (Eph 2.10) of the unknown genius whom Heaven and earth does and will acknowledge for the one and only Creator, Mediator and Ruler in transfigured human shape. We read that our lives are hidden with Christ in God. But if Christ—our life—is to reveal himself, then we too shall be revealed with him in glory.'[138]

Thus Hamann can—half in jest, half in earnest—speak of an

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[137] *Ibid.*, 200.

[138] *Die Magi aus Morgenlande* (N 2, 140).

'*ars poetica* of brotherly love'.[139]

To round off this section, it remains to describe the social and political side of this process, since it possessed great importance for Hamann and explains to us his earlier description of the right attitude as being 'critical-political'. His lifelong struggle for the kingdom of Heaven to be incorporated into the structures of the state; his impassioned pleas in French to Frederick the Great to set up his banner under the star of Jerusalem, not Babylon; the torment of his drudgery under the French customs officials, who made life more and more intolerable for him, increasingly begrudging him the bare necessities of life; the union with free thinking that Berlin (and that meant Germany, too) was entering upon as he watched in suffocating anxiety, and the glorification of this union perpetrated by that bogy, Mendelssohn's New Jerusalem; the slow but sure degeneration of the German intelligentsia (in which Kant, but also Herder and, in his own way, Jacobi participated) in a second, more subtle enlightenment: because of all this the political hour came to seem apocalyptic to him, and he himself sank into the isolation of the 'witness who is slain' in the midst of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt (Rev 11.8). But out of the rubble of Babylon, Jerusalem shall be awakened: 'The faithful waiting of a city that has a foundation and whose builder and creator is God will always be opposed to the political experiments of a Cain and the basic principles of a Nimrod and their successors. The first revelation of the most holy name occurred in a famous bush of thorns that does not burn, and the preservation of the weeds until the harvest is the best theodicy of the best housefather. In the horrors of the last days there is nonetheless consolation, the promise of his future and our redemption, approaching to raise up our heads.'[140]

As he continually affirms, Hamann's entire theological aesthetic has its sole nodal point in Jesus Christ, who, present from the beginning as Word, as Man is in the process of coming and as the Man who has come, nevertheless remains he who comes eschatologically. For him as for Pascal, Christ is the geometric point where the contradictions of the world are resolved. And in truth *coincidentia oppositorum* is the final formula to which Hamann clings (not knowing that Cusanus invented it and its christological use, he assumes that it derived from Giordano Bruno).[141]

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[139] To J. Fr. Reichardt, 27.10.1782 (Z 4, 432).

[140] To C. Fr. v. Moser, 10.11.63 (Z 3, xxix). Na 138–145, 175ff., 211ff.

As early as *Biblical Reflections* we read: 'Yet in this consisted the mystery of divine wisdom, in uniting things that could not exist together, that contradicted one another, that seemed to destroy each other. This is more than creation out of nothing. This—to create evil and make it into an enemy, to create darkness and form it into light—no one but God can do (Is 45.7).'[142] But since these contradictions are permitted only because at the place where the Word becomes man they are, through his divinely human power of suffering, resolved—and 'Even contradiction itself, against himself, he tolerates'[143]—the way rebellious enlightened reason contradicts Christ is always something already resolved and unreal, and 'the truth of God' becomes 'yet more glorious for his praise through the inner lies or contradictions of reason; but her damnation is still quite right'.[144] But the inadequacy of human judgment as such—'since *summum ius* and *summa iniuria* are, like light and shade, inseparably related in time within the underworld of the senses'[145]—is also superseded and justified in Christ's judgment, which brings the truth concealed in it creatively to light. There is a splendid passage in a letter to Kant: 'Altogether truth is of such an abstract and spiritual nature that it cannot be grasped other than *in abstracto*, in its element. *In concreto*, however, either it appears in the form of a contradiction, or it is that famed stone of our sages, whose original application is to transform every crude mineral, even stone and wood, into *true* gold.'[146] This stone of our (that is, the Christian) sages is Christ, and Hamann incessantly demands a 'grammar' suited to Christ as the Word; according to Hamann it does not yet exist,[147] it being anyway dubious what kind of a science it could be. 'The unity of the head and, equally, the splitting up of the body ... are the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven from genesis to apocalypse—the focal point of all the parables and types in the entire universe, of the *histoire générale* and *chronique scandaleuse* of all times';[148] and that is anything but the general 'unity in multiplicity', being rather 'uniqueness', which (being unique and incomparable) in inscrutable fashion unites what cannot be united and thereby forms the universal principle of aesthetics. 'O a muse like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap'—Malachi's words point to the Day of the Lord.[149]

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[141] To Jacobi, 16.1.85 (G V 49). *Cf.* to Herder, 19.11.82: 'Giordano Bruno's *principium coincidentiae oppositorum* is worth more in my eyes than all Kantian critique (Z 4, 462). For other passages, see Na 407–409.

[142] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 264).

[143] *Konxompax* (N 3, 222).

[144] *Ibid.*, 227.

[145] *Zwey Scherflein I* (N 3, 233).

[146] To Imm. Kant, April 1774 (Z 3, 88f.).

This, then, is the hyperbolic aesthetic[150] which, to reach its goal, must transcend the entire old aeon just as God, in that the Son became man, has already, in the middle of history, transcended the aesthetics and poetics of the Old Covenant. 'After God, through nature and Scripture, creatures and seers, causes and figures, poets and prophets, had exhausted himself and spoken until he was out of breath; there, in the evening of days, he spoke to us through his Son—yesterday and today—until the promise of his coming—no longer in the form of a servant—shall also be fulfilled':[151] from the Old to the New Covenant and from both to the Second Coming—together, a two-fold transformation from water into the headiest of wines.

3. THE EVANGELICAL DOCTRINE OF ANALOGY

Finally, we take a glance at the inner premise and the limitations of Hamann's philosophy. The principle Hamann follows and to which everything he writes is related he himself called that of analogy. He took it originally from Bengel, and quoting from Young ('analogy, man's surest guide below'), he attributed it to his first hero as the real heart of the Socratic method. 'Analogy was the soul of his arguments, and he gave them irony to be their body.'[152] Kierkegaard was content with irony; now while this is undoubtedly a crucial aspect of Hamann, no understanding of him can afford to ignore the ubiquitous principle of analogy.

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[147] To Jacobi, 1.12.84. (G V 22).
[148] *Konxompax* (N 3, 226).
[149] *Aesth.* (N 2, 207).
[150] *Ibid.*, 211.
[151] *Ibid.*, 213.

Analogous in Hamann means in the first place simply 'corresponding', 'in accordance with'. In so far as God is *causa prima*, everything that happens in the world is divine; 'however, everything divine is also human, since man can be neither active nor passive save after the analogy of his nature. . . . This *communicatio* of divine and human *idiomata* is a fundamental law, and the principal key to all our knowledge.'[153] In this original *communicatio* lies the second and higher conception of analogy, expressing the relationship between *causa prima* and *secunda* in terms of the relationship between the senses and spirit in this world. Language presupposes an original 'relationship and connection between our soul, with its ability to know, and our body, with its ability to make signs'.[154] Life—organism—mechanism: this trinity is 'similar in its stages'[155] in man and beast. But between God and man there is the similarity of the word, with its naming power, and here Hamann specifically uses the term *analogy*. 'The analogy of man to the Creator bestows on all creatures their content and their form.'[156] In so far as God's revelatory word has primacy of effect, and man is obedient to the dispensation of the Spirit of Christ, his obedience becomes what Paul calls *analogia fidei*, and what Hamann takes up when he gives Herder, who had been speaking of his planned interpretation of Genesis, the following advice: 'Believe me, dearest friend, your theme is happily chosen . . . always assuming that the imagination too is given a free rein—but not so that obedience, the analogy of faith, is thereby denied.'[157]

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[152] *Sokr. Denkw.* (N 2, 61).

[153] *Ritter von Rosenkreuz* (N 3, 27).

[154] *Versuch über eine akademische Frage* (N 2, 121).

[155] *Philol. Einfälle und Zweifel* (N 3, 37). *Cf.* 39: 'The analogy provided by animal housekeeping is the only ladder to the anagogic perception of the spiritual economy.' Here the analogical process presupposes an analogy between the lower and the higher realms.

[156] *Aesth.* (N 2, 206f.).

It is typical of Hamann that 'the infinite wrongness of man's relationship to God'[158] (this idea, which places him between Luther and Kierkegaard, he takes absolutely seriously) in his view finds such great redemption through the *communicatio idiomatum* in the Holy Spirit and in faith, now that it has been renewed and restored in Christ; and that in consequence, by virtue of Christ's becoming man, everything that has been created, in nature as in history, can and must become a redemptive image and word for one who has mastered that spirit and faith. To be sure, there is the contradiction of sinful reason in its blind vanity; but she too, her contradiction borne and overcome by Christ, must in the end, albeit against her own will, serve and acknowledge that One is Lord. Here as elsewhere Hamann follows Paul's confession: 'We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ' (2 Cor 10.5). Hamann's way of taking apparently 'natural' data 'captive' is to turn them into organs, potential or real, of Christ's unique revelation. For example, the poetic disorder found in the Bible is a copy of the 'regular disorder in nature' and becomes the style of the Holy Ghost in its higher disorder. 'The imagination of poets has a thread, invisible to the ordinary eye, that seems to connoisseurs a masterpiece.'[159] It is here that the question—the decisive one—arises. Is the (genuine) poetic 'disorder' in itself an analogon to the 'disorder' of the Holy Spirit, or is it solely through the Spirit that it is enabled to become such? To raise this question, or to attempt to solve it with an either-or, would be to ask too much of Hamann. Consider the following quotation: 'Paul does a poet the honour of calling him a prophet of his nation (Tit 1.12). True poetry is a natural form of prophecy. . . . Mythology, say the experts, is the soul and inspiration of poets.'[160] Here the relationship is both descending and ascending. Again and again Hamann testfied to his certainty that there were prophets among the heathen, too, and 'that we ought not to despise this cloud of witnesses, that Heaven anointed them to be messengers and translators and initiated them into the very vocation in their race that the prophets enjoyed among the Jews'.[161] This, as I have mentioned, is the basis of the profound difference between the Socrates of Hamann and of Kierkegaard; the ignorance of Hamann's Socrates is in a hidden way what Paul's was openly,[162] and his genius or *daimon* may very well have had something of the holy *pneuma* about it, for he bore a reverential love for this genius,[163] and his foolishness may have been a form of the holy, evangelical foolishness.[164] In that case, why should not the babble of Apollo in the oracle be understood as a likeness of the servant, form of the divine word, since rays of grace and illumination are to be found in ancient wisdom?[165] And further: 'Plato makes of Socrates's voluntary poverty a sign of his divine mission. What is more significant is his sharing the final destiny of the prophets and the just'?[166] The analogous breadth of Hamann's understanding of 'belief' I have already described; also, that it is capable of interpreting Socrates not only as a likeness but as a medium of Christ. That Hamann, the true Christian, undertakes to do this shows that a relationship such as this to him who is absolutely unique can be meant only as a work of the Holy Spirit of Christ himself, who chooses his vessels as he will.

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[157] To Herder, 13.1.73 (Z 3, 35).

[158] *Golgotha und Scheblimini* (N 3, 312).

[159] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N 1, 229f.).

[160] *Ibid.*, 241.

And thus a final point becomes apparent: that Hamann's aesthetics can be called Christian and theological because at the critical point he brings nature and supernature into a relationship of hiddenness and openness; in other words, that the categories he imposes of nature have so radical and sweeping an effect because, ultimately, they derive from the sphere of supernatural revelation. Poetic inspiration is (hidden) prophecy. Language is (hidden divine) revelation. The realm of the human senses conceals the mystery of Christ's incarnation. Created sexuality is the hidden mystery of the heavenly Eros of Christ and Church. Genius is hidden *pneuma*. Beauty is hidden eschatological transfiguration.

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[161] *Sokr. Denkw.* (N 2, 64).
[162] *Ibid.*, 74.
[163] *Ibid.*, 75.
[164] *Wolken, 3. Aufzug* (N 2, 107).
[165] *Sokr. Denkw.* (N 2, 70f.).
[166] *Ibid.*, 81.

'Holy Scripture ought to be our dictionary, our art of rhetoric, so that all a Christian's ideas and speech would be based on it, would consist and be composed of it.'[167] This is so central a truth for Hamann that occasionally he fears he has gone too far. 'What Homer was for the ancient Sophists, the Holy Books have been for me, and perhaps I have even misused that source, and my drinking has been—εὐκαίρως ἀκαίρως—too deep.'[168] Not that there is such a thing as an excess of Scripture, but when the peculiar structure of created being, which, it is true, is conceived and prepared with a view to grace, finds itself all too hastily overpowered and replaced by it, that can be an encroachment into the sphere of philosophy. Here we find Hamann's limitations and perhaps a way of justifying the obtuse rejection, the refusal to understand, that became his lot in the age of Goethe. Perhaps it was that the leaps and bounds of his logic demanded structures for the Christian sphere that did not exclusively belong to it and for which philosophy and poetry had the prerogative of investigation; it may even be that his view of these structures was inadequate, so that he put himself somewhat in the wrong. His unquestioning rejection of all Catholicism (which he hardly knew) shows the same limitations, suggestive of a self-sufficient philosophical orthodoxy (which perhaps comes out most clearly in the writings against Mendelssohn).[169]

And yet, how close he was to achieving a role far beyond his actual historical influence, to becoming (instead of Schleiermacher) the theological mentor and 'familiar spirit' of German idealism and so to determining the theological attitude of more than a century. Such an interpretation would be a falsification. But for one prepared to understand and apply

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[167] *Bibl. Betrachtungen* (N I, 243).

[168] To Jacobi, 7.1.85 (G V 38).

[169] This is the grain of truth in *Natuur en Genade bij J. G. Hamann* by Jansen Schoonhoven (Nijkerk, 1945), which otherwise presents a far too systematised theology.

Hamann's work with sufficiently generous breadth, his lightning mind, despite its elliptical speech, can bear fruit in the future for theological aesthetics as few others in German-speaking lands.

SOLOVIEV

1. VISION AND FORM OF WORK

Soloviev,[1] writing a century after Hamann, was heir to all that had occurred during the intervening period; the French Revolution, German idealism, the Hegelianism of the Left together with Feuerbach and Marx, Comte's positivism, Darwin's evolutionism, Nietzsche's doctrine of the superman;

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[1] Unfortunately, I am obliged to quote Soloviev's works in translation, so far as they are available (there is a complete Russian edition in 9 volumes, 1901–1907, and another in ten volumes, 1911–1914, plus four volumes of letters, Petersburg, 1908–1911, 1923). There is one work in French, *La Russie et l'Eglise universelle* (Paris, 1889).

A German 'collected edition', which brings together the major works, has been appearing under the imprint of Verlag Erick Wewel since 1957 (four volumes have appeared so far, *II*, *III*, *VI*, *VII*; these are quoted as W). The deficiencies in this edition can be supplied from other translations, above all from that of Harry Kohler, which appeared as *Wladimir Solovjeff: Ausgewählte Werke* (two volumes, Diederichs, 1914, 1916). The projected third volume never appeared. This edition (= D) becomes the fourth volume in the *Philosophical and Anthroposophical Library* published by Verlag Der Kommende Tag (Stuttgart, 1918–1922; = A). What is not available in D, we shall quote from A.

Other translations referred to include: the French version of Soloviev's doctoral thesis, *Crise de la philosopie occidentale* (translated by Maxime Herman, Aubier, 1947); *Drei Reden über Dostojewsky* [*Three Addresses on Dostoyevsky*], translated by Th. Gräfin von Pestalozza, Grünewald, 1921: *Die historischen Taten der Philosophie* [*The Historical Achievements of Philosophy*], an inaugural lecture, translated by E. Keuchel, Sarja, Berlin, 1925. There are some shorter pieces, particularly letters, translated for the first time in *Wladimir Solovjew: Übermensch und Antichrist* (selected and translated by L. Müller, Herder, 1958). Parts of the work on *Judaism and the Christian Question* are translated in Bubnoff-Ehrenberg, *Östliches Christentum, Vol II*, 299–332 (Beck, Munich, 1925). A short passage from the *Critique of Abstract Principles* is reproduced in Kobilinski-Ellis, *Monarchia Sancti Petri* (Grünewald, 1929), an extensive anthology of texts on the ecumenical question from Soloviev's writings.

What is not translated of the major works had to be taken on the basis of the painstaking and brilliant analyses of Soloviev's work by D. Stremoukhov in *Vladimir Soloviev et son oeuvre messianique* (Strasbourg, 1935; quoted as Str.) and other studies (such as that of Szylkarski, in *Solovjews Philosophie der All-Einheit*, Kannas, 1932).

To provide some general perspective, we here list Soloviev's major works:

The Crisis of Western Philosophy (1873); quoted as *Crisis*, following the French translation.

The Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge (1877); quoted as *Princ.*, following Stremoukhov.

The Critique of Abstract Principles (1877–1880); quoted as *Crit.*, following Str., one chapter in Kobilinski-Ellis.

Twelve Lectures on Godmanhood (1877–1881); quoted as GM, from A III (ET, *Lectures on Godmanhood*, trans. by P. Zouboff, Poughkeepsie, 1944).

Three Addresses on Dostoyevsky (1881–1883); following the translation already mentioned.

The Spiritual Foundations of Life (1882–1884); quoted as GG [*Die geistliche Grundlagen*], from W II (ET, *God, Man and the Church*, trans. by D. Attwater, London, 1938).

The Great Schism and Christian Politics (1883); quoted as GS, from W II.

The History and Future of Theocracy (1885–1887); quoted as Th., from W II.

La Russie et l'Eglise universelle (1889); like the smaller French works, this will for the sake of simplicity be referred to in the German version in W III, and quoted as R.

The National Question in Russia (collected essays from the period between 1883 and 1891); quoted as Nat., following A IV.

The Justification of the Good (1897); quoted as RG [*Die Rechtfertigung des Guten*], following D II (ET, by N. A. Duddington, London, 1918).

Theoretical Philosophy (1897–1899); quoted as *Th. Phil.*, following W VII.

Essays on aesthetics, sexual love, *The Drama of Plato's Life* (1889–1899); from W VII.

Numerous articles on philosophical matters in Brockhaus-Ephron's dictionary; quoted from W VI.

Sunday and Easter Letters; quoted as SO [*Sonntags-und Osterbriefe*], from D II.

Three Conversations (1899–1900); quoted as *Gespr.* [*Drei Gespräche*], from D II (ET in *A Solovyov Anthology*, ed. by S. L. Frank, London, 1950).

Soloviev's poems (about 190) are in part available in German translation. The following editions are noted:

Gedichte von Wladimir Solovjew, trans. by L. Kobilinski-Ellis and R. Knies (Grünewald, 1925).

Gedichte von Wladimir Solovjew, trans. by Marie Steiner (Dornach, 1949).

Wladimir Solovjews religiöse und philosophische Lyrik, trans. by Hunnuis and Engert at the end of the above-mentioned work by Szylkarski (Kaunas, 1932); relatively speaking, the most complete collection, but poetically unsatisfactory.

Russische Lyrik, selected and trans. by W. von Mattey (Schwabe, 1943).

Neue russische Lyrik, ed. and trans. by J. von Guenther (Fischerbücherei, 1960).

Bibliography in Stremoukhov; on Soloviev's aesthetics in particular, Leonida Gancikoff, *L'estetica di Wladimir Solowiow*, in *Sophia* (Naples, 1935), 420ff.

and the fashionable pessimism of Schopenhauer in the form finally given it by E. von Hartmann. The controversy between the religious confessions had acquired a broader, worldwide perspective, turning into a dialogue between East and West, the Byzantine-Muscovite world and Rome. The Great Schism had once again become an issue of present relevance and its theological meaning was being reexamined. Soloviev's thinking has an urgency attained by no one since Hegel, and it operates on the same level as Hegel's, dealing once more in purely and consistently universal, 'catholic' terms. It has an almost hallucinatory spiritual clarity, like the northern Alpine valleys when the dry warm wind of that region is blowing: all objects seem to be brought very near to the eye; they can be grasped in sharp outline and arranged in ordered relations one with another. The reason why this, the 'most universal intellectual construction of modern times',[2] has its place in the context of this present work is not only that it is 'a work of art on a massive scale', a drama and epic, a hymn of the universe; nor is it just because it is 'beyond question the most profound vindication and the most comprehensive philosophical statement of the Christian totality in modern times'. It is, rather, that this system aims at bringing a whole ethical and theoretical scheme to perfection in a universal theological aesthetic—a vision of God's coming to be in the world. By this means, Soloviev both delivers his final verdict on Kantian and Hegelian formalism, and at the same time secures a place for the theological aesthetic already in existence but not hitherto recognized as a proper discipline of thought, by giving it at least the outline of a formal structure. He is also 'the only Russian writer to have left us an aesthetic system'.[3] This is no accident: he alone among the Russians had had some feeling for the specifically Roman form of the Church, not, as one might suppose from an exclusively aesthetic standpoint, in the manner of the Romantics or of the *Action Française* (with whose precursors he did indeed come into contact),[4] but from an ethical and social perspective.

[2] Keuchel, in the introduction to the inaugural lecture, ed. cit.

[3] Herman in the introduction to *Crisis* (ed. cit.), 137.

[4] GM, lectures 11–12 A III 219, n.

Soloviev arrived at the Catholic conclusion[5] because, for him, it provided a link between two formal concepts. The first originates with Hegel and corresponds to his distaste for any kind of subjectivism, any clinging to particularity and differentiation. The subject is a person only because it becomes objective spirit: this spirit mediates between the subject and that which lies outside it, and as such it has structure and form. But so long as this form remains limited by the particular—especially the national—the spirit has not yet acquired the universality that properly belongs to it. Confronted by this Hegelian law, the scales fell from the eyes of the young slavophile Soloviev: even the greatest spokesmen of this school—Khomiakov, Kireevsky, Aksakov—stay within their national frontiers and inevitably, for good or ill, are bound to impose this limitation on Orthodox Christendom as such. Hegel's all-embracing intellectual structure in its systematic as well as its historical aspects has been of invaluable service to Eastern Christianity, a means for it to transcend its national limitations, leading it back to its true identity.[6] Even the cyclical view of culture defended by Danilevsky (the Russian Spengler) is entirely superseded by it.[7] And the catholic spirit can be attained only through the mediation of an objective form that is itself international and catholic; so adherence to the form of Roman Christianity is a means, not an end in itself.

But there is a complementary Hegelian principle, the law of process, understood as the progressive determination of the undetermined, so that by this means determinacy and universality or plenitude develop simultaneously. This principle provides the transition to the second ultimate formal concept. *Process*, or *evolution*, is the great word of the century, a concept in which temporal and historical consciousness encounters the metaphysical question of meaning and is brought within the latter's sphere. And for Soloviev this concept stands at the centre of his system. It is securely grounded upon the abiding intuition that was the basis of German idealism, and it is confirmed by the cosmology that was established empirically only subsequently (cosmology seen in terms of a process of hominization) and by the study of cultural history (seen as a preparation for the incarnation of God); confirmed, finally, by the evolution of christological truth in the dogmatic development of the Church—sketched by Soloviev almost more painstakingly than by Newman and deployed against the rigidly retrogressive Eastern Church.[8] By this means, the total meaning of the world's evolution is clearly established for the future: the development of humanity and the totality of the world into the cosmic body of Christ, the realisation of the eschatological relation of mutuality between the incarnate Word and Sophia, who receives through the Word her final embodiment as his Body and his Bride. The theme and content of Soloviev's aesthetic is nothing less than this: the progressive eschatological embodiment of the Divine Idea in worldly reality; or (since the Divine Spirit is indeed in and for itself the highest reality, while the material being of the world is in itself no more than indeterminacy, an eternal pressure toward and yearning after form) the impress of the limitless fulness and determinacy of God upon the abyss of cosmic potentiality. This also means the bringing into submission, the conquest, of the nondivine on the basis (in Baader's terms) of the image of God already printed upon it. This is the complete triumph of God's omnipotence, which can manifest his plenitude and totality and cause it to prevail even in what is opposed to it—in what is finite, separated, egotistically divided, evil.

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[5] The proof that Soloviev actually converted in earnest to Catholicism—a fact ever more strongly contested time and again from the Orthodox side—is to be found in Heinrich Falk, *Wladimir Solowjews Stellung zur katholischen Kirche*, in *Stimmen der Zeit*, 1949, 421–435.

[6] Th., foreword W II 374–375.

[7] Reply to N. J. Danilevsky, W II, 347–360; art. on Danilevsky in Brockhaus-Ephron, W VI.

Here, then, is the same universal trend of thought as in Hegel; but in place of the Protestant 'dialectic', which relentlessly transcends all things to find its term in the absolute Spirit, the basic conceptual model in Soloviev's thought is the catholic '*integration*' of all partial points of view and forms of actualization into an organic totality that annuls and uplifts (*aufhebt*) all things in a manner that preserves that which is transcended far more successfully than in Hegel. It establishes God's becoming man as the abiding pivot and organizing focus of worldly reality and its relation to God. What is preserved is the eternal, ideal kernel of every person in so far as it has been integrated into the entirety of the cosmic body of God; which means that its real bodily form is preserved in the same way. There is no ultimate absorption of all things into an absolute spiritual subject; instead there is the resurrection of the dead. So for Soloviev aesthetics and eschatology coincide, in practical terms; and in connection with this we must note simply that if God has become man in Christ, the Kingdom of God does not break in 'unilaterally' from above and from outside; it must necessarily grow to maturity just as much from within. Soloviev's skill in the technique of integrating all partial truths in one vision makes him perhaps second only to Thomas Aquinas as the greatest artist of order and organization in the history of thought. There is no system that fails to furnish him with substantial building material, once he has stripped and emptied it of the poison of its negative aspects. This process succeeds smoothly and painlessly even with wholly anti-Christian ways of thinking like ancient Gnosticism and contemporary materialism; and the integration is so powerful that no trace is left in the completed structure of eclecticism or of a process of compilation; just as, through the skill of composer and conductor, all the instruments of an orchestra articulate precisely that symphonic consonance (for the production of which their parts were differentiated in the first place) as a consequence of the ideal pattern worked out beforehand. It is not so much that integration is made possible by the capacity to distinguish necessary and unnecessary aspects in a system—though such a capacity is eminently present and available and is indeed brought into play. Far more importantly, such integration is achieved by a technique of allocating to each element in turn a place in the system in accordance with its value and specific gravity. And by this means, the limitation of the particular original world view appears of its own accord in the perspective of an inclusive totality of vision. This style of thinking is made possible primarily by means of a concept of God that is alike beyond personalism (God as the free *hen*) and beyond vulgar pantheism (God as *pan*). The Greeks emphasized the *pan*, the Jews the *hen*; but the Christian God is in the truest sense both *hen* and *pan*. 'God is not exhaustively defined in terms of personality. He is not only an independent entity, He is everything, not only a distinct individual but the all-embracing substantial being of things, not only an existent but Being itself[9]—and precisely in that respect freely exalted and all-powerful over every individual existent, so that his being as totality is in no way simply the sum of all finite substances.[10] Thus the Christian reality of participation by grace in this *hen-kai-pan* in Jesus Christ must mean the opening up, in full consciousness, of the limited, finite spirit to this total plenitude; it must mean the breaking apart of every variety of egotistic will-for-self, allowing it to emerge as a love free from jealousy, which lets all things be (and so is a self-negation).[11] The divine and eternal integral wholeness is answered from the side of created reality by a progressive integration into that integral wholeness.[12]

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[8] Th. XXIII W II 476ff.

If Soloviev is set against the background of the Christian *past*, one can say that it is idealism (especially in the form given it by Schelling) that has provided for him the impulse to free himself from the limited forms of mediaeval and Eastern Christianity—as it provided the same impulse for Karl Barth (in the form of Schleiermacher and Hegel), who used it in overcoming the limited vision of Luther and of Calvin (in their doctrine of predestination). Schelling confronts Soloviev with ancient gnosticism as an attempt to reduce Christianity to its own terms in a systematic way. Valentinus is hailed by Soloviev as 'one of the greatest intellectual geniuses of all time';[13] all the main motifs of his cosmic poem are taken over, but their direction is reversed. As Valentinus builds the Christian doctrines of incarnation and salvation into a surrounding system alien to them, so Soloviev integrates gnosis into Christianity. This implies also that the two streams that here flow together—the

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[9] GM, lecture 5 A III 91.

[10] *Ibid.*, lecture 6 A III 105.

[11] *Ibid.*, lecture 1 A III 15.

[12] *Ibid.*, lecture 7 A III 138.

[13] Art. on Valentinus, W VI.

Oriental (including the Indian doctrines of freedom and of *nirvana* and their resurrected modern forms in Schopenhauer and Hartmann) and the Greek (most centrally in the shape of Plato and all his imitators, Eastern and Western)—are employed in the most positive and deliberate fashion and with distinct tasks to perform. India provides the first form of the doctrine of pan-unity, and so also of the doctrine of freedom; but this alone remains negative and exclusive. It presents a theory of the world as infinite potentiality ('thirst', or 'urge', or Schopenhauer's 'blind will'), but redemption from this world remains again something negative.[14] Greece, in the person of Plato, discovers the divine in the shape of the Idea that fully answers the 'urge' or 'longing' (*Drang*). The latter can be understood as Eros directed toward the good and the beautiful; but the divine world of ideas does not embody itself, and the Idea is manifested only in a contemplative sense, its embodiment in ethics and politics comes radically to grief. There is no thinker whom Soloviev, the ostensible Platonist, takes to task so severely as Plato. Soloviev saw the greatest tragedy of human history in the fact that Plato, who owed the whole of his philosophical impulse to the liberating influence of Socrates, had finally and shamefully (in the *Laws*) betrayed his master and his master's ideas—in that, in this late work, he judges anyone who subjects the authority of the state's laws to any kind of critique to be worthy of death.[15] But even without this catastrophe, the Platonic Eros remains only a beginning, incapable of following itself out to a proper conclusion, or indeed of understanding itself to the limit. Plato had not unravelled the mystery of what the process of 'generation in the Beautiful' means.[16] He could not, for he had no knowledge of it from within; for that, some sort of radical conversion was necessary, like that provided by biblical religion in its transferring of the initiative from God-seeking Eros to the gratuitous descent of Agape, and in its making humanity the object of God's quest. To understand what is central in

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[14] GM, lecture 3; A III 51f.

[15] *The Drama of Plato's Life* (*Lebensdrama Platons*) XXX W VII 333. Similarly, in the very detailed article on Plato for Brockhaus-Ephron, W VI, and further, in GG W II 53ff. 66–67.

[16] *The Drama* ... XXII W VII 318–319.

Soloviev's turning away from Plato and the whole of Platonism, one has to let the following statement sink in.

> Before Christianity, the natural principle in human nature was the given object (the fact); divinity was something that was sought for (the ideal), and it worked on man in an 'ideal' way, simply as the object of seeking. But in Christ what was sought was given to us, the ideal became fact: 'Here the inaccessible (that is, the unattainable) happens, the indescribable is here enacted.' The Word became flesh, and it is this new spiritualized and divinized flesh that remains the divine substance of the Church. Before Christianity, the firm foundation of life was human nature (the old Adam); the divine was the principle of change, motion, progress. After the appearance of Christianity, the Divine itself, incarnate now for evermore, stands over against man as a firm foundation, as the element in which our life exists; what is sought is a humanity to answer to this Divinity; that is, a humanity capable of uniting itself with it by independent action, appropriating it for itself. As the object of seeking, this ideal humanity here becomes the active principle of history, the principle of motion and of progress. . . . The outcome must be man divinized, that is the humanity which has taken the Divine into itself.[17]

Or, briefly put: 'In Christianity, Plato's ideal world is transformed into the living, active Kingdom of God, which does not operate "over against" the material being of the factual reality of this world with indifference, but rather endeavours to make this world the vessel and the vehicle of absolute being. . . . The harmony of the ideal world, the inner unity of all things, reveals itself in Christianity through the power of the divine-human personhood of Christ as its living reality'.[18]

Logically, then, Soloviev's true starting point in the Christian past is Greek patristic thought before the Schism, especially in its definitive form in the work of Maximus the Confessor, who systematically makes the Chalcedonian dogma (that is, the synthesis between God and man in Christ) the foundation upon which the entire structure of natural and supernatural reality in the world is erected. To the static element provided by this world picture, Soloviev added nothing of substance except the dynamic element of German idealism—the evolution of nature towards man, of history toward Christ, and of the Church toward the Kingdom of God in its completeness. The christological development of patristic thought in the great councils constitutes for him an adequate basis for discussion between Eastern and Western churches. Maximus in particular—'the most significant philosophical spirit in the Christian East after Origen, the only significant philosopher of that era in the whole Christian world, the link between Hellenic Christian theosophy and the mediaeval philosophy of the West'[19]—is repeatedly cited as chief witness for the fundamental idea of Soloviev's evolutionism: that, since Christ God has been given to men: that now it is man who is sought; everything from now on depends on the free acceptance of the grace of this gift—the 'art' of the Kingdom at work, and the redemption of the cosmos. Maximus's defence of the free human will of Christ against all the encroachments of platonizing monophysitism provided a decisive vindication of the Christian cause.[20] If Maximus, with his christological philosophy of Godmanhood,[21] represents the truth at the heart of Hegel's thought; so it is Hegel who gives Maximus his topical relevance at the end of the nineteenth century; in the pattern thus arrived at, all the theoretical and practical strivings of the age find their magnetic centre.

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[17] GG II W II 134–135.

[18] Inaug. lecture 10–11.

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[19] Art. on Maximus in Brockhaus-Ephron; W VI.

[20] GS 3 W II 231, 242. Clarificatory comments in W II 328–329, 332; Th. 17, W II 449. *On St Vladimir*, W III 123; R introd., W III 163, 170–171; ch. 9 W III 239, etc. On the meaning of Chalcedon: GS 3, W II 24ff.; Th. 16, W II 444ff.; ch. 23, W II 475 (Chalcedon as a criterion); R ch. 14, W III 319–324 (Chalcedon and Rome).

[21] The extent to which we have to speak of a christological philosophy in Soloviev is illuminated by this principle: 'A free and interior union between the absolute divine principle and human personality is possible only on the basis of allowing human personality itself an absolute significance. Human personality therefore can unite itself with the divine principle only in freedom, out of its own interiority, since it is itself, in a certain sense, divine, or, more accurately, participates in the divine' (GM, lecture 2; A III 22). This 'divinity' of man, however, has its preeminent and supreme instance in Christ and thus has its foundation in Christ.

This is so much so that Soloviev also anticipates in prophetic fashion the great developments of the twentieth century. As compared with the methods of eidetic classification used by Dilthey (forms of Spirit), Spranger (forms of life), Leisegang and Rothacker (forms of thought) and Spengler (forms of culture), Soloviev is indeed well in advance with his method of integration. He analyses independent forms only within the context of the whole and in order that they may fructify the whole. In the approach of his theoretical philosophy (1897f.), he comes very close to Husserl's earliest approach to philosophy. He surmounts the monadic idealism of this system simply by implanting the whole of theoretical philosophy in the context of an ethical reference, the sphere of act and freedom (like Blondel and his disciples). In his presentation of themes, his kinship with Scheler is astonishing: there is the same religious approach as in *The Eternal in Man*, the same struggle against Kantian formalism in ethics (for both of them the decisive impulse and point of departure for their own particular concerns), the same phenomenology of the ethical—the sense of shame, the sharing of suffering (*Sympathie*) and the sense of honour and reverence (*Pietät*). There is the same broadening out into sociology (society and the forms of knowledge),[22] the same basic tension in man between the materially real and the divinely ideal. But where the later Scheler is broken by this tension, Soloviev holds out as a Christian and avoids that fatal philosophical notion of the twentieth century that sees driving instinct as power and spirit as impotence. Nonetheless, he comes close to Freud in freely accepting the theory of sublimation as something pervasive within this tension: the forces of egotism are given to man not to be destroyed but to be transformed, just as God himself creates good out of evil. The dark 'ground' is constantly in need of being brought to illumination.[23] Most astonishing of all, though, is the relationship of the whole vision to that of Teilhard de Chardin. One might well say out that none of the latter's intuitions is alien to Soloviev. He accepts the process of the hominisation of nature as established fact, as much on the idealistic and speculative level as on the empirical scientific level of palaeontology; it is so self-evident as not to need recapitulation. Likewise, he accepts the progress of cultural and religious history toward the God-Man, Christ. And on the basis of both these assumptions, the collective evolution of humanity and the cosmos toward the complete coming into being of God in the world, in the mystical Body of Christ, appears no less self-evident to him. If Christians eighty years ago had taken Soloviev's world picture seriously, there would be no cause today for all the anxious efforts to refute Teilhard. But, quite apart from Soloviev's incomparably greater speculative power, his picture has this in its favour: at the end of his career, Soloviev was confronted by the apocalypse, by Antichrist; and this serves as a salutary counterpoise to his evolutionism, a counterpoise lacking in Teilhard right up to the end.

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[22] All this appears most clearly in *The Justification of the Good* but is also to be found in the earlier *Spiritual Foundations* and *Lectures on Godmanhood*.

[23] GG II 4: 'The essence of the Good is made present through the activity of God; but nothing other than the transformation of the self-assertive power of personal will, when overpowered and converted into a condition of potentiality, can provide the energy to produce the manifestation of the Good in man. So in the holy man, potential evil is the precondition of actual

Soloviev's achievement for his own age was to have affirmed so far as possible all the distinct paths and streams in the construction of world views. If he went along with German idealism in its basic concerns, the idealism to which all the varieties of rationalism since Descartes had been leading, so also he agreed with the check to idealism offered by Feuerbach's humanism. After all, if it is true that the human spirit has developed out of nature, why then refuse any justification to the material aspect of man?

> The material principle in man that links him with the rest of nature, which Buddhism attempted to deny, from which Platonism sought escape and liberation—this principle, according to Christian belief, has an established role in the life of man and of the universe. Christianity sees material life as the necessary foundation for the realisation of divine truth, the embodiment of divine spirit. . . . It asserts the resurrection and

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salvation: the saint is great in his holiness because he might also be great in evil.' W II 85–86. Likewise GM, lecture 10, A III 201; RG I 2, 4, D II 55ff.; *ibid.*, 62, RG II 8, 7, D II 192f.

> eternal life of the body.... The reinstatement of the rights of matter was a necessary operation in the process of liberation wrought by philosophy, for it is only the acknowledgment of matter in its true significance that sets us free from actual slavish dependence upon it, from an involuntary materialism. So long as man does not feel material nature in himself and outside himself as somehing that is his own, something akin to him, he does not love it, and he is not yet free from it.[24]

But in the same connection Soloviev exposes crude materialism as philosophical naiveté and the concept of pure matter as a contradiction in itself, a contradiction that Leibniz and, more particularly, Schopenhauer and Hartmann, show him how to resolve. With materialistic socialism, the same contradiction breaks through in the ethical sphere,[25] and its concerns must find a haven at a higher spiritual level, in a christological socialism, in what Soloviev dreamt of and sketched out as 'universal theocracy'. This integration will be bound to take its aspect of formal absoluteness from rational idealism, but the real fulness of substantive historical content from empirical 'materialism'. In Christ, the real and the ideal have become archetypally one, and so Soloviev now seeks ideological schemata that can chart the process of the world's divinization that begins at this point.

These schemata must in each case be developed with an encounter in mind: the encounter between a divine reality, understood in its maximal, most concrete fulness, and a human and worldly reality, taken equally in its maximal concrete fulness. In this way they must indicate the basic form of the *hieros gamos*, the sacred marriage, of Heaven and earth. Thus Soloviev harks back to the gnostic idea of *syzygia* (the primordial couple, *Ur-Paar*), a syzygy between the fully incarnate deity (as Logos and Christ) and the fully divinized reality of the world (as the *Sophia* that is led upward to God, back to its source in God). Intently and enthusiastically, he follows through the history of Western Sophiology in its various changing guises, from Valentinus by way of the

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[24] Inaug. lecture, 13–14.

[25] GM, lecture 1: the opposition between a renunciation of egoism and individual separateness in the interests of a collective egotism of material welfare.

Kabbala to its baroque representatives—Böhme, Gichtel, Pordage, Rosenroth, Arnold—to Swedenborg and to Franz von Baader. But because in reading all these and many others he fully appropriates them for himself, the muddy stream runs through him as if through a purifying agent and is distilled in crystal-clear, disinfected waters, answering the needs of his own philosophical spirit, which (in contrast to that of so many of his speculative compatriots) can live and breathe only in an atmosphere of unqualified transparency and intelligibility.

Sophia is the eternal feminine in the world, the eternal object of God's love; it is the essence of the world, gradually moulded, elevated, purified, emerging in its proper selfhood in the primordial image of the Church, the *Panagia*, the spotless virgin and mother of Christ, but then broadening out to become the real principle of the whole of redeemed humanity and creation. This Sophia is Soloviev's 'immortal beloved'. To her he dedicates most of his poems, though there too, as normally elsewhere, she is still not named directly. She appeared to him in visionary form three times during his life,[26] and it is worth at least airing the question of whether these are not in fact apparitions of Our Lady. Soloviev always saw and acknowledged that Mariology and Sophiology pervaded one another from within and so welcomed the application of Sophiological texts in Scripture to Mary and the promulgation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by Pius IX. Despite occasional and impassioned relationships with earthly women, which remained, however, unrequited or unconsummated, signifying for him no more than transitory embodiments of his 'secret mistress', Soloviev lived in an habitual state of 'baptized Eros' directed toward Sophia. His only desire was to see all things in her light; not only relations with the individual human 'Thou', but also relations with human society and the cosmos in general must be 'a living relationship of syzygy.'[27]

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[26] These visions are described in the great poem frequently translated, 'Three Meetings: Moscow, London and Egypt'. Soloviev said of this that it contained the most important thing that had ever happened to him so far. Kobilinski-Ellis (see n. 1) provides, together with his translation, a commentary on the whole of Soloviev's Sophiology, in which more extensive confirmation of and testimony to its mariological significance is adduced.

It is out of Sophiology that there issues the outline of that system that might be called 'theosophy' (in Baader's sense), that is, a science conceived as the integration of philosophy and theology. It is not, however, an integration in the way in which it was conceived in German idealism, which simply assimilated both into the ideal of absolute knowledge; it is based rather on the foundation of the Christian assumption that the free acts of a free God are a revelation of the highest kind of rationality surpassed by nothing else and so are *necessitates* in the Anselmian sense. Once we know that God has redeemed and divinized the world in Christ, the immediate issue of that knowledge for human understanding is the recognition that everything in history and nature, as far back as the act of creation itself, must be intelligible in this perspective, which excludes all others, and that it could not be otherwise. Within the total overall scheme, then, the logical connection of the several elements can manifest itself in the form of a 'postulate',[28] as 'logical inference',[29] as something 'entirely natural, necessary and rational' (this expression is used in connection with the resurrection of the body).[30] 'By virtue of their deepest meaning, and because they are absolutely congruent with reason, [Christian dogmatic statements] can be developed into the most perfect of philosophical systems.'[31] This holds true even for the doctrine of the Trinity, so far as its 'formal aspect' is concerned.[32] What this means is clarified by the statement that

> the eternal and divine world . . . as the ideal plenitude of all things and the actualization of the good, the true and the beautiful, presents itself to the understanding as something that must stand as a norm, in itself and for itself. As the absolute norm, it is logically necessary to the understanding; and if understanding as such cannot assure us of the presence and accessibility of that

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[27] *The Meaning of Sexual Love* 4 W VII 269.

[28] GG I 4 W II 87.

[29] GG I 5 W II 91.

[30] SO 12 D II 176.

[31] GG II 2 W II 129–130.

[32] GM, lecture 6 A III 127–128.

> world, that is because the understanding alone is in no way the organ by means of which we can know any *actual* reality. Such reality can be known only through genuine experience. The ideal necessity of a divine world and of Christ as the centre and pivot of this world, absolutely universal, and at the same time, for that very reason, absolutely, uniquely individual, a central point in whose complete fulness the world participates—all this is plain to speculative thought.[33]

Accordingly, Soloviev (contradicting the traditional affirmations) says that God's *essence* is accessible to reason while his *existence* must be the object of faith.[34] Soloviev's ecumenical purpose is 'to vindicate the faith of our fathers and to raise it to a new level of rational consciousness: to show how this ancient faith, when freed from the fetters of local isolation and national egotism, coincides with eternal and ecumenical truth'.[35] The role of philosophy in all this is that of 'defactualising' the Christian and churchly reality that had by its superficiality obstructed the understanding of faith, both in the mediaeval Western world and in the East.[36] What is achieved is an enrichment of the patristic and of the mediaeval Christian world view with all the contributions made by modern speculation and the results of modern science. In this way, all partial aspects are integrated into the central theosophic and 'logosophic' system as *logoi spermatikoi*. And among these also there actually appears the Roman Catholic ethic of ecclesiastical obedience and practical discipline; for Soloviev this seems to be demanded unconditionally by the idea of a social world-organism, just as it saves to complement the strongly individualist-ascetical component in his spirituality.[37]

In Russia and in the West as well, Soloviev was a completely solitary figure. However, various bonds linked him with his most important contemporaries: between him and Dostoyevsky there was the closest friendship and the most intimate commerce of soul and mind, so that (for instance) we do not know which of them first conceived the figure of the Grand Inquisitor or the notion of applying the three temptations of Jesus to the Church and to Catholicism in particular. It is in fact more likely to have been Soloviev.[38] The two of them went on pilgrimage together to Optina Pustyn (in June 1878) to visit its renowned Starets Amvrosy. Both were equally impressed: the Starets was to become the prototype of Zosima, and Soloviev, the 'secular monk', the model for Alyosha Karamazov. Soloviev lived out his ideal of practical Christianity to the point of folly: 'He was almost always without money, he let all and sundry take advantage of him, he would give the contents of his wallet to anyone who asked anything from him, and, if his wallet were empty, he would take off his coat and give that, so that in winter he regularly had to borrow clothes from his friends. He would even give his shoes to beggars in the street.'[39] Animals loved him, and flocks of birds besieged his hotel room. He died far too young, worn out by a quixotic life of constant wandering and by overwork. A lasting affection drew him to Tolstoy, so different a character from himself. Soloviev always believed that he could win Tolstoy back to a genuine Christian belief, although Tolstoy dismissed the *Lectures on Godmanhood* as 'rubbish' and 'childish nonsense'. Common social concerns brought them together again; it was only reluctantly that Soloviev, obedient to his convictions, attacked Tolstoy's pacifism and moralism in the *Three Conversations*. His encounter with Leontiev, however, was crucial. At first, Leontiev beset him with an impassioned adoration, an almost unhealthy love; but he became less and less willing to forgive him his religious belief in progress. Leontiev, torn between an aesthetic and an ascetic and religious existence, a Russian Kierkegaard, could not cope with Soloviev, the supreme Hegelian. If Soloviev's ideological constructs seemed to him far too deceptively lucid, his very style of life seemed opaque and ambiguous; so the ardent love turned to a hatred that embittered his last years. He demanded Soloviev's exile from Russia and elaborated a complete campaign of persecution. In an article written after Leontiev's death,[40] Soloviev had no difficulty in showing him to be a contradictory thinker, never able to unite his Byzantine hostility to progress, his asceticism and his cult of beauty.[41] But the encounter with Leontiev was unexpectedly portentous for Soloviev; it was on this rock of opposition that his firm and rounded faith in progress splintered (though indeed it had already been undermined by his disappointments in ecumenical negotations). There now rose up on the horizons of his spirit the dimensions of the scriptural apocalyse: it might be that the line of development from the head of the Church on his cross to the Kingdom in its fulness and the deified cosmos would run only through the eschatological battles between the opposing forces in the world, finally revealed in all their contradictoriness. So Leontiev's objections to Soloviev (as Ludolf Müller impressively demonstrates) in fact led him to a conclusion in the theology of history that—as the theologian of the three temptations of Christ—he could have drawn for himself and would have been obliged eventually to draw for himself: the conclusion 'that the ways of history do not lead directly upwards to the Kingdom of God'; they pass by way of the final unveiling of the Antichrist, who conceals himself under the last mask to be stripped away, the mask of what is good and what is Christian.[42] We shall see how this tension between progress and apocalypse (which is missing in Teilhard) moulds the shape of Soloviev's aesthetic. Here the total opposition between Hegel and Soloviev comes out into the open, between Hegel's dialectic of absolute knowledge (which again first takes flight—as the 'owl of Minerva'—in the twilight of the end of history) and Soloviev's Christian programme of integration. For the former, evil can be no more than Socratic ignorance; for the latter, it is a clearly acknowledged act of saying No to love. And this contradiction shatters any systematic clarity in the cosmic 'process'; it explodes into a battle to the death, a battle of mounting intensity, that, in Soloviev's eschatological consciousness, could not be other than directly imminent. And so it is into this fiery inferno that his entire system flows.

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[33] GM, lecture 8 A III 150.

[34] *Ibid.*, lectures 2 and 3 A III 28f., 40f., 43: 'That God is, we believe; who he is we experience and know.'

[35] Th., foreword W II 363.

[36] Inaug. lecture, 11–12, 15.

[37] Particularly clear in GG.

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[38] W. Szylkarski, *Solowjew und Dostojewskii* (Schwippert, Bonn, 1948). By the same author: *Messianismus und Apokalyptik bei Dostojewskii und Solowjew*, which appears as an epilogue to Antanas Maceina's *Der Grossinquisitor, Geschichtsphilosophische Deutung der Legende Dostojewskijs* (Kerle, 1952).

[39] Herman, introd. to *Crisis*, 149f.

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[40] For Brockhaus-Ephron; W VI.

[41] On the relations between the two men, see N. Berdyaev, *Constantin Leontjeff* (Paris, n.d.) 201–229.

[42] Ludolf Müller, *Wladimir Solowjew: Übermensch und Antichrist. Über das Ende der Weltgeschichte*. Selections from the complete works. Herder-Bücherei 26 (1958), 148–149.

Soloviev's work divides into three clearly delimited parts. The first period is dominated by the construction of the theosophical system (1873–1883); the second is taken up with the ecumenical project for reconciliation between the churches of East and West and with paving the way for the advent of 'universal theocracy' or 'free catholicity' (1883–1890); the third period, after the failure of his union schemes, returns again to philosophy, outlining the system in its final form, with the accent this time on 'theurgy' and apocalypse (1890–1900).

After a preliminary enquiry into *The Mythological Process in Paganism* (1873), which takes its bearings from Schelling, the first period opens with a critical survey of modern Western thought from the Middle Ages to the present. *The Crisis of Western Philosophy* (1874) was already internally adumbrating the method of integration and indeed was already making use of it to a limited extent in pointing beyond rationalism (idealism) and empiricism (positivism) to the true point of departure for philosophy. The first positive outline of a system, in fact, was to be entitled *The Principles of Universal Religion*; never in fact carried through to completion, it nonetheless led in to the later structure. The earliest extant outline seems to be the foreword to the next work, which remained no more than a fragment, *The Principles of Integral Knowledge* (1877).[43] According to this, philosophy should be made up of three parts: first, the logical part, which has for its object the Absolute in its necessary a priori determinations; then the metaphysical, which investigates the Absolute in its relations with the created world; then the ethical part, which deals with the integration of the world into God and God into the world. While the book aforementioned treated of logic, it is the work that follows it, the *Critique of Abstract Principles* (1877–1880) that undertook to set out an ethical system (or a religious doctrine of self-realisation). In this work, which deals in an epilogue with Kant's formal moral principle, the parallels with Scheler are particularly striking; not only do we find a substantial ethic of value, but a new ethic of being (developed from idealism) in process of construction. In this latter, human self-realisation is seen within the framework of the total self-realisation of God in the cosmos, so that the close connection, close to the point of full identity, between ethics and aesthetics is evident.[44] The appropriate metaphysics, though partly overlapping with ethics, is represented by the *Twelve Lectures on Godmanhood* (1877–1881), while the aesthetics remained unwritten. Instead there appeared an outline treatment of spirituality, *The Spiritual Foundations of Life* (1882–1884).

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[43] Stremoukhov, 52f., 69–78.

After the assassination of Alexander II, Soloviev, who had pleaded for Christian compassion to be shown to the murderers, resigned his chair at Moscow. Dostoyevsky urged him to be more active; so, even more strongly, did Fyodorov (for whom, in his *Philosophy of the Common Task*, the only legitimate account of the world was to be found in the resurrection of the dead, the fathers being raised to life by their children). But Soloviev's concern about the state of the Russian Church led to his rather abrupt turning toward the Roman communion (1882);[45] and the works of his second period stem mostly from his residence abroad. First there came *The Great Schism [sc. between East and West] and Christian Politics* (1883); and after that a *magnum opus* in three volumes was planned, *History and the Future of Theocracy: An Examination of the Path Towards True Life in World History*. Of this, only a foreword and a first book, *An Introduction to the Whole Work*, appeared (1885–1887). The second part was to have included a 'philosophy of biblical history', and the third a 'philosophy of church history'.[46] The essence of this work was preserved in his French essay, *La Russie et l'église universelle* (1889). Side by side with this went studies on

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[44] *Ibid.*, 60–62.

[45] Details in Wladimir Szylkarski, *Solowjews Weg zur Una Sancta*, in W II 153–205.

[46] W II 363.

Israel and its relation to Christianity and theocracy, as well as prolonged polemical debates with representatives of Eastern Orthodox nationalism and slavophilism.

The failure of his schemes for reunion led him, now a much-fatigued man, back to theosophy and the final stage of construction of his system. From the second period there still remained a belief in the primacy of ethics, so much so that the theoretical element, much restricted as to its sphere of competence, was only just squeezed in between ethics and aesthetics. The new ethics was first to have been a revision of the earlier version (in the *Critique of Abstract Principles*), but it grew into a major independent work. *The Justification of the Good* (1897) emerges as the most luminously serene work of this wise man. The *Theoretical Philosophy* (1897–1899) remains fragmentary; the radicalism of its approach makes it extremely difficult to see how it might have been developed. Cartesian methodological doubt is pursued to its conclusion; as regards the object as well as the subject, the essay suggests no way out of a phenomenalist position; that is, it denies to pure thought any capacity for breaking through into being. Whatever was to have followed, we may be sure that the further step upward would have derived from consideration of the ethical claim. Everything flows into Soloviev's aesthetics, and for this only sketches and drafts survive: *Beauty in Nature* (1889), *The Universal Meaning of Art* (1890) and the essay on Eros, *The Meaning of Sexual Love* (1892–1894). The early material shows how much his controlling interest drew him toward this conclusion to his work. 'The task of humanisation now emerges as the solution of an aesthetic question, a solution for which the Beautiful in nature prepares the way and which art continues. Contemporary art, then, is obviously inadequate to the embodiment of Wisdom: what is needed to fulfil such a task is a genuinely theurgic art.'[47] The essay on Eros witnesses to something of this: it achieves meaningfulness only in connection with Christ's 'humanisation', his becoming Man. 'Aesthetics thus becomes the science of the progressive embodiment of the idea. . . . The new position of the philosopher is that he now treats the world process from the aesthetic viewpoint, instead of confining himself to the theocratic dimension.'[48]

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[47] Str. 225.

2. LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS

Soloviev paves the way toward his system of pan-unity by a preliminary delimitation of the field of philosophical thought. Only the independent subject is capable of self-reflexive philosophising, and this activity contains as much reality as the independent being as such. The subject, however, finds itself belonging to a common, suprapersonal, generic nature, finds itself caught up in a social and political life; and the realities of language and religious expression itself belong of necessity to this social and political life—an individual can as little 'invent' them as the individual bee can invent the honeycomb. But the subject also acts beyond and outside himself in aesthetic work, which expresses a more than individual inspiration.[49] In the *Crisis of Western Philosophy*, Soloviev shows the consequences of philosophy's identification of these suprapersonal relations with the subject itself. Such a move inevitably condemns philosophy to formalism; that is, to confusing the demonstration of the conditions of the possibility of suprasubjective knowledge within the subject with the reduction of what is known to the subject itself. In the late and fragmentary *Theoretical Philosophy*, the same point of departure appears in radicalised form. Here what is given in the finite subject is strictly reduced to a *noesis* and a *noema* conceived, respectively, simply as 'appearance' and that which appears; while the positing of the *noema* as real transcends the whole sphere of what is merely *theoretically* given and derives in fact from that sphere of act or will, which is also the only thing capable of giving the subject itself its ontic dignity. The separation of the subject from the total cosmic subject and the divine subject is, as it stands, as much a fiction as the act of isolating the phenomenal object from the total interconnectedness of existing reality.

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[48] *Ibid.*, 267; *cf.* Herman, 132f.

[49] *Crisis*, 162–163.

The major currents of Western philosophy—rationalism, from Descartes, by way of Spinoza, Leibniz and Wolff, to Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel; and empiricism, from Bacon by way of Locke, Berkeley and Hume to Mill and Spencer—have absolutised either one aspect or the other of the structure of cognition, either the concept or the experience, and turned a merely formal element into the whole of the reality. This ultimately issues in the identifying of an abstract function with the concrete reality that perform that function; in Hegel everything is reduced to '*the* Reason', in Schopenhauer everything is reduced to '*the* Will', in Hartmann to '*the* Unconscious'. But who is it who *is* rational, who wills, who is unconscious or superconscious? The twofold historical development can be expressed in two syllogisms. For rationalism, the major premise is this: 'what is truly knowable is known by a priori thinking' (Descartes to Wolff). The minor premise runs thus: 'but a priori thinking can know only the forms of our own thought' (Kant). And so the conclusion is: 'therefore what truly exists is the forms of our thought; being and concept are the same' (Hegel). Likewise for the empiricist tradition. The first premise is: 'what truly exists is known experientially' (Bacon); the second: 'but only discrete empirical states of consciousness can be experientially perceived' (Locke, Hume and Berkely); and the conclusion: 'therefore what truly exists is discrete states of consciousness' (Mill).[50] These statements are mutually exclusive, but they are at one in the one respect of elevating a single element in actual knowing into the whole act. Soloviev dubs this 'abstract formalism', 'because where there exists neither knowing subject nor known object, only the form of knowledge remains'.[51]

In the *Crisis*, Soloviev generally finds his stimulus in those philosophies that carry on the train of reflection beyond the primitive Cartesian allocation of 'spirit' exclusively to the subject (*noesis*) and 'matter' to the object (*noema*). Matter (the concept of the atom in particular) conceived as pure extension and pure passivity is a contradiction in itself. Leibniz rightly sees the need for some active principle in matter, a power working against infinite divisibility, analogous to the spiritual principle, and so also a kind of unity in plurality—whether it is that a temporary state of affairs unites plural elements in a unity (*perceptio*, cognition), or that the power working within effects an unbroken transition from one cognition to another (*appetitio*, will).[52] In Schelling, this analogy of subjectivity (the idea of a principle existing in the object as 'nature' and in the subject as 'spirit') is acknowledged as a starting point; but it loses its primacy in the process of advance toward final identity. This identity (of subject and object), however, remains a questionable conclusion, since the 'absolute subject' is conceived on the pattern of the finite subject, which achieves its selfhood from what is *not* identical with it; and thus formalism is still present in the system.[53] Schopenhauer emerges as the first to break through that formalism that culminates in Hegel; he clarifies the whole sphere of cognition from the perspective of the will that surrounds it on all sides. But if will, understood as a blind urge—that is, as something preceding all cognitive activity—is postulated as absolute, then once again it remains vacuous and meaningless; the world is as little illuminated as God, and its real existence as little vindicated. An absolute 'will for life', an infinite, unsatisfied striving, a hunger for being and so also for suffering, is a contradiction in terms; and the ethic of 'sympathy with the finite creature' erected on this basis, the ethic in which every sufferer transcends the egoism of his own particular existence to identify with the Other, is no less contradictory.[54] But if the obscure drive within all finite reality is not itself the Absolute, then equally it is not to be identified with the finite knowing ego; it is rather that reality that alone can illuminate the objective world in its existence as matter and as phenomenal life and that comes into its own in the knowing subject as knowledge and will. On the other hand, these elements that come into their own in the reflective activity of the human subject—will and perception, reality and ideality—must always have been part of each other if the formal and elemental realities are to be rendered intelligible. In other words, the world process *exists* as truly as does the Absolute that must be posited before and beyond any world process—as truly, that is, as God, understood as that which is not in process of becoming but which exists eternally in the perfect identity of spirit and nature, ideality and reality.

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[50] *Ibid.*, 318–320.

[51] *Ibid.*, 320–321.

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[52] *Ibid.*, 180–181.

[53] *Ibid.*, 198–201.

[54] *Ibid.*, 256–260.

The 'crisis' in the attempt to explode the formalism of Western philosophy comes, therefore, in allowing the self-reflexive finite subject to make a twofold claim as the condition of its own possibility. On the side of the 'object', the demand is for a total reality that is always volitional but not identical with the particular subject (this will be christened the 'world-soul' in subsequent books), although it is at the same time the 'real' condition presupposed for the subject's own existence. On the side of the 'subject', what is required is a subjective reality in which the two moments of finite cognition, each of which presupposes but never becomes identical with the others—that is, general concepts (form) and particular perceptions (content) —have a prior identity. In other words, what is required is God.[55] Soloviev grounds this second demand for the time being by means of inner experience (Jacobi), which he describes as 'faith' (as opposed to finite objective knowledge) or direct intuitive penetration (*Mystik*); but it would be unfair to accuse him at this point of a flight into the irrational. His path toward God is (as with Baader) philosophically precise, well thought out and logical. Later, at the beginning of his *Theoretical Philosophy*, he shows that he is also able to dispense with appeal to supposedly 'direct' mystical experience. It is only a terminological question whether or not one wants to call the (finite) personal subject's reflection on his act of knowing 'philosophy'; if one does so, no problem remains about calling the actual step beyond the boundaries brought to light by this reflection (boundaries that themselves demand this step beyond), 'ethics' on the one side—the step toward the world—and 'theosophy' on the other—the step toward God—leaving the name of 'metaphysics' for the relation between God and the cosmos (the world-soul).

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[55] *Ibid.*, 329–331.

So at the end of the *Crisis*, we are confronted with three postulates (though they are not as yet clearly articulated) for a comprehensive ontology, coming clearly to light in the subsequent works of the first period correspondingly as they are worked out in detail.

1. We must be committed without qualification to the achievements of modern philosophy as regards the world process in its twofold cosmological and historical shape (hominisation and divinisation), but without identifying the subject of this process with God. It can only be a comprehensive subjective reality over against God, in process of self-integration; it may be designated as world-soul, cosmic will, humanity or, finally, 'Sophia'. If this assumption is not made, even the most limited of material objects will remain inexplicable.

2. God's existence over against the cosmic process makes it impossible directly to identify the finite with the infinite subject; and above all it makes possible the relation of love that had always been impossible in idealism. The merely formal (ideal) sign of the divine in man cannot be given content except through God's free opening of himself (grace, revelation). God, as the identity of real and ideal, being and spirit, identity and nonidentity, is also the totality of what is outside himself, since he is wholeness *in* himself. He exists 'for himself' only in so far as he exists as 'not for himself' (as love), as totality both within and without himself.

3. Thus there falls a shadow over any being that exists 'for itself', in a state of separation that is not wholly and purely a condition of and an opening to wholeness in the world. The individual ego (as philosophising subject) is bound on its own level to degenerate into formalism, since pure separation is ontically abstract and unreal, a state of fallenness from the concrete fulness of God; it is exiled from fulness, so that it has to recapture this fulness in the process of integration, starting from the opposite pole, from sheer nullity, so as to be 'God outside God,' the representation of God in the twofold freedom of creator and creature and therefore the absolute form of artistic activity.

We shall now proceed to deal with these three metaphysical perspectives in turn, though in different order.

1. Since the doctrine of the world-soul and the world process presupposes the doctrine of God, we shall first present this latter in the form in which it appears in subsequent works, above all in the *Principles of Integral Knowledge* and the *Lectures on Godmanhood.* God is the Absolute in the twofold sense of being both a reality detached from (unconditioned by) all that he is not, and a reality subsisting entirely independently in isolation (and perfectly); which is possible only if, while being limited by no other reality, he also possesses the power and freedom to be himself *in* any other reality.[56] He is in fact not a part of all things; if he were only that, he would be the actual being of what is other to him. But if in fact he has free sovereignty over what is other to him, if he is its principle, then he is himself both in himself and in what is other to him, which therefore cannot be the negation of God in its otherness from him. And it is as the one who in his freedom and power possesses what is other to him as both subordinate to himself and behind himself, that he is Trinity: this important and suggestive conclusion Soloviev shares with Schelling, though he does not understand it in quite the same way, since he fills up the idealistic form with what he considers to be (and wants to be grasped as) Christian content. As the ground of all that is (*quod est*, the subject), God is Father; as paradigm of existing reality (*essentia*, the object), he is Son; and as that which unites both (*esse*, identity),[57] he is Spirit or being. This explains why it is that the finite subject cannot in itself attain by philosophical reflection to the ground of being (and of spiritual being); it can do this only by self-transcendence—by its subjectivity (*noesis*) transcending itself in movement toward the absolute subject, the Father, and its object–reference (*noema*) transcending itself in movement toward the absolute object, the Son. Soloviev can dispense with the Cartesian self-affirmation of the finite subject in its intuition of itself as 'thinking substance' only because he has in the background this conception of the *imago Trinitatis*.

Because God the Father has by his side a Son identical in substance with himself,[58] he has within himself the perfect reproduction and self-presentation of his own totality, independently of whether this is manifest in himself or in the other that is also himself. In his Logos, he contemplates his own absolute divine power and freedom—freedom to do all things, and so power over all things.[59] The infinity of this free power becomes truly present for God in the Son; he possesses this in himself both as his potentiality and as his own actuality. But he does not wish to possess it only in and for himself, as he is unenvying Goodness; he wishes to give this freedom and power to his potentialities by giving them self-subsistent actuality. By this means, in the first place, he demonstrates fully that 'he is an absolutely unified reality in his innermost essence, which cannot be superseded or negated by any plurality within his unity'.[60] He rules from all eternity over all the plurality that stands against him as power and as ideal reality; but he also wills to rule over it as Good, and to do this he must let it attain real plurality.

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[56] Str. 70.

[57] *Ibid.*, 72, 74; *cf.* R III 1 W III 327.

> God cannot be content with being stronger than chaos only *de facto*; he must also be so *de jure*. . . . Thus he must separate off his perfect wholeness from the chaos of plurality and respond in his Word to every possible expression of plurality by an ideal expression of true unity, a rational ground that demonstrates the intellectual, or logical, impotence of chaos when it seeks to maintain itself *as* chaos. . . . God's absolute superiority must emerge not only as *against* chaos but also as *for* it, in that it gives to chaos more than it merits, allows it to share in the fulness of absolute life, allows it to perceive the truth that divine plenitude is superior to the empty multiplicity of an unredeemed and corrupt infinity by living inner experience, not only on the grounds of objective rationality.[61]

This rather later formulation softens the abruptness of certain expressions in the earlier writings, in which the distinction between the necessary begetting of the Son and the free creation of the world seems to have been obliterated; in these texts God appears to be obliged by his own eternal character to create the world, to let his free power triumph over chaos and to let the glory of his love illuminate the self-orientated life of his creatures.[62] The immanent Trinity would then have to be seen as in its very expression already orientated toward the world itself. 'The Logos is God revealing himself; but that presupposes an Other for whom or with reference to whom God reveals himself; that is, it presupposes man.'[63] Accordingly, in *The Principles of Integral Knowledge* the relation between the Logos and the material principle, *Hyle*, seen as the external presupposition of the intradivine being-other of the Second Person, becomes very close.[64] Finally, Soloviev makes the link between God and the three transcendentals: in that he comes forth from himself, God is Goodness; in that he knows himself, he is Truth, in that he experiences himself, he is Beauty. But these determinations are in each case made in relation to God's revealed existence in the 'otherness' of the world; so that Truth is at the same time God's self-manifestation as the Kingdom of God, brought to perfection in Christ, and Beauty is God's full actualisation of his selfhood in the other, his highest degree of materialisation. 'Good is the prescribed goal, Truth the necessary means for determining it, and Beauty the actual realisation of it. In other words; because Being itself affirms the ideal as Good, it bestows upon it, through the mediation of Truth, a realisation in the Beautiful.[65]

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[58] Th. 13 W II 435.

[59] GM, lecture 6 A III 110.

[60] *Ibid.*, 110–111.

[61] R III 3 W III 341–342.

But what precisely is this ideal reality or totality of ideas? What (to introduce the term that now becomes necessary) is God's *Sophia*? Is it the plenitude of the modes in which his essence can be imitated (which exist already as absolute reality in his essence), coming to light through his power and freedom? or is it the plenitude of possibilities realised through his free power and grace, possibilities that are (eschatologically) linked with the form of preexisting ideas? The question is of some importance for aesthetics; from the viewpoint of the aspirations of reality, does the Beautiful lie in the sphere of ideal being only? or does ideality eternally include reality in itself? For Soloviev, however, the question can be left as insoluble, since for him the opposition of real and ideal no longer had ultimate significance as in the idealist system of God's coming to be; in God, the idea is always his own reality, and it is this reality that draws the still imperfect creation, existing for itself alone, home to himself.

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[62] *Cf.* for example, GM, lecture 5 A III 75, and *ibid.*, 88; also lecture 6, *ibid.*, 105; lecture 7, *ibid.*, 142, and lecture 8, *ibid.*, 152.

[63] *Ibid.*, lecture 8, 153.

[64] Str. 73.

[65] *Ibid.*, 75.

This also becomes clear from the fact that the process of the subjectivising of the idea, its fulfilment in being properly and independently itself, is curiously underemphasised in all this. In the Logos there exists, first of all, 'the sphere of pure intelligences, objective ideas, hypostatic thoughts of God . . . and these constitute the world of ideas; they are entirely contemplative, passionless and immutable essences, fixed stars in the firmament of the invisible world, and so they stand above any desire, any will and thus also any kind of freedom'. Over against this world stands the sphere of the 'responsive activities of the Holy Spirit, which are more concrete, subjective and lively and which constitute the spiritual world, the sphere of pure spirits or angels. . . . They experience not only intellectual contemplation but states of emotion and will, they possess motion and freedom' (the significance of the fall of Lucifer is illuminated by this).[66] In the former sphere, the intelligences are so much 'in' God that they exist only beyond themselves; in the latter, the spirits also exist *in* themselves. The former have 'only an ideal individualisation', while for the latter 'the divine will seals their independent unique subsistence'.[67] We may properly observe here that for Soloviev, individuation is in no way accomplished *ratione materiae*; for him it is precisely the personal that is truly and properly 'ideal', while, conversely, that which is purely generic and anonymous is assigned to matter. The tendency to 'neutralize' (so to speak) the act of creation, and in certain respects to negativise it is of importance here. This is the old neo-Platonic-Gnostic-Kabbalistic tradition, about which more will be said later on.

Sophia, then, is the divine substance *qua* 'pan-unity', 'the plenitude or absolute wholeness of being', in which

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[66] R III 5 W III 354–355.

[67] GM, lecture 9 A III 171.

'indeterminate plurality has never existed as such but has from all eternity submitted itself and reduced itself to the absolute unity of being in its three inseparable hypostases'.[68] In a figurative sense, it can be described as 'the body of the divine, the material being of the Godhead, penetrated by the divine principle of unity'. Or else it may be described as his 'nature'; since it is precisely in this way that God distinguishes himself absolutely from the nature of the world, it is necessary that 'an eternal nature of his own, a special eternal world of his own, be accorded him'.[69] As such, though, it also includes in itself 'the power that unites the fragmented and disrupted being of the world'. It includes this not in its form as active divine Logos, but rather as 'the feminine origin or the feminine consummation of every entity'. 'If it *exists* substantially in God from all eternity, then it comes into actuality in the world, embodying itself progressively in the world. In the beginning, it is *reshith*—the fertile idea of absolute unity, the only power whose calling is the unification of all things. At the end, it is *malkuth*, the kingly rule of God, the perfect, wholly realised union of creator and creature. It is not the world-soul—this is only the vehicle, the means and the basis for its realisation.'[70] On this basis, then, Sophia is defined in terms of the tension between, on the one hand, God himself in his perfect presence and perfect representation in the totality of being (thus over against the Logos, understood as the locus of divine generation and the active moulder of that totality), and on the other, the Kingdom of God as the perfected issue of the world process, together with the humanity that is brought to completion through that process. But if humanity is necessarily threefold—Man, Woman and Society—'then its union with God is also necessarily threefold, though forming only one unique divine-human essence—Sophia incarnate, whose central and perfect personal expression is Jesus Christ; whose feminine complement is the Holy Virgin; and whose universal extension is the Church', this last-named being officially held together by the person of Peter. Nevertheless, Christ remains in himself the incarnation of the Logos as the divinely personal power that actively shapes the world. Over against him, as both fertile feminine womb and his created, formed issue, stands Mary, who is also the Church, *Maria-Ecclesia*, eschatologically the 'Bride and Consort of the Lamb', the personal and social form taken in the world by Sophia in the stricter sense of the term.[71] The bodily element in this process of incarnation is essentially that of the one eucharistic body of Jesus, made ready beforehand in the animation of all bodily existence in the world, but finally given concrete structure by God. This living form of the body of the world, which finally finds its own plastic expression, is the form of God's Sophia, of his divine mode of articulation itself.[72] This is not contradicted by the *Lectures on Godmanhood*, where he sees Sophia as 'the ideal, complete humanity, determined for eternity in Christ',[73] not only collectively but thoroughly individually, since it is a reality in which 'each single individual is eternal as a part of total humanity' and has 'an eternal and unique substantiality'.[74] The world-soul was previously distinguished from Sophia as being only an 'outer husk' for the perfection of humanity; but in so far as it is structured in all respects by Sophia and so enters into it as its goal, it also can now be called Sophia in its own right; it is 'the complete organism, simultaneously universal and individual, total humanity as the eternal body of the Godhead and the eternal soul of the world'.[75]

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[68] R III 3 W III 339–341.
[69] GM, lecture 7 A III 145–146.
[70] R III 5 W III 352–353.

2. Both the remaining aspects of Soloviev's metaphysics—the complex of ideas centring on creation, separation from God, and the Fall, on the one hand, and the question of the world-soul and the world process on the other—are in fact inseparable, and this inseparability is precisely what characterises the contribution of Eastern Christian theology to the *Una Sancta*, the theme that it brings to be incorporated in it. The actual co-incidence of Creation (the creature's emergence from God and from ideal form) and Fall (the creature's falling away from

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[71] *Ibid.*, III 7 W III 366–367.

[72] *Ibid.*, 368.

[73] GM, lecture 8 A III 152.

[74] *Ibid.*, 158.

[75] *Ibid.*, 157.

God) is expressly taught by Maximus the Confessor,[76] epitomising a long tradition that is by no means exclusively Gnostic. The 'subject' of the world process as a whole, normally called the 'world-soul', begins its development in a position of extreme inferiority, a state of absolute fragmentation and separation. In accordance with gnosticising Christian tradition, Soloviev believes that this state cannot be comprehended without supposing a dimension of turning away from God, a dimension of guilt, embracing the whole process.

Before we introduce the question of 'process',—that is, of the essence of Creation, Fall and development, a word about the essence of the world-soul is in order. According to the article in Brockhaus-Ephron, 'The world-soul is the uniform inner nature of the world', in so far as this unity is conceived not only as 'the highest ideal unity, which reposes in the absolute principle', but also as a real 'subordinate principle', as in Plato's *Timaeus* and in Plotinus. 'The idea of a world-soul, which disappeared in the Scholastic period, becomes a matter of pressing concern once again in the Renaissance Platonists and at the beginnings of the modern era,' in Goethe and Schelling, for instance; while Schopenhauer and Hartmann go further back still, beyond the Greeks, to the monism of Indian thought. Soloviev himself dismisses this monistic conception of the world process: 'If we presuppose a world-soul as the unique fundamental principle, such a world process would have to be a constant generation of something absolutely new, an uninterrupted creation *ex nihilo*; that is, pure miracle.' However, natural philosophy makes it perfectly plain that there is a uniform centre of nature (as, indeed, the Soloviev of the *Crisis* had demonstrated): 'If the component elements of the cosmic whole, the atoms, are to be traced back to a dynamic source of determination (centres of active powers), a determination that in turn finds its exhaustive definition in the psychic characteristics of aspiring and imagining, then we are necessarily bound to grant that the natural ground of unity in these powers also possesses the same psychic nature.'[77]

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[76] *Cf.*, my *Kosmische Liturgie. Maximus der Bekenner*, 1961, 184–185.

[77] Art. 'Weltseele' in Brockhaus-Ephron W VI.

If 'atoms' are active centres of energy in reaction against a principle of passive dissolution proceeding *ad infinitum*, then 'pure matter' is a limit concept, a 'postulate', that is entirely imaginary; it cannot even be followed through to a logical conclusion.[78] 'In order to act upon another reality outside itself, any power or energy must strive to go out of itself. In order to receive the influence of another energy, it must, so to speak, make room for the other, draw it to itself or set it before itself. It follows from this that any fundamental or primordial energy necessarily finds expression in this way, in aspiration and representation.'[79] In action, it becomes real for others; in experiencing outside influence, other things become real for it. So the purely quantitative dimension is already superseded: the centres of atomic entities are acting and aspiring monads, living elemental substances (if they were not so, they would have no rationale for their aspirations). 'In nature there is no such thing as pure mechanism or absolute soullessness.'[80] If we start our investigations at the lowest levels of the process, it is still the forward-striving energy of nature that appears as 'elemental basis of the cosmic whole, as blind natural will'. In this, two tendencies are simultaneously recognisable: there is the capacity for a deeper submission to the ideal principle of the cosmos, and thus the readiness to receive forms; and at the same time, because of the blindness of the act of aspiration, there is the opposite capacity for resistance to the ideal principle, the tendency toward chaos.[81] Pure 'striving', 'blind yearning' (*désir aveugle*) is what characterises this stage, precisely because the energy has not yet achieved any kind of interiority, and cannot transcend the separation of the particular individuated centres of energy that 'exist side by side with one another in the formal unity of infinite space—a completely external and empty image of the objective substantial wholeness of God'.[82] This 'pure striving' is 'pure indeterminate potentiality',[83] and as such, it is 'the first of all creatures, the *materia prima*, the true substratum of our created world'.[84] Soloviev does not want to abandon to their own inner and autonomous fertility and creative fantasy the products of the world-soul as they follow one upon the other, the gradations of astral, geological and biological processes leading up to humanity; rather, in reaction against a monistic idealism, he puts them all under the irradiating activity of the divine creative Logos, but in such a way that in the inmost depths the mother and matrix of all forms shares in the successive acts of their information, since this matrix itself attains a deeper interiority in every one of its products and so acquires greater generative power. On its own, it is a 'barren womb';[85] but when it is fertilized by the Logos, it is no longer possible to say whether the forms generated are more the product of the Logos or more the product of the world-soul. What at first is imposed upon the world-soul as an external 'law', (what, therefore, it experiences as pure limitation) it now takes into itself and, as it ascends towards consciousness, experiences as inner life and light and so as liberation. Whereas the world-soul 'originally, as simply aspiration, does not know what it should aspire to and does not possess the idea of pan-unity', the Logos for its part cannot realise 'its ideal purpose directly in the divided elements of material existence'. So the world-soul is the necessary principle of mediation, just as much for the Divine Logos (whose desired goal is the coming to be of God in the world) as for the world itself, which can only attain to freedom through a process of prolonged assimilation of the ideal 'law' into its own distinct life. So if the question is asked as to why the goal is not reached 'by one single act of creation', 'why such pain and fatigue is necessary in the life of the cosmic whole', 'the answer [lies] in a single word that expresses something without which neither God nor nature is conceivable: freedom'.[86]

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[78] GM, lecture 2 A III 30.

[79] *Ibid.*, lecture 4 66.

[80] RG, introd. 4 D II, 20, n.

[81] 'Beauty in Nature' ['Die Schönheit in der Natur'] 8 W VII 152–153.

[82] R III 4 W III 349.

[83] *Ibid.*, 348.

Now the world-soul becomes 'free' and 'self-aware' for the first time in man: 'In man nature transcends herself and, in attaining her conscious being, passes over into the sphere of absolute being.'[87] In man the world-soul 'comes to itself': all that has gone before is only a process of 'hominisation'; and so the world-soul can be identified in its meaning and its goal with humanity.[88] 'As the living core of all creatures and at the same time as the real form of the divine, the unified wholeness of humanity, or "world-soul", is both the true subject of creaturely existence and the true object of divine acton.'[89] Man is the one truly free being who stands between God and the world; his freedom may, of course, be no more than a natural exercise and thus be limited and conditioned, but it has only itself to blame for this. So if we say that 'by a free act of the world-soul, the world that it held together as a unity has fallen away from God and fragmented into a multitude of warring elements',[90] then this cosmogonic 'falling away' (at least in so far as it includes an element of guilt) has to be seen as one and the same event as the fall of man. 'Eternal humanity' (the 'Adam Kadmon' of the Kabbala) is, in the ideal purpose of God, the world-soul that has 'come to itself': only in man does it attain to that state of suspense between God and the world that can result in a falling away from God. Man 'possesses first the elements of physical existence that link him with the natural world; second, an ideal consciousness of total unity linking him with God; and, third, because he unites himself exclusively neither with one nor the other, he emerges as a free ego. . . . He is free to will the total unity that God possesses; and by willing it as God wills it, he can will to exist beyond himself, as does God.'[91]

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[84] GM, lecture 10 A III 180.

[85] R III 6 W III 357.

[86] GM, lecture 10 A III 181–183.

It would be nonsense to think in terms of two 'falls', especially as Soloviev consistently impresses on us the identity of world-soul and humanity (*qua* content of the cosmos of which it is the consciousness). But Adam Kadmon is man in a general no less than an individual sense; Soloviev recognizes no such thing as an hypostatized universal, only 'ideas' concretely filled out with their individual content.[92] He speaks of 'the sinfulness of universal man', as a consequence of which humanity, 'which ought to constitute the unifying rationality of the universe, found itself fragmented and scattered over the globe'.[93] Like Maximus the Confessor, he speaks of the 'splitting of a single human nature into many individual natures'.[94] He sees the totally unified essence of man and the world as having emerged from God's eternity into a sphere that is not historical ('fallen') time, in which preexistence (the preexistence in unity of all things) and immortality (after time) are absolutely one and the same and support each other. 'That which comes into being only in time must also disappear with time; the notion of an entity eternally perduring after death cannot be logically harmonized with belief in its antenatal nonexistence.'[95] The paradox is inescapable that for Soloviev the temporal world process (the world-soul's coming to consciousness in man) depends upon a supratemporal decision of the same reality in its freedom—depends, that is, upon its 'eternal humanity'. This indeed is the only possible resolution of the apparently contradictory assertion that death came into the world through one man's sin (Rom 5.12) and yet must have existed, in terms of evolutionary history, long before the first man. It is possible that Soloviev also has in mind here Schopenhauer's doctrine of the unconditioned will and its subjugation at the level of phenomena to the principle of sufficient reason. He offers a painstaking exposition of this: 'Every willing individual is, from one point of view, entirely conditioned in its manifestations; but, from the other side, it is entirely free in its inmost essence. Although all its acts are determined by its innate character, this

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[87] *Ibid.*, 186.

[88] *Ibid.*, 187. *Cf.* 174: 'The world-soul, or ideal humanity', 'the prototype of humanity or the world-soul'; 188: 'The world-soul in man, or man himself'; 190: 'Human consciousness, i.e., the world-soul.'

[89] *Ibid.*, lecture 9, 174. *Cf. The Meaning of Sexual Love* I, W VII 215: '[Man] is aware of himself as the centre of the general consciousness of nature, as the soul of the world, as the self-realising potentiality of absolute total unity.'

[90] GM, lecture 10 A III 183.

[91] *Ibid.*, 187.

[92] GG II 1, 5 W VII 89: 'By the figure of the natural Adam we should understand not merely an individual person over against other persons, but a wholly united personal being, including in itself the entirety of natural humanity.'

[93] R, Introd. W III 151.

[94] RG II 7, 10 D II 164.

[95] GM, lecture 8 A III 159–160. *Cf.* 167–168: 'The efficient cause of evil cannot be in the individual as an earthly phenomenon, conditioned in advance; *rather it must be sought in an absolute, eternal essence, in which the direct, pristine will of this individual is contained.*'

innate character of the person is at the same time conditioned in its metaphysical essence by its own free will.'[96] Quite apart from the fact that, in Soloviev's work, the whole process is set out in dualistic rather than monistic terms (in terms of the distinction of cosmic will from God), the resolution of the world-soul problem must be sought in this direction. The world-soul itself is aspiration and will, but in an indeterminate condition (it is *aoristos dyas*),[97] 'an unconditioned and unconfined principle' (*apeiron kai aoriston*);[98] in order to define itself as will, it requires the consciousness that it attains only in man.

Once again, it is clear from all this that the world-soul is in no sense to be equated with Sophia,[99] although as the wisdom and the total unity of God progressively embody themselves in it, the more the activities of the creative Logos are taken up by it, at an ever more interior level, and marked as its own. In this sense, at any rate, Sophia and the world-soul can be equated,[100] or rather the world process can be described as Sophia coming to be.[101] Thus it could be envisaged as in one way comparable to the Augustinian City of God (*peregrinans*), or else as the universal Church.

3. The world-soul is that which carries forward the cosmic process that begins with Creation. At the point of Creation, the only thing established as the ground of created being is pure potency (the world-soul as *materia prima*, as mother or matrix of all things); and there then follows the bestowing of form on this by the irradiation of the creative Logos (which represents the ideal world, *divine* Sophia, over against this primal matter). So Soloviev, following Augustine on the one side and Schelling on the other, can describe the act of creation almost in negative terms as the 'removal' of God's triumphant power, that power for which the chaos of pure potentiality is always a possibility that is already in the past, already transcended. God 'wills chaos to exist since he is able to lead back into unity the rebellious life

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[96] *Crisis*, 249.

[97] R III 4 W III 348.

[98] *Ibid.*, III 5 W III 356.

[99] As Stremoukhov rightly stresses (82, n. 65).

[100] GM, lecture 9 A III 174.

[101] *Ibid.*, lecture 10 A III 182.

of creatures and fill the infinite void with his overflowing life. Thus God gives freedom to chaos, he denies himself . . . the power of reacting against it in his omnipotence.'[102] This negative guarantee of security for the order of potentiality by means of the already victorious power of God holding itself back is at the same time a positive act of will, 'since this other reality only attains its existence by a free act of the divine will'.[103] God

> desires that finite essences should possess a real life of their own. It is to this end that he brings his divine will out from its absolute substantial unity and directs it toward the multiplicity of the ideal objects and thereby confirms their independent and individual existence. . . . God confirms and establishes the 'other'—that is, being (*to apeiron*)—by not retaining this will in himself as the One, but objectivising and actualising it for himself as total unity. However, because of the natural unique particularity that belongs to the life of this 'other'—that is, to every divine idea, every objectivised form, and in virtue of which it is simply '*this*' reality—these forms with which the divine will has linked itself do not behave at all indifferently with regard to the divine will; they remould the activity of this will to conform to their own particularity, pouring it, so to speak, into their own particular form. . . . In this way, the will ceases to be exclusively divine. . . . It now both belongs to the objectified form in its particularity as well as being an expression of the activity of the divine essence. The infinite energy of existence (*to apeiron*) which in the Godhead always remains hidden behind and within its realisation . . . , ceases to conceal itself in an individual essence behind its realisations, since these actions are not the whole but only a distinct part of the whole. So every individual essence loses its direct unity with the Godhead, . . . it separates the divine *act* of will from the absolute and immediate unity of the divine will as such, taking it *for itself*, and through it acquiring the living power of reality.[104]

Here one need only replace the word 'will' with the word 'being' (*actus essendi*)—as indeed Soloviev himself does—to see appear the classical Thomist doctrine of the *limitatio actus essendi*

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[102] R III 4 W III 345; *cf.* 354.
[103] R III 4 W III 346.
[104] GM, lecture 9 A III 171–173.

per essentiam ut potentiam, with the whole profoundly problematic element that this contains (since the inner potentiality, or 'openness', of this divine act of being, as it externalises itself in the cosmic act, the *apeiron*, is already articulated in and with the process of *limitatio*). The consequence also follows that the world-soul (*qua* humanity), which has already been designated as *apeiron*, is nothing other than this divine act of being itself, transcending itself in the Other and pouring itself out into the Other.

The world then becomes 'the God who is coming to be' vis-à-vis the God who exists as eternally contemporary to all things. It becomes, as Soloviev constantly reiterates, a mirror image of God's reality,[105] which constructs itself a second time beyond itself, constructs itself out of a pure potentiality for being. Why so? So as to point to the ultimate proof of its Divine Being, to the fact that he is both *hen* and *pan*; that, in its total being, it is contained by no 'other' reality and limited by no 'other'. It is wholeness both in himself and outside himself.

This is where the difficulties start, at the point where the limitation of the act of being is described as a separation and a 'taking for self' of the divine will. To avoid identifying the coming into reality of nature with the Fall, identifying separateness with egotism, we must stick to those texts that are quite clear in tracing the Fall back to a (transcendental) free decision, which establishes the form of fragmentation in cosmic life. It is through this decision that evil enters in at the root of the sensible world as the contradiction between the infinity of the basic blind urge or 'thirst' and the finitude of the forms in which it is realised and which it wills to make absolute. The central phenomenon in which this destructive contradiction becomes manifest is the life of the various species; though when thus manifest, the contradiction is ipso facto denied and resolved at a higher level. Such a life is based on sexual desire and necessarily ends in death. It nourishes itself from an alien life (killing so that it itself may live) and yet can live only in order to die.[106] Again this is a decidedly Eastern way of thinking. The positive concept of form means the removal and elevation of this endless and unsatisfied craving in finite being to another level: 'The boundary of matter is to be found in God.'[107] Thus the world's condition is evil, since all beings burn with the hellfire of insatiable craving, they burn with 'false and evil life'. Only from God can it receive definition and limit—initially, by means of an external and harsh law that, as it is gradually interiorised, brings this dark blaze of desire into the light; and by doing so it shows itself to be truly grace, something the creature can never bestow upon itself, something, therefore, that requires faith in a higher gift, given from outside,[108] something that thus requires prayer.[109] The finite in itself is parasitic and insatiable; the infinite, on the other hand, is always a matter of a definite task, a definite responsibility, and so constitutes the form that determines the 'matter' provided by the basic urge or drive.[110]

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[105] R III 4 W III 346. 'A negative counterpart to the divine'; RG III.8, 3 D II 184.

[106] GG I, Introd. W II 13–15.

Adam exists in three conditions. He is, first, wholly real in God and potential in himself. He then becomes real in his own right, and *as such* has only potential (ideal) reality in God. Finally, in Christ, he becomes real both in himself and in God—*en duo physesin*.[111] 'The animal shape in which humanity appears to us at the dawn of history is only a distortion of the image of God in man.'[112] So far as it includes the process of hominisation, the establishment of the world's reality is indeed the result of alienation. The latter is 'a displacement of certain essential elements'[113] and thus 'a false relation' of individual entities to one another,[114] whereby 'the root of the perversity of our existence is constituted by impenetrability; that is, by mutually exclusive essences standing in opposition to each other'.[115] The centring of the self *in* the ego and the stubborn clinging *to* the ego, clinging to the differentiated existence of separation and division, this above all puts individual existence 'outside the truth' and condemns it to death and decay.[116] 'The oppressive, tormenting dream of our egotistic separateness',[117] the contradiction of wanting to be at one and the same time the whole of reality *and* one's own self, this 'root of all suffering',[118] existing in opposition to the corporate fulfilment of nature, is transcended first and foremost in Christ and in the Mystical Body. In ordinary sexual relationship, the contradiction is at best only masked—that is why sexual Eros is so close to cruelty and to rending hostility;[119] and thus too, marriage is not a real means of salvation—sexual continence is far better. Again, childbearing can only be the transmission of the same finite, egotistical and therefore mortal life, despite the hope that the temporal world will get 'better' with the children; the sacrament of marriage does not alter any of this.[120] For that one would have to be able to elevate the meaning of Eros, purified and clarified by sexual continence, into true love. And then to pass beyond both marriage (which will always remain the only possibility for the common run of men) and negative asceticism (beyond which the Christian monastic tradition has rarely penetrated), into that rare and supreme possibility of authentic love, in which the eternal, androgynous syzygy which is the heart of Eros, now redeemed from its fallenness to sexuality, is taken up into God, into the relation of Logos and Sophia.[121]

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[107] GG I 1 W II 33.

[108] GG I, Introd. W II 19–25.

[109] *Ibid.*, 25f.

[110] GS I W II 211–212. Also R III 6 W III 357.

[111] GG II 1, 5 W II 92–93.

[112] GG I 2 W II 51, n.

[113] GM, lecture 9 A III 165.

[114] GG II 1, 2 W II 74.

[115] *The Meaning of Sexual Love* 4 W VII 268.

But it is worth remembering at this point that matter—that is, a state of absolutized separation and fragmentation—is no more than a limit concept (a 'postulate') that is in reality impossible, and that the 'will', energy or impulse, that constitutes the kernel of all life is already in reaction against this tendency toward a flight into chaos. However, the power to penetrate and overcome this chaotic tendency toward absolute separation varies: the cosmic process is the gradual illumination and redemption of the will (of the world-soul), its deliverance from this perverse potentiality that it possesses. Here we should note merely that it is only when it becomes conscious in the free human subject that the blind 'impulse to separation' opens up to the diabolism of freely willed evil; and so the world process can be perfected only in a process of historical and apocalyptic decision for or against the true Good.

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[116] *Ibid.*, 2 VII 215.

[117] GM, lecture 9; A III 162.

[118] *Ibid.*, 164.

[119] GG II 1, 3 W II 77.

[120] RG II 7, 4 D II 15 154f.

[121] This is the theme of the essays on sexual love; VII 201–272.

We shall not attempt here to trace out the stages of the cosmic process in detail, though the description given of them (modelled on the accounts of Schelling and Hegel) is of the highest visionary power. God does not create directly, but only through the medium of the world-soul: this is an indispensable notion of which we must never lose sight.[122] Through 'blind groping', 'through unfulfilled projects for never-realized creatures', the world-soul ascends with difficulty, from chaos to cosmos. So the stages of the world's coming to be are to be interpreted as the steps leading up to the coming to be of man and of Christ. The 'universal force of gravity' binds disparate things to one another in a mechanical and external fashion; it is 'a primordial expression of cosmic altruism'. Subsequently, a new, refined and dynamic form of matter, the 'ether', embraces the elements and binds them together as light, electricity and so forth; 'this active energy is characterised by pure altruism, an unlimited extension and a continuous act of self-giving'. 'The world-soul, the earth, beholds in the radiance of the ether the ideal image of its heavenly beloved, but it does not in reality unite with it'; it strives toward it by absorbing the light into itself, by 'transforming [it] in the fire of life', and now begins to develop organic forms. These represent the Logos in so far as it has come into being as immanent in the world, the Logos that finally, after endless efforts, struggles through to come to consciousness in man, and so too to come to the form of total being, that form in which the God, who is all in One, can be present as ideal structure. At this point, the historical process begins, the process that so deepens and alters the ideal forms of thinking about God that the dwelling of God in a real man, as the constitutive reality of a real man, becomes possible in consequence. By these stages the world ascends toward its peak in the God-Man. Soloviev constantly goes over them again:

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[122] R. III 6 W III 157–159.

from the abstract Indian idea of God (corresponding to the abstractness of the principle of gravity) we move to the luminous, contemplative ideal world of the Greeks (corresponding to the stage of the irradiation of matter, but still lacking active interiority of life) and thence to Israel's real and active relation to God (corresponding to the organic process of nature)—a relation, though, in which God still remains 'Other'.

'That which is fresh and original in Christianity does not lie in general conceptions but in positive facts, not in the speculative content of its ideal structure, but in this idea's embodiment in a personality. This fresh and original character can never be taken from Christianity; it is not at all necessary in establishing this to demonstrate, in the face of all historical fact and all sound human understanding, that the ideas of Christian dogma come on to the scene as something entirely novel, fallen from Heaven, so to speak, in their perfected shape. Nor would this be a view shared by the great fathers of the Church.'[123] Soloviev does not mean to say that Christ is only a particular case of the genus 'Godmanhood': he is much more its unique and all-transcending peak, God's becoming real in man—previously no more than an unrealisable ideal for humanity. He is 'the absolute synthesis of the infinite with the finite',[124] 'manifestation of the new man . . . [as] the focal point of world history'.[125] However, this is not 'a miracle in the crude sense of the word, not something alien to the general order of existence; this new and unprecedented phenomenon was being made ready in all that had gone before; it represented what all the earlier phases of life had yearned for and striven for and hastened toward: the whole of nature had aspired and gravitated toward man, and the whole history of humanity had been directed toward the God-Man'.[126]

Soloviev's Christology reaches its climax in the affirmation that the realisation of the God-Man Christ is to be seen as grounded upon a reciprocal sacrifice—God's sacrifice in entering into humanity no less than man's in entering into God. In this lies the perfection of human love, and thus too the perfection of human freedom. In the state of total 'innocence', Adam Kadmon existed really in God while existing only potentially in himself; then, when he came to be real in (and for) himself, his being in God was only potential. The pristine unity cannot be simply reproduced, it must be 'achieved; it can be only the issue of free action, of a free deed, in fact, of a twofold deed: a self-abandonment on the part of the divine just as on the part of the human'. Now the whole cosmic and historical process rests upon 'a kind of self-sacrifice' by the Logos, 'since on the one side, the Logos here renounces, by a free action of his divine will or love, the manifestation of his divine glory. He forsakes the repose of eternity and engages in the struggle against the principle of evil, subjecting himself to the whole consequence of the rebellion of the cosmic process by appearing within the imprisoning constraints of an existence external to himself, within the limits of space and time . . . hidden rather than manifest. On the other side, however, is cosmic and human nature, in the form of its actualisation at any particular point, unceasingly divesting itself of itself as it experiences an unremitting yearning and strives after ever new modes of appropriating the divine prototypes.' Nevertheless, for the time being this twofold *kenosis* remains incomplete; 'it first comes to perfection when the divine Logos truly empties himself and takes the form of a servant (Phil 2.7)', since at this point he

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[123] GM, lecture 6 A III 102–103. *Cf.* lecture 7, 141: 'Christianity has its own proper content . . . , and this is uniquely and solely Christ'; and 142: 'The only novelty, the only specifically distinguishing feature, [is] Christ's teaching about himself, this pointing to his own person.'

[124] R III 11 W III 408.

[125] GG II 3 W II 136.

[126] GG II 1, 5 W II 91–92.

> determines [the human principle] no longer by means of external action, by setting limits to it without himself changing at all but rather by an interior self-limitation making space in himself for the Other and taking up into himself what is human. So on the one hand, the divine Logos takes human limitation upon himself; not indeed in such a way as wholly to enter into the limits of human consciousness, which would be impossible, but by experiencing these limits in any actual given moment as his own. And this self-limitation of the Godhead *in Christo* sets free his humanity, since it allows his natural will freely to renounce itself in favour of the divine principle—regarded not as an external force (which would mean that the self-renunciation was

> unfree) but as an interior good through which man can then come to share this good in full reality.[127]

This is a crucial text for the whole of Soloviev's theology and theological aesthetic: in God's *kenosis* (which perfects the whole process of creation by transcending it from within), human *kenosis* is freely given space in God so that the human consciousness may give itself over absolutely to the divine. In this act, man is freed from all sinful isolation for him who is total unity; and this indwells in him, no longer simply as a pure abstract form of thought (Western rationalism from Descartes to Hegel remained fixed at this level), but rather as real plenitude. And this is possible, not through some Promethean will to understanding on the part of 'absolute Spirit', but through loving dedication in response to the eternal Father. This twofold *kenosis* is the essence of the person of the God-Man no less than of his work, his death on the cross, and it is at the same time absolute glory in twofold form—the self-glorification of God in his creation as much as the glorification in God of the whole man, the man who, in the voluntary death of love, is victorious over all the disastrous contingencies of the material world and so has achieved for himself and for all humanity and the cosmos the resurrection of the body.[128] In this connection, Soloviev insistently stresses the necessity of the christological doctrine of Christ's twofold will, which alone guarantees the *kenosis* and the glorification of the God-Man himself as well as of the whole creation through him. This doctrine alone makes possible the threefold temptation of Christ, which becomes intelligible precisely in virtue of this developed Christology (the idea that Christ's human nature exists in and because of a surrender to the person of the Logos who makes space for it in himself). It is a temptation to bring more and more of the divine power into play for the work of salvation—which would, however, mean the loss of life lived in self-surrender and so the loss of the only possible salvation. The renunciation of a glory that can be deployed at will is the attainment of an authentic 'glory in the act of all-conquering love: "We beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth".'[129]

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[127] GG II 1, 5 W II 94–96 (collated with Kohler's translation in D I 78–80).

[128] GG II 1, 5 W II 99–101.

With Christ, the spiritual man comes on to the scene; the law of his being lies in the saying that only he who loses his soul (in so far as it is separate, limited and worldly) will save it.[130] And he wins in exchange for it not only his own self in Christ and so in God, but also, as a necessary consequence, the divine and worldly total unity itself. He has consecrated himself to the work of atonement, to the coming to be of God's Kingdom; and that Kingdom in its coming to be is the Church.

3. ETHICS AND ECCLESIOLOGY

Soloviev's basic idea is the notion of 'realisation', realisation as the becoming real of the ideal, as the descent of Heaven to earth, as the setting free of man for God and for himself by the process of God's becoming man. To this end it is of first importance that the level of *theoria* (as pure knowledge and perception of the idea) be transcended; and it is transcended by God as he makes himself known in the Judaeo-Christian tradition as the *realissimum* (beyond the Greek ideal of contemplation and the formalism of Kant), which in its work of grace sets limits on human freedom for the actual task of collaborating in the building of God's Kingdom in the cosmos. Thus the 'will' of God, that which he has invested in the world as his own reality in the Other, returns again to him in a threefold manner.

So clearly does Soloviev see in the process of the absolute ideal—God becoming real—the abiding and obvious achievement of Christianity for the human race, that he does not consider it as a philosopher might, going back behind the process, abandoning what has actually been attained in the interests of some kind of pure philosophical method. Still less is he minded to offer a rationalistic unravelling of the Christian phenomenon in order to surpass it. For if God's coming to be real has not been consummated on the soil of historical and empirical fact in the uniqueness of the God-Man, then everything remains still in the partial and prejudiced state of *theoria*, 'absolute knowledge'. However, the projected system of the late 'theoretical philosophy' shows a concern to build into itself this realm of absolute knowledge as pure phenomenalism and formalism. The later ethics, the *Justification of the Good*, accomplishes both steps at once: worldly reality (of the so-called 'external world' as well as of the ego) is unfolded and secured primarily in ethical fashion—and the reality of God unfolds itself in the same act as the inner reality that makes possible every ethical action and is presupposed by it. For in order to exist, man must act; and in order to act he must presuppose that existence has some meaning; but this presupposition implies the existence of a *giver* of meaning.

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[129] GG II 1, 5 W II 96–99.
[130] GM, lecture 5 A III 59.

> Any creature striving toward the goal of its existence necessarily becomes convinced of the fact that the attainment of its goal or the final satisfaction of human desire does not lie in human power; that is, any creature endowed with reason comes to recognise its dependence on an invisible and unknown reality. Such dependence is impossible to deny. The only question is whether that on which man depends has a meaning or not. If it has no meaning, then a life conditioned by this meaninglessness is itself meaningless. . . . We are able consciously and rationally to do good only if we believe in the Good itself, in its objective, independent significance in the world—only if (in other words) we believe in a moral order, in a purpose, in God. . . . We must believe that the good that reason demands of us is no subjective illusion but has a real ground, and that it brings truth to expression.[131]

Soloviev has no trouble in showing that all the great ethical systems (all those, that is, with religious content) of the various races are constructed on this assumption, and that the ethical systems of eudaemonism on the one hand[132] and Kantian rigorism on the other[133] extract only one aspect from the total phenomenon. He himself constructs his system (as always) with an eye to the final integration of the 'total unity'; the norm is the wholeness of man,[134] and a broad inductive survey of ethical phenomena, conducted with magisterial sureness of touch, demonstrates 'from below', from the concrete facts of history, what Kant proves a priori (and thus no more than formally).[135] The three basic phenomena of shame (the elevation of spirit over the world of instinct), sympathy (communication with one's fellow man, with everyone who is a neighbour) and *pietás* (in the sense of reverence for the higher reality upon which one depends—parents, clan, country, ancestors, gods, the living God) support the cosmos of virtues and duties, the universal human integration as personality, society and Church, or Kingdom of God.[136] Here again the concept of process, this time at the historical level, is for Soloviev 'an historical fact that cannot be contested with any well-founded degree of certainty'.[137] Each man on his own level can of course, in some way do what is right, strengthened by providential grace. 'But just as neither a formless organic piece of matter nor an inadequately evolved living body such as a sponge, polyp or cuttlefish can produce a human being, even if it possesses it potentially within itself, so also the Kingdom of God (in the sense of the perfection of human and cosmic social life) cannot take shape directly out of a horde of savages or an inadequately evolved and barbarous political organism.'[138] Just as the first Adam's arrival on the scene was a seed sown in the world requiring infinite time to evolve, so too the seed of the second Adam will require a long passage of time before the whole

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[131] RG I 4, 4–5 D II 98–100.

[132] RG I 6 D II 128–148.

[133] RG II, 713–714 D II 170–177. 'Morality is in reality autonomous; Kant was not deceived in this respect. And this massive issue from the sphere of human consciousness, which is implied in its very name, will not forsake man.

Morality is autonomous precisely for this reason, because its essential core is no abstract formula, hanging in the air; rather it is autonomous because it carries in itself all the conditions of its own reality. And those realities presupposed by a moral life, the existence of God and an immortal soul, do not represent the demand for something other, added on to the sphere of morality; they are its own inner basis. God and the human soul are not postulates of the moral law, but the very formative powers of moral reality.' *Ibid.*, p. 175.

[134] RG II 7, 10 D II 162f.

[135] RG, foreword *ad fin.*; D II xxii–xxiii.

[136] *Ibid.*, I, ch. ii–iv.

[137] *Ibid.*, II 7, 14 D II 176.

[138] *Ibid.*, II 8, 5 D II 188.

'dough' of world history and the cosmos is leavened. However, the eschatological Kingdom of God does not fall from Heaven any more than Christ's own advent occurs without mediation; it comes in the fulness of time, when the womb of the virgin—and the womb of earth itself as well—is perfectly ripe for the reception of the divine seed. While the Church fathers had to answer the question of why Christ came so late, at the end of the ages,[139] Soloviev has to deal with the opposite question, why he came so early and delays his return so long. If 'the Kingdom of God could be revealed as little among cannibals as among wild animals, if it is necessary for humanity to make its way from an animal, formless and chaotic condition to intelligible organization and unity, then it is as clear as day that this process is not yet concluded, that the idea of Christ has not yet leavened all the dough'.[140] Soloviev is no Pelagian,[141] so little does he recognise any independent achievement by men and by humanity without the prevenient assistance of the 'nourishing' work of grace,[142] that we must fear almost the exact contrary—a dissolution of the natural order (where, at the end of the day, nature would still exist really only as pure potentiality, while an ideality stems from the Logos) in the order of grace. But the expressions he uses here should not be pressed too far: Soloviev thinks as a Christian who can never posit a pantheistic dissolution of creation and creaturely freedom in God; his teaching on the Kingdom of God seeks indeed to integrate all particular individual freedoms in the one mystical Body, in the communion of saints, but seeks precisely in this integration to preserve and eternalise the authentic freedom of authentic personalities.

Since the event of Christ, this process of the integration of humanity into the Kingdom of God is necessarily bound to the reality of the *Church*. The Church is, on the one hand, the God-Man really living on in a community of love, realised ethically as well as sacramentally; but, on the other hand, it is also, necessarily, the pattern of the ideal universal form of the

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[139] Henri de Lubac, *Katholizismus als Gemeinschaft* (1943), 145f., 216f.

[140] RG II 8, 5 D II 189.

[141] *Cf.* the detailed article on Pelagius in Brockhaus-Ephron; W VI.

[142] RG II 7, 14 D II 176.

Kingdom of God. It is ideal in so far as it has not yet really been integrated and realised in the historical process; but in Christ it is already real, and, in inchoate form, it is realised in the Church and in humanity. The Church as founded by Christ is the place where the ultimate is made present; in it the false and contradictory species life that exists in the flux of temporality is done away with: in the Church is abiding fatherhood and abiding filial *pietas*; it is 'natural humanity transsubstantiated'.[143] And it is so from a starting point in the real and particular that the ideal sought for is no longer simply God but the perfected body of humanity.

> The God-man is individual, the true Man-God is universal: as the radius is the same for the whole circle and determines equally the distance from the centre to any given point on the circumference, it is thus in itself the formative principle of the circle, while the points on the circumference can make up the circle only in the sum of their totality. Outside this totality—that is, outside the circle—they have taken individually no definition; and the circle also is unreal without them. In the human world, the Church represents this circle. When human personality is united with the Church, man comes to be *integrated*. He receives true and healthful life, and the Church itself is fertilised and can now act effectively.[144]

Everything then depends on the integration of humanity into the Church, so that it can receive there a share in the form of divine-human universality, and on the other hand, on the Church's integration into humanity, so that it can shed the abstractness that is foreign to it because of its essential centre, but which it still retains because of the refusal of men to accept it. It is of course equipped by its founder, for the sake of its task of integration, with a *form* of universality, that removes it from the limits of any finite worldly form (nationalism in particular); but this form, which culminates in the finality of papal authority and in the doctrine of infallibility, is not *in itself* abstract. For in the first place there is absolutely no such thing as abstract truth in the Church; further, the *form* of being in truth corresponds to a real existence; in truth, an existence which has its ground in the immaculate virgin Mary,[145] and finally, the form of infallibility is always embodied in a concrete Church order, 'grounded in the real and living unity of the prince of the apostles,' the one who, in the place of all and in the name of all, was the first to make a free confession of the divinity of Christ, to 'the messianic idea in its absolute and universal form,' and thus the one to whom the keys of the Kingdom have been entrusted.[146] So the concept of form that is practically applied in the polity of the Catholic Church is, as was noted at the onset, the concept of a means, a way of mediation; but it is only possible and meaningful if it arises out of a form that has its end in itself (the Godmanhood of Christ as the expression of God in the world) and advances toward a form that equally has its end in itself (the complete embodiment of Christ in humanity, the Kingdom of God). Only when considered in the light of this purposive dynamism is the form of the Church not vacuous or abstract, but a plenitude in the process of coming to be, supernatural ethic in practice and so itself an expression of Christian love. For it is love alone, and can only be love alone, that transcends all forms of egotism, whether of individuals, or of groups, so that it may liberate them in 'a real act of submission or love toward the Church'[147] for Christ who is total truth and total unity. It is in virtue of this love, which is at work beyond all limited personal or racial loves, that 'the Church as a whole is more real and more alive than all persons and races, just as the whole body surpasses the individual organs and cells in its vital power'.[148]

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[143] R III 10 W III 396–397.
[144] GG II 2 W II 135.

In the *Spiritual Foundations of Life*, Soloviev had already, in a superb survey, outlined the forms of ecclesial catholicity; it is a survey oriented to the practical 'catholic' task of the permeation of all humanity but does not yet enter into the debate between the Western and Eastern Churches. Although, as Soloviev says in this work, the Church stands above all natural organisms, it possesses in common with them those qualities that belong to any kind of life in the world. 'Any real determinate life also requires a corresponding determinate form', a body. This is more than a mere aggregate of parts; it involves (1) the entirety of its component elements, (2) the organic form that produces the real body out of these elements, (3) the actual vital energy itself, which expresses itself in all the operations and movements of the separate parts in subordination to the whole. In the Body of Christ, the elements are human beings, the form is the Church and the vital energy is the Divine Spirit. By virtue of the ecclesial form, the Divine Spirit elevates particular individuals above their limited existence, so that they come together formally in the total unity of Christ; and it further happens, again because of the ecclesial form, that the enduring limitations of sinners do not damage the dignity of the Church as a whole. A natural body too can be diseased in particular members, but it will die only if the central organs are affected. But in the Church these organs are invulnerable: the head is the God-Man, the heart is the immaculate Virgin and, with her, the whole invisible Church of the saints. So the ethical task proper to all who belong to the Church becomes the conforming of its life to the divine life, whose seed and whose structure are preserved in the sacred form of the visible Church. Any form originating with man is innerworldly; by contrast, everything 'provided by the Church universal, has the form of unconditionality (absoluteness).' This comprises (1) the true faith as the Church understands and proclaims it in her role as representing the powers of human knowledge penetrated by Christ's spirit, to which the individual has to surrender his isolated, 'fleshly' understanding; (2) the right relationship to all men, which the Church in her hierarchical form is able to uphold, the hierarchial form 'in which every member occupies his place and fulfils his destiny not in his own name, but in the name of him who has commissioned that member for his work, in which this whole ordered existence leads directly up to the source of all truth, to Christ, the one true High Priest and King'; (3) the human destiny to rule over the cosmos and mould it into the body of God. But for this last the Church carries in itself only the seed, the germ of the new and higher nature (in the Eucharist), 'the absolute form of transfigured matter,' with which we communicate in the organic existence of the Church, so that, starting from there, freed in principle from the servitude of the material order, we can actively help the world to be transfigured.[149] The universal form of faith, universal hierarchical obedience, and the receiving in the sacraments of a universal eschatological quality of life, these three things together elevate man in his fragmented and limited existence to a state of participation in the fulness of divine catholicity. And the ecclesiastical form directed toward that goal cannot be invalidated by the 'matter' that is unified by it: 'The Church is not only the assembly of believers; it is, before all else, that which assembles them—that is, a substantive form of unity given to men from above, by means of which they can come to share in the Godhead.'[150]

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[145] R. II 1 W III 249.

[146] *Ibid.*, 250–253.

[147] *Ibid.*, II 4 W III 267.

[148] Th. 23 W II 476.

Soloviev emphasises very strongly the mediatorial nature of ecclesiastical form. We are not to 'confuse the bed with the stream'; the Church is the Kingdom, not in the state of fulfilment but only in becoming, and there can be no doubt that the grace of God has always been at work in the world. But since Christ's incarnation, this grace has taken on a visible and tangible form: 'In the Christian Church, the divine is not only an interior and intangible working of the Spirit, it appears also in determinate shape, already realised, in bodily manifestation. The Old Testament Church too had its forms, but there they were only allegorical foretypes and signs. On the other hand, the sacred forms of the New Testament Church are true and authentic images of the presence and work of God in humanity.' Because of the imperfection of the human beings who enter the Church, 'these forms appear only as the inception, the pledge, of divine life in humanity . . . but even at the present time the New Jerusalem, the city of the living God, does not consist purely in the thoughts, wishes and inner feelings of Christians: the divine forms represent the real foundations, here and now, of that city of God, on which the divine building will be erected—which, indeed, is already in process of construction in a mystical sense. So, of course, not everything in the visible Church is divine, but the divine is already something visible within it. And these visible foundation stones are unshakeable and unchangeable; without them there is no Church.'[151] The Church is, it could be said, the process of gestation, the perfected Kingdom is the event of birth.

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[149] GG II 2 W II 108–111.

[150] *Ibid.*, 112.

Soloviev's doctrine of the necessary interpenetration of an immutable structure with the living evolution of the same structure arises out of this conception: if an entelechy is vital and active, then precisely for that reason it must change as to the forms of its manifestation if it is to remain itself. 'Thus the visible forms of the divine, though always present in the Church, were at first very rudimentary and imperfect, just as the visible form of a seed is rudimentary and imperfect and shows very little correspondence as yet to the full form of the plant, although it contains this form potentially in itself.' So it would be foolish for someone to reject the full-grown tree so as to preserve the seed, to 'reject the more fully revealed forms of God's grace in the Church, preferring absolutely a return to the structure of the primitive Christian community'.[152] And yet the whole plant is present in the seed; and thus the choice of a new apostle to complete the original number is made at Peter's suggestion. It is not done 'aristocratically', with the Apostles exercising their own plenitude of power, nor 'democratically', by ballot, but 'theocratically', through prayer and the drawing of lots. In this way, the divine influence on the community is the outcome of the free concord of the disciples under Peter's leadership; so that 'already the polity of the Church emerges with complete clarity as a free theocracy'.[153] The Church that is sent out into the arena of world history will always have to express its life in the fact that, through the indwelling Spirit of God, it is equal to ever-new historical situations and tasks. It will, in consequence, have to elucidate its faith in the rich Graeco-Roman systems of learning and conceptuality and to develop the expression of it accordingly, precisely if it wishes to remain true to its own primitive tradition;[154] and the definitions promulgated in its ecumenical councils as the expression of the self-understanding of its faith will be binding on all believers.[155]

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[151] *Ibid.*, 114–115.
[152] *Ibid.*, 118–119.
[153] *Ibid.*, 120.
[154] *Ibid.*, 121.

At this point, the Great Schism intervened, the schism between East and West, between the Byzantine-Muscovite world and Rome, and between the slavophiles and Soloviev, with Soloviev pleading the cause of Rome—but also the cause of the ecumenical councils—with such superiority in his grasp of the issues involved. We need not and cannot summarize here this brilliant apologia, although in its clarity, verve and subtlety it belongs among the masterpieces of ecclesiology. One or two observations must suffice. Both the great schisms, Eastern and Protestant, are pure scandal; they cannot be justified from a Christian point of view in any way at all. The East, which adhered to the legitimacy of the great ecumenical councils, had in fact acknowledged the authority of Rome in these very councils (especially at Chalcedon); no council ever condemned Rome, and, since the time of Photius, the East has recognized its inability to convene an ecumenical council on its own behalf. It has ossified in the position it held at that time, whereas Rome has never ceased to renew itself in vital fashion, facing up to the contemporary historical situation. Before the separation of the churches, the Byzantine Church, out of loveless political envy and the lust for honour, had surrendered itself to the service of the emperor and so deprived itself of its catholic, supranational liberty. This bondage to the state was its legacy to Russia, which totally dispensed with the Church's liberty by finally establishing the tsar as head of the Church in 1885. By rejecting the living, contemporary polity of the Roman Church, Byzantium had no alternative but to elevate the stagnated tradition and, in consequence, formalism into a principle; thus it became the Church of the past.[156] It was a profound historicophilosophical logic that the heir of Byzantium was Islam.[157] Whoever, as a Christian, only preserves without creating has indeed suffered the interior loss of his treasure: 'When cut off from its living form of *coming to be*, existing only in the forms of expression that *have* already *come* to be, the Church's holiness necessarily loses its infinite quality. It becomes hidden and bound by limited, dead, ... already-exhausted forms that weigh upon the living consciousness as purely external things.'

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[155] Th. 7 W II 414f.

[156] GS 3 W II 240. *Ibid.*, 4, 258f., 5, 268f., 272f.; and SO 12 D I 183f.

[157] GS 3 W II 243–248; R, Introd. W III 174–177.

'In such a situation, what is essential and eternal in ecclesiastical structure is confused with the contingent and the past; the stream of Church tradition itself, forced into narrow channels by the dead hand of fundamentalist literalism, no longer has its proper unbounded ecumenical breadth.'[158] Thus the flight into contemplative monachism was likewise logical, a flight by which the profane world and the Christian nation were abandoned to a purely secular political order and left without Christian nurture.[159] Byzantium is now no more than 'a deserting Church'.[160] Indigenous Russian Orthodoxy, with its healthy and vigorous beginnings under St Vladimir, was too heavily weighed down by its fateful heritage to be able to escape the disease of sterile conservatism. The indigenous Russian schism, the controversy between Avvakkum, the leader of the *raskol*, and the patriarch Nikon, revealed the hopelessness of the inner situation and the cruel lack of any decisive ecclesiastical court of appeal. Peter the Great did the only possible right thing when he abolished the patriarchate and established the Synod: 'Russia, thank God, was rescued both from the Oriental stasis of the Old Believers as well as from a superfluous and belated parody of the mediaeval papacy!'[161] On both sides we see the lack of interior catholicity; but the saviour figure, Peter, who 'legitimately and lawfully abolished'[162] the ecclesiastical power that had been so abused, was also the one who opened a door to the West—and thus to the universalist thinking of German idealism. Compared with this, Peter's own rationalism and that of the slavophiles who followed was something already surpassed from within. If Khomyakov understood the notion of an ecumenical Church 'as a living organism of truth and love, and still at the same time wished to cling to Russian national messianism, then logically he ought to have accused the whole of the West of a falling away from love. For Soloviev, this is a 'monstrous assertion' from the Christian point of view as much as the historical (when considered in the light of the actual events leading to the Great Schism).[163]

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[158] GS 5 W II 272.

[159] R I 1 W III 192–193.

[160] *St Vladimir* W III 105.

[161] Th., foreword W II 367, 370.

[162] *Ibid.*, 371.

Soloviev himself is unsparing in criticism of the Roman Church, but only so as to separate wheat from chaff, to set out the Petrine principle in its purity and indispensability. Rome is the form of the sacred, the living counterpart of the frozen Byzantine Icon,[164] grounded upon the resurrection of Christ, which demonstrates 'that bodily existence is not excluded from the covenant between God and man, and that external, palpable objectivity can and must become a real instrument and a visible likeness of divine power'.[165] But this sacral form is holy only as a means to the realisation of God's Kingdom;[166] the more it appears as a humble servant and the less attention it draws to itself, the more Christlike it is.[167] 'The authority of the Roman See was never more generally acknowledged or more powerful than under the least assuming popes.'[168] The besetting temptation for Christian Rome, as the heir of the pagan caesars, was, again and again, the exploiting of power to achieve spiritual goals. An 'authority possessed of a mystical religious foundation had no need of reinforcement from without or of formal juridical documents'; but an 'all-too-active concern with their own power' led the popes to strive for such secular guarantees, and in this way they inevitably became entangled in politics and even in waging war. 'The Church militant became the Church in arms', and the spiritual theocracy to some extent assumed 'the character of a coercive regime'.[169] So little does Soloviev extenuate these abuses and what he calls the 'abstract clericalism' of Rome,[170] that he can portray Protestantism's reaction in the direction of Christian liberty as in fact inevitable,[171] although he denies that Protestantism has the character of a Christian Church because of its refusal of an objective and universal ecclesial form.[172]

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[163] *Ibid.*, 375–377.

[164] 'The apostolic chair in Rome: this wonderworking icon [sic!] of universal Christianity': R, Introd. W III 161.

[165] *Ibid.*, 160. On the theology of the icon, *cf.* Th. 17 W II 450–455.

[166] R II 2 W III 259.

[167] R II 8 W III 284. 'So it is clear that the central authority of the papacy has a purely conditional and functional meaning': GS 6 W II 288.

[168] GS 6 W II 289.

[169] *Ibid.*, 288–291.

[170] W II 161.

The great lesson to be learned from the twofold schism is that the Roman form is still necessary for the Church's survival, but that the Church cannot be united by force, any more than it can rule the world by force or man be saved by force.[173] There is nothing more needful for the stability of Christianity on earth and its effectiveness among men than the reunification of its three branches. Each of them preserves one distinctive element of Christian life: the Graeco-Russian East preserves tradition (the past); Rome preserves the means of spiritual power (the present, as the constant renewal of the presence of Christ); Protestantism preserves freedom and prophecy (the future), though this can in no way present itself as authentically Christian without both the other principles.[174] Soloviev is not arguing for the 'branch theory' of the Oxford Tractarians; but he does see the values that have been stolen from the Church's centre in Rome and are still withheld from it because Orthodox and Protestants stand aloof. Only a pure act of love can help the Church over these difficulties, a love, though, that renounces any kind of egotistical clinging to the national or to a freedom of conscience conceived in purely individualistic terms, a love that acknowledges the form of universality. What is required is an 'ethical act of self-denial on the part of persons and nations'; this alone can open the way for the total unity of the Church of Christ;[175] for it is only when animated by the Spirit of the Church that the individual can be free: 'Such men as surrender religiously to the Church in its holiness and obey it humbly in its authority share in the Church's freedom in full measure; for in their life the Divine Spirit lives and works, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Any other kind of freedom, which is not purchased at the high price of self-denial in faith and obedience, is counterfeit coin in the ethical world.'[176]

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[171] GS 4 W II 257. *Ibid.*, 6 W II 304f.; GM, lecture 2 A III 22.

[172] GS 6 W II 306. *Ibid.*, 7, 323.

[173] *Ibid.*, 6 W II 307–308.

[174] *Ibid.*, 4 W II 263f. *Cf.* the rather different division in Th., foreword W II 382–385, and R, Introd. W III 152–153.

[175] GS 4 W II 253.

For Soloviev, with his lucid spirit and its search for order, one thing self-evidently, necessarily and immediately needed resolution: the ecumenical problem of the mutual estrangement and hostility of the churches. He made a representative confession of faith to the Roman Church in the name of all Russians:

> As a member of the true and venerable and rightly believing Eastern or Graeco-Russian Church . . . I acknowledge . . . as supreme judge in matters of religion him whom St Irenaeus, St Dionysius the Great, St Antony the Great, St John Chrysostom, St Cyril, St Maximus the Confessor, St Theodore the Studite, St Ignatius, et cetera also acknowledged: namely, the apostle Peter, who lives on in his successors and did not receive that Word of the Lord in vain: 'Thou are Peter . . .' et cetera. You know, O immortal spirit of the blessed Peter, invisible servant of the Lord in the government of His holy Church, that there is need of an earthly body for its revelation. Twice, indeed, you have granted it to be embodied in a society, first in the Graeco-Roman, then in the Romano-German world . . . and after those two preliminary incarnations it awaits the third and final one. A complete world, full of forces and longings but lacking a clear consciousness of its destiny, is knocking on the door of world history; what word is to be spoken to it, O peoples of the Word? . . . Your Word speaks of a free universal theocracy, the true solidarity of all nations and classes, the realisation of Christianity in social life, a christianised politics, freedom for all the oppressed, protection for all the weak, social justice and true Christian peace. . . . I have come to utter this Amen in the name of one hundred million Russian Christians in the firm and full conviction that they will not dissociate themselves from me. . . .[177]

4. AESTHETICS AND APOCALYPTIC

The protests against Rome failed;[178] Rome possessed that form of catholicity that alone can unite the world and lead it toward the Kingdom of God. Soloviev wished to see this formal principle applied entirely realistically in the free subordination of the state—that is, of particular states—to the spiritual authority of the representative of Peter. Only so can national egotism be overcome, and 'the universal brotherhood of races' be realised.[179] 'The free ethical sacrifice of the national spirit' could make real the 'supremely free unity of the Church', whose ecumenical reality would appear to us 'no longer as a lifeless idol, nor as a body possessed of soul but bereft of consciousness, but as self-conscious, ethically free, a nature itself working for its own actualisation, as Sophia, the true Beloved of God . . .'[180] Soloviev's dream was to open up the sphere of realised secular achievements, of state and culture, to the influence of a Church that is unified and thus fully aware of its task, in the kind of free reciprocity that the Middle Ages had indeed sought, but never wholly realised. Only through the Church can the concerns of the state achieve a supratemporal significance for the Kingdom of God, only through the Church can the indubitable fruits of cultural and technical progress be given meaning in the light of eternity. 'If social progress aims to be authentic progress, it must have an absolutely worthy, an ideal and perfect purpose.'[181] Like Dante, Soloviev dreamt of the unification of the world, not in a totalitarian monarchy, but in a total free theocracy, into which all things, secular and spiritual, must be integrated. Did he seriously hope to see this distant goal of his ecumenical efforts attained? In any event, after his failure to achieve the proximate goal of ecclesiastical unity, his hopes vanished into thin air, leaving him a disappointed man.

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[176] *Ibid.*, 255.

[177] R. Introd. W III 188.

And so the last years of his life—the years that take up again the speculative work of the first period and attempt to bring it to a conclusion—move into a curious twilight. The direct activism in ecclesiastical politics which marks his ecumenical period recedes, to give place to his own theoretical work, which (as was demonstrated at the beginning) seeks to open the whole of philosophy to aesthetics, starting with ethics and working

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[178] GS 6 W II 308–310.
[179] Th., Introd. W II 384.
[180] *Ibid.*, 385.
[181] GG II 3 W II 149.

through to theory. The aesthetics which has to perfect the whole scheme was never written; we have only fragments of this. It was to have been an aesthetic that was the issue both of the 'realisation of the good' (the idea taking form) and of perfected truth (the idea, that which is worthy of being, becoming real), and so a 'science of the apocalypse', of the revelation of God's Kingdom, God's ultimate coming-to-be in man and the world. In the light of Rom 8.19f., both basic words, *apocalypse* and *glory* move closer together: 'This revelation, and the glory of God's children that all creation awaits in hope consists in the fact that the free union of God and man is to be fully realised in the whole of humanity, in every sphere of its life and activity . . . , all these spheres must be led into the condition of divine-human, harmonious unity, must enter the state of free theocracy in which the Church Universal will attain to the full measure of Christ's maturity.'[182]

But if the meaning of *apocalypse* is here reduced entirely to 'aesthetics as ultimate harmony', the other meaning of apocalypse in the Bible makes its impact felt ever more strongly as the years pass. Indeed, it swells to thunderous volume until at last it produces a quite opposite result and completely swallows up the first meaning, 'aesthetics as harmony'. Free obedience, free sacrifice, free theocracy, all will flow into the divine freedom in an apotheosis of creaturely freedom. But what if the creature uses its freedom to say no? Had not Soloviev's earlier philosophy already established that all true freedom rests upon the overcoming of the power to say no, and that the depth of denial that is possible increases in proportion to the increase of consciousness and spirituality? The unconscious world-soul is chaotic, but only the free spirit is demonic. Thus there errupts into Soloviev's world picture a force that had always been latent there but had never been given its true weight. At the beginning Soloviev had attacked Western abstract thought; but was not the construction of the historical process, as a continuation and a reflection of natural process, still itself abstract? Did it take seriously enough the freedom of the creature? Even if we want to assume that the historical process is entirely in the hands of the

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[182] GG II 2 W II 107.

Logos, who is becoming and finally has become man—this 'real suprahuman field of activity, giving nourishment to the whole life of humanity and conditioning its ethical progress by the fulness of this nourishment'[183]—even so, we still have to ask whether what we know of the incarnate Logos gives adequate grounds for expecting this kind of progress within history. As the powers of good advance through history, so too do the powers of evil, since progress can in no case outplay the free decisions of humanity, least of all if we conceive the world-soul as 'coming to itself' in man, and if man is not cast down from his throne to be a mere function of a monistic *Weltgeist*.

But what then is the content of the total aesthetic scheme? It is a revelation (an apocalypse) of the truth of God and of man—of God as God-Man and man as man-God—each opened to the other in their apocalyptic depth; and above all it is the unimaginable and incomprehensible justification of the good in and through this death-dealing reciprocity. But this means that the law of death and resurrection remains the ultimate law for world history, no less than for the individual. Certainly we would be less than just to Soloviev if we did not acknowledge that even in the period of his undisturbed faith in progress, he always had the resurrection of the dead before his eyes as the horizon of his eschatological aesthetics, and that the whole of the aesthetic element in nature and art appeared to him purely as an adumbration of the resurrected cosmos. But this view so dominated his thinking that he was in consequence inclined to overlook the realism of death or to cloak it in the enveloping terms of the 'process'. For him, 'the Kingdom of Death' was subspiritual nature, which included the sexual sphere; all truly spiritual entities in which the eternal, ideal world is already to be seen appeared to him to constitute the unique path to immortality and resurrection. The heavenly crucifixion of the Logos was for him (as it was in Valentinus' myth) a painless, dialectical matter, and the earthly crucifixion was something viewed exclusively from that standpoint. In the very few places in his work where the cross appears, it is only as 'the sign of spiritual power that can overcome all suffering'.[184] In this area there was a great deal still to be done. Soloviev wrote his *Three Conversations*, including the *Tale of Antichrist*, with his last failing energy, and he did indeed say a decisive word with these. But death itself left him no time to deal more thoroughly with the mystery of death.

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[183] RG II 7, 14 D II 176.

[184] GG II 1, 6 W II 105.

It remains for us to deal in order with the first fragmentary outlines of an aesthetic, then with the subsequent, apocalyptic aesthetics that extend so far beyond the first.

From the very beginning, Soloviev wanted to complete his theosophy with a universal aesthetics.[185] He prefaced his essay on natural aesthetics with Dostoyevsky's dictum that 'beauty will save the world.'[186] The *Critique of Abstract Principles* had proclaimed that 'the realization of pan-unity in its external actuality is absolute beauty', so it is as little something 'given' as is 'pan-unity' itself; it is a task assigned to humanity, and human art is a vehicle of its realisation. Soloviev promises to develop, at the end of his work, 'the common axioms and rules of this great and mysterious art that brings all beings into the form of beauty'.[187] According to another declaration, the sphere of aesthetic realisation should be divided into three areas: the material (technology), the formal (the 'fine arts') and the absolute (mysticism).[188] For Soloviev, however, mysticism is not only passive devotion to the divine or direct contact with it; it also is the active art of bringing the divine from Heaven to earth, and, in this sense, 'theurgy'[189]—it is concerned, that is, with the realisation of the ideal: this is why Soloviev becomes a bitter opponent of classical idealist aesthetics, according to which beauty is allowed to be 'only' appearance, not reality, only an illusory reflection, not even a true promise or foretaste. 'An infinity that existed solely for an instant would be an unbearable contradiction for the spirit; a bliss existing only in the past would be a torture for the will.'[190] Thus too Goethe's

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[185] As in the outline of the *Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge*, Str., 75. He refers back to this in his later philosophy of art: W VII 174, n.

[186] *Beauty in Nature*, W VII 119.

[187] *Cf.* the introd. to *Shorter Writings on Aesthetics* W VII 337.

[188] *Principles of Integral Knowledge*; Str. 114, 273.

[189] Article on 'Mystik' in Brockhaus-Ephron; W VI.

[190] *Sexual Love* 5 W VII 257.

Faust cannot embody any authentic idea: 'The heavenly powers and the "eternal feminine" appear from above, and so from outside; they do not reveal themselves from within, in the very content of reality itself.'[191] Even Dante's Paradise is 'not sufficiently living and concrete—an essential deficiency that not even the most euphonious verse can make good'.[192] 'According to Hegelian aesthetics, beauty is the embodiment of a universal and eternal idea in individual and transitory phenomena; in this embodiment, moreover, these phenomena remain transitory, disappearing like individual waves in the stream of the material process. Only for a moment do they reflect the light of an eternal idea. This is possible only if the relation between spiritual principle and material phenomenon is accidental. True and perfect beauty, on the other hand, since it expresses the full solidarity and mutual penetration of these two levels, must necessarily allow one of them (the material) to come really to share in the immortality of the other.'[193] If true embodiment is lacking, 'the powerlessness of the Idea to give its inner content a direct external expression' becomes manifest. Thus Soloviev welcomed the shift toward literary realism, even in the materialistic form that it assumed in Chernyshevsky:[194] he was a declared enemy of all 'art for art's sake'.[195] In ancient culture, 'poets were at once prophets and priests', and it is only in the subsequent division of labour that poets elevated an isolated art to the status of an idol: 'For such priests of pure art, perfection of external form comes to be the main consideration.' Realism quite rightly reacted against this; but 'in the ineffectual hunt for pseudo–real detail, the actual reality of the whole is once more lost'. Dostoyevsky had an eye for true inner reality, and he is the pledge of the poetics of the future. In this way he unmasks in prophetic fashion the anti-Christian side of modern utopian social progress—movements orientated to the future; his vision grows in the true 'houses of the dead', of the 'insulted and injured', as he recognises the solidarity of saints and sinners. His ideal is the Church, the Kingdom of God, and not a particular nation. 'The Church as positive ideal was intended to become the central idea . . . of *The Brothers Karamazov*.'[196] The more truth, the more beauty, always: 'The full truth of the world consists in its living unity as one spiritualised and God-bearing body; in that lies the world's truth and the world's beauty.'[197] Following on from that, the task in hand is 'to embody the content of salvation and truth in the sphere of things perceptible to the senses by giving it the form of beauty'—and that immediately means ascesis for the soul that lives through its senses, a submission of blind, inordinate impulse that has no interior goal to the chains of the spiritual idea that captures it and gives it form.[198] But what exactly is the idea that seeks thus to incarnate itself?

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[191] *The Meaning of Art* 3 W VII 188.

[192] *Ibid.*, n.

[193] *Ibid.*, 2 W VII 179–190.

[194] *First Steps Towards a Positive Aesthetic* W VII 351.

[195] *Ibid.*, 346f., and the essay on Lermontov W VII 405f.

Soloviev defined it quite strictly in relation to his aesthetic. Ideal being is being such as merits to be and therefore *shall* be. It is existence in complete unity such that in it (1) 'the elements do not exclude one another but stand in complementary relationship and exist in solidarity'; (2) these elements 'do not exclude the whole, but maintain their individual existence on the one common ground'; (3) 'the ground in its totally unified character does not suppress or absorb the individual elements, but gives them full play within itself by developing itself in them'. Being of this kind is at once true, good and beautiful. If one of the three elements is lacking, falsehood, evil and ugliness arise. 'Anything is ugly where a part grows disproportionately and unchecked, dominating other parts, where unity and wholeness are absent, where, most particularly, there is no free diversity.'[199] In short: 'The plenitude of the Idea requires that the greatest unity in the whole be realised in the greatest independence and freedom in the partial and particular elements *in* them themselves and *through* and *for* them.'[200] This idea of beauty is indeed eternally real in God himself, in so far as he exists as the eternal actuality of all his potential in the fullest degree of freedom. It is, at the same time, the reality of the Kingdom of God in its coming to be in the world as it realises itself eschatologically through the ascent of natural and historical forms. Christ and Mary, the Logos incarnate and Sophia incarnate, represent in this process the ever-perfect primordial form of beauty, the norm by which reality as it takes on form can measure and align itself.[201] The threefold characterisation of the Idea (as the mutuality of parts, their free submission to the whole and the whole's allowing the parts to be themselves) can be summed up in one word: love. 'Love in the extended sense in which this concept coincides with that of unanimity, harmony and peace, the concept of the totality of the world, the concept of *kosmos*. In this sense, the Good, the True and Beautiful are only the various images of love. . . . The will of the Good, however, is in its essence genuine love, or love's source, the Idea of the Idea.'[202] And as the good that is longed for, this love is Eros, and, as that which is realised out of God's plenitude, it is Agape. It is plain that, for Soloviev, to distinguish between Eros and Agape in their essences is completely unthinkable: Christian love is the level where natural Eros is fulfilled, where what it vainly longed for and sought to embody is granted to it—the true presence of God in man, immortality, resurrection.

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[196] First address on Dostoyevsky, in *Drei Reden* (1921), 9–26.

[197] GG, foreword W II 10.

[198] GG I 3 W II 64.

[199] *The Meaning of Art* 2 W VII 176–178.

[200] *Sexual Love* 3 W VII 266.

The essays *Beauty in Nature* and *The Universal Meaning of Art* belong among the best of Soloviev's work, but this is not the place to rehearse their argument in their particular details. For our purposes it is important that in the essay on nature the idea of progress, which allows the beautiful to be perfected as a free and living organism, only gradually and with dramatic setbacks (monstrosities in nature, the disproportionate growth of individual functions, excesses, et cetera), provides the basis of the eschatological hope of glory for the entire cosmos in its interior development. The Kingdom of God is coming into being from the beginning of the world process onward. Beauty in nature is neither pure illusion nor can it be simply explained in terms of psychological stimuli; it is just as objective in its forms as it is subjective for the one who beholds or experiences it. It may be encountered anywhere where the more spiritual reality overcomes the material and makes it transparent: in the diamond, for instance, where the light so shines through and plays with the material reality that both seem to have become one, 'what results is translucent matter and embodied light.'[203] In living beings, the penetration becomes more and more an interior thing; the lower level of being can be changed, illuminated, sublimated in different degrees by the Idea. 'Thus the material instinct of sexuality can, in the nightingale's song, clothe itself in the form of harmonious notes', 'the instinct comes to embody the idea of love'.[204] Of course the beautiful is not to be found simply in the adequate embodiment of any kind of content (otherwise an animal such as a pig, embodying pure voracity, would be beautiful, as would a worm, embodying formless and blind instinct), but only in the embodiment of a content worthy of existence, which alone merits the name 'Idea'. In order to embody the latter, the art of the creative Logos struggles with the chaotic element in the world-soul;[205] and so long as the supreme equilibrium is not reached, any harmony is menaced from within, because it is only provisional: 'Every fresh victory opens the possibility of a fresh defeat', since the primaeval chaos, which is pure hunger for existence, the 'necessary background of any earthly beauty', is not yet finally informed and transfigured.[206] 'Even the most beautiful of butterflies is no more than a winged worm';[207] in the higher animals, the 'worm-like' element is forced inward and made unnoticeable by a beautiful outer covering. But such a covering is not yet a complete transfiguration: only in the resurrection of the body is the inwardly necessary goal of the world process achieved, the resurrection as the complete illumination of chaotic matter by the loving spirit; but only God can bring this to perfection.

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[201] W VII 199.

[202] GM, lecture 7 A III 138–139.

Human art is not a copying of nature, but rather an imitation

[203] *Beauty in Nature* 2 W VII 127.
[204] *Ibid.*, 128–129.
[205] *Ibid.*, 6, 144–147.
[206] *Ibid.*, 140, 146, 153.
[207] *Ibid.*, 9, 159.

of the *natura naturans* that forms images, 'the world process as it is drawn forward in its aesthetic aspect'.[208] Truth and goodness are not enough—or, better, they are both pressing toward embodiment. But only someone who believes in immortality and resurrection can ascribe an ultimate meaning to artistic activity. The one who 'reconciles himself (even if only theoretically) to the triumph of an all-destroying material process must treat beauty and, in particular, all that is "ideal" in the world, as a subjective illusion of the human imagination—as indeed the most consistent minds of this school do'.[209] Today there can no longer be a third standpoint between Christian hope and faith and pure materialism. There may have been such in the pre-Christian period, when the ideal had yet to be incarnated, when myth served as the aesthetic anticipation of Godmanhood. The Egyptians were right to organize their culture and art around the idea of resurrection, even if it could in no way be actualised;[210] Plato likewise was right in wishing to let his Eros be creative in the sphere of the Beautiful, even if the content sensed in this could nowhere actually be grasped.[211] A true work of art is simply 'the perceptible representation of an object from the perspective of its ultimate condition or (which is the same thing) in the light of the world beyond'.[212]

It is in this context that one must set the *Essay on Eros*, in which the authentic personal love of man and wife appears as the central 'theurgic' work of art. Such love aspires to a superhuman wholeness above and beyond the separation and struggle of the sexes in a purposiveness that transcends enslavement to the concerns of the species and of sexuality[213] (with which marital love in its personal core has nothing to do—so little, in fact, that there exists no direct proportionality between sex and Eros).[214] The Western theme of an androgynous unity in humanity, found from Plato to Dante to Böhme, Novalis and Baader, is thus resumed and brought in classical fashion to its conclusion. And yet this does not imply a process in which the person is transcended; the human being as 'the reasoning power of truth' can indeed 'infinitely perfect its life and nature without transcending the limits of its human form. . . . Therein lies the essential distinction between the cosmological and the historical process.'[215] The power of Eros is that it can creatively perceive the (objective!) ideality of the personality in the beloved and can work to make this real: Eros as looking up to the ideal ascends; as embodying the ideal in a real beloved human being it descends.[216] Its essential theurgic power lies in the faith by which it 'accords unconditional significance' to the beloved, a significance that an empirical and temporal nature cannot as such have. Only he can love who believes in the eternal meaning of his love for this particular finite substance; and this does not occur without a parallel belief in God, immortality and the resurrection, not only of the I and the Thou, which is impossible, but of the whole cosmos. Only in such a context does this love have space and scope.[217] The emotion of love (being 'in love') can of course be a prefiguration of Eros, but it first becomes real when realised actively and creatively.[218] The true lover 'actually sees something, perceives with his eyes, something other than that which other men see': he sees the ideality that is the true reality; in an inchoate way he sees the beloved person as God sees him, which is indeed the only way God wills to see him. And to let this ideality be true, to make it true, is 'the beginning of the visible restoration of God's image in the material world.'[219] Here Soloviev, in accordance with the most characteristic concerns of his programme, has allowed the power of (platonic) Eros to merge into the power of the agape of the Sermon on the Mount. The Christian, therefore, is obliged because of this to see his neighbour as God the Father sees him in his redeeming Son, and to take this ideal vision as a guide in his actual dealings with others.[220] Soloviev therefore expressly subsumes the model of androgynous Eros under the twofold norm and prototype of God's relation to the world as the divine Sophia, and Christ's to the Church as the incarnate Sophia. This at the same time implies that the individual relationship of syzygy must, because of these prototypes, open itself out into an erotic relationship with the whole of the rest of the world. The person who believes and loves must embrace in his love the whole of humanity and the cosmos, as well as Christ and God, since they are Sophia in the process of coming to be, God's own beloved.[221] It is in this context that Soloviev's most significant poems have their place. His cosmic lyricism is both Christian and erotic in the highest sense just defined; for here he senses and glorifies in all worldly forms only the veilings and hidden revelations of his eternal secret beloved, the divine Sophia. Her eschatological glory he takes on faith alone; but with the eye of Eros he sees into the future, sensing her presence, as he lives out of the cosmic love of God.

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[208] *The Meaning of Art* 1 W VII 172.

[209] *Ibid.*, 2 W VII 181.

[210] GS 2 W II 223–224: 'The Egyptians were above all else artists. The final goal of this art was the vision that it gave of a victory over death, the eternalisation of life, the bringing to life of the dead. . . . This great religious idea of a general resurrection or restoration of all things is a specifically Egyptian one.'

[211] *The Drama of Plato's Life* 22 W VII 318: '[Plato's] theory of love, unheard of in the pagan world, profound and bold, remains unelaborated'; and 320: 'The proper activity of Eros can be nothing other than the rebirth or resurrecting of life into immortality.'

[212] W VII 194.

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[213] RG II 7, 8 D II 159f.

[214] *Sexual Love* 1; W VII 201–211.

[215] *Sexual Love* 2, art. 1 W VII 213. 'To bring into being the true man, the union in freedom of the masculine and feminine principles, to preserve, in both, their formal separateness, while having overcome their essential distinctness and dividedness—this is the proper and most immediate task of love'; art. 3, 1: 272.

[216] *Ibid.*, art. 4, 7 W VII 255.

[217] *Ibid.*, art. 4, 6 251–253.

[218] *Ibid.*, art. 3, 2 229.

But Sophia's apocalyptic unveiling is not the same as the apocalypse of world history. In Soloviev's last years, the lyrical intuition of an eternal presence of love takes on an ever-darker hue, turning to an apocalyptic foreboding of the imminent incarnation of evil in history.[222] And since for Soloviev there is no individual fulfilment without the collective fulfilment of all men and all creatures—'no one has the right to separate his own welfare from the true welfare of all living things'[223]—then the revelation of Sophia too is bound to recede into the collective mystery. Evil, according to the *Three Conversations*, is 'not only a natural lack, an imperfection,' it is the power of the lie, of seduction, especially in the name of the Good.[224]

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[219] *Ibid.*, art. 3, 3 230–231.

[220] *Ibid.*, art. 4, 5 248f.

[221] *Ibid.*, art. 5, 4 268–272.

[222] Text in Ludolf Müller, *Übermensch und Antichrist*.

The first question to be posed from a standpoint high above the human stage concerns war: is its abolition possible? Is the Tolstoyan gospel of nonresistance a correct interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount? Soloviev was as sceptical as Péguy would be not long afterward. Two orders are here being confused with each other. 'Why did Christ not employ the power of the Gospel spirit in such a way as to arouse the good hidden in the soul of Judas, Herod, the Jewish high priest—and finally of that impenitent sinner whom we normally overlook when we discuss his penitent fellows. If he forgave his enemies, why—to use your own [Tolstoy's] words—did he not release their souls from the fearful darkness in which they lay? Why did he not conquer their wickedness by the power of his meekness?'[225] But Christianity, after all, is not moral rearmament; it demands a Yes or a No. 'In earlier times, Christianity was comprehensible to one, incomprehensible to another; but only our age has succeeded in making it repellent and mortally boring.'[226] This moralisation reflects a seriously anti-Christian spirit, for Christ did not come to bring peace, but a sword. Otherwise Christ's disciples would have to 'perform greater moral miracles (on the higher level of moral development we have now reached) by their meekness and nonresistance to evil than was possible eighteen centuries ago'.[227] Man remains as he is. And, above all, death remains what it always was: 'in this respect, there is no cultural advance to be recorded of any kind'.[228] What has Christ succeeded in changing on earth? His work was 'an astonishing failure'. Historically, 'in any case, far more evil than good has resulted from it', since

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[223] *Sexual Love* art. 5, 1 W VII 260.
[224] *Three Conversations*, foreword D I 227.
[225] *First Conversation* D I 266.
[226] *Third Conversation* D I 315.
[227] *Ibid.*, 319.
[228] *Ibid.*, 327.

Christ's resurrection is, of course, not itself a part of the historical process.[229] 'We have only one refuge: the real resurrection . . . all else is only the condition, the path, the step toward it . . . and in reality it is still a Kingdom of Death.'[230]

The Antichrist will blur the edges of the apocalyptic rift between morality and the cross, between cultural progress and the resurrection of the dead. He will permit Christianity to merge into this synthesis as one positive element. 'Christ divided men in terms of good and evil; I shall unite them through the benefits of salvation, which are necessary to good and evil alike. Christ brought the sword, but I bring peace. He threatened the earth with a terrible Last Judgment; but I shall be the last judge, and my judgment is one of grace.' Satan fills his son with his spirit; his soul is filled with a glacial abundance of enormous power, courage and effortless skill. He composes a manifesto, *The Open Path to World Peace and Welfare*, an all-embracing programme that unites all contradictions in itself—the highest degree of freedom of thought and a comprehension of every mystical system, unrestricted individualism and a glowing devotion to the general good. He establishes a European union of states, then a world monarchy, satisfies the needs of all the poor without perceptibly affecting the rich and founds an interconfessional institute for free biblical research. He seeks to be elected by the general assembly of the churches as head of the Church (from now on ecumenically united), and receives the approval of the majority. But resistance comes from Pope Peter II, John the Elder, leader of the Orthodox and Professor Ernst Pauli, representing Protestantism: under the pressure of persecution the three churches in this eschatological situation at last unite. Peter's primacy is recognised, and the Pauline and Johannine churches come into the Roman fold. The spokesmen of Christianity are persecuted and killed, but they rise again; the last Christians journey to the wilderness, the Jews raise a revolt and the Christians join with them. They are slaughtered; but then Christ appears, robed in the imperial purple, his hands outspread with the marks of the nails upon them, to rule for a thousand years with those who are his own.[231]

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[229] *Ibid.*, 335f.

[230] *Ibid.*, 338–339.

What is important in this story is not its novelistic features, but the fact that Soloviev quite unconcernedly surrenders great parts of his philosophy of cosmic process into the hands of the Antichrist. As regards the *facts* of the process, he has not abandoned a single detail; the one thing he has given up is the idea that the process comes to perfection within history. The harvest of the world is brought home, but not by man; it is brought home by Christ, who alone lays the whole Kingdom at his Father's feet. He is himself the integration of all things. And if we believe ourselves capable of establishing within history some kind of signs of the end—perhaps in the unification of the world or in this ideal seen as the way in which 'the whole of humanity gathers itself around an invisible but powerful focus in Christian culture'[232]—even such indications will never suffice to gain an overview of the real course of the historical process as it appears from God's own standpoint. In this respect, Soloviev humbled himself before the all-conquering Cross.

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[231] *Ibid.*, 348–380.

[232] *First Steps Towards a Positive Aesthetic* W VII 350.

HOPKINS

1. OXFORD, IGNATIUS AND SCOTUS

A sharper contrast with Soloviev than Hopkins[1] is scarcely conceivable; yet Hopkins too administers a great inheritance in a way at once unique, sovereign and pregnant with future implications. It is the English inheritance, which this other convert with a finely discriminating mastery brought home to Mother Church when he trod the path from Oxford, beyond Newman's oratory, into the novitiate of the Jesuits. Formed through and through by the English spiritual tradition, he retained not only in his choice of the religious life but also in all his aesthetic decisions an astonishing independence: 'The effect of studying masterpieces is to make me admire and do otherwise.'[2] Nowhere is there attachment; he passes back beyond all his lineage to the origins.

The artistically very gifted boy, who came from an artistic family, early began to draw, to make music, to write poetry.

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[1] Gerard Manley Hopkins' works are cited with reference to the editions published by the Oxford University Press:

Poems of GMH, 4th ed., ed. by W. H. Gardner and N. H. MacKenzie (1967; reprinted with corrections, 1970) = P (with the number of the poem and, for the longer poems, number of the stanza).

The Sermons and Devotional writings of GMH, ed. by Christopher Devlin SJ (1959) = S.

The Journals and Papers of GMH, ed. by Humphrey House, completed by Graham Storey (1959) = J.

The Letters of GMH to Robert Bridges, ed. by Claude Collier Abbott (1935; revised 1955) = B.

The Correspondence of GMH and R. W. Dixon, ed. by Claude Collier Abbott (1935; revised 1955) = D.

Further Letters of GMH, Including His Correspondence with Coventry Patmore, ed. by Claude Collier Abbott (1938; 2nd ed. revised and enlarged 1956) = F.

Bibliography in *GHM's Gedichte, Schriften, Briefe*, ed. by Hermann Rinn, trans. by U. Clemen and Fr. Kemp, introduction by Wolfgang Clemen (Kösel, 1954); in *The Shaping Vision of GMH*, Alan Heuser (OUP 1958), a concentrated and critical account of the spiritual world of the poet; and *GMH*, Geoffrey Grigson (*Writers and Their Work*, no. 59, 1955).

[2] B (25.9.88) 291.

Fragments of his early poems, which he destroyed on his entry into the novitiate, betray the predictable influence of English Romanticism, above all of Keats. In 1863, when he was nineteen, he went up to Balliol College, Oxford, to study classical philosophy; he had Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater as teachers, the latter also as a tutor, and he was therefore completely immersed in the whole aesthetic world view that characterised the mid-Victorian period. Nowhere in Europe had the word *beauty* such a magical sound as in the England of that time; nowhere else had the Platonic and Epicurean antiquity so immediate a presence, nowhere else had the Dante of the *Canzoniere* and the *Vita Nuova*, the world of the Troubadours and the Florence of the *quattrocento* awakened to such a life as with the English pre-Raphaelites. All that in continental symbolism—from Flaubert and Baudelaire to Maeterlinck and d'Annunzio—was set aside in a very programmatic and polemical manner, was in England completely bathed in the ancient and mediæval tradition. And where on the continent ecclesiastical modernism sought to take over the ideas of the imaginary character of concepts and also of dogmatic *symbola*, thereby earning the sharpest of censures—so that the two worlds were violently split in two—just there English theology, reared in an hereditary empiricism, sensed no danger and preserved the native rights of imagery in religious thought, and therefore in Christian theology, right up to the present day. Newman's *Grammar of Assent* cannot be understood apart from this tradition of the place of the imagination in thought (as Coleridge, in a way somewhat parallel to Schelling, gave it classical expression in England), and still today theologians like Austin Farrer (*The Glass of Vision*[3]) and E. L. Mascall (*Words and Images*[4]) keep this tradition alive.

A mistrust of the value of universal concepts, a consciousness is as old as English intellectual life. The formulations of Locke and Hume are secondary to this consciousness—they express something of it, but not the whole—and again the poetical intimations of Wordsworth and Coleridge's speculations about God as nature are secondary and temporally conditioned; they are a possible interpretation, but not the sole necessary and all-embracing one. Yet again the symbolist theories of the pre-Raphaelites and the mythologists and Platonists of the Oxford of Hopkins' time are a variation of an ancient theme and not at all the theme itself.

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[3] Dacre Press, Westminster, 1948, with chapters on 'Images and Inspiration', 'Archetypes and Incarnation', 'Prophecy and Poetry', and the 'Poetry of the New Testament'.

[4] Longmans, Green 1957, with discussions of the relationship between sense experience, the intellect and mysticism and on the role of analogy and of images in theology.

Hopkins had himself passed by the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries; behind them there rose up for him Milton, Purcell and Shakespeare, and behind them Duns Scotus. He set no store by a warming up of the ancient world of mythology.[5] He had at an early stage taken a dislike to Swinburne—he mentions him in the same breath as Wagner and E. von Hartmann[6]—and it was the same with Browning. He finally turned from the once beloved Keats, whom he still quite late defended in correspondence with Coventry Patmore until he was convinced by Patmore of Keats's entanglement in a sensuous immanence;[7] of the idealist imagination as understood by Wordsworth he retains only 'his spiritual insight into nature', which appears to him to be more of a philosophical than a poetic accomplish- of the irreducibility of the individual, be it material or personal, ment.[8] Blake's invention of myths remains for him 'crazy',[9] although he recognised here 'an exquisite freshness and lyrical inspiration',[10] and there are too places in his own speculation, where he approaches, quite unconsciously, Blake's religious inspiration.[11] But only in face of the Christian poetry of Milton is there posed for him the problem of the mythical image that, throughout English Romanticism up to Hopkins' times, had retained an astonishing, almost archaic, liveliness. In his early poem 'Pilate' (1864) he had once trodden such ways, but never again. What remained valid for him in Milton was only the unattained power of form; it was in Milton that he would soonest see anticipations of his own rhythmical innovations in an English context (leaving aside Pindar and the choruses in Greek tragedy). And beyond, towering over all, was Shakespeare, the greatest creator of unique, incomparable characters, marked out from all others—God alone can assign him his rank[12]—and close to him the mighty Purcell, to whom Hopkins dedicated one of his finest sonnets, 'and that not so much for gifts he shares, even though it should be in higher measure, with other musicians as for his own individuality'. He compares this 'arch-especial spirit', his 'forgèd feature', his 'own abrupt self', with a 'great stormfowl', who, after he has rustled his thunder-purple plumage on a stormy seabeach, unfolds his 'snow pinions' and scattering 'a colossal smile', himself intent only on flight, 'fans fresh our wits with wonder'. 'So that while he is aiming only at impressing me his hearer with the meaning in hand, I am looking out meanwhile for his specific, his individual markings and mottlings.'[13] Always for Hopkins it is a matter of such uniqueness, of a vision that penetrates beyond all laws, all Platonic ideas and Aristotelian forms, to the incomparability of just this individuality, whether it be, as with Milton, Purcell, Shakespeare, the uniqueness of genius[14] or the uniqueness, unnoticed by men, of each image met with every day in nature or the world of men. Hence Scotus becomes his thinker, 'who of all men most sways my spirits to peace; / Of realty the rarest-veinèd unraveller; a not / Rivalled insight, be rival Italy or Greece'.[15] The Scotist *haecceitas* as 'individual form' is the basis for any consideration of universal constructions of things; only here do they touch the ground of reality. In the unique, the irreducible, there shines forth for Hopkins the glory of God, the majesty of his oneness,[16] to whose ultimate, creative artistry the incomprehensibility of worldly images bears witness.

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[5] To Bridges: 'Believe me, the Greek gods are totally unworkable material; the merest frigidity, which must chill and kill every living work of art they are brought into'. B (17.5.85) 217. To Dixon: 'Mythology is something else besides fairytale: it is religion, the historical part of religion. . . . First it is as history untrue. What is untrue history? Nothing and worse than nothing. . . . For myself literally words would fail me to express the loathing and horror with which I think of it and of man setting up the work of his own hands, of that hand within the mind the imagination, for God Almighty who made heaven and earth'. D (23.10.86) 146.

Both letters deal with the mythological dramas of his fellow student and life-long friend, the poet laureate Robert Bridges, who, thirty years after the poet's death first published Hopkins' poems (1918).

[6] To Baillie: F (15.9.67) 228–229; to the same, F (22.5.80) 246; about Browning, D (12.10.81) 74; B (26.11.82) 164.

[7] To C. Patmore (20.10.87 and 6.5.88) F 381, 386: 'He lived in mythology and fairyland the life of a dreamer'.

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[8] D (7.8.86) 141.

[9] D (25.10.86) 148. *Cf.* (22.10.87) 153: 'mingled with the good work a great deal of rubbish, want of sense, and some touches of ribaldry and wickedness'.

[10] D (22.12.87) 153.

[11] *Cf.* for example the end of the sermon of 25.1.80: S 66–67.

[12] P 126: 'God . . . see what his place is. . . .'

[13] P 45; B (4.1.83) 170.

[14] 'Every true poet, I thought, must be original and originality a condition

At this level the English genius gathers together the results of the experience of Antiquity into itself. Any consideration of 'form in general' at any stage of universality becomes preparation for what Hopkins intended by the always unique oneness of the individual form that only emerges in the Christian encounter between the absolutely personal and free God and the fully personal creature—here alone truly *monos pros monon*—and just this fundamental experience had to lead Hopkins back to Ignatius and his *Spiritual Exercises*, where for the first time in the history of Christian spirituality everything is placed on the knife edge of the mutual election that takes place between God and man, behind which retreats any consideration of 'perfection in general'. Here are dissolved all the confusing clouds of the mythical in order to uncover the absolute, hard reality in which alone the true glory of being shines forth. The impatience of this breaking through to the uniquely true glory determines Hopkins' whole ethos; here lies the unity of his personality as poet and religious, that unity of which he was most sharply conscious even when it finally broke him, for neither his poet friends nor his brothers in religion had any eyes for it. In the end, as Wolfgang Clemen rightly says, the 'supposition of any conflict between priest and poet, between

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of poetic genius; so that each poet is like a species in nature (*not* an *individium genericum* or *specificum*) and can never recur'. To C. Patmore (6.10.86) F 370.

[15] P 44.

[16] J 215: 'Of a tree he writes, 'the inscape markedly holding its most simple and beautiful oneness up from the ground'. . . . S 146: Generally of the self: 'Self is the intrinsic oneness of a thing'.

his religious and artistic vocation, cannot be maintained'; this is also the reason why in the case of his poems, which 'stand forth as an almost incomprehensible miracle, the conventional methods of literary criticism are inadequate',[17] and Hermann Rinn is in agreement with him, when he maintains 'that the priest, the theologian and the poet in Hopkins are not to be separated. Despite all the obvious tension, any attempt to find inner contradictions in him seems hopeless, a radical misunderstanding even.' He is also 'a singular case in modern times' in that with him 'the theoretical concept and the poetic "conceptus" are completely congruent.'[18] Through the consuming impatience of his ascent Hopkins achieves a position in which he can become, next to Keats, the greatest English poet of the century[19] and at the same time not only the sharpest critic of his own and others' poetry and works of art, a subtle philosopher and theologian, but also a spiritual man, to whom the hardest sacrifices, among them the sacrifice of art and the whole aesthetic sphere, are wholly justified. This consuming passion devoured him—whether deservedly may be questioned—but in such a way that in the fearful isolation into which it drove him, he alone—unlike his whole generation on whom time was running out—knew himself to be a beginning. To Bridges he wrote thus about his compositions: 'If you do not like it [my music] it is because there is something you have not seen and I see. That at least is my mind, and if the whole world agreed to condemn it or see nothing in it I should only tell them to take a generation and come to me again.'[20] And a sonnet ends in a melancholy vein:

> This to hoard unheard,
> Heard unheeded, leaves me a lonely began:

that 'wisest word', which his heart breeds and which Heaven or Hell hindering frustrate: to store up this thing unheard while even what is heard remains unheeded causes him to remain a lonely beginning.[21]

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[17] Introduction to the German selection, op. cit., 16, 15.

[18] Afterword to the German selection, op. cit., 732f.

[19] Alan Heuser, op. cit., 103.

[20] B (1.4.85) 214.

If we now try to trace this first curve more carefully, it will be helpful to go back behind all his experiences of upbringing to an almost primeval experience that characterizes Hopkins both as poet and man and touches his reader very directly. From the poems, the diaries and letters there breathes everywhere, uniquely and unmistakably, the English countryside: woods, hills, green upon green, always a strong wind, driving clouds, the closeness to the sea, the moors and highlands with quick-flowing brooks and heather, the surge of the waves, islands wild and yet with a Southern mildness. But it is no cultural landscape, not at all a romantic or mythological landscape, but, as it were, a primeval landscape. The word *wild* is everywhere and is literally meant, but it enters even into the loftiest Christian utterances: as when Mary is described as 'worldmothering air, air wild',[22] and Christ's Advent, in the great shipwreck poem, as 'sealed in wild waters'.[23] In the first place it is simply landscape as wilderness, as celebrated in the poem 'Inversnaid': the gloomy, brown mountain stream, rushing down between heather and dripping fern:

> What would the world be, once bereft
> Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
> O let them be left, wildness and wet;
> Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.[24]

He had another poem, 'On the decline of wild nature', which began something like this:

> O where is it, the wilderness. . . .[25]

It is of 'brute beauty',[26] that he intends to sing, which will find again 'the true Arcadia of wild beauty',[27] and equally his works should reflect this formally. Once when he read again some verses from one of his own poems, 'it struck me aghast with a kind of raw nakedness and unmitigated violence I was unprepared for'.[28] To achieve this impression of the harsh, the abrupt, the unruly, this ear, most sensitive to beauty and melody, discovered his new 'sprung rhythm', which he established on the most rational foundations and distinguished from rhythmic schemes hitherto attempted (including Milton's and Coleridge's).[29] A tense, utterly objective contemplation of the primal power of nature, the language of nature expressing itself free from any hindrance—such seemed to him the authentic school for the senses of the poet: '*Laus Deo*—the river today and yesterday. Yesterday it was a sallow glassy gold at Hodder Roughs and by watching hard the banks began to sail upstream, the scaping unfolded, the river was all in tumult. . . . Today the river was wild, very full, glossy brown with mud. . . .'[30] Or 'Bitter north wind, hail and sleet'[31] or the breakers of the sea, whose structural laws the poet searches out through a penetrating, ever-new contemplation,[32] or the formation of ice,[33] or the forms of freely growing trees,[34] the curves of water flowing over stones,[35] the subtle shading of colours in the sunset,[36] meteors, comets, but ever again, endlessly, the changing forms of the clouds[37]—all this was a complete attentiveness that has nothing to do with romantic outpourings of the feelings but rather reminds one of the attentive eye of a Goethe; with a desire for objectivity[38] that lays claim to the whole man through and through. A companion, with whom one must converse, is a hindrance to such total concentration.[39] Hopkins is sensitive to any mutilation of pure, wild natural form: fallen trees 'unselve' a whole landscape ('unselve the sweet especial scene') and 'after-comers cannot guess the beauty been'.[40] Above all devastation there flies—in his favourite, untiringly varied picture—the bird in the free, untamable air. If Hopkins thought he had achieved his poetic best in the 'Windhover',[41] then it was not least because of the unity of vision and thing seen: the 'daylight's dauphin' who, in 'brute beauty and valour and act', spiralled upward with 'air, pride, plume' on his wing tips against the powerful wind, so that, called by the poet as he hovers on high ('here buckle!'), he may pour forth all his most dangerous power, motionlessly, like falling embers.[42] At a quite early stage the ascending bird became Hopkins' signature,[43] later the 'dare-gale skylark', emprisoned in his cage, becomes a parable of the soul in its earthly 'bone-house',[44] while in the sonnet 'The Sea and the Skylark', there is placed between these two primeval sounds—the roar and lull of the tide and the 'rash-fresh re-winded', descending note of the lark—'this shallow and frail town' with its 'sordid turbid time' and all culture, which, in its longing for the original purity of being, is fated to 'drain fast towards man's first slime'.[45] The theme is raised again and brought to a conclusion in the prodigious poem, 'That Nature Is a Heraclitean Fire and of the Comfort of the Resurrection', with its picture of nature, noisy, stormy, joyfully romping about, pillows of clouds tossed by the winds of the storm:

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[21] P 68.
[22] P 60, at the end.
[23] P 28, st. 23.
[24] P 56.
[25] B (22.2.79) 73.
[26] P 36.
[27] To C. Patmore, F (6.10.86) 370.

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[28] B (22.4.79) 79.

[29] Most important explanations: to Dixon (6.10.78) 14f.; (4.3.79) 21f.; (14.1.81) 39f.; to Bridges (21.8.77) 44f.; (18.10.82) 155f.; (11.10.87) 263. Comparison with Pindar and the Greek tragedians, B (18.10.82) 157.

[30] J (20.10.70) 200.

[31] J (11.11.74) 261.

[32] J (10.8.72) 223; J (16.8.72) 224; J (16.8.73) 235; J (13.8.74) 251.

[33] J (29.4.70) 201.

[34] J (17.3.71) 205f.

[35] J (1863) 8f.; also the sketches, fig. 8, 28 and 31 in J after p. 455.

[36] J (24.9.74) 260 and frequently.

[37] J (24.7.68) 181; J (29.7.68) 184; J 195f.; J (25.10.70) 201; J 204; J (21.4.71) 207, etc.

[38] J 58: 'Addis says my arguments are coloured and lose their value by personal feeling. This ought to be repressed'.

> Delightfully the bright wind boisterous ropes, wrestles, beats earth bare

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[39] J (12.12.72) 228.

[40] 'Binsey Poplars', P 43. *Cf.* J (15.9.71) 215; J (8.4.73) 230; J (18.12.73) 240: 'The ashtree growing in the corner of the garden was felled . . . there came at that moment a great pang and I wished to die and not to see the inscapes of the world destroyed any more'.

[41] B (22.6.79) 84.

[42] P 36.

[43] P 16: 'Let me be to Thee as the circling bird. . . .'

[44] P 39.

[45] P 35.

> Of yestertempest's creases; in pool and rutpeel parches
> Squandering ooze to squeezed dough, crust, dust; stanches, starches
> Squadroned masks and manmarks treadmire toil there
> Footfretted in it. Million-fuelèd, nature's bonfire burns on.

All that was human culture is 'drowned . . . in an enormous dark' after its dank outlines have been parched by the 'world's wildfire' and dissolved in dust. Certainly the end of the poem speaks suddenly of the Resurrection, but this shines out only in the dying down of the fire, and only in so far as man is 'this Jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch, matchwood' is he also 'immortal diamond'.[46]

It is in terms of this rhythm, which sweeps the whole cultivated world of beauty of the Victorian age into the dustbin, that the turning points of Hopkins' life are to be understood: (1) from Walter Pater, (2) through his conversion, (3) to Ignatius, and (4) to the interpretation of the *Exercises* in the light of Duns Scotus.

1. The Oxford classical student had made himself at home in the world of beauty of the Greeks, which as *kalokagathia* (the beautiful and the good) pervaded and dominated every sphere of existence, including personal and political ethics. And the English poets had always, in the most diverse ways, had this totality in view. Even unworldly poets like Blake or Shelley had in view in their poetry the *polis*, the community of humanity; and again the contemporary representatives of a 'total aesthetics', in particular Ruskin, saw their goal as the informing of every realm of existence with beauty. Ethics and sociology are subordinated by Hopkins to the canon of the soul's harmony; the crying ugliness of the English industrial towns betrayed the lack, the total loss, of any spiritual equilibrium, of any hierarchy of values in the individual and in the social consciousness. The isolation of the economic world from the entire human harmony rendered first man, then his world, ugly, turned man egoistically back upon himself and his dull selfhood, and robbed him of the capacity to understand nature as it reveals itself: as the glory of God. Already in *Modern Painters* (1843f.)

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[46] P 72.

Ruskin's concern was clear (as will later be true of Hopkins): to discern the forms of the world, trees, rocks, clouds as objectively as possible—and such objectivity includes for him the whole dimension, from scientific observation to Christian and religious contemplation.

If Hopkins in his first efforts was occupied with the nature of beauty—for instance, in 'On the Origin of Beauty: A Platonic Dialogue' (1865),[47] composed, we may assume, for Walter Pater—and in so doing initially saw only harmonic laws (proportion, balance and their subtler form, contrast, illustrated by the structure of a chestnut leaf), if he further attempted to interpret these fundamental, numerical laws as a polarity between a 'transitional or chromatic opposition' of imperceptible change and increase and an abrupt, diatonic contrast ('Poetic Diction', 1865),[48] then already he ranged the creative power of imagination with the abrupt moulding that imparted unique form. The only slightly later essay on 'The Probable Future of Metaphysics' (1867)[49] took issue with the positivism, psychologism and materialism of the time, which destroy the substance of metaphysics; for without metaphysics all these supposedly exact sciences would in future become aimless and remain atomistically separate, and if there is talk of there being within metaphysics a temporal rhythm of development, leading from formal Greek and Scholastic thought, through the scientific and positivistic, to the Hegelian and evolutionary, the last-named seeming to be the one to govern the future, then, Hopkins argued, there lies in the concept of a pure, absolutely orderly development a self-contradiction, which automatically calls forth the reaction of a new Platonism or formal system. Hopkins saw the return of three basic concepts in the near future. First, he saw the return of the type or the species, which, instead of a pure, chromatic transitionalism of all forms one with another, presupposes a diatonic determination of fixed differences, both quantitative and qualitative, that provide form and meaning for the continuum—it is the return of the Pythagorean world view—

[47] J 86–114.
[48] J 84f.
[49] J 118–121.

and only when these basic forms of natural being have been laid down and the 'determined differences' between them established is it possible to speak meaningfully of development. Second, it is therefore necessary to take the basic forms or ideas as one's starting point, if the multiplicity of the forms that are empirically encountered is to be accounted for, which means, third, taking issue with the 'atomistic personalism' of contemporary thought. And here it is important for the later Scotist that at the same time he professes himself to be 'in an even prostrate admiration of Aristotle' and gradually comes to think 'that he is the end-all and be-all of philosophy',[50] that even later he holds fast to and uses the doctrine of the soul as form and shaping power as if it were obvious.[51] The Platonic idea for him was thoroughly incarnated in nature; this aspect remained an integral part of his thought even when the Aristotelian *morphê* took separate form as the personal, Christian self, as the person. So again it is important to note that Hopkins developed his henceforth indispensable coinings of word and concept, with which he expressed his heart's intent and from which from this time on he never again is separated, on the occasion of an essay on Parmenides (1868):

> His great text, which he repeats with religious conviction, is that Being is and Not-being is not—which perhaps one can say, a little over-defining his meaning, means that all things are upheld by instress and are meaningless without it. An undetermined Pantheist idealism runs through the fragments, which makes it hard to translate them satisfactorily. . . . His feeling for instress, for the flush and foredrawn, and for inscape is most striking. . . . But indeed I have often felt when I have been in this mood and felt the depth of an instress or how fast the inscape holds a thing that nothing is so pregnant and straightforward to the truth as simple *yes* and *is*. 'Thou couldst never either know or say / what was not, there would be no coming at it.' There would be no bridge, no stem of stress between us and things to bear us out and carry the mind over. . . . Being and thought are the same. The truth in thought is Being, stress, and each word is one way of

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[50] To Baillie, F (2.2.68), 231.

[51] To C. Patmore, F (24.9.83), 306f.

> acknowledging Being and each sentence by its copula *is* (or its equivalent) the utterance and assertion of it.[52]

Hopkins interprets Parmenides; he does, it is true, defend himself against his 'pantheism' and yet he reads into him his own best. With 'inscape' and 'instress' his world view is expressed in cipher. Both concepts lie no less deeply in being than in the thought of the Greek; it is only that being is differently experienced: it is en-selfed as person. Hopkins was by the time of this essay already a convert, and he was teaching in Newman's Oratory in Birmingham. At the same time, he was making notes on the nature of words and language. 'A word then has three terms belonging to it . . .—its prepossession of feeling; its definition, abstraction, vocal expression or other utterance; and its application, "extension", the concrete things coming under it.'[53] The first moment of prepossession has clearly to do with instress. *Instress*, as in-stress, im-pression, intention in existing beings, is used by Hopkins for both the object and the subject: things express their instress, their deep, unique act, which establishes them, holds them together and holds them in tension,[54] and there is required in the subject an answering stress, so that it can hold communion with the stress of things and experience them from within and can also through a feeling prepossession of their nature find the word that exactly expresses it. This communication is everywhere presupposed; Spinoza is mentioned even before Parmenides, invoked against the 'atomism of personality'.[55] The objective instress is taken up by the subject that is open to it, that is moved in its depths by the depth of its power of being. On seeing a comet Hopkins says: 'I felt a certain awe and instress. . . .'[56]

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[52] J 127–130.

[53] J 125.

[54] J (18.5.70) 199: 'All things hitting the sense with double but direct instress'. J (23.2.72) 218: 'I could not but strongly feel in my fancy the odd instress of this'. J (11.5.73) 231: The blue of the bluebells 'beating up from so many glassy heads, which like water is good to float their deeper instress in upon the mind'. J (8.8.74) 250: 'A lovely coomb that gave me the [same] instress'. J (17.8.74) 253: 'There was an instress about this spot'. J (6.9.74) 258: 'Looking all round . . . I felt an instress and charm of Wales'.

[55] J 121.

[56] J (13.7.74) 249.

If *instress* refers to the power of a thing, then *inscape* refers to its form. What is intended is not a separate form, resting in itself, but a form released from its creative source and at the same time shaped and held by it, radiating from a focus from which the whole form (whether it be a curve or a play of colours or a landscape) can then be brought to completion. Increasingly, it is the uniqueness of the personal 'inscape' that Hopkins aspires to and for which he looks in nature and in art. Of the young Keats he said: 'a poet . . . full of feeling, high thoughts, flow of verse, point, often fine imagery and other virtues, but the essential and only lasting thing left out—what I call *inscape*, that is species or individually distinctive beauty of style.'[57] In the poem on Purcell (and in his explanations) the sense of inscape is perfectly expressed: for genius unfolds its wings, and 'also unaware gives you a whiff of knowledge about his plumage, the marking of which stamps his species'.[58] The word is everywhere,[59] as also 'all the world is full of inscape.'[60] All one has to do is find the point where it discloses itself, from which, for example, an animal is built up.[61] The form thus grasped is the key to the word, is itself already an objective word. *Formed* can also mean *worded*.[62]

In the period before his entry into the Society of Jesus and thereafter during his studies, Hopkins kept a diary through which he preserved the sharpness of his eye in reading the signs of inscape. In the creative sources of natural things, whether they be enduring or completely transitory, like water and clouds and the light and shade of landscape, the novice, the scholastic, trained himself in this encounter with the Creator of all nature. 'Unless you refresh the mind from time to time you cannot always remember or believe how deep the inscape in things is.'[63] The openness of the soul for particular forms changes; 'for a certain time I am astonished at the beauty of a tree, shape, effect etc, then when the passion, so to speak, has subsided, it is consigned to my treasury of explored beauty, and acknowledged with admiration and interest ever after, while something new takes its place in my enthusiasm'[64]—so wrote the nineteen-year-old. Later he experienced the diminishing power of the memory of inscape,[65] of an immediate relish for things,[66] he weighed this loss very carefully against the gain in clarity and perceptive power.

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[57] To C. Patmore, F (7.11.86) 373. On instress and inscape see especially A. Heuser, op. cit., 23–39, and the literature discussed by him on 105f.

[58] B (26.3.79) 83.

[59] J (14.5.70) 199: The chestnuts in blossom, tossed by the wind, 'crossed one another without losing their inscape'. J (18.5.70) 199: The inscape of the bluebells is mixed of strength and grace. J (17.3.71) 205: 'This is the time to study inscape in the spraying of trees, for the swelling buds carry them to a pitch which the eye could not else gather'. J (9.5.71) 209: The bluebells 'baffle you with their inscape, made to every sense'.

[60] J (24.2.73) 230.

[61] J (6.4.74) 242: 'caught the inscape in the horse . . ., following that one may inscape the whole beast very simply'.

[62] J (20.4.74) 243.

Inscape in nature is for Hopkins beautiful in itself.[67] 'I thought how sadly beauty of inscape was unknown and buried away from simple people and yet how near at hand it was if they had eyes to see it and it could be called out everywhere again.'[68]

2. Most of these references come from Hopkins' diary, from the time of his early days in the religious life. But it was not inscape that drove Hopkins to conversion and entry into the religious life, at least not inscape in the sense he gave to it in his maturity: an experience exact, aesthetic and religious at the same time. The divine image of his Anglican period is rather—in several poems that welled up from the depths of his heart—that of negative theology. 'Nondum' takes its motto from Scripture: 'Verily, Thou art a God that hidest thyself', and makes a division between the revelation of the glories of the world and the complete unapproachability of the Creator:

We see the glories of the earth
But not the hand that wrought them all:
Night to a myriad worlds gives birth,
Yet like a lighted empty hall. . . .

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[63] J (Beginning of March, 1871) 205.
[64] To Baillie, F (10.7.63) 202.
[65] J (20.4.74) 243; *cf.* to C. Patmore, F (28.9.83) 313.
[66] D (22.12.80) 38.
[67] J (20.4.74) 243: 'beautiful inscape'.
[68] J (19.7.72) 221.

We guess; we clothe Thee, unseen King,
With attributes we deem are meet;
Each in his own imagining
Sets up a shadow in Thy seat. . . .

The soul reels, stunned,

That dares to cast its searching sight
On being's dread and vacant maze.

The prayer goes forth to God to bestow the 'sense beyond' and to lead her by the hand through the total darkness of the night.[69] 'The Habit of Perfection' praises the 'elected silence' of the infinite and puts to sleep all bodily senses; it is the year of his conversion, which echoes with Newman's word, 'surrender':

Shape nothing, lips; be lovely-dumb:
It is the shut, the curfew sent
From there where all surrenders come
Which only makes you eloquent.

The marriage with poverty begins.[70] But 'Lines for a Picture of St Dorothea' already open a new door; starting from the legend, Hopkins lets the dead martyr bring her executioner a basket full of fruit from Paradise, but the fruit melts away into the world of nature, which is like the visible husk in which the 'bright remainder of a miracle' is left:

My eyes hold yet the rinds and bright
Remainder of a miracle.[71]

What draws Hopkins, together with some of his friends, to the Catholic Church is—in so far as this mysterious, hidden event can be made plain—certainly a dissatisfaction with the theological position of the Tractarians; neither Liddon nor even Pusey could justify the incoherence of their position in regard to Rome, as Hopkins depicts it in his dignified letters to his dismayed parents.[72] It is simply not the aesthetic that draws him to Rome: 'I am surprised you shd. say fancy and aesthetic tastes have led me to my present state of mind: these wd. be better satisfied in the Church of England, for bad taste is always meeting one in the accessories of Catholicism.'[73] Everything looks much more like a breaking out from the closed aesthetic world of Oxford, within which not even a Ruskin could successfully encompass reality. The bitter, horrifying reality of today and tomorrow is continually before Hopkins' eyes: 'I must tell you I am always thinking of the Communist future. . . . I am afraid some great revolution is not far off. Horrible to say, in a manner I am a Communist.' The condition of the workers in 'very rich' England is terrible, and if they have to 'live a hard life without dignity, knowledge, comforts, delight, or hopes in the midst of plenty', who can blame them if 'they profess that they do not care what they wreck and burn, the old civilisation and order must be destroyed!?'[74] Hopkins will be sent to the poor as a simple pastoral priest, and among the poor he will gladly spend his time. 'Tom's Garland' is the name of a sibylline sonnet in which he depicts the nature of the state in the image of a man: the monarch as the head, crowned among the stars, the day labourer as the foot, shod with dirty hobnailed boots, but the soles crowned with a crown of hobnails, which signifies a second crowning, stamping the form beneath.[75] To the end Hopkins gives expression to his abhorrence for the great cities of misery, which slowly but surely suck up the population of the country and bring them to ruin both of soul and body.[76]

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[69] P 23.

[70] P 22.

[71] P 25.

[72] To his father, F (16.10.66) 92: 'The Tractarian ground I have seen broken to pieces under my feet'. On Pusey, *ibid.*, 98.

At his conversion Hopkins offered himself to the real God, the God who addressed him personally, the God of the Cross and the God of this fearful world, and with himself offered his love of beauty and his art. Without doubt the poems of his youth breathed the atmosphere of an immanent aesthetic: 'I burnt [them] before I became a Jesuit and resolved to write no more, as not belonging to my profession, unless by the wish of my superiors; so for seven years I wrote nothing.' The first great poem to be written after that, which marked the beginning of the masterpieces of his maturity, owed its origin to a chance remark made by his rector.[77] Between the poems of Hopkins' youth and those of the Jesuit there yawns then an abyss: that of a determined and fundamental ascent beyond all the beloved forms of the world—no matter how religious the view that one takes of them—to the naked God; and what on the far side of this gulf is perceived and praised as the manifestation of the glory of God in nature and the Church is pure gift, without any necessity and without any accent.

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[73] *Ibid.*, 93.

[74] B (2.8.71) 27f.

[75] P 70; the interpretation to Bridges: B (10.2.88) 272–274.

[76] To Baillie, F (1.5.88) 293.

3. Two years after his conversion Hopkins entered the religious life. This raises the difficult question of Hopkins' encounter with the father of his order, Ignatius. Could he, was he to find in his new son one who could make known his ideal in poetry? No convincing poet had emerged in the order since Spee, Balde and Bidermann.

To his friend, Canon Dixon, who continually urged Hopkins to publish something, or at least not to oppose the publication of a few of his poems by him, Dixon, Hopkins offered resistance with an ever-categorical No. 'You say truly that our Society fosters literary excellence. Why then it may be left to look to its own interests.'[78] To the uncomprehending Dixon he explained that his vocation 'puts before me a standard so high that a higher can be found nowhere else'; also that if he made a sacrifice to God with 'reserves . . . in my heart', he must expect a severe judgment from God: 'a purpose may look smooth and perfect from without but be frayed and faltering from within'. He had burnt his earlier poems, but a man, learned in spiritual matters, had said to him, 'with things like composition the best sacrifice was not to destroy one's work but to leave it entirely to be disposed of by obedience. But I can scarcely fancy myself asking a superior to publish a volume of my verses. . . . And to be sure if I chose to look at things on one side and not the other I could of course regret this bitterly. But there is more peace and it is the holier lot to be unknown. . . . I know I shall not regret my forbearance. . . . PS. I should tell you that my letters now are opened.'[79] In his next letter he explains to Dixon that the Society

[77] D (5.10.78) 14; to Baillie, F (24.4.85) 256f.

[78] D (31.10.79) 30–31: 'I forbid its publication'.

[79] D (2.11.81) 88f.

of Jesus does not place any emphasis on the aesthetic. Pure poetry is only rarely a serviceable means in the search for God's greater glory; literature and culture are certainly prized, but only as means to higher ends. Jesuit poets have, anyway, always been an irregular phenomenon. Genius attracts fame, and it was just this that seemed to St Ignatius to be dangerous. Campion could have been a great poet, but it did not interest him. 'But his eloquence died on the air, his genius was quenched in his blood. . . . Brilliancy does not suit us. Bourdaloue is reckoned our greatest orator: he is severe in style. Suarez is our most famous theologian: he is a man of vast volume of mind, but without originality or brilliancy; he treats everything satisfactorily, but you never remember a phrase of his, the manner is nothing.' So too the saints: Ignatius, one of the most extraordinary men, lived such an unremarkable life in Rome that in the process of his canonisation one of the cardinals said that he had never noticed any higher qualities in him than in any other good priest. Much the same may be said of Aloysius, Stanislaus and John Berchmans. 'I quote these cases to prove that show and brilliancy do not suit us, that we cultivate the commonplace outwardly and wish the beauty of the king's daughter, the soul, to be from within.'[80]

While Hopkins continually urged his friends, Bridges, Dixon and Patmore, to publish, not to shun fame but to consider that the poet represented a spiritual power in the nation and the world and must seek such power for moral reasons,[81] that admiration belonged to the work of art as much as reward to moral deeds,[82] he seemed to claim for himself completely the opposite. But even his career in the order was one of an ever more fundamental failure: he was a joke, an oddity; because of his Scotist leanings, even with his great speculative gifts he could not continue his studies beyond his priestly ordination. After that as an occasional preacher in the industrial cities he was never able to achieve a sufficiently common touch, something that became increasingly a problem. After the tertiate he first had to be a schoolteacher of Latin and Greek, and then, in hated Dublin, he taught classics in a dilapidated University College. All inspiration deserted him; a continuing, total exhaustion hindered any fruitful intellectual work; his life, like his work, crumbled away under his fingers. During the scholasticate, in the blessed Welsh countryside, those few poems that make him immortal were completed; then later there trickled a few more, then everything dried up except for a few fearful sonnets 'written in blood'.[83] There were many pieces he began but never finished, 'ever so many . . . ruins and wrecks'.[84] 'The melancholy I have all my life been subject to has become . . . rather more distributed, constant, and crippling.'[85] 'Every impulse and spring of art seems to have died in me. . . . I have . . . been so completely ruined for life by my alleged singularities.'[86] Completely misunderstood and pushed about in the order, 'I have long been Fortune's football and am blowing up the bladder of resolution big and buxom for another kick of her foot.'[87] 'My muse has long put down her carriage and now for years "takes in washing". The laundry is driving a great trade now.'[88] 'It kills me to be time's eunuch and never to beget.' His spirit was so broken 'that madness seemed to be making approaches'.[89] But if his friends to whom he thus wrote became indignant, he explained to them that there is nothing to be done, it must ever be so.[90] He referred to the destiny of Christ, who certainly as man had hoped also to have success and saw all his earthly work fall to ruins.[91] He referred also to his vows that rendered him dead to the world.[92]

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[80] D (1.12.81) 92–96.

[81] To C. Patmore, F (4.6.86) 366; to Bridges, B (13.10.86) 231; to Dixon, D (4.6.78 and 13.6.78) 1–6.

[82] D (13.6.78) 6f.

Who will disentangle this inner tragedy? If Hopkins acknowledged the view of Ignatian indifference that he was taught as just—namely, that he himself could undertake no step in the matter of his poetry but must wait for the clearly never to be expected initiative of his superiors—then things could have turned out no differently. But behind this conflict there lay another still deeper, indicated in a letter to Bridges: 'The only person that I am in love with seldom, especially now, stirs my heart sensibly and when he does I cannot always "make capital" of it, it would be sacrilege to do so.'[93] It is the problem of the conflict between divine consolation in prayer and poetic inspiration. The first *could* overflow into the second, but the poet did not will it, particularly when such consolation became rare. It is the ligature, to which Baruzi draws attention in the case of John of the Cross, and which Brémond's superficial book, *Prière et Poésie*, does not sufficiently perceive.

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[83] B (17.5.85) 219.

[84] To Baillie, F (24.4.85) 255.

[85] *Ibid.*, 256.

[86] B (3.4.81 and 27.4.81) 124, 126.

[87] B (26.7.83) 183.

[88] D (29.7.88) 157.

[89] B (1.9.85) 221f.

[90] B (21.8.84) 197; B (17.5.85) 216: 'which must be and will be'; B (1.9.85) 221: 'alas, so it must be'.

[91] D (3.7.86) 137f.

[92] D (17.10.81) 75.

On the one hand there is justice in the remarks of Fr Devlin, S.J., who has said some of the most acute things about his fellow-Jesuit, Hopkins:[94] 'Hopkins the Jesuit behaved to Hopkins the poet as a Victorian husband might to a wife of whom he had cause to be ashamed. His muse was a highborn lady, a chaste matron, dedicated to God; but he treated her in public as a slut, and her children as an unwanted and vaguely sinful burden. . . . It is certain that Hopkins was keenly and even agonizingly aware of his duty to these children, his poems, and that in secret he loved them passionately.' But Hopkins belongs, in Devlin's opinion, to that type of nineteenth-century convert who had brought with him into the Church a certain Kantian-Victorian and crypto-Jansenist 'hero'-ideal and thereby excoriated himself in self-laceration.[95] Thus there were many times when his whole destiny must have manifested itself to him as completely coherent and logical: he wanted to transcend the aesthetic sphere and confront God in his nakedness—indeed the living God appeared to him in decisive moments as Heraclitean cosmic fire (almost with the aspect of Shiva), as the roaring winter sea in which the *Deutschland* with her five exiled nuns, and later the *Euridice* with her fine young sailors, foundered and were destroyed. He knew very well that this God of majesty, to whom the created dust owes praise, reverence and service, is at the same time the mystery of the noblest tenderness, the wounded Heart of the World breaking with sweetest love, of which so many of his poems speak. But how far he is in all of this Ignatian, it is hard to say. The *Exercises* were for him the breath of life, an ever fresh occasion for self-examination and conversion, an occasion too for the most daring speculations, which, however, betrayed more interest in Scotus than in the father of his order. Hopkins and Ignatius do not look one another full in the face.

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[93] B (15.2.79) 66.

[94] In the three introductions to the sermons, the spiritual writings and the private notes: S 3ff., 107ff., 213ff.

[95] S 119–120.

4. Duns Scotus, whom Hopkins first encountered in the summer of 1872 and in the reading of whom he 'was flush with a new stroke of enthusiasm',[96] was for Hopkins from the beginning the confirmation of his own vision of the nature of things: 'Just then when I took in any inscape of the sky or sea I thought of Scotus.' Scotus had been the first to maintain philosophically the uniqueness of things, withstanding the temptation to dissolve them into general ideas, forms or laws. This too was Hopkins' object: to express the irreducibly unique, or at least to evoke it, which clearly brought with it the danger of 'oddness'—'No doubt my poetry errs on the side of oddness. . . . Now it is the virtue of design, pattern, or inscape to be distinctive and it is the vice of distinctiveness to become queer. This vice I cannot have escaped.'[97] Where the distinctiveness of things is emphasized and the unifying laws are not allowed to drown such distinctiveness, there the world becomes essentially surprising,

> All things counter, original, spare, strange . . .[98]

they are 'dappled', 'brinded', 'fickle', 'freckled', each has a different and peculiar taste, which is its worth, its irreplaceability. Scotus had an eye for the uniquely individual; that meant that his vision outstripped his power of expression, as Hopkins pertinently remarks: 'And so I used to feel of Duns Scotus when I used to read him with delight: he saw too far, he knew too much; his subtlety overshot his interests; a kind of feud arose between genius and talent, and the ruck of talent in the Schools finding itself, as his age passed by, less and less able to understand him, voted that there was nothing important to understand.'[99]

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[96] J (3.8.72) 221.
[97] B (15.2.79) 66.
[98] P 37.

In the great essay on the *foundation* of the *Exercises* ('*Homo creatus est*')[100] the mystery of the 'I', of the being of the self, moves into the centre and becomes in its determined, irreducible uniqueness the touchstone of every world view and the proof of God's free, sovereign, creative act. The diatonic points in the Pythagorean picture of the world are given a new, much sharper characterisation: 'I find myself both as man and as myself something most determined and distinctive, *at pitch*'—that is, exactly aimed, like an arrow that hits the bull's-eye, set on its course, marked out, harmonised, picked out—'more distinctive and higher pitched than anything else I see.' But whence is this concentration of being into this unique knot, whence this selving? Clearly not from anything less dense, anything more blurred, more shallow, more general; 'but only by one of finer and higher pitch', which alone could 'force forward the starting and stubborn elements to the one pitch required'. This is already true generally in the case of man, still more so in the case of mind, of self-being, consciousness and feeling of self: 'that taste of myself, of *I* and *me* above and in all things, which is more distinctive than the taste of ale or alum, more distinctive than the smell of walnutleaf or camphor, and is incommunicable by any means to another man. . . . But to me there is no resemblance: searching nature I taste *self* but at one tankard, that of my own being.' In other cases two things have always something in common; but here all things rebuff him and 'in no way help me to understand [my being, myself]'. To clarify the phenomenon, the hypothesis of chance is first rejected, but then a second hypothesis, thought through by Hopkins with some subtlety, that some universal spirit of nature or the world is 'enselfed in my self' ('here we touch the *intellectus agens* of the Averrhoists and the doctrine of the Hegelians and others'), for neither could this universal spirit enself itself in different selves as the same 'I', just as little as I, considered as an individual, can be a part or a member of some universal spirit, for 'either way self tastes differently to him and to me'; still less can the universal spirit be thought of as a mere centre or point of reference for consciousness or action attributed to it, for whose self would this point be? It is true that a self has its centre and its periphery (as, for instance, a man and his body), but this is just the periphery of its self, and not a self in itself. In the animal realm, a central life may display itself in individuals, but neither are really selves. In mankind there may be community of selves, but this does not abolish them. God as the highest self may indwell all created persons in virtue of his uniqueness and transcendence, but only because he has in freedom singled out these selves (from the infinite possibility of other determinations and self-ings) and set them in being.

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[99] To C. Patmore, F (3.1.84) 349.

[100] Dated 20.8.80; S 122–129.

In this way the whole world of myth is finally transcended, but not through some demythologisation, but rather through a transmythologisation: because of the immanence of the absolute the free self in all determined selves is the truth of the impossible, imagined, romantic self as a whole. And from this springs the basic conception of Bonaventure, from which the way leads on to Scotus: 'God's utterance of himself in himself is God the Word, outside himself is this world. This world then is word, expression, news of God. Therefore its end, its purpose, its purport, its meaning, is God and its life or work to name and praise him.'[101] The free word of a free self can only express this, can only radiate his solitary glory, and therefore the whole world must speak of God. All nature's language is in Bonaventure's sense *reductio*: 'As we drove home the stars came out thick: I leant back to look at them and my heart opening more than usual praised our Lord to and in whom all that beauty comes home.'[102]

But in all this the real mysteries of the self have not yet emerged. These only disclose themselves when we pass beyond the general philosophical *analogia haecceitatis et personalitatis* to the theological problem: what is the human self, the person in the face of God's gracious election in Christ? It is only here that Hopkins, taking his lead from Scotus, develops his speculative originality.

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[101] S (7.8.82) 129.

[102] J (17.8.74) 254.

2. GOD'S THOUGHT OF THE WORLD AND VISION OF THE WORLD

This speculation is developed principally in two very dense pieces: 'On Personality, Grace and Free Will'[103] and 'Creation and Redemption: The Great Sacrifice'.[104] Again, the starting point of Hopkins' reflections is the notion of the self, or rather the person as a rational self: 'Self is the intrinsic oneness of a thing, which is prior to its being and does not result from it *ipso facto*, does not result, I mean, from its having independent being.' Of course a self cannot exist without a nature, but as an intention (of the Creator) it is yet something 'positive' and distinct from each other possible self. This Scotist distinction between person and nature exactly meets the point that Anton Günther has made the centre of his thought. The same nature can be imparted to different selves, and the same nature can even more readily undergo in the different subjects different destinies. But that act, through which God wills to elect a self in its uniqueness—to possibility or reality—is indivisible and imparticipable. The personal self, which can only exist clothed in a nature and can only be and be effective in it as itself, has its freedom precisely in this distinction: it can and must determine itself as the self that it is—'in freedom of pitch'—and this self-determination has to be worked out within the area of manœuvre that its nature grants to it—'freedom of play'—to which belongs logically a certain range of objects from which to choose—'freedom of field'. But it is self-determination as self-choice that is decisive, which is then perfected when it integrates itself to the innate sound and taste of this individual, preconceived and chosen by God from eternity, to a 'pitch' in which at all times the self-determination (and therefore 'self-creating') of the creature is included.[105] Here the choice (*elección*) of the Ignatian *Exercises* complements this Scotist primordial choice, as praxis complements theory, for Ignatius trains the human will to choose what God has chosen for it from all eternity (*Exercises*, no. 135). Here Hopkins engages in polemic against the Thomists and a bare freedom of indifference in the creature in which the constraints of pre- and self-determination are undervalued. It is in this sense that Hopkins wants to take the *videre personas* and *videre locum* of the Ignatian contemplation, for 'every real person living or dead or to come has his quarter in the round of being, is lodged onewhere and not anywhere, and the mind has a real direction towards him'.[106] But because the refusal of self-determination, which is present in every sin, is potentially a refusal to choose the archetype of the self, conceived and chosen by God, (which rests in God and ultimately is God himself), there is hidden in every sin a manifest tendency to develop into the murder of God: whence sin receives its meaning and structure, and to which it is in fact related by the Cross of Christ.

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[103] S 146–159.

[104] S 196–202; to which add the individual passages from the fragmentary commentary on the *Exercises*, especially the meditation on Hell (135–142), the remark on the composition of place (S 185), on the Resurrection appearances to Mary (S 190f.), on the meditation *De Amore* (S 192–195).

Now if we are indeed from all eternity predetermined and called by God to be brothers and members of Christ, the core of our personal 'pitch' lies in the supernatural, and thus our self-choice can only be perfected concretely within the grace of God. It is not that Hopkins wants to define the person (as, it might be, by contrast with the individual) only in a supernatural way, for he posits quite clearly creaturely, rational freedom as the presupposition of any cooperation with grace; but he tends to oppose quite bluntly naked personal freedom (*arbitrium*) on the one hand and the freedom of the rational nature (*voluntas ut natura*, affective will) on the other, and to entrust to the former alone the work of the deciding choice.[107] But how can God's grace bring the human person to choose and determine itself beyond nature in the supernatural? It can achieve this through a threefold work that is effected by *gratia praeveniens, concomitans* and *perficiens* (*elevans, uniens*). The prevenient or 'forestalling' grace operates on the *voluntas ut natura*, which moves naturally toward the (absolute) good, and can do no other: 'It is prevenient grace which *rehearses* in us our consent beforehand, when for the moment we find ourselves to have consented, without finally consenting; and I suppose this to be a true and proper consent.'[108] It is the Augustinian being drawn (*delectatio*) to God, expressed here in more personal terms, that cunning of grace by which God takes to himself in advance the natural motion of our agreement[109] and holds it out as a trophy in front of our still hesitating *arbitrium*. As his grace penetrates us, there opens up for us a new horizon, a new 'strain' for the exercise of freedom, a new plane of cleavage, a new 'cleave' through the round ball of the self,[110] though not on the same level as before but displaced in a 'shift': 'It is into that possible world that God for the moment moves his creature out of this one . . . *shewing it to itself* gracious and consenting; nay more, clothing its old self for the moment with a gracious and consenting self. This shift is grace.'[111] It is only now that the personal *arbitrium* has to decide for itself for this highest self, to aim to hit it ('pitch'), drawn by the accompanying grace, in a decision that man can achieve only inchoately, only in a 'sighing of consent', only in the acknowledgment of the prevenience of grace. This decision of the creature 'is found to be no more than the mere wish, discernible by God's eyes, that it might do as he wishes, might correspond, might say Yes to him . . . and this least sigh of desire, this one aspiration, is the life and spirit of man. . . . And remark that prayer understood in this sense, this sigh or

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[105] J 197: 'Taking part in their own creation'.

[106] S 186; in which context Scotus is introduced: God reveals his triunity so that believers might give their thoughts of God a completely determined direction to a completely determined someone, who is God.

[107] S (5.9.83) 138f.: 'The memory, understanding and affective will are

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incapable themselves of an infinite object and do not tend towards it. . . . The arbitrium in itself is man's personality or individuality and places him on a level of individuality in some sense with God.' S 153: 'For a self is absolute which stands to the absolute God as an infinitesimal to the infinite'.

[108] S 150.

[109] S 157: 'God's forestalling of man's action by prevenient grace, which carries with it a consenting of man's will. . . .'

[110] S 151.

[111] S 154 (my italics).

aspiration or stirring of the spirit toward God, is a *forestall* of the thing to be done, as on the other side grace prevenient is God's forestall of the same, and it is here that one creature, one man, differs so much from another: in one, God finds only the constrained correspondence with his forestall . . . ; in another, he finds after this an act of choice properly so called. And by this infinitesimal act the creature does what in it lies to bridge the gulf.'[112] If this work of *gratia praeveniens* is like 'a prophecy, a forecast, not of the certain future, for it leaves us free still to discard and unmake that future', then is the future thus opened up such that in it 'God has already acted, nay we have done so too. . . . The sigh of correspondence links the present . . . to the future . . . : it *begins* to link it, is the first infinitesimal link in the chain or step on that road which is to created power impassable.' And 'even the sigh or aspiration itself is in answer to an inspiration of God's spirit and is followed by the continuance and expiration of that same breath which lifts it, through the gulf',[113] and in which grace is finally immanent to freedom as *gratia sanctificans* and *uniens*. While the first grace must be appropriated to the Father, who raises us to the image of the Son, the second is the genuinely crucifying grace of the Son; the third, however, is the unifying and sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit. The first (as the experience of being drawn affectively) is the grace of the novice, the second (as independent choice) is the grace of the mature Christian, the third 'is truly God's finger touching the very vein of personality which nothing else can reach and man can respond to by no play whatever, by bare acknowledgment only, the counter stress which God alone can feel . . . , the aspiration in answer to his inspiration': perfecting grace.[114]

But all this revolves round the basic Scotist idea that the sacrifice of the Son is God's first thought of the world; we have met this in Bonaventure. Hopkins, like Bonaventure, is interested only in the actual world order (and not in the question of what would have happened if Adam had not sinned), but this is founded on the 'great sacrifice' of the Son, to which Idea of sacrifice all the rest of the creatures are related at the level of idea. The 'great sacrifice' on which everything is founded is, however, the primary way in which the self-emptying, the pure being for another of God's personal, trinitarian being can be manifest externally:

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[112] S 155.

[113] S 155f.

[114] S 158.

> The first intention then of God outside himself ... the first outstress of God's power, was Christ; and we must believe that the next was the Blessed Virgin. Why did the Son of God go thus forth from the Father not only in the eternal and intrinsic procession of the Trinity but also by an extrinsic and less than eternal, let us say aeonian one?—To give God glory and that by sacrifice, sacrifice offered in the barren wilderness outside of God, as the children of Israel were led into the wilderness to offer sacrifice. This sacrifice and this outward procession is a consequence and shadow of the procession of the Trinity, from which mystery sacrifice takes its rise; but of this I do not mean to write here. It is as if the blissful agony or stress of selving in God had forced out drops of sweat or blood, which drops were the world, or as if the lights lit at the festival of the 'peaceful Trinity' through some little cranny striking out lit up into being one 'cleave' out of the world of possible creatures.[115]

From here Hopkins proceeds to his breathtaking speculations. Scotus had, in view of the eucharistic presence of Christ, revised the Aristotelian categories and found that quantity, though secondarily signifying the being of parts outside themselves, primarily signified only the relatedness of parts one to another within a being; that is, its harmony or corporeal form. God therefore has the power to cause the eucharistic body of Christ to be present universally in any position in space and time throughout the cosmos, and Scotus adds: 'I say then, but without insisting on it, that before the Incarnation and "before Abraham was", in the beginning of the world, Christ could have had a true temporal existence in a sacramental manner. And if this is true, it follows that before the conception and formation of the Body of Christ from the most pure blood of the Glorious Virgin there could have been the Eucharist.'[116] On the basis of this *auctoritas* Hopkins continued the already quoted passage on sacrifice thus: 'The sacrifice would be the Eucharist, and that the victim might be truly victim like, like motionless, helpless, or lifeless, it must be in matter. Then the Blessed Virgin was intended or predestined to minister that matter. And here then was that mystery of the woman clothed with the sun which appeared in heaven.'[117]

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[115] S 197.

[116] *Op. Oxoniense* IV, dist. 10, qu. 4 (cited after Devlin, S 113f.)

This eternally universal temporality and spatiality of God sacrificing himself in matter is primary; in Paul's account of the *kenosis* of the Son, who 'could not but see what he was, God, but he would see it as if he did not see it, and be it as if he were not . . . [there] seems to me the root of all his holiness and the imitation of this the root of all moral good in other men.'[118] And indeed this is true already for the angels, who were created not in time but in eternity to accompany the lamb of self-sacrifice, and who in the midst of their eternal world encountered the real presence of the eucharistic Son and the woman clothed with the sun following him and then had to decide[119] whether 'to contribute . . . towards the Incarnation'[120] or not; that is, whether they would realise in the eternal foundations of the world the spirit of the sacrifice of Christ, would allow Christ an 'embodiment' in the angelic world, or not. Here Hopkins likes to take up motifs that have flitted through the history of theology from Origen to Soloviev; they fit in with his line of thought, and he uses them in poetic vision of the world. He uses too the notion that Scotus made seem possible of the simultaneity of happenings in the

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[117] S 197. Apropos of the appearance of the risen Christ to his mother, as Ignatius depicts it in the fourth week of the Exercises, Hopkins draws out the implications, showing as beyond a doubt that 'at the Last Supper Christ invisibly but sacramentally communicated his Blessed Mother (as many ecstatics and others have been communicated)'. 'In her then as well as on the cross Christ died and was at once buried, her body, his temple, becoming the sepulchre. At his rising the soul entered the body in her as in the sepulchre and, issuing from her breast, the two presences passed into one': S 190f. So too is Michael's battle against the serpent who is threatening the woman a sort of 'crusade' to liberate the 'Holy Sepulchre' in which 'the sacrifical victim had lain and from [which] he had risen': S201.

[118] B (3.2.83) 175.

[119] S 197f. On the basis of the Scotist theory of *adductio* (S 200) Hopkins can speak of a 'real fetching, presentment, adduction' of Christ and of Mary into the world of the angels. *Cf.* Devlin's notes, S 308f.

[120] S 200.

aevum and in time, for 'a single event in angelic duration could be coincident with the whole of our time.'[121] If creation in its entirety is traced from the pinnacle of Christ and therefore from this height is unfolded, then the key to the Pythagorean distances of the spheres and the cosmic harmonies of them all is found in Christ, then Christ 'passed', as the last blossom of the world, through the whole 'pedigree' of the angelic world as well as through the material and organic world.[122] Then is Lucifer's sin a refusal to follow the 'great sacrifice', a 'dwelling on his own beauty, an instressing of his own inscape, and like a performance on the organ ... of his own being; it was a sounding ... of his own trumpet and a hymn in his own praise'.[123] It is (following Scotus again) the sin of 'luxury', which is one with that of pride, in Heaven as on earth[124]—which explains how there can be 'beautiful evil'—while the explanation of 'ugly good' lies in the resistance of matter to the (Aristotelian) power of form.[125]

Thus, if the creation of the world is seen in this way, as an implication of the decree of the Incarnation, then it follows that the cosmos as a whole possesses, either manifestly or secretly, a christological form. And it further follows that through all the raging of the elements, all the wildernesses of matter, all shipwrecks and ruins, Christ can be coming and truly is. For the sake of this vision, Hopkins began again, as a religious, to write poetry.

> I admire thee, master of the tides,
> Of the Yore-flood, of the year's fall;
> The recurb and the recovery of the gulf's sides,
> The girth of it and the wharf of it and the wall;
> Stanching, quenching ocean of a motionable mind;
> Ground of being, and granite of it: past all
> Grasp God, throned behind
> Death with a sovereignty that heeds but hides, bodes but abides;

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[121] Devlin's explanation in S 112f. *Cf.* the beginning of the sonnet, 'The shepherd's brow ...': P 75. So can Satan lay hold of man, before he, Satan, has himself finally fallen from heaven; he draws man into his own pride, and it is a single, universal fall ('move' = the Origenist, Evagrian *kinesis*).

[122] S 200.

[123] S 201.

[124] S 132, and Devlin's notes, 286f.

[125] To C. Patmore, F (24.9.83) 306f.

With a mercy that outrides
The all of water, an ark
For the listener; for the lingerer with a love glides
Lower than death and the dark;
A vein for the visiting of the past-prayer, pent in prison,
The-last-breath penitent spirits—the uttermost mark. . . .[126]

Christ girds chaos in his descent into Hell—and his coming is always a descent—but he determines too the decisive selving of all created persons who achieve their 'pitch' only in their victory over self for him. This their victory over self is, for the elect, included beforehand in the act of their creation, so that in their act of decision they have only to remain true to themselves, while the wicked and the lost 'are like halfcreations and have but a halfbeing',[127] because they are shut up and immured in their natural selves (which they doubtless possess) without hope of being able to ascend. This self is experienced by the sinner, and still more sharply by the man who feels himself bereft of transforming grace while he is left behind in his own night, as 'myself unholy':[128]

Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.[129]

The murderer in the St Winifred drama is wrapped up in the 'despair' of such 'keen self-feeling',[130] while on the other side there answers the grace of that innermost 'selfless self of self', which no man can trace in advance or sound out, or imagine, and which will say Yes or No to the great sacrifice:

Man lives that list, that leaning in the will
No wisdom can forecast by gauge or guess,
The selfless self of self, most strange, most still,
Fast furled and all foredrawn to No or Yes.[131]

Finally it is Christ himself, who is enselved in all his members if the believer will let grace work in himself and together with it breathe forth a sweet perfume to God:

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[126] P 28, st. 32–33.
[127] S 197.
[128] P 16.
[129] P 67.
[130] P 152 (Gardner and MacKenzie 191).
[131] P 157.

> Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is—
> Christ. For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
> Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
> To the Father through the features of men's faces.[132]

'For grace is any action, activity, on God's part by which, in creating or after creating, he carries the creature to or towards the end of its being, which is its selfsacrifice to God and its salvation. . . . So far as this action is God's it is divine stress, holy spirit, and, as all is done through Christ, Christ's spirit; so far as it is action, correspondence, on the creature's part it is *actio salutaris*; so far as it is looked at *in esse quieto* it is Christ in his member on the one side, his member in Christ on the other. It is as a man said: That is Christ playing at me and me playing at Christ, only that it is no play but truth; That is Christ *being me* and me being Christ.'[133]

This then is the theological centre from which we can develop the laws of Hopkins' aesthetics. For a complete picture it would be necessary to separate out the tangled and yet always extremely lucid threads of his formal and critical reflections—on verse form; on rhythm; on the nature of poetry and prose; on the role of number, proportion, chromatics, counterpoint, fugue, canon in verse and music—it would be necessary to trace his word creations, his powerful conciseness, his poetry's assonance and inner rhymes, his subtle, critical remarks on his own poems and those of others; it would be necessary to build out of these countless fragmentary aspects a complete edifice, whose coherence with Hopkins' philosophy and theology would then have to be shown.[134] We must content ourselves with a theological approach.

The principle lies in the fact that all truth is grounded in

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[132] P 57.

[133] S 154.

[134] Alan Heuser has made such an attempt, though he carries his attempts at systematisation too far. W. H. Gardner's two-volume study is fundamental: *GMH, a Study of Poetic Idiosyncracy in Relation to Poetic Tradition:* I, 2nd ed. London, 1948; II, 1st ed., 1949.

[135] P 157.

Christ ('Christ is truth')[135] and that all beauty belongs to him, is related to him, is yielded to him in the 'great sacrifice' and must rest with him ('give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God, beauty's self and beauty's giver').[136] In the sonnet, 'To What Serves Mortal Beauty?', which sets out from the danger of its bewitching power—'the O-seal-that-so feature'—this power serves to keep alive a man's sense for things as again and again he is left speechless at the sight of them: as at that of the beautiful English boys whom Pope Gregory noticed in the slave market in Rome, and who moved him to send missionaries to convert such a people. Man would worship blocks and stones did not human beauty speak to him, human beauty in which 'self flashes off frame and face', and say that love is intended for a 'thou': in a real encounter, but in what is only an encounter, that allows the beloved other to be—'then leave, let that alone'—and wishes it eternal beauty and grace.[137] Christ alone is the repository and the judge; as he is the ethical judge of mankind, so he is the highest aesthetic judge of all human art. 'As I am criticising you, so does Christ, only more correctly and more affectionately, both as a poet and as a man.'[138] 'The only just judge, the only just literary critic, is Christ, who prizes, is proud of, and admires, more than any man, more than the receiver himself can, the gifts of his own making. And the only real good which fame and another's praise does is to convey to us, by a channel not at all above suspicion but from circumstances in this case much less to be suspected than the channel of our own minds, some token of the judgment which a perfectly just, heedful, and wise mind, namely Christ's, passes upon our doings.'[139]

But now the glance that God casts on man and his work is the glance of his grace and election. He hears man's inchoate sigh of assent, which is included in the picture of his election:

> Thou heardst me truer than tongue confess
> Thy terror, O Christ, O God.[140]

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[136] P 59.

[137] P 62.

[138] B (22.2.79) 73.

[139] D (15.6.78) 8; *cf.* D (1.12.91) 93.

[140] P 28, st. 2.

> If He would prove
> And search me through
> Would he not find
> (What yet there must
> Be hid behind. . . .[141]

And so God sees, complementing what is failing in the creature itself:

> God, lover of souls, swaying considerate scales,
> Complete thy creature dear O where it fails,
> Being mighty a master, being a father and fond.[142]

So too it must be left to God to see the most fearsome destruction in worldly terms as a gentle spring:

> Surf, snow, river and earth
> Gnashed: but thou art above, thou Orion of light;
> Thy unchancelling poising palms were weighing the worth,
> Thou martyr-master: in thy sight
> Storm flakes were scroll-leaved flowers, lily showers—sweet heaven was astrew in them.[143]

This doctrine of grace changed the natural doctrine of instress and inscape, for the true inscape of all things is Christ; God's grace is the stress within them, by which indeed (as has already been said) the arguments of our self-taste against mythical pantheism are not rendered powerless but are, rather, transcended. For now it is really God who has the true taste of the human self in his mouth. In the great shipwreck poem, man is the succulent fruit that God bites in order to know its innermost taste, and in being this fruit for God, mankind treads, willy-nilly, the way to Calvary:

> . . . How a lush-kept plush-capped sloe
> Will, mouthed to flesh-burst,
> Gush!—flush the man, the being with it, sour or sweet,
> Brim, in a flash, full!—Hither then, last or first,
> To hero of Calvary, Christ's, feet—
> Never ask if meaning it, wanting it, warned of it—men go.[144]

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[141] P 127.
[142] P 34.
[143] P 28, st. 21.
[144] P 28, st. 8.

The Holy Ghost is the Paraclete within us, since he is 'stress' in us: 'Who comforts, who cheers, who encourages, who persuades, who exhorts, who stirs up, who urges forward, who calls on; what the spur and word of command is to a horse, what clapping of hands is to a speaker, what a trumpet is to the soldier, that a Paraclete is to the soul: one who calls us on.'[145] But Hopkins insists that this 'stress' does not come unmediated to us from above, from Heaven, but also from the temporal history of the Cross:

Not out of his bliss
Springs the stress felt
Nor first from heaven (and few know this)
Swings the stroke dealt. . . .

But it rides time like riding a river. . . .

It dates from day
Of his going in Galilee [. . . and]

The dense and the driven Passion, and frightful sweat:
Thence the discharge of it, there its swelling to be.[146]

And because the Cross was invented and laid on him by men but grasped by God as a sign and then in turn imprinted by him on men, the stroke and stress he inflicts touches men both humanly and divinely, just as the imprint of the seraphic signs sealed Francis in a divine and human way.[147]

For this reason, and also because God, in virtue of his predestination of man to his eternal self, already possesses a measure of man's acceptance in advance, there is in the 'great sacrifice' for men not only darkness, but always too a kind of light. It is the light of faith, whose strength is precisely proportional to the measure in which man has surrendered himself to God and God has bestowed on man the totality of his vision, for 'it is God—in man—knowing his own truth. It is like the child of a great nobleman taught by its father and mother a compliment of welcome to pay to the nobleman's father on his visit to them: the child does not understand the words it says by rote, does not know their meaning, yet what they mean it means. The parents understand what they do not say, the child says what it does not understand, but both child and parents mean the welcome.'[148] And that it is so is understood by the child too, and the child is glad, not in himself but in the one addressed, that he can bring joy. So too can it be with the joy of Christian faith: 'We must put a stress on ourselves and make ourselves find comfort where we know the comfort is to be found. It *is* a comfort that in spite of all, God loves us. . . . We have only to force ourselves to see it, to dwell on it. . . .'[149] In the same sermon the emphasis is laid ever more firmly on God: 'It has been said that God prays to men more than men to God: Christ called to us from his cross more than we call to him there. . . . His servants rejoice in him, at least St. Paul says they should, but much more does Christ rejoice in them. . . . He admires them more than they can, more than they *justly* can, themselves, for he made all these things, beauty, health, strength, and the rest. But we admire ourselves and pride ourselves: we should leave that to him, he is proud enough of us. If we do well he smiles, he claps his hands over us; he is interested in our undertakings . . . more . . . than we are.'[150] A sonnet on soldiers draws out this thought in poetry. Why, he asks, are we inclined at the sight of our redcoats, our tars, to bless them, although they are only frail clay, even foul clay? Because the heart hopes and fancies that the man in the uniform will answer to his calling, because it judges the artist by the standards of his art.

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[145] Sermon at Liverpool, S (25.4.80) 70.
[146] P 28, st. 6–7.
[147] P 28, st. 22–23.

Mark Christ our King. He knows war, served this soldiering through;
He of all can reeve a rope best. There he bides in bliss
Now, and seeing somewhere some man do all that man can do,
For lovẹ he leans forth, needs his neck must fall on, kiss,
And cry 'O Christ-done deed! So God-made-flesh does too:
Were I come o'er again' cries Christ 'it should be this'.[151]

God therefore sees in us the true beauty, because by his looking he sets within us his beauty; yet with Hopkins this is grasped completely undialectically, in a quite unprotestant way. Everything depends, at the stage he is considering, on the assumption of the human deed, of the human act of assent, by redeeming grace—so much so that this assumption becomes something absolutely original and already occurs where God in his freedom calls man to rise from nature to grace: 'for redeem may be said not only of the recovering from sin to grace or perdition to salvation but also of the raising from worthlessness before God (and all creation is unworthy of God) to worthiness of him, the meriting of God himself, or, so to say, godworthiness.'[152] And here the whole world order—and within it the whole of aesthetics—depends on the inextricable linkage of Christ and Mary: on the interweaving, by grace, of the human act of assent into the redeemer's own act of assent, which is one with the assent of the love of the Trinity. Thus is Mary everywhere present in the work of Hopkins and indeed compared to the air we breathe:[153] in her the whole of creation is worthy of God, is objectively, and without any dialectic 'as if', beautiful. Thus we see again that at the deepest level theological aesthetics as a whole stands or falls with Mariology.

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[148] S 157.
[149] Sermon at Bedford Leigh, S 47f.
[150] *Ibid.* 49.
[151] P 63.

3. SACRAMENTAL POETRY

The fact that all natures and selves are fashioned and determined for Christ, who is both their ultimate inscape and instress, means that there is no other possibility of reading them objectively and understanding them than in relation to this centre in which they are integrated. Hopkins does not thereby confuse nature and grace, but the concrete *telos* of natures and persons is none the less that for the sake of which they exist; and out of the glory of the Incarnate God there breaks forth the truest and most inward glory of forms both of natures and persons. Christ therefore stands once more in the place of the eternal idea, which shines through the phenomena: but he is idea as living God and living man, as personal majesty, self-sacrifice, love in mercy condescending and emptying itself, so that Hopkins can even frequently call him hero, the beloved, deified ideal hero.[154] The Christian, who is able to read this picture of the manifestation of the glory of God knows that here all truth and therefore all beauty lies, that he owes it to himself to surrender in love to this archetype, because he owes him his being and existence and can therefore only glorify him in an ascent to him in his life and work.

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[152] S 197.

[153] P 60.

So Christianity is really 'an inspiration'[155] such as is expressed both in the ethical sphere (above all as love of one's neighbour) and in the aesthetic (as an exact experiencing of the forms of the world) with the most careful, most sober endeavour. It is precisely the duty of the one who ascends to Christ in faith, hope and love to interpret all the forms of God's revelation in Christ throughout the universe, and this task is achieved by Hopkins the poet. For what has to be interpreted is not concepts (of 'universal', abstract truths), but images (of the unique, personal, divine-human truth), and here poetry is the absolutely appropriate theological language, and Hopkins brings the great English tradition back into the Church by his own creative achievement.

His constant efforts and schooling in reading the forms of nature is therefore not 'aesthetic' in the usual sense nor 'mystical' nor one-sidedly 'exact and scientific', but rather, it subsumes them all under the higher Christian law.[156] It is, in a real sense a 'learning to read'. Of certain clouds he can say: 'its make easily read';[157] of a moonlit landscape with clouds and trees: 'I read a broad careless inscape flowing throughout'.[158] Inscapes are 'discovered',[159] they unfold ('the scaping unfolded'),[160] they are caught flowing ('I caught an inscape as flowing');[161] indeed it is just in their movement that they unfold and become legible: 'Indeed a floating flag is like wind visible and what weeds are in a current.'[162]

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[154] S 21, 34f., 48; P 28, st. 8; P 41, st. 28. He is also called 'giant': P 28, st. 33; and designated as 'greatest genius': S 36f. And there is here certainly no dependence on Carlyle, whom Hopkins regarded as an impostor, a false prophet, and in whose style he discerned pretence: D (2.10.81) 75.

[155] B (10.9.88) 287.

[156] Clemen's introduction to *GMH's Gedichte, Schriften, Briefe* (ed. by Rinn, cited in n. 1), 19.

[157] J (24.5.71) 210.

[158] J (23.2.72) 218.

[159] J (14.5.70) 199.

[160] J (20.10.70) 200.

The idealists and romantics were right when they understood that the inscapes would only open themselves to the poet in some creative consummation between him and the spirit of nature; but for the Christian the final creative unity lies higher, and he must raise himself to this in his faith, in the great sacrifice; his enthusiasm may have no other source than does his faith. It is of this exaltation as the whole man's engagement and effort that the poetic form must speak; the unprecedented character of Hopkins' language is a theological phenomenon and can be understood only in this way. It was unintelligible to a non-Christian like Bridges, who found Hopkins' language (although in some way magically attractive) mannered and outrageous,[163] and even a convert such as Coventry Patmore, with his dutifully traditional diction, had no antennae for it.[164] Hopkins himself heeded a warning from his friends: 'It is plain I must go no farther on this road: if you and he [Dixon] cannot understand me who will?'[165] 'Dividing a compound word by a clause sandwiched into it was a desperate deed, I feel.'[166] But he will not give up; language must be revalued, at whatever price, it must be equipped anew so as to be able to express in a plausible and fine way the unique and extraordinary, even if not everyone will go along with it at first: 'Plainly if it is possible to express a subtle and recondite thought on a subtle and recondite subject in a subtle and recondite way and with great felicity and perfection, in the end, something must be sacrificed, with so trying a task, in the process, and this may be the being at once, nay perhaps even the being without explanation at all, intelligible.'[167] At the deepest level Hopkins was not to be diverted. If he renounced any publicity, any fame on his own part, then it was because he sensed that his hour had not struck, and he could wait.[168] 'The verses stand or fall by their simple selves.'[169] But a Hopkins renaissance in a purely aesthetic or stylistic sense would be as fundamental a misunderstanding as his former neglect; with him, form and content stand and fall together.

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[161] J (17.9.72) 227.

[162] J (22.7.73) 233. *Cf.* the 'beautiful instance of . . . successive sidings of one inscape': the successive stages of the iris: J (13.6.71) 211; the Horned Violet 'even in withering . . . ran through beautiful inscapes', 'it is not that inscape does not govern the behaviour of things in slack and decay': J (19.7.71) 211. Inscapes can also run together in the observer: J (14.9.71) 215.

[163] B (30.5.78) 54; B (6.11.87) 265.

[164] His letter to Hopkins, F (20.3.84) 352f.

[165] B (10.2.88) 272.

[166] B (6.11.87) 265.

Together with the man, the language must reach out beyond its immanence because the mystery of God does not hold sway as something incomprehensible *behind* the forms of the world; rather, the divine Word was made flesh. Bridges regarded the dogmatic formulation of the mystery, above all of the Incarnation, as profanation; to the extent that the mystery diminishes, he said, so also is diminished its power to captivate the mind. Hopkins replied that mystery was not 'an interesting uncertainty' that held the mind only so long as one had not got to the bottom of it; he cited examples from the realm of the arts that prove that the delight—say of certain musical cadences—'is keenest when they are known and over'. How must it then be when the very answer is the most tantalising statement of the problem and the truth one is to rest in the most pointed putting of the difficulty! And so it is in the dogmatic explanation of the Trinity, which for Christians is 'news of their dearest friend or friends, leaving them all their lives balancing whether they have three heavenly friends or one—not that they have any doubt on the subject, but that their knowledge leaves their minds swinging; poised, but on the quiver. And this might be the ecstasy of interest.'[170] For an understanding of the way the mystery of God takes form in the world, the concept of the sacramental is at hand, which certainly contains within itself the power of the 'symbol', while it goes far beyond it; the form of the image is a likeness to the primordial form in that it has the

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[167] *Ibid.*

[168] B (1.4.85) 214: 'take a generation and come to me again'; D (1.12.81) 95: 'it may be that the time will come for my verses'.

[169] D (27.1.87) 150.

[170] B (24.10.83) 187f.

'stress' of the latter in itself: *sacramenta continent quae significant*.

But the mystery incorporated in the inscapes is not to be grasped as a straightforward picture, as, it might be, a simple allegory. The mystery of Christ is, on the one hand, of infinite depth, penetrating all the levels of being from flesh to spirit and beyond into the abyss of the Trinity; on the other, it is an infinitely dramatic event that in the kenotic descent into man and matter exalts and changes them, redeems and deifies them. The poet of the cosmic rapture will be, if he is a Christian, at the same time the poet too of the intimate dialogue between the lost sinner and the crucified Redeemer; as one who beholds he will be also the obedient believer, in the analogies he must always consider and express the reversals and the erasures. The image that should interpret the mystery of Christ is, in itself as an image of nature, utterly overtaxed, but in so far as it is grounded in Christ as the presupposition of nature, it is allowed to say by grace of the archetype what it cannot say of itself.

So it is the mystery of the sonnet, 'The Windhover'—dedicated 'To Christ our Lord'—to draw out the image in an immense, ascending intensity, which starts by spiritualising the bold soaring of the wild bird in order then to interpret the utmost, now motionless, suspension at the highest point, with outstretched wings, as the final unfolding of power from which the embers drop down: a sacramental image of the Cross. At the natural level the image is overstretched, but as a whole it is not; it accomplishes no *metabasis*, no allegory; Christ's Cross is indeed not one historical fact among others to which a natural process can more or less arbitrarily be related: it is the fundamental, ontological presupposition of all natural processes that all, knowingly or not, intrinsically signify or intend by pointing beyond themselves. The 'Windhover' allows this connection to appear expressly only in the dedication; in the poem itself the image must say all. But there are other ways in which this connection can manifest itself in a poem.

First of all there is the Christian's simple 'cosmic experience of God'. Here Hopkins' world view is very close to that of Claudel; many of the images he uses could be Claudel's.[171] God is immediately visible in the beauty of the world.[172] In 'God's Grandeur',

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[171] For example in the sonnet, 'Hurrahing in Harvest' (P 38), whose beginning immediately reminds one of the '*Cantate à trois voix*'; 'The Starlight

> The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
> It will flame out, like shining from shook foil.[173]

In the summer glory of a harvest day, the poet wanders beneath wild wind-walks and silk-sack clouds and lifts up heart and eyes:

> Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our Saviour;
> And, eyes, heart, what looks, what lips yet gave you a
> Rapturous love's greeting of realer, of rounder replies?

The next verse discovers in the rise of the azurous hung hills Christ's world-wielding shoulder. And all these things were here and waited for the one who could truly behold them,

> ... which two when they once meet,
> The heart rears wings bold and bolder
> And hurls for him, O half hurls for him off under his feet.[174]

In the encounter then of nature and the beholder the mystery of the 'great sacrifice' is thrown up in both of them. It is not 'projected into' the landscape; it has long tarried there in order finally to be discovered. Harvest means the world harvest, and the gleaning gaze gleans the Redeemer. In 'Pied Beauty' it is the contrariety and perverseness of natural things that proclaim immediately in their incomprehensible beauty the glory of God:

> Glory be to God for dappled things,

for 'whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?) ... He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change: Praise him'.[175]

Night' (P 32), where the sight of the stars becomes immediately, as with Claudel, a vision of all the saints, or the way in which the poet 'kisses his hand' to the stars and the wind (P 28, st. 5), et cetera.

[172] Sermon, S (18.1.80) 59: 'he let himself be seen'.

[173] P 31, and the explanation to Bridges, B (4.1.83) 169: 'I mean foil in its sense of leaf or tinsel, and no other word whatever will give the effect I want. Shaken goldfoil gives off broad glares like sheet lightning and also, and this is true of nothing else, owing to its zigzag dints and creasings and network of small many cornered facets, a sort of fork lightning too.' An example of the exactness of Hopkins' poetic diction.

[174] P 38.

[175] P 37.

. . . nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things

—in contrast to the world, trodden down under men's feet, 'seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil': a virginal creation embraces the fallen cosmos,

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.[176]

This pure, wild nature—in contrast to the fallen culture, returning to dust, swept away and burnt up in the Heraclitean fire—we have already encountered; between 'the sea and the skylark', whose sound and rejoicing are pure, there stretches the sordid city of men:

We, life's pride and cared-for crown,

Have lost that cheer and charm of earth's past prime:
Our make and making break, are breaking, down
To man's last dust, drain fast towards man's first slime.[177]

Here the periods of world time overlap one another: 'earth's past prime'. Is then Paradise the past and mankind the present? 'It is the blight man was born for', and the child's grief over the fallen blossoms finds its truth in the tears of the grown-up over himself.[178] The sonnet, 'The Lantern Out of Doors', sees a little light, a human destiny, a human beauty, lose itself in the night: no eye, following its course, can perceive it to the end. But there is one who knows every line, every fate, who lovingly pursues and rescues as 'first, fast, last friend';[179] in him is the world of men, however vainly it disports itself, hidden, embraced, brought home, set to rights.

It is impossible to say where the natural perception of God in the world ceases and the supernatural, Christian perception begins, which presupposes a dogmatic knowledge. Faith is so deeply involved in flesh and blood (the Word indeed has become flesh), that the transfer of interpretation from sacramental signs to the indwelling grace of faith proceeds imperceptibly, ultimately indeed because the christological-mariological has been *understood* as the inner condition of the possibility of the whole natural order. So in the sonnet 'The Starlight Night', looking at the 'fire-folk sitting in the air', at the 'bright boroughs, the circle-citadels', at all the treasures poured forth—'all a purchase, all is a prize'—passes over immediately into the Christian: 'Buy then! bid then!—What?—Prayer, patience, alms, vows', and what is above is really

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[176] P 31; the theme of the brooding dove is found again in the sonnet 'Peace', P 51.

[177] P 35.

[178] P 55.

[179] P 40.

> . . . the barn; withindoors house
> The shocks. This piece-bright paling shuts the spouse
> Christ home, Christ and his mother and all his hallows.[180]

The transparency of nature to the mystery of salvation makes it equally as easy to look from the mystery into nature: Mary is the kernel of unfallen nature, she is effective mediation to her Son, she *is* the atmosphere in which we live, not metaphorically but really; she is in no way a personification of mother nature; on the contrary, she establishes and supports the natural spring at a much deeper level, as 'The May Magnificat' sings:

> All things rising, all things sizing
> Mary sees, sympathising
> With that world of good,
> Nature's motherhood. . . .
>
> This ecstasy all through mothering earth
> Tells Mary her mirth till Christ's birth
> To remember and exultation
> In God who was her salvation.[181]

The ode 'The Blessed Virgin Compared to the Air We Breathe' praises the nature of Mary's gentle mediation: what would the sun be without the blue sky? 'Whose glory bare would blind'—it would be a fearsome, fiery ball in the darkness. But now Mary is mediatrix—'let all God's glory through'—she is the web, the robe, the 'sweet alms' self' in whom everyone must participate simply in order to live:

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[180] P 32.
[181] P 42.

She, wild web, wondrous robe,
Mantles the guilty globe . . .
Nay, more than almoner,
The sweet alms' self is her
And men are meant to share
Her life as life does air.

So through her there is extended to men the possibility of new Nazareths and new Bethlehems, for in faith they breathe in Mary's fruitfulness, her Son, who insinuates himself into their selves as a nobler self and I and as eternal life:

Men here may draw like breath
More Christ and baffle death;
Who, born so, comes to be
New self and nobler me. . . .[182]

Hopkins had then during his years of pastoral activity among the poor come to see men and women ever more strongly as a sacramental form of God: on the one hand, in their fearful threatenedness[183]—Hopkins has a mimosa-like feel for purity and could hardly bear the pollution of young, innocent souls—and on the other, men and women in their homecoming, as sinners, to God, in the bursting forth from him of love in all its cunning: here the tenderness of the priest and the poet are fused into one.[184] His eye gives him a scarcely bearable insight into the heart; in human love he can catch an almost naked glimpse of the love of God holding sway there; it is as if the heart stood still for him ('The Handsome Heart', 'Felix Randal', 'Brothers').[185] The Christian neighbour becomes for him a most transparent sacrament of the Incarnate God, a symbolism of Christian fashioning without reverie or giddy enchantment, in which obligation and inclination, ethical self-transcendence and aesthetic rapture have become one.

But the ultimate for Hopkins remains still his shipwreck poems, because here the foundering and shattering of all

[182] P 60.
[183] P 47, 48, 62, 157.
[184] P 53.
[185] P 47, 53, 54.
[186] P 28, st. 24.
[187] P 28, st. 31.

worldly images and symbols yield a final picture of the sacrament of the world: perishing and ascending to God—death as Resurrection: Resurrection not beyond death, but in death. The nun on the foaming deck, who from the midst of the tumult of the elements cries 'Christ, come quickly'—she cries to her Redeemer in and through the elements: 'christens her wild-worst Best'.[186] The wreck is as a harvest ('is the shipwrack then a harvest'),[187] the beach as a goal ('the goal was a shoal');[188] everything alive was washed away ('lives at last were washing away').[189] Foundering in God—that is the high point of the poem—man finds nothing more to cling on to, not his longing nor reward nor Heaven nor any of God's attributes, for beyond all that there is nothing but him alone: '*Ipse*, the only one'[190]—the self beyond any nature. Here the poet rejoices because the 'heart right' (*cor rectum*), the 'single eye' of the parable, is capable of the highest: to interpret the formless and unformable chaos of the night as form and in the senselessness of pure question to know the who and the why:

> Ah! there was a heart right!
> There was single eye!
> Read the unshapeable shock night
> And knew the who and the why. . . .[191]

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[188] P 28, st. 12.
[189] P 28, st. 15.
[190] P 28, st. 28.
[191] P 28, st. 29.

PÉGUY

1. THE BASIC PATTERN

For the opening years of the twentieth century, there is no better representative of the concerns of a theological aesthetic than Charles Péguy,[1] because, from within the Catholic sphere, he

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[1] Péguy's works will be quoted as follows. Since the volumes of the standard collected edition (*Oeuvres Complètes*, vols. 1–15, Paris, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Francaise, 1917–1933, and vols. 16–20, Paris, idem, 1952–1955; not strictly speaking a critical edition), as well as Péguy's own periodical, the 229 issues of the *Cahiers de la Quinzaine*, are not easily obtainable outside France, references will be to the modern India paper edition in the Bibliothèque de la Pléiade: two volumes of this contain the full texts of the works included; the third unfortunately does not, though the full texts are promised for future editions.

A = *Oeuvres en prose 1898–1908* (edited—like the two following volumes—by Péguy's son Marcel, Paris 1959). This contains all the major works of the first period, beginning with a selection prepared by Péguy himself: *De la cité socialiste*, *Marcel*, *Premier dialogue de la cité harmonieuse*; then a group of texts from the *Cahiers*, the most significant being *De la grippe* (three parts of a serial); *Réponse brève a Jaurès*; *Personnalités*; *De Jean Coste*; *Zangwill*; *Notre Patrie*; *Les suppliants parallèles*; the three studies directed toward his projected theses (*De la situation faite à l'histoire et à la sociologie dans les temps modernes*, *De la situation faite au parti intellectuel dans le monde moderne* and *De la situation faite au parti intellectuel dans le monde moderne devant les accidents de la gloire temporelle*). The same volume contains a number of pieces not included in Péguy's selection: *Pierre* (an autobiograpical fragment), *Pour ma maison*, *Pour moi* and a few others.

This volume, A, should be supplemented by the numerous published articles that appear in the *Cahiers* and the *Oeuvres Complètes* (some of which are also available in 'Péguy et les Cahiers: textes choisis par Mme Ch. Péguy', *Nouvelle Revue Francaise* 1947), and the extensive and important writings remaining from this first period collected in:

Par ce demi-clair matin (1952) (= D). This contains the two continuations of *Notre Patrie* (1905–1906), the fragment of a monograph on Bernard-Lazare (1903) and *Hervé* (1906).

L'esprit de système (1953) (= S), containing the fragment of this name, various fragments for the *Situations* essays, the beginning of a work entitled *Brunetière* and other fragmentary pieces.

Deuxième Elégie XXX (1955) (= E), a fragment in the same area as the *Situations* pieces.

B = *Oeuvres en prose 1909–1914* (1957) [2nd ed. with some additions from conducts precisely the same polemic against the 'spirit of systematisation' that Kierkegaard conducted against Hegelianism. In this respect, he speaks for the same existential preoccupations as Kierkegaard; but he does so in consequence of a more radical anchorage in the Bible than the Danish writer possessed and so avoids his major failing—the separation between aesthetics and ethics (and, equally, religion). As for Hamann—indeed, even more fundamentally than for him—the aesthetic,

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unpublished sources, 1961; Tr.]. This volume contains the completed prose works (though the order of items and the commentary are open to question): *A nos amis, à nos abonnés* (with the suppressed sequel, *Nous sommes des vaincus*), 1909; *Clio, dialogue de l'histoire et de l'âme païenne* (1909–1912), together with the important essay arising out of this, composed in 1909 but originally suppressed, *Dialogue de l'histoire et de l'âme charnelle*, which was published (along with the *Deuxième Elégie XXX*) and given the title *Véronique* on the basis of a chance remark by Péguy; *Notre jeunesse* (1910); *Victor-Marie, Comte Hugo* (1910); *Un nouveau théologien, M. Fernand Laudet* (1911); *L'argent and L'argent suite* (1913); *Note sur M. Bergson et la philosophie bergsonienne* (1914); and from the posthumously published works, *Note sur Victor Hugo* and *Note conjointe sur M. Descartes et la philosophie cartésienne* (1914).

C = *Oeuvres poétiques complètes* (1941). This contains the early play *Jeanne d'Arc* (1897), the published text of the three *Mystères* (*De la charité de Jeanne d'Arc* [1909], *Du Porche de la deuxième vertu* [1911], *Des Saints Innocents* [1912], the poems, especially 'Tapisseries' and the great 'heartbeat' *ballade* (*Quatrains*, written in 1912) and finally the epic *Eve*, with its more than 12,000 stanzas (1913). The volume also includes the unpublished continuation of the first *Mystère*, but the first complete edition of the unpublished text, found among Péguy's papers after his death, is that of Albert Béguin, *Le mystère de la Charité de Jeanne d'Arc*, Club du mielleur livre, 1956 (=J). Quotations of this *Mystère* will be from Béguin's edition.

L = Péguy, *Lettres et Entretiens* (1927), containing letters to Mme Geneviève Favre (more fully in Maurice Reclus, *Le Péguy que j'ai connu*, 1951), to Louis Baillet, OSB, and above all, the important letters to and conversations with Joseph Lotte. Further letters in *Cahiers de l'Amitié* (v. infra).

Bibliography: A brief general survey in Louis Perche, *Charles Péguy*, 1957. For Péguy's life in the context of the history of his times, various books of recollections by friends and acquaintances: Fr. Porché (1914), André Suarès (1915), Daniel Halévy (1918, 1940), Jérôme and Jean Thauraud (1925, 1948), Romain Rolland (1944—an intensive exposition, which is, however, crucially deficient because of their entirely diverse and unreconciled perspectives), Jules Isaac (1959, important for the early period, a corrective to false and legendary pictures), Geneviève Favre (*Souvenirs* 1938, in the review *Europe*). On Péguy's achievement as a whole, Jean Delaporte, *Connaissance de Péguy* (1944); Emmanuel Mounier, *La Pensée de Ch. Péguy* (1931); Elsbeth for Péguy, is in its depths identical with the ethical, and this on the basis of God's becoming man in Christ: the spiritual must put on flesh, the invisible must give proof of itself in form, and only that which is just and justifiable in the sight of God can be right in worldly terms. The Augustinian and Anselanian key word, *rectitudo*, gave expression to this in earlier ages, and Péguy's twofold language of *justice* and *justesse* takes up the same idea. While Kierkgaard retreated before Hegel and the aftermath of his thought and threw up his defences against it, Péguy goes immediately into the heart of the anti-Christian position, the extreme of left-wing Hegelianism, in order to bring all of it home or, better, to unfold from within what is Christian in it. But this does not happen by means of any kind of synthesis or compromise; the form that is achieved and lived out must be a pure and seamless fabric. The words *pur* and *pureté* appear again and again as fundamental concepts, employed in an almost sacral fashion.

What drove the young Péguy out of the Church was precisely the same thing that brought him by a direct route back to it. 'My past needs no apology. I require no defence. I do not stand arraigned on any count.'[2] 'We have been walking continuously in the same direction, and this straight path has led us to where we now stand. It was not a "development", as people rather foolishly say, unthinkingly using one of those words in current speech that has become so loose in meaning: it was an *approfondissement*. It is through a steady *approfondissement* of our heart along the same path, and not through any kind of develoment, that we have rediscovered what it is to be a

Gremminger, *Péguy. Vom Sozialismus zur christlichen Weltschau*, with an introduction by A. Béguin (Olten 1949—the best introduction in German); Karl Pfleger, 'Péguy, der gute Sünder' (Hochland, 1933–1934; included in 'Menschen, die um Christus ringen', 1946^5); Alexander Dru, *Péguy* (London, 1956). On Péguy's theology and spirituality, Albert Béguin, *La prière de Péguy* (1942); *L'Ève de Péguy* (1948); André Rousseaux, *Le prophète Péguy* (3 vols. 1942, 1944, 1945). On his aesthetics, A. Chavanon, *La poétique de Péguy* (1947); Bernard Guyon, *L'Art de Péguy* (1948).

The society 'L'Amitié Charles Péguy' publishes both more extended studies in its *Cahiers* (1947–) and smaller essays, bulletins and reviews in its *Feuillets* (1948–).

[2] B 561.

Christian. Not through a return home, but as the last end of all. We may have been in advance of the letter; but we have never resisted the spirit.'[3] In this course of unswerving consistency lies the mystery of Péguy's character, which, despite all the oscillations and depressions of his personal life, was in itself so unshakeably secure. Never yet have I felt so strongly that I myself am nothing, and only what I do is everything.'[4] 'Unimaginable trials in private matters, enormous graces for my works'[5]—by this he means that mission whose true scope impresses itself upon him ever more plainly, strengthening him and yet also threatening to shatter him. 'Mine is no ordinary life. My life is a wager. At the deepest level, there is a Catholic renaissance coming to fulfilment through me. One must see this for what it is and stand one's ground. I am a sinner, I am not a saint. You can recognise a saint at first glance. I am a good sinner. A witness. A Christian in the parish, a sinner, but one possessed of the treasures of grace. . . .'[6] Nonetheless, the most clear-sighted of his contemporaries, notwithstanding all their misunderstanding and hostility, their conspiracy of silence, had some sense of the incomparable quality of the event before them—like Gide, writing on the appearance of Péguy's first *Mystère*: 'Nothing since Claudel's *Arbre* has impressed me so much. I am still disturbed as I write, still quite intoxicated.' Or Alain-Fournier: 'It is absolutely wonderful. . . . I know what I am saying when I make the claim that no one since Dostoyevsky has been so patently a man of God.' Or Jacques Copeau: 'It is wonderful, uniquely beautiful.'[7] After reading the second and third *Mystères*, Romain Rolland wrote in his journal: 'After Péguy I can read nothing else. How hollow the greatest men of today sound in comparison with him. Spiritually, my place is at the opposite pole to his, but I admire him unreservedly.' And on the conclusion of the poem about the holy innocents: 'A unique creative achievement amongst the literature of all ages.'[8]

[3] B 998–999.

[4] L 30.

[5] L 168.

[6] L 158.

[7] These and further remarks are assembled by Béguin, J 397–398.

[8] Rolland, *Péguy* I 283–284.

Péguy's work reaches out to pagan, Jew and Christian alike; and even when Péguy is misunderstood by non-Christians, they are not able to resolve his wholeness into its parts and deal with his aesthetics independently of this ethical and religious dimension. He remains indivisible; and so he stands both inside and outside the Church. He is the Church *in partibus infidelium*, the Church in those places where the Church will be one day, and he is so thanks to the fact that he is rooted in the depths where world and Church, world and grace, meet together and interpenetrate to the point of indistinguishability. Perhaps, after the long record of Platonic variations in the history of the Christian spirit, the Church has never been placed so firmly in the world as in Péguy's thought; and, as a result of this, the idea of the world is allowed to remain free from any taint of uncriticised enthusiasm, whatever its source—whether in mythology or eroticism or in optimism about the future. The biblical sobriety and chastity of his thought provides an incorruptible clarity of vision for the world as it really is, *grandeur et misère*. In this respect Péguy, quite deliberately and consciously, sails in Pascal's wake; it is Pascal above all who is in Péguy's mind, it is by Pascal's stature that Péguy measures himself, through him that he acquires both nearness to and distance from things; even at those points where he is bound to go further than Pascal, he brings his ideas to completion.

In that he plunges back into a ground below all secondary oppositions, Péguy is still in the eyes of all those who cannot follow him there a contradictory spirit, or a unifier of all the things that cannot be unified: Communist and traditionalist, internationalist and nationalist, a man of the extreme Left and the extreme Right, ecclesiastically minded and anticlerical, mystic and polemical journalist, and so forth. But on the other hand, for anyone who can see the basic pattern, all these strands that appear to cross one another converge like radial lines toward the central point. From this point he can deal with opposite notions as complementary pairs. From this point too he can indulge an all-pervading humour, less intellectual than Chesterton's, less pedestrian than Claudel's, a kind of superior peasant shrewdness and good nature by which he sets himself apart from the ecclesiastical and antiecclesiastical intelligentsia around him as the only one left with his feet on the ground, incarnated afresh again and again. If he is, in common with Kierkegaard or Nietzsche and like scarcely anyone else, an 'individual', he is nonetheless an individual whose roots run deep, who is bound to family, people and race. 'A task like mine is not the work of an individual; it is nourished, often without their being aware of the fact, by what is best in the life of all those who are present in it. This life reverbeates in the work, in almost incalculable ways.'[9] Only in this lived relation is the mission at all possible, for it is itself existence as representation. Whom would the man speak for who is deprived of his roots, even if he is a genius as an individual? 'What a bitter irony there is in words themselves!' What in any case will the genius that is cut off from its grounding in the national life represent? Only itself; it will depict itself, a poor, pitiful representation. It repents itself, itself as man, and then always only as a poor and pitiful man, just as we all are.'[10]

But what a nation is in the natural order—an interrelation of human beings that is more than the sum of its individuals—the communion of saints is in the Christian sphere, except that here true saints stand out with the stamp of authoritative vocation. The shape that gives focus to everything is here, for Péguy, the figure of Joan of Arc, that unique point of intersection of spiritual and secular action, and this precisely because she *is* 'the people', and—Péguy ascribes this to her from the very beginning—acts out of a sense of total solidarity. Behind Joan, 'as her master and model', stands King Louis, saint and ruler, spiritual and earthly crusader, who was again a prototye for the Sire de Joinville in his own life's path as in the chronicle that he wrote to depict the saint. Péguy has now found the geometrical location of his mission: 'In just the same sense Joan of Arc is my model, since I undertook to devote all that belongs distinctively to me to the representation of this great saint. In that respect, Joinville is my master . . . My attitude toward Joan of Arc is in spirit exactly that of Joinville towards St Louis. Everything hinges upon the dependence and loyalty that we have to these great exemplars. Joinville too was a sinner. But that is not in question, that is not the issue. What we look to him for is what he has made of St Louis, what portrait of him he has bequeathed to us, what faithfulness he has preserved in the representation, what degree of certainty, what depths of representation his reproduction has achieved.'[11]

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[9] J 389.

[10] D 158.

The key word 'representation' here combines all its possible meanings: presenting oneself, making onself present—but doing so by making someone else present, the saint who for his part makes present and personifies the people, profane and holy as the people are, and brings them to full reality. At this focal point where the word's meanings intersect we have, as in a flash of lightning, a complete view of Péguy's universe: representation means standing forth on behalf of someone or something, on behalf of others, of all men, so it means solidarity, love as service. And of course, since this is the fundamental definition, it is in principle unlimited. In secular terms, this is where ethics, self-forgetful involvement, belongs, but it is also where aesthetics, the life of genius, belongs. Woe to the genius who is not 'the voice, the expression, the revelation of the whole people!'[12] In spiritual terms, however, it is the holy that again, in its real nature is the life of the Church. Thus, missions and mandates in both areas always have connexions in a vertical direction: the hero's relation to the people, the saint's to the mass of sinners. But if the sinner is at the same time hero or poet, then—like Joinville or Péguy—he can ascend toward the saint in this vertical relation and represent him by depicting him (in his work) and imitating him (in his life). The two are, for Péguy, self-evidently inseparable. But it is not that he, the poet who has been given a mission, portrays in the secular realm what Joan achieved in the spiritual; the decisive thing is that Joan herself does what is spiritual in a worldly fashion. In that respect she is Christ-like, the disciple of Jesus the Jew. Jesus is the fulfiller of the Old Covenant and of the people of the Old Covenant, not their destroyer. At the basis of the Christian demand to take root in the world lies the eternal concern of Israel, obscured by Platonism and rediscovered by Péguy. He completes the circle back to our own point of departure, to Irenaeus.

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[11] B 1023.

[12] D 160.

Ecclesia verus Israel: but Israel is a people, and its solidarity is simply that of a people. The Church is the 'people' of all mankind, and its absolute solidarity is with humanity as a whole. Jesus wants to redeem the world as a whole; he is the Son of Man, and his absolute solidarity is with each person, with the least of the brethren. Only the ideal of total solidarity permits the ideal of the genius and the hero in the secular sphere and of the martyr and the saint in the spiritual. The ideal of solidarity creates an analogy between the two orders (and not that separation that the Protestant Kierkegaard carries through in his book *The Eagle*, the separation between the genius and the apostle). Péguy's central problem is thus laid out before us, the question that illuminates the shape of all his life and work: the problem of the eternal loss of a part of humanity—damnation, Hell. Joan '*est mon seul atout (temporel) dans ce terrible jeu*',[13] and so he can say: '*la damnation est mon seul problème*'. Thus he ties together inseparably both themes, Joan and Hell, from the first of his works onwards. Joan, with her holy obstinacy, must and will force the door that Church tradition since Augustine has closed in what for her and for Péguy seems an incomprehensible resignation. Joan and Péguy do not understand how *charité* can understand itself in any other way than as *solidarité*. This was why the young Péguy rapidly determined to abandon the Church to devote himself to the Socialist (Communist) Party. 'All my colleagues from the *lycée*, whether they became workers with hand or brain, peasants or factory hands, whether or not they became socialists and republicans, all of them alike shook off their Catholicism just as I did.'[14] A religion that has resigned itself to giving up brothers eternally for lost without eternally regretting this has a fundamentally egotistic view of salvation and thus is at bottom utterly bourgeois and capitalistic. It is only logical that the bourgeoisie in modern times should chose this kind of Christianity of *charité—a dole for the socially destitute, the proletarians—and that the people, the working class, should opt out of any involvement in this to choose that is, to preserve—solidarité*, and accordingly to oppose *humilité* with simple *modestie*.[15] If *solidarité* after all demands a higher involvement than bourgeois *charité*, then it is not possible for it to lead into what is only an augmented earthbound egotism of *fécondité* (this point is sharply established in opposition to Zola).[16] Earlier Christianity, whatever its theology might be, 'laid hold on the essential thing; one and the same blood animated the vast body, one and the same thought dominated, one and the same heart beat, in full community, indeed, in a full communism. One breath, one conscience pervaded the whole flesh, and they possessed one and the same eternal character. Today, we pay the same taxes and have the same political representatives. There was more security in the comradeship of any age than in the friendship of today. They did not talk incessantly about solidarity, but they knew what it was.'[17] What prevailed was not today's horizontal 'dust-storm of individuals' but a vertical structure of representation and of rootedness in the life of the people. So it is clear how Péguy could at the same time attack the (Augustinian and Bourgeois) ideal of *charité* and demand the reinstatement of a Christian and organic form of society, and how there could be no possible understanding from the supporters of the Left, any more than with those of the Right, the *Action Français* group. For these, it is a question of forms, but, for Péguy, form grows only out of the depth of the living spirit. They were aesthetes, but Péguy's concern was with a Christian aesthetic that could most easily be attained through a Christian world revolution. The finger directs us inexorably toward one single point: a cosmic harmony dependent upon the definitive abandonment of those beyond salvation means tolerating (as did Augustine and Dante) the *città dolente* within a theological aesthetic and limiting hope in an individualistic fashion *lasciate ogni speranza*; and so also it means finally giving an aesthetic justification of Hell as an accepted fact, just as Augustine does. But that in turn means accepting a general exodus from the Church into the bargain. For Péguy this can never yield a viable aesthetic. Such an aesthetic would, for him, have to stand or fall by the 'principle of hope', which in his earlier period he understands as the 'principle of solidarity'.

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[13] B 675. [14] A 182. [15] A 451, 489.

Thus the shape of his life and his work is marked by an enduring warfare on two fronts: against the clericalist and ecclesiasticist bourgeoisie is set the liberating and broadening prospective of socialism as an effective programme for changing the world (the Old Testament ideal) no less than as total personal solidarity (the Cross of Jesus). And therefore, on the other hand, the deep mysteries of salvation in Christ are set against the narrow-minded philistinism of anticlerical socialism: *solidarité* is most easily achieved if it goes together with the original biblical depths of *charité*. The *Cahiers de la Quinzaine* from 1900 to 1914 carry on this war on two fronts, not indeed in the lonely fashion of the journals of Kierkegaard or Karl Kraus, but, from the very beginning, in solidarity—Péguy with a group of friends and fellow workers of the most diverse tendencies seeking to act as a leaven and a magnet. Christians are reminded that they cannot shrug off their responsibilities with a few charitable works. 'The alarm has been well and truly sounded on the subject of a certain kind of intellectual modernism that hardly attains the measure of a major heresy but is only a sort of witness to the poverty of the modern intelligence. Infinitely more serious is the modernism of the heart; Christianity is no longer socially an underground religion, a religion of the people, a temporal and eternal people, a religion rooted in the deepest foundations of temporality, but a pathetic kind of "better" religion for people who are supposed to have "bettered themselves" .... But it will not win back the centres of labour if it is not prepared to bear the cost of an economic, social and industrial revolution—in short, an earthly revolution for the sake of eternal salvation'.[18] What is said to the socialists is just the opposite: the earthly revolution is made for the sake of the freedom of the person. This freedom, which Péguy demands as a primary condition,[19] immediately collides with the interests of the party politician. More and more, he exposes such men as concerned only with power, betrayers of the spirit and the person; their anti-Christianity is nothing but a new and more insubstantial counter-Church,[20] their atheism a new mythology with massively unexamined metaphysical assumptions,[21] their free thinking a new variety of clericalism.[22] Péguy's first creative period (1900–1905) is taken up in this struggle against the dragon of socialist pseudoreligion that had sunk to a position well beneath authentic Christianity rather than itself surmounting it. 'There is nothing to be compared with a total life such as Christian and above all Catholic life was other than a new totality of life, a total revolution—that is, a deeper grounding; *res nova*, the Latins said, *vita nova* we shall say, for a revolution consists essentially in a deeper entrenchment in the unexhausted resources, the wellsprings of the inner life. And therefore the great figures in revolutionary action are men whose greatness lies in their inner life: meditative and contemplative men; it is not the men of external concerns who make revolutions, but the men who live an interior life.'[23]

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[16] A 548.

[17] D 109–110.

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[18] B 592–595.

[19] A 1112; B 10; B 61.

[20] B 810.

These deeper sources are in fact nothing other than early Christian ideas; the breach with the Church for the sake of solidarity must be followed by a second breach with shallow political socialism. But woe to the man who makes a break twice in his life. It is only this 'second wind of courage'[25] that makes him absolutely alone, isolated; it gives him authority as a witness to truth and makes him an exile from any party. Neither his first nor his second group of friends will forgive him this 'second leap'.[25] He experiences the 'modern social and secularized version of Hell'; the 'scientific methods of contemporary ostracism, total boycott'.[26] For the sake of his campaign for the truth, Péguy travels this path of suffering to the ultimate degree of privation for himself and his family. Betrayed by his comrades,[27] he defends his work to the last breath, the work that appeared to him 'the most important of undertakings',[28] the one solitary sanctuary of absolute truth and freedom,[29] '*la misérable petite boutique essentielle des Cahiers*',[30] which at least had stood for '*un certain noyau de résistance*.'[31] In his darkest hours, he cannot avoid the realisation of his 'wretched situation' between the times, in a sterile present that is only a period, not an epoch,[32] and can only admit the shame of his total defeat. 'We have been conquered. There is a secret gnawing certainty that tells us that in success there is always a residue of impurity, in victory always a residue of coarseness, . . . that there is and can be complete purity only in misfortune, and that therefore historically the great and secret honour and glory are always the lot of the fallen.'[33] But it could also be that this secret glory remains completely invisible in worldly terms, that a deed of the highest courage may be entirely wasted. Clio does not concern herself with the vanquished, and if they appeal to history for vindication—as to the juster judgment of later generations—these naive folk do not realize how powerless Clio is.[34] She is concerned with results;[35] and so she can 'never do more than bring to light the suns that have set'.[36]

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[21] A 1072–1073.

[22] A 1297.

[23] A 1388.

[24] A 1017.

[25] A 1022.

[26] A 1024–1026.

[27] A 458; B 56.

[28] B 6.

[29] A 468.

[30] S 318.

[31] B 61.

The second period (1905–1909) is marked by a retreat from direct involvement in the times, a distancing, in order to get a general view of the period itself, the event of the present. Péguy's youth drew its finest inspirations from a threefold, through still unified, taproot: Antiquity (the natural piety of the pre-Christian era), Christianity and national history that for Péguy flowed in an organic stream from the Middle Ages up to and including the French Revolution. In 1880 occurs the first catastrophic interruption: the three sister worlds sunk down together to yield to the *monde moderne*, the rising tide of the post-Christian era. Its characteristics are these: a view of man as a mere calculating intellect, Kantian formalism, Hegelian systematising, the ant-like labours of German philology, psychology and sociology in place of philosophy, the loss of relationship with God, the loss of all real nourishing roots, the quantifying of all value, the triumph of mathematics and technology all along the line, the shallow optimistic ideology of progress, and money as the only real force in the world. Péguy's great analyses of contemporary nonculture, analyses related in many ways to those of Nietzsche, Bloy and Chesterton, are the warning cries of a Cassandra faced by the threat of total loss. How restricted on earth are the zones of true culture and authentic humanity![37] And these small islands are capable of being swamped, really and irrevocably;[38] as of old, the barbarian stands at the door once again, more terrible than ever.[39] From the time of the Tangier episode of 1905, Péguy knew with absolute certainty that war was unavoidably drawing near;[40] resisting all pacifist and internationalist illusionism, he steered himself and held himself constantly ready, in the utmost of alertness and tension, for battle and death.[41] He fell in the first days of the World War in an attack, shot through the heart.

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[32] B 508–509, 511.

[33] B 36–37.

[34] B 19; B 207–214.

[35] B 19–28.

[36] B 35.

One great name besides those of the detested lesser idols of the contemporary Sorbonne—Lavisse, Lanson, Durkheim—dominates Péguy's critique of the age: that of Renan. The embodiment of apostasy,[42] elevated by the contemporary anti-Church to be its official symbol (with the dedication of his monúment in Tréguier),[43] surrounded by an atmosphere of elusive and unreal melancholy,[44] but the father of modern insubstantiality,[45] spiritually speaking he can generate afresh apostates who are loyal to him only because they are disloyal to him.[46] The basic textbook of the modern world for Péguy is Renan's *L'avenir de la science* (written in 1848), which dreams of the absolute progress of man and builds up the atheistic hope of a human collectivity higher and higher in an asymptotic approach to the divine consciousness by way of general cosmic evolution and the totally comprehensive sciences of the world and of human history. Much in Péguy's astonishing and lengthy quotations from Renan sounds like an anticipation of Teilhard de Chardin; no doubt Péguy would have felt the same metphysical horror at the latter's work.[47]

Although this critique of culture was continued until the last years of his life, Péguy had resolved in 1909, after along pause due to exhaustion, to devote his remaining powers to constructive work. He knew perfectly well that the modern world had not begun over night, that the spiritual apostasy of Christians had brought it slowly and unavoidably into being,[48] but also that a *ressourcement*, a plunging back into the wellsprings of primitive Christianity, was more important than any accusations. He reworked his socialist drama of Joan of Arc into a contemplative mystery play (the first part of which appeared in 1909)—the problematic issue of solidarity and damnation are not in the least muted as a result; rather they receive a far more truly Christian response and *approfondissement*. In all, some fifteen such 'mysteries' were projected, all of them circling more or less closely about the ideal figure of Joan, but only two were completed: the one on hope (1911), and the on on the holy innocents (1912). But from Joan the view leads on to the broadest Christian horizon. In *Eve* the whole of salvation history is unfolded: Jesus, grace, the new covenant are here in dialogue with the first mother of mankind, the origin of the Old Covenant: the relation of *enracinement* in the world on the part of God is here understood as belonging to the original source of the Incarnation. In the great poems on Chartres (*La tapisserie de Notre Dame*) the interpenetration of spirit and flesh is celebrated in its final simplified manifestation in the realised symbol of Mary.

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[37] D 24–25.

[38] D 36–38; A 927–928, 932–934, 939.

[39] A 736–737.

[40] A 811, 849–853; D 52–55.

[41] A 1251–1253.

[42] A 1016–1017.

[43] A 1031f., 1044–1047.

[44] A 1004.

[45] S 157–174.

[46] A 1051.

[47] A 700–740.

During his period outside the Church, Péguy had married the sister of Marcel Baudouin, a friend of his youth who met an early death; she bore him four children. But the marriage was ill-starred; it was solemnised in a civil ceremony, and Péguy's wife resisted the idea of a Church wedding up to the time of his death. Péguy did not want to put pressure on her in this respect, and so he too abstained from the sacraments after his return to the Church, and his children remained unbaptized (after his death, his wife converted to the Church, and the children were baptized). No resentment on this score embittered the lonely Péguy. He always mentions prayer and sacrament in the same breath,[49] and against a one-sided clericalist overvaluation of the sacraments, he simply makes the point that prayer 'is at least the half of it'.[50] His sacramental theology is distinguished by a deep sense for what is proper for the life of the Church; he stresses the distinct character of each one. The Eucharist and confession he puts in the foreground as the sacraments of life, seeing in the other five nonrepeatable acts of consecration (to life and death) and of the sanctifying of particular states of life.[51] His desire is to have a 'sacramental heart'. He aims to demonstrate the 'indelible' nature of Christianity by appeal to the indelible character of some of the sacraments.[53]

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[48] On this, see especially the analysis of the epochs of Philip the Fair, and of Mazarin and Richelieu, D 112–116, B 1376–1378, the treatment of the philosophy of the Enlightenment, D 116f., the evaluation of the French Revolution as an attempt to restore a primitive and natural ethic, A 1377–1378 and elsewhere, the judgments on Michelet, D 133, 190f., A 278–279, and on the history of the 19th century, D 127–132, B 520–522.

In 1910 Péguy lost his heart to a Jewish girl. It was a great and painful love, an experience that shook him to the core. But the demand for purity in his life preserved him from any ambiguity, any aesthetic transfiguration of earthly Eros. He gave up any claim on the girl and led her to marry someone else. 'I worked uninterruptedly so as to bring myself to my senses. Rather be a little unwell from overwork than endanger my mission because of an aberration of the heart. True Christian resignation is no apathetic affair; it is the extremity of being torn apart.'[53] He calmed himself in Chartres before the Mother of the Lord:

Et pour bien nous placer dans l'axe de détresse,
Et par ce besoin d'être plus malheureux,
Et d'aller au plus dur et de souffrif plus creux
Et de prendre le mal dans sa plein justesse
Par ce vieus tour de main, par cette même adresse,
Qui ne servira plus à courir le bonheur
Puissons-nous, ô régente, au moins tenir l'honneur,
Et lui garder lui seul notre pauvre tendresse.[55]

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[49] B 259; B 1187, 1235.
[50] L 138.
[51] B 431–436.
[52] Missing Copy?
[53] B 431.
[54] Letter to Mme Favre, 4 Sept. 1910.
[55] *Prière de Confidence*, C 698.

All this is no less important for the understanding of Péguy's theological aesthetic than Kierkgaard's broken relationship with Regine Olsen, or Dante's relationship with Beatrice or Claudel's with his Polish sweetheart, the original for Dõna Prouhèze. But here there is neither a theological transfiguration of Eros nor a flight from it, but a lacerating faithfulness to an indissoluble marriage without any kind of transfiguration. *Axe de détresse* rhyms with *pleine justesse*, but also with *pauvre tendresse*. It is precisely these freely sought hardships and an entirely un-Kantian disregard for his own predilections, his own tender feelings, that brought to Péguy the grace to penetrate more deeply than any other Christian poet into the secrets of the tenderness of God's heart, which is more deeply within the heart of man than the heart of man itself and is, most purely and simply, Agape. A man humbled in every way has been granted the privilege of uttering words, beyond all the fluency of theology to date, spoken as from the centre of God's fatherly heart, that reveal the glory of the *kenosis*.

2. PROPHECY AND THE TRUE ISRAEL

Péguy's destiny and his thought are indissolubly bound to Israel. Two major encounters made a decisive impression upon him at the outset of his career: the Dreyfus Affair and the philosophy of Bergson. Together they furnished him with his determinative pair of categories (comparable to Kierkegaard's pair of 'aesthetic' and 'ethical' but entirely opposed to it): *mystique* and *politique*. '*Tout commence en mystique et finit en politique*':[56] everything begins in an original intuition and a truth lived out and ends in its subordination to other ends and so in untruth. So one might paraphrase and elucidate the basis meaning of these two basic concepts (awkwardly chosen, perhaps, and not fully corresponding to Péguy's ultimate inclinations). 'The founders come first. Then come those who exploit their work'.[57] For Péguy, involvement in the Dreyfus business was a holy, almost sacramental symbol of ethical purity and integrity; but it is precisely a symbol that develops itself in the public arena of the *polis*, the state. The adoption of Bergson's governing idea presses him into direct intuitive contact with reality, beyond all the conceptualisations of scholasticism, dialects or the 'exact sciences' of the modern world, toward a contact that is directly revelatory and of binding force.

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[56] B 516.

[57] B 619.

It is clear from the convergence of these two influences that Péguy was working his way toward the Jewish prophetic tradition, which emerges clearly in the third decisive figure, that of Bernard-Lazare. In this atheist, 'overflowing with the Word of God',[58] Péguy saw 'the secret friend, the hidden inspirer, I might gladly and quite rightly say the patron of the *Cahiers*',[59] precisely because he was 'the prophet and interior master' for God's renewed testing of Israel,[60] which had experienced its usual fate in the political mishandling of the Affair. 'The complete misunderstanding, the disappearance from view, the isolation, neglect and contempt into which it was allowed to fall, or made to fall, or by which it was allowed to go to its ruin. Or abandoned to its death. The misunderstanding of the prophets by Israel, and yet the leading of Israel by the prophets: that is the whole history of Israel.' Péguy adds (drawing on Pascal): 'The misunderstanding of the prophets by Israel is a figure of the misunderstanding of the saints by the sinful.'[61] Bernard-Lazare first taught Péguy the old Jewish virtue of 'gentleness, goodness, mystical tenderness, even-temperedness, experience of bitterness and ingratitude, perfect assimilation of bitterness and ingratitude',[62] and then also the 'eternal trembling and resonance' with inner events, the concord that gives to the critical judgment a keenness that cannot be deflected, an essential 'exiledness' that is half essential terror, half essential courage. It is this that characterises the situation of all Israel and again and again thrusts it against its will into a dreaded and unwanted heroism. This mortally sick man whose last remaining friend Péguy was, showed him the present age in its true colours; 'he was, like all authentic prophets, a prophet of disaster, at least of temporal disaster',[63] well versed in temporal affairs precisely because he knew the real distinction between the eternal and the temporal and the character of their interrelation.[64] This gave him an 'elemental freedom, primordial freedom'[65] and thus a distanced perspective to see even the greatest historical systems—Judaism, Christianity, Islam, et cetera—from outside in an 'international perspective', a distance 'that none of us has attained'.[66] In his fragment of a portrait of his friend, Péguy relates the whole matter in Bersonian categories: the springs of historical events lie far deeper than the level allotted them by the judgments and evaluations of scientific history. This method will and must always control its material by making evaluations of a juridical and political nature. But only the prophetic vision (which Péguy allows to Michelet as well)[67] can 'accompany in everlasting movement the everlasting movements of everlasting spiritual reality'.[68]

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[58] B 572.

[59] Rolland, *Péguy* I 77.

[60] B 549. 'One of the greatest prophets of Israel', B 14.

[61] B 551.

[62] B 552.

Alred Dreyfus, a general staff officer of Jewish extraction, was convicted in 1894 of espionage; Colonel Picard, convinced of Dreyfus's innocence, was exiled; after Bernard-Lazare, Clémenceau and Zola took up the battle on behalf of the innocent man. The real culprit, Major Esterhazy, a proficient confidence trickster, was expelled from the army in 1898, but only on the grounds of other crimes. In 1899, the sentence of 1894 was commuted: Dreyfus was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in consideration of mitigating circumstances, and a week later he was pardoned. The Parliament determined to resist any further reconsideration of the trial. Dreyfus's innocence was never fully recognised. 'What matters is that a statement of plain justice has never been accepted in this matter. It means that no court of law in the France of the Third Republic possessed sufficient authority actually to administer justice'.[69] Even when Clémenceau came to power, he could not risk a legal confirmation of Dreyfus's proven innocence. Péguy gave his loyalty to this reluctant hero to the last the Affair, which was soon hushed up and petered out, not least because the hero himself 'betrayed his own renown',[70] remained for Péguy what it truly was; the concrete symbol of injustice in the world, the *politique* that betrays *mystique*, the textbook case of how a people, a state, can 'sell its good faith and lose its soul',[71] 'fall into a state of mortal sin' and 'gamble away its eternal salvation'.[72] Theologians of a juridical cast of mind may treat sin as a 'finite, limited act'; but in doing so they fail to see how guilt can become, for an individual as for a nation, an atmosphere, an all enveloping reality.[73] Péguy investigated this condition more extensively in his analysis of the 'modern world', a condition that, in the hollow life of the intelligentsia, 'becomes a lasting state of sin, and even—quite evidently—because of the gravity of its matter a material state of mortal sin, in which the evil intention is only formally absent'.[74] The illusionism of scientific activity is shown up in the Judaeo-Christian light of the Sermon on the Mount: 'Whoever is unfaithful in spirit has already committed adultery in his heart. Any unfaithfulness in respect of reality itself is, almost before it has been entertained (and such entertaining is always the beginning of its realisation), for us something of infinite and eternal import'.[75]

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[63] B 15.

[64] B 570.

[65] B 587.

[66] B 598–590.

[67] A 278f.

[68] D 235.

[69] Hannah Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft* [*The Origins of Totalitarianism*] 1955, 155.

The Jew is condemned, willy-nilly, to reality. Although no hero by nature, he must play the hero and martyr on the stage of world history. 'Whoever is marked down must march. Whoever is called must answer. He is appointed to be a public person.'[76] It is true of Dreyfus, as it is of Israel; Israel's history is in its depths the same as that of the Christian world. Jews, like Christians, naturally have 'a fear of violent assault, a fear of *affaires*, a fear of their own greatness', and thus always use *politique* against their own *mystique*. The Jewish Dreyfus party demonstrated this with sufficient clarity: 'They could think of nothing but sacrificing Dreyfus to still the storm.'[77] Jews are indeed possessed of 'a good memory, fifty centuries of wounds and scars, of neurasthenia. They were so frequently whipping boys for the whole world, for ourselves. Israel's *politique* consists essentially in never making a fuss. But Israel's *mystique* consists essentially in Israel's pursuing in the world its painful mission, which resounds to the furthest corners of the earth. It is the prophetic race. It is as a whole, in one single body, a single prophet.'[78] It lives as a people *à l'intersection* and is left there doubly defenceless. '*Ils subissent ensemble l'inquiétude verticale et 'inquiétude horizontale . . . verticale de la race, . . . horizontale de l'âge, du temps.*'[79] Here one can recognise the hidden kinship with Joan's mission, who likewise lived at this point of intersection: '*Elle est à un point d' intersection unique dans l'histoire de l'humanité*', she lives 'in the deep eternal contradiction between the temporal and the eternal'.[80] But Joan's point of intersection is, on the level of her unique mission, the same place as that in which the everyday Christian in the world has to live; 'he has the experience of touching the very point of articulation, the point of intuitive penetration' reciprocally between time and eternity.[81]

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[70] B 637.

[71] B 524–525.

[72] B 643, 646.

[73] B 820–822.

[74] S 211.

[75] S 219.

[76] B 637–638.

[77] B 545–546.

So it may be that when Christians evade the pain of this 'intersection' and take refuge in the spiritual, the Jews are brought in to remind them of their mission. 'If God in his Church were to receive a full measure of service (he is served there with punctiliousness, but with such a meagre punctiliousness), then perhaps he would not need to recall, when he wished to bestow some great grace in the life of intellect and reflection, that he still has the people of his original servants at his disposal.'[82] For Péguy the Old Covenant is not simply persuaded, all the less so because he sees its relation to the new as very close to the relation between nature and supernature. Christianity eternally rests upon the foundation of the ancient world as on the foundation of Israel, and thus

> the perspectives of the first law can in no case be surrendered. Jesus came to bring us a second law. He came to crown the order of nature by the order of grace, but not by means of the devaluation of the natural order. He would be wrongly understood and wrongly served if people sought to establish his

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[78] B 546–547.
[79] B 1017.
[80] B 627.
[81] B 1246.
[82] B 1355.

> kingdom on the destruction of the primary foundations. Creation was the preparation for salvation; the Fall required the atonement. The mystery of the first and of the second convenants, the mystery of God the Father and the mystery of God the Son, are in direct interplay as the two essential elements in the mechanism of our salvation. Any disposition of the spirit that tended to lose sight either of nature or of grace, of the first law or the second, God the Father or God the Son, would by a symptom of some profound loss of balance. One may search the gospel in vain for any trace of contempt: all there is love (and nothing is more opposed to contempt). The terrifying wrath that flows beneath the surface of the Gospels is not wrath against nature or against man confronted by grace, but wrath directed only against wealth. But wealth, the axis on which the modern world turns, is no less opposed to nature than it is to grace.[83]

The fact that Jesus was a Jew, in solidarity with his people and their destiny, remained for Péguy the starting point for the attainment of a right balance between *spirituel* and *charnel* (or temporel).[84] God does not come into flesh, into historicity, simple to turn away from the world. Péguy reproached the clergy and the monks for having upset the balance in favour of the spiritual, leaving behind the concerns of Israel instead of bringing them to fulfilment. As a disciple of Pascal, he was well aware that Israel is a figure—'*la figuration est un des mécanismes essentiels du sacré*'[85]—but a figure that in Jesus is filled out and perfected.

> Jesus came as a creative personality in order to save the whole world. He was neither a 'secular' nor a 'regular'. That is to say, he was neither exclusively. He was not exclusively and strictly secular, nor exclusively and strictly regular. You could well say that the question did not arise. He was simultaneously and truly worldly and spiritual, both together without separation or any possibility of separation. He was what we have ever since (after their separation from one another) called the secular and monastic Christian, both together in unity. Nevertheless, the original Christian enterprise was one that entered into the world, not one that retreated from it. Worldly existence is evidently the

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[83] L 186–187.

[84] J 68–70.

[85] B 792; *cf.* B 551.

> object; the norm (or that which has since become a norm) was that from which nourishment was drawn.

'Spirit' in ancient culture was certainly no more than it was in Israel; it was a source of nourishment, a force for the transformation, a distanced cast of mind, simply 'registering' its view of the world.[86] Thus Joan of Arc serves as a representation of Jesus and thus too as a representative of Israel.

Right up to the end, Péguy continued in persistent dialogue with Israel. Even in his last work, the *Note conjointe*, he extended his discussion with the Jew Benda (an anti-Bergsonian) about Bergson and gave it an eternal dimension. Here it is the ancient people (who in their experience of suffering, their endurance and rejection, and with their Scriptures and their culture are so much ahead of the younger people, who still persist in their rebellion against the order of this world) whose voices are heard urging their own concerns and carrying the day.[87] Many Jews, in more or less close association, were companions in Péguy's destiny. These included Albert Lévy, librarian at the Sorbonne, who had made the pilgrimage to Domrémy and Caucouleurs with Péguy; Jules Isaac, who followed and defended the path Péguy had taken, and Pierre-Marcel Lévy; the poet André Spire; Gaston Raphael; Julien Benda; Eddy Marix, to whom the book on hope is dedicated; Daniel Halévy, with whom Péguy had a vigourous dialogue in *Notre jeunesse* about the ***mystique*** of Dreyfus—a contest, with no holds barred, about friendship and mission—and who dedicated a report to him; and Edmond Fleg. The *Cahiers* constantly carried information on the situation of the Jewish community in the world at large; and articles by Aaron (Delahache), and the long short story *Chad Gadya* by Zangwill (with a long introduction by Péguy) were also given space. The great love of Péguy's life was a Jew; and Pauline Benda (Mme Simone) was a confidante of his.[88]

Over and above all these, Bergson remains the spiritually decisive figure, the Bergson who in those initial years of his career was not yet unequivocally clear in his teaching; he is the great source of stimulation, from whom a variety of pathways branch off in diverse directions. One line of development led directly from the *Evolution Créatrice*, with its evolutionary optimism (in which life finally attains to spirit), to Teilhard de Chardin; another was seized on by the neo-Thomists and employed in bringing Aquinas to life (Maritain, Sertillanges and the school of Maréchal, which on this point was also fertilised by the influence of Blondel, and which has had so powerful an effect in Germany as well). Péguy, however was not interested in a Bergson interpreted in these ways: his reality is the historical existence of humanity withits deeply-rooted decisions, and for him the revered master is a religious thinker standing between Judaism and Christianity. And Bergson, who once said of Péguy to Tharaud, 'He has come to know my most secret thoughts as I have never expressed them myself but as I would have wanted to express them'—Bergson in his own development, perhaps not without some covert influence from Péguy, was to vindicate this statement, setting the concept of incarnation at the heart of everything, from the ethical as well as the aesthetic point of view.[89] What Péguy demanded—and took over—from Bergson was his vision of reality, which is unjustly 'thought of as agnostic, domineering and superhuman, as opposed to the discursive method, which is thought of as scientific, human, modest, clear and distinct'. The exact opposite is true.[90] The desire to capture reality and to offer an exhaustive representation of it by means of an infinite discursive process is the real 'titanism', the graspong of modern science after equality with God;[91] but reality is inexhaustible, the more so the better one comes to know it.[92] The courage to engage with reality directly and without defence is in fact humility; this alone gives promise of success. Bergson's abiding merit is to have shown this simple and direct relation to reality (which

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[86] B 367–368.

[87] B 1311–1321.

[88] Jules Isaac, 'Les amitiés juives de Péguy', in *Expériences de ma Vie* I (1959), 304–311; Mme Simone, *Sous de nouveaux soleils* (1957); Rabinovich, 'Péguy, témoignage d'un juif', (*Esprit*, June 1939).

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[89] E. Mounier, 'Bergson et Péguy'. A. Béguin, 'Note conjointe sur Bergson et Péguy', both in A. Béguin and P. Thévenaz, *Bergson. Essaïs et Témoignages* (1941), 319–335; André Henry, *Bergson, Maître de Péguy* (1948).

[90] A 699.

[91] A 1083; B 95, 324–329, 811; S 203.

[92] B 34; A 736.

Husserl again was to call for and to work through in his own fashion) as the pristine impulse in all the sciences. So 'in scientific work itself, in scientific discovery and development, the methods of art, the insights, intuitions and flexible responses of art, the inventive dimension of art' are at work.[93] Modern systematic thought, 'in its foolish arrogance' wants to omit nothing from its purview, and it believes that in this way it will avoid the need for decision and the choice of one thing rather than another. But 'it has nonetheless made a choice, against its will, in this attitude—a choice in favour of extinction'.[94] The correct choice, the free choice is the basis of intuition—indeed, it is one and the same thing as intuition: 'Choosing is an artistic medium. Choosing means to take the shorter way. And how shall one choose among the inexhaustible immensities of reality without a definite intuition, a definite and direct grasp, a definite interior grip on reality?' Anyone who creates, in however modest a way, who selects, leaves things out, has preferences, is behaving as an artist.[95]

This is the point at which the 'ethical' and the 'aesthetic' coincide for Péguy. The prophetic books of Israel bear witness to their identity, bear witness all the more clearly because the ethical dimension in the prophets always makes its appearance as the temporal and social and demands not only the interior, spiritual decision of faith, but also an exterior, national and often enough, genuinely political decision. It is to promote such a decision that the Word of the Lord is given, removing all illusions and yet laying claim to nothing less than the height of poetic utterance. By analogy with this, all the great poetry of the ancient world has a sacral character; but in Israel there is a complete absence of any kind of mythological fog, and the precision of God's pronouncement in the situation of decision becomes one with the potential precision of the human being as he makes a determinative decision for himself and thus becomes one with the immanent condition of the world itself. André Rousseaux recognised that this was the theme closest to Péguy's heart, rightly entitling his three-volume study, *Le prophète*

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[93] B 809.

[94] A 774.

[95] A 739.

Péguy. Prophecy here, of course, does not mean foretelling the future but knowing what God's righteousness demands in any particular instant; knowing how, from the standpoint of God, to assign to things and to human beings, to events and their configurations, their place in the overall pattern. The tangled threads of time are unravelled, and 'the system, as our geographers call it, is laid bare.[96] But one cannot wish to play the role of the conscience of the age' without being oneself involved centrally in it. Péguy founded a 'truthful review', *un journal vrai*,[97] in which he repeatedly heard the confessions, as it were, of France and of the modern world. And this he could do only in so far as he himself constantly 'confessed' before the general public, in so far as he was himself crystal clear and transparent. He understood that this was also the principle of Christian sanctity (and consequently of canonisation): however deeply the interior and hidden contemplative life may reach into God, 'the Christian of the early centuries was nonetheless always prepared for, always submissive to the discipline of public confession, a communal and, as it were, mutual confession. The ancient principle of public confession undergirds all Christian living.'[98] This openness, this complete externalising, opens one's eyes to the signs of the times and one's ears to the promptings of the Spirit: '*Des sourds avertissements profonds intérieurs, des pentes intérieures, de ces admonitions sévères et justes.*'[99]

It is perfectly clear that religious and poetic inspiration have their common roots here and stand in an interior relationship and analogy to each other so long as the poet is someone who tells a story for the whole nation, not a private aesthete, whose inspiration can have no deep roots because it cannot bear any ethical weight, and whose work will therefore never be truly influential in history. Péguy directs his polemical shafts against Laudet, who had claimed with regard to Joan that 'all visions are projections': 'By no means; they are communications, occasions of communion, occurrences of direct possession. Because of this and in respect of this they are visions. The other ways in which

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[96] A 1027.

[97] A 96, 97, 99, 131, 444–446, 482, 742. *Cf.* Rolland, *Péguy* I 85.

[98] B 875.

[99] B 674.

God speaks with his creation and which amount to something less than visions, these are in greater or lesser measure projections.'[100] Beauty is found only in the exact self-presentation of what emerges from the accuracy of the innermost vision. 'After all, we are forty years old. We know what life is. It no longer satisfies us if we find a marble that is without blemish. We want to know whether the organic construction beneath the harmonious and incomparable folding of the rock is correct, whether indeed there is such a construction at all, whether being itself is correct, organised, organic.'[101]

The word that recurs again and again is *exact*. In his earlier, non-Christian days, Péguy wrote to a religious with whom he had become friendly and with whom he wanted to maintain his friendship: 'That an exact-minded humanist can keep up an exact-minded friendship with an exact-minded Catholic may turn out to be something indispensable for an honest clarification of our most important common origins.'[102] In a splendid fragment, he compares ancient culture to a great trireme: 'A miracle of exactitude, born of an exact people, with the perfect accuracy of its curves, a work of unadorned sincerity, which is still subtle, inventive πολύμητῖ'[103]—'perfect exactitude in the curvature of the flanks. And one should not even say "perfect". The word is a pleonasm.'[104] 'But the ἀκρίβεια of the Greeks has been wrecked, the delicate exactitude of the Greeks has sunk beneath the waves.'[105] After haunting Western humanism like a ghost ship, it has at last given way to the rigidity of mathematics, which arrogates to itself a monopoly of exactitude, 'confusing, as it does so, the abstract and the scientific'.[106] 'And now they talk indefatigably, inexorably, imperturbably, about exactitude!'[107] In his *Polyeucte* (which Péguy considered the supreme artistic achievement of French literature), Corneille had established a certain equilibrium in the relations between the ancient and the Christian worlds, between the pagan wisdom of the judge Sévère and the Christian wisdom of the martyr Polyeucte, a balance that brings the ethical and the aesthetic into thoroughgoing correspondence and thus realises the concept of the classical. 'What constitutes the sublimity of the prayer [of Polyeucte for his wife, who is still pagan], what gives him his detachment and, at the same time, his exactitude, his strong, hard exactitude', is that it is first and foremost the completely human, incarnate prayer of an individual; but then, more deeply, it is that, in the situation of martyrdom, it is 'a secret, humble, Christian anticipation of the heavenly authority soon to be his. It is this that gives his prayer fulness, preeminent authority and complete exactitude.' It is an earthly prayer, and it is primarily 'a prayer of the whole Church triumphant that prays for the whole Church militant'.[108] 'The depths of the eternal aesthetic' are, so to speak, incarnated in the most transparent of earthly situations.[109] It is tempting to think back to Augustine's doctrine of number, in which numbers are transformed analogically into the realms of spirit and grace; or, again, to hark back to Pascal, in whom the same analogy of exactitude is repeated, this time in the leap forward from one level of order to the next. All true art is either classical or is not art at all—any other concept of the classical would be no more than Alexandrine.[110] The exact, the classical, is that which is correctly placed in relation to an 'axis'—that is indeed itself an axis and thus is the deeper point of illumination on the far side of phenomenal objects. The word *axis* appears everywhere. Genius, for instance, lays its span of life 'precisely along the axis of an age'.[111] That Christ came to save the world as a whole is 'the axis of Christianity'.[112] And within Christianity there is 'an axial, central level on which saints and sinners meet; around this axis they oscillate, forming in common an indissoluble system'.[113] And again, it is something 'at the axis and heart of Christianity' that looks for eternal salvation in the pursuit of temporal salvation.[114] Formally, the axis is the place of *justesse*; materially, it is the place where Heaven and earth, time and eternity, flesh and spirit, contemplation and action, grace and

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[100] B 920.

[101] B 783–784.

[102] L 45.

[103] S 274–275.

[104] S 284.

[105] S 288.

[106] B 814.

[107] B 816.

[108] B 795–796.
[109] B 833.
[110] B 832–833.
[111] B 303.
[112] B 398.
[113] B 400.
[114] B 645–646.

achievement penetrate each other—not as two factors external to each other, but as realities that internally require and condition each other. This axial point is never attainable in terms of a synthesis, by way of a process of thinking, but only as the decisive involvement of a whole life. German idealism, and then, in Péguy's lifetime, the Sorbonne, imagined that Christianity could be decisively dealt with by some such systematic process. But just as the prophets resisted any synthesis between Yahweh and Moloch or Astarte, so Péguy resisted this modern amalgam. If one is a Christian by the decision of faith, then, to be sure, the ethical dimension brings the aesthetic with it; the latter does not remain as an indeterminate or supradeterminate neutral area over and above the basic decision about one's life. It is impossible to enjoy Christian truth, the Christian form of life, Christian liturgy or poetry in an aesthetic way and to defend them as culturally valuable (like the supporters of *Action Française*), without deciding for faith and discipleship. 'There are Christians for whom the Joan of Arc of M. Anatole France means next to nothing (and is certainly incomparably more dangerous than a mere nothing), and there are non-Christians for whom the Joan of Arc of M. Anatole France means everything.'[115] It is the eyes of faith that see the beauty of faith and the vacuity of its seductively dazzling opposite. These beauties are shut off from those who do not have the eyes of faith; in their existential depths they own a different aesthetic.

And yet, Péguy had set out by assuming the union of all who truly act in good will, be they Jews, pagans or Christians, and his concern was for the transformation of reality. Because Christian action failed, he appealed to socialist action. He was convinced, and he remained convinced throughout his life, that anyone who commits himself totally will find his way through the entanglements of all systems to the ground of reality. 'Let us study the book of reality, one of the rare books in France that are not written in German!'[116] What he valued in Descartes was 'that he deliberately pursued his thinking as if it were action itself. But the goal of his resolve was no less theoretical than ethical'.[117] In contrast, he refused to allow the validity of the basic axiom in Kant, the idea that the maxim of every action should be capable of universal legislative force. 'We have other and infinitely deeper concerns. How many of our acts would be incapable of ever being elevated into general rules—and these are precisely such acts as are most valuable in our minds; acts done with trembling, with feverish shudderings of emotion, completely un-Kantian, acts done in mortal anxiety, perhaps our only good acts, by no means full of self-confidence, in no way without remorse, in no way securely guaranteed; but always challenged, always accompanied by the interior gnawings of conscience, our only good deeds, or just our least evil ones, perhaps the only ones that will count toward our salvation.'[118] They are the enterprises of our own selfhood, by which we alter both ourselves and something of a genuine reality as well.

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[115] B 960.

[116] D 41.

To do this rightly is what the prophet seeks and requires from us, and what art, in its way, seeks from us, like the headless, eyeless archaic torso of Apollo in Rilke's words: '*Denn da ist keine Stelle, die dich nicht sieht. Du mußt dein Leben ändern.*' [For there is no place where you are unobserved. You must change your life.'][119] Thus the problem of analogy, central for Péguy, arises again in connection with inspiration. Artistic inspiration too is directed toward incarnation: spirit becomes flesh. The idea that the great art of classical Antiquity has significance in relation to Christ as part of the Advent hope; that, despite its opposition to Christian faith, or rather precisely *because* of the opposition, it is engaged in the most lively dialogue with it—this is not for a moment in question so far as Péguy is concerned: it can simply be read off from the facts. But there can also be the post-Christian phenomenon of what might be called naive paganism, without any interior relation, either positive or negative, to the Christian reality; and yet even there the incarnational tendency can, astonishingly, be clearly discerned. In this connection, Péguy was throughout his life preoccupied by the figure of Victor Hugo (Balzac he never touches upon)—

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[117] B 1281.

[118] B 825–826.

[119] *Sämtliche Werke* I (1955) 557.

Hugo, whose personal as well as poetic ambiguity he knows accurately enough and illuminates in a very humorous style;[120] and yet 'any weakness seemed to him preferable to the curse of barrenness. And who knows whether the waters that look so brackish and dirty to us from the bank were not just as precious to him, the parent stream?'[121] Occasionally he had what Péguy prized above all else: 'Eyes that saw the world as it was on the first day of creation. One thing that that man possessed was a fair share of Θαυμάζειν—triumphant mornings, the breaking of unbelievably glorious dawns. He could boast of having got himself a real pair of spectacles!'[122] Boaz lies sleeping in the harvest field, a slender crescent moon above him, and Ruth catches sight of it and wonders, 'What god, what reaper of the eternal summer has left this golden sickle so carelessly by the wayside in the cornfield of the stars:' Boaz dreams of an oak tree growing up out of his body as far as the blue heavens: '*Une race y montait comme une longue chaine. Un roi chantait en bas, en haut mourait un Dieu.*'[123] There is an atmosphere of primordial, chthonic time, 'where man the nomad wanders restlessly over the earth, an earth still damp and soft from the waters of the flood, soft enough to show the tracks of the giants' and a primordial pagan vision of all things bearing fruit on this earth, of the commingling of man and woman, and the heavenly fields of harvest above: 'never perhaps has any creature so directly penetrated into the fleshly core of creation, [*dans le ventre de création*]'; and it is from these bowels of creation (*sorti de son ventre*) that there rises the shoot, the stock, upon whose topmost point a God will die.

> Christians are accustomed to viewing the Incarnation as something communicated from the eternal realm, to viewing it from the side of eternity. But what gives this poem its value is that here we have a pagan (and a Jewish) vision of the Incarnation as emerging out of the Jewish and the pagan worlds, as a bodily

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[120] '*Hugo était un faiseur*', B 705. '*D'avoir hasardé de bafouiller, tant, si carrément*; S 313. '*Rusé comme un lapin, double, duplice, avisé, retors. . . . Un vieux malin, en somme*', B 316.

[121] A 841.

[122] B 316.

[123] Victor Hugo, 'Booz endormi', in *La Légende des Siècles* II 6.

> culmination, a bodily maturation, a fulfilment and a completion, the bodily bringing to fulness of a bodily sequence. The Incarnation is simply the supreme instance, the superabundant instance, a peak, a limiting case, the ultimate drawing together into a single point of this everlasting infusion of the eternal into the temporal, the spiritual into the carnal, which is the hinge, the cardinal point, the joint, the elbow and knee, the entire creation of the world and man and which indeed brings it into being. . . . Any kind of sanctification that is abstract, withdrawn in a crude manner from the world of the flesh, is a process without meaning or consequence. But there are still two ways of regarding the *et homo factus est*. Normally, Christians see it as issuing forth from the eternal; they contemplate this supreme insertion, this point of concentration, this drawing together in one point where the wholly eternal enters the wholly temporal. To find the counterpart to this, the view from the other side, the countervision, as it were, for a story that had happened to the earth—namely, that it had given birth to God—for this the earthly, the fleshly and the temporal realms, the pagan world (and also the mystics of the elder Law, the Jewish people) would need to see the Incarnation from their side. But this is just what they do not do; and, God knows, they can hardly be blamed for it. The Incarnation would have to present itself as the full flower and the temporal fruit of the earth, as an extraordinary triumph of fertility, as a superabundant but yet not unnatural growth; in order that we might consider God as he is on the side of his creation, emerging out of his creation, from a succession of creatures, from the lineage of David, which issues in God as it might in an ordinary bodily issue.'[124]

'Matthew the peasant' traces the succession of Jesus' ancestors according to the flesh: 'few men perhaps have so many criminal forebears.' Luke on the other hand moves backwards and upwards, 'he goes in search of Jesus and his temporal pedigree right back as far as the first Adam: *qui fuit Adam qui fuit Dei*. Homogeneously, unobtrusively and modestly, he goes back to our father Adam, and to Adam's Father, God'.[125] Creation too was a begetting; we pray to God as 'Our Father'. Luke 'puts great stress on the record of Jesus' paternity' and arrives back at the eternal Father who begets his Son through the medium of

[124] B 729–732.

[125] B 734–737.

humanity. And it really needed a pagan like Hugo for someone to 'hit on the idea, for someone to receive the vocation of contemplating one of the central mysteries of the Christian *mysterium* as a *témoin de l'extérieur*, a pagan'.[126]

So Péguy can write (in bold type) 'a pagan prophecy',[127] and the conditions of its possibility are weighed: there is 'some sort of mysterious osmosis between the realm of genius and the realm of grace, a mysterious outflowing and overflowing, a derivation, a discharge, an outpouring (in a carnal and spiritual manner) from the realm of grace into the realm of genius.' Despite all distinctions of 'orders', for the proof of such interpenetration 'we need only to look at the pagan pride of which this poem is so exuberantly full, the sense of well-being, the fleshly fulness, the sense of playfulness and entertainment, the constant provocations in its very vocabulary.[128] And Péguy, unperturbed by all warnings, all apocalyptic oppositions between Man-God and God-Man, makes directly for the point where both sides must meet on theological ground.

Genius is defined by its incomprehensible power to look into the deepest origins of things, and out of that to bring forth its fruits—against all the forces of alienation and existential obsolescence.

> The question about genius's residence among us poor men is one of the hardest ever posed to psychology, ethics and metaphysics. In the sphere of human psychology, human ethics and human metaphysics, it has precisely [*exactement*] the same problematic status as does the question about Christ's divinity in religious divine things. If one wants to regard theology (qua investigation of, or knowledge of God) as the limit toward which psychology and ethics (qua investigation of, or knowledge of man) is striving, as a part of metaphysics (qua investigation of, or knowledge of being), one might suggest that the question of the divinity of the Son of Man is, as it were, the limit toward which the problem of human genius is striving, and that both together are two distinct expressions of the overall problem of personality within being itself.

The modern science of man prides itself on its discovery of the splitting of the personality. 'I am not claiming that the problem of genius can be completely reduced to these terms, but I do avow and profess boldly that it is a related question.' And if the problem of Incarnation in theology is one like that of dual personality, then the problem of genius appears as an immanent stage on the road toward a destiny that outreaches our longings, toward which 'the being that we already comprehend within our own selves and that we know in man' is orientated.

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[126] B 738, 740.

[127] B 746.

[128] B 752.

> So our clever modern psychologists are making a great mistake in ridiculing the difficulties that beset our theologians. Whether for psychologists or for theologians, the difficulty is still the same, the concerns of both are equally alien to the inquiries of the logicians. The *mysterium* is the same. On the one side: God becomes man, God becomes the Son of Man, God descends into a man, living and abiding in him. On the other: genius becomes man, is born, lives, dies in a man; simply put (using Scholastic language for once), the divine problem or *mysterium* is a transcendent problem or *mysterium*, a transcendent form, and the human problem, *mysterium*, is an immanent problem and *mysterium*, an immanent form. I am amazed that it has not yet occurred to our young clerics, with their self-congratulation and their sporadic attempts to modernise the most ancient faith for the benefit of the Western nations, to rescue the dogma of the Incarnation by placing it under the sign—or under the cloak, let us say—of the psychological dogma of the splitting of the personality. I do not want to say that they will thereby serve their God as he asks to be served; they possess the eternal and yet see the temporal as a prop to lean on, they have the sacraments and yet occupy themselves with sophistries, they have the Mother of God and yet hurry to resort to any and every kind of psychophysiological laboratory; I am only saying that if our young clerics, who these days are so eager to imprison their ancient faith within the system of the modern world just at the moment when this modern world is creaking in every joint and stammering out the confession of its inability to interpret the course of human life—if these clerics were to bring to light the *mysterium* of the two persons, or to put it in the exact terms of Catholic theology, the *mysterium* of the two natures in one single person, which is the correlate of the mystery of the one person in two natures, and then, starting from there, and in analogy with this, to bring to light the *mysterium* of the one single God in three

> persons as the limiting case in the system of splitting of personality, then, I believe, they could seriously embarrass the *grands seigneurs* who influence the modern world.'[129]

That would depend, admittedly on the willingness to waive the claim that genius can be dealt with according to the rules of a psychology, ethic and metaphysic designed only to deal with the average, perhaps (and Péguy develops this in a lengthy satire) in such a way that the genius's immediate perception of the sources of things might be compared with the immediate perception of the child; so that, from the fact that we were all children once, we could broaden the argument into a generalisation that genius is only a more or less dormant potentiality in every human being.[130] This would in turn depend on the willingness to recognise the inalienable obligation and necessity attaching to genius, the obligation to live in a 'representative' way. 'The man of genius has behind him a whole mute nation, abandoned to the fate of historical (if not, indeed, eternal) death. He is the only person in today's world who can convey to us some idea of what the ancient chiefs or kings were when the whole nation represented itself, crystallised itself, concentrated and personified itself in one outstanding personality.' He is supported by all of this silent throng, produced by them, nourished by them; he is indebted to them and remains always in their debt. They have no other earthly immortality except through blood (their next of kin) and through him.[131] 'The true hero thus draws on the resources of his origins as from an inexhaustible well.' But it is this too which is the natural ground on which the saint's life grows. The saint does not merely represent; he transfers the virtues of hero and genius on to a higher plane. 'The melody, the *cantus firmus*, is identical—each in its own order, of course.' In the hero and the genius it is a game; in the saint, it is in deadly earnest.[132] And 'however various may be the living sources, adaptations and fresh resources of grace, there is still undeniably a certain technique, a certain hierarchy of expertise, a rule of the trade and a kind of skeleton structure for heroic virtue and sanctity

[129] D 204–208.

[130] B 319–329.

[131] D 156–157.

[132] A 1200.

alike', a definite 'measure of venturesomeness,' which was indeed *required* but never fully encompassed by the feudal laws of the Middle Ages.[133] The analogy between the two realms, then, is not only an external one, lying in the category of pictorial representation, but an internal one, despite all the contrasts between the two orders (as seen by Pascal).[134]

> It is precisely when the temporal sets itself up in diametrical opposition to the eternal on the matter of the object and the mechanics of the relation between end and means that it nevertheless continues to provide the eternal with a temporal shape, a temporal representation of the universal form. The temporal hero represents in his own mode the eternal saint. As the former is continually drawing his strength from his historical and racial origins, so the saint is continually drawing his strength from the strength of God's grace; and in a certain sense, *mutatis mutandis*, the communion of saints is for the saint, by analogical relationship, a kind of race, a point of origin; it means for the saint what race and roots mean to the hero. As the inheritance of blood wells up and overflows into the heart of the hero, so the blood of grace wells up and overflows into the heart of the saint—the temporal power of blood; the eternal power of grace; the eternal power of the eternal blood.[135]

But this eternal blood of Jesus Christ was itself temporal blood: in Christ the analogy is transformed from an external into an internal one; it becomes the inner mystery of his dual personality. Grace is in blood, and grace does not exist without blood.

Péguy develops the enormous consequences of all this again with reference to *Polyeucte*; because the Christian martyr must depict, represent, to the heathen sage who condemns him what is truly Christian in a way the latter can understand—on the level of the human, in the human mode. Polyeucte must hold up to Sévère his own ideal image, he must make what is Christian credible to him on the level of the human; it cannot be realised in any kind of 'as if' presentation (as Pascal's separation of the two spheres would dictate). Polyeucte must 'see his own likeness' in Sévère. And this appears clearly where nature exists in its maximal form (as genius and heroism), and grace likewise in maximal form, in the witness given by the shedding of blood.[136] Here is a fair standard for self-measurement: the struggle is a matter of 'integral loyalty' and *noblesse*, although it is the saint who is the 'measure' of the hero, not the other way round.[137] And though Péguy acknowledges Pascal's competence in all this discussion, especially as regards the choice of Epictetus as the only figure in Antiquity ultimately worthy to be a partner for the martyrs, still, for him, Corneille here 'makes a significant step beyond even the *Pensées*' in that he, as a 'unique poet of the heroism of blood', becomes also 'a unique poet of the eternal blood . . . of grace'.[138] He brings the classical drama of the *analogia entis* to its supreme theological stage of creative development.

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[133] B 1012.

[134] A 1202.

[135] *Ibid.*

However, this interior quality in the analogy between culture ('Antiquity') and Christianity, as should now at last be clear, is not possible without the mediation of Israel and its prophetic tradition—both aesthetic and ethical, natural and supernatural. Where this mediation is absent, Jesus is no longer seen as emerging from a race and a particular history, but drops straight out of Heaven in Gnostic fashion. And when this happens, the relation between culture and Christianity becomes Platonic and 'aesthetic', in the dubious sense of the word: culture (classical Antiquity) becomes a symbolic system that is in no way indispensable (and which can simply be discarded by Luther), a system that (as in Pascal) is no longer recognised as belonging together at the innermost level—in virtue of the Incarnation—with what it symbolises. And so Christian reality becomes 'deed without image'.

3. THE METAMORPHOSES OF HELL

Péguy had abandoned the Church because the dogma of an eternal Hell seemed to him intolerable, yet he returned to the Church in such a way as not to have to foreswear the least portion of his past. How did he manage this? If 'prophecy' has been singled out in the preceding pages as the formal focus of his world, 'Hell' must likewise be singled out as its material focus. His world stands or falls with the question of Christian exclusivity; and so too, therefore, does his theological aesthetic.

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[136] B 1393–1394.

[137] B 1396, 1394.

[138] A 1203.

The starting point is to be found in a twofold work. Since 1892, when he was nineteen, Péguy had studied the life of Joan of Arc, which he turned into a powerful dramatic work, completed and published in 1897. At the same time at school he was an enthusiastic advocate of socialism, involving himself actively in relief work for the hungry poor, and in 1896 planning with his friend Marcel Baudouin a manifesto, *De la Cité Harmonieuse*. After Baudouin's death in 1898, Péguy completed this, and again published it—a kind of 'Holy Writ' of thoroughgoing socialism, a sacral *Utopia*, which set out the aesthetic-ethical ideal toward which humanity must strive, after the failure of Christianity, simply by its own innate powers of good will.

Both these earliest works of Péguy, contradictory as they seem, must be seen as a unity; the concern of both is the overcoming of Hell. The *Cité* is a *civitas Dei* constructed from below out of the stuff of the world and in which, essentially, there is no more possibility of exile. *Jeanne* is the interior overcoming of exile through a total engagement on behalf of one's condemned and banished brethren (even to the point of an interior experience of Hell).

The *Cité* in its very title presents the aesthetic category of harmony as the supreme value. It is an eschatological harmony, which everyone except Péguy would have regarded as merely utopian since it could seriously be realised only in the overcoming of any and every economic cultural and ethical disharmony, in a comprehensive work of art fashioned from the whole of humanity and effected by the whole of humanity, a work of art to which all egotistic and private sectional interests must be surrendered. Solidarity does duty for Christian *caritas*, and the whole is penetrated by the ideal of spiritual and bodily health, *santé*. The sacral term *pur* is everywhere, signifying a sense of life and a style of life that rest upon a personal and social relation to life and to being that has been completely healed and renewed—not upon a diseased relation, as with the Christian notion of purity.[139] In the *Cité* only healthy relations are worthy of attention, and thus only such relations are the object of scientific study. Men have 'discarded and renounced all knowledge of social disease'[140] from their historical tradition and themselves 'experience nothing that is in any way unwholesome'.[141] Since the human world, like all organic living being, is inseparably and equally both personal and collective, both sides are taken into account at once in a perfect harmony: collective entities, when they are established in progressively integrated stages will not overwhelm personalities but rather develop them; and persons will discover their freedom precisely in their integration by service into the community's life. 'In the harmonious *Cité* a soul is born for the *Cité*, and this soul lives and attains its full-grown form without ever displacing individual souls, the souls of families and friendships or nations, being born from all of these.'[142] The salvaging and defence of the personal world and of freedom from the threat of being overwhelmed by political force, the basic concern of Péguy in later years in his opposition to Jaurès and Socialist Party politics,[143] is already an aspiration here. But the horizon of the human spirit remains, for the time being, immanent being, the self-manifestation of the *logos physeōs*, as in Stoic thought; freedom and law here coincide. However, the transcendent horizon (of a personal relation to God) is not simply shut out. If human reason is essentially free,[144] then the state has no right to prescribe a normative metaphysic,[145] as for instance in the elevation of atheism into a state religion.[146] The consequences of this will be drawn out in the years immediately following, in the realistic light of a *cité désharmonieuse*; and this is why the inspiration of the original vision is never allowed to disappear. The primary requirement of the *Cité Harmonieuse*, that it should be a *cité sans exil*,[147] is never abandoned; and the second requirement, that within it the social apparatus should have a subsidiary place in relation to the free creative working of the spirit in art and science and philosophy, is still more strongly emphasised.

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[139] A 34f., 37f.

[140] A 77, 44.

[141] A 78.

[142] A 41.

[143] A 260f., 443, 447–448, 972–973.

[144] A 407–427.

[145] A 1075– 1076.

[146] A 313f.

[147] A 259.

In the *Reponse a Jaurès* (1900) we find the clearest formulation on this subject: 'We demand that science, art and philosophy should not be socialised, precisely because the socialising of the large-scale means of production and commerce, or, better still, of the means of manual labour (which is indispensable for the securing of the fleshly life of the *cité*), guarantees for the *cité* the leisure and freedom not to have to socialise any and every thing that does not lie within its sphere of competence but rather belongs to mankind as such.'[148] 'We have to learn how to distinguish humanity and society. We mean to prepare the way for this *cité* of mine, where *société* will organically cater for the concerns of the citizen so that he can occupy himself in complete freedom with the concerns of *humanité*.'[149] Even the idea of beauty as the supreme value is never rejected in later years by this ethical polemicist: it was at this point that he drew the dividing line between himself and Zola, with whom he was at one in his political programme. 'His works are for the most part intent on showing us the numerous mean and ugly features of humanity. I think the message of these books was damaging; it is not through horror at what is ugly but by the attraction of what is beautiful that we should teach people about beauty. The beautiful should ignore the ugly, just as Aristotle's God ignores the imperfect world.'[150] Péguy was later to feel obliged to go beyond the proposition formulated in these terms: the goal of inclusion came to take the place of simply ignoring what is ugly. But in spite of this, beauty as the standard of value is never surrendered.

Only one rift, a curiously revealing one, appears in the artistic construct of the *Cité Harmonieuse*. Although bodily defects are to be reduced to an insignificant minimum, it is nevertheless part of the greatness, the harmony and health of the human spirit to suffer. This is an idea, like so many of the younger Péguy's, that reminds one of Nietzsche, although it derives from completely different sources 'The sane and healthy sorrows of the harmonious soul are endlessly nuanced; occasionally they can increase to the point of extreme agony and extreme suffering. They increase in power and beauty to the utmost point of the endurance of God's absence, especially in doubt, separation and death.'[151] Here the poet who celebrated Joan of Arc leaves room for his socialist heroine, who had made her way to the *Cité* only through the experience of Hell.

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[148] A 264.

[149] A 258–259.

[150] A 556.

In progressing from the socialist drama, *Jeanne d'Arc* (1897), to his Christian work *Mystère de la Charité de Jeanne d'Arc* (1909), Péguy did not need to delete a single sentence: he simply added clarificatory material to the text. The *Mystère*, in Péguy's overall plan, proceeds by way of interpolation until the end of the first part of the first third of the trilogy is reached. But because this is where the inner drama of Joan's election is enacted, everything essential is in fact said in the account of the motivation of this election. The remaining two thirds of the trilogy simply develop the consequences of this, retelling the external history—the battles, the imprisonment, the interrogations and attempts at intimidation, the recantation and its subsequent withdrawal, the execution at the stake. Thus the *Mystère* could properly be restricted to the making explicit of the latently Christian themes of the initial conception, displaying them in all their breadth, height and depth.

The drama is dedicated to all those who gave their lives and deaths 'to remedy the general ills of mankind', and those who 'knew the way of salvation, which is to stake life and death on the task of bringing near the universal socialist republic.'[152] Joan suffers because of these 'ills', and her friend Hauviette recommends daily work on the land for her and the giving of alms to the hungry; but this is a drop in the ocean. Madame Gervaise has left her aged mother and taken the veil to pray for the world; but she cannot free herself from the suspicion of having deserted her post. Secular and spiritual tasks must be done together, and since destructiveness rages in the world in the shape of war, war to the death must be waged against war.[153] But destructive power is from the beginning seen by Joan, in a wholly radical fashion, as the violation of the soul, the loss of salvation, damnation itself, all this rising like a flood ('*la damnation va comme un flot montant*').[154] And since Joan has not committed her whole life and death in the struggle against this Hell, she feels herself to be 'hopelessly cowardly, in collusion with the general evil'. Gervaise, reading her inmost thoughts, poses the decisive question: basically, it is no longer possible to love those of one's fellow men, one's brothers and sisters, who work their own damnation—'*tu ne peux pas les aimer*'. According to the Church's teaching, there is no expiatory suffering for the damned, just as their own suffering is fruitless. But Joan feels the loss of those she has loved as an eternal void in her soul: '*tous ceux–là que j'aimais sont absents de moi-même*'. And so she offers to God her own soul to suffer loss of God in order to save the souls mad with the pain of their loss of God. When Gervaise remonstrates with her, saying that the Saviour did not let himself be damned in our place but could offer only his human suffering, Joan does precisely that. But Gervaise transcends the limits of her own thinking as she now proceeds to describe the Godforsakenness of Jesus on the Cross: Jesus' suffering for the Hell-bound despair of Judas, for the impossibility of redressing his eternal damnation by his own temporal suffering, so passes our understanding that it becomes itself infinite.

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[151] A 35.

[152] C 949.

[153] C 954.

> *Étant le Fils de Dieu, Jésus connaissait tout,*
> *Et le Sauveur savait que ce Judas, qu'il aime,*
> *Il ne le sauvait pas, se donnant tout entier.*
> *Et c'est alors qu'il sut la souffrance infinie,*
> *C'est alors qu'il sentit l'infinie agonie,*
> *Et clama comme un fou l'épouvantable angoisse . . . ,*
> *Et par pitié du Père il eut sa mort humaine.*[155]

Before this paradox, Gervaise halts and stays: all that a Christian may do is to want to do no more than Jesus did, to adore God's will and seek to live in it. But Joan presses on into the heart of the darkness. She knows that Gervaise is right, that God is always right in what he ordains, but she is no longer able to pray so long as the thought is in her mind that there are souls damning themselves. And so as not to be 'mad, in company with the rebellious spirits', she asks for a sign. She asks that the venerable shrine of Mont St Michel on the seashore, besieged for months, may be relieved. The sign is granted, the news of the liberation arrives, and the victorious battle at Mont St Michel at once becomes for her transparent to the apocalyptic battle of the archangel against Satan. Image and prototype merge with one another; the eternal battle againt Hell must be fought on earth. Praying alone, in place of acting, is cowardice; but soldiers in such a battle must be ardent for their good cause without anger, without any of the lower passions. How shall a leader be constituted who might tame all that is impure and brutish by the power of complete purity and so lead the way to righteousness?[156]

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[154] C 957.

[155] C 960.

In what follows, there is a twofold thread of development in the drama. The one who is called by God is in the highest service and is answerable to God alone; Joan follows her voices consistently through all that happens, and that constitutes her freedom which is unintelligible to those around her, that freedom which others interpret as her arrogance.[157] Her commands are not open to discussion;[158] she will carry through the attack on Paris against the king's command;[159] she knows nothing of diplomacy,[160] and so she loses her best comrades in arms and inevitably becomes a stone of stumbling for churchmen, theologians and bishops. She submits humbly to the Church as far as its sphere of competence extends: '*Dieu premier servi*'.[161] So she is condemned as a heretic: the ecclesiastical judges (Péguy excels at this point in the drama) torment her. If she does not submit to the injunctions of ecclesiastical diplomacy, she is to be condemned not only to temporal but to eternal fire.[162] And Joan, shorn of all power, ratifies this condemnation in a long monologue: yes, she is damned and she will pass from the earthly to the everlasting fire.[163] The theologians' blasphemous playing with the idea of damnation is only the incidental music that leads from their playing with predestination,[164] by way of the trivialising of Hell itself ('*qu'importe qu'elle se damne*'),[165] to the justifying of torture and the stake as a means of saving Joan's soul[166] (Jesus' trial too only brought the world good), and to the idea that 'she must be burned in any case': 'for if she is a witch, she has deserved no less, and if she is a saint, it will win her a better place in Paradise where she will be better able to pray for us'.[167]

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[156] C 971–972.

[157] C 1084, 1120.

[158] C 1038f., 1048, 1065, 1097.

[159] C 1080, 1108, 1113.

[160] C 1055f., 1072f., 1108f.

[161] C 1161.

[162] C 1181–1183.

[163] C 1187–1193.

The second sequence of motifs is less happy than the first; it is meant to show that even the purest soul, when it comes into close contact with earthly reality, cannot remain spotless. Already, to free herself from her parents, a kind of lie is necessary, which continues to weigh heavily on Joan's conscience; and she is pursued ever anew by involuntary lies and defilements.[168] But this motif is necessary in that it gives Joan an inner consciousness of guilt and so of solidarity with the damned. She suffers the pains of Hell not as something imposed from without, but as her own proper fate. The great concluding emphasis is wholly on the willing acceptance of damnation in the night of the spirit. What comes afterward has little power—the prayer to God to forgive and 'if possible' to save all. The strongest positive stress is at the beginning, where Joan, after receiving her sign from God, is able to pray again and, in the spirit of the *Cité Harmonieuse*, can utter an eschatological and socialistic Paternoster for the salvation of the whole creation.[169]

Péguy's point of departure in these two works, the *Cité* and *Jeanne*, is a dialectical knot; the task of its unravelling is pursued through all his works. Why then does Péguy, for the time being a non-Christian, build so irremovably into his world picture the Christian problematic of Hell? Because (he said), the question, once it has been raised by Christianity, can never again be silenced, even though the answer remains unacceptable. In the Cross an 'infinite terror' burst forth on the world, and 'twenty centuries of Christianity have instituted a kind of ritual presentation of this infinite terror. Christianity has introduced the infinite everywhere, pushed up the prices in the market of values'.[170] 'You Christians', says Clio, 'are the most unhappy of people. And you are also the happiest. You have made everything infinite. You have made the measure of value infinite.'[171]

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[164] C 1083–1084, 1128.

[165] C 1082; *cf.* 1095.

[166] C 1129.

[167] C 1201.

[168] C 1062f., 1102, 1110, 1150f.

[169] C 966.

Even as a small child, Péguy (in the fragment *Pierre*) had encountered the devil in the stories told by his grandmother, the devil who longs to draw souls into Hell and from whom they are snatched at the last possible instant by the angels or by the pastor.[172] Later the question was posed in earnest: can any member of humankind be lost to the realm of God, which is also the realm of humanity? Can any member be lacking from the sum of all the others? Or, more clearly: is it possible that the others when saved will not feel his lack? The manifesto denies this: '*Aucun vivant animé n'est dans le cité harmonieuse comme un banni de la cité*'.[173] It is *la cité sans exil*.[174] Anything else leads to bourgeois egotism about salvation. 'You do not save your soul as you might save a treasured possession. You save it as you lose a treasured possession: in surrendering it. We must save ourselves collectively, we must arrive together before the good Lord. What would he say if we arrived before him, came home to him, without the others?'[175] It would be bad if someone were to 'love God against the interests of his neighbour, were to pursue his own salvation at his neighbour's expense'.[176]

What the young socialist writer of *De la Grippe* admired in Pascal (bearing it out in long quotations from the biography) was the latter's love for the poor: the fact that when mortally ill he wanted to be no better off than the destitute in the hospital 'who are infinitely more poor and sick than I'; that he wanted to be taken there himself and, when this was not permitted him, wanted at least to have one sick pauper sharing his house with him.[177] It is then that the problem of exile appears in relation to Pascal. A man of the ancient world would have experienced exile from the *polis* as something dreadful and longed with all his might for a return home, for νόστος. 'But when the *polis* had become universal, had become the eternal *Civitas Dei*, then the earth itself became the place of exile, horror and death that we fear, and the longing for a homecoming came to be of ultimate importance.' The Christian God, 'slayer of other gods, was also their heir; in succession to Zeus, he became the god of the hospitable: his own hospitality is infinite, merciful toward all.' And in this system it is understandable that many Christians are over-eager to hasten away from their earthly banishment to the eternal *polis*. Pascal did nothing of the sort; his prayer was to persevere on earth as long as his mission from God consigned him to be here.[178] But why stay? Here Pascal's *cœur* points the way: we stay out of compassion for the suffering, out of solidarity, *charité*—as one does if one takes the word 'as Pascal understood it, in an absolutely fully operative sense',[179] and distinguishes it from any other sort of effectiveness in human activity and effort by means of a qualitative 'leap' (*saut*).[180] This 'leap' (out of the realm of the mathematical and quantifiable) into the realm of love displays Pascal as 'a perfect geometer and equally a perfect Christian',[181] because the leap itself had its own exactitude, and also because Pascal as a Christian did not renounce terrestrial, mathematical exactitude. Yet because Péguy was a good Christian, the temporal realm must have been for him banishment. 'Christians cannot have this deep-rooted taste for life and health, this kind of bondage to animal nature—I might almost say, to vegetative life'. Hence, in their lives the ruling influence is 'something uncertain, inexact, standing over against their own life—though it would not be difficult for me, even within Christianity to find a means of salvation despite all this. But it does seem to me to have been demonstrated that Christianity is especially complicated.' Under the pretext of uniting all extremes it is nevertheless a 'violation of life itself'. And when Christians had once reached the point of loving and affirming, for God's sake, the heavenly sentence of damnation on earth, it naturally followed that they were able to become familiar with the thought of an eternal exile, a Hell, 'this shocking hybrid of life and death.' 'But no one who has experienced the human lot or who has devoted himself to it could accept this. No fellow citizen who has done no more than grasp the idea of solidarity could consent to it.' 'Our solidarity is with those who are eternally damned. We cannot bear that human beings should be treated inhumanly. We cannot bear that human beings should be turned away from the gate of any *polis*. That is the grand passion that animates us. We will tolerate no exception in Heaven or on earth. An eternity of living death is a perverse and unnatural piece of fantasy.'[182]

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[170] B 420.

[171] B 485.

[172] A 1218.

[173] A 23.

[174] A 259.

[175] J 44.

[176] B 1390.

[177] A 169–171.

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[178] A 182.

[179] A 184–185.

[180] A 188.

[181] A 179.

But even in Antiquity do we not already find just such a conception? Did not Creon let Antigone be immured alive in a subterranean cavern full of terrors? Lengthy quotations from the *Antigone* show that there is here, beyond any doubt, 'a pagan adumbration of Hell'. The reply to this objection is weak: 'The harmonious laments of Antigone and the harmonious but cowardly consolations uttered by the chorus seem to me dubious, but in no respect horrifying like the fantasies of the Christian Hell. The pagans, with their love of life and beauty, neither could nor would construct such a horror. At the root of Christian consciousness there must exist a repugnant accommodation with sickness and death, and that's an idea I cannot get out of my head. . . . Here there is indeed a *non possumus*. Whether or not Hell was invented as a deterrent for sinners, it has certainly succeeded more in horrifying the best sort of Christians.'[183] Such was the tone and timbre of the argument in 1900, the tone of the socialist manifesto.

In 1902, *Jean Coste*, a story about the condition of the poor by the writer Lavergne, appeared in the *Cahiers*; Péguy wrote a long introduction to it, and tackled the problem of Hell afresh from a new perspective. It has now become a question of the immanent Hell of the wretched of this earth, a question of the sharp demarcation between poverty (with the minimum necessary for life) and *misère* (with less than the minimum necessary for life). Destitution may be known from within or without: Zola knew it and described it from without, Lavergne from within. In the face of such destitution a Christian *charité*, which 'lowers itself' to help is an inappropriate, bourgeois stance. That such misery, such an exile from human society, should cease from the earth, is a matter of elementary social obligation. In terrestrial terms it corresponds exactly to Hell in Christian theology. Péguy remarks in passing that Heaven and Hell are related to each other in diametrical opposition as regards the question of time: Hell is 'being deprived of all time'; the horizon of the damned is built of infinite constraint, Hell is fenced around and not the slightest glimmer of hope filters through. In contrast, Paradise is an infinite openness to every kind of companionship and fulfilment. Even Purgatory belongs on this side of the divide; it is within the sphere of communion, while Hell is outside.[184] However, the reality of destitution on earth is more than merely an image of Hell. Whoever lives in real destitution has no hope of escape. 'The perpetual gaze he directs toward his own destitution is itself a look of destitution. What this produces for him is a uniform impression of total despair: destitution is his whole life, an unrelieved servitude; a taste of death is intermingled with the whole of life. Death, for the sages of Antiquity, was a final release, but for the destitute it is only a filling to the brim of the cup of bitterness and defeat, the very peak of despair. The destitute person is at the heart of destitution itself; he understands only in a destitute fashion, precisely because he has no belief in eternal life. The destitute person as we know him, as he has become through his exclusion from religious belief, has only a single room left to live in, and this is filled for him to the limit with destitution.' This cannot be imagined from without. From without it looks like a finite kind of suffering, but from within it is as infinite as the Christian Hell: '*Une absence particulière peut causer une privation totale.*' 'Human suffering extends its range to seize the place previously occupied by religious anguish, religious suffering', which was indeed qua human suffering, no less objectively limited.[185] 'Serious Catholics have always been preoccupied with the question of Hell—whether it has been out of concern with the question of whether or not their own souls would be damned (the problem of salvation was of capital importance; hence the many efforts to do away with Hell); or when they became heresiarchs and impugned the threatened pains of Hell; or as they sought to save souls by faithful perseverance and immersion in the depths of their faith; or when, as nowadays, they decide in favour of unbelief and abandon the Catholic faith so as not to have to accept the doctrine of Hell. And it is quite certain nowadays that requirement of belief in a Hell of eternal torment is, for the great majority of serious Catholics, the most serious reason for apostasy.'[186]

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[182] A 192–193.

[183] A 198–199.

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[184] A 496–498.

[185] A 503–507, 501.

But Péguy feels no relief after disposing of this dogma, because destitution, exile and hopelessness are still there. 'The cost of life has not gone down since the elimination of the Catholic faith. The value of suffering is undiminished. The value of the struggle to cope with it is always the same.'[187] 'To succour the destitute is one of the oldest concerns of true humanity throughout every culture; from age to age, fraternity—whether it appears as *caritas* or as solidarity, whether it proves its mettle in hospitality to a guest in the name of the hospitable Zeus, whether it receives the destitute as a figure of Jesus Christ or forces through a minimal wage for workers—fraternity in an eternal human sentiment.'[188]

Péguy always adhered to this equation.[189] Indeed, at the nadir of his own life, he himself experienced *misère* as bodily and spiritual indigence and deprivation and depicted it in moving words.[190] At the furthest limit, the idea of death or suicide prevails over life as a whole, 'sours life itself, the whole sum of existence, in a total interpenetration of life and death; it is a "living death", as I then (in *Jean Coste*) expressed it'.[191] This throws some light on the concept that (with only slight modifications) haunts the whole of Péguy's work: the concept of *tourisme*. Zola's depictions of destitution are indeed far blacker and more dramatic than those in *Jean Coste*, and yet, 'The conditions of the destitute in Zola are those we might find in a description given by a rigorously observant and often conscientious tourist, by someone on an excursion to view the poor.[192] Even where the French Revolution and the campaigns of Napoleon are concerned, it is still said that this is '*du tourisme*

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[186] A 508.

[187] A 509.

[188] A 510–511.

[189] A 1131.

[190] B 63–64.

[191] B 64–65.

[192] A 519–520.

aussi. Naturellement du très grand tourisme'.[193] Clio had a similar comment to make on those historians who bustle around on the field of reality like demigods: '*Les historiens perlustrent le monde comme des amateurs.*'[194] The category gains importance above all in the controversy with Halévy. Halévy is a Jew of the wealthy bourgeoisie; he likes to travel and to talk amicably with ordinary people. Péguy *is* himself the people. For the peasants and vintage labourers Halévy is always '*un monsieur qui passe, qui leur fait l'honneur de venir les voir, un visiteur (je ne dis certes pas un étranger)*'.[195] The idea that even Christians in the Holy Land can only 'visit' the holy places like foreigners and tourists drives Joan of Arc (in the *Mystère*) beside herself.

> A pair of pilgrims, poor shabby pilgrims, go and ask the infidels
> for permission to 'visit' the Holy Sepulchre.
> Visit, visit! anyone would think it was an object of curiosity.
> Well, we shall see whether permission must be asked of them to
> conquer the Holy Land![196]

And now, at last, comes the relating of all this to Dante, whom Péguy wanted to rival in things concerning Hell and Heaven. 'Of course I know no Italian. But despite that, I have read this *Paradiso* of his. He invents, I discover. He is far stronger in his *Inferno*. But they all do this: they need evil and sin to make things interesting. I do not work in sin. I am a sinner, but there is no sin in my work.'[197] In *Eve*,

> everything is in the first-person plural. That means that nowhere in the course of this great long pilgrimage does the author appear as an historian or a geographer of Heaven and earth, as a visitor, an inspector, or, so to speak, a tourist—as a grandiose kind of tourist, perhaps, but still a tourist. At no point here is the poet someone on a trip—a grandiose trip, maybe, but still a trip. At no point does he take up a position on the sidelines so as to observe what is going on in front of him, because what is going on in front of him is himself—that is to say, it concerns his damnation or salvation. At no point does he take up his position on the pavement to watch the sinners go by, because the sinners are

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[193] A 1192.

[194] B 276.

[195] B 688; *cf.* 680.

[196] J 316.

[197] L 170.

> himself. This immense multitude is what he is himself within, not something alongside it. The whole task consists in the right orientation of mankind, turned full-face toward the Last Judgment.[198]

Les Suppliants parallèles (1905), one of Péguy's finest works, offers a response to *Jean Coste*. Here he introduces a poem of Porché's, celebrating the bloody events of 1905 in Petersburg when the Russian workers marching to the Tsar's palace to present their famous petition to the monarch were greeted by the imperial guard opening fire on them and were decimated before the palace gates. 'Sire! We, the workers of the city of St Petersburg, our wives and children and our aged and infirm parents, have come to you seeking justice and protection. . . . We have fallen on hard times, we are destitute . . . we are treated not as men but as slaves who must endure their bitter and wretched lot with patience and accept it in silence. We do not ask for much, only for that without which life is not life at all but prison and endless torture. . . . Whoever among us dares to raise his voice . . . is thrown into prison, condemned to exile. . . . Sire! Is this the divine law in virtue of whose grace you reign? . . . We speak to you as to our father, honestly and openly.' Then follows the list of requests. 'But if you will not answer our pleas, then we shall die right here, before your palace.' Péguy's heart was touched at the innermost level. He contrasts the workers' document point by point with the ancient text that forms the prelude to the *Oedipus Rex*; both utterances illuminate one another, both evoke the eternal threnody of man's pleading for succour. But the one to whom the plea is addressed in the classical text is himself a suppliant, 'besought by men, he beseeches the gods; he does not separate himself from the suppliants who are his subjects.' And 'the formula of Christian supplication and, more generally, of Christian lamentation, drawn originally from the Messianic lament, is to be found, both in its full perfection and in its completest purity, in the words *Misereor super turbam*. I weep, I grieve, with compassion for the multitude.'[199] Only lately has the modern ruler abandoned his solidarity with those outcast from society.

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[198] L 180–181.

[199] A 897.

The formulation of the theme is new and prepares the way for a motif soon to increase in importance: that of the *monde moderne* that has become inhuman juxtaposed as a contrast with the classical and Christian worlds (the latter understood in terms of its messianic origins) as the *humanum*. What is astonishing for Péguy is that the petition of the Petersburg workers is made in the most authentic tone of the supplications of Antiquity, which gives the suppliants their unique human and superhuman stature. For the Greeks, the suppliant, and the one who pleaded for succour, was the truly great man, for he represented humanity to the gods. But the fortunate man was the one to be pitied, because he is menaced by fate, because he falls victim to fate. The suppliant at his feet is in fact superior to him, for

> he is a representative. He is no longer himself alone—no longer even himself. Thus every other person must be on his guard. Dispossessed as he is by the same events that brought such precarious good fortune to the one being besought, a citizen without a city, a head without an eye, a child without a father, a father without children, a belly without food, a back without a bed, a head without a roof over it, a man without possessions—he no longer exists as himself. He is moulded by the human and suprahuman fingers of God, moulded and turned to the lathe. The gods and the Fate that stands behind the gods have deprived him of the *polis*. But the gods have given him his own city in return. It is in no sense a compensation, not even a sign of justice; and naturally it is not a romantic antithesis. It is something much deeper, much truer. Here men have put on record that they were the plastic material beneath the sculpting fingers of Fate.[200]

Thereby they achieve the 'higher tone'; they have received promotion (*élection* would no doubt be the Christian term) to the highest aristocracy that the essence of classical tragedy can delineate,[201] in which the 'opposition between the just and the unjust' is mysteriously transcended and balanced out.[202] Péguy here spoke only of supplication in the ancient world; Christ's supplication is no longer mentioned. But the line connecting Oedipus with Christ is drawn in cryptic fashion; each of them, as the one besought who is himself a suppliant, cast a bridge

[200] A 905–906.

[201] A 908–909.

[202] A 912.

between the hellish world of exile and the shelter of the *polis*.

The works that follow complete this turning toward the existential in various distinct forms of expression. *Notre Patrie* (1905) had already broached the problem of the relation between genius and the people: the mortal people, cut off from posthumous celebrity, have their immanent temporal salvation in the genius (and this is where Péguy sees his own burdensome mission as lying). 'His only true equal, his only brother, his only father, his only begetter is this poor, destitute and ignorant mass; to them he is bound for ever by a vertical bond'.[203] 'Dreadful responsibility! He is the voice, the expression, the revelation of this whole people!'[204] If he ceases to be a witness to what they cannot themselves be witness to, 'he annihilates himself, he destroys his genius'.[205] He becomes fair game for the sociologist: 'Neither the genius nor the people allow themselves to be sociologised—only talent allows that.'[206] In the *Cahier Mangasarian* (1904), the relation between conservation and revolution is dealt with: the conservation of a status quo requires only talent, but revolution on the contrary requires genius, whether it is that of individuals or the deeper genius of race and people 'or finally that specially profound variety that rises up out of a long-lasting experience of destitution (*misère*)'. The removal of organisation and the diminution of conservation will not create freedom; this emerges only where the revolution of the depths of national life and the focal point of genius bring with them and develop out of themselves and their own freedoms the power of organisation.[207] To eliminate this power, through the levelling alike of the springs of national life and of genius, is the programme of the *monde moderne*, and Péguy feels that he is its sacrificial victim. His destiny is inexorable ostracism; he will perish through total neglect, through deadly silence and the deprivation of air to breathe (*Situations* I, 1906). He experiences 'the modern, secularised, social Hell'[208] that is far more dreadful than any banishment in ancient times. But then the poet (in *Notre Jeunesse*, 1910), as he reflects on his origins, recognises that this fundamental exile was from the beginning rooted in his intentions and earliest decisions. The one who in the *Cité Harmonieuse* and in the Dreyfus trial had opted for absolute truth and justice could expect no other fate at the hands either of a bourgeois Catholicism or of a politicised socialism: 'There was infinitely more Christianity in our socialism than in the whole of the Madeleine together with St Pierre de Chaillot, St Phillippe du Roule, and St Honoré d'Eylan [the affluent parishes of Paris]. It was essentially a religion of worldly poverty. We had received so strong a vocation to poverty, even to destitution [*misère*], so deep, so interior and at the same time so historical, so event orientated a calling, that we could never extricate ourselves from it; and I begin to believe that even in the future we shall never be able to.'[209] Péguy again saw his fate as an exile side by side with the Jewish destiny, especially that of the poor Jews who in the *monde moderne* are cut off by the same horizontal dividing line from the wealthy world above them and are thus doubly destitute and exiled by their religious destiny. Péguy the poor man felt and knew himself to be 'in a common state of *misère, dans cet enfer commun*', with them.[210]

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[203] D 161.

[204] D 160.

[205] D 166.

[206] S 253.

[207] A 1382–1385.

[208] A 1024.

The negative idea of existence as exile united Péguy more and more inseparably in this period with a conception of the modern world as seen in Bergsonian categories, a conception of the modern world as one in which, yet again, only the features of an existence alienated from God, distorted into grotesquerie, appear. For Bergson, indeed, everything rigid, complete and conceptual is a degenerate form of what is living, flexible, fluid and intuitive; it is the sinking down of life and existence toward the limits of complete petrifaction. But all existence is as such a growing old, *vieillissement*, a transition from originality to habit and so to lack of authenticity and individuality; thus too subsequent generations allow the historical achievements of genius to decline into something accustomed and dull. For that now seems to be 'the greatest mystery of events'—that what is completed once and for all still 'remains always incomplete' and cries out for a crowning completion in the vision of the observer, the reader, the one who shares in the task. The sublimest works of art, stowed away in museums and 'flung down before the dogs', before our unworthy and unseeing gaze, perish from lack of receptive response. 'A futile gaze, an empty gaze, something that is no gaze at all is—so to speak—the most malignant gaze, for it is the gaze of ultimate distancing and lovelessness, ultimate annihilation; the gaze, ultimately, of disintegrating oblivion.' 'We are free to contribute as much collaboration as we wish,' and if we refuse it, the waves of barbarism will once again swamp civilisation for centuries, 'like a temporal image of the Last Judgment'. Such is the 'terrifying responsibility' we have for the survival of civilisation.[211] The origins of this disintegration are thus completely internal; in this respect, the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount is quite right. 'Whoever has merely conceived the idea of disloyalty has already committed sin, he is already an adulterer in his heart. All disloyalty to reality is already, even when it has hardly been conceived, the beginning of its realisation, an infinite and eternal disloyalty.'[212] And Clio, the muse of history, is incapable of halting this process of disintegration; therein lies her *misère*. Péguy sees only two alternatives for history: either great events perish entirely for it, or else they become powerless in the memory of the succeeding generation. Any other option, 'apart from salvation', which comes from God, is not open for man in history.[213] This is the language of extreme pessimism, at least as regards the effects of history; there is no possible appeal to future generations. But—and this is the other side of the coin—grace always remains available in the present and is always offered for the future; a life lived in increasing hope can always salvage something from the process of decline and fall toward death and Hell. All that is in decline exists only in virtue of what is growing and rising ('What does it matter if they mock us? They themselves live only through us, they *are* only through us. Even the insubstantial beings that they are, they would not be without us. Even their hatred stems from us, it is our handiwork, parasitic upon us').[214]

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[209] B 579.

[210] B 629–630.

Péguy here draws attention to the coincidence of Bergsonian and ecclesial language:[215] 'It is in the highest degree remarkable that spiritual death, the death of the soul, in the traditional language of the Church, is understood as the result (we might also say, as the limiting case) of a process of hardening. As the encrustations penetrate more and more deeply, they at last reach the heart; it is all simply a matter of this process of encrustation.'[216] Now this means that for Péguy, in the light of what his philosophical mentor said, Hell, which was for him the one utterly unacceptable thing, suddenly became a conceivable, almost a tangible reality. Bergson explained 'the mechanism of the gradual death of the soul', the process of mummification, of ageing, stiffening and hardening in the soul in which what is completed (*le tout fait*) defeats what is still in the process of shaping itself (*le faisant*). The insolubly tangled contest between freedom and grace can here no longer take place; everything is crammed to the limits with 'finished results', with memories, records and bureaucracy. As organic life presses toward the death of the body, so all spiritual life presses toward the second, historical and moral death, and only a suprahistorical principle in the heart of history itself can save it from this descending path. 'If we speak of the eternal promises that the Church has received, this means strictly that it possesses the promise that it will never succumb to its own ageing process, its hardening and rigidifying, its habits and its memory. Never will it become dead wood, dead soul, never will it collapse under the weight of its archives and its history. Never will it be entirely crushed by its recollections. Never will it succumb to the accumulated paperwork and the inflexibility of its bureaucracy. And it is the promise that the saints will rise up ever anew'[217] (*Note Conjointe*, 1914).

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[211] B 109–111.

[212] S 218–219.

[213] B 119.

[214] B 540–541.

[215] B 1344.

So it is a twofold experience by which Péguy comes into contact with the reality of Hell: the experience of his own expulsion from the modern world, and the experience of the modern world's state of expulsion from authentic life. And thus the two contrary experiences encounter one another at their roots: the illusionism of the modern world is a catastrophic expression of the general frailty of finite being that Péguy experiences in his own self (*Eve* will testify to this theme) and that makes clear to him that he still remains in solidarity with that modern world he hates. 'I too am a modern, I too am fired by the modern demagogy I am struggling against.'[218] 'Against our will we are infiltrated by barbarism, by the modern and modernism.'[219] 'Every modern man is a tattered newspaper. Not just today's, but a battered old daily on which every morning the day's news has been printed on the same paper.'[220] 'In the modern world, everything is modern, even those who struggle against the modern'; they live 'in the same terrible privation, the same dreadful lack of a holy reality [*du sacré*]'.[221] *L'Argent* (1913) describes the personal dialectical experience of Hell as the universal experience of the age: under the rule of money (the quantifying of all value) there is no longer any room for a 'spiritual marriage with poverty'; only an 'adulterous coupling'. The mysterious exchange that made such a marriage possible in the old world has now vanished—so how shall a Christian live the Christian life in such a dispensation? 'Ancient culture and Christianity went hand in hand—both kinds of ancient culture, the Hebrew and the Greek. Hitherto, the Christian was a man belonging to this culture; today he is bound to be a modern man.'[222] How can he be so 'in this contemporary Hell where anyone who does not play along is lost?'[223] It is the immense problem of dechristianisation, as set out in *Véronique* (= *Clio* II, 1909), in which Péguy distinguishes three levels of the problem: (1) the possible loss of the individual soul within the Christian community—where this is concerned, as Joan of Arc first showed, there can be no resignation to it; (2) excommunication from the Christian community—but this act of expulsion, so Péguy forcefully shows, is still a juridical-mystical bond, and it is precisely this that connects the person excluded in a continuing relation to the community of salvation—(3) the dechristianising of the world *in toto*, the loss of any connection to a sacral universe, whether antique or Christian—the condition of managing entirely without God. It is here that the question posed in the drama of Joan expands to the most comprehensive and contemporary dimensions; it is here that the most decisive statements about the essence of being a Christian are made.

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[216] B 1343–1344.

[217] B 1346–1349.

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[218] S 152.

[219] S 285; *cf.* B 627.

[220] B 1325.

[221] L 196.

[222] B 1075.

[223] B 1073.

Corneille's Polyeucte had made men familiar with the idea of a figure who could strike an equilibrium between Christian and pagan by means of his representative activity as a Christian. But this equilibrium of secular and spiritual to the point where it is a true complementarity rests upon the principle of incarnation: the *enracinement* of the divine and spiritual in the secular and carnal by means of representation—that is, by acceptance of the world's descent into Hell—by means of mortal anguish. Accordingly, deadly sin in Christian thought is the refusal of this *enracinement*, the fruitlessly agonized effort to spiritualise and desecularise, the anguished struggle to avoid anguish, the bridge of anticipation reaching out to Easter, as a result of which Good Friday is never fully realised—Easter as a mythical, pagan or Jewish festival: the joy of the seasonal return of spring, bracketing out the historically and eternally unique anguish of God.[224] Besides, we are all so glad that Jesus has borne it on our behalf. All are agreed in this respect, agreed 'in a dark instinct of self-preservation'. 'Our metaphysical anguish feels itself diminished by all this. We are liable to look upon this tragic agony with a complaisant eye. We tolerate it with a truly disarming naivete and cruelty.' You men, says Clio, are used to living in illusion, but when, in the interstices of existence, the unhealable chasm of your nothingness yawns open once again, 'then I counsel you not to look into it or to turn your heart toward that agony, be it ever so tragic, toward that helplessness—to open your heart to that unfathomable heart. Be content with hearsay, do not seek to go back to the original text. Do not bend your heart, your feeble heart, down toward this infinite heart.'[225] Yet everything rests upon his agony. Everything else, even Peter's denial, Judas's betrayal, is less than the true reality. But the agony is. 'God himself was in anguish even unto death. *Tristis usque ad mortem*. Though this densely packed text does not make it plain whether it is a question of a single datum only—"unto the hour of death"—or also, at the same time, of a mortal sorrow that in itself extends to the point of death, constitutes a kind of death.' The whole drama of the Passion is made ready: everything in the world waits upon that one totally decisive event; God himself waits, from all eternity he has made himself ready for it in complete freedom and love, he has engaged himself in it. '*De toute éternité il s'était embarqué dans cet affaire.*' 'But between will and deed there is after all a chasm, between the knowledge of death and death itself.' Thus a pause falls in between, 'the moment of terror and amazement, the moment, we might say, of stumbling or of retreat, so that this appalling prayer can sound loud and clear, out of a fleshly agony, an agony like the eternal agony of a boundless torment, *Transeat a me . . . si possibile est.*'[226]—'Dreadful words, which we venerate so as to avoid having to hear them. Your own concerns intrude on you, egoism pulls at you, the calendar lends its assistance, and the historical record and the catechism (three little works of approximately equal value)—all three have conspired together: the historical record so as to set the event firmly in the past (whereas it is in fact universally present); and the calender could do no other than set it firmly in the springtime, where nature lives through the illusion of an eternal rebirth!'[227]

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[224] B 441–443.

[225] B 444–447.

Upon this event the world rests absolutely; but only Christians know it and run up against it from every angle. 'You bring everything to God, you relate everything to God. From every side you touch him. From all sides you reach out to God, you wound him. Therefore you can no longer move yourselves. The least of your sins shares the guilt of the Roman spear, it reaches personally to the flesh of Jesus. How can you survive this? Only if the nature, the carnal nature concerned has retained a great capacity for resisting death in the power of its instinct for self-preservation and its will. But also, and above all, if such an exchange is to occur, God's grace must be infinite, and the merits of Jesus must cancel out the peculiar horror of their manner of realisation.'[228] Only to the believer's eye is the appalling phenomenon upon which all things depend translucent to the glory of grace. 'We may wonder how you can endure it. It is so *disproportionné* as to be virtually cowardly. It is so excessively heavy for you that you become defenceless and dumb, without any appropriate response; it becomes a pressure constantly exerted upon you—to put it plainly, an eternal blackmail. And this brings you, even on the most trivial occasion, face to face with the flesh of Jesus, in the Host, on the Cross, face to face with the Passion. By this mechanism the crucifixion begins ever anew in the world for all eternity. So, you ask yourself, from where can you draw the courage to keep on going to Mass?' The Jews, the Romans, Caiaphas, Pilate, Barabbas 'have simply been working on your behalf. You are the ones who stage the play.'

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[226] B 448–460.

[227] B 462, 461.

[228] B 491–492.

> You are bound to the body of Jesus by a mystical mechanism, bound to that sacrificial body, that body that writhes in death, that body of destitution, by an incredible, improbable, certainly nonhuman mechanism, by an unbalanced mechanism, staggering on its way, out of joint, out of true, a mechanism that yet is the only authentic one; by this bond, so profound, so essential, so centrally Christian, which is thus the only authentic bond between man and God, between infinite and finite, eternal and temporal, even between spirit and matter, spirit and flesh, soul and body, by this inconceivable union of a fleshly soul; with God and in God, with man and in man—this unbelievable, uniquely effective union of the Creator with his creation.[229]

'Innumerable connections bind all beings to Jesus, bind every soul and every body to Jesus—through this community, this communion. What an inextricable mesh, my children! Everything is linked with everything. You are all linked together and linked to all. Everything is linked with everything and everyone, and at the same time all this is linked with the body of Jesus.' And so—as the *Suppliants* had begun to show—all the fortune of the world is based upon misfortune, 'upon the contemplation, the consideration, the representation of misfortune'. This is so for the ancient world as much as for Christianity. 'For the pagans it is more a matter of misfortune [*infortune*], for you as Christians, more a matter of *misère*'. The *polis*, no less than the *civitas Dei*, rests upon exile and the experience of Hell.[230] Only in this descent into the anguish of dereliction is the bliss and salvation of love in all its purity realised.[231] Here is '*l'axe de détresse*' and '*le centre de misère*'.[232]

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[229] B 493–495.

Now too it becomes clear how much in the Christian system the saints and the sinners together constitute the pattern of the Church and are complementary qualities in it—a theme Péguy constantly emphasised afresh.[233] Because Dante could not give a genuinely christological foundation to his *Inferno* (in so far as it is to be taken in an ontic sense, not merely as a phase of his wanderings), the idea of reciprocal representation broke down for him. For Péguy there is in addition the possibility of a representation of the saints by the sinners—St Louis by Joinville, Joan of Arc by Péguy himself.[234] This ultimate solidarity and thus complementarity between the few saints and the multitude of sinners is to be found only in the Church. 'Whoever does not enter into her system, whoever does not lend his hand is no Christian, he has no kind of competence in the affairs of Christianity. He is a stranger. But the sinner does extend his hand to the saint, offers him his hand, because the saint has already given his hand to the sinner. And all of them together, the one by means of the other, the one drawing the other, advance upward and reach Jesus.'[235]

So Péguy, instructed and chastened by his roundabout journey, could now, for the first time, sort out the form of his second *Jeanne d'Arc* (1909). Everything was now immersed in, impregnated with prayer. The work opens with a prayerful meditation on the Lord's Prayer. The 'kingdom on earth'—this is also, even after Jesus' coming, the risk of perdition. 'It seems as if "thy kingdom" has gone away.' No bread, no forgiveness of sins, no deliverance from evil. Must not something wholly new and unheard of be established? 'But whoever will venture to say—for God's sake!—that there might still be something new to come after fourteen centuries of Christianity?'[236] Then comes once again the encounter with Hauviette, Joan's friend, and with the nun, Madame Gervaise; and it is in conversation with

[230] B 497–498.

[231] B 36–37.

[232] C 698.

[233] B 1021.

[234] B 1023.

[235] B 1022.

[236] J 17.

the latter that the real breakthrough is accomplished. Gervaise sacrifices herself for the individual soul, and to this end she risks the ultimate in prayer and suffering. Who would ask more from God? In the end she stands awestruck and silent before the divine mystery of predestination. Even Hauviette knows about the communion of saints: sinners and saints belong together. This is a barb directed against the cloister: Jesus, after all, was not the founder of an order, he did not withdraw from the lost world.[237] To remedy the world's destitution, one must act in a worldly, not only in a spiritual way. Joan becomes immersed in contemplation of the Cross, its reality in space and time. She envies those who can encounter the flesh of Jesus in a fleshly way; she envies the Jews who were his kin according to the flesh.[238] Then, as if in a single leap (and in the same moment Gervaise appears—they are both in ecstasy, both forming together the communion of saints), the historical suddenly becomes perfectly present.[239] It is as they confront each other that their long altercation takes place. Joan points to the world's dereliction and the complicity of Christians in it.[240] Gervaise understands her: even her first communion brought her no consolation; so long as the ideal of Hell haunted her, it remained powerless and 'worm eaten'. And now there arises the question of the cry from the Cross: it can only belong, says Gervaise, on the side of fruitful, profitable suffering, not the meaningless pain of the damned, even if Jesus cries out more teribly than a damned soul,[241] and his cry echoes through Church and world for all time and eternity.

O clameur culminante, éternelle et valable
Comme si même Dieu se fut désespéré.[242]

God the Father measures the depth of this suffering: 'Even the wretch who had just condemned himself was yet in his presence only as a condemned human being'; but here his Son cries out to him from the heart of time, and yet in his cry binds together both ends of eternity.[243] Everything in the atoning work of Jesus moves toward this cry—the birth, the shepherds and the kings, the years of manual labour, the episode in the temple when he was twelve years old. And now the long lament of Mary too enters in, as the weeping mother follows on the way of the Cross[244] and ponders on the destiny of this child who caused her such anxiety, her own son. Rarely indeed have Mary's thoughts been displayed with such realism, clearly from the perspective of the poor, uneducated woman from Nazareth; it is a masterpiece of Christian poetry. But her whole destiny too runs on to the cry that is coming, flows toward this precipice. Then again, there is the meditation of the crucified Christ on the men who are to be saved—on Judas, the betrayer, who hanged himself—and at this (as the earlier Joan had already pictured it), 'infinite agony' seizes him, and it is then that he 'lets out that insane cry'.

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[237] J 41f.

[238] J 55–70.

[239] J 70.

[240] J 81.

[241] J 97–98.

[242] J 107.

[243] J 116.

But Joan rebels: why did the apostles forsake him? She would not have done so. Charlemagne and Roland, Geoffrey and King Louis, they would not have done so, nor yet would Martin nor Bernard nor Francis. Gervaise replies: you are dividing Christendom, playing off the later saints against the earliest ones. Your saints would never have done that. They all began by submitting themselves to judgment, they all humbly recognised themselves as sinners and only then sought to be imitators of Christ. Beware: arrogance is close to sanctity. Joan now aims directly at the other's heart: 'I say that you, even you, Madame Gervaise, you would not have tolerated it.'[245] Gervaise wavers, wounded to the depths. Joan has dragged her unwillingly over a threshold. Gervaise will adduce against her the deep mysteries of the Church's teaching: that Peter was subsequently crucified as well, that the grace of Christ crucified must always be grasped and realised by men, that prayer and suffering carry such infinite weight before God that, if one offers onself for the salvation of the world, one excludes no one from his hope,[246] that one can offer to God only what is given one freely, that one can never know whether any soul has condemned itself. Joan counters this by saying that one sees and knows that Christianity 'gradually and of its own free will is drawing toward its own ruin, toward perdition'. Gervaise attributes this to the evil times; other and better days will follow, God is in command. At this point the two women take leave of each other. The *Mystère* ends abruptly with an anticipatory sight of Orleans. Péguy initially had the rest of the play typeset, but he then suppressed it.

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[244] J 122.

[245] J 205.

[246] J 217.

In Péguy's posthumous work, the dialogue is continued—a dialogue, like that of Bernanos's Carmelites, on the highest level of sanctity as the Church conceives it. Gervaise has nothing personally narrow about her, let alone anything in the least hypocritical; she represents the noblest and most daring efforts of an Augustinian and mediaeval theology. She begins by confessing her own humiliation—an involuntary humiliation, as true humiliation only is. Then she refers to Joan's vocation, her particular and superior mission. 'Listen for a little while more. Do not dismiss me scornfully yet, and consider this: we must work in the little way. Our place is behind our shepherd, my daughter, behind Jesus Christ, not ahead of him. We must not run ahead like stray sheep.'[247] You have recognised what solidarity means: that we remain linked with every tragic occurrence, even when we do not bear guilt for it, and we feel remorse just because of this link. But anything more than prayer and sacrifice is not vouchsafed to the Christian. Thus Gervaise concludes: '*Elle sort. On ne la reverra jamais.*' And thus Péguy, with decisive solemnity, closes the door on an epoch of Christian thinking.

Joan is alone, her own path is a solitary one, a struggle with God. She offers herself and acknowledges in that moment the perfect justice of God. 'You are the only judge, you are the whole machinery of justice; you always give just judgment.'[248] But when her prayer becomes powerless, she begs for the sign, the relief of Mont St Michael. She reflects on Gervaise's attitude: 'Fundamentally, she has resigned herself. She suffers a great deal, but fundamentally, in the very last analysis, she has resigned herself. Hauviette too, they both put up with it, they are used to it. But you, my God, are not used to it; the saints are not used to it; and Jesus, your Holy One, is not used to it. Are we to say, my God, that we are in your debt, through our sin, our sin-laden dereliction, in your debt for repentance, for a kind of repentance in you? In prayer, Joan is drawn unexpectedly right into the heart of God. 'My God, I have secret prayers. You know it. I have come to an understanding with you, and you with me. I implore you—we shall begin with that, begin with something very small. Afterwards, of course, we shall see. You know what you are doing, and it is always well done. The damned. The damnation of the damned. Grant us again to make communions that are complete and pure. There is a secret between the two of us, a secret we share. I have risked sharing a secret with you.'[249] Hauviette brings her the news of the liberation of the Mount. Joan rejoices at this confirmation and breaks out in a great prayer of thanksgiving.[250] In this she shows that there is no longer any kind of rebellion in her (as in the earlier Joan). The simultaneity of her total *fiat* and her plea to God, her secret shared with God, is itself the inmost mystery of Christian theology, which permits nothing but a Trinitarian solution. The world is given afresh to Joan, 'it is as if it came forth afresh from your own fresh hands'. 'Tomorrow I shall celebrate my true first communion.' Here is Christian existence at the very sources of its inspiration—an account composed in Bergsonian tones. But the sign of Mont St Michael is at the same time an example with implications for earthly engagement and action. Both must be one: prayer and struggle.[251] Once again we see how for Péguy these two things are connected internally and inseparably: the problem of earthly and eternal exile, the question of the *real* actualisation of the kingdom of God both here and beyond. The Paternoster that Joan now prays is both contemporary and eschatological.[252] It includes martyrdom, but only as the culmination of the earthly battle. The thought is cast in the contemporary categories of the crusade, but Péguy means by this the taking in hand of the earthly task. Christianity and humanity are ultimately one. The goal is not to ask permission 'to visit the Holy Land', but to conquer the land that belongs to

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[247] J 235.

[248] J 250.

[249] J 257–259.
[250] J 269f.
[251] J 293–294.
[252] J 300–306.

Jesus. Otherwise, Christians would merit only the scorn of the infidels, and so would be unfaithful to their own mission.

Que la chrétienté croisse au cœur d'humanité.
Que cette chrétienté se fasse humanité.[253]

God's earth, says Joan in her prayer, is like the steps leading up into the church. 'It is our right that the earth should become the gateway to your Heaven. The church steps are, if you will, outside the church, they are in the marketplace. But they are also in the church, for they are the beginning of the church.'

The final section (first published in 1956) makes the transition to the point where Joan rides out from her home. The village has been burned and the church with it. God has taken back his gifts. The people have fled: Christians are always cowardly; they have 'flight in their bones'. So finally we are left with the question of the saint who may be at the same time a hero, of the soldier who might fight without taking revenge. This question is of course for Joan the beginning of her exposure, her God-forsakenness: '*Pourquoi m'avoir laissée en exil de vos cieux.*'[254] '*Faible et seule et pleurante en la terre exileuse?*'[255] Péguy had no need to take the revision of his play any further; all that was to be said had been said, and anything liable to misunderstanding had been set right. And the 'door into the mystery of hope' is pushed open, the door that leads directly into the heart of God. There, in God's grace and love, the secret between God and man becomes one of mutuality. Joan even expresses it in these words: 'Never yet has God been so much in need of man.'[256] The *Note Conjointe* enlarges on this theme: 'I think I said this (in my *Mystères*): that the lover enters on a state of dependence upon the beloved, and that therefore God himself arrives at a state of dependence upon the one he wants to save. When the good shepherd sets out to seek for the lost sheep, he enters a state of dependence upon the lost sheep, and you could say that, to find the sheep again, he takes his bearings from it and from its wanderings.'[257] 'If two people fail one another, they both fail together. Human guilt causes something to be lacking in God

[253] J 317.
[254] J 356.
[255] J 358.
[256] J 255.
[257] B 1400.
[258] B 1275.

himself. When man fails God, God fails man. When one fortress falls, Versailles too suffers the loss, the kingdom loses an outpost.'[258]

So there still remains a twofold job for us to do: to describe the *enracinement* of the Christian identity in the world and humanity, and—thus anchored—to outline also its entry into the triune communication and conversation within the Godhead.

4. THE ENRACINEMENT OF CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

The characteristic movement of the Christian life is that of God's own approach to man. Life in the public eye and suffering are the highest degrees of this approach to man: the supreme involvement of Jesus, the supreme outpouring into all the world of the blood of the God-Man.[259] 'The whole point is embodiment, becoming concrete, becoming flesh. The whole is this process of engrafting, and this succeeds only very rarely.'[260] 'Being Catholic is, sadly, not enough; one must in addition act in the temporal order if one wants to save the future from temporal tyrannies.'[261] In all earthly affairs, this law holds: 'A body, a temporal form of flesh is needed as a material carrier, as the matter for an idea. We know of no historical movement of the spirit, be it political, social or even religious, that could become manifest without a certain *corpus*, a fleshly form of actualisation. The sage had need of the Greek *polis*; the prophet of the race and nation of Israel; the saint of the Christian people—and of certain Western nations, at least as a starting point. This extends to the formation of the Roman empire, which germinated around the time of the advent of Christianity and in view of it—such a heavy, fleshly, corporeal and material phenomenom, to which an almost exaggerated and certainly disquieting significance seems to attach.'[262] The Christian apex is neither possible nor conceivable without the earthly, historical substructure,[263] and this is always twofold, since the Church consists of Jews and Gentiles alike: it is both biblical and classical. Christian identity always presupposes the two foundations so as to bring both to completion in transcending them; but when the foundations are shaking, where the deepest feeling for the *humanum* is clouding over, what will be the possibilities for Christian existence and Christian orientation? Péguy's anxious thoughts constantly wander up and down the one highway, articulated in a fourfold curve: natural origins, the Christian fulfilment in transcending the menance of the modern world, and the exposed, apocalyptic situation of the Christian today. To make this anxiety intelligible, the fourfold path can be measured three times over; once in the area of nature, then in the area of time and history, and finally in the area of creative originality, where temporal man makes contact with the saving wellsprings of his being, the ever-springing wells of salvation.

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[259] B 370, 381.

[260] B 1286–1287.

[261] B 1214.

[262] B 42.

[263] L 186–188.

1. The natural roots of Christian identity lie as much in classical Antiquity as in Scripture; here Péguy appeals to the Church fathers.[264] 'The doctor of the Christian Church would on no account be what he is without Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus'; Christ is the heir of all philosophy, just as he is the heir of the ancient *polis* and the universal claims of Rome. He is above all else a founder, and Christian worship resembles the classical ritual and sacral worship offered to the founders of cities. He inaugurates, initiates, takes possession of the soil and makes tradition out of it. He is founder and father, the procreative fertility of the City of God in the midst of temporality and history. This divinely valid, supratemporally valid aspect throws into still sharper relief the process of the assumption of power in the temporal order: 'For the more life boasts of having overcome death, and eternity boasts of having overcome temporality, the more does the power and value and sublimity and, so to speak, the range and scope of death, the power, value, sublimity and scope of history and temporality, come eternally to expression and make its mark.'[265] As against a socialistic, political world internationalism[266] that no longer has any roots anywhere, Péguy emphasises the native soil, 'our

[264] L 191–192.
[265] B 347, 341–346, 885.
[266] A 924.

native land'; for him his own youth among peasants and workers is the source of all his power.[267] His strength comes not from the intelligentsia, but from the people;[268] it is the family, with its self-containment, its fertility, its direct contact with happiness and powerlessness at once, its care and responsibility for temporal existence, that is the model for earthly life, not the cloister.[269] Jesus lived in the bosom of a family for thirty years, but even the last years represent a grounding in the world, 'an unending movement toward the world'.[270] The great founders of the Christian religious orders, the fathers of what is in each case a powerful spiritual kindred, '*d'une cité mystique dans le siècle même, dont le siècle était la matière*', repeated in a twofold correspondence, both to classical Antiquity and to Christ himself, the same act of initiation or foundation.[271] Life in the family, the people and the *polis* has its roots deep in obscure sustaining powers: waking his its roots in sleep, the public in the secret and private, action in contemplation and prayer. Péguy's anger raged almost without limit against Fernand Laudet, who as *nouveau théologien* opposed this basic principle with the intellectualist thesis that the meaning of Christ and the saints for us is in exact proportion to what we can know of their public activities through historical documents.[272] All roots stretch without end into the night. And so too all acts that have effective power in the world are rooted in the ethic of a hidden pattern of daily work, in jobs decently done. Even revolutions must be decently done; sabotage is the death of any and every culture; and the machine, which dispenses with labour and 'service', poses, at the least, the severest threat to any culture.[273] A certain quality of celebration, celebration of events, of the passage of time, belongs to an existence that has proper roots; even what seems insignificant wins some attention in such a context.[274]

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[267] A 1217–1247; S 263–270; B 666–668.
[268] A 815; D 18; A 1286; B 1047–1049, 1319–1322.
[269] B 372–376.
[270] B 380–381.
[271] B 381–382, 349.
[272] B 857–885.
[273] A 247–248, 255; B 1051, 1053; S 151–153.
[274] B 685f.

Likewise frugality, even property, which is the fertile soil of all ethical greatness[275] belongs to such a mode of existence, as does *areté*, ethical skill, self-awareness, proper pride (which is the only thing that can be the foundation of Christian humility);[276] and as does also the conflict of man with man, the personal trial of strength, and thus war, in the classical sense, war that is an inalienable form of the human proficiency that must be historically brought to light and is always to be gained afresh.[277] All the great men and movements of history have had to fight for their authority; the category of struggle is coextensive with historical existence itself. Péguy's life was the perpetual bitter struggle of an individual who all but succumbed to the superior power of forces hostile to the personal; but for him—and here he goes beyond Kierkegaard's supernaturalistic picture of the 'individual'—the roots of this life of witness are actually in the depths of historical existence. It is precisely in warfare, in the total and crucial time of trial, that what is uniquely and properly human—solidarity—emerges in decisive fashion. The individual risks and offers himself for the whole. Péguy refused to identify war with hatred: true human conflict presupposes an underlying fellow feeling. Enemies 'cannot engage in the struggle without beginning to engage with each other, mutually interpenetrating each other, and so gradually coming to stand on common ground, having adopted the same rules of play'.[278]

In order correctly to grasp Péguy's understanding of the Christian *enracinement* in the natural order, we must beware of seeing in him a romantic yearning for a 'new Middle Ages'. Above all, he had no wish to preserve 'traditions'; he had nothing in common with the *Action Française*. He was a revolutionary socialist who traced the path back to the ultimate ground of the human so as to create a genuine breakthrough into the future.[279] There is nothing in the foundations of human existence that we can afford to overlook, and it is precisely in these inmost structures that the Christian God has revealed himself. Christian heroism in its faith, hope and love draws out

[275] B 129, 1071–1073, 1083.

[276] B 536f., 572.

[277] B 1162–1163.

[278] D 69.

[279] D 1377.

of the natural man what he cannot of himself attain. 'Heroism is essentially a skill, a condition and an act of sound health, good spirits, joy, even merriment, almost of frivolous playfulness—in any case, an act of pleasure, well-being, an act of the unconstrained, relaxed, productive person, of security, self-mastery, self-possession, almost (so to speak) of custom and routine, of good manners. It is without any posturing or ulterior motive, and, above all, without any self-pity; without sighs and lamentations, without the wish to win a reward. The person who only wants to win is a bad player. What makes a great player is the will to play. He would far rather play without winning than win without playing.'[280] This is how Péguy saw the Christian hero Polyeucte, the martyr for Christ, who matches his wits against the highest representative of classical wisdom in a contest that engages his whole life, in an 'immense unprotectedness. He has no cloak of virtue, of our own poor and false virtues; only faith, hope and love. It happens so seldom that the advocates of a good cause are free from anxiety. There is no accumulation of proofs, no piling up of furniture. Clothes and weapons are cast aside in grace. He does not devalue the world to exalt himself, and therein he is very sharply distinct from a certain tendency in Pascal. He gives the temporal order its due.'[281] This allows him the possibility of being superior even within the terms of the pagan system, since the pagan can only make judgments within his own system.[282] What Péguy admires in the Christian classical culture of the martyrs and the great doctors of the Church, in mediaeval chivalry and in the Christian classicism of Corneille is the health and joy of true involvement—life as a 'noble game' in the presence of God,[283] a game that concerns the most serious matters of life, though not in a spirit of Kantian and Kierkegaardian anguish, not in a bitter conflict between 'duty and inclination';[284] there is at most the conflict in Corneille between honour and love.[285] It is undertaken as a matter of course in free human involvement, undertaken out of a sense of decency,[286] without making any problem over 'recompense' (which is a concern that always tends toward a spirit of resentment). 'The man who allows full play to prayer and sacrament only to exempt himself in the time of war from work and, action is breaking the divine ordering of things. It may be generally accepted, a fine and profound thing, to beg in prayer, through prayer, for the crown of good fortune on an enterprise, to pray for the outcome of a battle (an outcome dependent only on the event); but equally it is stupid and subversive of obedience to want the good Lord to work on our side and to have the audacity to ask this of him. To ask for victory without the desire to fight—this would be indecent'.[287] So, from *Le Cid* to *Polyeucte*, we see 'the development of this wholly youthful and chivalrous generosity toward another kind of youthful generosity: the generosity of sanctity'[288]—all this in the hiddenness of the everyday life, of the petty tasks of Nazareth, yet done in such a way that the new task of love for God and man is performed also;[289] in the hiddenness of caring for the sheep and the life of prayer at Domrémy, out of which emerge the battles and the great martyrdoms.[290] It is precisley the Christian task of representation that presupposes this rootedness in the hidden. 'And it must be said that the *Mystères* of M. Péguy would lose their entire crowning glory if this mystical representation ceased even for a single moment to be the great inner regulative principle of his work.'[291] Thus, once again, everything rests upon what has already been noted once—the vertical network of solidarity (between the tip that appears and the hidden base, people and prince, people and genius, action and prayer)—and it is this network alone that is 'perfect communism'.[292]

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[280] A 1198–1199.

[281] B 1387.

[282] B 1397–1401.

[283] B 1380.

[284] B 1382–1385.

[285] B 1382.

[286] B 1187–1189.

Péguy's struggle against the *monde moderne* is also a struggle against the total deracination of the natural order and thus, consequently, of the Christian man; this does not need to be spelled out in detail. It is in its origins the denial of vertical solidarity,[293] the loss of the dark and invisible roots, the shift to the horizontal, the displacement of *mystique* by *politique*,[294] of personal and natural values by money.[295] It is the dissolution of all exactitude of living into mathematics and thus into the mechanistic[296] and a false notion of *égalité*;[297] the replacing of resilient material (wood and stone), which educates man in respect for things by the weak and shapeless paste of concrete, which adapts itself in characterless fashion to everything;[298] the replacing of the classical geometrical idea of equivalence by the idea of interchangeable elements.[299] It also means the advent of the concept of 'progress', which is properly at home only in the quantitative sphere but now draws into itself the whole meaning of existence, so that this meaning now can be only in 'results' and 'achievements',[300] resulting in an overall loss of contact with that reality with which alone the philosopher, no less than the Christian, wants to deal: those essentially poor souls who can never achieve a condition of measurable progress.[301] It means internationalism, but internationalism as loss, because we no longer know the value of the homeland;[302] pacifism, but pacifism as loss, because we have lost the skill of the warrior and have become anxious about war, which thus only approaches all the more inevitably.[303]

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[287] B 1188.

[288] B 802.

[289] B 848–863.

[290] B 844f.

[291] B 878.

[292] D 109; B 802, 1060.

[293] A 1138f.

[294] B 506–507.

Finally, what can the Christian do in such a time? He can, of course, do nothing but be the 'individual'. 'The great civilisations are protected by no one so much as the poor and wretched like ourselves; they still are maintained only by beggars like us, by unauthorised individual existences.'[304] Today, everyone is organised in terms of parties, and whoever does not cooperate is left out in the cold. 'I have been banned by the Catholics for having become a Freethinker, by the bourgeois for being a socialist and later on by the antisemites for being a Dreyfus supporter; one day I shall be banned by the socialist party for being an anarchist, and I have no doubt at all that later still some anarchist will condemn me for being a bourgeois (1902).'[305] And yet it is always 'personalities', not concentrations of power, that, again and again, achieve fruitful results, outside and inside the Church. Such people must make good out of their own plenitude what the age has taken away and is no more able to supply them with. 'Those who were all too richly endowed with goods remained sterile. And we, who had received nothing, had to find in our own selves a fertility that came only from our own selves.'[306] Solitary to the end, we must be the fathers of the future; our utmost degree of involvement occurs in the hope for our children.[307] 'And this is not one of the most secret of mysteries, for everyone knows it and simply no one talks about it: I mean that sense of being ashamed, perhaps less of shame than of despair, this terrible sense of responsibility that is part of fatherhood, for having brought children into the world. There is almost a kind of remorse, which one will never again be rid of. We want to protect ourselves and, out of a deep need for compensation and forgiveness, we become bold and courageous, so that we would now do anything for our children.'[308]

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[295] B 179, 1074, 1474–1476.

[296] B 813–814.

[297] D 252–254.

[298] E 20–36.

[299] E 50–85.

[300] E 85–98.

[301] E 88.

[302] A 924.

[303] A 819f., 828f., 835f., 848; D 58f., 65–71; A 920f.; B 41, 1161, 1198.

[304] B 808.

[305] A 441.

Here Péguy reveals something that is at the very heart of all living traditions, which never get off the ground without some such almost despairing act of self-giving—something fresh, and yet, surpassing all familiar and routine tradition, primordially Christian. By means of this self-giving he wants to recreate what is of elementary importance. In his earliest years he refers to it as '*refaire un public*'.[309] Later, he makes the more important statement: '*Ce qu'il faut refaire avant tout, c'est la paroisse.*'[310] He was never willing to rely for this on the clergy, on the official life of the Church. '*Les catholiques n'on jamais soutenu leurs hommes.*'[311] '*Il faut se méfier des curés. Ils n'ont pas la foi, ou si peu.*'[312] This assertion is broadly confirmed by the posthumous *Véronique*. Péguy laid the blame for the de-Christianising of the modern world almost exclusively at the door of the clergy and the religious. They have spiritualised everything in Christianity. They have betrayed the earth. 'In their ignorance of the temporal order there is a great deal of unbelief, a great deal of pride as well, no doubt, and a great deal of laziness.' They have underrated 'the essentially complementary, indispensable, completing element', the created world,[313] and thus they are bad workmen; they 'sabotage the eternal gardens, trampling down the garden of the Lord—what little still remains of it—with elephantine feet'. 'The dreadful thing is that they are never willing to voice their *mea culpa* and that, by a curious reversal of roles, those who should have been praying for the world are precisely those who will one day stand in need of the world's intercession for them.'[314] 'In all their piety (in prayer and sacrament) they forget the havoc they have wrought, forget it dishonestly, obscurely and yet clearly, cunningly, forget it and deny it . . . and so they have made null the effect of so many cloistered lives, so many prayers and sacraments. So eternity miscarries in time, because those entrusted with the authority of the eternal have forgotten the temporal, underrated and despised it.'[315]

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[306] B 934.

[307] B 1244.

[308] B 1245.

[309] A 467.

[310] L 164.

[311] B 1091.

[312] L 138.

We can now understand what Péguy means by 'civil war in the Church', a struggle more terrible and unhappy than any other. It is not simply that today, in contrast to the mediaeval situation, every Christian is in the forefront of conflict, that the decisive battles have to be fought out in each individual life and no safe interior sphere remains,[316] since everything now falls under the 'fortunes of war'; it is that, against the Bergsonian process of petrifaction, against the overgrowth, of organization and (as the unfinished conclusion of Péguy's last work, the *Note Conjointe*, puts it with incomparably delicate humour) against the dominance of the milestone over the road itself and the love of travel—against all these an interior struggle must be kindled, a struggle that 'even if it turns out victoriously, still comes into the category of the infinitely regrettable, the category of unholy warfare.' But since 'Jesus has to wage both wars at once, the inner war against the Jews and the external war against the Romans', the Christian even in his struggles is still part of the same axis.[317] Joan, who does indeed begin her warfare as an 'individual', who fights it through in the powerlessness and

[313] B 355–356.

[314] B 363–365.

[315] B 366–367.

[316] B 906–915.

[317] B 1409.

defencelessness of Jesus himself, stands yet again as the patroness of the modern Christian.[318] Péguy's whole life was lived under the sign of war. He was well aware (from 1905 onward) that a world war was approaching, and he held himself in readiness for it. What was required of him was the hardest thing of all: to exercise the virtues of peacetime and of wartime simultaneously, the virtues both of the child at play and of the man at war.[319]

2. *Enracinement* in the soil of time and history is no more than the complementary aspect of what has gone before. But an unexpected profundity appears as it becomes clear that all the highest aspects of humanity can be realised in this medium, which does not simply threaten them, but ineluctably destroys them. Historicity, the moment, the event—these fundamental and constantly recurring concepts are not taken in a Kierkegaardian, and certainly not in an idealistic, sense as the vertical breaking of eternal meaning and activity into the stream of time, but in their classical and Catholic sense, as categories of transient time that bring wealth precisely in and through their poverty, true being in their insubstantiality, Godward plenitude in their deathbound emptiness. And if these ideas of time and history clothe themselves once more in a Bergsonian conceptuality, the veil is here more transparent than elsewhere. *Durée réelle* (as opposed to alienated chronological time) does not, properly speaking, exist on earth; it is for Péguy a theological, not a philosophical category. All actual time is a state of alienation from divine, paradisial time; it is time declining and hastening toward death, the fateful process of ageing, *vieillissement*.

Nevertheless, there is a confluence of two distinct basic conceptions, each of which predominates at a certain period of Péguy's life. The first period of ethically heroic socialism is dominated by the notion that, amidst all the official, organised history, these are points of an absolute clarity and compression in events, sources and wellsprings where man must abide and from which he must live and learn to interpret history in prophetic fashion. The decision of the Dreyfusards was an exemplary case of this,[320] a holding fast to the 'infinite value of the real presence'[321] (and that against the current of a historical process declining into official, mediocre and generally mendacious judgments) in the effort to return upstream toward the sources. *Remonter* is the basic word here,[322] and it approaches more the Augustinian than the Bergsonian concept of memory. 'History is essentially horizontal, remembrance essentially vertical.'[323] To think 'against the stream' means to persevere in the examination of conscience (as against one's peculiar propensity for forgetting).[324] This pair of concepts is extended in *L'Esprit de Système*, where any process of actualisation directed toward a possible systematisation is seen as already a declension toward the unreal; while true (realistic) philosophy is the effort to stick faithfully to reality and thus to make itself, as concept and expression, redundant.[325] Thus from the start Péguy denies the possibility of belonging to anyone's philosophical school: '*les philosophes n'ont pas d'élèves*',[326] while the systematisers, who have sacrificed the reality of truth, inevitably ramify into innumerable schools and subschools—Scholastics, Kantians, Hegelians—whose insubstantiality provides inexhaustible fodder for Péguy's wit. The formalism of the schools and of modern scientific and learned enterprises, however, is the 'final distortion' of the true and eternal philosophical problem, 'the ancient Platonic and pre-Platonic idea, the ancient and venerable idea of age-old humanity, the Indian, Brahmanic and Buddhist idea, the idea of the people of Israel, that there is in fact a difference, a distance, a margin between being and the phenomenal world, and that therefore it is necessary to undertake the journey back to the source [*remontée*], a journey of transcendence and dialectic. The metaphysical task is to grasp the more truly real under the forms of the phenomenally real, a metaphysical *approfondissement* that must be carried through with infinite reverence', and that is the opposite of 'modern scientific enquiry in which the phenomenally real is replaced by a less phenomenal ideal of truth'.[327]

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[318] B 1018.

[319] B 819, 1251–1255.

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[320] D 220–238.

[321] D 199.

[322] D 211f.; S 150; B 951.

[323] B 270.

[324] B 642.

[325] S 10; E 14.

[326] A 86.

[327] S 238–240.

A second variation on the theme follows on the first one, especially in the *Clio* books. The ancient Clio, muse of history, can never, as a writer of historical records, lay bare the origins of events. 'Reality' in its 'inexhaustibility' is her 'enemy';[328] Clio herself can never offer more than an echo of this, since she is subject to the laws of the ageing process, the laws of attrition; she has to let things pass away and so is inevitably cruel and unjust.[329] She can at best offer 'truth', never 'reality'.[330] And precisely in so far as she is the process of recollection, she is the one who obscures the origins of things, the primordial, unimpeded vision, such as the child, and perhaps, exceptionally, the genius possess.[331] Of any historical achievement we can ask, 'How old is it?'—that is, 'How far is it from the source?'[332] or even, 'At what *kairos* did this work enter history?' A play that has no real premiere cannot survive in a living way.[333] In what epoch did a genius embed himself? Was this embedding a successful and profitable thing for him, or was it located between the wheels of two overlapping epochs?[334] Was it able to bring its own ascending progress into line with the ascent of a whole period?[335] One way or another, however, we are debarred from a Faustian lingering over the unique moment;[336] we are waves in the ocean of transience, and the greatest prospect for us is still the threefold peak of human existence: *la mort, la misère, le risque*.[337] This is why the men of Antiquity, though subject to destiny, are greater than their gods; they have the consecrated status that mortality bestows. And thus Christians are ill-advised if they shield themselves against the risk of death behind a screen of nontemporal Platonic ideas or nontemporal modern rationality. God has put his own self at risk in the medium of death, and so all rationality and all consciousness of God as well hangs upon this event. 'Man must take the risk of freedom; and so, in the last analysis, it must remain a risk, and we must return ever anew to the theme of Pascal's wager. Thus Christianity has never produced proofs in

[328] B 95.

[329] B 113–119.

[330] B 28.

[331] B 311–312.

[332] B 331–340.

[333] B 159–163.

[334] B 260–262, 296–298.

[335] B 298–301.

[336] B 665.

[337] B 257.

the sense given to the word by gross men; its best and only proof is just that it offers none.' In this way, the world after the death of Jesus may be no different, no better, no further advanced, since proofs of this kind would have destroyed the completely free character of the wager, which expresses at once the *misère* and the *grandeur* of man.[338] Clio can never penetrate to this level of inner reality, she cannot grasp it. She remains a stranger to destiny,[339] she is only the 'ageing process' of time;[340] so, on the one hand, history is the replacing of life by self-propagating recollections,[341] and thus again, not a genuine remembering but the replacing of memory by documents.[342] Men, the more insubstantial they themselves become, seek to understand this aggregation as progress; they dream, with Hegel and Renan, of a divine consciousness in process of coming to be, a consciousness that would equal the totality of historical occurrence. 'They secularise the Last Judgment and turn it into the paltry verdict of history. And for this they have sought me out, Clio, the most wretched of creatures, the princess of the past.'[343] Yet whence comes this senseless, deluded hope in the historical future—whence if not from a reflection of grace and eternity: 'and perhaps God loves misdirected virtue more than no virtue at all'? But God is constantly demolishing intrahistorical hopes so as to disclose the ultimate ground of them all—the roots of time and the past in a reality that has no ground. And if Christians still shrink back so much before such a prospect, they must enter upon it—history itself compels them.

Looking back on *Clio*, Péguy hoped to have shown 'that there is no kind of opposition between culture and faith, but far more a deep relationship, a deep nourishment that faith receives from culture, even a vocation for faith drawn from culture'.[344] Both rest upon the mystery of death, that monstrous presence to which no man can accustom himself; for every man, death is always a new thing—the death of friend and loved one, of father and mother, a death that really impinges upon a life. In death there is an insoluble mystery before which spirit no less than

[338] B 479–480.

[339] B 261.

[340] B 266–267.

[341] B 268.

[342] B 269–270.

[343] B 221.

[344] B 966–967.

flesh recoils, before which even God himself recoiled on the Mount of Olives.[345] And if time, like space, gives life a measure and a limit, it is still only in the mode of a groundless reality from which Platonism is powerless to save us. The whole modern world is one great campaign against risk and uncertainty; as a money-dominated world, it is a world of life insurance. 'The modern world as a whole is a world that thinks only about its own old age. It is a monstrous old people's home, an institution for pensioners. In economics, politics and constitutional law, as in ethics, psychology and metaphysics, we should, if only we had better eyes, be able to see one thing and one thing only: how much this terrible need for peace and quiet is invariably a principle of enslavement. It is always freedom that has to pay the bill. It is always money that is master. The glorious insecurity of the present is always sacrificed to the security of the moment immediately following.' That is the real psychology of the contemporary idea of progress: man would like to live his life in the future, to live in advance of the event, so making his present into his past.[346] Taking thought for the morrow, saving for the morrow, actually means throwing away its freedom, castrating its fertility and potency, which are the supreme blessings for human beings. 'Every financial transaction is an expense of spirit; the only genuine miser, storing up his treasures, is the lover. That is the most profound teaching of the gospel. And we are so much under the domination of money, the Antichrist, that even when we do not openly name it, we constantly take its name for granted.' In this commercial world, everything is commercial, even metaphysics, and theology; they too fall into line and cease to have any true presence in their own right. Christianity, like everything else, is detemporalized and thereby deprived of its 'salt'. Avarice in the form of anxiety about tomorrow is the lord of all the world. The drying up of the heart makes itself felt both spiritually and temporally. The person who rejects the fluidity of the living heart, preferring the rigidity of money and conceptual thought, has already chosen the other kind of fluidity, the liquefaction of the corpse.[347] 'The question is simply what in any given world is a commercial commodity and what is not. It is by this standard that every world will be judged.'[348] And yet Clio looks with an indulgent and absolving eye upon mankind taking flight into the future. Who knows, she says, whether, in this desacralising of hope, the true divine hope may not yet prevail in spite of all? Grace travels by tortuous routes; 'if you turn it from the door, it will climb in through the window. The men God wants, he has; the humanity Jesus sought to redeem, God's grace has given to him.'[349]

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[345] B 439–441. [346] B 1438–1441. [347] B 1422–1450.

Here is the starting point for the third modification of Péguy's idea of temporality. It dominates his last years and is crystallized in his massive poem *Eve*. This modification is the essentially Christian variation on the theme. Clio, the wonderful, elegiac and witty spokeswoman of the middle period, was a personage of classical mythology, an abstraction. But Eve, the mother of fallen mankind, is a real person, and she as an individual has experienced the difference between primordial, paradisial time and the time of a fallen and sinful world. She both possesses and constitutes the measure of such difference. Yet is is not Eve who speaks, but Jesus who speaks to her, to 'the much-beloved mother of his mother',[350] about the time that is lost and that is restored in him; here Péguy's work is also the theological redemption of the unredeemed epic of Proust. It is, to put it with precision, the only major attempt (after Augustine's *Civitas Dei*) to deal poetically with the three theologically distinguished existential conditions (*katastaseis*) of actual humanity: the primitive state at the time of innocence; the sinful state of the time after the Fall, a time flowing toward death and waste; and the redeemed state in Christ and Mary, who take up the whole world's heritage and bring home the harvest of death to the Father. Péguy's uniquely felicitous touch (whose internal necessity we shall later trace) lay in the fact that he treated these conditions not, as did Augustine, in a theoretical way, but in the situation of dialectical solidarity between Eve and Jesus; and also that, unlike Dante, he did not conceive the love that governs all things on the scale of a human Eros enlarged to cosmic dimensions, but in terms of the all-surpassing Agape of the Cross—though this itself, in the dialectical solidarity that exists between the second Adam and the first Eve and because of the perfect *enracinement* of grace in nature, issues in a unique natural-supernatural tenderness, which prevails throughout the whole epic. Nothing has yet been said in explicitly Christian terms, but behind this fresh aesthetic possibility stands a theology that opens up new possibilities, a theology that can be established with precision. It begins with the evocation of the 'atmosphere' ('*ce climat de la grace*') of the paradisial creation—fully earthly, yet completely pure, a completeness beyond any possibility of addition, yet above all a temporal reality, the passage and the rhythm of the seasons, a dying into new life.[351] The eye of God rests upon all, the eye of a God who is ever young and yet eternal, who watches with love over the youthfulness of the world and time. Eve has known all this, this 'cloak of tenderness cast about the shoulders of the world'.[352] Everything was a source, a spring, and there was no need to save, to channel resources; everything was loving faith, requiring no dogma, no scripture, no formula or rule;[353] everything was abundant plenitude, and there was no need of 'mine' and 'thine'.[354] Then came sin (its form is of no interest to the poet—only its consequences), and with it plenitude disappeared, existence became meagre and Eve became a housekeeper, a steward, a provider. *Ranger* becomes the catchword for hundreds of verses: the process of orderly provision for house, laundry, children, husband, everything, even God himself, is carried on upon a foundation of anxiety for their sakes, and, on the other hand, in order to control poverty and forget care. 'Women, I tell you, you would look after God himself if he should drop into your house one day; you would look after the wrath of God and grace and forgiveness of sins and the host and the chrism and the viaticum. . . .[355] The endless work of tidying up is an effort to cope with an essential disorder, and it proves in this very process to be itself a thing of futility and impotence and thus an expression of that same disorder. Eve as the one who 'tidies up', as the calculating housewife, here takes over the characteristics of Clio; she sets in order the *temple de mémoire*,[356] taking care always and above all of what has happened, even of the death of Christ, as events of past history:

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[348] B 1451.

[349] B 211–222.

[350] C 718 (st. 93. In what follows, *Eve*'s quatrains are referred to by page number, so that even the incomplete quatrains (1226 and 1300f.) are included in the sequence along with those projected but never actually written.

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[351] C 707–711 (st. 9, 15, 17f.).

[352] C 716 (st. 70).

[353] C 723 (st. 126–129).

[354] C 728 (st. 173f.).

[355] C 726 (st. 151–156).

Et vous rangez le mort: après qu'il est bien mort.
Et vous rangez les temps: quand ils sont revolus.
Et vous rangez les jours: quand ils sont absolus.
Vous rangez le vaisseau: quand il est dans le port.[357]

Eve classifies and quantifies, and at the end of the day it is from her activity that the *monde moderne* too will spring. But meanwhile her work of 'looking after' and providing is only an expression of the poverty of contingent existence. She knows the human condition and its flight from God, she knows what man has taken on board '*vers le déportement d'un éternel exil*',[358] she knows the fruitlessness of man's endeavour—and she has to incorporate all this into her domestic accounts, everything, even eternal salvation, which, however, cannot be part of any reckoning.

Éternelle économe, éternelle ouvrière,
Vous rangez le salut, quand il est écoulé.
O femme médicale et femme infirmière
Vous épongez le sang, après qu'il a coulé.[359]

Here Mary herself takes on the features of Eve, the primordial mother '*qui a pu ranger la muette agonie*'. Eve indefatigably sets in order the unending fatigue and futility of the world, the futility of buying and selling, of commercial value or lack of value;[360] she picks up what is left of the trampled flowers after the procession has made its way over them. 'You gather up grace when it has been spent, you gather up the spring when it has run dry.'[361] But how will the housewife of the temporal order survive the judgment of God with all this refuse heap around her? Suddenly, we have a great vision of the way toward this judgment,[362] a curiously sunless, entirely earthy vision, an awakening of the earth, in which the dead have first to get used once again to their flesh—verses that could have been written by Rilke. Again, and more urgently, comes Jesus' call to Eve—'*O mon âme, ô ma mère*'[363]—and now, when the judgment has been revealed as that which lays bare ultimate discrepancies, the question is one of the intrahistorical discrepancy in the human condition: between the task of setting things in order and the reality of disorder that it deals with, between calculations and the fact that all calculation is resolved in God alone and in God's uncalculating grace. Here there is a clear passing shot at Anselm's teaching, and Eve stands for the earthbound, theologising Church:

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[356] C 735 (st. 224); but *cf.* C 784 (st. 617), where Clio is the 'Temple of Memory', since she alone remembers the origin of things.

[357] C 759 (st. 420).

[358] C 734 (st. 214).

[359] C 741 (st. 273).

[360] C 744 (st. 295–297).

[361] C 746 (st. 313, 316).

Vous pouvez calculer, voici l'encre et la table,
A quel taux j'ai prêté le sang que j'ai donné . . .
Vous avez pu compter, implacable régente
Ce que j'avais tenté d'avec ce que j'ai pu . . .
Vous avez pu compter à combien revient l'homme,
Et qu'il fallut payer du sang même d'un Dieu.[364]

Everything in this unfathomable vanity of time is 'wormeaten' and hollow: law, virtue, morality, religion. Everywhere, man in his failure wants to manage God, to outwit God, to come to an exactly defined relationship with God; but God's ever-flowing love is the sole truly exact reality, and Eve's calculations will always be hopeless in face of that. And she knows,

. . . que l'être de Dieu remonte incessament
A son niveau de force à la même altitude,
Et qu'il fait de lui-même et son redoublement
Et sa force éternelle et son exactitude.[365]

Everything that man is able to take in hand is in the grip of futility, decline, the loss of the inheritance of past events. In this respect, *Eve* is a recapitulation of Augustine, Anselm, Luther and Pascal.[366] But what Jesus says to Eve, the '*reine de disgrâce*',[367] has such tenderness of filial love about it that it presupposes something very different from what the theologians of original sin have as their stock in trade. This fresh element is thrown into sharp relief by the second part of the poem: it is the path toward the Incarnation seen from below (what had earlier been described in the name of Victor Hugo) and, following from this and building upon this terrestrial solidarity, the pathos of the Greek fathers in their sermons on the descent into Hell. The tone in which Péguy's Jesus addresses his first mother is immediately reminiscent of the tone in which the dead saviour in Hades addresses the submerged figure of his first father, Adam: 'Thou first image of my father, what dost thou here?'[368] Suddenly in stanza 943 the tone shifts abruptly: '*Heureux ceux qui sont morts pour la terre charnelle!*'[369]

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[362] C 748–758 (st. 327–411).

[363] C 761 (st. 433).

[364] C 760–761 (st. 426, 428, 430).

[365] C 764 (st. 455; the next stanza replaces *redoublement* with *retriplement*, alluding to the threefold generative power of God). On law, C 768; on virtue, 768, on morality within the sphere of original sin, 790–794.

All those among the sons of Eve who have fallen in a just war for the sake of their homeland, the heroes who have perished sacrificially, they are 'an image and a first beginning of the house of God', they are 'the body of the *Civitas Dei*'. 'This pledge to the earth is the beginning of, and the first attempt at an eternal troth.' And when, as the 'mighty vanquished', they return again to the 'plastic clay' out of which 'God's thumb has shaped them', then their reunion with the ground of all is a sign of hope and promise for the whole being of the world within the life of God.[370] It is the classical and biblical lament for needlessly shed blood, the celebration of the lives of heroes, taken up into the sphere of redemption. 'May they not be weighed with a primitive severity, by fleshless standards or with eternal weights; may it still be remembered that they had blood flowing in their veins, *un sang artériel*.'[371] And in the same tones Jesus adds his own blood, shed just as humanly, just as pointlessly, just as heroically in company with the hero fallen in war[372]—shed blood, shed word, shed life of time and eternity together, inexhaustibly real and sacramental.[373] And now the endlessly flowing intercession of Jesus to his Father begins, the Father who has 'moulded from earth and clay and mire' these his brothers and so cannot be surprised to find them so earthy, so soiled with clay and mire.[374] Here for the first time theology returns to its home port with Irenaeus of Lyons. And the inextricable interpenetration of nature and grace is celebrated in solemn verses:

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[366] C 770–771 (st. 506–513).

[367] C 773 (st. 532).

[368] *Cf.* for instance the homily of pseudo-Epiphanius, PG 43, 440–446.

[369] C 800.

[370] C 800–802 (st. 743–761).

[371] C 805 (st. 784).

Car le surnaturel est lui-même charnel,
Et l'arbre de la grâce est raciné profond
Et plonge dans le sol et cherche jusqu'au fond,
Et l'arbre de la race est lui-même éternel.

'And eternity is itself within time, and time itself is timeless time. And the tree of grace and the tree of nature have their roots so fraternally intertwined that they are one single essence, one figure. The same blood flows through the veins of both, the same glory flows through the sufferings of both. Each soul that finds salvation saves its flesh also. Grace and nature have bound themselves together in so fraternal a knot that both have souls and both have bodies, both sail on the same ocean, both cradles float upon the same abyss of nothingness. And neither can perish without the other dying also, and neither can survive without the other surviving also.'[375]

An unexpected image of Christmas appears—'even Jesus is the fruit of a mother's womb':[376] the child, dreaming of Paradise, is only milk and blood, dew and wine (*rosée*), and he sleeps, sheltered in his mother's arms, the sleep of the source of all things, for all begins in the fruitfulness of sleep.[377] He is sheltered too by the warm breath of the two animals, those hirsute representatives and delegates of Mother Nature, of the cosmos in which God has made his bed; Péguy lets his humour play tenderly upon them in a long litany.[378] And as God slumbers within nature, so he does in history; and as Péguy lets Joan of Arc's whole destiny be determined in advance in the contemplation of Domrémy, so he makes the history of the world focus itself proleptically around the sleeping heir. He lies in the crib like Moses in the bullrushes; he is the heir of the Old Covenant[379] and of much more besides: the whole ancient world, Egypt, Greece and Rome; priesthood; wisdom; world power. All their sacrifices, all their speculation, all their battles, all were done for him. Here Péguy develops a true renaissance *Trionfo*, but one with the theological point that in Jesus the world's movement toward nothingness and death is arrested, brought to a standstill and turned in its right and proper direction; from this point on, the movement is upward, toward the source, which has itself been manifest within history in Jesus.[380] Rome, the midpoint of the historical world, is established afresh in him, and if the roads of the world radiate outward from Rome like the cracks in a glass mirror into which someone has thrust the shaft of a spear, so too the roads of the world of grace radiate from the heart that was pierced by a Roman spear. On this theme, the lines flow freely.[381] It is the great theme of the Church fathers and of Dante that here finds its haven and comes to rest, a theme that Péguy had long sought since for him the *praeparatio evangelica* of classical Antiquity seemed to lie not simply on the side of the spiritual and philosophical, the Hellenic world, but also in the political and juridical and strategic world, in the mastering even of these apparently supremely worldly spheres in the world's redemption.[382] Nonetheless, he did not ignore the distinct role of Byzantium, and he illuminated the relation of the Eastern and Western worlds in this respect with a few lapidary remarks.[383] But above all, in this motif of the Roman roads, he did not omit to note how much Rome, with its lance striking at the heart of Jesus, its own new centre, pierced its own secular power. The roads went out from Rome,

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[372] C 805 (st. 789–799).

[373] C 807–808 (st. 805–813).

[374] C 811–813 (st. 837–846); and on this subject see also the stanzas (298–418) from the posthumous material (*Suite d'Ève*), C 1242–1255, and again, C 1290–1292 (st, 729–750).

[375] C 813–814 (st. 847–861). Alongside this runs the theme to which widespread allusion is made in the posthumous material, the notion of body and soul as a married couple. Body is the knight-errant, boldy embarking on earthly enterprise, soul is distracted by the things of Heaven, recalling its origin in God: both together constitute the anthropological image of the central nuptial union, that of nature and grace. So the Platonic inheritance is conscripted into the service of a quite un-Platonic theology (C 1285f., 1292f., 1295f., 1298f.).

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[376] C 815 (st. 862).

[377] C 833 (st. 1006f.).

[378] C 822–832 (st. 925–1005).

[379] C 837–840 (st. 1042–1062).

[380] C 834–869 (st. 1014–1299).

[381] In the posthumous material, C 1210–1211, 1213–1218, 1231, 1255–1268, 1283–1285, 1294–1295, 1301–1307, 1314–1315.

Comme si d'une lance on eût frappé le monde,
Ainsi qu'on a frappé le flanc de Jésus-Christ,
Il s'était étoilé d'une étoile profonde
Et des rayons d'un cercle inscrit et circonscrit.

Et comme si l'injure et la lance romaine
Etait redescendue au cœur même de Rome,
Ainsi que le parjure et la faiblesse humaine
Etait redescendue au cœur même de l'homme. . . .[384]

Thus the Dantesque theme has its sting drawn: the old Rome was and still is a precondition, but one that enters the new city only when transfixed by its own spear. Jesus is the heir of the ancient world; he is not the heir of the 'modern world', the world that imprisons itself in its own denial of the Christian vision, which has become sterile, rushing forward into the futility of an empty future—the Johannine *kosmos*. After Péguy's maledictions against this world have been wearily recited,[385] he concludes with the 'parallel deaths' of two saints, Geneviève and Joan, who point in exemplary fashion to the route by which humanity returns to Paradise. Both are shepherdesses of peasant stock, signifying what Péguy so often turned his mind to (and which Thérèse of Lisieux was equally concerned to pursue): the duality of the road to salvation—being sheltered from the world, and being proved and tried by the world; the child's innocence, and the attrition of suffering.[386]

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[382] A 1383; B 250, 348f., 803–805, 1163–1165; L 188, 192.

[383] B 337–339.

[382] C 1231 (st. 201–202).

[385] C 869–929 (st. 1300–1778).

[386] B 1410, C 255–257.

But they both are equally of the people and the soil, and in each the significance of the earth itself is once again glorified, that significance that can bring fleshly man, even the saint, in his form, dimension, limit and contour into the absolute sphere, into the reality that eternally abides:

Or la terre est chargée, et c'est la terre seule,
De faire long âge et l'âge révolu,
Et de faire une enfant et de faire une aïeule,
Et de marquer les bords de notre âge absolu . . .

'and to mark out the frontiers of our actual age, so that none can alter, none can undo, the curve that it describes. So it is the earth that triumphs at last and that pleads for us in the trial of our ageing, the earth that disposes of us and provides our record and registration.'

Rien ne peut suppléer cet enregistrement
Et cette inscription et cette expérience.[387]

The poem to Eve does not fail to recognise the role of Mary. The long sequence on the 'only two bodies' that, without being dissolved into cosmic nature, travel back along the road to Paradise, the bodies of Jesus and Mary—all this clearly emphasises the dogmatic position of Mary over against Eve.[388] If Jesus is the God-Man and thus the source of all things made present in the temporal order, then Mary is the unfallen creature and thus Paradise made present in a fallen temporal order. In *Eve*, Jesus speaks with Eve, eternal time with fallen time. But in the six great *Chartres* poems, which must be considered as Péguy's supreme artistic achievement, he appeals from the fallen temporal order to the presence of unfallen time in the holiness of Mary.[389] Chartres, standing amidst the limitless golden cornfields of the Beauce, is a symbol of the harvest of the world come to fruition around a Paradise made present. Péguy, the weary but indefatigable pilgrim on his solitary way, established and initiated the pilgrimage that today many thousands of Parisian students and intellectuals still follow. His prayers are nothing other than the surrender of the earthly, which can find no ultimate measure in itself, to that which is right without qualification, the measure of Paradise and the fallen world that gives to all things their true direction and their peace. It is sacrifice as submission, as the abandonment of all now meaningless rebellion and bitterness, all the disorder of the covetous and presumptious heart, all anxiety in the face of death and judgment. The request is not for an alleviation of suffering, but rather for the maintenance of fidelity and honour in service. Everything becomes crystal clear and plain down to its foundations, every line is dominated by a penitent desire for transparency, like the Marian canto at the end of the *Commedia*, and like many lines of Eichendorff's.

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[387] C 934–937 (st. 1821, 1825–27, 1836, 1843).

[388] C 1290 (st. 728), 1296–1298 (st. 788–805), 1312–1313.

[389] *Présentation de la Beauce à Notre Dame de Chartres* (C 676–687), *Prière de Résidence*, *Prière de Demande*, *Prière de Confidence*, *Prière de Report*, *Prière de Déférence* (C 688–704).

Eve and Mary in their reciprocity determine the manner in which Péguy understands the Christian *enracinement* in time and history. The loss of this in the 'modern world' is self-evident; the long invectives of Péguy against contemporary idols need only be mentioned by their titles. Against the humility of this *enracinement*, the modern man, in flight from his roots, sets the concept of evolution—a German import, according to Péguy, resting on the shallow modern interpretation of a quantification of reality,[390] whose internal contradictions are set forth with particular penetration in the fragment *Brunetière*.[391] 'Neither life nor death, neither love nor hate, neither law nor morals, neither homeland nor family, neither marriage nor children, neither salvation nor suffering, and above all neither destitution nor poverty have declined in market value.' Nor will they ever do so as long as humanity exists.[392] Who would seriously want to improve on a child?[393] After Péguy has exposed the reader—without comment—to pages and pages of Renan's fantasies of the future it is enough for him, leaving aside questions of 'interplanetary morality', to select as a counterpoise to such fantasies two of the major atrocities of modern civilisation: 'Europe's decay has spread to the whole world.'[394] 'Naturally, after the invention of telephotography mankind will invent new "-ographies" and "-phones", each more "tele" than the last, and we shall be able to whistle round the earth in next to no time—though still only around the temporal earth. But still, if Plato had never existed, would you be able to invent him, do you think?'[395] Who is there today who still thinks about philosophy? Sociology is the slogan of the new Sorbonne, the slogan of 'exact human science', which means fundamentally a comprehensive cataloguing of facts, statistics. Péguy never tires of pouring out his most bitter and caustic wit on such fabrications[396]—bitter, because those people who are secretly glad to see the great philosophical and religious systems of mankind in decline are those who are the true gravediggers of humanism.[397] But there is irony here too, as he exposes the ludicrous nature of an enterprise that seeks to translate the values of sanctity (Joan's, for example) into psychological terms.[398] Let the world progress as it wills; there is in Christianity 'no progress of any kind [Péguy puts these words in bold type]. Only modern men make progress. But we are, once and for all, no more clever than St John Chrysostom.'[399] To improve Christianity would be like wanting to 'improve' the North Pole.

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[390] B 125–127, 400f.; D 35f.

[391] S 177f.

[392] B 1237.

[393] B 324.

[394] A 158; similarly, the discussion that breaks off at A 736.

If we ask about the theological situation of the Christian in this modern world, then, as Péguy sees it, what is left for him to do is roughly what Péguy himself has done: to discern the signs of the times in the power of Christian prophecy and to demonstrate in exemplary fashion in his own person (and that is again a form of prophecy) what Christian *enracinement* means, over against the loss of substantiality in the world around. No more can be required, and the task will need, and will demand and consume, all the resources the witnessing Christian possesses.

3. The third aspect of *enracinement* will be recapitulated only briefly, since its features have already appeared in many respects.

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[395] A 1106.

[396] A 253, 992f., 999f.; S 76–81, 215–217.

[397] A 1108–1110.

[398] B 900–905, 1219.

[399] B 918.

In the midst of the nothingness of time as it dissolves, even in the natural sphere, are resources, wellsprings, which are like a present token of eternal life, or at least a promise and foretaste of redeemed existence. There is the child and his unspoiled world, his freshness, still moist from the divine dawn. It is as if the astrological moment of birth were really decisive: 'We all have only one kind of innate knowledge, the mother-wit that we receive from the world; at the particular place and time at which we come into the world, there our whole existence is forged, there is life, truth, the starting point of our path through life; there is the innermost axis, the mystery and the power.'[400] It is out of these remote areas that there breaks out, around the family table, those unpredictable children's remarks that so entertain the grown-ups, and yet also, at the end of the day, may make them tremble, because they can themselves no longer come up with such words, they cannot even hold them in their memory to retail to others.[401] We have already noticed how close the child for Péguy is to the genius in his capacity to see without illusion and to formulate his vision accordingly. The attempt to abide in and hold to the power of the source usually takes the form of philosophy and so can never be imitated externally in its products but only internally in its striving. Any 'division of labour' here would be absurd, so there can be no 'progress' in philosophy, but only the manifestation of abiding types.[402] And indeed the third point to be taken up in Péguy is the experience of fatherhood, where human thought masters that ungraspable fruitfulness and responsibility that drives the father to any and every degree of involvement on behalf of his children.[403] This 'source experience' is perhaps—even in Péguy—the deepest of all: not the experience of Eros between husband and wife, which in Bloy's work wanders so far off the beaten track and is still confused in Claudel, yet is almost overlooked in Bernanos and Péguy (none of the four had a happy marriage); but the experience that occurs between father and son, which becomes for Péguy the terrestrial point of entry into the inner mystery of the Trinity.

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[400] D 90–91.

[401] C 430–433; *cf.* S 232; B 320.

[402] A 1005–1006; S 99f., 184; A 1092–1097; D 244–245.

[403] B 344, 372f., 1245–1246; C 179–188.

It is with good reason that the Christian consummation of this natural *enracinement* in the springs of life takes the path that leads to the Cross, the humiliation, the thrust that opens up the heart. But once again, it is Péguy's unique contribution always to see the broken heart upon the Cross, the source of all temporal-eternal life, all hope and all innocence, exclusively in relation to its rootedness in natural greatness—to see heroism and holiness as *one* single phenomenon,[404] natural kinship and grace reflected in one another and ultimately one in Christ;[405] the classical hero marked by divine fate and the Christian saint marked by the Father's mission.[406] Christian heroism (as that of Polyeucte, for example) must 'display a natural supernaturality, not a free-floating kind of holiness (which would be a terrible danger), but a heroism that is close to eternal reality yet cleaves to all its temporal origins, to its roots in time, to its rootedness, *enracinement*, in time; a heroism that can indeed tear itself away from all this without uprooting itself and so does not become a merely intellectual thing, but remains fleshly, not only in virtue of its source and starting point, of its whole flavour, its sap of life, but at the very least because it has to fulfil the duty of praying in a representative fashion. Thus this heroism of sanctity always remains fleshly with respect to its process of generation. And that is what constitutes its infinite value, for it is precisely the mystery of incarnation. And that also gives it its accuracy.'[407]

This is exactly the balance sought in the eleven hundred quatrains of the 'Ballad of the Beating Heart'[408] (dating from 1911 but published in 1941), which Péguy had made no further effort to 'organize' (that is, to set in order). In the brief hammer strokes of their heartbeat rhythms, a well-nigh innumerable succession of free-flowing *aperçus* on two constant and basic themes follow one another in turn: the naked, proud, humiliated heart, and the comparison between the four cardinal and the three theological virtues; that is, between classical and natural perfection and its Christian counterpart. The unending garland is plaited in a wonderful fashion with perfect Christian tact and humour; in this garland, the praise of the cardinal virtues is followed each time by a still higher praise of the theological, achievement is followed by grace, exact figure of classical perfection by the unexpected outpouring of grace, seriousness by childlike playfulness.

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[404] A 1200–1203; B 641.
[405] A 1202–1203.
[406] *Cf.* B 532.
[407] B 720.
[408] C 479–618.

Les quatre Cardinales
Sont des gendarmes.
Mais aux Théologales
Le don des larmes.

Aux quatre Cardinales
Les revenus.
Mais les Théologales
Marchent pieds nus.

The heart beats in accordance with this system; it must always both fulfil and transcend, and there can be no transcendence without fulfilment. As in the prayers, so it is in the reflections on French history and in Péguy's secret struggles at the time of his great love. But what always triumphs in his work, as in Corneille's, is honour, the demand for purity.

O cœur tissé de joie
Sur fond de peine,
La joie est une proie,
La peine est reine.

Nous perdrons le bonheur
Virgilien,
Mais perdrons-nous l'honneur
Cornélien.

It is a poem celebrating the heart as centre of life and being, as the pulsating point of unity between flesh and spirit, between pride and humility, between pleasure and pain. The point of equilibrium here is heart, not spirit, and it is in the heart that Péguy finds his jumping off point for venturing an attempt at capturing the very heart of God—the heart that beats between father and child and thus both heart and spirit; the heart that bears the cost of all life out of its own strength and creative resourcefulness, its own original genius; the heart that depends on nothing else for its beating, that never judges or compares, but in its own naked poverty gives protection and security to all things. Quite simply, it is a symbol of any and every creative source, and one that does not remain inaccessibly transcendent, but is alive and active in the midst of our own reality.

There is nothing to be gained in detailing the forms of contemporary degeneration, the withering away of the heart's power by the philosophical and scientific 'systematics' that dries up everything, and attempts to 'write up' reality and so loses sight of every possible experience even before any experience has occurred, the breaking forth of original freshness as well as faith's vision of it. It loses sight of it because it has to leave being itself out of account so as to have left only essences capable of classification and, ultimately, formal definitions and no more. With this blinkered claim, all genuine culture is abandoned, and we see before our very eyes the ruin of the entire heritage of Antiquity.[409] The advances of the modern age are purchased by surrenders and losses that can never be made good. And all that is left for the Christian is an act of 'ultimate courage'[410] and 'weary hopefulness',[411] to hold up his heart to the unfeeling teeth of the machines in the theological hope that, against all hope, the sacrifice of the heart may yet contribute to humanity's self-discovery.[412]

5. THE HEART OF GOD

Péguy carefully gathered together all the component parts of his theology and built these stones into a wall, so as finally to be able to set his last reflections in place like the keystone of an arch—a keystone that, however much it had been trimmed and dressed, had never yet really fitted any structure. It had not found a place in the theology of the Greek fathers (of which Péguy had some

[409] B 810; S 288; A 1075.

[410] B 1244.

[411] B 56f.

[412] B 1247; L 160.

idea);[413] they had developed the idea of comprehensive human solidarity through the comprehensive character of the Incarnation, but their concept of God was still overshadowed by a particular philosophical perspective (the idea of immutable, self-diffusing goodness). Still less could it find a place in the theology of Augustine and the West, in which the concept of predestination consistently ruled out any ultimate solidarity—according to Augustine, man can hope only for himself, not for his neighbour.[414] Péguy, who was certainly not a theologian given to compartmentalising, had brought his insights, once achieved, to completion in a breakthrough into a comprehensive theology of hope—by means of patient contemplation of the one reality that is at once natural and supernatural, by an unceasing process of *approfondissement* and assimilation. And this theology of hope makes its presence felt today, gently but irresistibly, by a structural shift in the whole theological edifice.

This is evident in the two works, *The Mysteries of Hope* and *The Holy Innocents*, which fundamentally constitute one single piece, the crown and consummation of Péguy's theology and so too of his aesthetic. Everything flows together in the 'principle of *hope*'. While all things in the world sink down toward the entropy of death, hope is the only thing that swims against the stream and moves upward: '*quand tout descend seule elle remonte*'.[415] And so the principle of hope inherits all the legacy of Bergson and indeed of all true philosophy. But Péguy's Bergson was, as we saw, the spokesman of Israel, the philosopher as prophet; and so, once more, Péguy's theology of hope is the heir of the Old Covenant. He took up, in broad terms, the ancient patristic and Pascalian *figura* relationship between the two Testaments, and, as will later become clear, developed it to a level more profound than did Pascal.[416] Yet for Péguy nothing was biblical that was not also human (classical). Such a phenomenon is the hope of humanity for the future, the hope that Clio smiles indulgently upon; this feeling that is refuted day by day and yet is never annihilated, the feeling that despite everything things will get better; this need and longing connected not so much with the life of the individual as with the race as a whole, deeply embedded in the mystery of fatherhood; the need to do everything possible so that things may be better for one's children. That is why Péguy began his *Mystery of Hope* as he did: after some introductory theological thoughts, he moves at once to the reflections of a woodcutter in the forest in winter, slaving away for the sake of his children. 'Wherever do men get this from?' asks God. 'These poor children surely see every day how the world goes, and yet daily they think that things are bound to go better tomorrow. Only tomorrow . . . *Ça ça me confond. Ça ça me passe. Et je n'en reviens pas moi-même.*'[417] But Péguy's woodcutter is a Christian, and the Christian hope from the start intermingles with his human hope. So Clio's critique loses its validity here; and when, at the end of the book, the secret pact between the people of France and the idea of hope is celebrated, the union between human and Christian hope is indissolubly sealed. 'Immediately, at once, almost in advance, they forget all the evil days, the evil days that descend like a grey, unremitting rain. They soak this rain up like the good Lorraine earth, transforming it at once into flowing water, living, clear and sweet. That is what amazes me, says God; and yet I am not easily surprised.'[418] The woodcutter is, through his children, in solidarity with all Christendom, and that is why he pins his own hope, in one and the same moment, upon the whole communion of saints. With a determination so bold that it shocks him, he has bypassed all the usual patron saints to go straight to the Mother of God, laid his sick child in her arms and left it there. This means that Péguy's socialist hope, resting as it does upon the universal solidarity of all men, upon the intolerable pain of a single shared exile, has now, without breach or interruption, become part of the equally universal solidarity of the communion of saints, whose apex is Mary, the

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[413] B 337–339.

[414] *Enchiridion* 8: *spes non nisi bonarum rerum est . . . et ad eum pertinentium, qui earum spem gerere perhibetur* (PL 40, 235). The development of a theology of hope was blocked for a millennium and a half by this statement. *Cf.* Pierre Charles, S.J., '*Spes Christi*', *Nouvelle Revue Thèologique* 1934, and my own book, *Sponsa Verbi* (1961), 67.

[415] C 250.

[416] C 368–422.

[417] C 267–268.

[418] C 268–269.

one created being who is entirely pure and yet entirely fleshly, 'infinitely pure because infinitely poor, infinitely exalted because infinitely humbled, infinitely young because infinitely maternal, infinitely upright because infinitely inclined in mercy, infinitely joyful because infinitely sorrowful'.[419] This is the statement finally achieved in the first *Mystère*, and it remains the necessary foundation for everything that follows; Péguy feels no desire now to return again to deal with the dimension of totality in this consciousness of solidarity. The communion of saints is not only a horizontal extension in historical time but equally a vertical line extended between the heavenly and the earthly Church (with Mary as its summit in Paradise)—the unconditional medium into which hope dares to enter. The existence of such a mediating reality assumes that unfathomable link, forged by God alone, between body and soul, nature and freedom;[420] assumes an incarnation of spirit that the angels will never know. But here Péguy is no longer philosophising in the abstract about the physical unity of human nature: he is reflecting within the bounds of the mystery of God's becoming man. To have bodily form already means to be in contact with the body of Christ[421] in the sense worked out by Péguy in *Véronique*.

So now all the elements are assembled for the curtain to rise on Péguy's drama: the risky venture of the soul's *enracinement* in the material world is, in so far as the soul is free, spiritual reality, a response to the deeper hazard of the eternal Divine Spirit as it puts down its roots in the nothingness of the created world, the nothingness of creaturely freedom. Taking for granted Clio's notion that the great historical event must constantly be borne, preserved and brought back to life responsibly by each subsequent generation, the chronicle of hope moves on: even God's Word and God's being can only entrust themselves to the world in such a way that they must be accepted by men and responded to in love; otherwise, everything could have been in vain. And this is a risk that God must run if he is to trust himself to creaturely freedom. Here there is no 'eternal knowledge' that will transcend and arrest the risk involved in this entrusting of self, no eternal 'power' that will neutralize the risk by exploiting the world's powerlessness. That would debase the whole process to the level of a children's game. Here, in the heart of God, there can be nothing but hope alone.

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[419] C 206.

[420] C 217–219.

[421] C 220.

Péguy introduces this concept unobtrusively in speaking of the Good Shepherd who follows the trail of the lost lamb with an anxious heart; and this theme once raised is then taken up time and again till its depths are laid open. 'This sinner who wandered away and was all but lost has unlocked the doors of anguish and so too the springs of hope in the heart of God himself, in the heart of Jesus—the fear and trembling of anguish, the tremor of hope.'[422] 'God has known the dread that he will have to condemn . . . the dread that he will never find the lost lamb again, the dread of not being sure. But finally he is rescued; he himself, the rescuer, is rescued—rescued from having to condemn it.'[423] And this rescue depends on us, who must catch and hold God's Word and God's blood, who 'in our hearts must nourish the fleshly Word of God with the flesh and blood of our own hearts'.[424] God sets his hope on us, and it is his hope that 'guarantees in advance and promises a temporal form for eternity, flesh for the spirit, a Church for Jesus, a creation for God himself, his own creation'.[425] 'And so it depends on us whether or not hope in the world is a deceit. It depends on us (ridiculous though it is!) whether or not the creator loses his creation.'[426] This preserving in oneself of the God who risks himself is faith, which can also be called hope ('the faith I most prefer, says God, is hope').[427] 'We must have sufficient trust in God to hope in him. To hope in God and to believe in God are one and the same. We must trust God; he has already trusted us sufficiently.'[428]

In this free, mutual movement of risk, Péguy sets out the origin and content of all that is. Everything ultimately depends on this reciprocal hope, which, however, has its source in God. 'This is what God began with. All feelings, all emotions that we owe to God, he has already experienced with regard to us.'[429]—and this not at all in any predestiniarian election, but in creation as a whole. 'So it is not the will of your Father in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish. "See that you do not despise one of these little ones." And does not the shepherd leave "the ninety-nine in the desert to seek the one, *quae perierat*, that has been lost until he finds it? I tell you, there is as much joy in Heaven over *one* sinner who repents as over ninety-nine righteous men, who need no repentance."' Over that *one* unfaithful sheep there is as much—'perhaps even more'—joy as over all the faithful. 'For it was dead and has come back to life. It has made God's heart tremble with anguish. It has brought the theological virtue of hope into God's heart. It has caused an unfamiliar feeling to well up in the heart of God himself, made his heart new, as it were. The heart of God made new—I have weighed these words, I know what I am saying: the heart of God eternally new.'[430]

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[422] C 209.

[423] C 215–216.

[424] C 227.

[425] C 233.

[426] C 235.

[427] C 169.

[428] C 240–241.

All this is infinitely far from Hegel, yet it is the truth in what Hegel says transferred into the sphere of the reciprocal freedom of love. 'When someone loves, he commits himself thereby to dependence upon, servitude to, the one he loves. That, my child, is the state to which God has come by his love for us.'[431] 'As Jesus has left his body in the wretchedly poor Church throughout all ages, exposed to the malice and mockery of the humblest soldier, so God has left his hope throughout all ages exposed to the malice and mocking of the humblest sinner. He has, so to speak, condemned himself to this.'[432] But in this way, as he relates the parable of the prodigal son, which no one can hear without tears, 'he has awakened in man's heart I know not what unique little point of response'; and this parable 'is perhaps the one thing to stick fast in the heart of the betrayer, like a nail of tenderness'.[433] So God plays with man the children's game of 'loser takes all'.

'I have often played with man, says God. But what a game! I still shudder at the mere thought of it. But my grace has its secret methods, it is more cunning than a woman. It plays with man, spins him around and spins the outcome around. Often I play against man, says God, but he will insist on losing, the idiot, when I want him to win. Now and then I succeed in getting him to win. You might indeed say that we are playing "loser takes all". At least he is, since it is only when he loses that he wins. An extraordinary game: I am his partner and his opponent. He wants to beat me and so to lose; and I, his opponent, want to let him win.'[434]

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[429] C 241.

[430] C 243–248.

[431] C 250.

[432] C 252–253.

[433] C 262.

There are two points here. One is that, no matter what the sinner may do, he is always in contact with the throbbing heart of God as a reality enveloping and bearing him, a reality into which he inevitably falls back as the waking man falls into sleep, as day falls into night. And there is also the point that God must train man in making his own venture: in freedom. He is like the father (says Péguy, in a thought-provoking image) who stands in the river 'wanting to teach his little son to swim and torn between two impulses: if he goes on holding him with his hand all the time, the child will come to depend on it and never learn to swim; but if he does not snatch him up at the right moment, the child will choke. On the one hand, men must work out their own salvation. That is the law, there is no breaking it. Otherwise it would not be interesting, they would not be men at all. They must be manly and win their spurs on their own. On the other hand, they must not be left to choke as they are immersed in the malice of sin.'[435] So grace must coach them in freedom and at the same time teach them how one truly serves the cause of one's own freedom. They must learn to understand the generous, gracious, gratuitous character of love, so as to respond 'with liberality of heart' to the heart of God. This is the essence of Christianity, that in the heart of man 'a reflection dawns of the gratuity of my grace'.[436] This is the aristocratic courtesy of the heart that grace shows to men, in whose context indeed grace sets them. That is why sanctity is aristocratic courtesy, *largesse*, at the same time that it is humility, because God's *largesse* itself takes the risk of humiliation—*largesse* and the bloom of well-being and comfort (*aisance*), of the profoundest kind of health: '*nos saints sont sains. Sanctos esse sano*'.[437] Péguy quotes extensively from the memoirs of the Sire de Joinville and the reprimand given him by St Louis because the unfortunate man had said that he would sooner have committed thirty mortal sins than become a leper. Louis knew the nobility of heart that was in this sinner; God himself knows him and delights in his open candour. Louis does not reproach him as the Pharisees might. 'The Pharisees would like others to be perfect. I am easier to please, says God.'[438] The royal saint knows human nature all too well; only at the deepest level is he saddened. He speaks firmly but with gentleness and humility: 'firm in his meekness, meek in his firmness'. 'He, the king, speaks in the name of God and of himself. On behalf of God and the King of France he speaks humbly, like a trembling petitioner. He trembles out of anxiety that his faithful knight may not act for his own salvation.'[439] He shudders like God himself, but, like God, he cannot for one moment cease to be in solidarity with the sinner; the saint along with the sinner together form the 'Christian system'. Undoubtedly, though, the saint is the 'representative of Jesus'[440] and only in this sense the representative of the sinner. This means simply that the Christian vision has its truth and its manifestation in Jesus and, consequently, in the saints. It can be understood only from the perspective of Jesus and, consequently, of the saints. Hence, it is uniquely from this point that its glory and beauty break forth. The radiance of glory in sanctity is identical with its rightness, its exactitude, and this radiance is again nothing but the reflection of God's own holines, which is itself that hope that risks the utmost. So there comes about that wonderful moment when the son has grown up and can encounter the father on equal terms as a free man.

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[434] C 345.

[435] C 352.

[436] C 359.

> Ask any father whether the best of all moments is not that one
> When his sons begin to love him as full-grown men,
> To love him as himself a man, freely and for nought.
> When subservience is done with, and the sons, grown into men,

[437] B 904.
[438] C 372–373.
[439] C 367–370.
[440] C 453.

> Now deal with him and love him man to man, like those who have a right to judge.[441]

That is what God has always willed—that his grace should educate man in freedom, in the same spirit of risk that constitutes God's own heart.

But God's heart still remains a wounded heart, rendered helpless by love, an exposed and undefended flank where the enemy, man, can force a way through. The most famous image in the *Mystères*, that of the prayer 'fleet', illustrates this phenomenon. Its presuppositions include first a Christology in which the Incarnation is always capable of an ambivalent reading: as God's revelation to man and as man's to God. And it is precisely this second aspect that is properly Trinitarian, since the tension between Father and Son is never greater than there, at the point where the Son as man returns from the world to the Father bearing all the concerns of mankind. The other presupposition, as is obvious from the theology of freedom, is that the 'merit' of man, his empowerment by creation and grace, will be taken fully into account. This creaturely fulness of power is, as is evidenced in the *Mystère* of Joan of Arc, itself something possessed of an internally Trinitarian form: it is the interpenetration in prayer of the total submission of the will and its total 'revolt' in the sense of the articulation of its own wishes; and this avoids being a contradiction (it becomes, rather, a Trinitarian mystery) only when the saint, as he says his Yes to God, rightly divines with his own wishes the most deeply hidden wishes of the Father's heart.

In this case it is the prayer of the Son, the Our Father, that rises from the world to the Father, laden with all the pleadings, all the requests, of the whole creation like some antique warship with its pointed prow; and behind it, shielded by it, the immense fleet of all the world's prayers follows after in its spreading wake—the massive Paternosters and the light galleys of the Ave Marias and all other prayers uttered or only thought or even unconscious. It is an irresistibly successful assault on the Father's heart. And here appear those words of the Father of which Romain Rolland said: 'I know of no writer in the world who has ever made God speak in such a manner.'[442]

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[441] C 376–377.

'Father, who art in Heaven—naturally, when a man begins to speak thus, he can go on to say whatever he likes. You can see quite clearly that I am disarmed. My Son knew that well enough. . . . This, then, is the way I am attacked. I ask you, is this fair? No, it is not fair, for all this belongs to the power of my own mercy. The kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent men will take it by force—violate it, you could even say. How can anyone defend himself in such a state? My Son has told them everything. And not only that, he, in his turn, has put himself at their head. And now they are like some great fleet of ancient times, countless in number, mounting an attack on the High King. Behind that foremost spur they cluster, tightly locked together like a bundle I cannot break apart; the massive triremes come recklessly closer and closer, shamelessly smashing through the surging waves of my wrath. They present themselves to me at this angle, and only at this angle can I receive them. They approach, crouching down like warriors taking up their positions for the attack; together they make a spearhead, they make a covering with their shields and often even with their own bodies. And the tip of the spearhead is formed by the clasped hands of my Son. How do you expect me still to be able to pass judgment after all this has happened? Our Father, who art in Heaven—my Son knows full well how the plot should be laid, to bind the arm of my justice and loose the arm of my mercy. And now I shall pass judgment on them as a father. For once, a father will be judge. "There was a father who had two sons." You know how a father judges; there is a well-known case. You know well enough how the father judged the son who had left home and then returned. All the father could do was to cry over it. That's the kind of story my Son has told them. My Son has given away the secret of my justice to them.'[443]

Not for a moment did Péguy oppose the Father's standpoint to the Son's. For the same God who weeps softly over the Son's 'treachery', his *traditio*, because he has given away the Father's secret to men, himself gave away, handed over, 'betrayed' his own Son to the world out of love. The powerlessness of the Father, whose justice is fettered by mercy, is the expression of his own omnipotence, and the powerlessness of his omnipotence is equally the omnipotence of his powerlessness; this is the *kabód*, the true glory of God that Péguy seeks to extol, and the aisthesis of which he cultivates in all possible ways.

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[442] Rolland, *Péguy* I, 270.

[443] C 334–344.

The corollary is that man too has power with God and for God only on the foundation of the divine powerlessness, which remains the supporting and nurturing ground from which all earthly illumination and form grows and to which it will return again. This is the place where we encounter in Péguy the symbol of night, corresponding to John of the Cross's *noche oscura* (the intermediate stage of Novalis's *Hymnen an die Nacht* is an essential point of transmission in this); but Péguy's night is, in its profoundest core, still within the bounds of biblical theology.

'"O night", says God, "my daughter in your great cloak, it is through you that I sometimes win the self-surrender of man so that he gives in, relaxes and above all, finally for once falls silent, he who never stops talking."'[444] This 'night' is in one of its aspects simply the mother soil of nature, sleep as a falling back into the sources of life, the grown man becoming a child, a release from all the business and cares of the day, God's loveliest creation, since it both allows and prayerfully requests the lifting of the day's heavy load. 'As if I were not capable of the least anxiety or wakefulness over it; and perhaps you will find all the oppressive matters of today set right tomorrow when you get up, because I have overlooked them in the meanwhile.'[445] Night—the time in which children make up the sum of what they have released during the day as if drawing from the inexhaustible fountain of youth from which their strength flows, yet without any counting up or reckoning, since sleep is without reckoning; the Bergsonian night of the infinite reserves of being, of which the fanatical apostles of duty, the Kantians, have no inkling.[446] And what of the examination of conscience in the evening? Well and good: a brief glance backward, a passing regret; but then to immerse oneself in the abyss of grace

[444] C 347.

[445] C 296–298.

[446] S 113–118.

that is the night, in the inconceivable miracle of a new beginning;[447] the Bergsonian night, but one already wholly saturated with the mysteries of the divine presence and love. Hence follows the unbroken transition to the second aspect: night as the supportive basis, the continuum, in which the days form only intervals, openings, discontinuous segments. 'The nighttime is what is permanent in the life of a child, constituting the basis of his existence. It is into this that he returns, falls back. It is his very own place, his being, in which he swims, where he gets his nourishment, creates himself, forms himself. The days are interruptions. The nights join hands with one another in a beautiful dance around the days. The days only break in, they are like islands in the ocean, scattered islands broken up by the sea. But the ocean goes on while the islands are astray.' The days constitute time, but night is a 'foretaste' of something beyond time, that great 'bed in which I, the Father, shall lay my creation down to sleep. These days are never more than an appearance, an ambiguity; and you, night, you are my great and dark light.'[448] Thus above all, in these first and second aspects, the creaturely dimension and the dimension of grace are indissolubly linked. Night is not (as for John of the Cross) simply an expression of divine transcendence and of faith; it is already established as the basic form of creaturely existence itself. Man must each night again become a child, and each night the child draws from the night his strength for the day. Only from this perspective can Péguy go forward to his concluding treatment of the mystery of night, to give it its final theological location: night as the calming, silencing, reconciling curtain that falls upon the dreadful drama of Good Friday; and thus the night into which God himself sinks back from the draining day in which the Father has had before his eyes the spectacle of his Son on the Cross. 'All was finished. We shall speak of it no more, this incredible descent of my Son among men, and what they have so far made of it. And about the ninth hour my Son let out that cry that will never again die away. The soldiers had gone back to their barracks, laughing and joking because their turn of duty had been done. Only a centurion was still left and a few men to keep guard over that meaningless gallows. A few women too: his mother; perhaps one or two disciples as well, though that is less certain. Now any man has the right to bury his own son. Only I, God, whose arms have been bound all though this adventure—I could not bury my Son. And then it was you, night, that came. . . .'[449]

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[447] C 322–330.

[448] C 298–302.

As if this creaturely night now had power even over the heart of God, as if it could silence and bury the bleeding mystery in God's heart, as if God's heart should yield to the law of his 'loveliest creation', as if the 'uninterrupted' night of the world might now at last flow into the uninterrupted night of God—Péguy has recognised the problem of the continuum that endures throughout all the quantified intervals that both measure and interrupt as the deepest of all problems, and he returned to speak of it again and again.[450] All images and concepts are an interruption of the night of the race as they are of the night of that understanding that is beyond concepts.[451] Ultimately all creation is an interruption of God's eternity: 'I have cut time out of the fabric of eternity, says God.'[452] The return of time into eternity, however, is not a philosophical problem, but rather a problem that is theological through and through; for its resolution nothing less is required than the entire history of salvation: the history of human death, but also of God's love, which empties itself even to death on a cross, of the infinite weariness of the evening of Good Friday, in which God himself sinks back into his own eternal life—death as the noiseless opening of the eternal gates. So *Eve* ends with the image of snow falling silently and endlessly on the grave of Geneviève.[453]

Yet in the *Mystery of the Holy Innocents* the poet seeks to transcend this image of night yet again. His last word cannot be of weariness, of soothing descent into sleep, for he is the poet of hope, and so he probes insistently through the night, looking for a further extremity again.[454] The ultimate point must be the child, the youthfulness, the blossoming spring of eternity

[449] C 307–308.

[450] B 1413–1415.

[451] B 1326.

[452] C 419.

[453] C 945 (st. 1904f.).

[454] C 349, 382–383.

itself.[455] Dante gave the holy innocents the lowest place in his celestial Rose; Péguy accorded them the highest. God himself enumerates ten reasons for this decision of his. One of them is that the children who safeguarded the flight of the infant Jesus with their blood 'were in a way his representatives'; they managed to witness by shedding their blood without departing from the source of their primordial innocence, and no one else apart from the Mother of God has succeeded in doing that. 'And so these urchins, these less-than-urchins, acquired a claim on us', 'these Infant Jesuses who will never grow old', who never needed to tread the whole path of futility and destruction, who 'play with palms and crowns' in Paradise, as the festal sequence that Péguy sets out in conclusion puts it, playing no doubt that game where you have to catch a hoop thrown to you on a short stick. 'That is how it is in my Paradise. What other game can you play with palms and crowns? I imagine they play quoits—at least I think so—for you must not suppose that people always have to ask my permission.'[456]

So the whole of Péguy's art and theology flow more and more towards prayer without one ever being able to say precisely whether this prayer is a dialogue or a monologue on God's part. It is a dialogue with God (predominantly so in *Jeanne*), but one which is constantly developing into a monologue of God the Father, addressed without distinction to his Son, to the men he has created and to himself. It is a form of 'theology as Trinitarian conversation', never realised prior to Péguy, which could only be risked by a poet using a simple and popular style of utterance that avoids any show of sublimity and yet does not for a moment degenerate into 'mateyness' and false familiarity. Only faith in the Holy Spirit can allow God to speak in such a way: in a meditation not only on the basic relationship of creation (*analogia entis*, of the ever-greater unlikeness of God in contrast to the world), but also on the basic relationship of the gospel and its *analogia fidei*—of the ever-greater unlikeness of the divine-human person of Jesus in contrast to sinners. And yet, presupposing and surpassing all this, the Church can speak and pray adequately in the Holy Spirit; it can (as Péguy makes God the Father say) put words liturgically into the mouth of God himself: '*Or je ne démentirai jamais une liturgie, . . . je m'engage autant dans les enseignements de l'Eglise que dans mes propres enseignements.*'[457] 'My daughter the Church', in which Mary constitutes the innermost foundation, can treat the Word of God with precision, and in the Spirit of the Church, the poet too can treat the divine-human Word with precision if he has received the necessary humility, simplicity and *parrhesia*, boldness, from the Holy Ghost. Péguy is personally aware of himself as a sinner, and his life is not that of a saint.[458] 'But my work is not performed in sin. There is no sin in my work. . . . I am a sinner with rich resources of grace and an astonishing guardian angel. . . . I see issues absolutely simply. That amazes the priests. The liturgy is full of this simplicity, but they have never spotted it.'[459]

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[455] C 384.

[456] C 461.

Dialogue is the basic form of Péguy's art, in contrast to Kierkegaard, who always delivers monologues, always speaks as an individual. The *Cahiers* are simply composed of conversations with real human beings, often cast in dialogue form (as with *De la Grippe*). Very frequently, a personal address breaks unexpectedly into the middle of a prose discourse—*mon cher Halévy, mon cher Isaac*, et cetera. When Péguy speaks about a fundamental issue, it is always in dialogue with those others who have dealt with it: Corneille or Racine, Michelet or Hugo, Renan or Taine, Jaurès or Herr; only human beings make history. The basis of history itself is the dialogue between the *polis* and the exiles, dialogue as supplication, the dialogue between the people and their spokesman. Only once does Péguy permit an unhistorical figure to speak or take part in a dialogue, and that is History herself, the colourful, humorous and elegiac muse, who however, immediately gives way before the still more profound conversation between Jesus and Eve. Jews speak with Christians; what is more, in the *Note Conjointe* Péguy and Benda go off together for a walk and a never-ending conversation. Christians speaks with pagans, as Polyeucte does does with Sévère. Saints speak with saints, Gervaise with Joan.

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[457] C 434, 439.

[458] L 158.

[459] L 170, 158, 168.

Ultimately, though, it is God alone who speaks with all. We never find in Péguy truth abstracted from the world of persons—only truth that rests in the bosom of Trinitarian communication and so evolves out of a source in personal life, in a conversation that is as awesome as it is tender. Of his *Eve*, the poet had this to say: 'How can one fail to see that this total awe, this sort of profound and serious universal tenderness is here not only given representation in eminent form, but is summed up in eminent form in the respect, the great tenderness, of Jesus toward his first fleshly ancestress? It is precisely in this respect that the work shows itself to be profoundly Catholic, if indeed *tendresse* is the mark of the Catholic.'[460] *Tendresse* is not simply a matter of emotional tenderness but is an essential gentleness as it belongs to the heart of all existence: to the child, to the swelling bud, to hope and all the mysteries in the bosom of being.

If Péguy is constantly appealing to the mysteries of the communion of saints, to the intercession of the saints for sinners, this task of representation belongs (in accord with his conviction of the naturalness of this intercession) to the innermost structure of his life as of his work. In this respect he is in a particular sense a French poet, who draws on the riches of the grace of the great French saints alike in his life and in his own creative writing. Thus a foreign reader of his work must allow him some indulgence when, again and again, he sings the praises of the French soil, making God himself praise it, and of that 'garden-loving people who are best at ploughing both soil and souls, who always have fresh waters flowing in their wonderful and tragic gardens, those deeply sorrowful gardens of the soul.'[461] Likewise when he praises the 'order' and 'clarity' in which prayer and suffering occur, and when he spells out what 'secret sacrifice' is signified by these orderly ranks in the 'garden of the King'.[462] He thinks above all of Louis and Joinville, Geneviève and Joan, but he could equally well think of Ars and Lisieux, of the tears of La Salette that occupy a central place in the work of Léon Bloy just as Jean-Baptiste Vianney does in the work of Bernanos; and Joan is significant for all of them and for Claudel as well. The subterranean links between the message of little Thérèse and that of Péguy have already been touched upon elsewhere; they are indissoluble bonds, and the messages of both are in many respects identical, both in what concerns the ideas of childhood and the heart of God and in what touches the ideas of loss and destruction and of hope.[463] Their missions are inextricably interwoven, for Joan herself stands in succession to Louis, and Thérèse in succession to Joan. But Péguy, whose central point is Joan, projected onto her the figure of Louis no less than that of Thérèse. In the communion of saints all these vocations exist in mutual connexion with one another and emerge in reciprocal relation. But the vocations of poets—as sinners who dedicate themselves in their work to an ideal of sanctity and serve this ideal by giving it artistic representation—are like separate emanations from the order and beauty of the saints. In the lineage of theological beauty, it is they who witness to it and make it present.

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[460] L 193–194.

[461] C 272–273.

[462] C 274–275.

6. AESTHETICS AND SANCTITY

Our aim in this section is not to elevate Péguy to the rank of one of the greatest Christian poets or even theologians. It is simply to gather from his work those elements of a theological aesthetic that could only with difficulty be found elsewhere in comparable fulness and clarity of organization. He has many features that also point us forward to the best figures of the period following—to Charles de Foucauld or Konrad Weiss—and has every right to represent them in advance. His work as an essayist, like his work as a poet (to outward appearances, sometimes standing in opposition to his inner poetic sense), is a mass of fragments, a jumble of unfinished, disproportionately conceived things: the planned number of the *Mystères* varied from twelve to fifteen, *Eve* is spun out endlessly, the wide-ranging prose style can for pages appear almost empty and pretentious in its repetitions, the absence of plan is self-conscious and (as with the prophets) is treated as imperative: '*Car nous*

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[463] *Cf.* my book, *Bernanos* (1954), 291f.

n'avons pas de plan, nous ne devons pas en avoir.'[464] Yet in the litany-like character of his style there is, as Gide recognised, a profound stylistic principle: something of the Kierkegaardian trick of repetition, something too of Bergsonian continuity, the never-ceasing stream of reality as it passes on its way and is experienced in its unfolding. The characteristic feature of the Alexandrine line employed in his strict verse is that its mechanical measuring of syllables is constantly at odds with the rhythmical stress; the latter is superimposed upon the former without destroying it and is repeatedly held back and restrained by it. But the interferences are innumerable, and the whole structure is always suspended in midair without ever losing the ground beneath its feet. This is also the reason why Péguy, after such a long apprenticeship in prose, showed an immediate mastery of strict rhythmical form, a great improvement upon his early essays in drama.

The starting point of his aesthetic was the *Cité Harmonieuse*, that utopian aesthetic ideal that was intended as the earthly substitute for the *Civitas Dei*: harmony as the ultimate value, but a harmony won by means of a struggle involving the highest ethical achievement—the abolition of any kind of exile, the abandonment of any kind of disease of the spirit, an ethical classicism that roots out all romantic muddle in life or thought. The absolute striving of life toward this vision of beauty was then itself the embodiment of beauty in contrast to all Socialist Party programmes relating to art[465] and to any designs for a distinct, demarcated artistic sphere. Beauty is what is 'given in addition' (*par surcroît*), a gift gratuitously bestowed on men and events.[466] But since in Péguy the success of the outcome always remains interlinked with the effort involved in arriving at it, it is also possible to speak of the beauty of an authentic revolution. 'Nothing is so agonizingly beautiful as the spectacle of a people raising itself up and doing so by means of a fresh and profound renewal of its origins, by immersing itself in its most ancient pride and dignity.'[467] Right up to the end, the beautiful for Péguy does not have its primary location in beauty of form, but rather in the fresh-springing blossoming forth of life itself as it reveals its victorious achievement in achieved forms. This is why for Péguy the aesthetic is ultimately rooted entirely in the religious; he takes no account of any kind of art other than a religious one, an art of worship. Cathedrals are for him 'the prayer of fleshly people, a glory, almost an impossibility, a miracle of prayer';[468] they are 'embodiments of adoration'.[469] The argument with the clergy that ends the *Note Conjointe*, full of subtle peasant malice, yet without bitterness, turns upon the role, the utility, the indispensability, of milestones on the road. The cleric defends these external forms (in practical terms, this has to do with the Index—more specifically, with Bergson's being placed on the Index), while Péguy speaks for the fine, straight road itself and the longing to travel along it. And it may even be just as well, out of a surpassing desire for certainty, as it were, to cast a glance once in a while at the stones that mark the distance; their 'indispensability' is admitted in the long run, but they are 'not indispensable in the sense of having utility'.[470]

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[464] S 214.

[465] A 244f.

[466] A 249.

[467] B 1247.

Already in the socialist period, the concept of ethical and aesthetic *justesse* is paired with that of prophecy. Bernard-Lazare, as an atheistic prophet, has an unfailing instinct for what is right and just in history as it is happening. This is the Old Testament ethic; this is why the prophet is a 'poet', since he finds the right words to utter from God in the strength of the correct divine reading of the times, and so with the creative power of the word that imprints itself on the prophet. For the prophecy of the ancient prophets is a path toward the Incarnation, as the divinely just reality embodies itself in what is ethically and aesthetically just and right and manifests itself in these terms. And the more firmly the total Incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ is established as the supreme norm, overflowing in its abundance, the more it becomes clear that what is humanly right and just is not simply and unilaterally inserted into the world from above, but is simultaneously drawn up from below, out of the roots of the order of creation itself; and that therefore, in Péguy's understanding, there is no disputing the reality of the

[468] B 333–334.

[469] B 897.

[470] B 1490.

encounter and interpenetration between classical and Christian reality. The 'classical' for Péguy means the phenomenon of perfect human proportion, as developed from within, out of the interior, existential, primordial proportions in human nature itself. Here he opts for the classicism of Corneille as against the 'romanticism', the 'passion', the 'morbidity' and 'secret cruelty' of Racine's characters.[471] For it is not in the difference between Paradise and the Fall that we find the element of the compelling and the beautiful; it is uniquely in the overcoming of that difference by 'power from on high', by grace, which bestows righteousness on men. There is neither a beauty in sin (*Fleurs du Mal*), nor a beauty that can be taken seriously in pure form alone—anything like that is patently the consequence of sin. Wherever beauty (*justesse*) may be, *justice* is required along with it; and this is ultimately grounded only in justification by grace.

Jesus is God and thus is infinite; but he is also man and as such is finite. Péguy guards against a Christology that makes out of Jesus an abstract, nonconcrete and thus inhuman compendium of the supreme values, a summary of the ***summum bonum***. Since he is some particular thing, a some*one*, 'a living, clearly delineated personality', he cannot simply be 'everything'. He is 'circumscribed in space and time. He enters into a finite scheme of things.' It is precisely 'because he accepts Incarnation in its exact sense, without qualification, without limit or condition' that human finitude on this basis can 'tune in' to his perfect being. If he were simply a compendium of all virtues, 'we should not have required any Gospels. We should not have needed any narrative record. But he ranges himself in the ranks of humanity. He ranges himself among the saints—as the first among them, but still among their ranks. *Il se range*. He is certainly not just anyone and everyone. He does not swallow up the whole world in himself. He leaves something for the others. So it is that the freedom of God as well as historical freedom can be seen in him; as a man and a saint, he is metaphysically beyond the sphere of calculation or fabrication. And the freedom of his existence thus and not otherwise as a human being is the most necessary reality there is, 'for it alone expresses itself exactly on the basis of the gratuity of grace.' This freedom in the event of Jesus is shown, for instance, in the sovereignty with which he fulfils the prophecies; there is nothing mathematical or mechanical in this correspondence.[472] It is for this that he needed historical witnesses and willed to have them, that he commissioned scriptures and therefore also scribes; that he set in motion as an historical human being an unending historical process, 'becomes a sacrificial offering to historical criticism', 'delivered over to the exegete, the historian and the critic, just as he was delivered over to the soldiery, delivered to these other judges, these other fellow countrymen. It is one and the same *traditio*, one and the same delivering up, handing over.'[473]

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[471] B 778f.

This is of decisive importance for a theological aesthetic. A Jesus (like the Jesus of so many theological systems) who is no more than the abstract (and necessarily false) sum of 'perfections' or, more precisely, of the things that look like perfections to human eyes and that they thus attribute to the God-Man—such a Jesus can never be the canon of a 'classical' beauty; his image is bound to degenerate from the already vacuous *beaux Christs* of Gothic art to the style of modern 'sacred heart' kitsch. For such a Christ does not take his place in a series, *il ne se range pas*, so as to form an authentic figure along with prototypes and imitations alike. Only when this visible figure emerges is the transcendence of his Godhead credible in the same moment. And so it is possible to apply to him what Péguy wrote about *Polyeucte*: '*Un texte ferme et précis, parfaitement [dé]limité, parfaitement classique et qui pourtant on ne sait comment sans aucune dégradation baigne dans un bain de dépassement de sa propre grandeur*'.[474] So it is also an aspect of the 'classical' quality of Jesus that the divine love is in him fully incarnate in righteousness, which can only be *justice* when it is *justesse*; and so once again it can only be itself when it is immersed in what transcends it.

Again, the relationship between Old and New Covenant is decisive for aesthetics. Péguy discusses this exhaustively in the *Holy Innocents*, where he tells the whole story of the Egyptian

[472] B 1418–1420.

[473] B 1420–1422.

[474] B 792.

Joseph. 'There was a man who had two sons'—but first, 'There was a man who had twelve sons.' And in both cases it is the youngest child, who seems to be dead, who is found again. 'That is a symbol, my child, a single story that is told twice. And for the one who has eyes to see, each version appears in the other *en transparence*.' But the parallels only hold when both wings of the diptych correspond to each other as mirror images, reversed images. The one son is found seated on a throne, the other arrives coming from a pigsty. 'The Old Covenant always has a perspective that includes the idea of lordship. And in the New Covenant the idea that is always in the background is that of service, of being a servant, of obedience, of the ordinary condition of man.' In the former the idea in the background is of 'the kingdoms of Egypt and Babylon'; in the latter, it is the idea of affliction, destitution and poverty. 'She is the much-beloved and most holy Lady Poverty.' But the diptych is equally a moving process, a movement forward: 'The temporal kingdom advances toward the eternal.' Thus the Old Covenant is indeed a kind of progressive 'image', 'but as an image, it is at the same time wholly faithful and yet completely the other way round, going in the opposite direction, faithfully and exactly reversed, precisely the contrary: *fidèlement inverse, exactement inverse*'.[475] Jesus is the coping stone of the arch, toward which both sides mount upward. 'The last stone before the keystone is John the Baptist, but the first one after it is Peter the Founder. Thou art Peter, upon this rock. . . . And he was crucified upside down; that is, on the descending plane.'[476] Despite all this, the parallels are not exact, for 'the Old Covenant is a line, while the New occupies a surface, an area'. And the ridge that mounts up 'swells upward from the earth, and it is a fleshly ridge, but the surface that flows downward stems from the spirit and is a spiritual surface'. Or again it can be put in these terms: 'The Old Covenant is a deep ocean in which a lofty forest is reflected. And the forest is entirely in the ocean and yet is not in it. And the dark sea, the deep sea rests upon the foundation of the earth, and in the depths of the sea lie the heavens. But the lofty forest strives toward the heights. The lofty forest, the real and substantial forest, lifts itself upward away from its reflection in the water, allowing the real and substantial sap to rise up towards the only deep and real and substantial Heaven.'[477] Previously, the Old Covenant had been fleshly reality in its rising upward. Now the substance of the Old Covenant, reversed in the mirror, has become the water that moistens the roots of the New. In both images there is a real relationship involved, going beyond the purely aesthetic, symbolic relationship with which Pascal had stopped. Péguy, faithful to the classical side of Corneille, rejected the Jansenist aspect all along the line. He retained what is evangelical while rejecting what is Protestant.

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[475] C 386, 415–418.

[476] C 420.

Apart from this, there was no aspect of Pascal that would not be taken up positively by Péguy: his *royale détresse*;[478] his vision of the *grandeur et misère* of humanity,[479] of the present actuality of sin;[480] his sense of exactitude and geometrical precision;[481] his assessment of genius;[482] his praise of Epictetus and the Stoics in general;[483] his leaving out of consideration of rational proofs of God so as to leave plenty of room for his 'wager', for the freedom to stake a bet;[484] his treatment of biblical imagery;[485] and above all his own particular quality, the sanctity, which finally has to do with love alone.[486] But Pascal reasons too much and looks too little; he proves too much, a dangerous trait,[487] and Corneille has more than he does of that Christian and human peace and plenitude that is its own evidence.[488] This is not to be found without a full affirmation, stemming from the heart of faith and all the secrets of its life, of that freedom, given and bequeathed to man by the Creator, to cultivate the earth, to create *cultura*. Christianity and culture—but culture does not have the onesided meaning of 'civilisation', certainly not of 'technology'. Culture is the triumphant achieving of form out of landscape, history and human nature itself. Péguy cannot be a Christian without landscape and locality; but it is not the wilderness of Hopkins, but rather the Beauce, awaking to an infinite fruitfulness,[489] the royal Loire with its chateaux, its vineyards, its customs and speech,[490] and, ever and anew, the inexhaustible scenery of Paris, 'monument of all monuments, city of supreme culture'.[491] It is an ethical landscape that from the very first exists in achieved perfection, effortlessly classical,[492] 'sacramental', noble, 'without any striving for special effect'[493]—a landscape that has been organised, in which a foreordained order reposes, in which man can trustfully establish himself so as to learn what order is; and yet a landscape already set in order by man as well, in which human and divine order interpenetrate. 'Neither too much or too little of anything; proportion. Neither barbarism nor Byzantinism (casuistry, Scholasticism, pedagogics, philology, sociology). Nothing in polychrome. Nobly sloping hills, situated in just the right places, clothed in natural nobility, clothed by nature in classical and Christian dignity. Not simply in the sense of Christian art, for it is far more than art, even Christian art. For this reason, this landscape corresponds with unique exactitude to an exact point of maturation and fulfilment, the point at which the Christian vision achieves its goal.'[494] It is classical harmony: not, however, an angelic, heavenly, eschatological harmony, but rather a harmony between Heaven and earth, between grace and sin, the solidarity of all the world's sounds in the all-embracing motif of poor and powerless Christian love, powerful in its powerlessness. Christians, indeed, often make music that transports them to the supraterrestrial level, music in which they imagine they have a foretaste of the sounds of Heaven.

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[477] C 422–423.

[478] B 1312, 1315.

[479] B 405.

[480] B 822.

[481] E 81, S 284–287.

[482] D 200–201.

[483] B 1392–1393.

[484] B 1386.

[485] B 792.

[486] D 169–183, 187; A 539, 735, 939.

[487] D 189–190.

[488] A 1203, B 1387.

> Mystical, heavenly revelations, fragments, anticipations of Heaven. But even when these sounds seem to us most poignant, most upward soaring, mounting most surely, precisely at these peaks, or perhaps when these have already been surpassed, they still remain human prayers, human harmonies, human mystical visitations, the music of human organs, in human registers; even when, just when these registers dub themselves *vox coelesta*. The Christian is entirely human. He is indeed the most human reality

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[489] A 1181–1190.

[490] A 1204f.

[491] A 1165–1178.

[492] S 308–310, 323; E 114–117, 128f.

[493] A 1183.

[494] E 130–135.

there is. He is the only one who has put on humanity a price equal to the market price of God, who has valued man, even the last and least of sinners, the most wretched of sinners, at the price of God himself. So his music is something entirely different from that of the angels: a paltry human music, a wretched music, that sinners and saints perform together, the hymn that is in sum, all told, a hymn of sinfulness—the music of Christian hearts.[495]

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[495] B 396–397.

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THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Hans Urs von Balthasar

THE GLORY OF THE LORD:
A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

By Hans Urs von Balthasar

VOLUMES OF THE COMPLETE WORK

Edited by Joseph Fessio, S.J., and John Riches

1. *SEEING THE FORM*
2. *STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: CLERICAL STYLES*
3. *STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: LAY STYLES*
4. *THE REALM OF METAPHYSICS IN ANTIQUITY*
5. *THE REALM OF METAPHYSICS IN THE MODERN AGE*
6. *THEOLOGY: THE OLD COVENANT*
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BY

HANS URS VON BALTHASAR

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Translated by Brian McNeil C.R.V., Andrew Louth,
John Saward, Rowan Williams
and Oliver Davies
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Come! out into the open, friend! True, today only a little gleam
Falls on us from above and the skies close us in.
Neither mountains nor tree-tops have broken through
As we wished and the air is empty of song.
It is dull, today, and the lanes and streets slumber and almost,
It seems to me, it is as in the age of lead.
And yet the wish triumphs, true believers doubt not
That the hour will come; the day remains desire's.
For the joy is not small of that which we have won from heaven
Which it refused and at the last freely gave his children.
Only that what is won is worth all the talk
And the steps and the trouble; and that the delectable is wholly true.
And so my hope is great that what is wished for
Begins and our tongue at last is loosed
And the word found and the heart opened
And from the drunken mind a higher contemplation springs.
There will begin with ours the blossoming of heaven;
The resplendent be open to the open eyes.

HÖLDERLIN

What is God? Unknown, yet
Full of his attributes is the countenance
Of heaven. The lightning flashes
Are the anger of a god. The more
A thing invisible, the more it seems as strange. But thunder
Is the fame of God. And love of immortality
The character, as of us,
Is of God.

. . . .

For everyday, but wondrous kind to men
God has on a cloak.
And to our knowing hidden is his face
And the skies artfully concealed.
And air and time cover
The terrible, lest any one with
Prayer too much should love him
Or give his soul.

HÖLDERLIN

There can be no objective rules of taste which would, by means of concepts, determine what is beautiful. For every judgement from this source is aesthetic; i.e. a feeling of the subject. And there is no concept of an object which is the ground of its determination. To seek a principle of taste which would indicate the general criterion of the beautiful in terms of specific concepts is a fruitless endeavour, because what is sought is impossible and self-contradictory.

KANT

. . . and it is perhaps in this that lies my very joy and task in life: that I, although altogether a beginner, am among those who hear the beautiful and recognise its voice even when it is scarcely to be heard above the other noise; that I know that God has not set us in a world of things to select but to take so thoroughly and so largely that in the end we can, in our love, our lively attention, our never to be stilled admiration, receive nothing but the beautiful.

RILKE

However much spiritual culture may develop, the natural sciences may grow in ever increasing breadth and depth, no matter how the human spirit may be enlarged, it will never exceed the height and moral culture of Christianity as it gleams and shines through in the Gospels.

GOETHE TO ECKERMANN

Whoever cannot give account
Of three thousand years,
Let him remain in darkness, unlearned,
And live from day to day.

GOETHE

The Scribes and Pharisees of our time who turn the holy and dear bible into cold and idle chatter, killing the heart and the mind – they are not the sort of people I would choose as witnesses to my inner, living faith. Of course, I know how they have come to such a state, and because God forgives them for killing Christ more sorely than the Jews, because they make his word into a letter and him, the living one, into an empty idol, because, I say, God forgives them, I forgive them too. Only I do not like to open myself and my heart when it is not understood and so I keep silence in the presence of those who are theologians by profession . . . as keenly as I do in the presence of those who want to have nothing to do with any of that, because from their youth they have had any sense of religion, the first and last need of humanity, destroyed for them by the dead letter and the terrifying command to believe. Of course things had to come to this, the way things now are in general and with religion in particular; and religion was in much the same condition as now when Christ appeared in the world. But just as spring follows winter, so always after humanity's spiritual death comes new life, even if it is disregarded by men and women. And there are not a few who are more religious in their hearts that they would or could say and perhaps even some of our preachers say more than others suppose, because the words which they use are so familiar and so manifoldly misused.

HÖLDERLIN

INTRODUCTION

THE NEW TASKS

What is the 'glory' to which this work is to bear witness? The first Volume set out on the path towards it in order to catch sight of it: the subject was the manner of the appearing of beauty and the conditions of its becoming perceived. The next two Volumes displayed not the heart of the shining sun itself but twelve rays that flame out from it; in their substance they diverged from one another but perhaps they were nevertheless conditioned by one another and each bore witness to the midpoint. We have expressly refrained hitherto from asking what 'glory' itself is. The twelve theologies have schooled us, have broadened our horizons and thereby have made us sceptical of quick answers. Taken together these twelve could not produce a complete system, for they left gaps that are not to be spanned by speedily-constructed bridges; besides, there are so many other testimonies, those that already are in existence or that can be discovered in the future . . .

'Glory' cannot be defined. The reason for this confronts us with the particular difficulty of the task that remains to be carried out. The Bible is full of statements about God's glory, and the passages and vistas are far more numerous than most believers realise: glory is a fundamental statement that leavens all of Scripture. God himself is glorious: in his appearing, in his Word and law, in his message of grace and in his act of redemption; therefore he is glorious also in what he has established, in man whom he has favoured, for man is, in his being, ordered 'to the praise of glory', εἰς ἔπαινον δοξης (Eph 1.6); God is glorious in his Church and in the whole cosmos irradiated by his glory. But it is precisely this universality of biblical glory that necessarily must confront that other universality, the universality of the human spirit, already to hand in the world from the fact of Creation, the spirit which of its nature is open to understand the being of all that is. It contemplates the being of all that is, searching out its 'transcendental', fundamental determination and perhaps can no longer deny this being, when considered in its utter depths, the predicate of the 'majestic' (Hans André), of the sublime, *hehr-lich* (Heinrich Schlier). If Christian proclamation and theology is not to be restricted to statements about something that occurred historically once and still exists in its after-effects, one thing existing among millions of others, but is in all seriousness to make a claim of absoluteness on everything that is, then Christian proclamation must have its roots both in the historical sphere (only things which *exist* are *real*) and also in the metaphysical sphere (only as *being* is that which exists *universal*).

The task which is theological in the strict sense, to treat of the glory of the Christian revelation, cannot then be undertaken successfully without constant reflection on the subject of metaphysics. Metaphysics must be taken here in its most original and broadest range (for when it narrows its own scope it destroys itself), as the Greeks understood it: not separated from the 'holy knowledge about the origins of the world' (*mythos*) and in the breadth of the aspects of what is ἀληθές ('clear, true'), ἀγαθόν ('good') and καλόν ('sound, healthy, beautiful'). The historical sequence is secondary—a more 'mythical' period which meets and expresses that which is, more strongly by means of dramatic images; then a more 'philosophical' period which turns away from the images and conceives of that which is, in concepts; then a more 'religious' period which again relativises these concepts by pointing to the mystery. The myth is already essentially religious and the philosophy is neither able nor willing to deny its mythical past, especially when it is concerned with the aspect of the *kalon*.

But anyone who speaks of mythical-religious interpretation of being speaks also of *art* in its most original act of generation, art in the womb of its most favourable development. Before Plato began his philosophical work the great period of Greek art in all its domains was already completed: everything that came later in Greece, Rome and the Europe that was fascinated by the classical period remains a reminiscence of this original act of generation from the spirit of myth—and thereby from religion. All great art is religious, an act of homage before the glory of what exists. Where the religious dimension disappears the homage degenerates into something that is merely attractive and pleasing; where the glorious disappears we are left with what is usually called the 'beautiful'. Goethe, expressed this, with an astonishing humility for his own age, in a letter to Riemer: 'Men are productive in poetry and art only as long as they remain religious; then, they are merely imitating and repeating, as *we* are in relation to Antiquity, all of whose monuments were matters of faith and can be . . . merely copied by us in an act of the imagination' (July 1810). It is clear that a science of aesthetics can exist only in this secondary period and indeed only at the end of this period; this thought is frankly expressed by Hegel at the beginning of his Aesthetics (or, as he preferred to name this science, 'Callistics').[1] Hegel does indeed assign the (mythic-) beautiful a very high place in his system[2] and thereby endeavours to take account of its transcendental significance; but his idea of absolute knowledge must necessarily deprive the beautiful of its summit of glory. Nor is this true height grasped by those who wish to attribute the dimension of glory to the beautiful when once this has been robbed of its power; for they only succeed in absolutising it in a diabolical and melancholy fashion. At the end of our treatment of this theme, in a short closing consideration, we shall have to consider the question of what human art can still signify and accomplish in the light of the Christian revelation.

But first we must consider the mutual relation of theology and metaphysics (understood in its full breadth). In this and the next Volume we shall represent what is Christian first in its solidarity with the thinking of mankind and in its rooting in general religious metaphysics; then in the last two Volumes we shall portray it in its lonely isolation over against all human systems of thought. Treating the metaphysical thematic first in this way has the considerable disadvantage that the reader must still wait for the central theological discussion, must accompany us on a long journey through history without a handy definition (or at least a description) of what 'glory' means in its biblical and Christian sense. Nevertheless the advantages outweigh this. For if a concept that is fundamental to the Bible has no kind of analogy in the general intellectual sphere, and awoke no familiar echo in the heart of man, it would remain absolutely incomprehensible and thereby a matter of indifference. It is only when there is an analogy (be it only distant) between the human sense of the divine and divine revelation that the height, the difference and the distance of that which the revelation discloses may be measured in God's grace. When the farthest-reaching systems of human thought (and these are to be found perhaps more in the myth and mythical art than in philosophy) are presented to man then he will be inwardly convinced that it was not he himself who discovered the system which God set out.

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[1] *Werke* X.1 (1835), 16.

[2] Especially in the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* and in the *Encyclopaedia*.

There is a methodological difficulty in giving a panoramic view of Western metaphysics by following the idea of 'glory': namely, that the history begins in the pre-Christian realm of Antiquity and ends in a modern realm which one might perhaps label 'post-Christian'—but between these runs the Christian era, which has its own metaphysics of 'glory', deeply characterised by the systems and categories of thought of Antiquity but in some respects independent. The study of this Christian period must bring home to us the analogical value of the concept of glory, which encompasses both 'philosophy' (in so far as this exists in a pure state) and theology (for the philosophy of Antiquity was always identical with theology), must bring it home to us so forcefully and compellingly that Christians in a period like our own (which cannot 'believe' any longer in a metaphysical glory) must not attempt to offer a biblical glory, without any continuity or mediation, to the world: rather, what they must offer to the world is, together with the biblical glory, the metaphysical depth of being, once thought lost and now again drawn forth anew from the scriptural revelation.

DOS MOI POU STÂN

The standpoint which is sought here is characterised by its allowing the highest measure of communication on all sides but at the same time by its shunning all intellectual compromise. It takes seriously what must be taken seriously in other standpoints that are only partial but recommend themselves by their radicality: but this standpoint will not go along with them in so far as they limit the overall perspective. The unity between the decision to believe in the divine revelation in Christ and the universal affirmation of all metaphysical-religious truth, which is made possible and indeed obligatory in the Christian realm, is itself unique; it cannot produce evidence for itself from elsewhere but can demonstrate its correctness only when it is put into practice.

1. This is a standpoint from which the truth of mythology and the history of religions can be just as clearly displayed as can that which is wholly other in the biblical revelation—yet without this resulting in a unified (perhaps progressive) history of the revelation of God in the world (as in the German idealists, the romantics and in theologians influenced by the romantics). The positive character of revelation and the Church is not destroyed by the fact that God is at work beyond the boundaries of the positive historical revelation and of the Church which bears witness to this revelation, nor by the fact that he calls to his kingdom and bestows his grace on whomever he will, in his sovereignty: rather, the positive character of revelation and the Church is thereby attested and proclaimed, for the clearly-defined historical form of God's self-revelation has essentially the function of a sign of salvation set in the midst of the entire cosmos.

2. It is a standpoint which believes it can do justice to the Christian requirement of penitence and conversion and immediate listening to the word (as is emphasised by Luther, Kierkegaard and Bultmann, among others) without thereby overlooking the (equally biblical) Catholic and Orthodox requirement of giving glory in contemplation.[3] The stirring

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[3] I have written more precisely about the possible and necessary uniting of these poles in my book *Das betrachtende Gebet* (1955; ET, *Prayer*, 1961).

Protestant seriousness which all too readily indulges in deprecatory remarks about the 'aesthetic' lack of seriousness in the Catholic sphere (and is certainly right to do so, where biblical contemplation sinks unnoticed into 'neo-platonic' aesthetic contemplation)[4] must continually be pointed to the glory of God of which the objective revelation is full. The contrary danger for Catholics is to sink into the false seriousness of 'existential' (i.e., subjective) grief for one's sins instead of understanding ourselves, in the light of our faith in Christ, to be in the very position in which we are understood to be by Christ himself.

3. It is a standpoint (as will be shown in the last two Volumes) which is able within the Christian sphere to see simultaneously the revelation of Christ in its character as something that takes on 'form' and the radical destruction of all 'beauty and form' (Is 53.2) in him who 'was made sin' for us all. For it is precisely in the event of the night of the Cross, where every recognisable form perishes in unimaginable formlessness, that Holy Scripture sees the universally decisive breaking-forth of the light of God's glory. Nevertheless, even this mystery is not wholly without analogy as a glance at pre-Christian Greece shows (this may stand here for analogous things in other cultures).

4. This standpoint, taken up within the Catholic Church, promises to guarantee an unhindered freedom to see the gospel without thereby denying the ecclesiastical and theological tradition together with its pre-Christian implications in Antiquity. The facile short-circuitings of argument here are visible not only in Protestants but increasingly in modern Catholics also. For example, Greek and Jewish 'forms of thought' are superficially opposed to one another and one hears again and again of the fatal

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[4] I had to be prepared for being tossed on to the old neo-Platonic scrap-heap, before I have even a chance to excuse myself. *Cf.* H. -E. Bahr: von Balthasar's 'entire theological aesthetics is an exceedingly urgent endeavour to penetrate behind Thomas and his Aristotelian-conditioned ontology of the beautiful' (!), 'in order to attain once more the sight of the whole of revelation and history, in a renewed neo-Platonic-Christian mysticism' (*Monatschrift für Pastoraltheologie* 53 (1964), 122).

Hellenisation of Christianity (already in Paul, worse in Alexandria, deadly in the Constantinian epoch) or of neo-Platonism in Augustine—never mind the Aristotelianism in Thomas. We are required to 'free ourselves at last from the Greeks and from the Mediterranean area', so that we may be ripe for the culture of the world and for mission to the world. The requirement of universality is right; but one must greatly fear that those who broadcast the slogans cited here have only a passing acquaintance with the object of their attacks and that they substitute for the truly thought-out universality (in the great Western philosophies) a wholly imagined universality of meetings and congresses—thus instead of inwardly mastering it they merely bring it down to their own level.

5. Finally, this is a standpoint which is not blind to the modern world's blindness to the glory of God, without thereby going along with this blindness or justifying it through pseudo-theological explanations such as that we stand in an epoch of the 'de-deification (*Entdivinisierung*) of the cosmos' and that therefore it is proper to distance oneself from the naive enthusiasm of Antiquity for the order of the world and from its immediate spiritual contemplation of the divine through the world (Acts 17; Rom 1). Rather, we will show that, on the basis of that experience of glory which marks him out for what he is, the Christian even today must accomplish and exemplify in his life the inalienable experience of being; the experience of glory must be thought through and formulated for our time anew, directly from the central point of revelation. So the Christian will be the responsible guardian of glory as a whole, just as once the Jew was, as he sang the psalms of creation to God and so was the responsible guardian of the glory of covenant *and* of creation.

Unless we are much mistaken the standpoint which we have chosen should be more classical than the classicism which has grown sterile but also more modern than the many superficial modernisms in Church and theology and more ecumenical than many hastily conceived attempts to bridge the gap between the confessions which claim that title. But the ecumenical fruit will not be ripe for plucking until the final Volume for this part remains in the sphere of metaphysics and *excludes* the two great theological catastrophes of Church history, *the Orthodox and the Protestant schisms*.

The method which is taken here has been sketched already in the short book *Glaubhaft ist nur Liebe*[5] so that the readers of this work will not be kept too long on the outskirts of the subject. The heart of the revelation of God in Christ can be seen only by one who neither takes the cosmos as the *final* meaning of the revelation (as classical philosophy and Christian theology until the Renaissance often, though not consistently, inclined to do) nor takes man as the final meaning (as the modern period prefers to do); for man is completed, redeemed and made blessed by the revelation; the final meaning must be left 'disinterestedly' to the love of God as this shows itself in its devotion and self-emptying. Such a man 'gives the glory' for this love to God alone and understands himself and the world as a function of this love. It is not difficult to grasp that this refusal to see God's love for man and world solely in terms of its purpose is the highest ethical-religious and aesthetic act of man, not as a 'meritorious undertaking', but as the obedient reply to the love of God as it opens itself before him and to him. Only so will the old principle (which cannot be made obsolete) that God could have no other end in the creation of the world than the proclamation of his own 'glory' become once again living and telling. Everything else that can be said about world and man, every 'finality' and 'evolution' of the individual, the society and the cosmos as a whole on all its levels—from the level of life to the religious level—must take second place, in a subordinate position to this first principle, if it is to be understood as, in the *last* analysis, meaningful.

Perhaps this quick panoramic view is sufficient to explain why we wish to characterise our method as one of *integration* and not of evolution. Today 'evolution' is in favour: it is by denying the old that one breaks through to the new and, in order to justify this turning aside, discredits the tradition (by means of psychology when necessary) and so persuades the contemporary world that it is quite pointless to make the tradition one's own or even to come to know the tradition at all. But if Christianity is to understand itself it must be bound in a health-giving way to its historical origin, which can be understood in its depth not in some ingenious, extempore fashion, nor in the light of 'the needs of modern man', but only by humble listening in the Holy Spirit to the original Word. Accordingly, the Christian ought to have a sensibility for human tradition which must be integrated precisely if the way into the future is to be found: as the way from a totality that is still implicit (with its equilibrium) to a totality that is made explicit (where the equilibrium is laid open, but not abandoned).

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[5] In the series *Christ Heute*, Johannesverlag 1963 (ET, *Love Alone: The Way of Revelation*, 1968).

TRANSCENDENTAL AESTHETICS

Before aesthetics was reduced in late rationalism (Baumgarten) and in critical idealism (Kant) to a science confined to a particular area of knowledge, it was (when seen against the background of the tradition as a whole) an aspect of metaphysics: metaphysics was the science concerned with the being of what exists and, in so far as by 'being' was meant that which finally establishes the multiplicity of the world, metaphysics was inseparable from theology. On such a view the transitory truth and goodness of the world which can be perceived only in a fragmentary manner was seen to be anchored in an entire truth and goodness that does not pass away, in order that they could be understood: in the same way, the beauty that blazes forth in single acts of appearing was anchored in an absolute beauty that does not pass away, a beauty that dwells in the whole ἀρχαί of being—with the 'gods', with the 'divine', with 'God'. This intuition survived from Homer and Pindar through Plato and Aristotle, Plotinus, the Christian early mediaeval period and high Middle Ages, up to the Renaissance and the Baroque period; we term this intuition here 'transcendental aesthetics', in the sense that the καλόν (as what is whole, sound, shining, beautiful) is one of the transcendental determinations of being *qua* being. The biblical revelation can and must enter into dialogue with such transcendental aesthetics; by the same token it can have no interest in a partial aesthetics that is confined within the boundaries of this world.

Let us be clear about what the intellectual decision in favour of such a supposition, that being as a whole is beautiful, presupposes. Is such a supposition not contradicted a thousand times each day by the shrillness of all that is ugly, that is warped, that is hopelessly mediocre and vulgar? And is not there an act of transcending, a quality of transcendence, in this limitless supposition, which has something utopian, heroic or indeed something of *faith* about it? For this is a commitment to that which exists *as a whole*, no matter how it presents itself to the individual. Rilke has expressed this in an inimitable manner: 'I know that God did not put us among the various things in order that we should make a selection but so that we should undertake to *receive* so completely and utterly that in the end we are able to receive nothing but what is beautiful, in our love, in our watchful attention, in our unappeasable wondering.'[6] Rilke speaks of taking and receiving, not of a subjective act of transfiguring; he speaks of a 'watchful attention' that goes along with love, in order to 'receive' quite objectively, i.e. 'completely and utterly', and this opening in love and attentiveness can now receive everything as 'beautiful' and is therefore a 'wondering' that encompasses everything. Without any doubt, this sentence of Rilke contains much of the outlook on reality found in Antiquity: the outlook of Homer, who sees the shining glory of being, in watchful attention and love, through the horrors on the battlefield before Troy and in the palace hall on Ithaca; more paradoxical still, the outlook of Sophocles as he sees the blinded king and his daughter immured in the tomb; Virgil's outlook as he sees the mating of animals and the plague they bring and as he sees the rending-apart of human love because of the divine commission to Aeneas; the gaze of all the tragic poets as it rests on the living form of man, breaking in pieces and breathing out the meaning of its life as it passes over beyond itself.

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[6] Letter to E. and K. von der Heydt, 11 December 1906. In: *Briefe aus den Jahren 1904–1907* (Insel, 1939), 210.

The 'transcendental' qualities of being are so called because each of them holds sway over the totality of being. They cannot, therefore, be marked off from one another but indwell each other and make their voices heard in each other. The man of Antiquity would never for a moment have thought of marking a boundary between the transcendentally beautiful and the transcendentally true and good for between these there is a *circumincessio*, so that that which is beautiful and whole never lacks that which is morally sound or the radiance of truth in its work of reconciliation and healing by grace. It is true that there can be various stages of the integration of these qualities: the stage of integration which is found in the poets from Homer to the tragedians appeared to Plato to be imperfect, when compared to the integration at which he aimed, and so it is that the 'aesthetic' myth must give place to the more serious, more existential philosophy—for Socrates dies for the truth. For the old Plato the cosmos is *kalos* because the creator of the univers is ἀγαθός[7]. In Vergil and Plotinus the mutual indwelling of the *transcendentalia* has become complete. The mediaeval period held fast in principle to this indwelling and was able to make it clear in a subtle metaphysics which simultaneously encompassed the indwelling of the beautiful in the good and in the true *and* its separateness from these two as something with its own sphere of interest. The Renaissance and the Baroque at their best live off the capital of this metaphysics of Antiquity and the Middle Ages and important aspects of it come to light once again in Heidegger.

It suffices here to recall a few points about the Greek cosmos. 1. The world is to be understood as the *epiphaneia* of the divine to man and as man's being broken open so that he may grasp this appearing. Only at a later period is it predominantly the 'ordering' of the cosmos (revealed in its pure form in the stars) which directs man to see the epiphany of the divine: in the early period, it is the apparitions of the gods themselves that do this. From the epiphany comes the moral standard for man which he must 'hold to' (σωφροσύνη) and the warning against sin as arrogance; from the epiphany comes enough light to make the darkness of mortal existence bearable and something that can be positively accepted. The world of men lies exposed to the eyes of the gods and man somehow sees the gods and 'is ashamed' before them because he is transparent and is seen by them; as he looks on things and knows them (εἰδέναι), he perceives the forms of things (εἶδος comes from the same root) which have already been seen through and illuminated in this double act of seeing, finite and infinite,[8] and bear on themselves the seal of truth. And so in Homer, Sappho and Pindar there is an objective brightness that flows from things and events, a brightness that flows as 'honour' from the heroes precisely when they immortalise themselves in death; the poets and the priestly seers, and later the philosophers, participate by divine favour in this seeing of truth (something they have purchased by the suffering and the act of being sacrificed that have left their mark upon them) and so they can proclaim the beautiful as that which is good and true for men.

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[7] *Timaeus* 29C.

2. The ordering of the world rests upon what is just, fitting and right (*Dikê*, *Themis*) as its divine foundations; man's proper individual and political nature is brought into action where he aknowledges this ordering and pays homage to the god in fidelity, indeed when he strives towards the god in love (*erôs*). The bond of fidelity between god and man, which is the foundation of justice is represented for the *polis* by its leaders in a manner that is visible and appeals to the senses, and the poets who offer an interpretation of the world predominantly hold firm to this 'sacrament'—only kings and leading heroes can appear on the stage of tragedy. As Alois Dempf has impressively demonstrated (*Die unsichtbare Bilderwelt*),[9] the

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[8] *Cf.* the admirable comments by Karl Kerényi, *Die Religion der Griechen und Römer* (1963), 145–159.

[9] *Eine Geistesgeschichte der Kunst* (Benziger, 1959). Evidence is brought for the 'three political high religions (Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome)'

ethical-political imaging of the truth of the world and the aesthetic imaging of this truth are formed in relation to one another in all high cultures. The fruitful, tense and often tragic relationship between court and poetry (down to Elizabeth, Versailles, Weimar) has therefore a deep necessity of its own.

3. In poetry, the world is especially revealed as *charis*: through all the 'justice' that has been built into nature, a free grace of the creator is perceived and acknowledged, turning the strict law into a charming play and becoming visible in the moments of unhoped-for and unmerited success where failure and falling-apart, pointlessness and destruction would seem to be the rule. Is not the youthful form of man, with its slim covering of radiant skin over ugly organs, with its radiant victory in contests where most fail, worth the glorious praise which Pindar bestows—in the insoluble play of χαρίζεσθαι between victor and poet? When *charis* shines out as charm and divine favour in the beautiful form the one who sees it can be inspired as by a flash of lightning and caught up from the realm of the day-to-day where things are obscure and are merely to be made use of and brought to the springs of being, which bestows itself in an act of free grace. So here, for a third time, the *kalon* is one with the good and the true in the metaphysical depths; and it is of decisive importance for the history of ideas that this metaphysics is in no wise contradicted or declared worthless by the biblical *appearing* of God, by his redemptive *giving of law* and by his free *grace*. Rather, it is confirmed in such a way that man sees all his preliminary sketches of systems included and far transcended in the definitive systems of God.

As Plato criticises the poets, because they do not push forward to the area where the truth is tied down but remain floating in undefined and undefining images, so the biblical revelation in its turn criticises all metaphysics, mythical, philosophical and religious—for the truth between the world and God is far more profound than man knows and the law-giving of God is far more holy, the breaking of God's law

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and for 'the cultures of the religions of the founders' (Israel, Byzantium, the West).

far more deadly than one can see from the standpoint of the world alone. Therefore also the *charis* of God is far richer in grace, far more free, bestows a far greater transfiguration than any political-aesthetic world of images made by men could ever have supposed. The philosophical criticism of beauty in Plato flows into an aesthetic teaching about the *transcendentalia* which remained definitive as metaphysics for the West; the Christian theological criticism of this Western metaphysics flows into a theological transcendent aesthetics which is the subject of the remaining Volumes of this work but will not be positively developed until the last two. In the fourth and fifth Volumes, we shall see only a reflection of the positive event—the critical relocation of metaphysics in theology or the critical embedding of theology in metaphysics. Such a procedure is indispensable if the bond between creation and redemption is not to be broken and if the working of God the creator is not to be contradicted in the working of God the redeemer but rather perfected therein.

In the biblical revelation, however, the object of contemplation is not an ordering between God and man but first the living God as the *only subject* of the act of revealing, law-giving and the bestowal of grace—and only then can the man who is the object of God's action become a subject whose action is a reply to God. Therefore a theological aesthetics that goes beyond any metaphysics requires a doctrine of *seeing* ('How can the free act of God's redemption be perceived in the world?'), as this was set forth in the first Volume of this work, and next a doctrine of *rapture*, of *being brought out* ('How does man cross over from his own metaphysical systems into the free system of God?'), as was promised in the first Volume and must now be set out in the last two. Meantime, the fourth and fifth Volumes prepare the way for this doctrine of transcending, in various aspects: metaphysics, in the breadth of myth, philosophy and religion already offers an interpretation of man that radically directs him to the 'divine' (θειόν: it is genuinely this neuter form that Paul employs at Acts 17.29); and *art* too, in the original act of generation which remains fruitful through the centuries, is always an act that transcends through to the divine, that pays homage to the divine—only so it is *concrete*, conscious art; whenever it falls away from this 'rapture', it is robbed of its own being and becomes 'abstract' art that is alienated from being and from itself.

The relationship between the two acts of transcending, the transcendence of the philosophy of the *transcendentalia* into the 'beauty of being' and the transcendence of the believer into the beauty of the saving act of God in Christ, is not to be reduced by man to a lowest common denominator; this at least is theologically strictly demonstrable. For if it is true that God in his dealings with his creation cannot abuse its transcendental laws of being, it is likewise true that the free opening of the heart of the innermost mystery of God cannot be anticipated on the basis of this transcendental lawfulness; nor, once this has taken place, can it be systematically fitted into its cagegories (as, for example, in Hegel, where it is the crowning example of the metaphysical truth, which was already perceived in all the preliminary stages and formally anticipated). Thus, the relationship of the biblical theology of faith to extra-biblical metaphysics remains in suspense: it is quite obvious that there exists a universal human transcendence to God (e.g., in the *erôs* of Plato and Plotinus) which implies an ascetical refusal to absolutise a finite form, and there is no reason why Christians should not take over the movement of this *erôs*, which *must* be 'disinterested' when it is accomplished, and perfect it as *caritas*. The great converts of Antiquity, from Justin to Augustine, did this—their aim was to illuminate what was unclear by bringing it into the light of Christ but also to justify what seemed the particularity of the biblical event before the ahistorical generality of metaphysics, even though there was a risk that the metaphysical *erôs* would be maintained as the determining context, and so the power and the salt would be stolen from the decisive *caritas* of Christ. Christian intellectual history is the history of this ever-present risk, which cannot be overcome once for all by an intellectual act, nor got rid of by a refusal in principle to posit such an intellectual act (as the Reformation proposed). And it is of course true that the attempts to reconcile metaphysics and theology were necessarily animated by an enthusiastic confidence in the power of thought—whereby the thinking of reason and the thinking of faith should complement each other harmoniously—and therefore from the outset unconsciously tended to extend the area of metaphysics to cover both realms of thought, as the systems of Scotus Eriugena and those of Nicholas of Cusa and Leibniz and as far as Hegel show; alternatively, when the risk was seen in time, these attempts at reconciliation of metaphysics and theology were impelled at least to see Christ predominantly as the 'way' to his own truth in the form of God and simultaneously as the indispensable guide to a perfected metaphysics, as we see in Origen and the young Augustine, or Alan and John of Salisbury and again in some Christian thinkers of the Renaissance. It seems here that what one discounts as classical (especially neo-platonic) 'aesthetics' has won the upper hand over what is biblical.

But even if (apart from Luther) Western intellectual history could be understood to say that the history itself demonstrates the brittleness of the synthesis between metaphysics and theology that Christendom sought and that the so-called autonomy of classical metaphysics hardened in the modern period to a new anti-Christian autonomy, this bitter lesson of history need not be understood as an intellectual fiasco, for two reasons. First, because the modern autonomy of reason has not been able to renew *one* impulse of the classical—the glory which always disappears where man does without God or identifies himself with God; second, because the loss of the synthesis of the patristic, mediaeval and Baroque periods forces the Christians of our time to reflect wholly on what is decisive in the biblical glory—naturally, as we have already said, so that from that standpoint they may become responsible guardians of the glory of creation too.

Accordingly, the last two Volumes lead us to an intensive dialogue with *Luther*, who undertook this limitation to what is biblical, though with a denial of metaphysics which immediately took its revenge in pietism, rationalism and idealism by swinging to the opposite extreme. The starting-point of this historically well-nigh incomprehensible way is an initial denial of the analogy of being: if we confine ourselves here to aesthetics, this first caused the continuing beauty of the creation to be overlooked, notwithstanding Scripture's frequent witness to it, because of the 'seriousness of sin'; then, more deeply, it made the overflowing of the glory of grace into the world of creation absolutely impossible or at any rate continually impeded this in a disruptive dialectic. Anyone who commits himself to this dialectic would be incapable of a fruitful ecumenical dialogue—rather, he would be banished by the historical dialectic which has already occurred to positions which are fruitless because they are already historically obsolete. This remains true even if modern Protestantism eagerly makes capital out of the crisis of modern art[10] and out of the obscuring of the whole dimension of the (καλόν) in today's world.[11] Christianity can indeed fasten on to catastrophes and bankruptcies, in order to make visible what is distinctive in Christianity itself, but it can never take comfort from such things, imagining that it could occupy painlessly a fortress abandoned by the enemy. And this remains true at a time when even for Catholics the period of humanism (understood in the sense of Antiquity), and thereby also the period of metaphysics in the sense in which this has come down to them, appears to have come to an end; when 'the beautiful' seems to belong only to bourgeois comfort which it seems almost indecent to cultivate any longer; when the figures who leave their imprint on the Church of today—Thérèse of Liseiux, Charles de Foucauld, the worker-priests, many communities living in the world—live the example of a Christianity of poverty and of utter exposure to a cold, heartless world of technology, a world that at best understands the word 'beautiful' to mean elegantly built tools and machines but discards all the other uses of the word as comical or rotten glamour. But the theme of our discussion here is not beauty, but *glory*. It is in the presence of glory that Thérèse kneels in adoration, just like the hermit de Foucauld, all his life long: and it is only from this mysterious land, hidden from the others, that they have turned to the world of their contemporaries, Christian or not, as Christians who have received the radiance and now give forth the radiance. It is this radiance, incomprehensible yet undeniable, that Paul means when he describes the Christian existence under the sign of Δόξα which is not obscured by the dialectic of 2 Cor 6.4–10, nor contradicted, but rather confirmed. It is not important whether or not there is generated from this something beautiful within the world, some form of 'Christian art'; the birth of what is artistically beautiful is subject to inner-worldly conditions and periods of taste, which do not apply to what is Christian.

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[10] *Cf.* especially Hans-Eckehard Bahr, *Poiesis. Theologische Untersuchung zur Kunst* (Evang. Verlagswerk Stuttgart, 1961) with its comprehensive Catholic and Protestant bibliography. *Cf.* Kurt Marti, Kurt Lüthi, and Kurt von Fischer, *Moderne Literatur, Malerei und Musik. Drei Entwürfe zu einer Begegnung zwischen Glaube und Kunst* (Flamberg, Zürich-Stuttgart, 1963).

[11] Rudolf Bultmann's statement is characteristic: 'The idea of the beautiful is of no significance in forming the life of Christian faith, which sees in the beautiful the temptation of a false transfiguration of the world which distracts the gaze from 'beyond' . . . If the beautiful is an image in which, in a certain sense, the puzzling, confused motion of life is brought to a halt and is made surveyable for the eye set at a distance from it, thus disclosing its deeper meaning for him (i.e. for man), then it is true for the Christian faith that it is not art that discloses the depths of reality, and that this is not grasped in a distanced act of seeing, but rather that this is grasped in *suffering*. The reply to the question posed in the human lot can never be objectified in a work of art but is always to be found in the enduring of suffering itself. The beautiful . . . is therefore, as far as the Christian faith is concerned, always something that lies beyond this life' (*Glauben und Verstehen* Vol. II (2nd edn., 1958), 137).

TRANSCENDENTALITY AND FORM

No metaphysics of being qua being and of its transcendental determinations is separable from concrete experience, which is always sensuous.The truth and the openness of being as a whole will be seen only where a judgment is made about some precise thing that is true; the goodness of being will be experienced only where something that is good meets one, something that simultaneously brings near *the* good and (through its finitude, fragility, lack of goodness) takes it away again. It is from the experience of the senses that we know that the beautiful exists: this experience makes it present to us and takes it away from us again, discloses it and conceals it in various layers of depth, freely and incomprehensibly—first of all as the individual attractive form or a particular mood and capacity to receive; then in a more hidden manner, where something unremarkable—the face of an old man, for example, or the still, restrained sorrow of a mother—suddenly betrays a secret beauty; most intimately, when what is crude, what is explicitly ugly, what is painful to the point of meaninglessness, the experience of being handed over to what is vulgar and humiliating, can appear as assimilated into a totality which can and must be accepted positively—without artificial sweetening, just as it is.

It would be an unworthy act to argue the relative virtues of the classical and modern forms of this kind of acceptance of the world, for they wished to see the most extreme tensions of being in the world, between which the abysses of death and guilt yawn, brought to peace in a final harmony: in tragedy, or in Heraclitus and Empedocles. Great tragedy—*King Lear*, for example—forces the onlooker to assimilate what is most terrible, most rending, into an act of acceptance. Great 'classical' art is not without the open wound in the heart of being and of man in which being becomes illuminated. In his *Allgemeine Ästhetik* (1929), Paul Häberlin has attained in the middle of our age this standpoint, where the philosophical act is one with the aesthetic (and therefore religious) act of acceptance.

Here, where it is always the totality of being that presents itself in various degrees of clarity in the individual things that exist, the concept of *form* is appropriate. This means a totality of parts and elements, grasped as such, existing and defined as such, which for its existence requires not only a 'surrounding world' but ultimately being as a whole: in this need it is (as Nicholas of Cusa says) a 'contracted' representation of the 'absolute', in so far as it transcends its parts as members and controls them in its own confined territory. This concept, taken over from Plato and Aristotle (as *eidos* and *morphê*), stood in the midpoint of mediaeval ontology (as *species* and *forma*) and likewise in the midpoint of the teaching about nature in Herder (against Kant!) and Goethe; it was excavated timidly but with sufficient success out of the ruins of the atomistic psychology of association by Christian von Ehrenfels (*Über Gestaltqualitäten*, 1890; *Kosmogonie*, 12th edn 1916;[12] *Das Primzahlengesetz*, 1922) and given a place of honour; then of course it was put at risk anew from within by the Berlin Gestalt psychology (M. Wertheimer, W. Köhler, K. Lewin, W. Metzger) because the form is here considered as a 'unity of correlation' of pyschic 'elementary functions', for the sake of 'exact scientific' measurability, and these 'functions' in accordance with the 'theory of isomorphism' ought to be of the same form as the physiological and physical substrata. Thereby the transcendent centre of the object, which is the midpoint of the concept of form, is once again abandoned.

'Everything that exists . . . has its being in itself, and thus also the agreement according to which it exists,' says Goethe, and continues: 'The measurement of a thing is a crude act which cannot be carried out on living bodies otherwise than with highest imperfection. A living existing thing cannot be measured with anything that is outside it; rather, if it is to be measured at all, it itself must give the measure. But this is spiritual in the highest degree and cannot be discovered through the senses.'[13] Since Goethe (in common with the great tradition) can think of the individual form only as 'participation in infinitude' or in 'complete existence' (in the *actus essendi illimitatus* of Scholasticism), it follows that we cannot 'completely grasp the concept of the existence and perfection of the most circumscribed living being'. Goethe comes thereby to his ontological comprehension of the concept of the sublime: '*If the soul becomes aware of a relationship as it were in embryo, whose harmony it could not encompass and sense in a single act of seeing were it to be wholly developed, then we name this impression sublime, and it is the most glorious thing that a human soul can receive*[14]

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[12] In his *Philosophie des Organischen* (1909), Hans Driesch gave new currency to the concept of entelechy, of which Ehrenfels says (despite Driesch's protest) that it means the same as his concept of form ('these elements of thought are as like each other as one egg is like another—or, rather, they are not even two eggs but only one single egg, considered and named from different sides'), *Weiterführende Bemerkungen* (1922), reprinted with the other relevant articles in: *Gestalthaftes Sehen. Ergebnisse und Aufgaben der Morphologie, zum hundertjährigen Geburtstag von Christian von Ehrenfels*, ed. by Ferdinand Weinhandl (1960), 53.

[13] In the incorrectly titled *Studie nach Spinoza*, Vol. 16 of the Artemis Edition, 841f.

This text may enable us to see why the concept of form could and had to be introduced in the first Volume of this work. Every really existing thing that meets us takes on form in analogous degrees and the 'height of the form' is judged according to the greater power of the unity to gather together equal varieties (Ehrenfels); but all the forms that can be apprehended spiritually refer over above themselves to the full and perfect being, which according to Goethe 'cannot be conceived by us'. The light which shines forth from the form and reveals it to the understanding is accordingly inseparably light of the form itself (Scholasticism speaks therefore of *splendor formae*) and light of being as a whole, in which the form is immersed, so that it may have a unitary form. The transcendence increases along with the immanence. To put this in the language of aesthetics: the higher and purer a form, the more will light shine forth from its depths and the more will it point to the mystery of the light of being as a whole. To put this in religious language: the more spiritual and independent a being is, the more it is aware in itself of God and the more clearly does it point to God. It is not possible that the biblical revelation should escape from this fundamental law of metaphysics, for God acts in human history, takes on the form of man and through his human form joins mankind to himself in the Church. And so the absolute being makes use of the form of the world with its duality of language (inalienable finitude of the individual form *and* unconditional, transcending reference to this individual form to being as a whole) in order to make itself known in its unfathomable personal depths.[15]

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[14] It is clear that the decisive stimulus for this formulation comes from conversations with Karl Philipp Moritz, whose words are quoted extensively by Goethe in the *Italienische Reise* (March 1788, Vol. 11 of Artemis Edition, 588–596).

If the inevitability of this truth were kept in view, the endless struggle between a biblicist orthodoxy (which appears today as Judaising exegesis) and a liberal Hellenism (in which today the dominant role is played by the general historical or systematic sociology of religion) might be lifted on to a higher level. For it ought then to be possible to allow that the reference of the individual form to its foundation in what is perfect has metaphysical and religious significance, yet at the same time to acknowledge the uniqueness of the biblical form over against all others, to be '*aware*' of it 'in embryo', in Goethe's sense and then to make the leap to *faith* in 'the harmony, were it to be wholly developed' (i.e., eschatologically); all the more so, since in the embryo it is the Word of the free God, who proclaims himself in his grace, that offers itself. Correspondingly, the battle for the demythologisation of the biblical revelation would go on its way in a less small-minded manner: it could be conducted rather in the sovereign manner of the later Schelling, for the *logoi spermatikoi* of ultimate forms of human and worldly fate which lie scattered in the myth, could be gathered together into the definitive form of revelation of Jesus Christ. Thus genuine art (rooted in the myth) would enjoy a relaxed relationship to what is Christian, for there is no reason why an illuminating and directing light may not fall from the form of revelation upon the significant forms of art which refer to the whole.

It is not difficult to see why a different approach to the question, one that would exclude a metaphysics of form and confront the modern critical spirit and functionalism of the natural sciences directly with the biblical revelation, raises doubts about its value. The apparent relationship between the total lack of 'perspicacity' on each side (based on one side on pure calculation, on the other on pure faith) must be deceptive because it is wholly negative: it would compel the Christian element to give up any visibility, any form in the world, any human credibility, and so would make mission impossible.

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[15] As man with his freedom and intellect is rooted in the cosmos and is absolutely inseparable from it, so the freedom of intellectual expression is inseparably rooted in the laws of organic form. The concept of intellectual expression (*expressio*), which Bonaventure appropriated for his doctrine of revelation (not without consideration of the stigmatisation of St Francis on Mount Alverna: *cf.* Vol. II of this work, 271ff.), presupposes as the basis on which all is built the organic relationship of expression, although it necessarily transcends this, as Hegel shows (*Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 1832, 209f., 235f.). Nevertheless, that which has form always unfolds itself from a depth which does not appear, and is superior to form, and thereby it is a genuine vehicle of utterance for the intellect which is sovereign but not arbitrary in its utterances.

Ehrenfels rediscovered his 'qualities of form' primarily through melodies: the forms of space appeared to him first by analogy to the *forms of time*. This points back to the aesthetics of Augustine (and beyond that, to the aesthetics of the drama of Antiquity) and is evidence that the concept of form in no way shuts itself off against the concept of history and event. If art owes such a character to its mythical origins (G. Nebel),[16] then there is nothing to prevent us contemplating (as Irenaeus did)[17] the revelation which God has taken on form—a work of art which precisely in its chief exemplification, the crossing-over from old covenant to new, from promise to fulfilment, from law to gospel, is uniquely and in a manner that can never be superseded history and event. The quality of being simultaneously in motion and definitively fixed of a limited form, which not merely *refers* to the absolute but centrally and with full validity gives utterence to the absolute, gives the biblical revelation the stamp of a work of art by God that can never be equalled by men.[18] The *character of event* belongs not only to the art of time but also to the great art of space: the image of the god reminds one of the epiphany of the god and lets it somehow be seen anew; it makes the eternal present by recalling what has taken place (ἀνάμνησις) and disclosing what is to come (ἐλπίς). Pillars and triumphal arches remind one of Caesar's victory and raise hopes for the continuing presence of its effects; like the arts of time—music, dance and theatre—they have the character of gathering time together and are very far from wishing to pass off an abstract moment as timeless eternity. 'Eternal' content is made present only when a self-contained moment is allowed to 'pass', so that this moment may bring what is absent (past and present) into experience. It is therefore possible to speak of a protological (paradisal)—eschatological—character of beauty, which surrounds the beautiful and (if it wishes to be so open) gives it a further opening to biblical revelation—always presupposing that this opening is not understood as an anticipation of the Word of God. Vergil's master-work is an especially impressive example of such a gathering-together of time, not in order to remove the temporal dimension but, on the contrary, to show the true meaning of existence in memory and hope: thus the *Aeneid* is the model for the great Christian epics.[19] Although it presents a historical form of the greatest style (the empire of Augustus), the openness of the work makes its subject a kind of artistic parable for the faith of the Old Testament—looking back to the covenant and running forward to the Messiah. The openness of every beautiful form, which always expresses more in the most perfect and determined expression than what goes into the thing formed itself (namely, the infinity of glory), makes the beautiful as such available as a form of revelation.

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[16] Vol. I, 58ff.

[17] Vol. II, 31ff., especially in the section, 'God's Temporal Art', 70ff.

[18] In his article 'Der Philologe, das Absolute und die Form' (*Trivium* IV (1946), 73–80) Theophil Spoerri distinguishes the three moments of the work of art: the structure as a whole in space (= *Gestalt*, form), in time (= rhythm) and in the intellectual-personal encounter (= love); these are related to one another like body, soul and spirit; therefore the form can never be considered as something closed off in itself but only as something that is open and points beyond itself, something that sets an event in motion. At this point, light is reflected from revelation on to inner-worldly beauty: *cf.* Ladislaus Boros, 'Kunstbetrachtung als Erziehung zum Absoluten', *Orientierung* (1959), Nr. 21/22.

How comprehensive this availability can be need not be demonstrated at this point. It should become reasonably clear at the end of this Volume, where Western intellectual history passes from the praxis of art into a retrospective theory of the beautiful and gives birth of itself to a '*science of aesthetics*'. This science, as we shall see, is a mixed blessing: on the one hand it has the tendency to reduce what is transcendentally glorious to the level of the inner-worldly and indeed categorical beautiful; but, on the other hand, even in this restricted form it discloses certain fundamental modes of beauty more clearly and in this form they can be of service in understanding better the fundamental modes of the divine revelation. The more correctly the analogies are drawn, the more definitively will the distances yawn. This is true not only for the objective structures of beauty, which are governed by the concepts of 'form' (*Gestalt*), of 'harmony' (proportion) and 'radiance' (*claritas*: the three elements of beauty in Thomas Aquinas) but equally, indeed more so, for the subjective structures, which come into prominence after the Kantian alteration of the concept of transcendentality; this is true likewise for the relationship between subject and object, which, as Bonaventure emphasised, is decisive in beauty. The late Schelling saw these analogies and pondered them; we shall have to ask how far from a Christian point of view he was right.

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[19] *Cf.* Vol. III, 15f. (Dante). On Vergil's role as model, *cf.* Th. Haecker, *Vergil, Vater des Abendlandes* (1931), E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (2nd edn., 1948).

But this making of a science out of aesthetics now in its turn lies behind us; as far as beauty is concerned, the twentieth century here too goes, in ever greater self-consciousness and ever more forgetful of the tradition, along its own untrodden paths. That which is crumbling is quickly and painlessly knocked down. Abstract figurations present themselves in the nothingness. The forms of the tradition have lost the background against which they could be understood and now give the impression of something in a museum, guarded by antiquarians and unseeingly photographed by tourists. Where is the Christian to wander along these vista-less paths? If the bond between metaphysical aesthetics and theological aesthetics, after having held firm for two thousand years, is now proclaimed dissolved, is the Christian required, when things become wholly serious, to let this tradition go on its own way and take his stand on the bare rock of the Bible from which he was hewn? Or must he, from his starting-point in naked glory, undertake the still harder task of sighting the obscured and lost beauty, of discriminating and administering it in proxy? How can such a thing be?

Without anticipating the final Volume, we can say at this point that such a thing would be possible only if it occurred without any intellectual-political compromise. Compromises are reached against the background of false equations, where it had been supposed that exact similarities existed but where in fact there were only analogies that were not to be turned into identities. We shall now list a few such compromises, that were historically important.

1. It is universal tradition that theology and philosophy in the mythical origin came forth from poetry, that Orpheus, Musæus and Linus were the first prophet-poets. But to conclude from this (as in the modern period, from Boccaccio through the Baroque to Herder and Creuzer, and to Guénon and Leopold Ziegler) that at their root theology and poetry are the same is a monism that leads to a false sacralisation of art and a false act of making aestheticism out of religion.[20]

2. While it is true that Catholicism maintains the visibility of the Church and the theologically binding character of the tradition, this does not justify the absolutising of its historical and cultural form; this would be to attribute to the form a commanding importance that in certain circumstances is seen as making it superior to the form of the biblical revelation (C. Maurras) or as giving it an equal worth to this (the Catholic romantics and some integralists today). We have already discussed the relative character of all forms of Church over against Christ in the first Volume: the same is true in a higher degree of all artistic and cultural effects of the revelation.

3. It follows from this that it is also necessary to guard against an open or hidden identification of the 'mythical form of thought' with 'sacramental thinking' (G. van der Leeuw)

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[20] On the historical question, *cf.* the important work by Rolf Bachem, 'Dichtung als verborgene Theologie', in: *Abhandlungen zur Philosophie, Psychologie und Pädagogik* Vol. 5 (Bouvier, Bonn, 1956). On the critical 'testing of the spirits', *cf.* especially the works by Eudo C. Mason, *Exzentrische Bahnen, Studien zum Dichterbewußtsein der Neuzeit* (1963), *Der Zopf des Münchhausen* (1949). As an example of the monistic direction today, *cf.* E. I. Watkin, *The Bow in the Clouds. An Essay towards the Integration of Experience* (New York, Macmillan, 1932).

or with thought in the comprehensive category of the mysterium (O. Casel). It is difficult to maintain the necessary element of analogy here because the relationship (against the battle-line of theological rationalism) must be consciously upheld and yet the greater differences (against a dangerous aestheticising of the mystery of Christ) must be emphasised.

4. The tendency today is towards the destruction of form: whether it is the Bultmannians, anthropocentric transcendentalists, philosophical functionalists, those who emphasise rhythm alone (E. Przywara) or Teilhardian evolutionists, they are all following the trend to the formless, though they could never be reconciled with each other. Against this strange univocity of the moderns, the character of *form* of the revelation must be maintained—in an unmodern manner—for only when we accept the unique incarnation of the Logos can the infinite dimensions of the Pneuma be understood as his glorification (Jn 16.14) and not as his dissolution. Nor is it any different in the dialogues with Asiatic metaphysics that fly from form. The Western history of ideas, which will now be sketched in answer to our questions, is not in any way lacking in moments of intimate dialogue with the Orient; here, we should not so much follow J. A. Cuttat by thinking of the patristic-Byzantine mysticism of ascent but rather think with R. Otto of the consistently developed spirituality of indifference, from Eckhart onwards: this position, seemingly lying beyond all form, attains in the perfect Christian love that which the Asiatics strove for predominantly in gnosis. There are other elements lying to hand for the east-west dialogue in Plotinus and Dionysius and further in the ultimate stance of the great founders like Benedict and Francis.

5. The theology of kenosis takes us equally into the realm of the ultimate. It seems tasteless to touch this with aesthetic concepts, for its path leads into the utter hiddenness of God—not only as the concealment of the God who is ever greater (as Dionysius understood this as κρυφιότης), not only as the hiding of the spiritual Logos in the heavy and mortal flesh (as the Alexandrians saw it) but as the concealment beneath its opposite, beneath what is in opposition to God—sin (as indeed Luther saw). Form now exists only to be crossed

out, disfigured and defaced. Yet, true though this is, is not precisely this concealment the decisive revelation of the hidden God of anger and love? And what does 'revelation' mean, if not a laying open, a making visible (however this takes place)? And is not this integration of the most extreme formlessness the victory of God's power of giving form in the chaos of sin? Is not here that attained, which all tragedy aimed at with failing human means—reconciliation in destruction? And may it not be the case (as Ferdinand Ulrich tries to show)[21] that the final mystery of the kenosis of God in Christ has an analogous structure in the metaphysical mystery of being, which shines forth as it destroys, which mediates the radiance of the divine only by pointing forward to the utter humility of the Cross?

If this be so, then a metaphysical history of aesthetics must be a place of continuous, very fruitful theological decisions: for being as a whole, in its transcendence which cannot be fixed, points through to God or to nothing, according to the illumination which man gives it. It points to nothing, wherever man thinks he can master it in his transcendental reason: then the heavens praise the glory of man and the glory which they seemed to praise is quenched. To this extent, no *transcendentale* is more demonic than the καλόν. As the last, after the one, the true and the good, the beautiful is only an appearance breathed out over what passes away: who knows whether it is an appearing of God or the seeming appearance of nothing. But where being is understood in a neutral scientific fashion (as the concept known trivially to all), the decision has already been made in the depths—the decision for nothing. As the last *transcendentale*, the beautiful guards the others and sets the seal on them: there is nothing true or good, in the long term, without the light of grace of that which is freely bestowed. And a Christianity which went along with modernity and subscribed merely to the true (faith as a system of correct propositions) or merely to the good (faith as that which is most useful and healthy for the subject) would be a Christianity knocked down from its own heights. But when the saints interpreted their existence in the light of God's greater glory, they were always the guardians of the beautiful.

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[21] *Homo Abyssus. Das Wagnis der Seinsfrage* (Einsiedeln, 1961).

The history which is unfolded here is therefore presented as the history of a continual, subterranean decision which at certain places unavoidably becomes visible: so, for example, in the first decision for philosophy, and in the question of the final meaning of Antiquity: in Vergil and more strongly in Plotinus; so in the circle of Thomas Aquinas and in the overthrow of metaphysics that followed him; and so once again —and as it were symbolically demonstrated—in Nicholas of Cusa, inasmuch as it is here that the fundamental decisions of the modern period are taken. It is the free thinking intellect that makes history and its deep decisions roll and echo down through the centuries. In this way history is the apocalypse (that is to say, the opening) of the decision of the intellect for or against God.

I. LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

A. MYTH

1. HOMER

Only the West received the grace of birth under the sign of a perfected cosmos,[1] in which religion and art are one—the cosmos of Homer's epics. This world was so strongly fashioned that, when philosophy and religion grew out beyond their beginning, they both developed a common heritage and strove in various ways, and with varying good fortune, to recover what else had been lost on the way. Art remains covered in Homer's mantle; even Plato, who fights against him, quotes him on every other page, while for

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[1] The uncouth Gilgamesh epic of the Babylonians, the origins of which lie as far back as Sumer, undeniably poses profound questions concerning men—death and immortality—but can scarcely hold the candle to Homer as far as the exquisite artistic understanding and the education of the heart are concerned. The same is true of the two immensely long Indian epics (both much later than Homer), for they lack that aesthetic ordering of the parts and lucidity which Aristotle rightly demands of a work of art; the plot belongs not in the realm of history but in that of myth (*cf.* the researches of Georges Dumézil), and is not dramatic but rather novelistic—indeed, in the Râmayâna it is romantic and antiquarian. In India, an unformed Many stands over against the formless One (despite a highly developed moral consciousness) and this conceals rather than reveals the One; it is more outer appearance than apparition and it cannot therefore prepare the path (like an Advent-tide) for a definitive incarnation of God in the way that the Greek epic can. A binding image of the apparition of the divine occurs in India and the far east first in the wake of the campaigns of Alexander (as René Grousset has shown in *L' Homme et l'Histoire*).

If India discovered the abstract absolute freedom of man (*cf.* Vol. III, p. 322, above), it was Israel that discovered the abstract absolute freedom of God. But such freedom resists the acceptance of a binding image of the apparition of God and thus, when Israel moved on to religious art (as in the synagogue of Dura-Europus), it too had to speak the language of Greek forms. Christian art found no other alphabet of forms in existence and it was only in the course of its history, in the confrontation with the Homeric-Platonic cosmos, that it could pose the question of a particular language of forms native to Christian art, whether such a thing could exist at all. 'The first Budda is an Apollo, and the first Good Shepherd was a Hermes Kriophoros' (Grousset, p. 163).

Aristotle he is the origin and measure of all poetry, of the epic (his art of composition and narrative is 'useful, when compared to the others'),[2] of tragedy and indeed of comedy;[3] even if the play requires time in order to mature to its own form,[4] Homer 'is superior to' all later writers in 'the form of his speech and thought'.[5] Aeschylus himself characterised his plays as 'slices from Homer's great banquets'.[6] The clear lineaments of the figures of Homer's gods, in conscious contrast to the formless gods of Asia and the Minoan period, remain binding on the Greeks, despite all contradictions and additions (such as Dionysius); the Romans let their deities be transformed by the Homeric gods, and Olympus and the Muses continue to exert their influence throughout the Middle Ages with Dante and Boccaccio into the Renaissance and the Baroque period,[7] into the classicism of France, Spain, England and Germany.

It is irrelevant to our purpose who Homer was and how much the poet, who disposed the work with the most exquisite understanding of art and executed it with the most admirable nobility of soul, found already in existence or how much material he drew from the whole Trojan 'cycle' (seven epics in all). We have only Homer, as he is, and that is more than enough.[8] It is in this form that he has had his effect: through Vergil, he has given its form to all epic (even the short Germanic heroic poems only achieve epic status by virtue of their Roman model); through the classical and the Alexandrian tragedians, and through Seneca he gives form and content further (despite all the converging influences) to Racine, Calderon and Goethe, Grillparzer, Giraudoux and Valéry . . . The plastic arts of Antiquity draw their life from Homer's image of the world: it is in the Homeric Athens of Phidias, Polycletes, Praxiteles and Zeuxis that the 'sophistis' and philosophers wander about and whereas they criticise the old world of the gods, they live without criticism in the radiant world of art which that world of the gods produced. *Theoria*, *eidos*, *nous*, *nomos*, *themis*, *aidôs*—all the fundamental modes of the original Greek world-view pass over from the old manner of existence into the new, newly thought-out but surviving the revolution of critical philosophy intact. So it is, once again, in the modern period,[9] where the Homeric world becomes ever more unambiguously evident behind the Vergilian world which is descended from it, that even where for thousands of years faith has no longer been placed in the figures of the gods, the expression of the Homeric world remains self-evidently credible.

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[2] *Poetics* 23 (1459 a 30f.).

[3] *Ibid.* 4 (1448 b 34f.).

[4] *Ibid.* (1449 a 7–15).

[5] *Ibid.* 24 (1459 b 16–17; cf. *24* [1460 a 5–6].

[6] *Athenaeus* VIII 347 e.

[7] F. von Bezold, *Das Fortleben der antiken Götter im mitteralterlichen Humanismus* (1922); A. Frey-Salman, *Aus dem Nachleben antiker Göttergestalten in der Bildbeschreibung des Mittelalters und der italienischen Renaissance* (1931); H. Liebeschütz, *Fulgentius Metafloralis, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der antiken Mythologie im Mittelalter* (Stud. Bibl. Warburg IV, 1926); Jean Seznec, *La survivance des dieux antiques* (London: Warburg Institute, 1940).

[8] There are, of course, witnesses of traditions at the time of Homer and later than him, which saw things differently: alongside the aristocratic island tradition of Homer there is the peasant mainland tradition of Hesiod and the liturgical tradition of the hymns to the gods. But Homer creates the form that leaves its imprint on all.

a. God and man

This was possible only because at the origin there stands a structure of forms that gives an interpretation of man in his relationship to the divine and thus gives him his being and his self-understanding. Together with religion it gives him art, in which he makes for himself utterance about the world and form. We can see two articulations in this structure: first, the irremovable separation of God and man and then man's transcendence into the sphere of God, in which he finds his salvation, his greatness and his glory. This movement of needy and mortal man towards the god who had no need and is immortal discloses the world as manifest and shining in a single light: the sun rises from the shimmering sea 'to give light to the eternal gods and to mortal men'[10] but all the more do men and gods obey the soft law of night,[11] which it is good to observe, in order to receive night's 'gift'.[12] It is this universal framework that sustains the spheres of gods and men, for all their separation, in a single coexistence in being.

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[9] G. Finsler, *Homer in der Neuzeit von Dante bis Goethe* (1912).

[10] *Od.* 3.1–3; 5.1–2; 12.385–6.

The separation is real, as Apollo reminds Diomedes, threatening him:

> Take care, son of Tydeus, and give way to me!
> Do not at all risk
> To think yourself equal to the gods, for never
> Are the blessed gods of one race with men who
> walk on the earth.'[13]

Men are mortal, wholly marked out by death, whereas gods cannot be killed. Apollo says to Achilles, 'You will never kill me, for my fate is not one with your human fate.'[14] This is not altered by the fact that kings and heroes are descended from gods—many sons of immortal gods fight before Ilium[15]—for this is merely the traditional manner of expressing the descent of the peoples from the divinity; in the same way the snatching up of a mortal to the dwellers in heaven or the defeat of death by one single mortal only confirm the inexorable rule. Agamemnon requires Achilles to master himself, for 'Hades alone is hard and inflexible, and therefore is for men the most hated among the gods'.[16] The heroes of the Iliad are drawn up in battle line round death, this first constraint laid upon man, and it is their nobility that they look death in the eye, indeed that they live immediately in the presence of death. Achilles achieves his greatness by choosing the honour that is linked to an early death, rather than a long life empty of honour. Odysseus rejects an offer of immortal life in hiddenness (the name 'Calypso' is derived from καλύπτω, to hide), preferring the risk of a suffering, mortal fate[17] which, once entered upon, cannot be prevented even by the power of the gods.

[11] *Il.* 7.293; 9.65. Night is 'she who conquers gods and men': *Il.* 14.259.
[12] *Il.* 7.482.
[13] *Il.* 5.440–442.
[14] *Il.* 22.13; *cf.* 6.141f.
[15] *Il.* 16.448–449.
[16] *Il.* 9.158–159.
[17] *Od.* 5.206–220.

The gods cannot change the common lot of death,
Not even for one whom they love,
Once the fate of long-reaching death seizes him.[18]

For Homer, it is as impossible that man should force his way over the barrier of death into a divine existence or even into blessed immortality as it is that he should retreat into his mortality in Promethean protest against the gods. It is in this life that the hero reaches over into the divine sphere for, like the righteous man of the Old Testament, he does not count on compensations, continuations and exaltations in the next life: Hades is for both equally powerful and destructive. Before the foil of Hades, the faith of the righteous takes on its clarity and the doomed form of the hero takes on its unprecedented sharpness of outline. An example of this is Achilles' paradoxical loyalty to the dead Patrocles, a loyalty not only in this life but also in the next life, where it will be impossible:

> I will never forget Patrocles, as long as I myself am numbered among the living and my own limbs have power. Even if one forgets the dead in the realm of Hades, still I will think of my dearest companion even there.[19]

The souls depart from the body, 'lamenting their fate',[20] for what is called 'soul and image' on the other side of the grave 'has no life at all'.[21] Odysseus' voyage to Hades—repeated later by Vergil, Dante, and Claudel—is the conscious reconnaissance of this unconscious (ἀφραδής) existence [22] and it is 'pallid dismay' for the living Odysseus,[23] precisely when the sip of blood permits a minute of recognition and of renewed life, for example for the mother who died out of yearning and anguish for her son[24]—but even in this moment, her shadow slips away from the embrace of the living man; or for the dead heroes, among whom is Achilles who expresses the wish (found also in the Old Testament) rather to be a servant in life than lord here over all the dead souls,[25] while Ajax in his stony ill-will merely turns silently away.[26] What Homer writes of the screaming dead, like scared swarms of birds,[27] echoes through all the lamentations for the dead in Western literature; the image of the flight of the living man from the threatening Gorgon head rising up from the depths[28] echoes as far as Faust. An abyss opens too in the meeting with the effigy (εἴδωλον) of Heracles in the lostness of Hades, while the hero himself, who lives, has been brought into the company of the living gods.[29]

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[18] *Od.* 3.236–238.
[19] *Il.* 22.387–390; 23.19.
[20] *Il.* 22.363.
[21] *Il.* 23.103–104;11.218–222.
[22] *Od.* 11.476.
[23] *Od.* 11.43, 633.
[24] *Od.* 11.202–203.

We may see a religious decision in the conscious renunciation by Homer of metamorphoses in the other world (an idea certainly existing before his time), whereby he equally decisively intensifies man's relationship to the deity by endowing this relationship with an interiority stripped of all magic:[30] his decision is one with the hour of birth of Western art. Now the pure relationship of the hero to his god comes into prominence—and the hero in this period is not the 'aristocrat' who enjoys 'privileges' over against the people but the model of man, an idea which is not yet an abstraction, a stamp to be imprinted on all his followers; it is true of him, as Claudel (using a Christian language) says of his Rodrigo, that 'He belongs to those who cannot save themselves except by saving the whole swarm that is imprinted with their form after them'.[31] They lead a life drawn up into the divine sphere, a life on which claims are made, gifted, at risk and graced by God. If the relationship to God which Homer describes belongs exclusively or predominantly to his heroes that is not because the Homeric bard was appointed by an aristocratic society to provide them with edification and mirth; almost all great poetry was the poetry of courts (just as almost all great architecture was the art of royal representation) but we should not therefore question the uncompromising rectitude of Dante or Tasso or Camoẽns or Molière or Goethe. But the courtly society understood that the hero is a representative character for man.

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[25] *Od.* 11.489–491.

[26] *Od.* 11.544, 563.

[27] *Od.* 11.605–606.

[28] *Od.* 11.634f.

[29] *Od.* 11.601–603.

[30] It is the merit of Wolfgang Kullmann to have seen this decision clearly: *Das Wirken der Götter in der Ilias* (1956), 81f., 147f.

[31] *The Silk Shoe*, 18.

In no other poetry of world literature does the thought of God occur so often, so continuously in every situation of life, as in Homer—the thought of his power, his presence, his working in everything, through external events, through inner inspiration and the endowing with strength; in no other poetry is there so much prayer, request for help, thanksgiving, sacrifice, vows. It is clear that a holy ritual regulates the day, the meals, the great events of life; but temples and sanctuaries remain almost invisible and priests appear only marginally. All traditional religion is reflected only in the personal relationship of the hero to the god, in his deep, childlike faith which knows the absolute freedom of the god, that is unconditioned and unrestricted and which knows about his continuous presence. The many 'signs' which are given, and which both the individual and the people carfuly heed,[32] do not emerge from a nameless darkness of fate (as later in Sophocles or Vergil) but are the cultic face of the double-sided personal relationship. The god is free and he can become angry, turn away, stay put; the one who prays addresses his prayer into this area of freedom; his prayer is heard,[33] he can 'change the mind' of the gods[34] but only when the one who prays lets himself be instructed in reverence and permits his own mind to be changed;[35] prayers can also remain unheard or only half heard or heard otherwise or only after some time, other than as the man intended.[36] Trust[37] in the god's leading[38]—not a 'fact' on which one may rely[39]—accompanies the prayer into the god's freedom; the god's accompaniment can be efficacious even when all men abandon the hero.[40] Since there is no trace of the idea of a magic binding of the god, the final submission to the fate which Zeus has decided, and in which it is fitting one should hold firm,[41] is a resignation that accepts a superior power.[42] The humbled holding-firm in obedience to the invisible will of the gods is the chief theme in the *Odyssey*.

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[32] *Il.* 2.308f.; 350f.; 8.247f.; 10.272f.; 12.195f; 13.821 etc.; *Od.* 2.146f.; 15.160f.; 525f.; 20.103, 242; 21.413.

[33] E.g., *Il.* 16.527f.; 10.295. *Od.* 3.385; 6.328: hearing and answering are one single act.

[34] *Il.* 9.500.

[35] *Ibid.* 508–510; 10.512.

Thus man is in his essence one who is in need of God and the real sin is the arrogance of wishing to lead one's life without God.[43] For it is from God that all good gifts descend, not only the tangible victory for the warrior but also that less tangible power which is the precondition of every victory and which is labelled κῦδος, usually incorrectly translated as 'fame' or 'repute'. 'It designates the characteristic of having success and emerging as victor; it designates at the same time the 'honour' that attaches to success, the prestige, the authority, the dignity and the rank . . . The dead also have their 'fame' (κλέος) but only the living have κῦδος.'[44] From

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[36] Partial answering, *Il.* 16.250; 18.328. Later answering, while the tribulation meanwhile increases, *Il.* 2.419–420. No answer, *Il.* 3.302; 6.34; 8.550–551.

[37] *Elpomai euchomenos, Il.* 8.526.

[38] *Il.* 9.49.

[39] 'I would certainly slay you as soon as I met you again. Perhaps then a god would hasten to help me', *Il.* 11.365–366; similarly *Il.* 13.153–154.

[40] *Od.* 16.260–1.

[41] *Od.* 6.188–190.

[42] *Il.* 2.116=9.23=14.69, with emphasis on the will of the god: *Il.* 14.110; 18.116; emphasis on the divine predetermination: *Il.* 19.270f. *Cf.* on this whole theme the nuanced examination by C. Fr. Nägelbach, *Die homer. Theologie* (2nd edn Nürnberg, 1980), (18) 185f.

[43] Ajax's boasting against Poseidon: *Od.* 4.503f.; Diomedes' hybris: *Il.* 5.434f; Menelaus' reflection that he must not fight on his own against Hector who is divinely protected but perhaps together with Ajax, 'even despite the god': *Il.* 17.104; Odysseus' warning against all bragging before God: *Od.* 22.287f.

[44] H. Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums* (2nd edn 1962), 88.

Homer onwards the word signifies 'superiority, power, dignity, authority, eminence'[45] and ἐρι-κυής correspondingly means 'glorious in spirit', applied to gods, to divine gifts and to the full-blooded youth of man.[46] The glory of spirit which can radiate from the hero as irresistible certainty of victory, when the god gives him this gift, can make itself known in the anxiety of the enemy who falls back before him, as when Diomedes yields before Hector, lest he should fight with a god;[47] or when Apollo, his shoulders and head covered in night, marches before the oncoming Trojans with the aegis.[48] the man σὺν δαιμονι is gifted in this way—the phrase means 'together with the god', for in Homer the *daimôn* is not an intermediate being between god and man, as in later writers, but an unnamed divine being.[49] He can be named ὀλβιο–δαίμων, made happy, blessed by the god,[50] and this illuminates the meaning of the later Platonic-Aristotelian εὐδαιμονιά: blessedness as the state of being indwelt by the good god or good indwelling by the god. Heroes and entire armies are inspired by the divinity[51] and transported into enthusiasm (literally, 'God within'), and here the relationship between hero and poet becomes clear, and it is here that Tyrtaeus, who was both, finds his point of reference.

In the free indwelling of the god, man experiences the elevation which fulfils him as the transfiguration of his mortal lowliness which bestows on him good fortune, a meaning for his life and beauty. Raised up into such a light of divine favour, indeed mastered by this light, he becomes both good and beautiful in one. To understand the beautiful in Homer we must not take the external as our starting-point—the flashing, glittering, shining gold and other vessels and equipment; nor can we take the abstract definition of light and sun, and thereby of what shines, as our starting point;[52] for each, the external object and the definition, is rooted more deeply in the much more essential relationship between the god (who of course is in himself shining and light) and the man who is raised up into the light of the god's favour[53] and becomes able to see his own independent value, his eminence and dignity for himself and for all others: light out of darkness, life in death. Even less is the heart of beauty for Homer proportion and harmony;[54] rather, it is the immediate experience of human wellbeing, which can express itself sometimes more as radiant charm (κάλλει καὶ χάριτι στίλβων).[55] Sometimes more as heroic greatness in mind (μεγάθυμος, μεγαλήτωρ) and the force of love, or again as inner 'virtue' (as in the swineherd), without being reduced to any one of these particular forms. The beautiful radiates out from this midpoint as light and shines forth in everything bright, shining and clear in the world.[56] Men who live in this light and radiate it forth are called 'divine', without thereby being elevated into the rank of the gods; they may be highborn or lowborn—and here the adjectives show a fine gradation: many heroes are called διοτρεφὴς (full of divine power), διοχενὴς (of divine stock) and therefore 'like god' (ἰσόθεος, ἀντίθεος, θεοειδής, θεοείκελος, etc.); διο͂ς (*divus*) implies a more general form of belonging to the divine world than θεῖος (divine, in a stronger sense).[57]

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[45] H. Fränkel, *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens* (2nd end 1960), 71.

[46] *Od.* 11.631; *Il.* 20.265; 11.225; *cf.* also *kudros*, 'sublime': *Od.* 11.580; 15.26. And the *kratos* which the gods bestow is not simply physical strength but rather the capacity to be superior to the foe.

[47] *Il.* 5.606; *cf.* the apparition of Achilles in a form given by the god at the rampart and the fear of the Trojans: *Il.* 18.225f., 261.

[48] *Il.* 15.306–310.

[49] Kullmann observes this rightly, op. cit. 49–57.

[50] *Il.* 3.182.

[51] *Il.* 2.450f. (Athene); 11.10–14 (Eris); 13.43–61 (Poseidon); 15.306f. (Apollo); 13.794 (Zeus).

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[52] W. Perpeet, *Antike Ästhetik* (1961), 20f.

[53] It is true that this light of divine favour, as an identity of love and beauty (charis), is as it were personified in Aphrodite (so that Perpeet can speak, op. cit., 26–33, of an 'Aphrodisian characteristic of living beauty') but the Greeks do not tie their understanding of beauty to the narrower realm of this goddess; Athene and Apollo, neither of whom is 'Aphrodisian', are pure beauty in their epiphanies.

[54] In the myth, it is characteristic that Harmonia is Aphrodite's daughter (Hesiod, *Theog.* 957), although she also can bear the name Harma which, however, 'clearly refers to the union of love' (Walter F. Otto, *Die Götter Griechenlands* (5th edn 1961), 103.

[55] *Il.* 6.237.

[56] Homer has no lack of expressions for this: *aithops*, *enops*, *lampros*, *phaidimos*, *phaeinos*, *pamphainon*, *leukos*, *argês*, *aglaos*, *glaukos*, *sigaloeis*, *phlogoes*, *(pan-)aiolos*, etc. Statistics in Hubert Schrade, *Götter und Menschen Homers* (1952), 309–311.

This 'divine' quality exists in the misery of mortality and in the horror of the death that threatens men on every side—the *Iliad* repeatedly brings the most horrifying forms of this death before our eyes, as does the *Odyssey* often enough too; for the life of man is a continuous suffering in struggle,[58] when once one has been caught up in the thread of the fate of death,[59] and so becomes the most lamentable being upon earth.[60] Man is 'ephemeral', that is to say, bound to the uttermost depth of his being to time and the changes of time: not only mortal but determined and altered according to the change of the days, so that in his frailty he cannot trust in himself.[61] This word will make its imprint on the Greek understanding of existence for centuries to come.[62] Why care so much about life, asks Achilles when Lycaon begs for his life: 'Is not Patrocles also dead, who was far superior to you? And do you not see me, how fair and mighty I am—but from me too death and powerful fate are not far away.'[63] Those who have fallen in battle are still beautiful but what when the dogs begin to dishonour the corpses? 'That is indeed the most horrible image for wretched men.'[64] The Homeric man does not rebel against death; Achilles hastens to be revenged on Hector

> and then I myself will receive my lot,
> When Zeus and the other immortal gods decide to do
> this.[65]

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[57] Eumaeus the swineherd is always *dios*, never *theios*, but the singer is often called *theios*. Statistics likewise in Schrade, op. cit., 300–303.

[58] *Il.* 14.85–87.

[59] *Il.* 16.441–442; on the weaving into the destiny of death *cf. Il.* 20.127; 24.209; *Od.* 7.195f.

[60] *Il.* 17.446–447.

[61] *Od.* 18.130–150.

[62] H. Fränkel, 'Ephemeros als Kennwort für die menschliche Natur', in: *Wege und Formen*, 23–39; *Dichtung und Philosophie*, 148f., 570f.

[63] *Il.* 21.106–110.

[63] *Il.* 22.73–76.

[65] *Il.* 18.115–116 = *Il.* 22.365–366.

He is not tempted to measure himself against the gods or to confuse himself with them. When Telemachus sees his father in the metamorphosis which Athene has given him and takes him to be a god, the patient man replies:

> In truth, I am no god; how can you compare me to
> gods?
> No, I am your father, for whom you sigh
> And endure so much disgrace . . .[66]

For it belongs to the gods to elevate the ephemeral man into the form of the gods or to humble him into the form of a servant; since for Homer man is always an indivisible whole composed of inner and outer, the gift of power to the 'soul', the inspiration, the enthusiasm, have each a bodily correlate. When Hector is pushed from behind by the mighty hand of Zeus[67] he shines like fire;[68] Athene crowns Achilles' head with a golden cloud and flame when he first shows himself unarmed to the Trojans at the trench;[69] she equips Diomedes with strength and courage, so that he may win honour for himself, and she makes flames burst forth restlessly from his helmet and shield;[70] in the wrestling matches she gives Odysseus light limbs in answer to his prayer, while she makes Ajax stumble.[71]

> Is it not easy for the gods, who dwell in the broad
> heaven,
> To raise up or to bend down a mortal man?[72]

The second of these, the concealment in the form of a servant, is just as significant in the *Odyssey* as the elevation into the form of the gods. Since Odysseus, in his essence and in his fate, is the humbled patient man Athene's act of making him unrecognisable signifies no external trick but is precisely a declaration of his own reality just as much as is the dignified form. After he has had to appear naked and in utter misery before Nausicaa and she has not shrunk from the sight, the goddess pours beauty over him, makes him taller, gives him flowing curls, pours charm over his head and shoulders as the goldsmith clothes a silver statue with fine gold.[73] Thus elevated, he enters the city of the Phaeacians.[74] We see this again when he strips his body before the suitors[75] and again when he prepares himself after the destruction of the suitors for the marriage of blood with his wife—here once more the image of the goldsmith occurs and the hero is like an immortal.[76] In the reverse process Athene makes the hero 'unrecognisable for all mortals', she makes the healthy flesh shrivel, the brown hair disappear from his head, the fine clothes change into rags, the gleaming eye cast over, so that he may appear not good-looking, not comely (ἀεικέλιος) before the suitors.[77] Thus even the form of lowliness does not fall outside the realm of providence but rather belongs (to speak with Nägelbach) to the *providentia specialissima*. It is not merely that Zeus from the indifference of divine loftiness sends men good and bad from the two jars in his dwelling-place, sending them to 'the lamentable men' in their 'terrible distress',[78] 'to the noble and to the wicked, to each one according to the god's pleasure';[79] rather, there lies concealed a good meaning in the allocation of the evil lot, and it is reserved to the deep insight of the poet to discover and proclaim this meaning. This brings us to the next topic.

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[66] *Od.* 16.187–189.
[67] *Il.* 15.694–695.
[68] *Il.* 15.623.
[69] *Il.* 18.205f.; *cf.* 19.365.
[70] *Il.* 5.1–4.
[71] *Il.* 23.770.
[72] *Od.* 16.211–212.

b. The personal God

Odysseus' relationship to Athene, characterised by a tenderness and reverence, but also by a delicate intimacy which remains unparalleled in non-Christian poetry, is but the consistent development of a theme which has been touched on long before: the hero has his god who protects him and leads him, to whom he prays, in whom he trusts. This is not be understood in a restrictive and exclusive sense for the man prays to all the gods and none of the gods' sphere of work is confined to a single man. Nevertheless, mysterious alliances and elections do take place. Athene can address Diomedes as, 'You, the beloved of my heart,'[80] and Nestor can say of himself and Odysseus that Zeus and Athene 'love' them,[81] in a love which is never erotic but rather 'maternal'.[82] Zeus leaves his daughter Athene alone in this respect and, when she complains in the council of the gods that providence does not look after her protégé, Zeus points her to her own power of thought and action: 'Have not you yourself thought out the plan in your heart?'[83]

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[73] *Od.* 6.229–235.

[74] *Od.* 8.18–21.

[75] *Od.* 18.66f.

[76] *Od.* 23.156–163. Penelope's form too is correspondingly elevated (*Od.* 18.192f.), without her being aware of this (*ibid.* 250f.); similarly the form of Laertes (*Od.* 24.268–274).

[77] *Od.* 13.397–402; 429–438; similarly again at *Od.* 16.454f.

[78] *Il.* 24.524–530.

[79] *Od.* 6.189.

Athene makes her powerful spontaneity known at the beginning of the *Iliad*: she is the divine protectress of Achilles and, when the hero takes up the sword in his fury at the disgrace brought upon him, she seizes him from behind by his blond shock of hair, so that he turns round in rage and sees the goddess (who is visible to him alone) with her 'terrifyingly radiant eye' and thus she binds him, in obedience, to restraint.[84] Achilles 'willingly' does what he is told. If Athene tames this hero, she also stirs up Diomedes to battle and, since she stands by him, he does not need (as he was earlier instructed) to fear the fight with gods.[85] At the beginning of the *Diomedeia*, she had equipped the hero with divine superiority; he had prayed to her, the invincible one,[86] and in response she came to him and guided his spear in the battle;[87] later, she will herself direct his spear against Ares, the divine personified War.[88] In the same way Apollo protects Hector[89] and Aphrodite protects Paris, whom she carries off out of the battle-carnage to Helen, directing him to the work of love;[90] and, in a special way, Thetis protects her son Achilles to whom she can be both goddess and the mother who gave birth to him.[91]

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[80] *Il.* 5.826.
[81] *Il.* 10.552–553.
[82] *Il.* 23.783.
[83] *Od.* 5.23.
[84] *Il.* 1.188–214.
[85] *Il.* 5.800f., 826–828.
[86] *Il.* 5.115–117.
[87] *Il.* 5.290.

The *Iliad* knows many heroes and, therefore, many personal relationships to the gods and, since the armies are ranged against each other and each calls on its gods, it is necessary and germane to pose the question whether the gods are ranged against each other: 'They offered sacrifice, one to this one of the eternal gods, another to another'.[92] The *Odyssey* has only one hero and thus it gives the central position to one single relationship to a god; Telemachus, as the offspring of his father, is caught up into the same fate and is cared for by the watchful providence of the same goddess. Moved by compassion, Athene sets Odysseus' destiny once more in motion[93] and she protects him from afar, since he is to withstand the sea on a raft 'alone, without gods or men to accompany him'[94] in accordance with the divine decree. The patient sufferer laments the invisibility of his goddess in his great speech on the shore of Ithaca: once before Troy she was sweet to him but since the scattering of the Greek fleet on its homeward journey,

> I have never seen you, daughter of Zeus, nor ever
> been aware
> That you were aboard my ship, to preserve me from
> disaster.[95]

She replies to this with the protest that she could 'never leave him, even in disaster'.[96] Her love for Odysseus (so Nestor affirms to Telemachus) is more clearly-revealed (ἀναφαδνά) than ever the love of a god for a man was;[97] and if for a time, when the hero must prove himself alone, Athene conceals herself from him, she can send others ahead to him[98] or invisibly inspire his heart with what is right[99] or hear his prayer with its grumbling and its accusations, without appearing to him thereby,[100] or at the most be present to him namelessly as 'a god',[101] while she is arranging everything elsewhere in her care for him[102] and goes before him accompanying him in an unrecognisable form.[103] Thus she was always there, while invisibility and impalpability were required by another divine consideration, namely the need to take account of Poseidon in his wrath.[104] It is true that, as with Achilles, she can appear to Odysseus as one who gives divine commands (for example, when she orders all further fighting in Ithaca to be broken off and establishes the holy covenant);[105] yet her inspiration and the hero's thinking and planning stand in such an intimate dialectic with one another that a 'humanistic' reader who anticipates later things could see in the goddess only a personification of the better self of the hero or at most of his nameless *daimonion*. The poet, however, knows differently and tells a different story. We find in most passages an intimate dialogue, its depth hidden[106] in concern for small day-to-day things, with the goddess using the dual forms: 'Now we will quickly hide the treasures in the corner of the holy grotto and then take counsel with one another what is best to do.'[107] She shows him what is best to do but at the same time she requires him to think it over,[108] while he prevails on her to devise a stratagem and to stand by him;[109] she promises him this and goes on immediately to speak of their common task.[110] She will not abandon father and son in the decisive struggle[111] and she and her father will be helpers enough against the whole swarm of suitors.[112] 'Why then is Odysseus anxious?' asks the goddess: 'A man would have confidence in a lesser friend who is but a man and has no further advice to give. But I am a god and have always protected you in every danger.'[113] We have a visual representation of all this in the scene when the patient sufferer is brought sleeping on the Phaeacian ship to his native land and is put down there but, on awaking, does not recognise the land which lies in mist. Athene draws near to him in the guise of a young man and praises Ithaca which he does not see; she laughs at his cautious disguise of himself and puts it aside with a light touch of the hand. Now, once more resembling a woman, she opens his eyes to see two things at once: that she was always with him and that he is now in his native land; 'She blew the mist away and he saw the country'.[114]

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[88] *Il.* 5.856f. The gods frequently guide the heroes' weapons, so that they hit their mark or else (if someone is to be protected) fail to hit their mark: *Il.* 8.311; 13.562f.; 20.438f.; 23.865.

[89] *Il.* 15.306f., 355f.

[90] *Il.* 3.380f.

[91] *Il.* 1.351f.

[92] *Il.* 2.400.

[93] *Od.* 1.47f.

[94] *Od.* 5.30–35.

[95] *Od.* 13.314–319.

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[96] *Od.* 13.331.

[97] *Od.* 3.221–222.

[98] For example Leucothea, *Od.* 5.333f.

[99] *Od.* 5.425f.

[100] *Od.* 6.325–329.

[101] *Od.* 6.280; 9.142.

[102] *Od.* 5.491–492; 6.13f., 111f., 139.

[103] *Od.* 7.19–38.

[104] *Od.* 13.341.

[105] *Od.* 24.542–8.

[106] On this Walter F. Otto has written very finely: *Die Götter Griechenlands*, in the chapter, 'Sein und Geschehen im Lichte der Götteroffenbarung', 167–226.

In the same revelatory discourse she can tell him how much he still has to suffer in his own house but: 'Endure every disgrace in silence and do not resist the violence of your foes.'[115] The sufferings are ordered and laid upon him; their source is not enquired into, for in Homer they come from that depth which is an inextricable combination of the will of Zeus and *Moira*, but it is important only that the goddess knows the sufferings and permits them and thus cooperates in their ordering. Athene permits the suitors to be unrestrained in their bitter mockery, 'so that the sword may pierce yet deeper the heart of the son of Laertes'.[116] Odysseus is the 'patient man' who has acquired his knowledge through being driven about and through suffering,[117] to such a degree indeed that 'all the gods lament over him';[118] but in this he lives only the common lot of man.[119] He is chosen for suffering[120] and so he is called ταλάφρων, the unhappy man who endures much but at the same time steadfastly holds firm.[121] Calypso tells him that if he knew in advance the measure of his sufferings, he would remain with her and be an immortal with her.[122] He tells Alcinous that he could relate more about suffering than the most wretched of men.[123] But Athene bids him 'bow to necessity and bear everything'[124] and he himself must instruct his son accordingly:

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[107] *Od.* 13.363–365, and similarly already 303.
[108] *Od.* 13.376.
[109] *Od.* 13.386–391.
[110] *Od.* 13.393–394.
[111] *Od.* 16.170–171.
[112] *Od.* 16.260–261, 297–298.
[113] *Od.* 20.45–48.
[114] *Od.* 13.352.
[115] *Od.* 13.306–310.

> If they cover me with shame in the house,
> Endure it steadfastly in your loving heart,
> Even should I suffer grievously;
> If they drag me by both feet through the room,
> Before the door of the house,
> Or throw things at me—you must look on in
> patience.[125]

Telemachus and his mother are from the outset included in the destiny of endurance—almost more so indeed than Odysseus, since their fate condemns both to an inactive witnessing of what is unendurable, to a state of passive enduring from day to day of what 'the cruel gods have decided',[126] a state in which they see nothing. In the meanwhile Nestor assures him of the love of Athene and she herself strengthens him under a different form;[127] Penelope, instructed by the old nurse, prays to the goddess to save her son[128] and the goddess promises in a dream that she will give him a companion (herself) and that she will have mercy on the mother.[129] As she accompanies the boy, so she brings him back for the decisive hour.[130] But when Odysseus comes home, he must pass through the final humiliations: he is mocked by the suitors and reproached as a shameless beggar; pelted with a stool and a cow's foot,[131] he is insulted by the traitor Melanthios and kicked and trampled;[132] while those who are loyal despair of the gods,[133] Odysseus stills his heart:[134]

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[116] *Od.* 18.346–348 = *Od.* 20.284–286.
[117] *Od.* 1.2–4
[118] *Od.* 1.19.
[119] *Od.* 18.130–137.
[120] *Od.* 4.107–108.
[121] *Od.* 5.21.
[122] *Od.* 5.206–209.
[123] *Od.* 7.211–213; *cf.* 13.6.
[124] *Od.* 13.307.
[125] *Od.* 16.274–277.
[126] *Od.* 1.234.

> For I know what to make of blows and peltings,
> And my heart is steadfast; for I have already endured
> so much
> On sea and in battle, whatever now may come . . .[135]

It is bitterer still to look on at the flirting of his own servant maids, who have similarly mocked him, with the suitors and 'his heart cries out within him'.

> But he smote his breast and quelled his heart with the
> words:
> 'Endure even this, my heart! You have endured much
> more shameless deeds than this . . .'
> And his heart remained patient and obedient . . .[136]

In this endurance, it is he who inspires 'faith' in the others; he reprimands Eumaeus for his 'unbelieving heart' (θυμὸς ἄπιστος), swears to him that Odysseus is approaching and promises himself the reward for such good news (εὐαγγέλιον). He inspires his son with 'hope'[137] (ἐαπίς[138] and similarly his wife.[139] When then the day of vengeance brings judgment on the wicked it is like a divine parousia of the patient sufferer, prophetically foretold in images like those of the Old Testament by Theoclymenus, the seer from Argos.

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[127] *Od.* 3.218–231.
[128] *Od.* 4.751f., 763f.
[129] *Od.* 4.825–828.
[130] *Od.* 15.1f.
[131] *Od.* 18.394f.; 17.409, 462f.; 20.299.
[132] *Od.* 17.233f.; 20.177f.
[133] *Od.* 20.201–203.
[134] *Od.* 17.238; *cf.* 18.319.
[135] *Od.* 17.283–285.
[136] *Od.* 20.13, 17–18, 23.

> O wretched ones! What disaster comes upon you!
> Night covers your head and face and your limbs,
> Cries of lamentation ring through the house, and the
> walls are wet with tears!
> Blood spatters on the walls round about and into the
> recesses.
> Now the entrance hall fills with shades, the forecourt
> fills with shades
> Who press on to Erebus, down into the darkness;
> The sun in heaven is blotted out, and hideous darkness
> holds sway round about.[140]

The judgment is left to the patient sufferer himself: Athene, having spurred on his courage, leaves him to his manly deed, flying up in the form of a swallow to the timber-beams of the room and looking on from above.

c. God and Gods

When Greeks and Trojans pray to their gods, their contradictory prayer divides the world of the gods in two;[141] but ultimately both prayers reach the heart of Zeus, so that he ought to bestow 'on both like power and glory'.[142] Yet only one can win victory, for Ares cannot answer both prayers[143] and Zeus himself cannot fulfil all wishes.[144] The man-to-man combat between Ajax and Hector is broken off with the explanation, 'For both are beloved by Zeus',[145] even if both peoples pray for destruction of the other side.[146]

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[137] *Od.* 14.150, 152, 156, Again, 'unbelieving heart': 391.

[138] *Od.* 16.101.

[139] *Od.* 19.80.

[140] *Od.* 20.351–357.

[141] *Il.* 43.439.

[142] *Il.* 7.205.

[143] *Il.* 13.302–303.

[144] *Il.* 18.328.

The real theme of the poet of the *Iliad* is the divinity caught between the prayers of men, rent apart by the tragic contradictions of the world (this division is expressed in the personal relationships of the individual gods to their protégés and their quarrels against each other) and at the same time raised above the contradiction, keeping it under control by inscrutable decree. The question of what traditional religious material he made use of here is far less important than the question of what he formed out of this material, theologically and artistically. It stands, held together by its own internal forces, unique, at the origin of Western culture, without successors. For, as early as the tragedians, the personal characteristics in the divine government are lost and man stands, more and more, along with his fate. In the Christian world, on the other hand, the problem of the personal particularisation of God's will within the framework of his oneness (in the dealings of the angels with the world and especially in the dealings with the world of the saints and blessed ones of the heavenly Jerusalem, who have attained their full freedom) has scarcely ever been seen, let alone developed and set forth.[147] One must therefore be very careful when one charges Homer with archaic imperfection as far as his central vision is concerned; one should rather ask whether the later simplifications and removals of ambiguities were not frequently impoverishments.

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[145] *Il.* 7.280.

[146] *Il.* 3.319.

[147] An exception to this is the Virgin Mary in mediaeval epics and dramatic scenes, as she intercedes at the last judgment for those caught in damnation: here both possibilities are seriously considered and presented, the success and the failure of her intervention. Another exception is the supraterrestrial dialogue, in Calderon's drama, between divine powers, about the creation and redemption of the world, or between other modes of the divine presence in the world, which are incorrectly dismissed as 'personifications' and so robbed of their force: they are not personifications because there are no *abstracta* lying beneath the poetic imagery—they are modes of the presence of the personal God.

Zeus is the father of men and gods;[148] he is father in an absolute sense,[149] the one lord,[150] almighty.[151] Everything lies open and laid out before his gaze, both what is glorious and what is terrible.[152] He remains on high, refreshing his heart with looking on, while he sends the gods down into the battle, 'to help each side, as is right for each one'.[153] It is impossible to fight with Zeus himself.[154] It is also possible that his glance 'looks away' (Yahweh, similarly, can look on and look away,[155] see and overlook—these are but the modes of his all-seeing power); possible too is a sudden sharp act of insight (ὀξὺ νοεῖν),[156] an act of looking through what is in the foreground to see the final end,[157] an act of pondering, in the act of seeing, how the play should be directed further:

Zeus from on high
Did not turn away his eyes from the raging fray;
Continually he looked down on the men and pondered
in his mind.
The death of Patrocles, carefully considering
Whether the glorious Hector should kill him at once . . .
Or whether he should let the distress grow yet more
for many.[158]

In the very act of seeing, the father decides and ordains; his *theoria* is at once will, βουλή.[159] It may be that he accommodates himself to the will of others (of the gods who are beside him[160] or beneath him, or of men) by accepting their wishes and prayers (such as those of Thetis for her son Achilles) into the form of his universal will; it may even be that he admits the *Moira* and the *Keres* into his inmost act of decision, as is hinted by the images of the casting of lots[161] or of the rising and sinking scales;[162] for once it has made its entry into the destiny of world and death, the divine will enters into an unbreakable covenant with them.[163] But it is impossible that the aim of the divine will, into which everything is integrated, should not be attained: it is not to be deceived (νημερτής),[164] always superior (ἀεὶ κρείσσων),[165] both over against the totality of the other gods and the universe (in the image of the golden chain).[166] Neither men nor gods see through this universal plan,[167] for Zeus' head remains 'clouded in darkness'[168] and only fragments of the meaning of the whole are revealed to gods and to the human seers;[169] only one person may look at the cards in Zeus' hand and he is the poet. He must therefore be one inspired divinely; because by God's gift he sees the meaning of what happens, everything exists for him in the same radiant light of the divine *theoria*, which transfigures things and events and so raises them to the beautiful.

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[148] *Il.* 8.132; 15.47.
[149] *Il.* 8.245; 11.80.
[150] *Il.* 2.204.
[151] *Od.* 4.237.
[152] *Il.* 11.80–83; 8.51–52.
[153] *Il.* 20.25; 21.385f.; 24.479–481.
[154] *Il.* 21.193.
[155] *Il.* 13.3–4.
[156] *Il.* 3.374; 5.313.
[157] *Il.* 7.29–32.
[158] *Il.* 16.644–651.
[159] It is with this 'will of Zeus' that the *Iliad* begins its action (1.5); *cf. Il.* 20.20; *Od.* 11.297; 14.444–445: 'God grants the one and withholds the other, as he wishes in his heart, for he can do all things.' It is incorrect to attribute the fundamental motif of the 'will' of Zeus to the use of older models, or to undervalue this against the impulse of seeing and knowing, as, e.g., Karl Kerényi does, *Die Religion der Griechen und Römer* (1963), 145–159.

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[160] Like Poseidon, who points to his equality in age (*Il.* 15.185f.) but then yields (211); Zeus is the elder, and is 'filled with deeper knowledge': *Il.* 13.355.

[161] *Il.* 24.525f.

[162] *Il.* 8.69f.

[163] Thus the poet can speak of *Moira Theou* (*Od.* 11.292), *Moira Theôn* (*Od.* 3.269; 22.413), *Dios aisa* (*Od.* 9.52). This is not contradicted by the fact that men can cope with their 'lot' through their utterly committed action, can raise themselves above their lot (*Il.* 16.780) and almost win victory against the order of Zeus (*Il.* 17.321–322); nor is this contradicted by the fact that a god fancies and believes that he can win victory against the will of Zeus, while in reality he merely helps to carry out this will (*ibid.* 328f.). Where however men sin against fate (*huper moron*), i.e., against the law of the world and complain against the gods when the consequences burden them heavily, they behave like fools (*Od.* 1.32–35).

[164] *Od.* 5.30.

[165] *Il.* 16.688.

[166] *Il.* 8.18–27.

[167] Examples for the gods are given by Nägelbach, op. cit., 19f.

[168] *Il.* 1.397.

[169] *Il.* 1.69f.; 7.44–45; *Od.* 15.255; 17.153f.; 20.351f.

The divine plan which he sees is, of course, astonishing enough. Achilles' mother has prayed to Zeus that her dishonoured son may receive honour—the Trojans should advance for long enough for the Greeks to glorify Achilles with the honour which is his due.[170] This impulse is taken up into the plan of Zeus, who likewise loves the Trojans and wishes to give them honour too.[171] The plan is thus paradoxical: only when the Greeks are in the greatest distress and their ships begin to burn will Achilles intervene and change their fortune: and so, as long as the Greeks struggle and pray for victory in the battlefield, they are struggling and praying against themselves (the other gods do not know this or do not wish to realise it), and as long as the Trojans struggle and pray for victory, they are struggling and praying against their destruction; those who are raised up will be humbled and those who are humbled will be raised up. The whole thing hinges on the glorification of Achilles, which he willingly purchases at the price of his early death; indeed, in the very moment in which Achilles' dream is completely fulfilled,[172] the honour is of no further use to him for his Patroclus is dead.[173] The real, subtle drama takes place in the heart of Zeus, in a place so deeply hidden that in the end gods must fight against gods[174] until the whole plan, only parts of which were ever revealed, has been accomplished.[175]

Only contradictory means are available to the poet in his description of the fight in the realm of the gods—this is unavoidable, for the gods must be immortal and blessed and healthy and therefore the wounds which they inflict on each other or which are inflicted on them by men are not serious but are easily healed.[176] It is for this reason that Zeus can laugh so heartily over the battle of the gods.[177] But while Aphrodite only weeps, the wounded Ares roars when 'divine blood ran down upon him from the wound'[178] and he complains to Zeus that the gods have to suffer the harshest pain from each other, simply for the pleasure of men.[179] Thus the blessed gods experience terror,[180] sweating strain,[181] the necessity of holding firm in pain,[182] heartfelt grief,[183] the cleansing from stain,[184] loud cries of pain,[185] etc. For there is a real sense in which heaven goes along with earth. Even in Zeus, whose mind cannot be changed, there is a 'change', inasmuch as the events change.[186] In other words, there is mercy in Zeus and the other gods. Zeus 'has mercy like a father on the weeping' Agamemnon[187] and Hera has mercy on the stricken Danaeans;[188] when Zeus perceives the meeting of his son Sarpedon with Patroclus, he considers whether he should snatch him away; but he is reminded by Hera of the mortality of men and now weeps bloody tears that fall from heaven to earth, 'to honour the beloved son'.[189] He weeps once more, when Sarpedon's murderer himself is dead and he sees that the Greeks who are fighting for his corpse are hard pressed.[190] He has mercy on the lamenting Achilles[191] and when he sees Hector in the uttermost distress he is sorry for him; at the last moment he calls everything into question before the assembly of the gods:

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[170] *Il.* 1.505–510.

[171] *Il.* 12.174.

[172] *Il.* 18.74.

[173] *Il.* 18.80.

[174] *Il.* 20.24f., 75f.; 21.385f.

[175] *Il.* 8.470–476; 9.650f.; 11.78f.; 13.345f.; 15.47f., 592–602; 16.651–652.

[176] The wounding of Aphrodite by Diomedes: *Il.* 5.131–132, 330f., 401f.

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[177] *Il.* 21.389–390.

[178] *Il.* 5.870. His wound too closes easily: 5.904.

[179] *Il.* 5.873–874.

[180] *Il.* 1.406.

[181] *Il.* 4.27.

[182] *Il.* 1.586.

[183] *Il.* 12.179.

[184] *Il.* 14.170.

[185] *Il.* 21.328. At *Il.* 21.380 the river god is seriously 'mishandled' by Achilles.

[186] *Il.* 17.546.

[187] *Il.* 8.245.

[188] *Il.* 8.350.

[189] *Il.* 16.458–459.

[190] *Il.* 17.648; previously, at 17.441f., he was deeply shaken to see the weeping horses of the gods.

[191] *Il.* 19.340.

> Now then consider, you gods, and ponder in your hearts
> Whether we should save him yet from death,
> Or whether Achilles should strike him down . . .[192]

Athene puts the objection that Hector, as a mortal, is already woven into the thread of death: why should he once again be unwound from it? Zeus grants that he had not spoken in full seriousness but he leaves it to his daughter to act: 'Do what your will drives you to do . . .'[193] 'But Hector was of all mortal men who lived in Troy the most beloved of the gods.'[194] Iris brings the grieving Priam the message from Zeus that he 'takes great care for you from on high and has compassion on you', and promises the king that the corpse of Hector will be brought home.[195] At the beginning of the *Odyssey*, it is the compassion of all the gods (apart from Poseidon) that sets the epic plot in motion.[196] The countless prayers of the Homeric men flow into this heavenly 'going along with' earth, which yet remains free and unaccountable—above all, prayers of petition, mostly accompanied by sacrifices, prayers in distress which remind the god of a promise he has made,[197] prayers which admit the blindness of the one who prays,[198] prayers and sacrifices which are made even when it is a question of executing a deed commanded by God,[199] prayers of joy over divine favour that has been granted,[200] prayers at the casting of the dice,[201] prayers requested of others, so that there may be a happy fulfilment of the outcome of the throw of the dice.[202]

The final word of the poet of the *Iliad* is his statement of this mutual involvement of the man who rises up in his free act and free prayer into the divine sphere, and of the gods who in their yet higher freedom are divided among themselves in their care for the divided world. 'It is a monotheistic prejudice to say that sorrow for a man lowers God. One cannot call it a Christian prejudice, for even the Christian God remains more polytheistic than the spirit-god and world-god of Xenophanes, of Heraclitus, of Plato and the Stoics . . . For moments at a time, Zeus stands like one lame, hesitating irresolutely in the fullness of this supreme power, as one who is torn apart in his participation. No man is so much at variance with himself as he; no king appears so helpless. He must continually decide' (Karl Reinhardt).[203] And when he must decide (for the choice one way or the other has become inescapable) and reaches for the scales, this is only the expression of his own decision, not a *Moira* set over him to which he might abdicate responsibility but his supremely painful freedom, superior to all motivations.

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[192] *Il.* 22.174–176.

[193] *Il.* 22.185.

[194] *Il.* 24.66–67. *Cf.* 24.19,23: the pity which Apollo and then of all the gods feel for the dead, disgraced Hector.

[195] *Il.* 24.174–175.

[196] *Od.* 1.19–20.

[197] *Il.* 21.273–278.

[198] *Il.* 19.270f.

[199] *Il.* 24.285f., 301f.

[200] *Od.* 13.356f.

[201] *Il.* 7,179–180.

[202] *Il.* 7.194f. J. Th. Beckmann, *Das Gebet bei Homer* (Dissertation, Würzburg, 1932); H. Schrade, op. cit., 13–20.

It is unnecessary to prove that the Homeric man is free and responsible in relation to this god. There does indeed exist Ate, the blindness sent from God, but even when Agamemnon does once attribute the guilt to Ate, the great atoning compensation which he offers Achilles shows his deep sense of guilt;[204] and if Priam assures Helen that she is not guilty but rather the gods who have burdened him with the war that has brought so may tears,[205] this may be a bow before Helen's beauty or else also the expression of the awareness that the consequences of Helen's deed were much too complex in their ramifications to permit the whole guilt to be attributed to her. The case of Ate is the same as that of the evil spirit which Yahweh sends.[206] The mutual involvement of divine and human action is described in terms that allow us to see it most concretely and in good theology the initiative is left to the gods, without thereby (like bad theology) depriving man of his spontaneity. 'The heart and the god are in action', together and in each other, to drive on to the deed.[207] Everything—even the evil but above all what is noble, what raises man to his greatness and truth—comes from above, is gift. The absence as yet of an abstract conceptual expression for a central reality of existence does not mean that this reality is less directly experienced, affirmed or called to account.[208] In the rising up of the mortal being to the immortal god, the favour, grace and beauty of being (χάρις) are experienced, in an act of original admiration (θαυμάζειν) which opens the eyes for the wonder of being and attributes to it in its height and depth that which is light, seeing, happy and eternal— even where the mortal existence remains fearsome, thankless toil. There lies so great a power for the heart in the contentment with the fact that the gods exist, without claiming immortality on the part of one who is mortal, in the acceptance of the divine fullness (which grants the justification of the questionable character of an existence that leads to death and does not permit man to deny this questionable character as a mere untrue appearance), that this power of heart receives the gift of beauty for unlimited ages, as though this were a free reward—yet not without its own merit.

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[203] *Die Ilias und ihr Dichter* (1961), 383.

[204] *Il.* 19.90f.

[205] *Il.* 3.164–165.

[206] 1 Kings 16.14; 18.10; 19.9; 3 Kings 22.19f.

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[207] *Il.* 9.703. For literature on the question, *cf.* W. Kullmann, op. cit., 109 n.

[208] The fact that the well-known book by Bruno Snell, *Die Entdeckung des Geistes* (1946), in its very title and in its chief arguements, is so unsatisfactory is due to its insufficiently clear distinction at this point; despite clear insight on individual points, it thinks on the lines of the evolutionary schema which has always made it impossible to achieve a true view of the forms, above all where the Greeks are concerned. 'The Greeks continually assimilate the working of these gods into the human spirit, according to the development of their self-awareness' (!), 36–37—so the Homeric belief in an action of the gods is something undeveloped, that was later superseded and at best had aesthetic fruits that preserved it from being totally forgotten. For in Homer already, these gods are 'so natural and so obvious', they belong 'to the natural order of the world' (39) to such an extent that the rationalist can see in them from the start a metaphor that clothes the (modern) law of nature. 'But in Homer, man does not yet feel himself the origin of his own decision' (!), and therefore 'the divinity is necessary here' (45), but later man makes the divinity obsolete—and with the divinity he makes obsolete all the fundamental categories which we have outlined in the above passage as the starting principles of Western theological aesthetics.

d. The poet and the forms of God

In one single night, Hephaestus wrought the weapons of Achilles and marvellously produced the essence of the world's beauty in the image on the shield: the starry heaven in the middle, the ocean at the edge and between these the ordered world of men, 'superior, beautiful life' in 'scenes that complement each other, war and peace, city and countryside, crop field and pasture, sowing and harvest, work and dance'; last appears the singer who strikes up music for the dance.[209] The adjective 'beautiful' constantly occurs and it is not clear whether the poet means thereby the work of art or what is portrayed: the glittering gold is beautiful but so is what is represented on the gold: 'Who shall destroy the beauty there?' War and death, division and *kêrê* are as if spellbound on the shield, caught up into the great harmony between heaven and earth—which is no fixed harmony, for the figures on the shield seem to move, and dance, drama and melody are included in the marvellous picture produced there. The artist god makes this shield, with the radiant, cosmic and peasant world-order, to be used in the decisive battle between Achilles and Hector—this is like the insertion of the poet's self-portrait or monogram into his material, indicating what his art, in the most fundamental sense of this word, is. Here form and content are absolutely one, because in his view of the world they are not separated; and his view of the world is an undivided contemplation of the divine and the worldly or, better, of the world in its elevation into the divine sphere; it is therefore in its undivided state a contemplation which the poet as man possesses and which the god, the muse, bestows on him. Grace, as elevation, is always an election: not every man is hero or priest, not every man is poet. The poet, especially in the *Odyssey*, is the 'divine singer'[210] before whom 'all mortal men have respect and reverence, for the muse herself teaches the lofty song, and governs the singer lovingly'.[211] The goddess whom the poet invokes at decisive places is the one who calls him back to the divine truth:[212] she is likewise the one who allows being to become 'word', as described in a lost hymn of Pindar,[213] and the one who makes the poet 'spirit', who takes him up into the sphere of eternally valid, imprinted expression. The poet is dependent on her omniscience and he is ready to listen to her, so that he may come into the truth:

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[209] *Cf.* the marvellous description and assessment given by Karl Reinhardt in the chapter, 'Der Schild des Achilleus', op. cit., 401–411.

[210] *Od.* 4.17 (perhaps *Il.* 18.604); *Od.* 8.43.

Tell me now, you muses who dwell in high
  Olympus;
You are goddesses, present everywhere and knowing
  all things;
Our knowledge is nothing, we hear only rumours.[214]

The poet is 'seized' by the muse and brought into the state of the *mania* of the muses[215] and is there 'instructed'[216] by the muse (this is the true sense of αὐτοδίδακτος, τεμζ-υαφηθυ, *viz*. 'A god has laid many a sorrow in my heart');[217] so he may set his hearers in rapture (κληθημός), 'catch them up out of themselves',[218] so that they wish to hear him further, without end,[219] precisely when he sings of terrible things, so that Odysseus can listen to him only with tears and with covered head,[220] and Penelope bids him be silent when he sings of things that rend the heart.[221] Only the singer sings, 'like one of the heavenly beings',[222] of that which is, and of that alone; and so as Telemachus says, he is 'not to be blamed but rather Zeus who gives men their lot according to his good pleasure'.[223] But only destinies of suffering are worthy subjects of song and, because they are worth singing about, are worth living and are bearable.[224] Only what is tragic has honour, objectively, and can therefore claim subjective praise. The poet himself pays for his privilege in blows which are heavy and burdensome: 'It will be hard for me to declare all this like a god'.[225] And just as the hero is truly himself only in the most intimate encounter with and penetration by his god, so too the poet can speak what is praiseworthy only in his own particular meeting and penetration by the 'word'— the 'spirit' of the muse. In virtue of her authoritative appearance to him the poet can cause the divine to appear authoritatively (canonically), primarily for the 'hierarchy' of the aristocratic society for whom he sings and, through these, for the whole people. It is true that, especially on the Greek mainland, there was a cultic-priestly canon of authoritative divine *parousiai* but the authoritative canon of the Homeric poetry penetrates this, without abolishing it (Pindar's relationship to Delphi is characteristic here); this can be seen at its clearest in the fact that Homer, singing in the stylistic epoch of the Late Geometric Period and being far in advance of the plastic and artistic possibilities of representation in that period, became the fully authoritative origin of all representational art. He permitted the gods to appear in only one form. There are as yet no statues of the gods in the temples; when Hecuba, the queen of Troy, undertakes the procession to the temple of Athene and lays the consecrated garment in her lap, the goddess refuses the prayer by the act of looking upwards.[226]

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[211] *Od.* 8.479–481.

[212] The mother, the origin from which the muses spring, is Mnemosyne, Mneme, and the muses themselves are called Mneiai. On this and on what follows, *cf.* Walter F. Otto, *Die Musen und der göttliche Ursprung des Singens und Sagens* (2nd edn 1956), 26f.

[213] 'When Zeus had ordered the world, the gods comtemplated with silent astonishment the glory that opened to their eyes. At last the father of the gods asked them if they missed anything. Then they answered that one thing yet was lacking: the voice which would praise the great works and the whole creation in words and melodies. For this, a new divine form of existence was necessary, and so the gods asked Zeus to beget the muses.' Otto, op. cit., 28.

[214] *Il.* 2.484–486.

[215] Plato, *Phaedrus* 245A.

[216] *Od.* 8.488.

[217] *Od.* 22.347. He is 'one instructed by God': *Od.* 17.518–519.

[218] *Od.* 11.334; 13.2.

[219] *Od.* 17.520.

[220] *Od.* 8.83–85, 90f.; 8.521f.; 13.27f.

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[221] *Od.* 1.337–341.

[222] *Od.* 1.371.

[223] *Od.* 1.348–349.

[224] *Od.* 8.579–80: in the same way, *cf.* the words of Helen about herself and about Paris: *Il.* 6.357–358.

[225] *Il.* 12.176.

[226] *Il.* 6.603f.

Whereas Homer sees the goddess herself in the temple, in later ages it is sculpture that will make her present. Art, for the entire archaic and classical period, is concerned with the gods: the artist either represents the epiphany of the god himself or else makes presents, votive offerings for the gods (*agalmata:* precious delights for the gods, of which they are proud) which are placed in the sanctuary or in the graves.[227]

It is for this reason that the theophanies in Homer remain so significant for everything that follows him. They laid down the canon, not only for the fact that apparitions occur and for the question of who appeared but equally (indeed, more definitively still) for the theological atmosphere—for that specifically Homeric pious tenderness in the relationship of god and man, which dips everything in a shimmering light, for which the word *erôs* is an incorrect term and the word *philia* (*theophilia*) in its use at that period was too narrow:[228] yet a quality that can be expressed only through an essential, implicit, tender love that envelops everything. For Homer, the apparitions of the gods are traditional material which he obviously purifies (from their interest in demons and magic) and to which he gives a pure and shining form that corresponds to his inner vision of God and man.

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[227] Karl Schefold, *Griechische Kunst als religiöses Phänomen*, 1959. On the descent of plastic art from Homer, *cf.* 29f.; on the *agalmata*, *cf.* 48f.; on art as belonging to the gods, *cf.* 60f.

[228] Franz Dirlmeier, in 'Theophilia-Philotheia' (*Philologus*, 1935, 57–77, 176–193), offers an analysis that goes back from Aristotle (after excision of the disturbing passages: there is no friendship between god and man) to Plato (where it is an open question what God is and whether there can be a mutual love between him and men) and so to the mythical origins, where *philia* between god and man goes back to a blood relationship between god and hero (or king, or city) or else comes into being through an obligation on the part of the god brought about through sacrifices; the magical binding through sacrifice later becomes an ethical binding through *aretê* and in the sixth century the word *theophilos* can be explained by means of the word *agathos* and (in accordance with its efficacy) the word *eudaimôn*.

In poetry, however, much is evident that cannot be grasped philologically. Love and friendship in Homer are not in the smallest degree affected by blood and territorial relationships, nor by sacrificial magic.

For from of old the gods appear visibly to us,
When we honour them with holy festival
  hecatombs—
They sit among us in our rows, and eat of our meal.
Even when one single man, a wanderer, meets them,
They do not hide themselves from him, for we stand
  near to them.[229]

They almost always appear incognito, in a form other than their own—that of a known man who is a friend or even that of one unknown; the apparition may occur before an assembled group or before a single man to whom alone the god is visible (whether he is alone, or in a crowd). The *Odyssey*, where Athene takes on a human role for a long period in order to accompany Telemachus, explains this divine incognito as a testing of good and evil in the world, as a hidden judgement of the world,[230] as Shakespeare has formed it in *Measure for Measure*; in the *Iliad*, it is always a single action of taking on a body in a unique human situation in order to guide the situation divinely. There are often quite various gradations in the divine transparence: the god is often recognised in the act of disappearing[231] or sensed in this disappearing,[232] frequently through a sharper look at his face;[233] often, the characteristic of the divine command leads the man to pierce the form and guess the god;[234] gods are often recognised through the power that is inspired, through success in battle or *vice versa* through failure and defeat.[235] There is consistently in Homer a divine spontaneity in the epiphany: the god wills to appear, he wills to be recognised by this man but not by that man. Athene appears to Odysseus in the presence of Eumaeus and the dogs see her and slink off whining but Telemachus, who is present, sees and notices nothing.[236] Another time, when Athene, 'gloriously radiant', lights the path for both in the darkness to the weapon-room, the son sees only the incomprehensible light, not the form; in astonishment, he questions his father who tells him to be silent.[237] Thus we may understand how the poet, seemingly contradicting himself, calls the gods in their apparition in one passage 'easily recognisable' (ἀρίγνωτοι)[238] but in another passage 'hard to recognise' (ἀργαλέον ... γνῶναι):[239] 'For whose eye could have the power to look on the god, wherever he walks, if he himself does not will this?'[240]

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[229] *Od.* 7.201–205. On the apparitions of the gods in Homer, *cf.* H. Schrade, *Götter und Menschen Homers*, 144–164; W. F. Otto, *Die Götter Griechenlands* (5th edn), 127f. Lists of the epiphanies are in Kullmann, op. cit., 99f. Careful analyses of the modes of apparition are in Nägelbach, op. cit., 130–170.

[230] *Od.* 17.484–486.

[231] *Il.* 13.62f.; *Od.* 3.371f.

[232] *Od.* 1.320–323.

[233] *Il.* 17.33–334; 1.200.

[234] *Od.* 3.390f.

[235] E.g. *Il.* 15.467f., 472.

It is this act of taking on a body that the Homeric poet knows—this flashing upon the scene of the divine fire into the form of man, irradiating this form with the divine power despite the incognito and elevating the native human beauty into the glorious divine beauty. This is his knowledge (far greater than that of any traditional saga handed down to him) and he describes it with the gifts the muse gives him. In this he achieves the definitive standard as man and poet and he hands this over to the plastic arts as a commission through the centuries, a commission that remains unchanged even in periods when belief in the epiphanies of the gods is no more. But the test of credibility remains the crude realism of human suffering under the destiny of death. The hero proves himself in continual, pitiless murder, among hideously disfigured corpses, and that which is humanly moving, overwhelming and deserving of mercy comes credibly into view where death has reigned or threatens inescapably: Andromache, Hecuba, Priam, Hector himself become great when death enters the final shadows. The measure of man appears where the boundary in some way is crossed and man enters a world beyond the definitive measure, where a warning of the god is ignored in the ecstasy of victory[241] or where a complaint against the cruel gods by the man who has been humiliated beyond measure can no longer be repressed;[242] but the poet who permits this complaint to be uttered aloud does not accept the responsibility for it but simply gives it its place in the framework of what is true,[243] which in the *Iliad* ultimately shines forth in the meeting of reconciliation between the two unfortunate men Priam and Achilles—a meeting that is heavy with storms, dangerous and yet protected by the god. Achilles expresses it without resentment:[244]

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[236] *Od.* 16.155–163.
[237] *Od.* 19.34–43.
[238] *Il.* 13.72; 15.490.
[239] *Od.* 13.312.
[240] *Od.* 10.573–574.

> We achieve nothing at all with out terrible cries.
> This is how the gods determined the lot for wretched
> men,
> That they live ever in cares; only the gods themselves
> are without care.

And, remembering Niobe and her inhuman suffering when Apollo slew her children, he invites the old king to a feast of mutton.

What will become of this 'incomprehensible gracefulness', θεσπεσιή χάρις,[245] which, in Homer, is laid in the cradle of the West, so that the West should become 'lovable', φίλος, through it? Can the balance between god and man, grace and nature, suffering and consolation be maintained in the light of the glory shown and accomplished here? Yet even when this must fall apart, what a promise lay in such a beginning for the next millennia.

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[241] Hector's boasts, *Il.* 8.198; his girding on of Achilles' weapons, as Ate: 17.194f.; his pressing forward despite Apollo's warning, 20.419; he cannot go back any more, 22.99–130; the god abandons him, 22.213; Athene deceives the blinded man, 22.224f.,299. Patroclus oversteps the ordained measure, 16.685; he acts against Apollo, without knowing this, and is struck down by the god, 16.698f.,791f. The blinding of the suitors, *Od.* 20.345–357.

[242] *Od.* 5.118f. (*cf. Il.* 24.33); *Od.* 20.201f.

[243] *Od.* 1.32f.

[244] *Il.* 24.524–526.

[245] *Od.* 8.19; 17.63.

2. FROM HESIOD TO PINDAR

From Homer onwards, the glory of being was derived from and rendered credible in the model of the encounter of the hero and his god; the next generation had to ask whether this model was universally valid; whether a knowledge drawn from such an encounter could be broadened to encompass a knowledge of a continuing state; whether every man could find entry to the relationship in which the hero stands; and finally, whether the divinity as such could be understood in accordance with the personal mode of the individual god in his epiphany. The poets and thinkers from Hesiod to Pindar are occupied in the struggle to give these questions concerning man's lot a responsible answer—that is, an answer that takes account of the entire situation of mankind: and the more universally the question is posed, the more clearly does philosophy emerge from the myth.

a. Hesiod

The peasant Hesiod from Ascra drives his plough on a thankless soil on the slopes of Helicon and there he encounters the Muses and their commission to compose poetry in just the same unhoped-for manner as Amos receives his prophetical commission while going about his daily tasks as peasant. The genuineness of this encounter is witnessed to by the harshness with which the 'mistresses of the high and holy Helicon' [246] come upon him and now wish to leave the marvellous world of the Homeric imagination, for which they once undertook the responsibility, for a more truthful art of poetry, closer to reality—and it is for this art that the peasant is chosen.

> Rabble of shepherds, living in the wild, disgraceful
>   creatures, mere bellies:

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[246] Hesiod's works are cited in the edition of Paul Mazon (Belles Lettres 1951). Th = *Theogony*, EH = *Works and Days*. —Th 1–2.

> We understand how to utter lies of all kinds, that look
> like the truth:
> But if we wish, we can also proclaim the truth.[247]

They 'breathe resounding speech into him', so that he may 'glorify that which will be and that which is' and 'that which was', and that he may 'praise the race of the blessed immortals'.[248] The 'lovely song' which they 'teach him'[249] is the song of the Muses themselves, the marvellous concert of Olympus in which they sing of the gods in accordance with their rank[250] and then also in accordance with their birth:[251] in both lists, Zeus stands at the head as 'first and highest of the gods'. The poet's song reproduces on earth the song of truth, with which 'the peaks of snowy Olympus echo', and the content of the song of glorification is, in the first poem, the genesis of all things, the cosmogony, and in the second poem, man in the right manner of his existence on the earth which he is to cultivate: the right work at the right time. The 'Theogony' contains an immense claim, the same indeed which soon afterwards is made in the biblical creation narrative with its much simpler manner, a claim which leads in a direct line from Hesiod to the cosmic philosophy of the School of Elea, to the *Timaeus*, to Lucretius, to Böhme and to Schelling's 'ages of the world': the gaze is directed at one and the same time to the origins of God and of the world. Homer, beginning his song somewhere in the middle of the *Iliopersis* cycle, sought to illuminate the whole from the shining centre-point of a divine-human situation; but Hesiod wishes to begin systematically at the beginning. Whereas Homer continues his song as far as the circle of light extends and ceases where the darkness begins, Hesiod (like Schelling) draws forth the light from the darkness and can never be free from the shadows. Homer sings in the light, Hesiod sings from a meditative distance over against light and darkness.

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[247] Th 26–28.

[248] Th 31–32, 38, 33.

[249] Th 22.

[250] Th 11–21. On the first and second song of the Muses in the prologue to the *Theogony*, *cf.* B. Snell, 'Die Welt der Götter bei Hesiod', in: *La Notion du Divin depuis Homère jusqu'à Platon*, Fondation Hardt, Entretiens t.1 (1952; Vandoeuvres—Genève, 1954), 97–124, here 115–116.

[251] Th 43–52.

At the origin is chaos, the barren emptiness, then earth comes into existence and 'with it Eros, most lovely of the undying gods'. But from chaos comes night, and from night's union with Erebos come the aether and the daylight; from the earth, on the other hand, come sky and sea and from the repeated couplings of earth and sky, and earth and sea (here Eros enters upon his cosmogonic function), come all the other beings. In the meantime, night produces, without a partner, all the negative nocturnal forces—death and slumber, forgetting, hunger and pain, strife and lawlessness and, the most terrible of iniquities, perjury.[252] The enjoyment of love lies in the power of the dark forces—Hesiod gives it as companion in spirit deceit, rather than death; for it is Hesiod who relates the myth of Pandora.

The question of the origins of the earth and of all else in emptiness ends, itself, in emptiness and remains unanswered. How does light come forth from night? What is Eros and whence does it come? It is not Eros, described as the most beautiful of the gods, who takes the central place in the poet's attention but rather Zeus; or rather, the overpowering of the dark forces of disorder through the realm of order and justice of the Olympian, an overpowering which Hesiod describes in ever new inflexions of the myth. This realm is first of all that which results from the succession of the divine generations from Uranus through Chronos to Zeus, and, in the realm of Zeus, from the overpowering of the Titans and their fall into Tartarus. This victory is obtained only through '*Kratos* and *bia*', force and might,[253] which then become attributes of the government of Zeus, or through the 'hundred arms and fifty heads'[254] and this shows the fatal dependence of the divine realm of order upon naked might, which it needed (in the struggle against might!) in order to attain to government: it is here that Aeschylus will find his starting point. It is for this reason that the gods swear their oath in dependence at the Styx;[255] for this reason too that the hymn to the goddess Hecate is sung, Hecate who is all-powerful in earth, sea and sky, and behind whom we glimpse the image of the Magna Mater of Asia Minor[256]—Hecate, who is celebrated in songs whose tones are not unrelated to the 'Wisdom' of the Old Testament: here we have the dependence of the realm of Zeus on an older realm, that of the Mother. Thus, it is characteristic that the most fascinating verses of poetry are devoted to the underworld, to the unfathomable depth of the primordial chaos, into which the fallen powers sink down, where are the 'gates' and 'boundaries' between not-being and being, between night and day,[257] where are the 'sources' and the 'roots' of all things:[258] behind the images, the philosophical question presses forward. The gaze of the inspired poet penetrates to the place where the sun does not penetrate with its ray.[259] This is also the gaze of the representational art of this period: in the gable of the powerfully constructed temple of Artemis in Corfu the hideous gorgon is portrayed, three metres high, together with the struggles of Perseus or Bellerophon against monsters; and on the first vases that carry figures, sphinxes and chimaeras are portrayed by themselves—is this the overpowering of the demonic through the light or fascination of the light with the demonic?

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[252] Th 211–232. On the meaning of the first begettings, *cf.* Fränkel: 'Drei Interpretationen zu Hesiod' (in: *Wege und Formen*, 316–334): 'Neither the naiveté of an unintelligent faith, nor an unbelieving playfulness telling fables . . . rather the appropriate and timely form for making the unthinkable thinkable and the unutterable utterable' (319).

[253] Th 385.

[254] Th 147–153; 617–686; 713–720. H. Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie*, etc., 109.

Prometheus stands at the centre of both poems as the image of man's precarious situation in the realm of Zeus' justice. Prometheus has craftily deceived the god in sacrifice.[260] Therefore Zeus has prepared cares for men and hidden the necessities of life from them, so that they have to seek these in the sweat of their brow; among these is fire which the 'gallant' Prometheus goes to steal, with renewed cunning.[261] To this Zeus replies with a blow that is harder still, by forming Pandora and sending her forth: she is the deceitful beauty of woman, through whom all evils come upon earth,[262] so that in marriage the best to be hoped for is a balance of good and evil. But Prometheus is chained to the rock and Zeus abstains from his revenge only because of Hercules, who in the end stays the tormenting eagle.[263] Compared with Homer, the situation between man and god is fundamentally altered: there is indeed an order of justice which reigns over all but this is expressed in a relationship of cunning (guilt) and compulsion (punishment); Pandora's box is open and only hope remains within and is not distributed to men, whereas 'afflictions, sicknesses and pains without number wander through the race of men', 'in silence, because the wise Zeus has refused them speech'.[264] All of this is within the divine plan, 'from which it is impossible to escape'.[265] The myth of the descending ages of the world—from the golden age to the coming iron age, when men will enter the world already aged and all law and sense of justice will have perished—is further evidence of the awareness of a disturbance at the roots.[266]

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[255] Th 383–404, 775–806.
[256] P. Mazon in his introduction to his edition, 21–24.
[257] Th 748, 738, 811–812.
[258] Th 728, 738, 809.
[259] Th 759–760.
[260] Th 533f.

A legal dispute between Hesiod and his brother Perses, who failed to abide by the terms of his inheritance and who was given a favourable verdict in an unjust judgment, was the occasion for the composition of the *Works and Days*. The concept of law, understood in the widest sense, claims to order the life of man, a law which has its dwelling in heaven and must be inspired in the kings and judges by the Muses, just as poetry must be inspired in the poets;[267] indeed, the poet himself has the obligation to 'proclaim laws and customs that are to be respected'.[268] But this law, which Hesiod tries to make clear to his brother, is obscured by a primordial injustice (we would say today that it is only a secondary natural law). This is the dialectic of the good and the evil *eris*: the hard struggle and strife between men and peoples is evil, but Zeus fatefully imposes this scourge again and again upon mankind—and yet there is also a good strife set by God 'in the roots of the earth', the struggle for what is better (which emerges later as the primitive Greek *agôn*) and for Hesiod this good *eris* is one with the diligence of work, from which is derived the very dignity of the peasant, indeed of man.[269] In life as in art, the Greek will give the central place to measure (μέτρον) and the holding-firm to what is measured (σωφροσύνη), and this acquires in Hesiod a profound theological grounding: it is seen as the struggle for what is best, which nevertheless acknowledges man's essential scanty limitation, and emerges from a resignation experienced on a deep level.

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[261] EH 49–52; Th 565.
[262] EH 58–105; Th 570–612.
[263] Th 521–534.
[264] EH 96–104.
[265] EH 105.
[266] Th 106–201.
[267] Th 80–93.

> Fool, not knowing how much more useful is the half
>   than the whole,
> Nor what treasures lie in asphodel and mallow![270]

The 'Works and Days' fit into this simplicity (which is not in any sense experienced on a tragic level): it is the simplicity of the peasants' year, which issues in the final instruction,[271] 'Keep to the measured things (μέτρα); the actual moment (καιρός) in everything is the best'.[272] We see that all beauty is lastingly rooted in the rightness of life, when we consider the polyvalence of the terms ὡραῖος and ὥριος which repeatedly is brought to our attention[273] (at the right time, but also lovely, beautiful, just as the Horai are the goddesses of the cosmic legality and simultaneously the goddesses of sexual attraction), and when we consider the simultaneously ethical and aesthetic meaning of μέτρον,[274] εὐκόσμως,[275] and εὐκρινέες[276] —and this beauty is rooted above all in the rightness of work: 'Well-ordered work (εὐθεμοσύνη) is the best for mortal men'.[277] It would be easy to find material in Hesiod's instructions for living that corresponded to the Decalogue,[278] including even the command for morning and evening prayer; righteousness, the daughter of the highest god, is considered in close association with the all-seeing eye of the omniscient Zeus;[279] if she is hurt upon earth, she goes to her father and 'accuses the hearts of the unrighteous'[280] — the father remains judge and (wholly in the manner of the Old Testament) rewards and punishes even to the fourth generation.[281] This close tie between *Dikê* and Zeus prevents justice from being reduced merely to an abstract world-principle. An ethical world, then, for which gods and men must each struggle, a world with sombre depths lying beneath it, yet a world lived in courage and modesty: it is this world that the Muses commission Hesiod to glorify.

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[268] Th 66 (it is unlikely that verses 65–67 should be omitted as inauthentic).

[269] EH 11–29.

[270] EH 40–41.

[271] EH 383f.

[272] EH 694.

[273] EH 392, 422, 492, 617, 630, 641, 665, 695, etc. The Horai (Th 901f.) are daughters of Zeus and are named Eunomia (legality), Dike (justice), and Eirene (peace).

b. Poetry

ARCHILOCHUS, who is as entirely the initiator of the lyric tradition as Homer is the founder of epic literature, to the amazement of posterity who have con-joined their names in this respect,[282] this Archilochus is the *homme révolté* of the classical world. It was his fate too to come face to face, incredibly, with the Muses and to be initiated into their mysteries.[283] The transfiguring mantle of the heroes has slipped from man's shoulder who is now exposed, defenceless, to the cruelty of fate; he uses his teeth to defend himself, clawing and biting, filled with hatred and curses, and compares himself to a hedgehog rolled tightly into a ball,[284] and can—according to legend—drive people to their deaths with his verses. Yet we should note how small a step it is from the utterance of a devout man to that of this defiant and desperate individual. Hesiod celebrated the power of Father Zeus in song with these words:

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[274] EH 600, 649, 694, 720 etc.

[275] EH 628.

[276] EH 670.

[277] EH 471–472.

[278] *Cf.* esp. EH 320–367.

[279] EH 267, 281.

[280] EH 256–260.

[281] EH 281–285.

[282] Archilochus, Greek and German text, ed., Max Treu, Heimeran, 1959. For Archilochus and Homer, see 137–138.

[283] 42–44; see also 152–153.

> Effortlessly he lends strength, and effortlessly burdens
> the important,
> Effortlessly he causes the brilliant to decline and the
> needy to rise,
> Effortlessly he straightens what is crooked and blasts
> the proud.[285]

'Effortless', *rheia*, describes likewise the very existence of Homer's gods. Archilochos writes:

> All things are easy for the gods. They often raise up from his misery the man who previously lay on the black earth. And they often bring us to our downfall, laying many a one upon his back who walked with firm step. Now evil befalls them: hunger drives them onto false paths and their minds are disturbed.[286]

If he urges composure and self-control, then it is done out of an assurance which does not yield to fate. Addressing his own heart, which is 'confused and desolate with hopeless woes', he exhorts it to gather its strength and to offer resistance, to stand fast, neither vaunting in victory nor wailing in defeat, saying: 'Understand the rhythm which raises man up and brings him low'.[287] Because disaster is, like it or not, at large among men, he draws consolation from the fact that if it has struck someone today, then it will strike another tomorrow.[288] The poet, the bastard son of a nobleman, is as mercilessly critical of himself, of his passion as of his pain, of his cowardice as of his courage, as he is critical of others. There is something of Heraclitus, who called 'this most beautiful world' a 'rubbish heap', in his view of things and yet Archilochus writes poetry, splendidly, and Heraclitus says: 'For God all is beautiful and good and just'.[289] That is something which the poet would not have said, for he is not interested in taking a broader view of things, only in the nature of existence, diamond hard. He crudely exposes sexuality, like Villon,[290] though in a clinical not a prurient manner. Prayer, though, is absent, replaced by the cynical observation that Zeus prophesies better than all the gods because all that happens is in accordance with his will.[291] The latter is probably that inescapable rhythm of existence, with which on Koheleth's view it is wise to be in agreement (Eccl 3.1–8).

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[284] 94 (Diehl-Beutler, 1952 = D: D 102).
[285] EH 5–7.
[286] 68 (D 58).
[287] 70–72 (D 67a).
[288] 24 (D 7).

SAPPHO lives in the medium of love.[292] She writes nuptial poems, on the surface celebratory and in the popular manner, which vividly convey the mythic wedding ceremonies. Yet for the poetess herself, such an event means suffering and self-denial for she has brought about the marriage of a girl she loves. Her own love survives in longing, languishing, humble gratitude when love is consummated, in the gratified, though melancholic, rememberance of shared pleasure, in generosity of heart in not holding on to those who have left her, but also in a longing for death and 'Acheron's lotus banks, fresh as dew'[293]. She calls Eros bitter-sweet, *glukupikron*[294], which in Homer's world would be still unthinkable. But although love makes her tremble, and brings a deathly pallor to her cheeks, the famous fragment concludes with the words: 'we must bear all things because . . .'[295] Sappho always addresses someone, often a girl she loves. And when they have parted, it is often Aphrodite to whom she speaks, whom she summons for help. But this address is like nature.[296] The landscape and the soul to which the goddess is called are filled with love, in a way that is both sensory and sensuous, though also permeated with the spirit, through pain and self-denial rather than rational abstraction. One person will regard this thing as being the most beautiful, while another will choose something quite different, 'but I think it is that which we love'.[297] Eros lends beauty but he, too, is nature's beauty: 'Eros has sent my senses reeling, like a storm which fells the oak trees in a mountain wood'.[298] Thus the lover is always set simply and harmoniously in the whole, not artificially set apart in a place of tension. The gods make their presence felt, no longer of such personal definition as we find in Homer, but rather like the aspect that each moment in time takes on which is illumined by love. This can easily develop into the sophistic thesis that man is the measure of all things and, further, that God is human proportions in absolute form.[299] Sappho's world of eros and lyric can bear distant comparison with the world of the *Song of Songs* ('Like the hyacinth on which the moutain herdsmen tread, the carpet of purple blossom . . .'[300] but she remains—even in her imitators—fixed at her own level through the millenia, without the biblical openness to the future.

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[289] Frg. 124, 102 in Diehl.

[290] D 72, 34, Bkg 136 (Treu 72, 34, 106).

[291] 80 (D 84).

[292] W. Schadewaldt: *Sappho. Welt und Dichtung. Dasein in der Liebe*, 1950.

[293] Sappho, Greek and German text, ed. by Max Treu, Heimeran, 1958 (2nd edition) (with the numbering of Diehl et al.) 76 (D 97).

[294] 94 (D 137). For the later history of this word, see Horst Rüdiger: *Sappho, ihr Ruf und Ruhm bei der Nachwelt* (Das Erbe der Alten 21), 1933, 32f.

It is SOLON who gives the most elevated expression to beauty as the face of order and justice. In the whole of the archaic world ethics and aesthetics are one, only dominant nuances are possible. Sappho, too, said: 'Of course, the beautiful man is beautiful only in so far as his appearance shows; the just man will soon be beautiful too'[301] For *Tyrtaeus*, whose song accompanies the Spartans into war, valour and beauty are one: 'His death is beautiful (καλόν) who falls in the front row of warriors as a good (ἀγαθόν) man fighting for his fatherland' and whoever surrenders it instead and turns to mendicancy 'brings shame on his house and besmirches the glory of appearance' (ἀγλαὸν εἶδος).[302] *Eidos* as 'form, appearance, beauty' (later 'type', 'species' and Plato's 'idea') is here still the distinguishing mark of the noble citizen in his public behaviour and in the life-style, the dignity, which he possesses and to which he lays claim, and which he is now to justify through his willingness to face death.[303] The war elegy to the young men locates all virtue and therefore true beauty in the valour which does not seek to save its own life. 'Whoever risks his life is most likely to save it: 'he should let his life become a hateful thing and the black powers of death as sweet as the pleasing light'. Whoever flees, that is seeks to save his life, will lose it through 'the ugly things that will befall him'.[304] The pederastic Eros animates these soldiers of death, with whom Hellas won its greatest battles or lost them gloriously. Eros and destruction, in combination with each other, constitute ethics and art in particular. The being or non-being of the polis depends time and time again on the test of this alliance's authenticity. Solon inherits the pathos of Tyrtaeus; in him the battle song becomes a public speech[305] and a moral exhortation on self-inflicted states of disorder, especially the unjust rapaciousness of the wealthy. *Dike*, divine justice, is offended but no longer laments, as in Hesiod, at the throne of Father Zeus. She is herself the world order which must be restored and she looms as approaching judgment.

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[295] 25 (D 2).
[296] 74 (D 96).
[297] 34 (D 27a).
[298] 50 (D 50).
[299] H. Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie*, 212.
[300] 86 (D 117).

> For they shamelessly flaunt Dikê's sublime law,
> Dikê, who silently observes what happens and what
>   has happened,

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[301] 50 (D 49).
[302] Diehl-Beutler: *Anthol. lyrica gr.* I (1954), No. 6.
[303] See Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie*, 174, n. 7.
[304] Diehl, No. 8.
[305] In the early elegy which calls for the conquest of Salamis, Diehl, No. 2.

And some day, with certainty, punishing guilt will
come.[306]

Then SOLON praises the harmonious regulation of society (εὐνομίη), which orders (εὔκοσμα) and shapes (ἄρτια) all the things of men, smoothing out what is rough, subduing and calming what is overwheening, eradicating rank illusion and suppressing strife.[307] An appeal is made to the good spirit, who is the sole possible source of a better form of society and with which the radiance, or κλέος, receives the name of glory.[308] Solon immortalised his own existence in and for justice in magnificent verses.[309] But, even after the establishment of the polis, he still has the intimation of approaching doom, like an Old Testament prophet, sensed each time in the disharmony of the present order. He perceives the coming tyranny like a threatening storm cloud, full of snow, hail and lightening.[310] They think him mad, but 'soon his madness will prove true for the people when Aletheia, evident reality, appears in their midst'.[311] He is deeply convinced of the depravity of all men under the sun; not one of them is blessed,[312] although Solon meditates long on the natural contentment of the senses and has much to say of this. He offers a summary of his view of life in the great elegy (D 1). Once again it is the perception of the injustice in the world that is central, which quickly turns to delusion and, when the evil has grown too great, invites judgment.

For overwheening deeds have no duration,
But Zeus oversees the outcome of all, and suddenly
(ἐξαπίνης)
Just as a storm in spring scatters the clouds in an
instant,
Which churns the surface of the wild, unbounded sea
And howls across the corn-covered land,

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[306] D 3. 14–16.
[307] D 3. 32–39.
[308] D 23. 10.
[309] The Iambics, D 24.
[310] D 10; *cf.* D 11 for the image of the churning sea.
[311] D 9.
[312] D 15.

Destroying fields, upward soaring, to the steep
Dwelling of the gods, it sweeps the skies clean, of
pristine blue;
The sun's radiant power shines forth on the fertile
earth,
And all the clouds are gone from view:
Of such a kind is the punishment of Zeus.[313]

An astonishing image, which excels event he prophetic storm images: justice with its storm of wrath does not bring dark clouds this time but sweeps the skies clean. The 'day of the Lord' is the 'beautiful' (καλόν, 24) Greek sky. Beneath this ominous blue human kind go their way, following their 'empty hopes', their 'foolish madness', so that 'whoever is wretched imagines that they are well, whoever is pleasing to none imagines that they are beautiful', whoever is ill counts on recovery, whoever is poor believes that he is about to become rich. There are poets and prophets, those who are called but neither divination not medicinal art can ward off fate: the μοῖρα is ineluctable.[314]

Solon, with the prophet-like gravity of his judicial gaze, differs from much (earlier and later) lyric, which indulges in shallow, bourgeois platitudes: Drink and make love, for tomorrow we are dead. Everything is ephemeral and illusory, so we should enjoy all the more what we can, what is within our grasp (but with moderation for that is required by the law of a higher gratification). Religion exists in the background as a supplementary and balancing element; but in Anacreon and the Theognis collection, and in large parts even of Alcaeus and Semonides, the passion of conviction which inspires Homer, Hesiod and Solon is entirely lacking. The moral fable begins its career. An inherently trivial art becomes established which only seldom preserves a gleam of glory from above.

c. Pindar

But one lyric poet understands his art entirely as a form of glory, as the glorification of that which is in itself sovereign, victorious and glorious in the world, whereby total glory is precisely the necessary coincidence of both kinds of glory: that which transfigures and that which is transfigured. Of his seventeen books we possess in complete form only the four Epinician collections. The numerous other fragments (including 11 books of hymns) testify to their status and the kernel and essence of his mind and art, and acknowledge them as such. They are praises sung to the victors—men and boys—in the panhellenic games of Olympia, Delphi (Pythia), on the Corinthian Isthmus and in Nemea, where the great moment of a gracious, thrilling victory moves the polis, together with the hero and from him as its starting point, into the radiance of victory's light: and not just the polis, but the noble race to as far back as its divine and semi-divine origins, and all Greece, even existence as a whole. This it is that makes life worth living and justifies the world, which the victor and the poet, working together, turn to celebration. The Epinician Odes straddle the arts. They were sung by a choir and presented in a mime dance. Without their music the words which have come down to us cannot, despite their consummate literary artistry, comunicate to us their original impact.

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[313] D 1. 17–25.
[314] D 1. passim.

Such a harnessing of cosmic energy—itself an image of total deployment of the body's strength during competition—only has meaning within the closed totality of the mythic universe, which is just as much assumed and accepted as, in the artistic act of faith, it is presented anew as a whole. But this occurs at a time of extreme crisis when the philosophers have already set to work on their criticism of the gods, and Xenophanes and (Pseudo-) Tyrtaeus[315] have made a strong attack on the mythic heightening of the contests and their victors.[316] We still find in Pindar, at the end of the archaic period, the comprehensive, unified, Homeric universe in which the human and the divine are in the first place wholly opposed, so that no confusion is possible with the result, then, that man in his striving to reach beyond himself into the divine light can for the first time be truly seen as man. Now he can be seen for what he is, in the victor's break-through which is simultaneously and beyond doubt both ultimate achievement from earth to heaven and pure, weightless grace from Heaven to Earth. This dialectic is not solved in the abstract but in the archaic pendulum swing of a mode of thought which always moves boldy but securely from the perception of a comprehensive totality into its opposite, only to find itself again in its wholeness both here and beyond.

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[315] Diehl-Beutler: Tyrtaeus frg. 9.

[316] Diehl-Beutler frg. 2; Diehls-Kranz, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, frg. B 2 (8th ed. I. 128–129).

> One is the race of men, one the race of gods; but
>   from the same mother we received our breath.
> Yet our apportioned powers divide us wholly, for one
>   is nothing at all
> And, for the other, the heavens endure as a immovable
>   dwelling.
> But still we possess some likeness to the immortals,
>   whether through the quality of our mind or nature,
> Though we have no knowledge by day or by night
>   of the course
> Our lives shall run.[317]

The 'common mother' is not some greatness above both gods and men. The gods are not seen as deriving from the universe, for Pindar is always alert to the divinity of the gods, so much so, in fact, that he often approaches a 'concrete monotheism', as in the Theia song.[318] The personal points of reference of the Homeric heroes to 'their' god decrease (Pindar is praising contemporaries) and the myths are stripped of any offensive characteristics, as the poet either declares that they are unworthy of the god and therefore beyond belief,[319] or adjusts the stories [320] or refrains from expressing an opinion and shrouds himself in silence, expressly or by omission.[321] He does not concern himself with divine conflict or strife, as does Aeschylus. The designs of the gods are unfathomable and human reason is not their equal; Pindar regards the new philosophy with suspicion.[322] What he believes in, and as a poet requires, is the pure radiance of a heavenly world of light, bestowing grace on men, however multifold the fragmentation of the pure light might be into the images and words of the thousand sacred myths at the poet's disposal. In the light of a totality which transfigures all, every oblique connection is possible, and thus 'the full bloom of the hymns, like the bee, strays from motif to motif'.[323] The mythic motifs are taken as true, as truth that is acknowledged rather than one which is expressly to be developed (as in Christian theology and literature a single believing act presupposes a variety of things believed), in order to scintillate in a kaleidoscopic play of ever changing facets and to offer itself for interpretation. The myths are the forms of divine revelation in the first and foundational days of humanity, of the royal dynasties, of city states and clans. Noble man is more or less closely linked to these accounts of his beginnings; he derives from them and is determined by them in ways other than through the horoscope. Only where that which has such origins and has been well-formed (φύσις, φυά)[324] enters the exertions of the agon does the guarantee of divine blessing rest upon it: grace from below encounters grace from above.

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[317] Pindar's works according to the edition by A.Puech (Belles Lettres, 4 vols, 1922/23). Ol = Olympian, P = Pythian, N = Nemean, Isth = Isthmian Odes. Fragments given with number and page in Puech.—N 6. 1–7.

[318] Isth 5. 1f., where 'Theia of many names' is praised as the epitome of all that is divine.

[319] Ol 9. 37–41.

[320] Ol 1. 28; P 5. 55–62 (see also Puech's note).

> That which is greatest comes from nature, though
>   many men
> Have endeavoured to win glory by acquired skill.
> Where the god is absent, the matter is best not spoken of.
> Some paths lead further than others.

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[321] N 5. 16–18; Frg. Dithyr. 11 (Puech 156), Frg. Parthen. 3 (Puech 175). 'Often it is that about which we are silent which gives greatest joy': Isth 1. 63.

[322] Frg. Paean 13 (Puech 136f.).

[323] P 10. 53–54.

[324] P 8. 44f.: 'Through *phua* the nobility shines forth which sons inherit from their fathers'.

> We do not all profit from the same endeavour
>   equally.
> The ways of the highest achievement are steep.[325]

An accompanying symmetry inheres in the divine provenance of the chosen one, which gives him an insurmountable advantage.

> A man's strength is from inborn valour.
> He whose knowledge is acquired lives in darkness,
> Blown this way and that, his step is uncertain,
> And he seeks half-heartedly countless virtues.[326]

The dowry of nobility of mind appears for Pindar, however, only in the daring *agôn*, in the way in which it serves to distinguish man from god.[327] He warns as much against the immediate desire to become a god as he does against taking up arms against something divine.[328] The noble man should hunger for that which is highest, though within reach,[329] in accordance with the measure of his own status.[330] Whoever possesses the 'humility' to resign themselves to the insubstantiality and ephemerality of the human dimension,[331] pays the god honour and can rely on his supportive grace and aid. Victory is always divine grace, not only in the aforementioned sense of 'prevenient grace' in the blood, but in a more real and accompanying way in the *agôn*: 'Do not forget, when you are lauded in Cyrene, that all is a gift of the gods!'[332] 'The god brings all things to perfection according to his wishes; he, who outspeeds even the eagle in flight and the dolphin in the sea, has humbled many a mortal and brought others to unending fame.[333] Provenance by blood from divine origins is for Pindar fully a matter of grace.

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[325] Ol 9. 100–108; *cf.* Ol 11. 19–20.

[326] N 3. 40–42.

[327] P 2. 88; Ol 5, 24.

[328] Isth 7. 42–48.

[329] P 11. 50f.

[330] 'We must always take the measure of things from our own station': P 2. 34.

[331] P 8. 95–100.

[332] P 5. 25.

[333] P 2. 49–52.

The source of the divine virtue (ἀρετά) which flows in the soul and veins of the noble man and which continues to lend him wings, lies beyond the narrow confines of life. Precisely this secret of origins darkens in the Tragedians to the mystery of a guilt which passes from generation to generation, in which the individual, unable to draw a line between his own and inherited guilt, is precipitated into a more ancient and abysmal fate than is his individual due. The reality of this dimension is shown by Israel then and today, and even Israel began by understanding it in terms of an ennobling election until calamitous fate so predominated that Ezekiel, both removing the burden and adding to it, was forced to emphasise the responsibility of the individual.

But in Pindar's songs of victory everything, even the grace of provenanance, coalesces around the moment of victory: in the victor, who remains a man and who must be aware of this fact, the divine happens, becomes corporally manifest. From this centre the light of glory reflects back on all that is, just as it flowed together as grace for this purpose from the ends of the universe. Victory happens in celebration, which centres ordinary existence and uplifts it, in the precincts of the sacred temple which maps out the expanses of the universe,[334] and finally in a body, gathered from mythical realms and highly trained, the glory of whose form becomes fully visible in victory. When the young Greeks step naked into the stadium, their bodies exceed the limits of their form and they receive, as victors, a radiance which, breaking out both from within and without, envelops and transcends them. It is only for this reason that the Greek artistic canon was able to invest the naked human body with this perfect harmony, together with its luminosity, in which the *agôn*, as Pindar portrays it, as an intrinsic part of their glory, is not to be forgotten. Certainly the entranced gaze of the spectator who watches this unity of achievement and grace, dignity and elegance, is the origin of Greek pederasty. Eros invades a victorious centre which 'den Leib vergottet und den Gott verleibt'[335] ('makes a god of the body and embodies the gods'), causing the absolute coalescence of the moment of victory to descend into that which is conditional, unmindful of the *agôn*, ennervated and private. Since a fixing of transfigured corporality was not possible before the resurrection of Christ, except in marble, Plato's Eros went the philosophical way of intellectualisation, taking leave of Pindar's transfiguration of the individual in the total power of his *aretâ*.

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[334] Gerh. Nebel: *Pindar und die Delphik*, 1961, 103–106.

[335] Stefan George, 'Templer' (GA VI 53).

In the body-soul union of this *areta*, virtue and competence are inseparable, or at least the one unconditionally requires the presence of the other. Correspondingly, the original, radiant wholeness (καλόν) is comprehensive health, well-being within and without. It is characteristic therefore of the noble man that he conceals potentially distorting pain within himself 'but gives external expression to beauty': ἀγαθοὶ Τὰ καλὰ τρέψαντες ἔξω.[336] Virtue possesses inseparably its radiance, its objective claim to honour and its subjective reception of honour. 'If *aretâ* is the epitome of the excellence which one is and does, then *tima* signifies the value of this excellent person, what he is worth on account of his *areta*. For the value (*timê*) of something depends on how it is valued (*timatai*) and only that is *kalon* which is a *timion*. Therefore it appears as a light: only that which is radiant is visible and can be honoured.[337] But only proven virtue, that is virtue which has been tested by an endangering venture (κίνδυνος), has emerged into visibility, into light and thus into the state of being worthy of honour. '*Aretai* which are not set at risk (ἀκίνδυνοι) are nowhere honoured, but when with much effort a beautiful work is completed it remains in the memory of many'. [338] All the radiant beauty of the world balances perpetually on a moment when the venture succeeds, the effort proves worthwhile, nobility wins by struggle, the victor storms to his goal. And as breadth of spirit is the virtue of the generous of heart, the reward of *areta* is concealed at the heart of its own radiance, in its claim to esteem and its receiving of that esteem:

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[336] P 3. 84; *cf.* hymn. frg. 4 (Puech 92f.: 'Do not speak of the suffering which befalls us before strangers. I tell you: you may speak publicly to all peoples of the fine things which the gods send but of our unbearable griefs it is better to keep silent'.

[337] Herm. Gundert: *Pindar und sein Dichterberuf*, 1935, 26–27.

[338] Ol 6. 9.

> Whoever wins the highest renown in games or in
> war,
> Has in the praise of citizens and strangers his greatest
> rewards.[339]

Now it is the poet who, having received prophetic grace, perceives the light of the *areta* and can grant it space and a form of expression for its renown. If the victor in his venture is the most objective situation in the world, then the poet in his divine inspiration is the most subjective situation, shaped inwardly for it. As with Hesiod's muse, that of Pindar is wholly dedicated only to truth or to reality (both are called ἀλάθεια), and not to appearances. 'Deception never enters the growing mastery of art's practitioiner'.[340] The poet devotes himself simultaneously to the muse and to *Alatheia*, daughter of Zeus.[341] Displaying and giving voice to truth resists the descent into oblivion—therefore it is the poet who lends the immortality of renown[342] and, because kings have a claim to lasting renown, poets and kings exist in a mutual dependency[343]—but they resist also the shadows of envy and mendacity, which the poet's praise wards off and holds at a distance. [344] Indeed, he demands the right even to praise the enemy, 'if he has achieved something beautiful, from the fullness of his heart, in order to be fair'. [345] The poet is the one who knows, σοφός, who, in the service of the highest values which demand recognition on their own account and as spokesman and conscience of the totality achieves recognition for the good.[346] The transfiguring fire (the word φλέγειν occurs time and again)[347], into which he raises things, is the called for coincidence of the objective and subjective presence of the god.

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[339] Isth 1. 50–51.

[340] Ol 7. 53; *cf.* line 68–69 with the 'falling out of the words into truth (reality)'.

[341] Ol 10. 3–4; line 54.

[342] N 7. 77–79. The poet is also the first to turn a surviving *fama* into renown: P 1. 92f. 'Your most recent beautiful deed, youth, will soar on the wings of my art'. P 8. 33–34; P 3. 115; P 5. 98–104.

[343] Ol 1. 113f.; P 2. 13–14. Through his praise the poet makes king-like beings of common mortals: N 4. 83f.

[344] N 7. 65–69. Therefore the rejection of Archilochus: P 2. 52–55.

[345] P 9. 93.

This harmonious bond (φίλον) between value and renown is *charis*. This is a fundamental word which, in the fullness of its meaning, virtually defies analysis. *Charis* is 'admiration, veneration and gratitude from the point of view of the one who receives it and, from the point of view of the giver, it is that which wins victory and demands veneration; objectively seen, it is the unity of this mutual relationship. *Charis* is everything with which one gives joy, which is granted and received; it is the very act of giving, virtually the gift itself or its value. *Charizesthai* signifies not the material fact of giving but its effect and meaning: the giving of pleasure, pleasing, the showing of goodwill, doing service; and, for this reason, it also means giving in return'.[348] But this reciprocity between men is also the gift of the gods, of the *Charites*, whose presence pervades Pindar's world perhaps even more than that of the Muses. They are the mistresses of the celebrations and therefore imperative for the preservation of the world. They plunge existence into that golden light of elegance and joy, which only makes it worthwhile.[349] It is always on a concrete occasion that they highlight the meaning of existence as a delightful interdependence in love, for a single victor earns and receives a single song of praise. The celebration of victory rests on 'fellowship' (κοινόν) and

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[346] H.Fränkel loc.cit., 559.

[347] E.g. Ol 9. 21–22: 'I want to bedeck my beloved city with songs of fire' (Dornseiff). The numerous words which express life's radiance are collected and discussed by G.Rudberg in *Zu Pindaros' Religion* (Eranos 43, 1945, 317–336). See also J.Duchemin: *Pindare Poete et prophète*, 1955, and the critique of this by Jean Defradas: 'La Religion de Pindare', *Rev. des Etudes Grecques*, 1957, 224–234.

[348] Gundert loc.cit., 31.

[349] Ol 14 sings of the Graces of Orchomenus who are raised from the status of local cult deities who bestow life to universal principles (U.v. Wilamowitz, *Pindaros*, 1922, 152f.).

'friendship' (φιλία);[350] if the most important expression of the *charis* is the poet's gift, then this is made possible only by the *charis* which indwells the victory, in so far as it is the consummate achievement of a human being through the favour of the gods, above all of the *Charites*,[351] and one which has spent itself for the celebration, the people and the world. The grace which lies in victory inspires the poet to song,[352] enables him to sing,[353] opens the way for him[354] and yet the paean remains something which is offered 'of free will', 'willingly', 'readily' (πρόφρων, ἑκών, ἐθέλων).[355] 'For only when a *kalon* is joyfully received in the same spirit as that in which it is produced, does it achieve validity'.[356] In and despite this spontaneity, the song is a true and just reward, for the victor has earned it well.[357] The song, like the 'best doctor', bathes his exhausted limbs 'more than a warm bath' and it outlasts by far the deed, 'whenever our tongue goes by the grace of the *Charites* to draw inspiration from the heart's ground.'[358] Then the poet exercises his universal office: he 'bespatters', 'besprinkles', 'bedecks' and 'bedews' the man of renown with 'honey', 'droplets of dew', 'wine' and 'water'. He does on earth what God does for the world with wind and rain and sun:[359] he not only praises but also fructifies, for praise makes new virtue grow.[360] Thus the poet administers the divine *charis* itself, which he pours out like an overbrimming wedding goblet.[361] The rapturous beginning of the seventh Pythian Ode makes explicit the interplay of grace as the nuptial character of existence, not only obliquely by comparison but in the fullest and most complete sense.

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[350] Texts and interpretation in Gundert, 32–39.

[351] Victory as charis: Ol 8. 57; P 5. 102; victory through the Graces: Ol 14. 6f., 19f.; Ol 6. 76; N 10. 38.

[352] Ol 1. 17–22.

[353] Isth 1. 44f.

[354] For texts see Gundert, n. 181.

[355] *Ibid.*, n. 187.

[356] *Ibid.*, 41–42.

[357] *Ibid.*, n. 205.

[358] N 4. 1–8.

[359] Ol 11. 1f.

[360] N 8. 40–41.

[361] Ol 7. 1–12.

All things which are noble and precious in the worlds of gods and men are included in the immense complex of the cosmic celebration, including above all the contest, the daring, the danger. But not suffering and not death. Nor common everyday existence with its philistinism. Pindar's world is an aristocracy of the spirit, which means that the power and majesty of excellence, representing all, reflects on all. Insignificance, baseness and ugliness might catch a gleam from it but then there is the discriminating, excluding act of the poet. Though hesitant and uncertain, he has various ways of solving the problem of death and survival: there is, besides the old Homeric one (more marginally),[362] the Orphic way involving transmigration of souls and an Elysium which continues the ethic-aesthetic transfiguration of the world in the beyond, and completes it.[363] The images of the *agôn*—together with the κίνδυνος, the onlooking universe and the aristocratic election of the victor in the unity of free grace and highest endeavour—will enter the image world of St Paul. But by then the gleam of glory which marks Pindar's world will have deepened into the one God-Man who contains in his triumph both death and life, victory and defeat: annointed not for an earthly but for an eternal contest and celebration.

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[362] R.Hampe: 'Zur Eschatologie in Pindars zweiter Olymp. Ode' (*Hermeneia*, Festschrift fur O. Regenbogen, 1952), 46–65.

[363] Erich Thummer: *Die Religiosität Pindars* (Comment. Aenipontanae XIII, 1957) 121f.

3. THE TRAGEDIANS

a. Tragedy and Glory

The art of the Greeks culminates in the tragedians and then collapses. It is an important point that virtually everything which is still seen today as being part of the Greek inheritance as passed down by the Romans, the French, the Italians and the Germans actually stands under the sign of Euripides who, although still a believer, represents the end of high tragedy: its abrupt descent and evolution into the bourgeois and psychological self-understanding of man as he is in himself alone. Only tardily and sporadically is the mythic interpretation of existence of the first two tragedians caught sight of and tentatively imitated—in Hölderlin's *Empedokles*, in Shelley's *Prometheus*, in Blake, Mombert and Pannwitz, but without widespread effect and without potential consequence for the future. The absolute gravity of great tragedy, together with its understanding of glory, directly enters and is so subsumed by the drama of Christ that, after Christ, it cannot be repeated. But it is Greek tragedy, and not Greek philosophy, with which the Christians primarily entered into dialogue, that forms the great, valid cypher of the Christ event, central to human history, by enclosing and transcending all previous cyphers within itself. This cypher is not to be raised to the level of law and idea, being set apart from the direct fate of an individual, by philosophy (if indeed philosophy is condemned to such a thing); nor, rooting reality in eternity, is the temporal to be debunked as being merely apparent. It is also not aesthetic in the post-Euripidean sense, in which beauty lingers as a nostalgic echo of a ruined world of belief, as a mere symbol, finally as Alexandrian allegory. Rather, it is a mystery play by believers for an audience of believers and fellow-travellers. Its claim, like that of the Christians, to represent the glory of God and of the God-Man can only be made and answered before those who believe.

Tragedy was born from religious ritual; as a cultic act it found expression only in the Dionysian spring festivals. It is significant that its origins, however impenetrable they may be, lie in the intoxication of this dark and form-destroying god—*tragôdia*[364] means the song of he-goats, of choruses dressed as goat-satyrs. It was against this background that the great poets had to present the religions of Zeus and Apollo and prove their worth. This darkness moulds the luminous outline, is not long banished, as with Homer or Pindar,[365] from the image of the world, not even relegated, as with Hesiod, to the beginnings which have long since been overcome; the cultic present corresponded also to the presence into the soul of the sixth and fifth centuries of obscure questionings. Archilochus' escape into a realism of the 'common mortal' had not been in vain; even if it is only kings and heroes who can appear on the tragic stage, nevertheless these now have to be more directly suited to represent Everyman convincingly to the people and to enact for each one the delphic 'Know thyself' in its human desperation and helplessness.

But even in these changed times, the old Homeric double doctrine still remains valid: a primal opposition, an unbridgeable distance between gods and man—and man's complete devotion to the gods. The first principle contradicts the philosophical tendency towards an enclosing of being in itself as identity and the second resists any containment of man within himself. Although Aeschylus and Heraclitus are contemporaries, although both are concerned with resolving the final, yawning contradictions of the world, their ways are irreconcilable. In tragedy, man acts against the background of the god and man only reveals himself, emerging into the light of his own truth, because of the appearance of the god, even in wrath and concealment. There is no trace of an aesthetic effect on this stage, it is concerned solely with bloody truth and justice, which is Solon's concern too, and which is revealed simultaneously in the god and in man, in that communion which they enjoy and yet which divides them. But, so different from Pindar, the situation in which this truth emerges is now that of suffering, and preferably a most horrendous form of suffering which lays man bare in his vulnerability, forcibly exposing and humiliating him. Only a great and majestic human being is equal to this; he alone can bear such a burden, and only from him, when he is finally and necessarily broken apart, can there rise, like a fragrance, the pure essence of human kind, indeed, of being as such. What is unprecedented here is that the suffering is neither denied (declared to be only apparent and philosophically reduced), nor is it shunned for the sake of an attainable *eudaimonia*, but rather the way of man to god and the revelation of the deep truth of existence passes directly through the most extreme form of suffering. That is the valour of the unshielded heart, which philosophy will lack, and which stands in a direct relation to Christ. A valour which has determined to reveal the light in the darkness, god in his opposite, and which is rewarded (or rewards itself) with the appearance of such glory that the whole of Western art draws on it, without ever being able to attain it again.[366]

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[364] Aristotle's view of Euripides as the fullest and highest expression of tragedy (*Poetics* 13) sanctioned this erroneous view in the eyes of posterity. This led to an emphasis on an enclosed, easily understood plot which possessed its own formal aesthetic rules, such as *peripeteia* and disclosure, and was based on character with its decisions and 'psychology' (following O. Gigon's translation of *dianoia*).

[365] Who knows not only the Olympian but also Dionysian Muse: *Dithyrambs*, frg.2 (Puech 148).

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[366] 'One final certainty underlies tragedy', says Walter F. Otto, 'a certainty of such immensity and *glory* that all antitheses are resolved in it and even the greatest horror is transformed into serenity and composure. It is the certainty that the gods *exist*, that Zeus, who encompasses within himself all that is divine, *exists*. And this certainty means that everything, whether good or ill fortune, joy or suffering, is of divine origin and in its depth and truth is divine being . . . However terrible his fate may be, as soon as man recalls that it is ordained by the gods, which is to say that it belongs to the *world of glory*, he instantly experiences peace and calm although he has to die without the expectation of reparation' ('Tragödie', in *Das Wort der Antike* 1962, 197–198). 'This is the 'beautiful' as liberation, salvation, transfiguration and uplifting, without the necessity of a renunciation of the world. For this 'beauty' is not merely attractive and pleasing, a kind of decoration, radiance or splendour . . . but it is the very opposite, because it (Greek beauty) is true, being of the truth of the form which is

Because this glory belongs only to a 'mythic' person (that means one who in his fate has been formed, raised up and brought low by god in a representative way), who has been raised to the highest degree of suffering, there is therefore no possibility of creating and staging a tragedy in the highest sense after Christ, who has performed this role to its perfection. The glory of tragedy is absorbed into the glory of the *Kyrios*.[367] All that is possible now is the appearance of the *Kyrios* himself in the guise of the old myth, brought to His 'Truth' (as we find with Calderon, in whose work Christ appears as the true Odysseus, Orpheus, Perseus, Eros, Apollo, Pan etc.), or, as in the, mightiest works of Shakespeare, an immediate transparency of the central royal person as being in the role of the Christian God: Lear *is* the ultimately dispossessed eternal father; the duke in *Measure for Measure is* the eternal God who strides incognito in history through the sin of the world, who shares all our suffering, and reveals himself in the final act to be the world's judge; Richard II *is* the impotent figure who has been reduced to ultimate, unimagineable humiliation, in whom, in his extremity, we discern the outline of the suffering Son of Man himself. A gleam of the highest glory can fall also on Corneille's kings and martyrs (whereas Racine remains in the Euripidean tradition), as it can on Schiller's tragic heroes, almost all of whom move in a world of Catholic dimensions and concepts. But the greater part remains 'world theatre' in the Stoic sense: an active man against the background of a contemplative god, an *engagement* of freedom, ethical high performance in a conflict of conscience, duty and personal inclination, power

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bathed in the light of the *glory of the Eternal*. And since everywhere all serves the justification and the glory of the gods (in all the tragedians), this victory of the divine, which is characteristic of Greek tragedy, cannot be other than uplifting. And yet it leads to man's destruction . . . The true reason for the uplifting and inspiring effect of tragedy must be deeper (than the moral dimension), as Nietzsche recognised. It must lie in the primal phenomenon that when the greatest pain emerges into the light of the Eternal, it radiates a *glory*, which even joy cannot do'. 'Allg. Würdigung des Phänomens der griechischen Tragödie' (in *Das Wort der Antike*), 228–229.

[367] *Cf.* Péguy on *Polyeucte*: above, Vol. III, 425f., 434f.

and love, fidelity to a person or an idea. But in all this, it is only man as he is in his actions who comes into view, in different degrees of his transcendence; it cannot be called religious ritual.

In the old cultic tragedy the plot is secondary and the 'dramatic' scenes are conveyed generally only by a messenger. Here there is no emphasis on the build-up of tension; the decisive acts are already known, or narrated at the beginning (Cassandra tells us in detail of the murder of Agamemnon). Nor is the plot based on a free decision by the hero, still to be taken. Rather, from the very beginning everything is secretly already present and decided, and now layer after layer is peeled away from this present until the whole truth emerges into the light. *The Persians*, *The Seven*, *Prometheus*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Antigone*—everywhere the procedure is one of stripping away what conceals the truth, which has existed from the very beginning. This apocalypse discloses how man appears in the eyes of the gods, stripped of his illusion and in naked truth. 'The disclosure is itself the tragic event', the disclosure of that which 'has long been present'. Thus tragedy is 'religious ritual in one sense no one has thought of. It serves the god who appears; it serves epiphany'.[368] If man's freedom were not part of the whole, then man himself would not come into view, a fatalistic event would merely happen to him, or he would be caught up in one; but since he becomes truly guilty, his freedom must play a part. Agamemnon is guilty, for he has killed Iphigenia. Electra and Orestes are guilty, as is Antigone, not only because she spurns the law of the polis but, more profoundly, because of her obsessive one-sidedness and the fact that she gives herself utterly to her own destruction, without so much as a sideways glance at her lover, or her sisters. Is it personal guilt, is it disclosure of the spirit of the curse that is inherited from generation to generation, or is it proof of the constitutive impurity of human existence as such? Man can turn and twist whichever way he will, still he suffers, and the fact of his accusing the gods in his suffering is itself part of that suffering. Every time it is through him who is ensnared or who has been driven to his limits that the god is manifested: he breaks forth like a ripe fruit from the bursting shell.

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[368] Walter F. Otto: 'Ursprung der Tragödie. Äschylos' (in *Das Wort der Antike*, 1962), 175, 179.

Here too it is critical, as with Homer and Pindar, that everything turns on the present situation and that no thought is given, Orphically or Platonically, to an existence prior or subsequent to life. Especially where the tragic situation remains as a knot that cannot be loosed, where the solution cannot be sought beyond it, only within. Otherwise the stage plot would not be rounded and complete, according to Aristotle's requirement.[369] The dead can project their influence into the present but the living cannot reflect on a later state of being dead; the whole burden of eternity rests upon the present moment. It is this which lends it a taught, mythic fullness, the quality of glory, which is comparable only to the quality of sacramentality which includes and transcends it. 'Sacramenta continent gratiam quam significant': they do indeed signify something but not that which is other. They point to their own fullness and depth. They are not only symbolic but also that which is symbolised. They point to something (which embraces a mode of absence), because they are at the same time full of an abundant presence. In the act of absolution or of communion the pleroma is offered and is present. In Plato and Plotinus the immanence of truth will no longer be as palpable in the phenomenal world; there the *diastasis* and the *chôrismos* predominate.

But tragedy lives—for the last time—from this indwelling, although the divine presence is announced predominantly in heightened suffering and, therefore, in an increasing mode of absence. It is true that there may often be an immediate theophany as an introduction or as a conclusion which involves a ceremony of glorification, which might be falsely characterised as a mere theatrical trick (*Deus ex machina*) or as an artificial solution to irredeemable situations. In principle, an event caused by the god and for which the god is responsible, in which man is given, indeed gives himself, into the god's power, can only be solved by the god himself. When Orestes, driven on by Apollo's threats, murders his mother on the god's behalf and is therefore persecuted by his mother's Furies, all eyes are turned to the god for the way out of the situation. The same, equally, is true in Euripides, for whom, however, human helplessness is contrasted more starkly with the sudden inrush of divine light. But in neither case is the emphasis put on the sensory theophany; that remains a frequently dispensible *externum* of the essential inward manifestation, which, in the enormity of human suffering and vulnerability, is the self-authentication of divine glory.

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[369] *Poetics* 7.

In Aeschylus the interrelationship of the two spheres is at its most pious. Certain of his trilogies (*Prometheus* and the *Oresteia*) conclude with great cosmic and political resolutions but at the cost of introducing a profundity of suffering into the divine world itself. In Sophocles man has become much more isolated and the god behind him reveals himself as remote, concealed and full of wrath. The heart which endures this night of abandonment has the most courageous piety. In Euripides there is great bitterness: the cruelty with which a god leads a man to life only to burden him with guilt and to hand him over to suffering without hope of release, is so beyond comprehension that man no longer knows why he should render obedience. Thus the emphasis shifts to the one who is abandoned: if the glory of God is only ever concealed, then it is the glory of the agonised heart which finally prevails, of a heart which endures more than could ever be expected of it, more indeed than might be asked, even in the most extreme instance, under a convenant, a harmony between heaven and earth.

In tragedy the god is essentially remote and thus he is represented much more emphatically than before by signs, oracles and prophetic dreams. These signs guide the direction of the plot; they are autocratic and yet ambiguity inheres in them and they are first interpreted within the tragic action. They possess the power of history and are humbly and hungrily believed, though they engage men more than gods.

Thus the all-illumining situation of the tragic figure remains that with which so many plays directly begin: the situation of the *hiketês*, who 'craves protection'. Man at the end of his temporal power and possibilities, delivered over either to his fellow man on whose mercy he is thrown, or, where such a person does not exist, delivered over to the god, whose altar he embraces in his search for help. The heroism of strength lies in the past; what takes its place is the heroism of the defenceless heart, reconciled to necessity.

That, too, is the tragic situation as we find it in Homer. In the first book of the *Iliad*,[370] Thetis adopts the posture of a suppliant before Zeus and, in the last, the humiliated, white-haired king pleads before his arch-enemy Achilles. 'He clasped the son of Peleus by the knees and kissed the slender, deadly dangerous hands, which had killed his sons'.[371] He acts in this way at the behest of Zeus.[372] Achilles warns him against excessive pleading:

> So cease forthwith to stir my troubled heart,
> For I could not spare even you in the tent,
> You, who plead . . .[373]

Thus Odysseus approaches Nausicaa,[374] the Phaecian queen Arete[375] and King Alcinous[376] and Circe;[377] thus, after the terrible shipwreck, he casts himself before the river god and still adopts this same knee-clinging posture.[378] Thus he kneels before his son as the *hiketês*,[379] as the prophet Theoclymenus kneeled before Telemachus.[380] Thus Odysseus—expressly before the eyes of Zeus[381]—kneels at the behest of his son[382] and of Athena, as a beggar at the feet of the suitors, even at the feet of the rascal Antinous,[383] who derisively spurns him, throwing the footstool after him, and against whom he calls on Zeus as the 'avenger of the poor'.[384]

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[370] Ol 1. 495f.
[371] *Il.* 24. 478–479.
[372] *Il.* 24. 461.
[373] *Il.* 24. 568–570.
[374] *Od.* 6 149, 169, 175; 7. 292.
[375] *Od.* 6 310f.; 7. 145f.
[376] *Od.* 7. 181.
[377] *Od.* 10. 481.
[378] *Od.* 5. 445–450.
[379] *Od.* 16. 67.
[380] *Od.* 15. 276f.
[381] *Od.* 17. 424.
[382] *Od.* 17. 345f.

In Aeschylus it is Zeus again who protects the sacred rights of those who are banished (ἔκνομος).[385] The matricide Orestes embraces the navel stone in the temple at Delphi; and, while the Erinyes slumber, Apollo promises him:

> I shall never desert you but shall always remain
> You guard, whether I am near you or far away.[386].

He embraces anew the image of Athena on the Acropolis after his propitiatory journey[387] but, in accordance with his promise, Apollo takes the part of the suppliant who approached his hearth.[388] The *Hiketides* (*The Suppliant Women*) rests wholly upon the pleas of Danaus' daughters before King Pelasgus and begins immediately with the prayer to Zeus as the protector of those who seek refuge, which they later repeat in a great choir.[389] It is the tragedy of Prometheus to be objectively in the situation of someone who is wholly given over to his fate and yet subjectively not to want to enact it before Zeus. Xerxes in the *Persians* is put in a position of pure defencelessness,[390] which during the course of the action is laid increasingly bare.

In the work of Sophocles man is even more radically exposed. *Oedipus Rex* begins with the pleading of a people struck by divine curse and with the king offering them the assurance of his solidarity—'none of you sicken as I do, . . . my soul bewails the city, for both your sake and mine',[391] in this he unwittingly voices his own fate, which compels him finally to go into voluntary exile from his own homeland:[392] he, who has shown himself to be godless: *atheos*.[393] He appears as this refugee without rights in the Colonos drama and escapes the earth in order to become the *sacer*, the 'holy one'. As such he beseeches Athens for refuge, who 'guarantees the rights of refugees',[394] and can thus offer itself to him as a 'protecting spirit' (*soter*).[395] Ajax is exposed to an extreme degree, without being able to request anything any more, and has already been abandoned by the god (Athena), whereas Philoctetes can still make supplication and will finally be returned to the world of men by Heracles' epiphany, though not without the latter reminding the patient sufferer of his own fate: 'How long I struggled, how much I suffered, before the eternal radiance appeared to me, which now you see'.[396] In the Heracles drama (*Trachiniae*) it is clear that this refers less to his active deeds than to the terrible final exposure of the hero in the shirt of Nessus to complete powerlessness and to death by fire.

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[383] *Od*. 17. 415.

[384] *Od*. 17. 475.

[385] Aeschylus quotations from the Oxford edition by G. Murray (2nd ed. 1955), *Eumen*. 92.

[386] *Eumen*. 64–65

[387] *Eumen*. 235f.

[388] *Eumen*. 576f.

[389] *Hiket*. 1f.; 524–599.

[390] *Pers*. 734, 1024, 1036.

[391] Sophocles quotations from the three volume edition by Dain and Mazon (*Belles Lettres*, 1958f.). *Oed*. *Tyr*. 60–64.

In Euripides the final state, in which someone who is abandoned seeks refuge, comes to dominate the whole play. Thus at the beginning of the play *Andromache* Thetis lies at the altar, seeking protection from Neoptolemus and Hermione,[397] as 'a slave in a foreign land and hostile city', as a woman 'wholly abandoned',[398] and Hermione demands that she should fall humbly at her feet and, casting aside all her queenly pride, clutch her knee. Hecuba, the old humiliated queen-mother of Troy,[399] had to fall for the first time at Agamemnon's feet in order to try to save her daughter Polyxena, selected to die a sacrificial death at Achilles' grave.[400] But since fate preempts her, as Polyxena goes willingly to her death and she herself sees the body of her son beached on the river bank, she now has to clasp Agamemnon's knee in order to beseech, in vain, revenge for her son's death.[401] She does so, although 'powerless' and 'a slave', with an allusion to her right as guaranteed by the gods.[402] Creon beseeches the prophet Tiresias, who demands the sacrifice of his son for the saving of Thebes.[403] Iphigenia beseeches her father Agamemnon not to marry her to Hades rather than Achilles,[404] while Orestes, under the threat of stoning, beseeches his uncle Menelaus.[405] Clytemnestra pleads with Achilles, since the slaughter of Iphigenia is immanent.[406] The Oedipus of the *Phoenissae* (*The Phoenician Women*) is of course beyond any *hiketides* situation; he no longer desires to embrace Creon's knees, who banishes him as a blind man, and so goes out into the void.[407] But Creon, for his part, kneels before Tiresias in order to save his young son from the judgment of the gods.[408] At the beginning of her play, Helen sits at Protheus' grave as one who seeks protection, in flight from his son[409] who persecutes her. Later the shipwrecked and imploring Menelaus appears 'under the gods' protection'[410] and, finally, Helen must fall at the feet of the prophetess Theone, because only thus can the flight with her husband from Egypt succeed.[411] A whole family are encamped at the beginning of *Heracles*: Amphitrion, Megara and Heracles' children, imploring protection at the altar of Zeus, threatened with death by Lycus and defenceless against him.[412] The *Heracleidae*, likewise, begins with Iolaus, Alcmena and the sons of Heracles beseeching protection at the altar from Eurystheus who persecutes them.[413] In the play *The Suppliant Women* (*Hiketides*) it is the mothers of the Seven who fell at the gates of Thebes who implore King Theseus of Athens to release the bodies of their sons.[414] They gather around the altar to Demeter at Eleusis, as the humiliated King Adrastus implores their mercy:

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[392] *Oed. Tyr.* 1290.

[393] *Oed. Tyr.* 1360.

[394] *Oed. Col.* 284f.

[395] *Oed. Col.* 460, 463.

[396] *Phil.* 1419–1420.

[397] Euripides quotations from the three volume Oxford edition by G. Murray. *Andr.* 1f.

[398] *Andr.* 136–140.

[399] *Andr.* 165.

[400] *Hec.* 752–753.

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[401] *Hec.* 145.
[402] *Hec.* 798–801.
[403] *Phoen.* 923.
[404] *Iph. Taur.* 362f.
[405] *Or.* 382f.
[406] *Iph. Aul.* 900.
[407] *Phoen.* 1622.
[408] *Phoen.* 923.
[409] *Hel.* 1f.
[410] *Hel.* 549.
[411] *Hel.* 894.
[412] *Her.* 1f.

> Lords of Athens! The old man must blush
> To fall to the ground and clasp your knee,
> I a ruler and once so content.
> But harsh necessity compels me to bend to grief:
> Take pity on me.[415]

Then it is the mothers who make supplication, appealing to the right of burial and the power of the gods. In the *Phoenissae* all are given over to their fate: here Polynices is the one who is unjustly banished, Jocasta is the one without hope, who cannot mediate between the warring sons and who perishes with them; the old blind Oedipus is driven from the land by Creon and goes out, with Antigone, into an unshielded horror.[416] The *Women of Troy* are also presented in extreme abandonment: the queen and her daughters are distributed 'by lot', like goods, among the victors and one after another are led away. The situation is beyond all beseeching; it is the unmitigated darkness of meaningless destruction. And who knows whether it arouses the concern of Zeus in his 'etherial heights'?[417] Behind the queen Ilium burns and is destroyed. But in Euripides there stand beyond all these who are given up to their fate those who give themselves up, who willingly sacrifice themselves. We will speak of them later.[418]

The fundamental situation of tragedy is that man is powerless and delivered over to his fate, in the form either of

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[413] *Heraclid.* 1f.

[414] *Hiket.* 1f.

[415] *Hiket.* 164–168.

[416] *Phoen.* 1723–1736.

[417] *Tro.* 1077–1080.

[418] For the contemporaneity of the Hiketides situation, see Péguy, *Les suppliants parallèles*. *Cf.* above Vol. III, 449–451.

(an uncertain or hostile) human power or the overbearing power of the gods. The *hiketês* has no trump card; he can point only to his own impotence. But it is not of a kind which can rightfully arouse pity. There are mostly potent reasons, perhaps of a political kind, why whoever is petitioned for something should have to turn the suppliant down. But all three tragedians viewed it as being the glory of Athens to offer refuge, against all political interests, to those persecuted people who sought it. In one place in the world there shines the light of an attitude of mind (certainly, contradicted a thousand times by the city's pragmatic power politics), which together with the situation of the *hiketides* symbolises the Christian approach, taken up and developed from Plato's laws and Aristotle's ethics. But whereas the philosophers will seek to establish this in human nature predominantly by 'humanistic' means, its grounding, for the tragedians, is still in the service of the god who appears. If all three poets compose songs to glorify the spirit of their beloved city, then they do so in the same sense as Aeschylus, who at the end of the *Oresteia* accepts this spirit, together with its institution by Athene, as given and, honouring the god within it, shows how everything leads to his glorification.

b. Aeschylus

Aeschylus from Eleusis fought at Marathon and Salamis and shared in the glorious age of Athens, when it enjoyed the protection and the favour of the gods. His tragedy remains a pious feast of glorification even, and especially so, when he lays bare the abysses of the world with their dark theological antitheses. But this is done with the courage to endure, to carry through and to resolve the most extreme contradictions possible; and such resolution occurs not in easy philosophical syntheses and identifications but in such a way that suffering becomes a criterion of authenticity: the suffering of humans, Titans and of god-men. If, besides fragments, only six of the artist's ninety plays have come down to us, all belonging to the mature late period, then this is still sufficient to convey a picture of his true intents.

Two Dionysian tetralogies—one concerning the Thracian king Lycurgus and one concerning the Theban king Pentheus—deal with the new cult's invasion of the religion of Zeus. Lycurgus, who offers resistance, is struck down with insanity and murders his son, while Orpheus is torn apart limb by limb. Finally, the king has a change of heart and serves the new god. Pentheus (the subject of Euripides' final play), who similarly resists, is torn apart by his mother and his sisters in a bacchic frenzy. For Aeschylus 'Zeus, whoever he may be, should it please him to bear this name',[419] is the highest god who towers above all and contains all. But in order to be so, he has to grow immeasurably beyond the figure of light of the Homeric Olympian who banishes all dark matters of doubt, through the subjugation of every opposing power and world which rises against him. This victory cannot be objectified once and for all in a fixed mythic story. The mythic forms of expression are fluid; they are always reproduced in a new and contemporary way from the presence of conflict which defies all objectification and which possesses such depth that it can turn every one of the clarifying and simplifying victories of Zeus back into a new ambiguity. Nevertheless, no one ultimately doubts Zeus, or the comprehensive and ever increasing superiority of his might and justice: no one, from the Danaidean choir of Zeus who praise the truth, the soundness and the effortlessness (without βία, ἄπονον) of the divine will which, concealed in the impenetrable labyrinth, casts mortals from their high towers, but to which they would like wholly to belong[420]—to the choirs of Zeus in the *Agamemnon*, who set him, the nameless one, above and beyond all things, without compare. While the earlier gods, Uranus and Cronos, sank into the oblivion of time immemorial, he ascends and points men to the way of enlightenment: 'Learn through suffering', 'In place of sleep there trickles into the heart painful remembrance: wisdom penetrates us even when we are obstinate. That is the forceful act of grace (χάρις βίαιος) of those who sit at the dread helm'.[421] If for Pindar χάρις lay in the strength of the glorious agon, here it is forcibly infiltrated by the god into the unreconciled heart, which is in a new sense agonal. In Hesiod, Uranus and Cronos, and together with them the wars of the Titans, were entirely of the—albeit remembered—past. But in Aeschylus, the undoubted victory of Zeus is a breathless event still in the process of happening—just as in each new vision of the Book of Revelation the certain victory of the Logos is challenged by ever mightier opponents and has to be fought for in even more comprehensive battles.

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[419] *Agam*. 160.

[420] *Hiket*. 86–103.

Thus Aeschylus dares to stage the battle of the Titans, which laid the very foundations of world order, in his Prometheus trilogy. He does so moreover, in as far as the work has survived, from the point of view of the rebellious Titan who defies the gods so recently established at the helm,[422] and who does not think for a moment of subjecting himself to their despicable methods of power. Aiding Zeus in his struggle against the Titans who have outlived their time, Prometheus helps by his own Titan strength to place him on the throne. Then he came to the assistance of human kind, who Zeus thought to destroy, by teaching them thought and foresight, house building and husbandry, arithmetic and writing, the domestication of beasts, medicine and prophecy, and stole for them fire from Heaven. As a consequence Zeus has him nailed to a sea-cliff by his henchmen, Cratos and Bia (might and violence). The entire plot consists in the arrival of certain figures at this immovable cross and their departure, by which means the condition of the abused Titan is revealed in ever greater depth. The 'divine' long-suffering Prometheus[423] bewails his immortal[424] and therefore unending[425] agony not to the gods who inflict the pain but to the older, cosmic powers (the very ones who, for Hölderlin, are the primal ground for all that is formed in the likeness of a god:[426] the sacred aether, the buffeting wind, the springs and the surging seas, mother earth and the sun that shines on all.)[427] The Oceanides, who echo his complaint, are the pure voice of nature, grieving over its lost glory.[428] Oceanus, on the other hand, who appears after them, is only the weak voice of the broken race of Titans, diplomatically urging mediation. And then Io rushes on stage, heard by the jealous Hera and pursued by Zeus' fiery love, putting him even more in the wrong. As he speaks of her coming fate, Pro-metheus, the prophet, reveals the secret of his own future, though still infinitely remote, release, after he has saved Zeus from destruction (when the latter has had a son by Thetis, stronger than him) and is therefore released from his punishment by Io's distant descendant, Heracles. But Prometheus, who finally grows defiant and is accordingly cast into Tartarus at the end of the play, does not yet know that he will 'learn' from his suffering. The second play shows him broken spirited and it is not Zeus, but he himself, who is transformed, although the myth gives him a knowledge which Zeus does not possess and which lends the Titan a certain power over him. The Olympians renew their links with their origins, therefore, in order that they should secure for themselves the Titanic grounds of nature in a renewed victory and treaty. Through might, spirit triumphs over might, but must constantly reassure itself of its assisting power, in order—eschatologically—to emerge as absolute power: as the power of spirit, not only in the spirit but also in nature and in the anti-spirit. As long as spirit stands opposed to nature, it acts proscriptively, tyranically, unjustly. 'I know that Zeus is merciless and derives all justice from himself',[429] and thus the Titan wants to 'kick against the pricks'[430] and show his solidarity with the ancient powers who have been overthrown, Atlas and Typhon,[431] who breathes fire in the bowels of Aetna. Therefore the doctor, who has healed ailing mankind so cleverly, 'cannot help himself in his own need'.[432] The synthesis at the end of the trilogy has not survived, only the defiance, hardened to an extreme degree, the self-willed and self-induced hatred of all gods,[433] and the determination to bend at nothing,[434] which form the central section of the synthesis to be achieved.

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[421] *Agam.* 160–183.

[422] *Prom.* 35; 96; 148; 942; 955.

[423] 'See the bound and hapless god', *Prom.* 119.

[424] 'What can I then fear since death does not threaten me?' *Prom.* 933. Even Zeus could not kill him, the Titan': *Prom.* 1053.

[425] *Prom.* 257–258.

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[426] For Hölderlin's attitude to the Olympian and pre-Olympian gods, see Walter F. Otto: *Der Dichter und die alten Götter* (1942): 'The individual forms of the Olympian gods remain alien for Hölderlin, indeed, he decisively rejects their claim to hegemony. But from a certain point onwards we meet a similar kind of attitude in Greece'. Otto quotes *Prometheus* and Sophocles, who 'pray to something more ancient and sacred than the anthropomorphic gods'. Thus Hölderlin consciously returns along the path (programmatically in the poem 'Natur und Kunst oder Saturn und Jupiter') which Hesiod previously followed, and the dethroning of the Father God and his Titans is just as questionable to him as it is to Aeschylus, 31–37.

[427] *Prom.* 88–91.

[428] 'I hear the earth everywhere groaning, and it sighs for great power, the old honour which once bathed you in glory . . . There is a sigh when the tide's wave breaks, the abyss sighs . . . it wails and groans in the pain of the pure source of sacred springs'. *Prom.* 406f., 429–435. 'Who is not reminded by this of the Christian groaning of all creation?': Gerhard Nebel, *Weltangst und Götterzorn, eine Deutung der greichischen Tragödie* (1951) 77.

If it is a question here of might and spirit being seen as in conflict in the realm of the gods themselves, then in the Danaidean trilogy we are concerned with the resolution of the tension between virginity and fruitfulness, between, that is, the principles of Artemis and Aphrodite. Fifty virgins come to Argos from Egypt, begging for mercy. Are they really persecuted (by their fathers and suitors), or are they inherently shy of men?[435] These women, descendants of Io, from whom Zeus begat Epaphus by the breath of his mouth,[436] who pray to 'chaste Artemis for compassionate protection from Aphrodite',[437] are but a guise of that wild horde of Amazon women, scornful of men who, like the Centaurs in the art of the sixth and fifth centuries, represent the principle of the precivilised world which is to be subdued by the spirit in its

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[429] *Prom.* 186–187.

[430] *Prom.* 323.

[431] *Prom.* 347f.

[432] *Prom.* 469–471.

[433] *Prom.* 975.

[434] *Prom.* 995.

[435] *Hiket.* 8.

[436] *Hiket.* 45–47.

[437] *Hiket.* 1030.

Olympian clarity. This decisive battle, which founded the world's existence, can be seen cut in the stone on temple gables. In the Stoa Poikile Micon, working beside Polygnotus, painted the Amazonomachy, as he did again in the Theseum, placing it beside the Centauromachy. The central scene of the myth, the overcoming of Penthesilea by Achilles, is preserved at least on one glorious bowl. The bell-shaped krater in Boston on which Artemis, for whom Hippolytus also dies, slays Actaeon, dates from the same time. It is she who demands the slaying of Iphigenia, which begins the carnage of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*. The warning of the semi-chorus of servant girls at the end of the first drama not to offend 'Aphrodite the powerful, next to Hera the closest to Zeus',[438] points to the deeper dialectic. The next drama (*The Egyptians*) led up to a massacre, the murder of all their suitors by the women so that only one couple survive: Hypemnestra and Lynceus. The conclusion of the trilogy will have celebrated the victory of Aphrodite as being that of the cosmic Eros, which unites Heaven and Earth, as the following fragment shows:

> The pure heavens yearn to wound the earth,
> The yearning of the earth is to wed itself to heaven,
> Rain runs from the amorous heavens, fructifying the
>   earth.
> Now the earth brings forth for mortals food for
>   pasture and
> Demeter's gifts, and from the moist marriage rite the
>   grove
> Stands in glorious bloom. Of all this I am the
>   cause.[439]

This final word recalls the Sophoclean phrase: 'There is nothing in this which is not Zeus'.[440] The divine, under whatever name, has proved itself vital in all the darkness and contradiction. It always emerges finally victorious from each, potentially fatal, return to what has outlived its day, to what is dark and full of contradiction. In the *Seven against Thebes* the links to the all-bearing Mother Earth are prominent (who is also Zeus' mother).[441] She is the mother who must be shielded from the enemy spear,[442] the mother from whose darkness man is wrested by birth.[443] At the end of the play, since the brothers have slain each other at the gate, the choir magnificently sings:

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[438] *Hiket.* 1034f.

[439] Fragment from the *Danaidae*. In the *Eumenides* Apollo also opposes the claims to justice of the Erinyes, the ancient deities of the earth's depths, who scorned the marriage bond between Zeus and Hera and offended Aphrodite: 'The marriage bond stands under a greater power of law than that of an oath'. *Eumen.* 213–217.

[440] The final line of the *Trachiniae*.

> Zeus sent this suffering. Each of the unfortunate
> Received his share. But beneath their bodies lies
> The earth's immeasurable depth.[444]

The power of the dark, maternal earth is the power of the dead, which is why in the 'human sacrifice' of the *Oresteia* the ground at the burial mound of Electra and Orestes is beaten and implored in order to win over the father's spirit to the gruesome work of matricide:

> I pray to this earth, to a father's grave,[445]
> Send your blessing upon us,
> The gods, might of the Earth and the victor's
>   right.[446]
> Send this father, o Earth, as guardian of the battle.[447]

But whoever 'sings to the gods of the earth's depths'[448] also conjures, whether he will or not, the nocturnal goddesses of retribution and of blood. Light-filled Apollo commanded the act of revenge against the mother and threatened the disobedient with the same revenge[449] which now pursues the one who has shown obedience, in the name of 'the rights of blood':[450] 'Might fights against might, right against right',[451] the rights of the clan against those of the state. This time it is Apollo who is bound to his origins, and the reconciliation of the ancient, hostile, feminine world of the Titans with the new, ordered world of the Olympians will be the rapturous conclusion to Aeschylus' work[452]—a reconciliation which is at the same time heavenly, cosmic and political, like Athena's act in her foundation of the Athenian Areopagus. This transformation of the goddesses of revenge into the well-meaning Eumenides, this positive involvement of the world of the night in the Greek daylight of the moral, civil and aesthetic order, has no parallel in world literature, if for the time we leave out of the reckoning the great biblical arch between the Old and the New Covenant. It is the greatest endeavour of the myth forcefully to unify the most extreme tensions of the world through a personal, divine act which, as grace,—Orestes after all, has grace bestowed upon him—establishes a form of justice which is human and divine. The world order is neither given at the beginning, nor attained at the end by philosophical syntheses: everything is orientated to the glory of the divine event, all is dependent on the unforseeable revelation. It is—beyond all earthly beauty—the same epiphany of glory as when Apollo appears in the havoc of the wedding disrupted by centaurs and establishes in majesty both victory and order, as depicted on the western gable of the temple to Zeus in Olympia. Or, in a more profound theology, Zeus on the western gable between Pelops and Oenomaus, or Athena in the war of the giants on the archaic temple built on the mountain of Athens, and again on the temple to Aphaea in Aegina. Here the image of the gods deepens and evolves from its old apotropaic sense into that of a revelation which establishes order in chaos: no longer by superior physical strength but by the superior reclaiming of what has outlived its day.

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[441] *Seven* 16, Zeus and Gê: 69.

[442] *Seven* 416.

[443] *Seven* 664.

[444] *Seven* 947–950.

[445] *Choeph.* 540.

[446] *Choeph.* 147–148.

[447] *Choeph.* 489.

[448] *Choeph.* 475. The prayer of the Delphic priestess in the *Eumenides* begins with the appeal to 'earth, first of the seers, before all gods'.

[449] *Choeph.* 269f.

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[450] *Choeph.* 401f.

[451] *Choeph.* 461.

[452] This transformation of the Erinyes into the Eumenides is entirely Aeschylus' invention. *Cf.* Karl Reinhardt: *Aischylos als Regisseur und Theologe* (1949), 156.

In Aeschylus the name of the unifying god is finally no longer of consequence: 'Zeus, for thus I call him, be he whoever he may be, using every name which pleases him'.[453] What appears and becomes visible is his *kabod*, his *shekinah*, which can only be designated with apparently abstract names, such as right, justice, order, retribution . . . But, as in Pindar, it is the facelessness of the flowing light of the godhead. In this incandescent beam true expiation is possible and the streams of blood caused by the mythic vendettas can be stilled.

> The blood on my hand has turned pale; it has
>   vanished,
> And the guilt of matricide is washed away.[454]

Even the curse of Oedipus and of Laius is wiped away for Aeschylus by the brothers' death: 'Now the battle rests; the murder stream has joined the bodies on the ground, now truly blood brothers'.[455] But for him calming grace always assists in the establishing of justice, not the old graceless justice of the Erinyes period, but that which is full of grace and which embraces *phobos* and *sebas*, fear as shy awe.[456] The Erinyes, as venerable old deities of Athene, the 'younger', as 'co-possessors of her land' are invited by friendly persuasion (πειθώ),[457] and this transforms the spirit of the old deities from within, softening their hardness, broadening their narrowness, turning the threatening deep into a store of blessings. If in Aeschylus the minds of the gods are repeatedly said to be unknowable,[458] there is nevertheless a secret link with the human world: 'Apollo, once banished from Heaven,

[453] *Agam.* 159–161 (Reinhardt).

[454] *Eumen.* 280–281.

[455] *Seven* 938–940. The conclusion with the beginning of the Antigone tragedy is apocryphal.

[456] *Eumen.* 690–691, 698–703.

[457] *Eumen.* 881–891. For πειθώ *cf.* H. Fränkel: *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums* (2nd ed. 1962), 338, 536.

[458] *Hiket.* 87, 95, 1048–1049, *'ti de mellô phrena Dian kathorân, opsin âbysson?'* 1057–1058.

who yourself have known this fate: have mercy on us! Be compassionate and be a merciful helper.'[459]

c. Sophocles

In Aeschylus the possibility of achieving profounder reconciliations depends on a profounder acknowledgment of conflict and suffering on the part of the deity—although that Zeus should suffer is never in question. Prometheus asserts that the Moirae and Erinyes are above Zeus[460] but that is just the way a Titan talks and simply represents the antithesis. Sophocles provides no such glimpses into the heart of God. Here was a man favoured by fortune, acclaimed as *eudaimôn*, an actor, poet and priest, local treasurer and commander; and he could write entertaining, charming plays.[461] Yet as a tragedian he had but one vision of man: silhouetted against the night-sky of an infinitely sublime and distant god, one who yet through this same distance proclaims his presence. 'Mighty one, if so thou mayest be called, Zeus, Lord of the world . . .'[462] 'Darkness, thou my light! Eternal night, how bright thy rays!'[463] In this concealment of God is the true seed of what will come to be called negative theology. Against this backdrop, comparable to the background, black or red, behind heroic figures on the vases,[464] there stands forth the terrifying outline (μορφά) of the suffering man.

> In dread wise thus was dreadful form
> Begotten, whether who did the work
> Was God, or man.[465]

And so Sophocles moves away from the Aeschylean tragedy and its reconciliatory structure, preferring the single play with its single destiny: the human figure, beaten out as if from bronze (*charasso*, *charaktēr*) by divinely-imposed destiny.[466] And God does not remain incognito, for the blows of his hammer thunder on behind 'divine oracles', which guide all things from a hidden plan, forcing up from man perception and truth. In view of the power of this self-proclamation, the question of guilt is secondary; thus does the aged Oedipus, as he lays responsibility for the past on the gods, submit to the decree of fate:

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[459] *Hiket.* 214–216.

[460] *Prom.* 516.

[461] K. Reinhardt: *Sophokles* (1933), 237f.

[462] *Oed. Tyr.* 903–904.

[463] *Ajax* 394–395.

[464] For the comparison, see Ludwig Curtius, *Die klassische Kunst Griechenlands* (Handb. d. Kunstwiss., 1938), 191–192.

[465] *Electra* 198–200.

> If to my father oracles divine
> Ordained that by his son's hand he should fall,
> How canst thou cast the shame on me,
> When from my father and my mother I
> No life had yet received, and was unborn? . . .
> Nay, from that marriage falls no guilt on me.[467]

That is, he does bear it but as his destiny, imposed by a super-human power and, it thus transpires, conceived and ordained from above. Such genuine destiny is in contrast to conscious (ἑκόυσιος) sin like Creon's[468] and also to the walls of 'voluntary (ἑκόυσιος) suffering' behind which Philoctetes has taken shelter,[469] leading Neotolemus to accuse him of 'misery's arrogant defiance'.[470] Destiny, however, has an outline peculiar to itself for here, irrefutably, has been at work the hammering hand of God. Now on the human side this revelation involves a fall and therefore a slippery slope; and there also has to be a king or hero involved, if what Aristotle calls the over-throw (μεταβολή)[471] is to have exemplary meaning. Athene's prologue in the *Ajax*, so utterly cruel, where her favourite, Odysseus, is presented with an enemy driven to madness and now exposed to complete humiliation and ridicule ('aught laughter sweeter than his who laughs over enemies?')[472] demonstrates the tragic situation in its extremest form: man rendered impotent, an object indeed of ridicule, before and through God. But Odysseus shudders; for he can see therein mankind, himself too, laid bare:

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[466] *Trach.* 1159, 1165; *Philoc.* 113f., 990–99 (the hero does not accept the oracle), 1447 (he accepts). *Oed. Col.* 386f.; 603f.; *Electra* 32f.

[467] *Oed. Col.* 969–973, 988.

[468] *Oed. Col.* 985–986.

[469] *Philoc.* 1318.

[470] *Philoc.* 1387.

[471] *Poetics* 13 (1452b).

[472] *Ajax* 79.

> In him I see the image of myself.
> For all of us, we're phantoms and no more.[473]

For man, confronted by his absurdity, so utterly incompatible with his position and power, it really is no laughing matter. Ajax, on whom 'shame has been heaped',[474] is incensed by the laughter of his enemies[475] and the chorus is in agreement;[476] nowhere but in death can he find a cover for the nakedness of his destiny. King Oedipus, having sworn a holy vow to punish the man by whom Thebes is being ruined, is forced by fate to act against himself; he too would be ridiculous, were he not so frightening; for, instead of taking his life, he blinds himself and takes all sight with him into night to be left, nonetheless, a gruesome example, all the more exposed to view. The invalid Philoctetes is exposed in a similarly painful way, just as Heracles, as he writhes in torment in the shirt of Nessus, grimly recalling the heroic strength of which he has been stripped, is a humiliated and insulted figure. This Euripides later takes still further, having Heracles, who is returning home in search of vengeance, struck down at the very climax of victory by God; he slays both wife and children and then, awakening from his madness, must behold and endure the work of his own hands. The theme of the *Bacchae* is similar. When the divine oracle tells Orestes 'unprotected, with neither army nor weapons, and by myself alone the stroke of justice to deal,[477] it is Apollo who exposes him; Apollo alone has 'wrought this dreadful change' in Oedipus, whose blinding himself merely serves to make it fully visible,[478] and it is no man but Apollo alone, by whose bow Achilles has been laid low.[479] 'Truly, that suffering, if rightly I perceive, cometh from the gods', referring to Philoctetes's exposure on the desert island,[480] where he must hear the chorus sing: 'Thee hath struck not cunning from our hands but a destiny from the gods.'[481] And Oedipus again: 'With full intent the gods afflicted me.'[482]

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[473] *Ajax* 124–125.
[474] *Ajax* 367.
[475] *Ajax* 380f.
[476] *Ajax* 958f.
[477] *Electra* 35–38.
[478] *Oed. Tyr.* 1329–1332.

By leaving man powerless in this way, the god tears him from the sheath that can provide the only shelter in which he can attain to a status in natural accordance with human existence. Since, in this darkness of God, the god has broken out of his being, he appears, correspondingly, through a man who has lost his self. So estranged is Ajax from himself and everything else that nothing his friends and the women say can reach him any longer. 'All words are wasted . . . Think ye still to form my nature? Then speak ye foolishly.'[483] So too Heracles had lost himself, as he apostrophises his limbs: 'O hands, hands, o breast, ye shoulders, my dear arms! Are ye come to this . . .?';[484] and from her post in the land of death Antigone rebuffs her sister and sends her back into life:

> Be comforted, thou livest. But my soul
> Hath long been dead . . .[485]

Here is an isolation without the foundation of self where all power has been stripped away; it is the loneliness of Philoctetes, completely deserted, unutterably disgusted by his own sickness, humiliated and now longing, as a 'dying man',[486] for death in the flames. Only when the hero looks back from the transcendence of suffering at existence and the distant cosmos, only then can everything human seem 'meaningless shadows',[487] an 'illusion' and 'nothingness',[488] can 'not to have been born' be 'better e'er than entering the light',[489] can existence in time itself appear a 'curse' in contrast to the gods' 'ageless, shimmering eternity'.[490] When, at the height of her anguish, Antigone exclaims: 'Alas! cast out from the quick and the dead, neither being nor bones!', the Chorus sees her words as audacious and plunging 'defiance' (θάσρος),[491] for it seems mortal wisdom to adapt to the passage of time. 'Bow thyself, concede to change!';[492] a lasting fidelity is not possible in time,[493] which conceals all that is open and reveals which is hidden[494] and which has no use for a 'rigid heart'[495]—unless, perhaps, its fidelity, like that which Chrysothemis defends against Electra and Ismene against Antigone, be to change itself.[496] The almighty Guider of all the works of men is he not called Kairos?[497] Torn by his pain from the sheath of time, man no longer knows where he stands. To act, like Antigone, from an eternal perspective leads to guilt through an unbalanced and inflexible attitude; but to adopt a temporal perspective like Ismene's results in a betrayal of the laws of love and ''tis for me to share in love, not hate', says Antigone, thus confirming that she has chosen to die.[498] We find the same idea reappearing in Euripides: 'Whose love is not eternal is no lover'.[499] Thus for Sophocles the wound of guilt breaks open at the boundary of time and eternity, not to be confused with the line conceived by later thinkers (Schiller, for example) between duty and inclination or between the noumenal and phenomenal, the ideal and real I; for he means, in an utterly unequivocal and shattering sense, the barrier between God and man. The principal tragic theme is 'the riddle of the barrier between God and man'; 'one day, man is suddenly confronted by the will of the gods, a thing for him quite strange and incomprehensible, a breath from a world other than that inhabitated by men' and he loses his bearings, is torn from his centre and into 'a place apart[500] where earthly life has already been left behind and death is present in seed and essence. In such a devotion, in this special Sophoclean sense, to death lies the true imago dei of man. Thus Antigone is told by the Chorus:

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[479] *Philoc.* 334–335.
[480] *Philoc.* 192–193.
[481] *Philoc.* 1118.
[482] *Oed. Col.* 274.
[483] *Ajax* 592, 594–595.
[484] *Trach.* 1089–1091. *Cf.* K. Reinhardt: *Sophokles*, 69–70.
[485] *Antig.* 559–560.
[486] *Philoc.* 800, 819.
[487] *Ajax* 126.
[488] *Oed. Tyr.*. 1186–1191.

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[489] *Oed. Col.* 1224–1225, a view also to be found in Herodotus (I, 31) and Theognis (425–428).

[490] *Antig.* 608–613.

[491] *Antig.* 850–855.

[492] *Antig.* 718.

[493] *Oed. Col.* 607–612.

[494] *Ajax* 646f., 678f., 1358–1359; 'Time, all-seeing', *Oed. Tyr.* 1113.

[495] *Ajax* 1361.

[496] *Electra* 328f., *Antig.* 68; 'For Time is a god who eases burdens': *Electra* 179–180.

[497] *Electra* 75–76. In this context belongs the closed circle binding the world, the alteration between joy and suffering, suffering and joy (*Oed. Col.* 614–615; 'Like unto the Great Bear's orbit, do all sufferings and joy revolve in circles' (*Trach.* 129–131). That is the one certain thing before the uncertainty of the coming day (*Oed. Col.* 567–568, *Trach.* 1–3).

[498] *Antig.* 523.

[499] Euripides, *Troad.* 1051.

A law to thyself, alone dost thou
Descend yet living to Hades . . .
And that, in life and then in death,
To share in the lot of the gods thou art chosen,
Though 'tis thy end—is a noble thing.[501]

In this abstractedness there is no Buddhistic element, no flight from pain; pain is, on the contrary, the very medium of transcendence and we can feel this in the moving words with which the dying Sophoclean hero departs from the beauties he has loved in this world. Ajax: 'O Light, o holy fields of Salamis, and Athens in thy glory, ye springs, ye rivers! . . .';[502] Antigone: 'O my town, Dircean fountain, sacred grove of Thebes proud in chariots! . . .';[503] the aged Oedipus cannot take leave of the sun, only of the 'lightless light', but he still departs with a benediction, with a gesture of blessing for the king, his land and people.[504] It may be that in this state of abstraction all enmity is left behind and thus the *Ajax*, for example, actually ends on a note of love for one's enemy;[505] it may equally be that, in the name of 'justice' and the 'ancient Law', a judgment is sent back, a grim curse like that called down on Polynices by his aged father:[506] under its weight, the son 'goes to certain death'. The dying hero becomes a kind of judge over good and bad destinies. Through the contrast with Antigone, Creon is judged and becomes a nothing.[507] Through the ecce homo of Oedipus's bloody countenance, we perceive 'a spectacle of pain' such 'that now a very enemy would pity him';[508] before that eyeless symbol of isolation, suspended between heaven and earth, all else sinks away or is drawn spell-bound.

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[500] Reinhardt 13–14.

[501] *Antig*. 821–822, 836–838.

[502] *Ajax* 859–862.

[503] *Antig*. 842–845. Philoctetes's parting words to the island are equally wonderful: *Philoc*. 1452f.

[504] *Oed. Col.* 1549–1555.

How is it that these images have sent forth rays of glory so mighty that Western art through the ages has remained under the spell of their forming power, even if it was only poor copies and distortions—whether Alexandrian, Roman or classicistic—through which the image lived on? It is certainly not the element of horror that lends such fascination, as *Antigone* is not horrific; still less does the effect merely derive from classicistic formal discipline and external control of language, scene and gesture; indeed, where Sophocles does tend to Classicism, as in the *Electra*, his grip on us actually weakens. Is it not rather in his opening a new horizon to human existence, his carrying man aloft into the realms of transcendence that his spell lies?

> Much there is strange, yet nothing
> Stranger is than man . . .
> Words, the aerial breath
> Of thoughts, and the harmonious
> Spirit of ordered habitation
> These did he master . . .
> Never without resource; resourceful he
> Into the future strides—only before
> Death he contrives no escape.[509]

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[505] *Ajax* 1376–end.
[506] *Oed. Col.* 1354f., esp. 1381–1382.
[507] *Antig.* 1325, 1345.
[508] *Oed. Tyr.* 1295–1296.
[509] *Antig.* 332–333, 352–355, 359–361.

But this chorus is just an account of the benefits Prometheus brought mankind, of the culture—including medicine—by which the sphere of death is encircled; being, as the chorus often is, of a bourgeois superficiality unequal to the drama in which the kings and heroes are involved, it makes no mention of death in life itself. Yet this, and this alone, is the source of salvation and redemption. Here is the essence of Sophoclean glory: not for one moment, amid the night he is depicting, does he doubt that it is God's night and therefore 'God's lightless light'. His figure, his construction, remains intact only by virtue of this mighty affirmation, namely, that reality is good and, on God's side, eternally just, and that in man's very powerlessness the power of being reveals itself, so inconceivably raising him up amid all his humiliation. And if, in the antithetical humiliation of man, his guilt too is always exposed—a guilt which cannot be morally quantified any more than it can, through equation with finitude, be metaphysically wished away, for indeed the only proper description for it is theological (Aristotle later calls it ἁμαρτία, 'shooting wide of' the right course)[510]—in this ecce peccatum! and its terrible exposure there is nevertheless an ecce gratia! of reconciliation. Excommunicated from humanity (*sacer*), the hero thus becomes, as he himself knows full well, the actual source of salvation and sanctity. In this light the last and posthumously performed drama, *Oedipus at Colonus* (which, when one thinks of the old Wagner's *Parsifal* could be called a 'consecration of the stage') can be seen in its full, concluding, significance. Through his suffering, Oedipus has become a *soter*, a beneficial tutelary spirit, for whichever region is permitted to house his grave.[511] What he can offer King Theseus is a glory beyond all the beauty of form:

> I come to offer you my wretched body,
> A gift unlovely to behold, and yet
> A blessing greater than the fairest form.[512]

Despite the interruption of bitter earthly episodes, the holy mystery of this death unfolds, in the end, in the same atmosphere of cultic and liturgical tranquillity as was foretold and prepared for in the beginning: in the space sacred to the powers Aeschylus has appeased, the Eumenides, the divine voice will thunder forth and the blind man, led at first by his daughters, must make the final steps alone, for none may there be to witness how he is taken; the King who has led him a little further, now shields himself, holding

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[510] *Poetics* 13.
[511] *Oed. Col.* 463.
[512] *Oed. Col.* 576–578.

His hand before his head, as though he'd seen
A fearful thing, that no man's gaze may bear.[513]

And thus Oedipus departs, carried at once aloft and below, and after all his torment and suffering his end is suffering no more; it is heralded by a threefold repetition of 'suddenly', ἐξαίφνης.[514]

For he with ne'er a sigh and by no suffering
Tormented was sent forth, in wondrous wise,
As none before . . .[515]

In this mystery of salvation Sophocles succeeds in soothing and easing even what, in Antigone's death, had seemed stretched to breaking point, a prey to the 'wild world of the dead', as she, 'deserted by all her dear ones', 'unbridal, unnuptial', indeed 'cast aside by the gods',[516], makes her way to the self-chosen tomb she nonetheless greets as her 'bridal chamber'.[517] What accompanies her into the burial chamber is the power of love she experienced on this side of the grave, for the cosmic hymn to Eros[518] sung by the Chorus does not have the power to reach so far; indeed, she asks to be spared all marriage-songs for her betrothal with the Acheron[519] and when she reflects on the death forced on her by her dead brother, she does not overlook the ancestral curse.[520] That she, who has 'kept the Holy holy',[521] herself becomes a blessing Sophocles does not say and it is only when Oedipus is borne away that such a death can be seen to have salvatory meaning. When, at the end of the *Philoctetes*, the suffering the gods have imposed—which in the course of the dialogue between Philoctetes and Neoptolemus has become tangled into an insoluble knot—is resolved by Heracles appearing in person, in all the glory of his form, and made fruitful for a new task, the outer epiphany of the god, which we witnessed in the *Antigone* and the two Oedipus dramas, is no longer necessary; the suffering of this death sends forth the rays of its divine glory from within. A glory too real to dissolve into an intangible other world sends forth into the polis the light of an earthly salvation. The beauty revealed in this salvation lies in the courage born of the experience of the affirmation of suffering: Τὸ φέρον καλῶς φέρειν, 'to bear the burden gracefully (with courage)'.[522] Or, as Theseus says: 'Not with words, with deeds we seek to confer a ray of light on life (τὸν βίον λαμπρὸν ποιεῖσθαι).'[523] The virtue of Oedipus's legacy to the country is 'grace', an 'act of gratitude, fruit-bearing, fulfilment-bringing' (χάριν τελεσφόρον δοῦναι) for the hospitality shown to a helpless man.[524] Nothing less is Greek *charis*: the beauty of love, a free and mutual gift.

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[513] *Oed. Col.* 1651–1652.

[514] 1610, 1623, 1625.

[515] *Oed. Col.* 1663–1665; see the commentary in *Peri Hypsous* (*On the Sublime*), from the first century A.D. (XV, 7).

[516] *Antig.* 917, 919, 924, 877.

[517] *Antig.* 891.

[518] *Antig.* 781f.

[519] *Antig.* 814–816.

It is all too easy and common to compare Euripides unfavourably with his predecessor. It is said that his belief in the gods had been destroyed, that the appearance of the gods in his plays in thus no longer inwardly convincing and that the extreme situation of his characters accordingly tends towards the unduly theatrical. In Euripides the bow, already stretched to breaking point in Sophocles, must shatter. He is acquainted with the Sophists and is the friend and follower of Socrates who—as Aristophanes, one of the poet's most merciless critics, observes—gave the final *coup de grâce* to tragedy. He is almost always defeated in contests. Marathon, Salamis, Plataea lie in the past; in the middle of the poet's career the Peloponnesian War begins; at its end lies Athens' tragic Sicilian campaign. The poet often fought in the field, although he did not live to see the collapse of his beloved city. How could the rift which runs through his time not extend to his work too? But could not precisely this rift, which threatens content and form, itself sustain the final necessary form of the tragic?

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[520] *Antig*. 557–571.

[521] *Antig*. 943.

[522] *Oed. Col*. 1694.

[523] *Oed. Col*. 1143–1144.

[524] *Oed. Col*. 1489–1490.

It is he, and not his two predecessors, who provides the normative form of the European theatre, which wittingly and unwittingly follows him, although it knows him only through imperfect channels. Corneille and Racine learn of him through the Stoically coloured versions of Seneca.[525] Schiller and Goethe translate, adapt and admire him, and Goethe voices his fury at his general deprecation by 'the artistocracy of philologists . . . supported by the buffoon Aristophanes' and asks 'Have the nations had a single dramatist since who is fit to hold a candle to him?'[526] But Schiller translates *Iphigenia in Aulis* without the concluding miracle (which the lost original version contained and which the apocryphal one amplified beautifully) and Goethe reworks the material of *Iphigenia in Tauris* in a purely 'humanistic' way, which is equally at odds with its original theological sense. The ideal of the 'sublime' as we find it in German Classicism does not correspond to what for Euripides is 'glory' and which in its vulnerablility goes one step further than Sophocles, turning finally to resignation. The impoverished remains of Greek tragedy after Euripides clearly show that nothing loftier or even comparable came after him; nor could it have done so.

After Sophocles there remained only one act, desperate, utopian but irrefutable: the overcoming of death by a mortal. Almost all the surviving tragedies by Euripides (17 out of around 90) encircle death and make their way into its realm. It has ceased to be just a terminus lending definition and profile and has become an object, a medium, a centre. Death is the question and man must discover the answer, which is already in his own possession. In the face of this immense complex of problems all other concerns—the invention of the plot, the ambiguity of the characters and the action (as in *Ion* for example), the new rational lucidity of presentation (*saphaneia*) and so forth—pale into insignificance, yet it is only of these that we can say 'Euripidean tragedy was transposable, applicable, imitable and offered itself for the use of later times'.[527] The 'usable' element in him is that which is already corrupt and which declines yet further in the work of his imitators. His inimitability, however, is as unique as that of his predecessors, perhaps even more so, for from him the path leads directly to Gethsemane and to Golgotha. We need to consider four things: existence in death, how God stands behind this existence, how man overcomes death and what glory, fame and beauty are.

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[525] O. Regenbogen: *Tod und Schmerz in den Tragödien Senecas*, Vorträge der Bibl. Warburg, 1930. Kurt von Fritz: *Tragische Schuld und poetische Gerechtigkeit* (Stud. Generale 1955, 194f., 219f.).

[526] *Tagebücher* 22/23 Nov. 1831.

a. For Euripides man becomes credible in suffering. 'I believe the great suffering on account of Troy more than I believe you', says Menelaus to Egyptian Helen.[528] It is for this reason that the poet puts his characters in situations of (often improbable because unforeseen) suffering, which lays man bare in his ultimate reality, which vivisects him. After the completion of his 'works' Heracles, for whom his family, who are under the threat of death, have yearned, returns as a saviour, covered in glory. But then the gods strike him down with madness and he kills his wife and children. As he awakes from his madness, he realises that he has been cast out into the cosmic wilderness and suicide alone seems the proper course of action. But Theseus unmasks him beneath his disguise of shame and challenges him to live. But where, asks the accursed one, for everywhere people will point him out as the murderer of his family. Even earth and sea cry out to him: 'Do not touch us!' He is like Ixion, who was bound to the turning wheel. 'Why carry on living?' The gods have shattered him. They have triumphed over him. But since Theseus offers him refuge, he decides against the 'cowardice' of suicide, determines to 'stand up to life', to 'be subject to fate'.[529] Life becomes a 'second descent into Hades',[530] an 'existence in Hades'.[531] Heracles of all people, who 'is well-inclined to all men, who is their great friend'[532] must endure that which is 'without measure'.[533] It is much the same at the end of the *Phoenissae*, when each apparently insuperable cause of suffering is followed by another one. Eteocles and Polynices slay each other, as in Aeschylus, before the gates of Thebes. Their mother Jocasta, having failed to reconcile them, chooses to end her own life with them and the young Menoecius sacrifices himself. Then behind them there rises from its concealment in the darkness the blind face of Oedipus but only to be driven from the town by Creon. The play ends with him, supported by Antigone, feeling his way out of the town into the pathless and undertain wilderness.[534] He calls himself 'the dull and insubstantial shadow of an old man, a dead thing, a dream image waving in the wind'.[535] In the much later *Orestes* wave upon wave break, much wilder, in raging succession. It is the people's decision that Orestes, the matricide, together with Electra, is to die. They are surrounded and Pylades wants to die with them. They kill Helen in order to avenge themselves against Menelaus, who abandoned them, and take Hermione hostage. She is to be killed on the roof of the palace before Menelaus' eyes in order to force his hand. 'We are going to our death,'[536] says Electra, as the palace is set on fire, and both draw all with them as they rush headlong in madness and desperation to their certain deaths. But it is probably *The Trojan Women* which is the most extreme play in this respect. Here, no longer able to act, they are cast down, scene by scene, ever further into the abysmal depths of suffering. As they are busily concerned to protect themselves on account of a moderate storm which threatens the ships, Hecuba says:

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[527] Reinhardt: *Sophokles* 16.

[528] Works by Murray I–III (Oxford 1962). *Hel.* 593.

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[529] *Her*. conclusion, especially 1294f., 1351, 1357.

[530] *Her*. 1101.

[531] *Her*. 1413–1416.

[532] *Her*. 1252.

[533] *Her*. 1251.

[534] *Phoen*. 865f.

[535] *Phoen*. 1539f.

[536] *Or*. 1033.

> One labours at the helm, another runs to the sails,
> A third bails out the waters of the deep.
> But when the seas prevail in fierce strife,
> They yield to fortune, and to the waves' course
> And so it is for me; much affliction turns me dumb,
> And I neither open my mouth nor make complaint.
> For I am conquered by the gods' dire storm.[537]

Robbed of language (ἄφθογγος)[538], she is like an animal (τὸ θηριῶδες ἄφθογγον) which can only wait for the suffering that will come. The children, who are not yet dead, are murdered or led away as captives.[539] Whether the highest and unfathomable Zeus is moved with concern, whether he is himself a human spirit or a necessity of nature, [540]is not yet clear, but still the words 'in vain' (μάτην) and 'senseless' (μέλεον)[541] are used and, as if in confirmation, Troy burns in the background. Hecuba wants to cast herself into the flames but the way is barred.[542] It is not on the threshold of death that all ends but, as the world collapses, at its very centre.

> So deep in death, who knows where the boundary
> lies:
> Who knows whether what we call death is not life
> And our life is not death—who knows?[543]

Where does someone live who has lost what is most precious to them in life? Persistently and with great force Euripides depicts the fate of old people who, as it were, have got backstage in life. The aged Iphis describes the return to his house after his daughter's suicide with these words:

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[537] *Tro.* 688–695.

[538] *Tro.* 694, 671.

[539] *Tro.* 885–886, *cf.* the chorus song 1059f.

[540] *Tro.* 1242.

[541] *Tro.* 1251.

[542] *Tro.* 1282f.

[543] Frg. 833 of the Phrixos.

> What then should I do, unhappy man that I am?
> Go home? But there I shall find all the rooms empty:
> Joyless and barren shall my life be . . .[544]

Hecuba speaks in the same way after the loss of her children, Admetus after Alcestis' death. For those who are dragged away, banished, cast out, uprooted, removed from their own place and their dwelling, like Medea, Andromache, Iphigenia among the Taurians, Helen in Egypt, Hippolytus, for all these the paradise of a home such as Athens is irretrievable and their courage cannot help them win it back. The exterior illumines the interior but the interior can turn into the exterior at any moment; therefore pronouncements on the rapid swing from fortune to misfortune, the lofty fall and the lowly rise, increase[545] and there is no happiness, which the philosophers call εὐδαιμονία, to be found anywhere on earth:

> θνητῶν γὰρ οὐδείς ἐστιν εὐδαιμων ἀνήρ.[546]

Nothing which is of the earth can finally be trusted and, as regards love, there is only the resigned counsel of Phaedra's nurse or occasionally of the chorus, which the heroes never follow:

> Only moderate friendship can make the bond
> When one heart grows fond of another on earth:
> It never finds its way to the inner world of the mind,
> Easily loosed is all that unites souls.[547]

b. It is both true and not true that the gods in Euripides are more remote than they are in Sophocles. In the latter, humanity was seen against the background of a majestic fate. Euripides' souls, more sensitive in their defencelessness, wage a more bitter, desperate but secretly loving, struggle with the god who tortures them, whose personal countenance they both desire and reject. As in *Ajax*, gods can deliver prologues and unravel the thread of the plot, whose beginning they hold in their hands. As in the *Trachiniae* and in *Philoctetes*, gods can appear at the end and draw the tragedy for which they are responsible to a theological and supernatural resolution. This concluding epiphany can, though it need not, descend into something superficial and artificial (*Deus ex machina*, which means raised up onto the *theologeion*, the stage of the gods). To demand that a plot which has been created in the transcendent dimension should be brought to a conclusion fundamentally in the immanent one is ignorant even in aesthetic terms, let alone theological ones, just as if one wished to delete the resurrection of Christ from the Gospels on the grounds of its insignificance. The fact however that there are tragedies which do not conclude with a divine epiphany, that the gods who do appear sometimes conjure only 'more lies, more threats, more indications of unlimited conflict',[548] that their resolutions seem like a cheap 'and they all lived happily ever after' does not argue fundamentally against the fact that the theological centre of gravity necessarily shifts more and more from the gods to men but rather points to it. Euripides may purify, in the Pindaric sense, the myths of the gods:

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[544] *Hiket.* 1094–1096.

[545] *Heraclid.* 607–617 and many other places.

[546] *Med.* 1228.

[547] *Hipp.* 253–256.

> Do not speak of adultery in heaven,
> Nor of prisons and divine prisoners.
> Long have I known how false that is, and still do.
> The god, the true god, lacks nothing.
> Unholy and foul is the poet's song.[549]

Gods cannot fall out with each other[550]—something that is, of course, contradicted in the same *Hippolytus* by the conflict between Artemis and Aphrodite, chastity and eros,[551] though, as is the case with all individual gods in Euripides, they are probably to be seen more as a 'manifestation' of the activity of the unfathomable godhead. This activity contradicts itself in its manifestation and draws man himself therefore to contradiction. And yet, it conceals the unique utterance, the comprehensive word.

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[548] Walter Jens, *Einleitung zu Euripides*, Kröner-Ausgabe, XVII.

[549] *Her.* 1341–1346; *cf. Iph. Taur.* 380–392; frg. 292 of Bellerophonte.

[550] *Hipp.* 1328–1330; *cf. Iph. Taur.* 1012f.

[551] *Hipp.* 1416f.

> What mortal can fathom what is divine,
> What not, and what lies between?
> For he who considers the actions of the gods
> Discovers the limits,
> How it leaps now here, now there,
> And then, unhoped for, back again
> In a contradictory act of fate . . .
> The human mind seems to me uncertain:
> I found only the gods' word true.[552]

The presupposition must be made meaningful that 'all comes from the hands of the gods',[553] that there is no appeal against the gods, not even for those women whom the gods misuse[554] (and for whom the poet has a special sympathy), [555] that 'suffering is imposed by the gods',[556]if the passionate, embittered, desperate complaints of suffering men against the gods are to resound fully. They are to some extent horrendous and yet are not counted as culpable by the poet. They proceed from a most intense sense of injured justice. Apollo in particular, who expressly commanded Orestes' deed, who made Creusa expose their own son Ion and left her uncertain as to his fate[557] and yet is apparently unwilling to bear the consequences, this Apollo is the target for ceaseless accusations. Ion says bitterly: 'How could it be just that you give us laws and yet you yourself lawlessly become guilty of the same transgression? . . . Is it not unjust to denigrate mortals who imitate what seems good to gods?'[558] Creusa utters the most weighty curses against her former unfaithful lover.[559] So much so that at the end of *Ion* Apollo[560] is ashamed to appear and sends Athene ahead to effect reconciliation. She delivers a thin theodicy[561] for the non-appearing god: 'Apollo has brought all things to a wonderful completion' and 'the decrees of the gods proceed slowly but they are mighty'.[562] Above all, Apollo 'ensnared' Orestes[563] and 'lied' to him,[564] and 'gods, by whatever name, are deceitful'.[565] Electra says the gods are unjust towards their brother who has obeyed them piously,[566] and Helen agrees: 'I lay the blame for the sin on Phoebus' head'.[567] Electra again: 'A crime it was, yes, a crime,' that 'the god, you who sit on the throne of justice, commanded Phoebus to perform the most unholy act, the murder of my mother!'[568] Orestes: 'We serve the gods, be they good or otherwise',[569] thus 'It is he who sinned and not I'.[570] This time Apollo personally accepts complete responsibility at the end of the play[571] and Orestes bows in homage before the prophet-god: 'No deceitful but pure and genuine words came from his mouth'.[572] Iphigenia meditates on the 'nonsensical contradictions of the goddess' Artemis:

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[552] *Hel.* 1137–1143, 1149–1150.

[553] *Hel.* 663.

[554] Ion 252–254.

[555] Gilbert Murray: *Euripides and his Age* (1965), 41.

[556] *Andr.* 1203.

[557] *Ion*: 'If Loxias should finally seek to expiate his transgressions', 425f.

[558] *Ion* 440f.

[559] *Ion* 859–922.

[560] *Ion* 1555–1557.

> She, who bars from her temple the man
> Who shed another's blood . . ., fleeing him
> As a thing of horror, though she herself delights
> In human sacrifice and murder.[573]

She gets by through dismissing the Tantalus meal as 'an empty tale' and remains convinced that the wolf Taurians 'transferred to our deity' their own guilty blood lust, 'for no immortal being seems to me to be evil. But should we therefore agree with Lesky's conclusion when he says: 'The contradiction is virtually irreconcilable between the god whose providence is evident and the one who knows his own guilt and who in every case is other than those great guarantors of the right whom we find in Aeschylus'?[574] should we not ask rather what kind of image of the gods can be constructed from Euripides' scenes of suffering? That the god is burdened with the responsibility for these sufferings (and even Orestes' vendetta can be seen chiefly as 'suffering') expresses nothing other than faithful piety, even where the human voice is raised in complaint and revolt. The true difficulty is that the gods—the 'purer' and the more philosophical the notion of divinity becomes—can themselves have nothing to do with the burden of guilt that rests upon them. The dialogue between Hippolytus and the goddess Artemis, whom he worships and adores, shocks and terrifies:

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[561] *Ion* 1559.
[562] *Ion* 1615.
[563] *Iph. Taur.* 77.
[564] *Iph. Taur.* 711.
[565] *Iph. Taur.* 570f.
[566] *Or.* 28f.
[567] *Or.* 76.
[568] *Or.* 162f.
[569] *Or.* 418.
[570] *Or.* 596.
[571] *Or.* 1664–1665.
[572] *Or.* 1666–1667.
[573] *Iph. Taur.* 381f.

> H: Do you see, mistress, my misfortune?
> A: I see it: but my eyes cannot weep.[575]

And then, since the youth is dying:

> A: Farewell! For I cannot look upon a dead man,
> Nor profane my eye with death's last breath.[576]

Apollo, who speaks the prologue to the Alcestis play, does the same when he sees death, *thanatos*, approach to seize his victim:

> But lest I be sullied by the breath of death,
> I shall leave this house, this trusted roof.[577]

At this point mortal men excel the immortal gods, a point which Amphitryon's justified, irrefutable triumph expresses:

> O Zeus, in vain you shared my bed,
> In vain our double fatherhood was praised.[578]

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[574] A. Lesky: *Die griechische Tragödie*, 2nd ed., 1958, 234.

[575] *Hipp*. 1395–1396.

[576] *Hipp*. 1437–1438.

[577] *Alc*. 22–23.

[578] Of the twins which Alcmena bore, Iphicles was the son of Amphitryon, Heracles the son of Zeus.

You were a friend less true than we had hoped.
I, a mortal, possess more virtue than you, the great god,
For I did not abandon Heracles' noble children.
You knew how to insinuate yourself into women's
  favour
And entered, unsummoned, the beds of others,
But you cannot save your lovers.
You are a blind, or unjust, god.[579]

Thus at the end of *Heracles* man actually comes to occupy the place of the god. The latter suffices 'when he wishes to help', in good times but, in time of the greatest travail, it is only Theseus who offers support to those who are 'beaten into the ground'.[580] If in Euripides man can still only understand his greatest reduction to a state of helplessness and despair in theological terms (the gods are its cause), then he is challenged in the darkness to find in the hiddenmost treasures of his own heart a solution to an insoluble situation. What will he do?

c. Euripides discovered two ways of cleansing the atmosphere of the perpetually and unbearably heightened pressure of suffering: wrath and love, revenge and self-sacrifice. These are two approaches to religious reconciliation as seen principally from the point of view of man, where as the Old and the New Testaments see it from God's perspective. A great act of revenge as the play's conclusion occurs mainly in those of the middle period (the plays from the early period are all lost), in *Medea* (431), *Hippolytus* (428) and *Hecuba* (ca.426). The motif of self-sacrifice extends from the early *Alcestis* (438) to the *Heracleidae* and *Suppliant Women* to the late dramas, the *Trojan Women*, the *Phoenissae* (after 415) and *Iphigenia in Aulis* (after 408).

Phaedra, in her unrequited passion for her step-son, yields to death and as a terrible revenge drags her lover down with her by calumny. That is the 'pathology of love' as the poet liked to portray it (especially in the lost plays in which the

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[579] *Her.* 339–347.
[580] *Her.* 1307, 1338–1339.

Potiphar motif, the Cretan bull myth, incestuous love between siblings, homosexuality and so forth occur).[581] Revenge on a grand scale, such as that which Hecuba and Medea and, finally, even Electra and Orestes enjoy, does not incur guilt (in the conclusion Medea is virtually transfigured) but is an explosive act of desperation by those upon whom inhuman suffering has been inflicted, while Creusa's act of revenge (in *Ion*) rests principally upon seduction. Of course, the notes of a wild paganism sound here. Medea lays the burden of guilt squarely on the gods[582] and they can hunger for revenge, as Dionysius for instance shows when in the late (but quite traditional) *Bacchae* he avenges himself cruelly against Pentheus for spurning his cult[583] and turns Agave so much into a kind of 'grieving mother' that the Byzantine composer of *Christus Patiens* makes use of her lines for Christ's lamentation.

But the major emphasis lies not on vengeance but on the second motif which, more than any other, is peculiar to Euripides: that of a willing, sacrificial death. He plays it out from *Alcestis*, the very first drama which has survived, to the last of his posthumous works, *Iphigenia in Aulis* and, if he cannot find a central place for it, then he slips it in—*opportune importune*—wherever he can. He rehearses it in all its variations: from the spontaneous, freely-given offering (where the sacrifice of an unspecified person is required) to the dramatic transformation of a sacrifice imposed by external necessity into one which is inwardly accepted and to the lover's death, entirely natural in the circumstances, which is entered into together with the dead or dying beloved. In terms of motivation, it moves from the clearly recognised meaning of this total self-offering for the saving of the fatherland, the clan or a beloved individual to the squandering of life with no considered or visible aim. The unifying factor within this diversity is freedom: the penetration beyond a dark fate of necessity into an assent which springs from the heart's own inner and unfathomable resources. Then it is as if one were emerging from a dark cave into the light of day, returning to the freedom and beauty of existence. It is here without doubt that the moment of glory lies for Euripides, which has lived on through the ages, down to Corneille, Schiller and Hofmannsthal.

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[581] See Lesky: *Die griechische Tragödie*, 196–197.

[582] *Med.* 1372.

[583] Even the Maenad nature as such is the god's punishment in this play: *Bacch.* 32, 1297. The god avenges himself on the whole of Thebes: 1374f., so much so that Agave finally turns his back (1381f.) on this most terrible of gods (861–862), in the very midst of his festival!

For all that followed it was decisive that *Alcestis* should be the first play which survived and that Euripides should have extracted these wonderful, tragic and yet transfigured events from the old mythic material,[584] which Phrynichus had worked before him as a crude comedy. King Admetus must die, but Death, who comes to fetch him, would be content with taking someone else in his place. His parents refuse, while his young wife agrees to it and dies. But then the motifs divide. In one version which Plato (*Symp* 179C) follows, perhaps on the basis of an Orphic tradition (and therefore comparable with the Orpheus-Euridice motif), the goddess of death, overcome by Eros' power, sends the wife back while, in the other, followed by Euripides (and certainly by Phrynichus before him), Heracles enters Admetus' house and, learning of the events, lies in wait for death and robs him of his victim in a wrestling match. This crude motif may be the earlier one but it does not belong to the original myth. There are two loosely connected themes: the saving of a life through a sacrificial death and the hero's struggle with death who loses his victim. Here we find that victory over death by pure passion and highest action which will attain a seemless unity only in Christ. Euripides was the first to place a woman's heroic decision to face death for the sake of love at the centre of the action, with two significant adaptations. Whereas in the original version Admetus is called away from the wedding feast with his wife immediately leaving him the poet now inserts long years of contented domesticity between the decision to face death and the hour of death's summons. The precise moment when Alcestis will have to honour her promise is left unclear. The second point is connected with the fact that, if the instantaneous decision to die lent the deed heroic force and grandeur, the long delayed death, after a considerable period of an established rhythm of life, becomes unbearably difficult for Alcestis. But this is what the poet intends: the long drawn-out, cold-blooded and excruciating enactment of a magnanimous promise long since made. It is precisely at this point that the glory of a debilitated and humiliated heart is revealed, in comparison with which Heracles' wrestling with death as an act of heroic power possesses only secondary significance. The poet shows Alcestis on the day which finally arrives, when the decision lies in the distant past together with the fact of the possibility of a sacrifical death (which is assumed in the action); but the keeping of the promise, the spiritual actuality of the death, are examined in slow motion. What form does a sacrifice take when it assumes existential gravity? It is a fearfully difficult leave-taking of the house, the marital bed, the children, the spouse who clings to her knees and pleads with her not to leave,[585] though still she asks him to release her.[586] In her main speech, she reminds Admetus that her act is love:

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[584] For the following, see Albin Lesky, *Alkestis, der Mythus und das Drama*. Ak. D. Wiss. Wien, phil.-hist. Klasse, 203, 1925. H. Steinwender, *Alkestis vom Altertum bis zur Gegenwart*, Diss. Vienna, 1951. Elis. Frenzel, *Stoffe der Weltliteratur*, 1962, 31–34.

I love you, and more precious to me than life
Is this: that you should live.
So I shall die in your place . . .
I have no taste for a life without you
With fatherless children . . .[587]

She goes on to demand of Admetus that he should reward her fidelity by loving no other woman. But now Admetus too comes under scrutiny. Time and again the question is asked how he could permit, or accept, his wife's sacrifice. The pitiable scene with Pheres, his father, brings this whole problematic mercilessly to the centre of the stage, as they accuse each other of shameless cowardice. This is the reason why later adapters of this material made Admetus unaware of Alcestis' decision. In the myth no questions are raised about the psychology of the king; that he should permit it all to happen is part simply of the action. And what of Christians, who stand beneath the cross of Christ? Were they asked whether they could permit someone to die for them? The answer is clear and sheds a decisive light on our play. Sinners as such were not asked (Rom 5.8) for had they said Yes, then it would have been on account of egotism, which would have served only to deepen their guilt. The consent of those who loved was however sought (Lk 1.38; Jn 19.25), though this leads in the logic of love to 'dying with' the beloved (Rom 6.3). Whatever the character of Admetus' initial consent, which remains essential for the plot, the radiance of the present events casts its gleam back upon him, giving him initially a false profile. He fully recognises the significance of his wife's act and says of other women:

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[585] *Alc.* 201f. Alcestis herself departs 'unwillingly': 389.

[586] *Alc.* 263.

[587] *Alc.* 282–288.

> . . . they loved only with words, not by deeds.
> But for my life you gave your all.[588]

But now 'only in death shall she be called my wife'[589] and shall approach him only in dreams. Nor does he have Orpheus'[590] songs to save Alcestis from the night. Thus he will 'lead from now on a desolate life on earth':[591]

> For if you die, then I too shall live no more:
> For me life and death is in your company,
> For your love for me is holy.[592]

His life, from which all delight has vanished,[593] will be empty yearning, and thus he asks to die with her: 'By the gods, take me with you!'.[594] Then death will have borne two souls away in Charon's bark.[595] Finally, when she is dead, he wishes that he had never met her.[596] For through her he is now truly marked for death.[597] A fearful paradox: instead of saving him, she has brought about his ruin! This is an unbearable contradiction which can on no account be left unresolved because it would undermine the meaning of existence. And so the tale offers a fairy-tale conclusion when Heracles returns with a veiled figure and demands of the uncooperative Admetus that he should let her into his house and give her at least his hand if not his love. He does so with his face turned away and finds his wife in his arms. In no way can Hofmannsthal do justice to this with the 'law of transformation' of his philosophy of life. It is not that Admetus in his new love is assenting to love as such; the fairy-tale motif must in all seriousness refer to the return of the same love in its transfigured and resurrected form, and all contrary thoughts are to be removed from this pure act of glorification. This utopian motif is to be displayed, even if this can only be done on stage and in fairy-tale: so much the worse for reality. With determined clarity of purpose, Euripides passes through the 'impossible' death to something which lies beyond death and which is guaranteed by the immanent meaning of a self-sacrificial love. Euripides would from this point on draw out this meaning time and again. From the beginning of the Peloponnesian War the motif of a sacrificial death for community, city and people comes to the fore but not exclusively so. It is frequently initiated by the late archaic thought that the gods demand a human sacrifice, whether for the expiation of guilt (*Iphigenia in Aulis*) or for the gaining of a favour (*Heracleidae*, *Phoenissae*) or as an institutionalised ritual (*Iphigenia in Tauris*, in which even the poet himself questions the reasons, as we have seen). But there is also the death for love, which is inspired not by a god but by personal love, and is either offered (by Pylades in *Orestes*) or carried out (Evadne in *The Suppliant Women*, Laomedeia in the lost *Protesilaus*).

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[588] *Alc.* 339–340. 'She died only for me': 434.
[589] *Alc.* 329.
[590] *Alc.* 357.
[591] *Alc.* 242–243.
[592] *Alc.* 277–279.
[593] *Alc.* 347.
[594] *Alc.* 382.
[595] *Alc.* 900–902.

Everywhere it is freedom that is decisive, which appears in its most sublime form where the sacrificial death is first imposed as a necessity by gods or men. Thus the oracle in the *Heraclidae* demands the slaughter of a prince's daughter,[598] Macaria offers herself and underlines that her death is a free one: 'This life is willingly yielded' (ἑκοῦσα κ' οὖκ ἄκουσα):[599]

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[596] *Alc.* 880–881.

[597] *Alc.* 527.

> I do not wish to die, as fate by chance demands.
> . . . Do not fear that guilt for my death
> Shall profane you, for I die freely.[600]

She dies, as she says, with no certainty of life after death or, should there be an after-life, of any future happiness; she dies only 'for her family'.[601] Since in the *Phoenissae* the oracle again demands a sacrifice for the saving of Thebes, even though this time it gives a name (that of Menoecius, the young son of Creon, ruler of the city), Creon offers himself, but in vain. The burden of a choice between losing his city or his son proves too much for him and he urges his son to flee. But the latter wishes to save his own city and sees in that no greater sacrifice than is fundamentally demanded of all its citizens. It would be pardonable for Creon to remove his son:[602]

> . . . but unpardonable for me
> If I should leave this land, which gave me life.
> So know this: I shall save my city and offer my life
> For the land of my fathers.
> How shameful! Other citizens whom no prophet's
>   utterance
> Eternally binds, no commandment of the gods
>   compels,
> Stand beside their shields, firm in the face of death,
> But I should flee as a coward? . . .[603]

Pierced by his own sword, he hurls himself from the bastion into the dragon's gorge. In the lost *Phrixus* Ino, Athem's second wife, bribes the emissaries to Delphi to announce that the oracle demands the death of the king's son, who, once again, offers himself freely as a sacrifice, which only the discovery of the intrigue prevents.[604] In *Erechtheus*, also lost, it is the king who must sacrifice his daughter in order to save Athens, and on this occasion it is Praxithea, the mother, who willingly gives the child up and persuades her husband of the rightness of this attitude and deed in a fine speech. The two sisters of the girl to be sacrificed follow her to the grave on account of vows made previously, and the play ends with the 'stellafication' of Erechtheus' daughers.[605]

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[598] *Heracl.* 402–409.
[599] *Heracl.* 530–531.
[600] *Heracl.* 547, 558–559.
[601] *Heracl.* 590–596.
[602] *Phoen.* 951–952.
[603] *Phoen.* 995–1001.

We also find the free, wholly unpolitical, acceptance of a fate which is imposed by external forces, as with Megara, Heracles' persecuted wife.[606] And then, in *Hecube*, there is the voluntary death of Polyxena, Hecuba's daughter, who makes known thereby her royal spirit and escapes slavery. It is also beneath her dignity to plead with Odysseus for her life, as her mother would wish her to.[607] The idea that her willing death is a death for love, so that she may follow her dead bridegroom Achilles, belongs to a later, Hellenistic version. But Euripides dramatises just such a death for love in the *Suppliant Women*, when Evadne clad in her bridal dress throws herself from a cliff onto Capaneus' pyre:[608]

> For the sweetest death is to die
> With a dying friend.[609]
> Heart to heart, embracing and embraced,
> I shall float down into Persephone's house.[610]

In the lost *Protesilaus*, a drama full of the pathos of death, Laodamia is the death bride who brings her dead husband (the first to fall at Troy) back by her longing and, since he must part from her, follows him to the grave.[611]

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[604] This material has already been worked by Sophocles in his *Athamas*, but again the voluntary nature of the sacrifice is the invention of Euripides. *Cf.* Johanna Schmitt: *Freiwilliger Opfertod bei Euripides*, Rel. wiss. Versuche u. Vorarbeiten 17, 2 (1921) 71–72.

[605] Schmitt loc. cit. 63–69.

[606] *Her.* 278–311.

[607] *Hec.* 342–378.

[608] Schmitt loc. cit. 103.

[609] *Hiket.* 1006–1007.

[610] *Hiket.* 1021–1022.

[611] Schmitt loc. cit. 76–77.

This theme finds perhaps its purest form, again against a background of patriotism, in the unfinished *Iphigenia in Aulis* where Euripides once again is the first to draw out the victim's free choice of death and to place it at the centre of the action. Here it is the evolution of the heroine herself, from being a woman who pleads for her life to one who is steadfastly set on death for Hellas, the progressing beyond the *philopsychia*[612] (as clinging to one's own life) into a clear readiness to play the role of a sacrifice. The unyielding divine wrath of the affronted Artemis is only a prior condition in the background, as all the light falls on the hopeless situation of the father (because the whole Trojan war hangs on the sacrifice of his daughter)[613] and on Iphigenia's heroic decision, who now willingly does what in earlier plays[614] was forced upon her. Nowhere do the poet's own feelings so clearly emerge as in this play: for him the ritualised human sacrifice demanded by the gods is a hideous act and, from the point of view of the murdering father, a crime. Even for Agamemnon the deed is 'nefariously unlawful',[615] is 'murder'.[616] Clytemnestra sees in him a murderer who will never again be able to pray[617] and Iphigenia believes herself to be 'murdered and destroyed through the criminal sword of a criminal father'.[618] In *Iphigenia in Tauris* the poet called the human sacrifices 'an abomination to the Hellenes'.[619] The deed is 'hideous' for Agamemnon and he can perform it only because 'Hellas compels me to, for Hellas must be free'.[620] But it is not this Greek Abraham who plays the major role, although the poet illumines his soul more deeply than does Genesis the Jewish one (and in both cases the sacrifice goes as far as the preparation of the altar, the binding of the sacrifice, the raising of the sword and even its singing descent), but the Greek Isaac, upon whose free assent everything after all depends. The child's same question to its father,[621] in the end the same willingness, which however is drawn out in far more detail from Iphigenia (as if anticipating the 'true Isaac'):

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[612] *Hec.* 348; *Her.* 518. See Hans Strohm: 'Euripides Interpretationen zur dramat. Form', *Zetemata* 15 (1957), 54.

[613] *Iph. Aul.* 92–93.

[614] In the lost *Iphigenia* by Aeschylus and in Euripides' first *Iphigenia* 24f., 359f.

[615] *Iph. Aul.* 399.

[616] *Iph. Aul.* 512.

[617] *Iph. Aul.* 1185.

[618] *Iph. Aul.* 1317–1318.

[619] *Iph. Taur.* 465–466.

[620] *Iph. Aul.* 1257, 1273–1275.

> . . . My firm intent is to die . . .
> And if Artemis desires my life as bloody sacrifice,
> Should I oppose her, o gods, a mortal one?
> No, impossible! I shall give Hellas my body as a
> sacrifice.
> Kill me, destroy Troy! For I shall have an eternal
> memorial:
> My children, my marriage and my renown.[622]

She is so much the sacrificial victim that Agamemnon in *Iphigenia in Tauris* makes a vow to Artemis beforehand which is similar to that of Jephthah in the Old Testament.[623] Whether she, like Jephthah's daughter, is actually killed, or whether she is stolen away by the goddess at the last moment and, as in the Isaac story, is replaced with a hind is immaterial. In both religions it is a question of the absolute gravity of human sacrifice, though in the Old Testament more weight is placed on complete obedience to Jahweh, while in Euripides the stress is on the inner overcoming of necessity by an act of free acceptance. Subliminally the possibility and the reality of human sacrifice is discernible at many points in the Old Testament, not only as an abomination.[624] In the twilight area between symbol and reality there is an adumbration of Golgotha. This is true also of Euripides in the twilight area between the mythical foundation and psychological elevation, which is presupposed for the action. Here there is a divine, and thus absolute, commandment which is so eclipsed by the power of the self-sacrificial heart that is seems to have lost its divine character.[625] The complete fragmentation, contradiction and bitterness of Euripides' world, even the problem of guilt which is so insistent in Sophocles' work, retreat into the background and appear to have attained a peaceful centre of reconciliation in the sacrifice of love. The latter is glory in existence and in art, a glory which finally radiates more strongly however from the human heart and its wonders than it does from the divine world. There are theophanies but they serve the ends of a human transfiguration. The gods are guilty of violently hewing in half the knots which they themselves have tied and which cannot be loosed by purely worldly means, in order to impose harmony onto a helpless and insoluble fate (as in *Orestes* or *Ion*), when the humbled human figures are not finally bodily raised into a higher state of being, as in the *Medea*. But this is the exception; even the final 'stellafication' is not to be read in terms of a Platonic identity between the soul in Heaven and the soul on Earth, but rather as a reflex back to Homer's law of distinction.

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[621] *Iph. Aul.* 671ff.

[622] *Iph. Aul.* 1375, 1395–1399.

[623] *Iph. Taur.* 20f.

[624] As well as Abraham and Jephthah, *cf.* 2 Kings 3.27, Mic. 6–7 and Yahweh's 'right to the first born'. Bibliography in RGG^3 art. 'Menschenopfer' and 'Moloch'.

d. The emergence of the mysterious radiance of glory in Euripides must occur essentially in an extreme threat to existence: in ultimate impotence and abandonment, in subjection to brutal and hostile forces, in inescapable death,. Thus Achilles can say to Iphigenia, who has determined on death: 'In choosing the unavoidable, you choose the beautiful',[626] and Clytemnestra concedes to her 'Yes, child. I want to follow you, for you spoke beautifully', whereupon Iphigenia replies 'I am blessed as the country's saviour'.[627] There is an easy beauty which stands in contrast to the good: 'It is not fitting to use beautiful words when performing an ugly deed',[628] 'your words are beautiful but abominable'.[629] But is this not the beauty of which it can be said: 'δ τι καλὸν φίλον ἀεί'[630] ('the beautiful is always dear'), for the latter is that righteousness (between human actions and divine grace) which is luminous with its own truth. External beauty is undoubtedly a valued possession (Helen is divinised on account of her beauty)[631] but because it is not identical to the final glory, it is the cause of tragedy: Helen's beauty is hateful[632] (both for others and for herself), for it 'brings about her ruin'.[633] Man's upward gaze to this sign from Heaven in the midst of transience and delusion becomes at the same time doom and expiation in accordance with the gods' will for men, as Apollo explains to Menelaus:

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[625] For a different view, see Lesky: *Die griechische Tragödie*, 217.

[626] *Iph. Aul.* 1409.

[627] *Iph. Aul.* 1445–1446.

[628] *Phoen.* 526.

[629] *Hipp.* 503.

> Take someone else to wife; forget her.
> The gods created such beauty, beyond all dreams,
> In order to sow grief and death,
> So that Greek and Trojan would each thirst for it,
> Fighting and dying, to expunge the great number
> And guilt of mankind on the ancient earth.[634]

In this respect the transcendent power of earthly beauty leads to death: the vision of the highest beauty destroys, just as Semele, desiring to see the glory of Zeus, was struck down by his lightening bolt and turned to ashes.[635] And yet its fascination becomes the model of existence which, in its own destruction, freely radiates its glory. Thus worldy beauty can appear as a delusion, as the whole Trojan War was fought over a phantasm,[636] as even the real Helen proves to men to be 'apparition' (τέρας):[637] indeed, its radiance in emptiness and nothingness can almost assume the characteristics of the Buddhist Maya.[638] This is why there can be no happiness on earth, no *eudaimonia*.[639] But the Greek miracle remains that men and women do not turn from life and from suffering on account of the extreme fragility of the beautiful, but endure the ultimate in horror, in the consciousness that being is worth an absolute and loving assent.

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[630] *Bacch.* 881.
[631] *Hel.* 1667.
[632] *Hel.* 27–28.
[633] *Hel.* 305.
[634] *Or.* 1638f.
[635] *Bacch.* 6f.
[636] *Hel.* 31–36.
[637] *Hel.* 256.
[638] *Perhaps in the Trojan Woman, cf.* Andromache's speech (634f.), to the extent that Hecuba explains the phenomenon of Helen and the judgment of Paris.

> οὐκ ἔστ' ἐραστὴς ὅστις οὐκ ἀεὶ φιλεῖ
> He who does not love always, does not truly love.[640]

Certainly this love cannot endure to the end, because the gods do not reciprocate it to the end. The goddess Artemis responds to the tender love which exists between herself and Hippolytus and which allows him to sense her invisible presence, with a certain compassion, but she must depart from him in death.[641] A sense of virginal glory surrounds Hippolytus and yet his character is darkened, as with Aeschylus' Danaids, by a hardened misogyny.[642] Love certainly knows the law of incomprehensible election[643] but the common instruction that 'each loves himself more than his neighbour' fades away.[644] And Jocasta urges a forgiveness on her sons which forgets the evil which has happened, as she urges them to leave judgment to the god;[645] but man (and the poet for him) must take hold of vengeance for the sake of justice. Thus love remains shrouded in darkness. Only 'renown' is truly radiant, which remains inseparable from the act of self-sacrifice and of which those who sacrifice themselves are fully aware. Since they expect no personal reward in the beyond, their sense of the measure and the balance of things finds peace in the thought of posthumous renown. In *Alcestis*, the *Heracleidae*, the *Phoenissae*, the *Hiketides*, in the last *Iphigenia*, in *Erechtheus* the δόξα, the εὐκλεία and the κλέος are the transfiguring moment whether the person who dies claims renown for themselves[646] or the chorus claim it on their behalf ('No poets will celebrate you in song')[647] or whether the glory inherent in the deed manifests on itself. Renown is (as in the Old Testament) no external addition but is the eternal dimension which belongs to the mortal dimension of a self-transcending act.

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[639] *Med.* 1228.
[640] *Tro.* 1051.
[641] *Hipp.* 1389f.
[642] *Hipp.* 616–668.
[643] *Hipp.* 104.
[644] *Med.* 86.
[645] *Phoen.* 461–468.
[646] *Heracl.* 534; *Iph. Aul.* 1398; *Alc.* 323–325.

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[647] *Alc.* 445f.; *Heracl.* 537–538, 621–624; *Iph. Aul.* 1304.

B. PHILOSOPHY

1. TRANSITION TO PHILOSOPHY

The world of myth was fundamentally dialogical: glory streamed forth from the personally divine on to mankind who dared to interpret his temporal existence in this light. All artistic creation has its origin in this setting. The tragedy of Greek art was that the heart had to make increasingly superhuman efforts to understand each time how its most extreme situations could be encompassed by the divine light—even when this light revealed itself as the divine night—until at last the power of the human heart outweighed the power of the gods and its love really entered such a state as Rilke required (according to whom indeed man raises himself above the 'angels'): so that love shines forth into the infinite as the ray of the heart without any answering partner and thereby perhaps creates the God 'who will hear us in the end'.[1]

Myth rested on tradition which had to be received in faith and in the same act of faith justified prayer as cult and rite: it was not its nature to stray into the realm of knowledge. There is no 'fundamental theology' of myth. But the question how far knowledge extends could no longer be suppressed. Knowledge is that for which man possesses the criteria for verification in himself, in his reason. The undertaking that plots the limits to what reason can achieve in its investigations has borne, since the time of Plato, the name of philosophy. The realm of philosophy could be fitted without a break to the realm of myth because this reaching out after the whole of being must stretch out beyond the existent which is immediately to hand, because reason can understand itself only as an act of transcendence (beyond the 'human world') which must then reach up to a 'divine world' (however this is understood). The one, unique, fundamental question of all philosophy remains this: Has the act of transcendence already found the transcendent object? Is it, as act, therefore one with its object or not? Is the light in which we accomplish the act of transcendence identical with the illumination of transcendence? Or, to put the question another way: Can the light of reason bring the radiance and the glory of myth within its purview?

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[1] On this see my *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele* (1939), vol. III, 227–230, 253–254.

Initially the answer is in any case in the negative. Reason which inquires about being as a whole is a 'monological' act. At the point where philosophy becomes historically observable the dialogical act of prayer is cut off at a stroke. This break indicates the line of separation. In place of the daring of the heart there is knowledge which keeps itself to itself. It is just this line that marks a separation in the history of the human spirit between what had hitherto been depicted as 'glory', to which ancient and early classical art bore witness, and what in the future, in the age of philosophy (which is here less a chronological than a substantial 'later'), will be called the 'beautiful'. This has, as it were an upper limit which separates it from the 'glorious', which it does not, and cannot really attain: the 'sublime', which was to play such a significant role in the time of Kant and Goethe. When Schiller uses his Catholic material as a would-be myth, he is not in any way concerned with its own inherent revealed truth but with the 'sublime' self-interpretation of the human heart which may occur against this background (of 'faith').

Reason, which wants to assure itself of the viability of its own transcendence into being, into the immutable, divine world, must at least 'bracket off', methodically suspend, the act of glorifying God; its undertaking will therefore necessarily assume at least the appearance of titanism, of the storming of Olympus by its own power: 'the spectacle of the Titanic nature of which our old legends speak is re-enacted' (τὴν παλαιὰν Τισανικὴν φῦσιν).[2] Where philosophy first comes to our notice as an ethos, with Parmenides and Heraclitus, it is tuned to a pitch of overbearing ferocity, which is then refined with Socrates and in Plato's whole work to a subtle philosophical irony, a vital element with Plato in particular, which permits him to speak of the transcendent with the inspiration of yearning love ἔρως and equally with a reflective reserve: to use myths in the service of conceptual clarity and at the same time to transcend them dialectically and in this continual twilight duet to create a completely new form of beauty and bring it to its highest perfection, a form of beauty that is recognised as the flower of Attic 'humanism' (and the model for each future humanism right into the modern period): beauty as a measured equilibrium of human gesture and bearing, refined in the great 'middle' dialogues—as the *Phaedo*, the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*—to such an art that they already border on cultivated 'society' art, on *salon* philosophy. The later dialogues transcend these dangers of an immanence that harmoniously includes all within itself and Aristotle will retain only a 'scientific' diction (but where does his original accent come through?)

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[2] Plato, *Laws* III.701C.

At the outset, a brief moment of transition, with little consequence: *Xenophanes*, the first Eleatic: still a rhapsodic poet and yet already a philosophical theologian, he makes a clean sweep of the 'inventions of earlier times': of God noble things should be sung and 'not the battles of Titans or giants or centaurs';[3] and he equally rejects the Pindaric cult of heroes.[4] The multitude of the gods is a human fabrication: 'Εἶς Θεός, One God, the greatest among the gods and men',[5] one who 'sees as a whole, thinks as a whole, hears as a whole',[6] 'always he remains in the same place, moving not at all';[7]—and it is precisely of the divine that there is no 'clear vision', no 'knowledge based on evidence'.[8]

This monotheistic, theological purism could not prevail. Xenophanes' disciple, PARMENIDES of Elea, unswervingly transposed his doctrine of One God into a philosophical doctrine of one being. The very first lines of his didactic poem are a direct witness to a birth of universal significance: the birth of philosophy in the ecstatic transition of the thinker out of the realm of appearance into the realm of the truth of thought and being. With echoes of Pindar but on the whole with fresh inspiration, Parmenides depicts his rapid ascent in the chariot of the Muses, drawn by 'all-wise steeds', who drive him, the 'man who knows', on the 'way of the goddess' among the daughters of the sun up into the realm of absolute being. The axles scream, blazing as they whirl; a headlong rush of images depicts the majestic progress out of 'the abode of night into the light', while the maidens 'threw back the veils from off their faces', up to 'the gates of the ways of Night and Day', the bolts of which are controlled by avenging *Dikê*, the goddess of justice who, at the maidens' gentle entreaty, unfastens them and greets the chosen youth:

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[3] Diels-Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (8th edn., 1956) 21 B 1; against the anthropomorphism of the poets, *cf.* B 11, 14, 15.

[4] 21 B 2.

[5] 21 B 23.

[6] 21 B 24.

[7] 21 B 26.

[8] 21 B 34. Similarly Alcamaeon of Croton: 24 B 1 etc.

> . . . Meet it is that thou shouldst learn all things,
> As well the unshaken heart of well-rounded truth,
> As the opinion of mortals in which is no true belief at
> all.[9]

The goddess of justice, *Dikê*, now construed as the genius of 'fairness',[10] will explain to the enraptured youth the realm of pure being and its opposite, the realm of appearance. The mythical context and the goddess herself are clearly only a cover for an ecstasy of a quite new kind: the yearning of the philosopher and his breaking through to being.[11] This ascent to being effects a radical division in the world: between on the one hand the true world of the philosopher, in which it is permitted to contemplate only pure being without any admixture of negativity or potentiality, the One without the manifold, Eternity without time, the All-present without the dissipation of space, in the perfection of its absolute determination like a well-rounded ball,[12] the identity of being and knowing[13]—and on the other the seeming order of the seeming world with its seeming knowlege, in which everything is polarized into light and night,[14] making room for becoming and therefore for *erôs*, which 'begins all the works of hateful birth and begetting'.[15] Of the common people who cannot accomplish the ascent of the philosopher there is nothing but the loftiest scorn:[16] they 'wander helplessly, two-headed', and 'are carried along, deaf and blind at once, altogether dazed', with them there rules only 'the aimless eye, the echoing ear and the tongue'.[17] As far as the substance is concerned, this elevation over the seeming world and the wheel of becoming and of birth and death, is close to Indian ideas of redemption and the way too that Parmenides speaks so often and with such precision of the 'way' and of the occurrence of an experience which is one with both knowing and being equally points to the East.[18] But the ever-present sense of violent break-through, subduing and overcoming,[19] shows clearly that here we have to do with something quite different from a serene dissolving into the stillness of Nirvana.

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[9] 28 B 1 (Following Burnet's translation, reprinted in Kirk and Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, Cambridge, 1957).

[10] Unlike Hirzel (*Themis, Dike und Verwandtes*, 1907) and Ehrenberg (*Die Rechtsidee im frühen Griechentum*, 1921) Fränkel (*Wege und Formen*, 162–163) has been able to allot the new philosophical *dikê* its correct place in the history of language: as fairness of consequences, the norm of objective thinking and being. The transition to the Platonic *dikaiosynê* (*Republic* 433B) as 'essentially just dealing' is therefore conceded.

[11] Karl Deichgräber, *Parmenides' Auffahrt zur Göttin des Rechts. Untersuchungen zum Prooimion seines Lehrgedichts* (Abh. der Mainzer Akademie, 1958), 633–724.

His contemporary, HERACLITUS of Ephesus, at the other end of the world in both the geographical and philosophical senses, confirms this. If, with Parmenides, transcendence divides his world-picture in two horizontally, so that as a result there is only left the round ball of being, with Heraclitus the Absolute, the Eternal, and hence the object of true knowing is identified as that Logos which underlies everything as the unity of the world-contraries that ceaselessly flow into one another. Each pole of the antinomies conditions its opposite pole: 'Disease makes health pleasant and good, hunger satiety, weariness rest';[20] more radically: 'And as the same thing there exists in things what is living and dead, waking and sleeping, young and old: for these things having changed round are those, and those having changed round are these.'[21] 'It rests in change.'[22] Used ethically: 'The name of right would not be known, were it not for this [the wrong].'[23] And finally used religiously, that is, raised into the field of view of absolute knowledge: 'To god all things are beautiful and good and just, but men have supposed some things to be unjust, others just.'[24] The objective and subjective truth is a seeing together of existence in which all the parts exist for each other, through each other and in each other, a truth which necessarily and expressly includes within itself the mutuality of gods and men. In one colossal stroke Heraclitus understands and cuts through the knots of the myths and the tragedies: 'Mortally immortal, immortally mortal, living each other's death, dying each other's life.'[25] Parmenides achieves transcendence over all becoming in being in ecstasy, initiated by *Dikê* in the true and the false way. Heraclitus achieves transcendence as he hears in the eternal becoming the 'disposition' (ἁρμονίη) of the contrasting sounds meeting in harmony,[26] the 'back-stretched connexion, as in the bow and the lyre',[27] so that 'justice is strife'[28] and 'war the father of all and king of all',[29] because justice means both law and 'trial' ('legal process'),[30] for Heraclitus a law which is established in no other way than *in* continual process. Harmony always presupposes opposition (for instance, of higher and lower notes); if 'the most beautiful order in the world is like an overturned rubbish heap',[31] then it needs the vision of a philosopher to see this beauty; nevertheless 'an unapparent disposition (ἁρμονίη) is stronger than an apparent one.'[32] Only the philosopher has that 'trust' in the Absolute that makes this familiar again and does not let it withdraw;[33] only he can bear to live always beneath the eye of the Logos which is like the sun: 'How can anyone hide himself from that which neversets?'[34]

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[12] 28 B 8.

[13] 28 B 3. For the mind there is no absence, it gathers every existent into being: B 4.

[14] 28 B 9.

[15] 28 B 13, 12.

[16] 28 B 6.

[17] 28 B 7.

[18] G. Söhngen has made for this important concept a bridge to the West: *Der Weg*.

[19] Convincing worked out by H. Fränkel: *Dichtung und Philosophie*, 420–421.

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[20] 22 B 111; *cf. Phaedo* 60B, 70C.

[21] 22 B 88.

[22] 22 B 84a.

[23] 22 B 23.

[24] 22 B 102.

[25] 22 B 62; *cf.* 77.

[26] 22 A 22, B 8.

[27] 22 B 51; *cf.* the word-play in 48: 'The name of the (stretched) bow is therefore life but its work is death' (βιός = the stretched bow, βίος = life). Also frag. 10: 'Something which is being brought together and brought

For that reason we find that lofty words of scorn for the stupidity of the common people are more frequent here and more marked than with Parmenides.[35] That the dictum that common humanity is like swine 'sunk in a veritable slough of ignorance' stems from Heraclitus and forms the germ of Plato's allegory of the cave has been convincingly shown by Hermann Fränkel.[36] For him too the world of men is divided into the countless ones (οἱ πολλοί) who are sunk in a permanent doze and the very few who are awake[37] and who alone count.[38] The many are only fit to be tossed about in the wheel of birth and death, for indeed they will it so;[39] 'the

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apart, which is in tune and out of tune; out of all things there comes a unity and out of a unity all things.'

[28] 22 B 80.

[29] 22 B 52.

[30] Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie*, 429.

[31] 22 B 124. This unapparentness corresponds to the odourlessness of oil, with which scents of every and opposing variety are mixed and which symbolises the logos: B 67. Restoration and interpretation of the text by H. Fränkel: *Wege and Formen*, 237–250.

[32] 22 B 54.

[33] 22 B 86.

[34] 22 B 16.

[35] Plato, *Republic*, VII 533D.

[36] *Wege und Formen*, 253–257. Also the fragments 37, 13, 5.

[37] 22 B 1.

[38] 22 B 49.

[39] 22 B 20.

majority are glutted like cattle', while the best 'choose everlasting glory above all that is transitory'.[40] The majority live like those in a dream, each of whom has a separate world, while only those who see emerge to possess a common world.[41] The renunciation of myth is complete: Homer must be driven out; Hesiod has not understood the most decisive thing (the distinction of day and night).[42] The cult too belongs to the realm of folly[43] or of shamelessness:[44] which of the corybants perceive the real identity of Dionysus and Hades?

Thus that which is wise remains for Heraclitus, who sees the one in everything, 'something separated (κεχωρισμένον) from all',[45] something indeed 'untraceable and unapproachable', unless, indeed, the philosopher should hope for and risk the impossible: 'If he did not hope for that which is unhoped-for, he would not find it.'[46] Should one call this unspeakable thing compounded of all opposites God? 'God is day night, winter summer, war peace, satiety hunger.'[47] But the name of God remains unimpugned: 'The one, only truly wise one, does not and does consent to be called by the name of Zeus',[48] just as with Sophocles Zeus was all and held sway over all[49] and at the very same time became the wholly absent. The divine is not transcendent spirit (in spite of fragment 108), rather it is best grasped by the concept of that which endures in charge, indeed of the proportion (or harmony) that governs it.

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[40] 22 B 29.

[41] 22 B 1, 2, 73 (whose genuineness is doubted), 89, 113, 114. In this continually repeated *koinon* there lies concealed the superseding of metaphysical individuality (*cf.* 119) which Plato too will sacrifice for similar considerations. Heraclitus' man in life also touches death (21, 26, 77), soul is only a proportion between changing elements (12; *cf.* Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie* 432, 439) and is at the same time limitlessness (45) and in that a 'self-expanding sense' (115), in elementary terms rapture into the most clear, the fiery (118, 117), a launching oneself into the all-fire (30, 31, 64).

[42] 22 B 42, 57, 105–106.

[43] 22 B 5.

[44] 22 B 15; *cf* 20.

[45] 22 B 108.

[46] 22 B 18.

[47] 22 B 67.

[48] 22 B 32.

[49] Closing lines of the *Trachiniae*.

It is just this ruling concept that returns to dominate the centre with a third, legendary founder-figure, PYTHAGORAS. Even though we possess no writings of the founder himself nor any reliable information, powerful impulses emanate from him through every century up to our own time, as there are also undoubted links with Plato[50] who in his maturity and his old age opens himself more and more to the Pythagorean vision. Between a religious ethics (with the orphic doctrine of the transmigration of souls as background) and an arithmetical and geometric understanding of the world, there stretches a bridge, mediated by the insight (in the end known to every builder of musical instruments) that the harmony between notes rests on the relationship of numbers, so that the qualitative (in the sensible and the spiritual realm) and the quantitative (expressed in numbers) correspond to each other exactly. A. v. Thimus' *Harmonikale Symbolik des Altertums* (1868–76), which was continued by the work of Hans Keyser, pointed to the all-embracing importance of this principle.[51] The foursome (as *tetraktys*, 1 + 2 + 3 + 4, a holy tensome, by which the Pythagoreans had to swear their oaths) of arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy, for the Romans the *quadrivium*, remains into the Middle Ages the indispensable basic foundation even of Christian theology and is equally the germ of modern natural science: music here is not only music as we know it but it passes over without a break (as Plato shows) into the whole art of the Muses—hence *music*—in the sense of bringing harmony to the whole man, both body and soul. This all-embracing doctrine of harmony is, with the other three disciplines, 'mathematics', that is, literally what is teachable in the total Pythagorean sense, which stretches from concrete particularities (with his ethos of silence, of a secret society and his discipline of obedience) to an exact calculus of reality, something that again and again in the history of the West has tended to become a *mathesis universalis*. When Plato in the *Meno* draws out of an uneducated slave a mathematical proof by 'recollection'—that is Pythagorean; the founder was noted for the fact that he had conscious knowledge of all his previous incarnations,[52] and because, as Plato puts it in Pythagorean fashion, the 'kindred affinity of all nature' makes it possible that 'the souls of all things retain knowledge', so that there lies in the immortal soul an at least potential all-knowing, a totality which can be actualised by being drawn out. Empedocles had praised Pythagoras for such 'effortless vision', 'whensoever he strained with all his mind';[53] Parmenides had expressed something similar in the first verse of his didactic poem, that the steeds of the gods had drawn him, the 'knowing man', as far as his 'will had desired.[54]

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[50] Erich Frank, *Plato und die sogenannten Pythagoreer* (Halle, 1923); Julius Stenzel, *Zahl und Gestalt bei Platon und Aristoteles* (3rd edn., 1959).

[51] Philolaus: 44 A 11.

The world of philosophy emerges, we may say in a summary fashion, with three new themes which take the place of the mythical. First with a claim to totality, a claim raised by knowledge. This may admit of an analogical grading but it cannot renounce the claim to grasp the All (in whatever manner) in a drawing together of the divine and the human spheres; the initial juxtaposition of the worlds which we saw in Homer, is no longer acceptable whatever the consequences for the nature of the *theion*, of the divine. The second theme is that of the ascent, the transcending of the *a posteriori* in an *a priori* vision, in which philosophical knowledge itself is realised; this will appear in Plato as the theme of the ascent of *eros*, which is as such formally opposed to the theme of mythical theophanies. The third motif which is interwoven with the other two is that of harmony or proportion[55] or of total (quantitative-qualitative) mathematics in the most all-embracing sense, and this in turn will provide the key to the development of the philosophical notion of the beautiful—in combination with the motif of unity-totality and of the rapture of *erôs*. Speculation about the 'beautiful' is therefore allotted an historical and objective context, which imposes *a priori* limits on it which run differently from the boundaries and the questionableness of the 'glory' of the mythical world. This context must be kept in mind in everything that follows.

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[52] 14 A 8; *cf. Meno* 81AC.

[53] 31 B 129.

[54] 28 B 1.

[55] Democritus (Diels, 68 A 167) is possibly the first historically to locate the happiness of the soul in harmony; if this is correct then the Italian Pythagoreans took over this doctrine of harmony from him, and Archytas, Plato's friend would then have introduced him to it *Cf.* Frank, op. cit. 10.

2. PLATO

a. The Witness to the Truth

'The beautiful is difficult', χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά: five times at important junctures in Plato's work this proverb rings out. It occurs as the final sentence of the *Greater Hippias*, in which the attempt at a definition of the beautiful founders;[56] at the beginning of the *Cratylus* Socrates uses the proverb to issue a warning against taking up the inquiry about names too readily.[57] In the *Republic* on the first occasion it introduces the discussion of the parts of the soul,[58] on the second occasion it concerns the most difficult of the subjects Plato struggles with: the relation of philosophy and politics—today, he says, it has become almost impossible to philosophise in the public sphere.[59] In the *Sophist* the saying occurs at the high-point of the investigation into being, where Parmenides is refuted while his basic insight is still incorporated and where the tone, as rarely with Plato, becomes triumphal: he who will not believe this must put forward something better; to grumble against it like the sophist is 'neither clever nor difficult, whereas here now is something both difficult and beautiful'.[60] Accordingly in the *Phaedrus*: 'It is beautiful both to strive for what is beautiful and to bear whatever suffering lies in store for us.'[61]

What is beautiful to the poets is not binding and thus the philosopher bans them from his *Politeia*: they compose (to do and to compose are for the Greeks the same word: ποιεῖν) but not 'by wisdom but by nature and as inspired, like the prophets and givers of oracles'[62] or, put more soberly, 'by the unconscious (ἀφροσύνη), for no man achieves true and inspired divination when in his rational mind . . . for it was well said of old that to do and to know one's own and oneself belongs only to him who is sound of mind'; the prophets, in so far as they rationally understand the meaning of the oracles, do not therefore belong to the soothsayers (Paul: speakers in tongues).[63] Homer, Hesiod, Simonides, Pindar and the three tragedians are continually cited by Plato, either to be agreed with or rejected, but they are not authorities and the philosopher has better things to do than to rescue them with allegorisation.[64] He inquires after the truth not in 'graceful oratory' but 'quite simply' and that alone in his 'power of speech'.[65] 'Truth holds the first place among gods and men alike.'[66] The 'earnest, tragic poets' and the myth-makers, who knock at the gates of the new *polis*, will only be admitted when they have been subjected to the test of truth. 'Respected visitors,' so will come the answer from within, 'we are ourselves authors of a tragedy and that the finest and best we know how to make. In fact, our whole polity has been constructed as a dramatization (μίμησις) of a noble and perfect life; that is what we hold to be in truth the most real of tragedies,' so we are both 'rival artists . . . in the finest of all dramas.'[67] But the dramatic poet is involved simultaneously in all his characters and is thus forced to contradict himself, while 'it is not the legislator's business in his law to make two such statements about one and the same topic.'[68] In fact Plato, who began as a poet and to the end deeply loved the poets, broke with them because, for him, tragedy had been carried over from the stage into reality. Socrates, whom he moreover endowed with all the burlesque wit of comedy, who has translated the dialogue of the theatre into his existential dialogue and 'always wanders about helplessly subject to a demonic fate',[69] for he has both speech and reply within himself—this Socrates died as a witness to the truth and thereby created a tragedy which overshadowed in its everyday reality all earlier examples. He is one who in his life-time has come to 'endure so much evil' (ὑπομένειν) from both sides that he can ask 'whether it is better to live or to be dead'.[70] He philosophises on the knife-edge between life and death,[71] as indeed it is characteristic of any *erôs* that it is ready to die for its offspring.[72] He lives as one who is ready to die for the truth and therefore will not fail to be 'one of the few, not to say the only one', who will be put to death for it.[73] It is as such that Plato depicts him. The legal authority which Socrates obeys to the point of death is ambiguous: on the one hand it is 'that higher being, be it god or man',[74] whom, in spite of his love for the Athenians, he 'wills rather to obey as a god, than you'[75] and this he calls his 'good protective spirit' (δαιμόνιον);[76] and further there are the 'laws' which, should he wish to flee from prison, would pose him most personal questions and obstacles,[77] to which

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[56] *Hippias major* 304E. Text according to the Oxford edn. of Burnet. English translation as in the Loeb Classical Library, except for the *Republic* (Cornford) and the *Laws* (Taylor). The translations have sometimes been modified to preserve the literalness of the German translation used by Balthasar.

[57] *Crat.* 384B.

[58] *Rep.* IV.435C.

[59] *Rep.* VI.497D.

[60] *Soph.* 259C.

[61] *Phaedr.* 274AB.

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[62] *Apol.* 22BC.

[63] *Tim.* 71E–72A; *Laws* IV.719C.

[64] *Rep.* II.378DE. Socrates has no time for it: *Phaedr.* 229E.

[65] *Apol.* 17B.

[66] *Laws* V.730C.

[67] *Laws* VII.817BC.

[68] *Laws* IV.719C.

[69] *Hipp. maj.* 304CD.

[70] *Ibid.* E.

[71] *Phaedo* 67E.

[72] *Symp.* 207B.

[73] *Gorg.* 521D: 'It would be no marvel if I were put to death.' 521E: 'I shall be like a doctor tried by a bench of children on a charge brought by a cook.' *Rep.* II.368B: 'I am afraid to commit a sin by holding aloof while I have breath and strength to say a word in defence of justice.' *Laws* VIII.835C: 'It will need a bold man, a man who puts plain speaking before everything, to declare his real belief about the true interest of State and citizens, and make the regulations the whole social system requires and demands in a corrupt age; a man who will oppose the passions at their strongest and stand alone in his loyalty to the voice of truth (λόγος) without one creature on earth to second him.' On the blessedness of these 'higher men': *Laws* XII.951B.

[74] *Apol.* 29B.

[75] *Apol.* 29D.

[76] *Euthyd.* 272E, *cf.* below.

[77] *Crito* 50Bff.

he owes everything and through which he is 'betrothed' to the *polis*:[78] this unity of immediate, divine instruction and earthly, hallowed tradition is as valid for the Socrates of the early dialogues as for the aged master of the 'Laws'.[79]

The death of the witness to the truth is but the last act of a long prepared and unavoidable tragedy which develops only as a result of philosophy: because the philosopher wills the truth without any conditions—and ἀλήθεια indeed means literally reality, as it is—he therefore divides men into two groups: those who serve truth and are pledged to it, and those who let truth serve them and are not pledged to it. According to the intellectual and historical situation of the time this either-or between the binding and the not-binding could appear as the 'ancient war', a matter of life and death, 'between philosophy and poetry'.[80] But, more deeply, this front was the more brutal struggle between the service of truth and the egoism of power for which any ideology is right if only it increases power. The system of power still is revealed and branded in the dialogues about the sophists with superior philosophical irony; by about the *Gorgias* it is expounded by the sophist himself;[81] but finally quite plainly defended by Callicles as the pure morality of the powerful: the more power nature gives anyone, the more right it gives too; laws of equality are devised by the weak and philosophy completely spoils youth.[82] In the *Republic* this emerges with final earnestness. The standpoint of power is set forth with ever greater brutality: from Thrasymachus[83] to Glaucon [84] to Adeimantus who cynically unmasks the hidden egoism of the pious as a 'morality of reward'.[85] A little philosophy may be useful in the service of human greatness and culture[86] but in the end to be 'righteous' is simply not to have enough power to be the opposite.[87]

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[78] *Crito* 51E, 52C.

[79] Here Soloviev needs to be corrected (*cf.* vol. II, 653), in so far as he sees the tragedy of the history of philosophy in the fact that Plato forgot the master of his youth.

[80] *Rep.* 607B.

[81] *Gorg.* 456ff. In the *Meno* (73CD) a definition of virtue is given by Gorgias: the power to hold sway over men.

[82] *Gorg.* 482C–484E.

[83] *Rep.* I.338C. 'Thus injustice, if it is pursued cleverly, is something stronger and nobler and more powerful than justice': *ibid.* I.344C.

[84] *Rep.* II.358D–362C.

In order to reduce the position of the philosopher to absurdity, Glaucon develops this extreme hypothesis: a righteous man, who willed only real truth, would have to renounce everything else, not only any worldly power but even appearing to be righteous. The consequence will be that 'our just man will be thrown into prison, scourged and racked, will have his eyes burnt out, and, after every kind of torment, be crucified. That will teach him how much better it is to *seem* virtuous than to *be* so.'[88] It is not the rebel who appears here on the cross, as in Aeschylus, but the completely just man who can be stripped of everything, except the truth. Why does Plato not let his master mention the cup of poison? Death on the cross is the most ignominious possible, intended only for slaves, and it could well be that the disciple here 'has worked over his memories of a genuine historical conversation with his master Socrates, in which he gave expression to the possible outcome of his conflict with public opinion'; he reckoned not only with his death but with 'execution of a violent kind'.[89] The connection between philosophy's first martyr and Golgotha is uncanny; it is also very Western because the 'perfectly just man' even in the extremest form of the hypothesis is not unworldly in an oriental fashion but lives in the midst of the *polis* and therefore, by his own choice, is set forth defiantly as a call to decision.

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[85] *Rep.* II.362E–367E.

[86] *Gorg.* 485ff., 487CD; *Euthyd.* 305CD. Anyone who wants to hold to the 'right midpoint between philosophy and poetry' in an eclectic and dilettante fashion will be worse off in both: *Euthyd.* 306B.

[87] *Rep.* II.366D.

[88] *Rep.* II.362A. Taken up again as the model by which true justice proves itself: *Rep.* X.612C.

[89] Ernst Benz, *Der gekreuzigte Gerechte bei Plato, im Neuen Testament und in der alten Kirche* (Abh. Mainzer Akad. 1950), 1039–1041: Jesus, in his predictions of the passion said nothing of his cross; as man, he perhaps reckoned with another mode of death. Cicero calls crucifixion 'the worst, most extreme, most gruesome and hideous death-penalty' (*In Verrem* V.66.165, 169). The ancient Church saw in the passage from Plato a prophecy of Christ. He, who is also seen in the New Testament as the truly 'just one' (Mt 27.19; 27.24; Lk 23.47; Acts 3.4; 7.52; 22.14; 1 Tim 1.1; 1 Pet 3.18; James 3.7; 1 Jn 2.1), is, in the martyr-trial of the educated Christian, Apollonius, included in the fateful list of 'just men and philosophers before him' (Eusebius, HE V.21). The comparison is already

The question as to how far Plato's picture of Socrates is idealised plays no role here, only the fact that the philosophical act consists, in the dying decision which springs from his absolute dedication to the truth. Socrates himself was concerned only with conferring what he regarded as the greatest benefit on each individual with whom he had to do;[90] he had repeatedly argued that it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong[91] and that on the proposition that one ought not to pay a man back or injure him, even when one had endured the greatest wrong from him, men would be divided into two camps.[92] But only he can suffer wrong 'who does not seek his own glory',[93] who can, for the sake of truth, allow himself 'to be stripped by his enemies of all his substance' and 'be given a box on the ear with impunity';[94] and this fate is no remote and improbable one, for the true philosophers will necessarily be derided and persecuted by the worldly-wise.[95] In the allegory of the cave the man who has seen the light of day outside and returns to tell those who sit in the darkness of the cave is only greeted by them with laughter: he has, they suppose, ruined his eyes there and, certainly, it is not worth making the ascent; 'if they could lay hands on the man who was trying to set them free and lead them up, they would kill him.'[96] But 'god is the refuge of the sufferer and thus he will never suffer his wrongs unavenged.'[97] If anyone has given up everything for 'the only right coinage, for which all those things must be exchanged' whether he receive in return earthly goods or not;[98] if the immortal soul is of more consequence to him than anything else;[99] if his soul is, after god, the most precious thing;[100] if he understands that there is no 'advantage in possessing everything except it contain what is good',[101] he would have emerged from our underwater-world and would then have seen 'that which is the real heaven and the real light and the real earth.'[102]

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[90] *Apol.* 36C.

[91] *Crito* 54BC; *Gorg.* 469BC; 474C; *Laws* V.731AD; VIII.829A.

[92] *Crito* 49D–50A.

[93] *Gorg.* 457D.

[94] *Gorg.* 486BC, *cf.* 508Dff., where naturally the limits of unjust suffering and self-defence are mentioned. But the just man must never inflict injury: *Rep.* I.335D.

[95] *Rep.* VI.494A. That Plato is here giving expression to his own experience is shown by his *Seventh Letter*, where the sentence—'For whatever suffering a man undergoes when striving after what is noblest, both for himself and for his State, is always right and noble' (334E)—is embedded in the account of his own Sicilian adventure. Immediately afterwards he formulates the axiom that one must regard suffering the greatest injustices as a lesser evil than perpetrating them oneself (335A).

'Sternly shaking himself free' from poetry and myth, as from an 'old passion',[103] in order to come out of the realm of imitation into that of the original,[104] in order to make of his life itself a work of art and to be rather praised than to sing praises,[105] the philosopher places himself on the side of god: he remains true to the absolute truth and rectitude (δίκαιον) of the right constitution of life and of the state, even though all available imitations, through lack of faith in the truth, fall short of it;[106] even though the one true form is set apart from all others, 'as god is set apart from men'.[107] He occupies himself with 'becoming like God, so far as this is possible, by becoming righteous and holy with wisdom'.[108]

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[96] *Rep.* VII.516E–517A.

[97] *Laws* V.730A.

[98] *Phaedo* 69BC.

[99] *Phaedo* 107C.

[100] *Laws* V.726–727A.

[101] *Rep.* VI.505A.

[102] *Phaedo* 109E.

[103] *Rep.* X.607E.

[104] *Rep.* X from the beginning to 607.

[105] *Ibid.* 599B.

[106] *Statesman* 300C–303B. There is only one form of virtue, but countless forms of wickedness, which gradually decline from it: *Rep.* IV.445C. *Cf.* here Dante's account of monarchy and its imitations (vol. III.18–20).

[107] *Ibid.* 303B.

[108] *Theaet.* 176B.

Between this life and that which wills earthly power and pleasure there is 'no common ground of discussion'.[109] It may be that each soul has an inherent instinct to strive (ἀπομαντεύομαι) for what is truly good[110] but that of itself accomplishes nothing: everything lies in the decision between the service of truth and self-seeking. The truth is unconditional and 'never to be refuted';[111] if it is the right, then it is also the good,[112] but if it is the good, then it and nothing else is also the source of blessing, of the happiness of men,[113] for the individual as well as for the community. Thus Socrates can say that through his service of God, that is, his witness to the truth, the greatest possible good accrues to the state.[114] For it is just the same principle of order that rules both the individual soul and the state: the spirit, or mind, must hold sway over 'spiritedness' and 'desire', it alone can selflessly prefer the true and therefore master both these inherently selfish 'drives', making them perform nobly, instilling in them ethical principles.[115] To the hierarchy of the parts of the soul corresponds that of the virtues and that of the ranks of society. The *Statesman* outdoes the *Republic* in its statement that it is not only that this hierarchy is guaranteed by the actual rule of the mind, that is to say, of 'the man who possesses a wise and kingly nature'[116] but also that no law (which is never anything but a lesser evil and a hardening and distorting of what is living) can replace the actual existence of the truly good man.[117] Everything therefore rests on the fact that the philosopher orders reality from his vision (θεωρία) of the truth and understands his superiority as a service which necessitates for him a 'descent' (καταβατέον) to *praxis*: 'You must go down, then, each in his turn, to live with the rest and let your eyes grow accustomed to the darkness.'[118] Plato does not fail to recognise the difficulty (he had himself experienced it most bitterly in Syracuse): that truly philosophical heads are always very rare,[119] threatened by sophistry;[120] that such gifted natures will often be ruined in early youth through flattery;[121] or that, because of their systematic renunciation of worldly position and pleasure and through their speculations ('accustomed, as they are, to think of the whole earth'), they become clumsy and 'ignorant of common things'.[122] So the chances that truth will rule over the earth and be put into effect are slight. The 'beautiful city' (καλλίπολις)[123] is represented by Plato more and more as a model (παράδειγμα),[124] an outline (διαγραφή),[125] a pattern (σχῆμα),[126] as something, 'not completely and inherently impossible',[127] which could one day be realised if even 'only a single person' emerged who was able to bring it about: things which seem now unbelievable and impossible.[128] He presents 'a pattern set up in the heavens'[129] and speaks of 'things almost dreamlike', whose originality abates 'nothing of perfect excellence and absolute truth'.[130] It is on this level of philosophical existence, which admits of no compromises and seeks to infuse into the whole state a heavenly and divine life from above, that the questions of the abolition of possessions and of marriage, and the question of total obedience, will be discussed. Socrates had lived in poverty and he appeals to this in his defence before the court.[131] The form of life imposed by the truth can only be realised through the common ownership of all goods.[132] But that demands, if thought out radically, the abolition of the family in favour of a holding in common of women and children that transcends marriage;[133] it demands a total obedience on the part of the citizens, whereby thought as a whole is contained within inner limits and contradictions, because the freedom of the individual and the worth of love must be overridden in the interests of a merciless systematic. Just at the point where the 'heavenly state' foreshadows in its inner necessity the outlines of the Christian Church, it must, with equal necessity, fail: it can indicate the places where the questions lie, and the directions in which their solution will be found, but it cannot bring them together into a coherent picture. The inner limits of philosophy become visible. 'The holy' is in the end identified with 'that which yields the best results'[134] and liberation from the bond of the family leads to pure eugenics.[135] Heaven on earth has become a caricature. Must one renounce the attempt to realise it? But for what truth then did the witness to the truth die? The question as to the content of the truth and how to secure it becomes unavoidable.

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[109] *Crito* 49D; *Rep.* VI.505B.

[110] *Rep.* VI.505E; *cf.* 516D; *Lys.* 216D, *Soph.* 250C.

[111] *Gorg.* 473B.

[112] The transition is completed in the concept of the 'just' as the 'fair' (*Rep.* IV.433A, *cf.* I.331E), or of the 'healthy' as the original: *Rep.* II.372Aff.; *cf.* the *Critias* and the establishment of the colony in the *Laws*.

[113] *Gorg.* 478C.

[114] *Apol.* 30A.

[115] The *Republic* rests as a whole on this identity between personal and social ethics. The parallels are systematically worked out in book 4. The instilling of ethical principles into man is depicted in book 3.

[116] *Statesman* 294A.

[117] *Ibid.* 294B–295B. The kingly man, as the servant of truth, is superior to the laws and can alter them, if it furthers the truth: *ibid.* 300Cff.

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[118] *Rep*. VII.520C.

[119] *Rep*. VI.491AB.

[120] *Ibid*. 492A.

[121] *Ibid*. 494BC.

[122] *Theaet*. 174–175. Adeimantus on the eccentricity and practical uselessness of the philosopher: *Rep*. VI.487CD.

[123] *Rep*. VII.527C.

[124] *Rep*. VI.500E; V.472C: for numerous other references *cf*. Astius, III.32–33.

[125] *Rep*. VI.501A.

[126] *Ibid*.

[127] *Rep*. V.473AB.

[128] *Rep*. VI.502BC. In the *Seventh Letter* (326AB) Plato describes how he must renounce the practical realisation of his theory for the time being, in order to wait for the time when a 'happy chance' will bring the true philosopher to power, or 'through divine providence' a ruler will apply himself to philosophy. It would be enough for him if he were to convince a single person of the truth (328C).

[129] *Rep*. IX.592B.

b. Knowledge and beyond

The poet and the sophist have this in common: that they claim to be able to speak of and deal with everything;[136] but they are thus outstripped by any plain artisan, who simply understands his craft. To know how a shoe or a table is made: in all the early dialogues such education in things is *the* model of knowledge.[137] All true knowledge is determined by its object: the one who understands is one who understands something[138] in contrast to the one who is concerned with many things;[139] and if the lover of wisdom (φιλό-σοφος)[140] is one who understands something, then he is in sharp contrast to the boast of the pious, the inspired or the interested.[141] With this directing of knowledge towards reality, Socrates overcomes the doctrine of man as the measure (*homo mensura*),[142] bases philosophy on the universally human,[143] releases it from egoism[144] and orders the subject according to realm of values it thus encounters—a realm whose order is virtue—and therefore brings it back to itself,[145] in such a way that it is now fashioned according to nature, κατὰ φύσιν.[146] Indeed it wins back at a higher level the worth of the beautiful which had apparently been left behind: according to this, virtue would be 'the health and beauty and well-being of the soul',[147] whence these three concepts interpenetrate one another and together circumscribe the (objective) rectitude that belongs to the soul. It is only with the objectively right that one can begin to proceed at all (χρέια): 'the excellence (ἀρετή) or beauty (κάλλος) or rightness (ὀρθότης) of any implement or living creature or action has reference to nothing else than the use for which it is made or designed by nature'.[148] Objectively right government will be to procure for the whole community rightness, it will therefore (like any knowledge[149]) serve justice,[150] especially in relation to the weaker members of the people as a whole.

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[130] *Laws* V.746AB.

[131] *Apol.* 31C: 'For I think I have a sufficient witness that I speak the truth, namely, my poverty.'

[132] *Rep.* III.416D–417; IV.422E–423B.

[133] *Rep.* V.449–466.

[134] *Rep.* V.458E.

[135] *Rep.* V.461ff.

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[136] The claim to totality on the part of the rhapsodist is reduced in the *Ion* to absurdity, *cf.* esp. 536E, 539E, the latter compared to Proteus, 541E. The rhapsodist is ridiculed to still greater effect (for his claim always to have known everything before he was told) in the burlesque, *Euthydemus*, *cf.* 294DE, 296C.

[137] In the *Laches* (184A–185A), in the *Lysis* (209C), in the *Charmides* (where indeed self-knowledge is distinguished from all other forms of knowledge, which are related to their objects: 165DE). Gorgias is thus asked, to what objects his rhetoric is related: 454A. But this art is then unmasked as the arousing of the appearance of understanding more of everything than those who know something: 459C.

[138] The 'model' remains valid to the end. On the lack of objectivity of art: *Rep.* X.598D–599D.

[139] *Rep.* IV.434B, 444B.

[140] *Rep.* II.376B; IX.581B.

[141] *Gorg.* 526C; *Apol.* 31C.

[142] *Theaet.* 160C, 161C et seq.

[143] *Ibid.* 170AB.

[144] 'A man who means to be great must care neither for self nor for its belongings, but for justice': *Laws* V.732A.

[145] *Rep.* IV.443CDE.

[146] *Rep.* IV.444D.

The idea that knowledge, and therefore also and indeed especially philosophical knowledge, be an open readiness, service and submission before 'things', 'reality', and should precisely be defined from that perspective, is sustained by Plato even where he deals with the highest forms of reality and thus prevents any interpretation of his thought in terms of Kantian transcendentalism. From any such perspective his philosophising derives straight from myth and stands firmly in the whole Hellenic tradition. Spirit is the possibility of securing something self-authenticating, self-disclosing, a genuine epiphany; it is to stand face to face with reality at every stage, right up to the highest Good. When (in the *Symposium*) the philosophical act is understood as *erôs*, it is necessary that Agathon, who has naively divinized it, should be administered the finally decisive corrective by Socrates, who points out that he has forgotten that all love strives after a beloved and that he has therefore exchanged or confused *erôs* and *eraston*, subject and object.[151] In so far as the philosophical act is conceived of as 'understanding' (ἐπιστήμη), it transcends, according to the *Seventh Letter*, the stage of a purely external knowledge of names or concepts, as also that of a merely pictorial imagination and has (as the fifth stage) the object irreducibly in front of it, to which indeed it 'approaches more nearly in kinship and similarity' than the three lower stages, from which it must however be distinguished (ἕτερον).[152] The 'radiant light of intelligence and understanding', which illuminates (ἐξέλαμψε) the thinker on his long and groping investigation,[153] is in no case the 'thing' itself (τὸ πρᾶγμα),[154] whether that thing be the circle or the straight or the good or the beautiful or the just or something corporeal, a product of nature or art, an element like fire or water, a living being, a condition of the soul or even a judgement or an action.[155]

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[147] *Ibid.* DE.

[148] *Rep.* X.601D.

[149] *Rep.* I.342C.

[150] *Rep.* I.342E, 346E; thus the ruler is a 'servant of the law' (*Laws* IV.715C), and therefore 'no-one can properly command, who has not served': *Laws* VI.762E.

[151] *Symp.* 199CD, 200AB, 204C.

In all these 'things' however the object of the philosophical act is something of reality itself which is only posited and discerned and revealed to this particular act and which Plato calls *eidos*, *idea*, *ousia*, with an increasing determination of content: aspect, appearance, form, content, nature, essential core.[156] For Parmenides the world fell into two halves, being and becoming; but while Plato can certainly use the same words,[157] for him each thing partakes of both realms, and his spirit can find no rest until he has incorporated in the embracing Parmenidean vision of the identity of being the moment of the non-identity of becoming. But, in the first place, the distinction—and corresponding to that the distinction between perception and reason[158]—is so fundamental to all philosophy that in the *Phaedo* it is already regarded as commonplace.[159] The εἶδος is 'beheld' by philosophical vision;[160] this vision is on the one hand drawn out of things (for 'man must understand the truth according to the forms by collecting into a unity by means of reason the many perceptions of the senses'),[161] while on the other this collecting together and 'seeing together' presupposes that the soul already has some grasp of equality as such[162] and correspondingly of the beautiful, the good, the just, the pious etc.,[163] as such, something that in turn corresponds to the structure of the object. But not simply of the object in so far as it exists (as later for Aristotle, out of matter and form, μορφή, but in so far as it could not be knowable in its essence without 'participation' (μετάσχεσις)[164] in the Absolute of Unity, Truth, Goodness, Beauty. That is to say that in every transient thing there is present something eternal, immutable and therefore 'beautiful' which has opened itself to participation (τοῦ καλοῦ εἴτε παρουσία εἴτε κοινωνία).[165] For it is not only in the very being of things, butalso in the way they are, that there shines a 'light' that seems prior to thought itself—for which 'light' is only an imaginative description, if also a true one,[166] for something that is 'far more beautiful' (κάλλιον),[167] and indeed inexpressible: for 'the Good in itself, as the cause of both knowledge and truth'. 'It makes the sense of sight see and causes the objects to become visible';[168] it 'shines forth as truth and being',[169] or better: as that which lends to the objects of knowledge 'not only their power of being known, but their very being and reality, but which is itself . . . beyond being (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας ὑπερέχοντος), surpassing it in dignity and power', and so is an 'incomprehensible, divine extravagance'.[170] 'Something of extraordinary splendour' (ἀμήχανον κάλλος) Plato calls it here,[171] and raises the saying of Heraclitus about the 'unhoped-for' (ἀνέλπιστον), which is 'unapproachable and beyond finding out',[172] to a still greater brilliance, while Gregory of Nyssa will echo them both when he speaks of God as the 'unhoped-for beauty' (ἀνέλπιστον κάλλος).[173] In this overflow of light all things are bathed, with their being they reach out after it, and it is not known whether they will receive from it birth into freedom or to necessity.[174] It is permissible for the philosopher to spend time in this light, and he disappears from sight διὰ τὸ λαμπρόν, on account of the brightness, while the sophist becomes hard to discern in the shadows.[175] But even to the one who has an 'inner affinity'[176] with it, 'the light of understanding' does not come passively but after much effort on his own part; though equally it is as a kind of grace, when 'as a result of continued application to the subject itself and of communion therewith, it is brought to birth in the soul on a sudden (ἐξαίφνης), as light that is kindled by a leaping spark and thereafter it nourishes itself.'[177]

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[152] *Ep.* VII.342CD.

[153] *Ibid.* 344B.

[154] *Ibid.* 344A.

[155] *Ibid.* 342D.

[156] *Euthyphro* 5D: μία τις ἰδέα: a determined, unifying form. 6D: τό εἶδος: here the form has become a general 'concept', identified in the next sentence with ἰδέα. *Gorgias* 503E: the craftsman uses the appropriate tool, with which his work receives the form, εἶδος, that he intends. In the *Meno* (72C) the 'identical *eidos*' is the same as the οὐσία (72B), in the *Cratylus* (389B) the εἶδος of the shuttle is the shuttle itself (αὐτὸ ὃ ἔστιν κεκρίς), and this 'itself' is generally, in the beautiful and the good too, to be sought (439C). This 'itself' of the beautiful 'appears' in each beautiful thing (*Hippias major* 289E), and yet is not the appearance itself, but being (*Ibid.* 294CD), so that the 'form of appearance' and the 'form of thought' stand over against one another (*Rep.* VI.507AB), and is finally no longer an 'image' (εἰκών), but 'the true being itself, which appears to me' (αὐτὸ τὸ ἀληθές, ὃ γε δή μοι φαίνεται—*Rep.* VII.533A).

[157] *Rep.* VII.527B.

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[158] *Tim.* 51D–52C.

[159] *Phaedo* 100B.

[160] Mythically—*Phaedrus* 247CD; without myth—*Phaedrus* 265D.

[161] *Phaedrus* 249BC.

[162] Phaedo 74DE.

[163] *Ibid.* 75CD.

[164] *Phaedo* 101C. Socrates will use the expression 'participation' 'quite simply and artlessly and perhaps ingenuously', but none the less as a term which is much more comprehensible to him that the learned theories of the cosmologists: *Ibid.* 100D.

[165] *Phaedo* 100D.

[166] *Rep.* VI.506E.

[167] *Ibid.* 508E.

All these descriptions make it clear that here we have to do with something other than a mere *a priori* at the heart of reason. But whence is the light? Is it the return of a mythical revelation from without? Or a mystical experience of union?

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[168] *Ibid.* 508A.
[169] *Ibid.* 508D.
[170] *Ibid.* 509B.
[171] *Rep.* VI.509A.
[172] Diels I.22.B.18.
[173] Hom. 12 *in Cant.* PG 44.1037C.
[174] *Rep.* X.597C.
[175] *Soph.* 254AB.
[176] *Ep.* VII.344AB.
[177] *Ibid.* 341C.

Or simply an empirical experience of a transcendental structure of knowledge? That an ascent has taken place is clear, as it is that, for Plato, no philosophy can exist without it: it is just in the ascent to the Idea, supremely to the light of the Good which establishes everything, that understanding, ἐπιστήμη, is made possible. It is therefore impossible for Plato to do as the moderns would like and make a sharp distinction between 'scientific understanding' and 'mythical statement'. Everywhere the establishment of truth transcends so-called exact science. Four ways can be distinguished: 1. the theory of recollection, closely bound up with the doctrine of immortality and rebirth; 2. the appeal to *erôs*, the *daimonion*, inspiration; 3. the authentically mythical statement; and 4. esotericism, in which the handling of the dialectic method is always just beneath the surface.

1. In the *Meno* it is proved empirically that even an uneducated man knows geometry, if he is questioned rightly; his hidden, confused knowledge reaches more deeply than his temporal life; the Pythagorean view is adopted that the soul is immortal and comes and goes in a cycle of rebirths, and because 'all nature is akin, and the soul has learned all things,'[178] things which were forgotten can emerge again in the learning of something new. In the *Phaedo* the theory of recollection becomes a firm foundation for a proof of immortality;[179] in the *Phaedrus* the prenatal heavenly vision of being is related in an elaborate myth.[180] To that the *Timaeus*-myth adds the statement that the 'directing principle, called the divine' (θεῖον λεγόμενον ἡγεμονοῦν) is created immediately by the father of the gods and that only the rest of the work is entrusted to the gods who have come into being (i.e., the cosmic powers),[181] and this expressly for each individual soul.

With that the question breaks off, as to what this 'co-called divine' in man is: and here one suddenly senses the distance between the world of myth—where God and man are in basic opposition—and the world of philosophy, where in principle the 'kinship' (συγγένεια) of both with each other must be pressed to the point of identity. The soul in the *Timaeus* is of equal rank with the gods who have come into being; how then does it stand in relation to the creating god, who has not come to be? Is he, who looks to the Ideas, and supremely to the Idea of the Good, in order to create, to be taken literally, that is, personally? But because he engenders the universe as 'the self-sufficing and most perfect god',[182] man does not need to look higher than this universe; 'the kinship between the divine in us and the intellections and revolutions of the universe'[183] suffices, because 'the image of the intelligible [νοητοῦ: masculine, one supposes, though it could be neuter] is an empirically perceptible god, become the most great and good and fair and perfect totality, because it is one and only-begotten (μονογενής).'[184] Again prayer falls away; the relationship to the highest Good, mythically described as creation or the fashioning of order, is philosophically thought of as participation. But participation means primarily the 'highest likeness',[185] whence the demiurge gives reason to the universe. It is spirit (of gods and men) as derived from the Eternal-Good, whence 'determined eternity',[186] but still unconditionally eternity. The proof of immortality from recollection proves first of all the prenatal state, and only then life after death,[187] when Plato complements the Pythagorean-Orphic aspect with the Heraclitan notion of an eternal cycle of life and death: *because* life goes over to death it goes 'in a circle', ὥσπερεὶ κύκλῳ, and therefore death goes over to life again.[188] Spiritual soul is 'self-movement' (and therefore immortal) but such is without beginning and the source of all other movement.[189] This self-movement belongs to the basic opening up of all truth and therefore all souls receive a vision into the totality as a chance at the 'start',[190] even if this vision (in another myth) is from the beginning made use of differently by different souls, and indeed trifled away.[191] So can the *theion* in man mean the knowledge of the eternally valid, on which all the rest of man's nature depends?[192] 'Human nature is mixed with divine power'[193] so that it can lead to a quantitative preponderance of one or the other in the life of the individual, as in the history of the peoples.[194] Philosophy, which concerns itself with the divine in man and the world, is itself always 'divine';[195] as is ethics, in so far as it teaches the sub-human to 'submit itself to the human or rather to the divine',[196] 'the philosopher, in constant companionship with the divine order of the world, will reproduce that order in his soul and, so far as man may, become godlike',[197] looking to and fro between god and the world, between the Idea and reality, he intertwines and unites both to form the Ideal Man, pleasing to god (θεοφιλής).[198]

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[178] *Meno* 81CD.

[179] *Phaedo* 72E–75E.

[180] *Phaedrus* 247C et seq.

[181] *Tim.* 41C.

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[182] *Tim.* 68E.

[183] *Tim.* 90C.

[184] *Tim.* 92C.

[185] *Tim.* 29E.

[186] *Tim.* 41AB: 'immortal . . . through my will'.

[187] *Phaedo* 77C: transition from the first to the second part of the proof.

[188] *Phaedo* 70D–72B.

Here it becomes very difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between the sphere of the divine and the sphere of the spirit. The created gods of the *Timaeus* are clearly elementary powers, which rule the universe and, like the world as a whole, are endowed with a rational soul;[199] their existence as the gods known from the myths rests on 'faith', in which one must place one's trust on account of the witness of the forefathers.[200] Meanwhile for the philosopher the Idea of the good and the just suffices for him to see with its aid that justice, immanent in the world, which effects by its own efforts reward for the just and punishment for the unjust (whether before or after death),[201] to see it moreover with an even more convincing necessity than do the myths of the judgment of the dead, so often and so earnestly related by Plato.[202] Thus the fear of the underworld is energetically demythologised by the philosophers: the fear of death is inverted,[203] there is nothing frightening about Hades. The very name is no longer derived from 'invisible' (ἀειδής) but rather from the fact that man 'knows everything from the beginning' (ἀεὶ εἰδώς):[204] death is the entering-in to the vision of the divine. Socrates is therefore pleased to die, and that 'not without divine protection'[205] but even 'with a glad hope'.[206] Is not rather the earth a spiritual Hades: a cave-[207] or underwater-world,[208] from out of which one must emerge to come to the light, whereby one can fear only that one may carry over with one's self one's own unspirituality as a karma?[209]

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[189] *Phaedrus* 445CD (although in *Phaedo* 80B et seq. and in *Phaedrus* 246B et seq. the way this immortality is conditioned by the highest Good is noticed).

[190] *Tim.* 41DE.

[191] *Phaedrus* 248AB.

[192] *Statesman* 309C; all human goods have as their goal the divine, at the head of which reason stands: *Laws* I.631CD. Reason as divine for the divine: *Laws* X.897AB. Life according to reason is 'the most divine life': *Phileb.* 33B.

[193] *Laws* III.691E.

[194] *Critias* 121AC.

[195] *Soph.* 216BC.

[196] *Rep.* IX.589CD.

[197] *Rep.* VI.500CD.

[198] *Rep.* VI.501BC.

[199] *Tim.* 40BC: in the first place the 'gods' are the heavenly bodies. Then

If the 'divine' is to such a degree the 'rational', to which a man should be subject, 'at best so that he has it as his own, inwardly, but otherwise, imposed from without (ἔξωθεν)';[210] if the externality of myth is explained in terms of the authenticity of philosophical assertion; then it must be asked what piety is for Plato other than a devotion to the Good which is sovereign over all. That 'everything is full of gods' means in the *Laws* simply that a good spirit rules over all the parts of the ordered world,[211] providentially holding sway in all things,[212] operative as a distributive justice,[213] and caring not only for the great but also for the smallest and most particular.[214] Thus men are considered the charges and possessions, the 'flock' of the gods.[215] This devotion means: to hold to the good in everything and therefore 'to become like god as much as is possible, by righteousness and piety with wisdom',[216] that is, 'to follow after god' by entering into the 'right measure of god'.[217] The philosopher can indeed on occasion call on the gods but it remains no more than a ceremonious gesture;[218] the public temple, worship and sacrifice are also advocated in the *Laws*,[219] acts of sorcery and magic (which can influence the gods) are forbidden,[220] but it remains no less true that personal prayer, supplication and sacrifice are dismissed sarcastically as anthropomorphism and self-interest, while piety is subsumed under the virtue of justice.[221] The 'immortal battle' (μάχη ἀθάνατος) between the good and the not-good, in which the gods fight together with us, is finally a man's fight for the sake of virtue, a spark of which dwells in him as the divine and which he has only to enkindle.[222] The battle is finally seen to be none other than the 'battle of the giants' (γιγαντομαχία), fought out within philosophy, the 'immense, everlasting struggle'[223] between matter and spirit, the 'awful and holy spirit'.[224] So the proofs for the existence of the gods in the *Laws* are essentially based on the recognition of spirit in the world as self-moving,[225] which determination applies just as much to the human as to the divine spirit, only that then 'the best spirit leads the whole world'.[226]

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[200] *Tim.* 40D.

[201] *Rep.* X.612D–614A.

[202] *Rep.* X.614B–621B; *Gorg.* 523A–527E; *Phaedo* 110B et seq., on punishment beyond: 112E et seq.

[203] *Phaedo* 77DE; *Rep.* III.386B; *Cratyl.* 403B.

[204] *Cratyl.* 404B.

[205] *Phaedo* 58E.

[206] *Phaedo* 63C.

[207] *Rep.* VII.514ff.

[208] *Phaedo* 107ff.; *Rep.* X.611C–612A.

[209] *Phaedo* 81C: from this Platonic conception Augustine has drawn his depiction of a hell consisting of mere phantasms (*De Gen. ad litt.* 11c32–33; PL 34.480–481). Still clearer is the notion of karma in the myth in *Rep.* X, and the depiction of the wandering of the souls at the end of the *Timaeus*.

[210] *Rep.* Rep. IX.590D.

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[211] *Laws* X.899B. *Laws* 904B is about the particular rulers who are set by the universal god over the parts of the world.

[212] *Laws* IV.716A.

[213] *Ibid.* X.904B.

[214] *Ibid.* X.900C–902C.

[215] *Critias* 109B; *Laws* X.906A.

[216] *Theaet.* 176B.

[217] *Laws* IV.716B.

[218] E.g. *Tim.* 27C; 48D; still weaker *Phileb.* 25B.

[219] *Laws* IV.745ff.; 778C et seq.; VIII.828ff.

[220] *Laws* X.906BC, 909AC; XI.933AB.

[221] *Euthyphro* 13C to the end; 12CD.

[222] *Laws* X.906AB.

[223] *Soph.* 246A, C.

2. The theme of 'inspiration', '*erôs*', '*daimonion*' cannot finally escape from this ambiguity. The point of departure (in the *Ion* and often later) is the ironic critique of poetic inspiration, for only the poet in 'Bacchic frenzy', as 'inspired and enraptured',[227] can bring forth something proper, while the philosopher enters you upon the act of 'astonishment'[228] which leads him to the seeing and understanding of reality. But then it does not stop Socrates characterising himself more and more humorously as inspired, often in pure irony, often so that he himself provokes the supposition that a 'secret muse' hides in him,[229] because he 'suddenly' (ἐξαίφνης) feels himself overcome with inspiration'[230] and quickly profits from its presence.[231] Still in a humorous vein Glaucon calls the eloquent Socrates prophetically gifted,[232] but in the *Phaedrus* he places himself next to Sappho and Anacreon and means that he is to recite nothing worse.[233] 'Well, my dear Phaedrus, does it seem to you, as it does to me that I am subject to a divine condition (θεῖον πάθος)?[234] He feels that he had 'always been a prophet, even if not professionally',[235] and this gives him the opportunity to distinguish the forms of wholesome μανία that result from 'divine allotment': the

[224] *Ibid.* 249A.
[225] *Laws* X.894D.
[226] *Ibid.* 897C.
[227] *Ion* 533D et seq.
[228] *Theaet.* 155D; *cf. Phileb.* 28D.
[229] *Cratyl.* 428C. Pure irony: *Euthydemus* 275CD.
[230] *Ibid.* 396C.
[231] *Ibid.* 420D.
[232] *Rep.* IX.586B.
[233] *Phaedrus* 235C.
[234] *Ibid.* 238C.
[235] *Ibid.* 242C.

mantic, the prophetic, the poetic-enthusiastic, to which then *erôs* also belongs, whom he has undertaken to praise. Here the god moves.[236] Only a step further, and philosophy appears as the true inspiration, over against the—for the most part—false corybants; for this inspiration, says Socrates, he has striven all his life.[237] By such 'divine inspiration' the orator in the *Laws* also feels himself to have been given wings.[238] Now certainly something of the meaning here is clear if one draws into the discussion the polemic against written teaching and therefore the defence of the existential context of thought and dialogue in the *Phaedrus* and the *Seventh Letter*. The oak of Zeus at Dodona had spoken prophetically and 'the people of that time, not being wise as you young folks, were content in their simplicity to hear an oak or a rock';[239] yet even such a correct understanding of Plato's doctrine had miscarried in the case of Dionysius in Syracuse.[240] The many places where inspiration is spoken of ironically cannot be cited here. More important is the theme of *erôs*, which the *Phaedrus* counts as one of the states of 'madness', the forms of which make an unbroken spectrum stretching from infatuation with pretty boys through all the forms of frenzy to the highest philosophical act of rapture at the highest beauty. Bound up with the theme of recollection of the prenatal vision of the 'highest clarity'—ἐν αὐγῇ καθαρᾷ . . . ἔλαμπεν[241]—the thought emerges that both in the act of infatuation and in the philosophical act[242] the soul, in its powerful agitation, remembers the beauty and truth that it once beheld; *erôs* loves through all earthly tranquillity, it therefore inclines towards the divinisation of the beloved, and it misunderstands its own nature if it seeks sexual satisfaction; it finds the best possible state in a combination of tenderness and distance, in a taming of sensual powers—'in these truly Olympian games'—where the heavenly striving is enkindled by physical charm.[243] This state of suspense between denial and satisfaction, between heaven and earth, as the optimum state of love—brittle though it be—is strengthened by the philosophy of *erôs*, found in the *Symposium*.

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[236] *Ibid.* 245B. In earnest too *Theaet.* 142C: that Socrates has spoken μαντικῶς, prophetically. Somewhere between earnest and humour is the situation in the *Apology*, where Socrtes prophesies to the Athenians, 'for I am now at the time when men most do prophesy, the time just before death': *Apol.* 39C.

[237] *Phaedo* 69CD.

[238] *Laws* VII.811C.

[239] *Phaedrus* 275B.

[240] *Ep.* VII.337D, 340D et seq.

[241] *Phaedrus* 250C.

[242] *Phaedrus* 249A.

The circle of friends gathered together by the poet, Agathon, want to undertake the praise of *erôs*, and are astonished that 'while other gods have hymns and psalms indited in their honour by the poets, *Erôs*, the god of love, so ancient and so great, has had no song of praise composed for him by a single one of all the many poets that ever have been'.[244] Phaedrus, as the first, has an easy task to praise him in myth and to draw examples of his power from Homer and Hesiod, from tragedy (Alcestis, Achilles dying out of love), and even from Parmenides.[245] As second, Pausanias depicts heavenly *erôs*, distinguishing it from the lower, earthly love, and gives moral rules for proper love of boys.[246] The doctor, Eryximachus, finds *erôs* in nature as a whole, even in sub-human nature, and defines it as the striving after a more beautiful ordering, after harmony, but this is consonance and agreement;[247] thus musical art infuses love into beings who exist, to begin with, in 'non-unity', in 'opposition'.[248] Aristophanes underlines how it is a situation of tragic potentialities, when he tells the myth of the originally androgynous men, who 'were of surprising strength and vigour and so lofty in their notions that they even conspired against the gods'[249] and therefore Zeus sliced them into two halves so that now, all over the earth, they go in search of one another, and when one of them has 'found his real half', then there develops a bond between them of 'such affection, intimacy and love, that they are hardly to be induced to leave each other's side for a single moment', even though 'they could not say what they would have of one another', for it is not simple enjoyment of love, nor could they out of two become one. If we 'for our sins were dispersed by God', then must we henceforth follow a 'pious observance of the gods',[250] for 'if we make friends with the god and are reconciled, we shall have the fortune . . . of discovering our proper favourite', and with him 'revert to our primal state' and find *eudaimonia*.[251] Agathon wants to depict the essence of the god, Eros, instead of his effects, and adorns him with rhetorical crowns: he is most blessed in himself and makes everyone blessed; he is tender and soft; he possesses the art of making all serve him and pay him homage freely; he himself reconciles the gods with one another and frees men from alienation (ἀλλοιότης).[252] Socrates criticizes this commendation, which has met with general applause: if *erôs* is essentially yearning desire (ἐπιθυμία), then it strives after something that it lacks; if it strives after beauty, then it is itself not beautiful, indeed perhaps it is not even good, if the beautiful and the good are one.[253] To elucidate this, he repeats a discourse he heard from Diotima, which made him understand that Eros is neither God nor man but 'something in between' (μεταξύ), 'a great *daimon*' therefore, 'for the whole of the *daimonic* is between divine and mortal'; he has the task of 'interpreting and transporting human things to the gods and divine things to men'.[254] Entreaties and sacrifices rise up, ordinances and requitals descend, 'so that the whole is combined in one.' He mediates everything religious—sacrifice and ritual and incantations, priestcraft and sorcery—for God does not mingle immediately with men: all communication goes through him, both in sleep and in waking consciousness.[255] So he is the son of Plenty and Poverty equally, and if he is in this in-between position a 'famous hunter, always weaving some stratagem . . . a sorcerer, a poisoner and a sophist', then he is also a 'philosopher'—for neither the gods nor those without understanding philosophise but only one who is on fire with love for the true and the beautiful; the beloved is the perfect, the lover is only on the way.[256] And now arises the question (the model question put by the Greeks about the love of boys): what does he really want as he burns with longing for the beautiful? Certainly it is not just to 'behold' the divine (as later an intellectualised Christian theology will describe the essence of eternal *eudaimonia*) but 'to beget in the beautiful',[257] for it is impossible in the ugly. This happens at a sexual level between man and woman: it is a matter of procreation, pregnancy and birth. But in the foreground lies 'the eternal and the immortal, in so far as it can be achieved by the mortal', namely the perpetuation of the species of mortal beings who are therefore ready to die for their posterity.[258] Men too want to be immortal: whence the use of memory, whence the overpowering love of posthumous fame, whence all poetry and artistic creation, whence, above all, the raising of spiritual children in *paid-agogia*.[259] If then Diotima can lead one to the highest stage of initiation into the mysteries of love, can portray the progression of love from one particular beautiful body to all such, then to the spiritual beauty of souls ('even if the body's charm is slight'), of endeavours, customs and laws, and can finally, launching into the 'main ocean of the beautiful', suddenly (ἐξαίφνης) reveal the glory of the wondrous vision of the eternal and immutable Beautiful-in-itself: then it cannot be simply a matter, after all these preliminary steps dictated by the nature of *erôs*, of a mere beholding, θεᾶσθαι, but of a being with and in the presence of, συνεῖναι,[260] still more of a 'begetting in the Truth', not in the mere shadowy reflection of correct being (ἀρετή) but in its very reality, so that the lover attains to becoming 'a divine favourite' and therefore 'immortal'.[261] The sexual model, which in the earlier speeches formed the leading image for the cosmic, the heavenly, the tragic Eros's struggle after union, is here finally transcended and becomes a copy of an original image, which sees a hint of the wonder of a fruitfulness of the finite in the Absolute.

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[243] *Phaedrus* 250E–257B.
[244] *Symp.* 177A.
[245] *Ibid.* 178A–180B.
[246] *Ibid.* 180C–185C.
[247] *Ibid.* 187B.
[248] *Ibid.* 187A.
[249] *Ibid.* 190B.

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[250] *Ibid*. 192B–E.

[251] *Ibid*. 193AC. The question, what *erôs* between human beings really wants, is raised again in *Laws* VIII.837BC.

[252] *Ibid*. 194E–197E.

[253] *Ibid*. 200A, 201B, 201E.

[254] *Ibid*. 202A.

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[255] *Ibid.* 202E–203A.

[256] *Ibid.* 203D, 204AC.

[257] *Ibid.* 206C.

[258] *Ibid.* 206E–207B. On the relationship between procreation and the will of the species for immortality: *Laws* IV.721B et seq.; VI.773E.

[259] *Ibid.* 207C–209E.

If now the drunken Alcibiades breaks in riotously and makes his speech to Socrates, if he compares him to the status of Silenus which can be opened to reveal inside secret, hidden images of the gods, if he confesses that this man can make his heart beat wildly, as if he were in the grip of a corybantic frenzy, if he even tells how a well-intentioned attempt at seduction rebounded with such a 'man truly inspired by a daemon' and 'his accustomed irony', so that he slept with him 'as with a father or an elder brother', if he finally depicts him as one completely incomparable,[262] while Socrates, who himself is never drunk and has drunk all the rest under the table, is still arguing in the morning (about the unity of tragedy and comedy), then indeed the thesis about *erôs* as μεταξύ seems to be confirmed once more: this more-than-human, less-than-divine, this 'demonic' man has the last word. The wonderful speech of Diotima's was itself only drawn out from the little treasure-chest of gods of the opened Silenus, it was simply the overflow of his irony. That he has experienced it—ἐγὼ εἶδον[263]—is the witness of Alcibiades/Plato. A radiance from within has broken forth from Socrates, demonically, but so that he himself explains his relationship, at the level of thought, to the divine, the beloved, the sought-after by means of the analogy of love between the sexes, which is itself understood not only as transcending pederasty but as fulfilment in another through begetting. And that the horizontal relationship between the sexes may be raised to the vertical, of this the *Symposium* provides the preparatory steps and the transitions: the myth (Phaedrus), the physiology (Eryximachus), the doctrine of the fall through sin and the homecoming to safety (Aristophanes). Already the *Lysis*, a preliminary sketch for the *Symposium*, emphatically poses the question as to whether the passionate relationship to wisdom could not become reciprocal (ἀν μή ἡ σοφία αὐτοὺς [scil. φιλοσόφους] ἀντιφιλῇ)[264] and even the *Republic* speaks of the 'approach to and mingling' of the highest capacity of the soul with 'true being' to such an extent as to give birth to 'intelligence' (νοῦς) and truth (ἀλήθεια) and therein to grow and finally to be 'at rest from his travail'.[265]

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[260] *Ibid.* 211D, 212A.
[261] *Ibid.* 212AB.
[262] *Ibid.* 213–222B.
[263] *Ibid.* 216E.

The unheard-of opening, through which the philosophy of *erôs* breaks, when it dares to use the analogy of reciprocal love for the relationship to the Absolute, remains *mysterium* and is always both softened and excused by the play of irony. Its assertion in the *Symposium* remains indirect, at three removes: the report of a report of a report. Only the demonic 'between' stands out clearly in its dangerous position between the divine and the earthly: a bridge thrown across, before even the opposition of the two banks is seriously seen and secured. For that Jewry would be needed. And so the sublimity of the *Symposium* opens wide the doors for the blending in of Hellenistic piety.

Nevertheless there is still the *daimonion* of Socrates, about which so much is at least clear: that he in no ways understood this mysterious voice within himself, which from time to time broke out, always to warn him negatively, as his 'conscience' or as the psychological or transcendental depths of his self. Nor did he want to call it a god, he to whom the thoughtless use of this name was so repugnant,[266] who from the meaning of the names of the gods would deduce nothing as to their natures, but only as to the 'conceptions, in accordance with which men bestow such names',[267] and who was accused of not accepting the traditional gods of the state but 'something new, something demonic'.[268] But this accusation stemmed from the fact, as Euthyphro told him, that he himself maintained that he had experienced the demonic.[269] He himself called it 'something divine and demonic',[270] 'the accustomed demonic sign',[271] 'the *daimonion* and the accustomed sign . . . like a voice';[272] but he can also speak to be 'reviled' in conversation,[273] something that clearly belongs to the 'demonic that is accustomed to come to me'.[274] This voice is something particular, which cannot be universalised, even if in a broader sense each soul may be said to have its own proper god[275] and to be led by its *daimonion* to its own fated life.[276] The personal 'sign from God', which only intervenes where a warning, or prohibition, is called for, has not hindered him on his way to death but rather opened it up to him;[277] here a relationship of deep and simple obedience holds sway, where irony has no place. Plato takes his master simply at his own word. Posterity, represented especially by Plutarch in his treatise *On the daemon of Socrates*, undertakes the inevitable, if unwelcome, clarifications which moreover presuppose religious syncretism and do more to confuse than clarify. According to Plutarch the *daimon* is the point of contact between God and man (without mediation of the external senses: the immediate contact of spirit and spirit);[278] 'the thoughts of daimons have a certain radiance, whereby they illuminate those who are capable of it without needing names, or words, or any other symbols'.[279] But then again the *daimons* are themselves seen in a vision and reveal themselves as that in each soul which is not immersed in the ocean of the corporeal, but which remains sovereign, the νοῦς or the ἡγεμονικόν.[280] Yet again in contradiction to that, Plutarch can speak of a particular choice by which individual men who are invested with a divine seal[281] become God's friends, as also of a process, by which men who have lived virtuously accustom themselves thereby to the upper realm and can after death themselves become *daimons*.[282] Over against such chatter the Platonic Socrates remains in a sober obligation towards what is higher; he 'obeys the laws as his tutors', he hears them speaking to him as a man who has them 'ringing in his ears'.[283] But Socrtes did not reflect philosophically on his 'voice': in that Hegel is right,[284] as indeed Kierkegaard,[285] who echoes him here; though whether they are right when they both interpret it as the emergence of a new stage of spiritual self-consciousness, of the freedom of subjectivity, is more than questionable; for what Socrates himself describes contradicts the course laid down by Plato, like a rock in the midst of a stream. It is not to be resolved in the doctrine of harmony, with which Plato connects it; it belongs to those incalculable 'suddennesses', which (and this, interestingly, is also how Goethe understands the demonic) break through the nicely-rounded world of beauty.[286] It is not possible in reality to transcend the 'in between' of *erôs*, nor therefore effectively to guard against the misunderstandings of Plutarch.

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[264] *Lysis* 212E.

[265] *Rep.* VI.490B.

[266] *Philebus* 12C: 'My awe, O Protarchus, in respect to the names of the gods is not of the usual human sort, but transcends the greatest fear.'

[267] *Cratylus* 401A, 425BC. *Cf.* the mockery of the tragedians' gods on machines: 425D.

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[268] *Apol.* 24BC; *Euthyphro* 2D.

[269] *Euthyphro* 3B. Hippias calls him the 'demonic Socrates': *Hipp. Maj.* 293D, as does Alcibiades in the *Symposium*: 219BC.

[270] *Apol.* 31C.

[271] *Euthydemus* 272C.

[272] *Phaedrus* 242B.

[273] *Hipp. Maj.* 304C.

[274] *Theaet.* 151A.

[275] *Phaedrus* 248A, 249C, 250B, 252CD.

[276] *Rep.* X.620D.

[277] *Apol.* 40B.

[278] Plutarch, *Über den Dämon des Sokrates*, in *Vermischte Schriften*, übertragen von Kaltwasser (G. Müller 1911) Vol. 2, 188. Other explanations: Maximus of Tyre, *Dialex.* 14, Apuleius, *De deo Socratis*, where cap.16 says that each man has his *daimon* as guardian, but Socrates had seen his protective spirit. Lit. in Praechter (1926) 59.—

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[279] *Ibid.* 189.

[280] *Ibid.* 195–196.

[281] *Ibid.* 198.

[282] *Ibid.* 200.

[283] *Crito* 54B,D.

[284] *Geschichte der Philosophie* II (1833), 94f.

[285] *The Concept of Irony, with constant reference to Socrates* (E.T. 1966), 190.

[286] Ἐξαίφνης: *Gorg.* 523E; *Symp.* 210E; *Theaet.* 162C; *Cratyl.* 391A, 396B; *Rep.* V. 453C; *Parm.* 156D.

3. 'Myth', for Plato, is to be found, and belongs, where the lines drawn by philosophical reflection stretch beyond its grasp. An individual may and can discover 'myths', even if in so doing he keeps (or pretends to keep) more or less to traditional themes; the time of myth itself is in the past; its form of expression will be poetic but for this reason—precisely because it forms the upper boundary of philosophical reflection—in no sense optional. The mythical utterance remains bracketed off like an island round which the waves of irony play: none of this however precludes speaking within such limits with the greatest earnest and truly poetical and prophetic inspiration—in the allegory of the Cave, for example, or in the great eschatological myth at the end of the *Republic*. Here and in the other myths of judgment things are clarified and exemplified which, even philosophically, are only seen to be true when made concrete in some way in the realm of the transcendent, even if in this process the manner in which it is depicted (without which the poet can say nothing) is not itself materially important. The poetical is here the unavoidable substitute for the concretion of a revelation; only together with this form of expression can philosophy express what it must, and it cannot entrench itself in a (finally impracticable) immanent ethic. This concretion could not be replaced by illustration from historical situations: not even by the *kairos* of philosophy, which lay for Plato and Aristotle in the objective, historical situation between Heraclitus and Empedocles; not even in the totality of history, as Hegel will understand it, may the necessary *conversio ad phantasma* be found, which would make the platonic myths philosophically superfluous; rather the way forward from here leads only through the Christian revelation, which is uniquely able to accomplish the otherwise unattainable synthesis between poetry (myth) and philosophy. Until then philosophy remains in that situation where it must at once create myth as its own limit and yet critically take it back again: at the same time it must place things in the overflowing radiance of the inspiration of *erôs*, which it cannot justify by rational consideration. The implications of this become palpable in the *Timaeus*-myth, where in response to mythical imagination

a personal God is set above the gods of the cosmos and yet in accordance with philosophical considerations must be subordinated to the Idea of the Good. This ambiguity affects man's self-consciousness both theoretically and practically right to the end. Personal prayer or pure *theoria* as contemplation? Created being or necessary emanation and participation in the primordially divine? Piety rationally clarified into virtue or virtue finding its perfection in piety? The proofs of God's existence are only philosophically necessary proofs of the divine (*theion*), of that 'which all men call God' (as Thomas will say);[287] its complement, which transcends the capacity of pure reason but is demanded in the name of practical reason, that is, the perfectibility of man as he exists,[288] can only be satisfactorily discovered as a 'postulate': that is, for the Greek, through bringing the myth of an epiphany of the God to life again for oneself; or, for the Christian, through the anticipation of the revelation. This explains why according to Plato myth can possess different grades of existential seriousness. At its lowest it is almost an optional, poetic outline, which clarifies in a picture *one* side of the all-embracing truth—so, for example, the myth in the *Statesman* of the cosmos as a sphere, revolving first this way then that[289]—here the point is that one can only speak with probability of heavenly and divine things, while exactness reaches only to human things.[290] At a higher level of its optional clothing: as in the eschatological myth of the *Phaedo* with its bizarre details,[291] in the powerful closing myth of the *Republic*,[292] up to those sublime stories, in which the inexactness of the narrative points precisely to what is described, with the result that it appears paler, less real, without a picture than with one: in the *Phaedrus*-myth and the allegory of the Cave. Here the clothed bodies say more about man than they would naked. Here therefore philosophy falls into a strange crisis: it is as if it cannot yield total human knowledge, as if its standing as the queen of the sciences is undermined precisely when one views it in the context of human totality.

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[287] Gustav Siewerth, Das Schicksal der Metaphysik von Thomas zu Heidegger (1959). Therein: 'Die Gottesbeweise bei Thomas' 52–62; 'Wie kommt Gott in die Philosophie?' 463–508.

[288] *Cf.* my book *Man in History* (E.T. of *Das Ganze im Fragment*): 'The perfectibility of man'.

[289] *Statesman* 268E–274E.

[290] *Critias* 107D.

[291] *Phaedo* 110B–114C.

[292] *Rep.* X. 614B–621B.

4. Which brings us to the alarming question, where Plato is going to lead the transcendence of knowledge. The implication for knowledge in general is first worked out clearly in the *Theatetus*: it is not perception, as Protagoras, and before him Heraclitus, had held: pure subjectivity leads to pure transformation and thus undermines any truth. It is therefore not an act linked with any particular organ, but an act of judgment on the part of the spirit-soul, which beyond all changing things knows about being and not-being, identity and difference.[293] Do we pass over then into the realm of pure being, which Parmenides had contemplated? Here Socrates breaks off. 'Parmenides seems to me to be, in Homer's words, "one to be venerated" and also "awful". For I met him when I was very young and he was very old'—this meeting is depicted in the dialogue *Parmenides* in which Socrates is outplayed—'and he appeared to me to possess an absolutely noble depth of mind.'[294] There can be no doubt: while Plato had considered with interest Heraclitus' closed philosophical system of pure becoming, but had definitely rejected it,[295] he had been drawn towards Parmenides' closed philosophical system of pure being with ever-increasing fascination, until it appeared to him absolutely necessary to appropriate it from within and to take up his abode, together with his distinction of being and becoming (not-being), idea and appearance, within the Parmenidean totality. That is the task, introduced by the *Parmenides*, of the late, and

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[293] *Theaet.* 185CD.

[294] *Theaet.* 193E–184A.

[295] On Heraclitus: *Cratyl.* (rejection of sayings on doctrine of *panta rhei*:) 401E, 413Dff., (criticism and opposing teaching:) 437–438. *Hipp. Maj.* 289B. Various criticisms: *Symp.* 187Aff.; *Theaet.* 152E, 179E, 183A. Positive aspects: *Symp.* 207Cff.; *Theaet.* 152Eff.

uncompleted, trilogy of the *Sophist*, the *Statesman* and the *Philosopher*, which summarise the anti-Sophist dialogues of his youth, transcend the *Republic* and could have and would have brought to its most universal and all-embracing form even the *Symposium's* ascent of *erôs*: now no longer under the sign of *erôs* but of that knowledge which is the philosopher's final concern and to which the awesome name of 'Parmenides the Great'[296] attaches. But how? If *erôs* was found to be a *daimon*, what else then could philosophical knowledge be as its twin brother, its reverse side? The gods indeed do not philosophise,[297] nor do the sophists (they belong ultimately to the realm of non-being and delusion); statesmen are to be held in the highest reverence and are indeed indispensable, but at their level they can at best achieve 'correct opinion': 'they have nothing more to do with wisdom than soothsayers and diviners'.[298] The *Statesman* indicates once more that, if they wish to rule with ἐπιστήμη,[299] they must already participate in the state of being a philosopher. The philosopher philosophises above the *politeia*, beneath God: his art is *daimonic*. It is not simply a matter of the vision of the beginning (otherwise thinking would be superfluous); this vision only bursts forth 'on a sudden', and only then, when he is sufficiently practised in his own art, that of dialectic.[300] He therefore has his own skill, that of integrating in itself the specialised objective knowledge of the individual sciences in a strange suspended way, different from the inimical dilettantism of the poets.[301] This integration, a matter for philosophy alone, can happen only within the horizon and in the consideration of being as being; therefore Plato breaks through Parmenides' prohibition against concerning himself with the manifold and the non-existent, and rather deals with being precisely in its difference, rest and movement, thus establishing his ontology, that is to say, giving an answer, on the basis of a deeper understanding of Parmenides, to Aristotle's ontology. The inner movedness of being itself is thought out by the dialectician[302] and thus its basic constituents are discovered which in their complementary relations of both connected and opposing kinds have to be analogous among themselves, which again means that the existent must be shot through in its innermost being with the non-existent.[303] Thus the crude and constricted dialectic of the dialogue *Parmenides* (in which neither the position of the One nor that of the not-one could be followed through in its consequences) softens, but in such a way that the origins of Neoplatonism become visible: 'the existent too is not itself, in so far as the rest is.'[304] What Plato means here is not that the 'Good' holds sway beyond being but that the existent is negated in so far as it is opposed to itself in its parts.[305] Or in the *Seventh Letter*: the true philosopher must thoroughly examine the realm of becoming at the same time as the realm of being, 'both the false and the true of all being', τὸ ψεῦδος ἅμα καὶ ἀληθὲς τῆς ὅλης οὐσίας.[306] At the end there stands a Parmenides, purged of his negation; the 'well-rounded sphere, evenly balanced from the midst in every direction'[307]

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[296] *Sophist* 237A. *Cf.* the exception made of Parmenides: *Theaet.* 152C.

[297] *Symp.* 204A.

[298] *Meno* 99BD.

[299] *Statesman* 292B, 293C.

[300] *Ep.* VII. 341C.

[301] The problem of this integration becomes clear first in the *Charmides*, where individual insights are to be gathered together into a universal knowledge as 'knowledge of itself and of all other knowledge' (Aristotle's νόησις νοήσεως (167BC), leaving open the question whether such a thing really exists (169A), but then it is required that this act includes within itself the individual, objectively justified forms of knowledge, that it may be knowledge in general. The way leads further through the *Republic* and reaches a conclusion in the *Statesman*, where the royal art is determined as

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the συμπλοκή, the all-embracing weaving-together of all true objective knowledge and true possession (306A, 309B, 310E). The weal and woe of the whole human world is again decisive, as the passionate excursus by Socrates in the *Theaetetus* on the position of the philosopher indicates (172B–177C). On this see Wilamowitz, *Platon* I (1920²), 524f.

[302] *Sophist* 253D et seq.

[303] The whole dialectic of the *Sophist* is concerned with the nature of potentiality, esp. 256ff.; *mê-on* is 'not opposed to the existent, but simply distinct' (257B).

[304] *Sophist* 257A; *cf. Parm.* 139C.

[305] *Sophist* 258E.

[306] *Ep.* VII. 344B.

[307] Cited in *Sophist* 244E.

need no longer be ashamed of its parts and the resultant non-identity and movement. But even this totality, which contains within itself each non-totality, will be called in the *Philebus* the 'fairest and most perfect according to its nature'[308] and here be thought with the medium of Pythagorean thinking to consist of the determined and undetermined.[309] But that leads in the direction of the theory of numbers as the final way of philosophy: being as proportion and harmony. That is Pythagorean esotericism.

Here there emerges the transcendental movement of knowledge as knowledge, of philosophy as a 'great *daimon*' of the 'in between'. The sovereign ascent of Parmenides is not denied, it only becomes more demanding, since now it must take becoming with it up into being, the half into the whole. This whole is the soundest, κάλλιστον, the most honourable, τιμιώτατον;[310] inspiration, *erôs*, myth can point to nothing higher. And yet this totality contains in itself not only the 'divine' but just as much which is less than divine, just as *erôs*, which man prizes as a god, proves not to be such. Already the *Lysis* had raised the question as to what love really wanted. If only the good is friend of the good,[311] what then can the similar receive from the similar that it has not itself already?[312] Is it not precisely the opposite that attracts and provides mutual nourishment?[313] For the beautiful and the good to appear as friends, is it necessary to be deprived of both? Hunger and thirst are therefore necessary, but if the beautiful and the good are desired not for the sake of some purpose but for their own sake, then must it not be a hunger and thirst without any admixture of disadvantage?[314] But then does not this striving of privation for something that already belongs to it find rest beyond deprivation and possession?[315] With the question still open the *Lysis* breaks off. The *Gorgias* leads into the same problem of neediness as the ever new presupposition of any bliss of fulfilment,[316] the *Phaedo* develops the doctrine of the reciprocity of the pleasant and the unpleasant,[317] and the *Theaetetus* even takes us into the doctrine of the eternal necessity to the good of an opposed evil.[318] All fulfilling-fulfilled rests on a final 'between', and that goes too for knowledge which, as *philo-sophia*, is only on the way towards wisdom.[319] Should just this structure—well known from the *erôs* of the *Symposium* onwards—illuminate the 'beautiful'? Is it not precisely the mysterious fulfilment of the unfulfilled? So finally we have to deal with the predicate of the *kalon* which for the Greek Plato is, together with the *agathon*, the ultimate expression of the existent and the all.

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[308] *Philebus* 30B.

[309] *Phileb.* 17E, 23C et seq., 26C.

[310] *Phileb.* 30B; *Tim.* 30A.

[311] *Lysis* 214D.

[312] *Ibid.* 215A.

[313] *Ibid.* 215C–216A.

[314] *Ibid.* 221AB.

[315] *Ibid.* 221D to the end.

c. The Breadth of the Kalon

Kalon from the very beginning embraces in itself much more than what is implied for us in the word 'beautiful': it is the right, the fitting, the good, that which is appropriate to a being, that in virtue of which it possesses its integrity, its health, its security; only in so far as it embraces all this, is *kalon* also, by way of confirmation and proof, the beautiful. This final predicate can indeed emerge in its distinctness and so raise the question as to whether the beauty which appears is also good, and how deeply into the roots of being such beauty reaches: whether it is not simply something superficial and phenomenal but perhaps really something essential. But the *kalon* is in any case coextensive with being: it is a transcendental. This is seen in the ascent of the *Symposium* from beautiful bodies, to beautiful souls, to beauty itself. If the *Laws*

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[316] *Gorg.* 493ff., 496C.

[317] *Phaedo* 60BC.

[318] *Theaet.* 176A.

[319] *Lysis* 218A: the wise, be they gods or men, do not philosophize. *Cf.* what is said in the *Euthydemus* about learning (277E et seq.) and the corresponding teaching of the *Meno* and the *Symposium*.

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The obviously transcendental character of the *kalon* is also the background of that early investigation of the nature of the 'beautiful', the *Hippias Major*, whose unsuccessful search for a definition still makes known *one* aspect of the *kalon* in its meanderings. Asked by Socrates whether he knows what beauty is, Hippias replies with examples: 1. Beautiful girls are beautiful (but are they beautiful as such or only in the view of beings of a similar nature?); 2. glittering gold is beautiful (but yet only when properly used in a statue: Pheidias did not make Athene's eyes out of gold); 3. the fitting (τὸ πρέπον) is beautiful (but then only in its relationship to some other beautiful thing, not in itself; only in appearance, not in its essential being[322]); Hippias indeed maintains that the fitting can at the same time both be and appear to be beautiful, but Socrates will have nothing of it, otherwise it would be impossible for things, beautiful in themselves, not also to ap-

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[320] *Laws* V. 727A.

[321] *Symp.* 216DE.

[322] *Hipp. maj.* 293E–294A.

[322] *Hipp. maj.* 293E–294A.

pear to be beautiful.[323] The beautiful is the useful (χρήσιμον, *aptum*), which corresponds to an everyday use of the Greek word: 'The body is *kalon* for running or wrestling', 'all vessels, vehicles, instruments, laws', 'everything that is effective accomplishes something'. Socrates has made this proposal but must at the same time add: effective and useful for the good, so that the sixth attempt yields the result that the beautiful is equated with the serviceable, ὠφέλιμον[324] (but then the good produces the beautiful and the good and the beautiful are thus separated, something which 'by Zeus does not please me', because it endangers the transcendentality of the beautiful and allows one to conceive of a good which might not be beautiful). The seventh attempt, to determine the beautiful as that which delights the highest senses, the eye and the ear (*pulchra sunt quae visa et audita placent*), leads to the difficulty that here the beautiful is subordinated to a general concept of pleasure, quite apart from the problem as to what this characteristic of the beautiful, which is common to what pleases the eye and what pleases the ear, really amounts to. Plato does not in any way deny that aspects of the beautiful are to be found in all these definitions: the graceful, the radiant, the fitting and that which corresponds, the enhancing and the delightful: clear sides of a transcendent reality, facets which are throughout affirmed and to which he returns.[325] So we find this sentence in *Republic X*: 'the excellence or beauty or rightness of any implement or living creature or action has reference to the use for which it is made or designed by nature',[326] wherein once more the basic principle of service, by way of objective definition, emerges.

But then the *kalon* approaches the good, ἀγαθόν, most markedly. The two concepts had long been joined together in the term *kalokagathia* (avoided by Plato because of its political overtones),[327] which indicated a superior refinement—*haute volée*—over against the artisan class (the banausics); Xenophon had sought to justify it philosophically by reference to Socrates by stressing the primacy of the ethical, while allowing that this was the reflected in men's outward demeanour.[328] Aristotle will seek to naturalise it philosophically: it is for him at once natural and moral perfection, which contains within itself its own blessedness, ἀρετὴ τέλειος.[329] For Plato that harmony, which he upholds as the ultimate in meaning, can even on occasion be clothed in the old word;[330] but he gives it a new philosophical coinage when he causes Theaetetus, who was ugly in appearance, to be praised with the words: 'You are beautiful, Theaetetus, and certainly not, as Theodorus says, ugly; for he who speaks so beautifully, is *kalos kai agathos*.'[331] In the end he is convinced of the perfect equality of both realms: the good as such is beautiful.[332] He who really reaches the beautiful has attained the good;[333] if Socrates 'dreamt' of the Idea, then it was 'of the beautiful and the good in Itself'.[334]

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[323] *Ibid.* 294C.

[324] *Ibid.* 296E.

[325] So in *Rep.* X. 457B, where as 'the most beautiful speech' is cited: τὸ ὠφέλιμον καλόν.

[326] *Rep.* X.601D.

[327] But *Rep.* VIII. 569A: 'the so-called beautiful and good' in a passionately polemical context. As an utterance of Gorgias: *Gorg.* 518A.

How then is the beautiful to be distinguished within its unity with the good? The *Timaeus* gives the key-word: 'All that is good is beautiful, but there is nothing beautiful without inner measure.'[335] This measuredness is for Plato above all objective and exists at every level of reality: gracefulness in the body, virtue in the soul and grandeur in the cosmos and the divine. The three concepts, also taken up in the biblical book of Wisdom and fundamental for Augustine, inform his doctrine of the beautiful: 'measure, number and power'.[336] In order to succeed in this, the battle against the principle of pleasure (ἡδονή) as the standard of the natural and the moral life must first be won and also a final overthrow of subjective standards (the beautiful is what pleases, satisfies, entertains) in favour of objective ones must be accomplished. This battle, one of the greatest that Plato fought, begins early on in the *Protagoras*,[337] will be continued in the *Republic* and reach its peak in the *Philebus*. It is difficult because the good as such possesses its 'reward' in itself: satisfaction with its inner rightness, joy—finally ἐυδαιμονία, μακαριότης (as a state of objective and subjective well-being, 'blessedness'). This unity is already advocated in the *Gorgias*,[338] the *Symposium*[339] and in the *Republic*,[340] where in particular the doctrine is developed that pleasure can only be a kind of supplement to the good and to virtue and that therefore the nature of the latter can be developed without reference to the moment of pleasure.[341] The *Philebus* finally opposes pleasure to joy: the joys of pleasure are many but the joy of the good, for the sake of which the intellect renounces pleasure, is one only; the good as such stands beyond both pleasure and insight but the latter strives after it unconditionally, indeed 'belongs'[342] to it in its searching for the grounds of things and is the 'divinest life of all'.[343] Pleasure, on the contrary, (we know the doctrine already) always refers to something opposed to it—satisfaction to hunger, filling to emptiness—and so can be no comprehensive, synthetic state. The measure of the pleasures can therefore not lie in themselves but only in the superior realm of the intellectual soul, which is itself the source of measure; and this on its side only rejoices in the

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[328] *Memor*. 3.8.5; *Memor*. 3.10.5; *Symp*. 3.4; *Econom*. 6.11f.

[329] Details in Julius Jüthner, 'Kalokagathia', in *Charistereia: Festschrift für Alois Rzach* (1930), 107. According to the author the origin of the concept is not to be found in the 'noble man' in body and soul but in a picture of man, certainly of a united form, which puts character in the foreground, similar to the picture of the 'gentleman'; physical beauty was therefore not intended or required, or only secondarily.

[330] *Rep*. III. 401E–402A; *Lysis* 206E; *Prot*. 315D.

[331] *Theaet*. 185E.

[332] *Symp*. 201C.

[333] *Ibid*. 204DE.

[334] *Cratyl*. 439C.

[335] *Tim*. 87C.

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[336] *Laws* VI. 757B.

[337] *Protag.* 351Cff.; 354BC; 355Dff.

[338] *Gorg.* 507C.

[339] *Symp.* 204D–205A.

[340] *Rep.* I. 354A.

[341] *Rep.* X.611A–613C. So, but only at the end, can it be said, that 'the life of bodily or mental excellence is pleasanter than that of depravity': *Laws* V. 734D. Also II. 663D.

[342] *Phileb.* 30DE, 31A (συγγενής).

[343] *Ibid.* 33B.

Good, which, as the *Republic* shows, is enthroned above the intellectual soul as the sun, illuminating and giving warmth to everything.

That which gives measure takes rank over that to which it gives measure: this is the ordering of soul and body. The principal question of the Platonic aesthetic is now this: does the divine rank higher than the soul as giving it measure (as will be the case in the Augustinian hierarchy), or is the measure between God and the world the same, only transposed on to a larger scale, as that between soul and body (which will be the final solution for Plato, as becomes increasingly clear)? The works of the middle period know of a mystery of the beautiful which cannot be reduced to any system of harmony. 'Are not all beautiful things beautiful through the beautiful? Tell me then, O Stranger, what is this beautiful?'[344] The *Symposium* looks longingly upwards to it as the 'highest grade of initiation';[345] the *Phaedo* resigns itself to the 'simple' statement: 'that nothing else makes a thing beautiful but the presence or communion (call it which you please) of absolute beauty';[346] the *Phaedrus* describes the turmoil of the soul when it becomes aware, half-guessing, half-remembering, of beauty itself in the manifestation of beauty;[347] the *Republic* finally depicts in the parable of the sun the upward glance to that which is blinding and dazzling.[348] Thus, the mystery of an unspeakably illuminating presence is made known in order: world-order, political order, human order. And this is accessible both to knowledge and to action. To seek it out offers such satisfaction that finally the mystery is forgotten. It is absorbed in a radiant mathematics, by means of which the 'sage' (of the *Epinomis*) can read off the divinity of being immediately and contemplate it.[349] The great steps that lead up to the *Epinomis* are found in the relationship between the *Republic*, the *Timaeus* and the *Laws*.

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[344] *Hipp maj.* 287CD.
[345] *Symp.* 210A.
[346] *Phaedo* 100D.
[347] *Phaedrus* 250DE.
[348] *Rep.* VI. 505ff.; VII. 517ff.
[349] *Epinom.* 978AB; 982A–E.

The *Republic* sets forth that relationship of the aspects of the soul to one another that is 'according to nature'(κατὰ φύσιν),[350] both in man, who is a miniture state, and in the state, which is a man writ large. The 'irascible' part (the warrior class) and the 'desiring' part (the artisan and business class) are the soul in so far as it is in the body; the 'rational' part (the rulers of the state and the philosophers), in so far as it is in itself. The virtue (ἀρετή) of the rulers is wisdom, that of the warriors is courage, that of the businessmen etc. is moderation (temperance, self-control, σωφροσύνη), which immediately proclaims its character as measure, in that it establishes the right relationship, the agreement (συμφωνία), the harmony (ἁρμονία),[351] the order (κόσμος) between 'wisdom' and 'sobriety'. Temperance from this point of view 'extends throughout the whole gamut of the state, producing a consonance of all its elements from the weakest to the strongest as measured by any standard you like to take—wisdom, bodily strength, numbers or wealth. So we are entirely justified in identifying with temperance this unanimity or harmonious agreement (ὁμόνοια).'[352] But beyond this harmony order derives from the virtue of 'justice' (as total rightness, δικαιοσύνη), which 'renders to each his own', instead of busying itself subjectively in other matters which it does not understand and which do not concern it (πολυπραγμονεῖν),[353] and which therefore arranges everything with respect to both the being and the reality of all the aspects of the all-embracing whole: the harmony of harmony. Virtue is therefore fourfold and is essentially a matter of the right relation: in this the ethical and the aesthetic are at one. 'Virtue is as it were the health and comeliness and well-being of the soul.'[354] Up-bringing (or education, *Bildung*, παιδεία) is the drawing of each young man into the ethical and aesthetic harmony, essentially through the predominantly physical (but not for that reason

[350] *Rep.* IV. 444D.
[351] *Rep.* IV. 430E.
[352] *Ibid.* IV. 432A.
[353] *Ibid.* IV. 433A.
[354] *Ibid.* IV. 444D.

any less ethical) art of gymnastics and the predominantly spiritual art of the Muses,[355] both of which should be cultivated at the same time so that 'a right relationship is set up between them'[356] the musical arts, especially the art of tunes, with song and dancing, is to be so structured that its *melos* and *rhythmos* penetrate the whole harmony of man, giving it ethical tone from within.[357] Conversely this means that the whole art as such depends on its ethos:[358] what is aesthetically right is only discoverable in the context of what is ethically right. The 'most lovable' man, who 'displays the fairest appearance', must then be the one 'in whose soul there is noble character with an outward form answering thereto and bearing the same stamp of beauty';[359] and from this point of view something can be said about the place of the sexual in this whole ethos:[360] to overstep the limits laid down here is 'musical insensitivity' (ἀμουσία) and 'lack of receptivity towards the beautiful', 'tastelessness' (ἀπειροκαλία). Through gymnastics and the musical arts therefore the whole man is made musical through and through;[361] the higher understanding of these both is reserved for those selected to govern the state, so that there may be formed in them a reflexive and scientific insight into true proportions and harmonies: 1. Calculation and arithmetic as the presupposition of abstraction and the comprehension of unity; 2. geometry 'for bringing about an easier conceptual grasp of the Idea of the Good'; 3. astronomy, which provides examples for the discernment of the highest manifestations of order in the cosmos so that we may 'study eternally true beauties thereby' (here it is Plato's intention decisively to transcend the level of the Pythagoreans); 4. dialectic as imageless thinking of pure being and pure truth.[362]

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[355] *Ibid.* II. 376E.

[356] *Ibid.* III. 410B, 410E.

[357] *Ibid.* III. 401D. Therefore the artists of the state are to be supervised and those sought out 'whose instinct guides them to whatsoever is lovely and gracious', and whose works 'like a breeze bearing health from happy regions' draw men 'imperceptibly, from childhood upward, into sympathy and harmony with beauty'. *Ibid.* 401B–D.

[358] *Ibid.* III. 400DE.

[359] *Ibid.* 402D.

[360] *Ibid.* 403C.

[361] *Ibid.* 411E–412A.

The interpretation of the *kalon* by the *dikaion* (as comprehending all virtue or *aretê*) is the justification for the further critique of the poets at the end of the *Republic*; it demands the highest of mankind: that he also suffer for the true, indeed the 'perfect Beauty', even to the point where all other beauty vanishes.[363] The ethical doctrine of harmony in the *Republic* convincingly draws together the many related preliminary efforts of the early dialogues: of the *Protagoras* (education in virtue through poetry, the musical arts and gymnastics;[364] in man there is aptitude for art as well as virtue, yet both require education);[365] of the *Cratylus* with its theory of the original affinity of sound and thing and with its Heraclitan explanation of Δίκαιον as Διά (that which holds sway through all, or the one who holds sway as Δία (= Deus);[366] of the *Laches* with its demand for harmony between speech and life as the true musical art and for the 'only true Hellenic harmony';[367] the demand in the *Gorgias* to stand in harmony with oneself[368] the discussions there of skill as harmony (that is, as the art of order and system),[369] whence order and measure are decided on as the virtue and health of the soul;[370] the man without inner harmony can be loved neither by man nor by God, he is not capable of fellowship. 'Wise men tell us that heaven and earth and gods and men are held together by communion and friendship, by orderliness, temperance and justice; and that is the reason why they call the whole of this world by the name of order (κόσμος), not of disorder or dissoluteness . . . Geometrical equality (ἰσότης γεωμετρική) has great power amongst both gods and men.'[371] Sins in the soul are at the same time both aesthetic asymmetry and ethical shamefulness.[372] It is no wonder that the doctor in the *Symposium* develops a detailed ethical doctrine of harmony.[373] The imprisoned Socrates in the *Phaedo* is inspired in a dream to pursue musical arts, and indeed he himself even regards 'philosophy as the foremost form of music',[374] which is why as a philosopher he can permit himself to return to poetry and to write verses (just as Plato in the *Menexenos* uses the ancient rhetorical style).

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[362] *Ibid.* VII. 522–534.

[363] *Laws* IX. 859D–860A.

[364] *Prot.* 325ff.

[365] *Ibid.* 327.

[366] *Cratyl.* 412C et seq.

[367] *Laches* 188CD.

[368] *Gorg.* 482C.

[369] *Ibid.* 503E–504A.

[370] *Ibid.* 504BCD.

The *Timaeus* goes beyond the *Republic*, in so far as in the myth of creation it sets forth the proportion and analogy not simply between cosmic things and orders but between the Idea of the good and the world fashioned in accordance with it, a world which cannot be sufficiently praised as 'necessarily arranged excellently in all its parts',[375] 'beautiful and outstanding',[376] 'best and most perfect',[377] 'similar' to the Archetype 'so far as is possible',[378] and, finally, as in its glory 'self-sufficient',[379] indeed 'a blessed god'.[380] That means that the universe is no longer the manifestation of true being which negates such being, the 'limitless place of unlikeness',[381] but is God sufficient to itself so that therefore the difference between the Idea and the universe or the All is found within the identically divine. There is then no longer any reason why the reason of the universal soul—not essentially to be distinguished from the human soul—should not 'partake in the reasoning (λογισμός) and harmony (ἁρμονία) of intelligent and eternal realities, having been set forth as the best of all generated things by the one who is best (the

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[371] *Ibid.* 507E–508A.

[372] *Ibid.* 525A.

[373] *Symp.* 187A et seq.

[374] *Phaedo* 60E–61B.

[375] *Tim.* 28A.

[376] *Ibid.* 29A.

[377] *Ibid.*

[378] *Ibid.* 29D.

[379] *Ibid.* 33D.

[380] *Ibid.* 34B.

[381] *Statesman* 273D.

Creator).'[382] This first relationship, which makes the world not only an image (εἰκών) of an archetype[383] but rather a quasi-sacramental representation of the gods (ἄγαλμα τῶν ἀϊδίων θεῶν)[384] becomes the basis for both the following: world-soul is related to world-body as an individual soul to an individual body, so that the individual soul needs only to look up to the cosmos in order to restore between itself and the body or within itself any disturbance in balance (ἰσορρόπω[385]), in order to take that which is the permanently full divine balance as a model.[386] The world is in itself perfect proportion (ἀναλογία[387]) and symmetry (συμμετρία[388]); in so far however as the individual reason in its 'highest part' (κυριώτατον) is on an equality with the world-soul (in mythical terms: is immediately created by the same demiurge[389]), it can equally hold sway over the whole man as his own 'indwelling protective spirit' (δαίμων)[390] and lend to it 'immortal and divine thoughts' which 'in so far as it is possible for human nature to partake of immortality, will fall short thereof in no degree.'[391] 'For intellectual motions and revolutions of the universe are related to this divine element within us'; where therefore human thought is disturbed, order must be re-introduced 'by learning the harmonies and revolutions of the universe, thereby making the part that thinks like unto the object of its thought, in accordance with its original nature.'[392]

[382] *Tim.* 36E.
[383] *Ibid.* 51C.
[384] *Ibid.* 37C.
[385] *Ibid.* 88B.
[386] *Ibid.* 88C.
[387] *Ibid.* 31C, 32C, 56C. If this use of the word is compared with that in *Rep.* VI: 511D (τάξον αὐτὰ ἀνὰ λόγον, namely the four realms of knowledge: reason, understanding, faith and mere opinion), a difference emerges: in the *Republic* proportion develops through participation in the transcendental Idea, in the *Timaeus* it is an inner cosmic proportion.
[388] *Ibid.* 69B, 87CD. For other places see Ast.
[389] *Ibid.* 41C.
[390] *Ibid.* 90A, 90C.
[391] *Ibid.* 90C.
[392] *Ibid.* 90D.

The *Laws* simply build on this. The pedagogical way leads through the beautiful to the good, through 'rhythm and harmony', which is given us by the gods together with our delight in them—*choros* (song and dance) and *chara* (joy) go together and the gods themselves rejoice together with us—to produce the true balance of the whole man.[393] By this means man has to accommodate his taste and therefore his joy too to objective beauty,[394] which for Plato, the older he becomes, means an eternal, immutable canon, permitting of no artistic search for novelty (the Egyptians are the model here),[395] which must be established and protected through the means of laws and indeed of the police. As in the *Republic*, tragedy is rejected because it upsets the harmonious tone of the soul and its serenity through extreme feelings and thus estranges man from himself: the fateful route to the philosophising of drama (Seneca!) is thereby opened up.[396] The highest art appears to Plato to be that apolline *eurhythmia* which links together gymnastics and the musical arts and 'casts the spell'[397] of the one harmony of soul and body over the whole man, while for the aged he defends in detail the inflammatory, rejuvenating infusion of the dionysian in measured drinking bouts.[398] Cheerfulness, above all, sets the tone,[399] that which spreads joy is the best.[400] If the artist masters three things—objectivity, correctness (ὀρθότης) and beauty in word, melody and rhythm—then he can be allowed to do as he likes.[401] *Symphonia* and *symmetria*, the *metrion*, the *symmetron* and *epieikēs* circumscribe again and again the human ideal. The passions are not evil so long as they are kept in balance: 'high-spirited every man should be but likewise gentle in eminent degree';[402] no-one should foster overweening self-love, but each should hope that God will lead him from distress into something better. The 'greatest ignorance' (and that means for Plato the most serious sin) is 'that of a man who hates, not loves, what his judgment pronounces to be noble and good', when therefore there is 'dissonance between pleasure and pain and reasoned judgment'.[403] By contrast the 'fairest and greatest of consonances', the 'perfectly rational life' is recognised as 'wisdom' (σοφία).[404] Here it is no longer a matter of '*erôs* yearning for wisdom' (philosophia) but of wisdom itself, which is one with the cosmic-human consonance.

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[393] *Laws* II. 653C–654A.
[394] *Ibid*. 655D–656A.
[395] 656–663.
[396] *Rep*. X. 603D–606B; cf. *Laws* V. 733CD.
[397] *Laws* II. 664CD.
[398] *Ibid*. 665B–674B.
[399] *Ibid*. VII. 792B–E.
[400] *Ibid*. II. 657E.
[401] *Ibid*. II. 669AB.

This rounds off an aesthetic ethic immanent in the world, in which the divine as well as the human appears in a final identity as a harmony of balance; the last glimmer of a revelation from above—some features of which in the middle period were left to the (transcendent) Sun of the Good—fades, or rather passes over into the macrocosmic harmony which is accessible to philosophical enquiry. Now is born that philosophical aesthetic of the grand style, to which even Plotinus will be able to make no significant alteration and which will lay down the pattern for all Western humanism of Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and right into modern times. An aesthetic which seeks to draw out the glory of God which breaks in upon the human scene in the direction of a human, or what for the moment is the same, cosmic 'sublime'. And all the time there will be discernible powerful counter-currents—classical as well as Christian.

The *Epinomis*, whether it makes use of the Platonic *Nachlass* or is simply a witness to the earliest Academy, provides the final touches by logically dropping the distinction between

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[402] *Ibid.* V. 731B et seq. As virtue presupposes drive, which it orders: VI: 782D–783C.

[403] *Ibid.* III.689A.

[404] *Ibid.* 689D. On the social level quite similar: the control of the whole community by the right (lawful) determination: 863E–864A.

Idea and cosmos (which had been maintained and mediated by the 'demiurge') and equating the cosmos with God,[405] and thus also at least attempting to equate the transcendent Ideas with the immanent numbers: 'As for the right, the good, the noble and the like, no man without knowledge of number will be able to form an accurate picture of them, to distinguish and define them in such a way as to bring conviction to himself and to others.'[406] To the gods belong the heavenly bodies; the Absolute will be contemplated in the perfected astronomical mathematics of the heavens, the stars 'offer not only the fairest of all sights to the eyes, but the fairest and most glorious of marches and dances',[407] whether they are now gods themselves or their sacred images (in which they dwell—ἀγάλματα).[408] The *daimons* have now become cosmic intermediary beings between the gods and men, already (as later in Neoplatonism) subject to passions and suffering:[409] such a mediation is only seriously possible, if it is thought out within a (pantheistic) identity. The total mathematics (the later *mathesis universalis*) is now finally called wisdom, sophia; the primordial astonishment, the first philosophical act, is evoked not by being as such (and here lies a deep forgetfulness of being) but by the glory of the astral order.[410] Hellas, it is expressly emphasized, has accomplished what other people, the Babylonians and Egyptians, had begun.[411] Exoterically one can continue in Hellas to believe in the ancient gods, in fact 'everything is full of gods', and he who knows no better may as before call on the gods for help.[412] But he who is able to see all figures, all relationships of numbers, the whole system of harmony as a single great unity and can hold this before his eyes in all his intellectual endeavours, is beyond that and has reached true philosophy and true happiness, because he 'has become simple and has received revelation of a single bond of natural inter-connection between all being.'[413]

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[405] *Epinomis* 976E–977A. *Cf.* 894B, where it is the world-soul that generates and discharges the world-elements.

[406] *Ibid.* 978B.

[407] *Ibid.* 982E.

[408] *Ibid.* 983E.

[409] *Ibid.* 984ff.

[410] *Ibid.* 986D.

[411] *Ibid.* 987D et seq.

[412] *Ibid.* 991D.

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[413] *Ibid.* 991E–992B.

C. RELIGION

1. THE BRIDGE NEVER BUILT

After the first breakthrough into philosophy in Socrates and Plato—for the purposes of our present theme, nothing distinctively new is added by its consummation in Aristotle—there follows a long period whose main concern can most conveniently be summarised by the key-word, 'religion'—using this word in the historically and pragmatically limited sense of the search for a synthesis between philosophy and myth. For myth retains its vigour in the form of a popular belief, as a civic and domestic cultus and also as primordial historical saga, as poetry. However, belief in it, in the naive sense, will diminish continually; for to be recognised as a valid form of religious observance and spiritual life it requires, not least for the cultured and enlightened, the transposition of meaning provided by philosophy. Yet it is evident that philosophy itself, in its transcending of its own capacity, consistently shows a tendency to express itself at its frontiers in mythical terms. The continuing mythical cultus dovetailed with this tendency most effectively, just as philosophy for its part dovetailed with the cultus in providing it with a rational basis. It is in this mutual tendency of philosophy and myth that the uniqueness of religion, formally speaking, is to be found—both in Antiquity and, indeed, perennially. It manifests itself as a bridge which is being thrown out from two piers on opposite shores and which seems all the time to be approaching the point where both constructions meet, yet always remains intrinsically incapable of being completed. The piers grow towards each other, their behaviour is literally 'syn-cretistic': the essence of any religion (in so far as it is distinct from true myth and authentic philosophy), not only of religion in the Hellenistic age, is 'syncretism'.

When Varro in the seventy-six books of his *Loghistorikôn*, provides philosophical statements of problems (*logoi*) which are in each instance backed up with examples from myth or history (*historia*)—the titles themselves show this: *Orestes, de insania, Marius, de fortuna*, etc.—it is quite clear that the 'image' is there for the sake of the 'concept'. The same is true for Varro's well known threefold subdivision of religion into 'mythical', 'physical' and 'civil' aspects (a categorisation penetratingly analysed by Augustine): the first, the level of the 'fabulous', is the proper mode of poetry and drama, the second is the province of philosophers, the third is the public cultus. This last 'is that which the citizens of our towns, and above all the priests, should be competent in and know how to conduct; its province is knowing which gods it is proper to honour publicly with liturgy and sacrifice'. 'Who cannot see', comments Augustine, 'to which kind of religion he gives the prize? It is obviously the second'.[1] And he reproaches Varro for lacking the intellectual force of the later Seneca in assimilating the civic and the mythical forms of religion to each other, and rejecting both together.[2] But there is no such thing as purely philosophical religion. Neither then nor in any age has it succeeded in producing a cultic form of its own and so has instinctively come to depend on existing kinds of cultus. Religion is always something more than pure philosophy and in order to secure this 'something more' it makes its own borrowings from myth. The mediating concept of 'tradition' seems to offer some hope for the enterprise of bridge-building; and this comes out especially clearly in Book 2 of Cicero's *de natura deorum*. The views of philosophers about the divine, its existence and its nature, are displayed in all their multiplicity; yet, because of their contradictoriness, they appear as less than wholly convincing and the residual element of doubt is removed only through the 'wisdom' that is to be found in tradition (*nam et majorum instituta tueri sacris caeremoniisque retinendis sapientis est*),[3] i.e.

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[1] *De civitate Dei* VI.4.3; PL 41. 182.

[2] *Ibid.* VI.10.1–2; PL 41. 190–191.

[3] *De divinatione* II.72. 'For it is the part of wisdom to preserve the institutions of our ancestors by retaining their sacred rites and ceremonies.'

through the consensus of mankind—but also through the epiphanies of the divine which reveal the presence and power of the gods, and through prophecies of the future.[4] On the other hand, the gods of the nations are all reduced to natural phenomena and indeed the plurality of gods is explained in terms of diverse aspects of a single, all-pervading godhead which can be called Neptune in so far as it indwells the ocean and Ceres in so far as it indwells the earth.[5] The more Rome had to unite the various particular religions of revelation under its overall lordship, the more the concept of '(mythical) revelation' itself became a generic notion, accepted as a diffuse totality without any verification from particular instances, a notion which, unsurprisingly, accommodated philosophical abstraction by presenting itself as a corresponding form of mythical abstraction.

But abstraction is itself a philosophical process which, when it has engaged with a mythical object, necessarily evacuates it of its original content and subdues it to its own categories. In the co-ordination of religions of revelation resulting from Hellenistic philosophy and (still more markedly) from the political demands of Rome, Varro's 'civic' religion comes to be tied to 'physical' religion and opposed to the 'mythical'. Hegel's inexorable analysis holds good:[6] in the Roman pantheon, the gods cancel each other out; their 'glorious free individuality' turns into a 'uniform grey', dominated by an all-powerful Fate, in which the philosophical hegemony of men or the political hegemony of Rome manifests itself—and ultimately deifies and absolutises itself in the climax and summit, the representation of the imperial office. So it is an inescapable conclusion that (in Hegel's words), 'the form which properly belongs to art is lost'.[7] Normative ('canonical') beauty in art stems from the sphere and epoch of mythical revelation: this alone is surrounded by *glory*.

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[4] *De natura deorum* II.2–4.

[5] *Ibid.* 24–28.

[6] *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* II (tr. from the second German edition by E. B. Speirs and J. B. Sanderson, London, 1895), 298–323.

[7] *Ibid.* 309 ('The outward form which belongs to art is lost').

Hellenistic-Roman art, even as the expression of an official religion, can do no more than copy, accurately or (most of the time) inaccurately, the prototypes of a lost Greek world; but the copies, infected with the spirit of abstraction, no longer possess the archetypal radiance and the mythical glory. So the structures built outwards from the philosophical 'pier' consistently subdue the constructions attempted from the opposite 'pier' to their own structural laws and so neutralise their independent force.

But these constructions from the mythical side will always come too late in the age of 'religion'. Without the opposite pier, which dominates the world in the form of rational power, philosophico-ethical and political, they will remain in the realm of fantasy only. They can attempt to win a hearing only in the form of 'enthusiasm'-dominated gnostic and mystical sects; as soon as they come to depend on the constructions of the opposite side, they evacuate themselves of their proper content and dig their own graves. The claims once laid to some access to 'glory' remain phantasmagorical; and, in an age of due order and proportion in all things, many will be seduced and imprisoned by such fantasies, which have no way of establishing their own foundations. Since philosophical religion is imageless, mythical religion comes up with a tidal wave of images in every possible combination, a filmstrip of hypnotic religious enchantments which can be forgotten and left behind as soon as people step out into the street again. Nowhere is the bridge quite finished in the building. Our task now is to demonstrate this as concisely as possible. In this connection, there are two figures who tower above the general mark of ambiguity, however much they have their roots there: Rome's great poet, Vergil, with his firm grasp on the vision of a primordial and an eschatological wholeness; and Plotinus, living in Rome but most probably of Egyptian origin, the man who brings to full and final articulation the philosophical claim to wholeness of scope and vision, a claim so inimical to Biblical faith. The voices of both men echo endlessly throughout the story of the Christian West.

2. PHILOSOPHY: ONE PIECE OF THE BRIDGE

a. Projection on to myth

The religion which develops out of philosophy rests on two basic dogmas: the idea of the divine as the all-encompassing (in the Aristotelean tradition) or the all-pervading (in the Stoic tradition), and the idea of *syngeneia* (*agnatio*) as the relationship of human with divine spirit. Both these dogmas transcend the divisions between particular philosophical schools and make possible the emergence of a philosophical *lingua franca*. To make them into axioms of philosophy proper the transition from Plato to Aristotle was necessary—the transmutation of what, in Plato, could at first be expressed only in terms of transphilosophical myth into the language of a scientific discipline capable of being at once a religious metaphysic, an ethic and an aesthetic (and, later on, a mystical discipline). In Aristotle's work, just as the individual fields of study and the different areas and levels of the cosmos all have their particular scientific form, so too that field of study which is 'being qua being' (associated with that supreme and normative level of the cosmos which is the 'divine', *theion*) is encompassed in an ultimate scientific discipline—metaphysics and 'theio-logy'. In his philosophical manifesto, the dialogue 'On Philosophy' (Περὶ φιλοσοφίας),[8] the thirty-seven year old master outlines the advance of wisdom, *sophia*, from the technical level to the organisation of the *polis* to reflection on material bodies and nature, and finally to 'the divine, supramundane and entirely immutable realities' in the ultimate form of science.[9] It is an advance which seems slow and toilsome in the cosmic cycle in which we live (there have been infinitely many such cycles before us, destroyed in the floods of sinfulness); but it has become a rapid historical process since the time of Socrates. Just as in the poetic realm, tragedy had swiftly developed into its full and mature form, so Aristotle was conscious[10] that philosophy was approaching its consummation in him.[11] He worked for a direct extension and broadening of the final form of Platonic thought—the *Timaeus*, the *Laws*, the *Epinomis*—and took up its theme of religious 'pathos': God is manifest in the world, above all in the world of the heavenly bodies with its eternal and unchangeable laws, for the reflective and contemplative spirit. 'The concept of the divine among human beings springs from two primordial sources: from events and encounters in the sphere of the soul (perhaps through inspirations received in sleep or through an oracle or in the hour of death when the soul recovers its true nature and beholds the future)—but also from the phenomenon of the heavens whose harmonious order reveals an everlasting spirit.'[12] Astonished wonder in the face of this dazzling splendour of the heavens is what makes it possible for the whole cosmos to appear as a 'temple of the divine', a 'final and perfect initiation into the Mysteries'; and if we conduct ourselves with reverence as we come to the threshold of a temple, 'how much more are we bound so to behave when we have to do with the stars, the heavenly bodies, the gods.' It is even possible that the comparison between the Eleusinian Mysteries and those of the cosmos itself derives from the same text.[13] Aristotle sees the divine directly revealing itself in the order of the heavens and for this he has no need of myth; indeed, the deeper science leads him into the understanding of the ruling law of the cosmos, the clearer this vision becomes for him, the vision that reveals to him the eternity along with the divinity of the world. It is because of this vision that Philo calls him 'truly devout and holy', and goes along with him in charging the defenders of the opposing point of view with a 'terrible form of atheism'.[14] But there can be no doubt that the scientific spirit of Aristotle sees into the realm of eternal being with an essentially Greek eye, schooled in myth—the same vision that, from the *Timaeus* and the *Epinomis* up to the very end of classical Antiquity, continues to behold the divine in the heavens; the same vision, too, that Paul had, the vision presupposed when he says, 'What can be known about God is plain (φανερόν) to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived (νοούμενα καθορᾶται) in the things that have been made' (Rom 1.19–20). It was on the basis of this vision that Aristotle thought of the heavens (which encompassed and transcended all the four elements in the world) in terms of a 'quintessence' of which the stars and the divine intelligences were constituted[15]—and the soul as well, which shared in the eternal motion of the heavens and as such could be called an *endelecheia* (relating to ἐνδελεχής, δολιχός, [*d*]*longus*, long), a *perpetuum mobile.*[16] And so the second major dogma, directly derived from Plato,[17] is deployed: the world in its eternal aspect is divine and this is the source and homeland of the soul.

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[8] W. Jaeger, *Aristoteles: Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*, 1923, 125–170; J. Bidez, *Un singulier naufrage littéraire dans l'antiquité*: *A la recherche des épaves de l'Aristote perdu*, 1943; A. J. Festugière, *Le Dieu cosmique* (= vol. II of *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*), 1949.

[9] Ap. Philoponus, *Commentary on the Eisagoge of Nicomachus of Gerasa*, ed. Hoche, 1864, 1–2.

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[10] *Poetics* 4.

[11] Frg. 1, Rose (*Akademische Ausgabe* V; in the second volume of the 1960 reprint); on the text, see Bywater, *Journal of Philology*, 1877, 64f.

[12] On this and comparable texts, cf. Festugière, op. cit. 229–232.

[13] *Ibid.* 233–238.

[14] Philo, *De aeternitate mundi* 3.10 (Colson IX.190).

The period that followed (up to the first century B.C.) knew only this Aristotle, the Aristotle of the dialogue—one who, identifying with the later Plato, criticised and refuted the dualistic doctrine of Ideas of Plato's middle period and (again like the later Plato) opened the way towards the Stoa which would have little that was new to contribute in this area. The vision of the starry heavens remains wide open, generating (in contrast to the now unbelievable myths of older times) a higher kind of religious consciousness—higher, because both more committedly devout and more scientific.[18] This vision, this contemplation (θεωρία),[19] turning towards a stable and tranquil ecstasy, leads directly from the frozen fixity of astonishment to the relaxed calm of understanding wonder: what is made manifest to it is glory and order together or rather, if one examines the texts more closely, glory *as* order, as mathematical order, as meaning and purposiveness. It is quite clearly expressed in these terms in Cicero (and his source Poseidonius), where the radiant beauty of the world displays itself as unity in multiplicity, organic law and regularity;[20] and likewise in the pseudo-Aristotelean *de mundo* (probably from the first century B.C.),[21] where the cosmos appears as 'the most radiant glory' (λαμπρότητι εὐαυγέστατος),[22] above all because it is the perfect, God-given equilibrium of all its opposite and complementary parts.[23] So it is also—and pre-eminently—for the Stoics, where aesthetic wonderment is always channelled at once into the ethical: since the vision of God as father of all carries with it the revelation of the human person's citizenship in the '*kosmopolis*', the human person is thus a spark from the central fire (Zeno)[24] and, as the child of the universal Father, 'a citizen at least by nature, even if not yet by the actual exercise of his citizenship'.[25] Since the human person is able to know the law of God, which holds sway both throughout the world and his or her own existence, such a one must acknowledge it, on the basis of their own divine-human dignity, and submit themselves to it.

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[15] Cicero, *Acad.* I.7.26.

[16] Cicero, *Tuscul.* I.10.22.

[17] *Phaedrus* 111b, *Timaeus* 90ab.

[18] Programmatically set out for the first time in the *Epinomis*, which in this respect sees itself as 'an epiphany, a gospel'; see Festugière, op. cit. 209. On the theme as a whole, see F. Cumont, *Le mysticisme astral dans l'antiquité*, 1909, and F. Boll, *Vita Contemplativa*, 1922.

[19] Festugière, *Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Platon*, 1950².

Aristotle in his turn also opens the way to this religious perspective. Through his resolute engagement and interest in the particular sciences, he had more and more been able to discern the astonishing 'divine' order of the heavens—the sphere of the *theion*—even in the sub-celestial world. In the late introduction to his treatise *On the Parts of Animals*, he cautions the Platonists against keeping their gaze fixed on the heavens (in astronomy and mathematics) and their consequent neglect of the earth. Nature is glorious in its entirety, even in the realm of the apparently 'less noble creatures' (ἀτιμότερα ζῷα).[26] Thus the project of sensing and tracing the presence of the divine and of the *logos* of the world in the entirety of things corresponds to the mythical experience of the world and that of the first philosopher, Heraclitus. The Stoics were saying nothing new when they passed beyond a 'regionalised theio-logy' to the theology of a total and all-pervading, all-directing divinity and proposed their great identifications—between the laws of the natural world and divine order, Ananke and Zeus, between the progressively advancing insight of human beings into the wholeness of things and the deliberate and free proleptic acceptance of the wholeness of things (i.e. between science and ethics), between the person as individual *logos* and God as global *logos*. This is the direction in which Plato's doctrine of harmony is internally tending: a more and more explicitly presupposed and acknowledged commitment to a substantial identity between soul and God that has come to define completely the foundation of human existence. Love as '*erôs* for something' (*philosophia*) is refined and clarified into the identity of being-in-general *as* love (pure *sophia* and *aretê*). Everything stands or falls with this Yes to the totality of things, in which the human person recognises and affirms both God and him- or herself; instead of the subtle hierarchy of virtues in Plato and Aristotle, this drastically levelling reduction advances to the point where there is only one: recognition, acceptance, the penetration of particular, deficient individual reason by universal and divine reason. In this one act, the individual's resignation to the order of existence coincides with the exalted joy of having scaled some supreme and unsurpassable peak: the individual's humility, humility to the point of self-obliteration, coincides with a high and generous spirit (*magnanimitas*), and thereby makes contact with, indeed, once again comes to coincide with, the self-determining Absolute. Thus virtue (*honestas*) is self-sufficient (ἀυτάρκης); its sole reward is the divine glory which it already is and whose light radiates through it. Aristotle had already celebrated 'the virgin goddess Arete' in impassioned and exalted lines, while his friend Hermias had endured martyrdom, like the Greek heroes of old, for the sake of her 'beloved and beautiful form' (σᾶς δ' ἕνεκεν φιλίου μορφᾶς).[27] But if the mythical view still echoes and resonates here, the Stoics engaged in purposeful and thorough demythologising: the gods are only aspects, powers, elements of the one self-identical cosmic reason.[28] Where Hermias dies a martyr for the greater glory

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[20] Cicero, *De natura deorum* II.39–60.
[21] Ed. Lorimer, 1933.
[22] *Ibid.* 397a15.
[23] *Ibid.* 397a28f.; 397b4; 400b28 (νόμος ἡμῖν ἰσοκλινής ὁ Θεός).
[24] SVF I.114.
[25] Dion of Prusa, *Or.* 36.23 (quoted in Festugière, op. cit., 276).

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[26] *De parte animalium* I.5.

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[27] Jaeger, *Aristoteles*, 118.

[28] The 'philosophical' interpretation of Homer and Hesiod begins early on; in Theagenes of Regium, Anaxagoras, and his followers from Metrodorus of Lampsace onwards, the battle of the gods (*Iliad* XX) is interpreted as the struggle between the elements of the cosmos (*cf.* Heinemann, 'Die wissenschaftliche Allegorese der Griechen', *Mnemosyne* 1949, 5ff.). Parmenides and Empodocles took what purported to be hymns to the gods in this sense (Diels 28A.20). Antisthenes and the early Cynics read ethical principles out of Homer and Hesiod: poets depict the correct behaviour of human beings in images, which are more readily comprehended of the people than pure concepts. This reconciliation between myth and philosophy is of formative importance for the transition to Stoicism, which is particularly concerned with the elucidation of myth in its dynamic pantheism, as in Crates of Mallos (literature in Praechter, 128), Pseudo-Plutarch, *On the Life and Poetry of Homer* (*ibid.* 535). See also, in the middle of the first century A.D., Chaeremon, Cornutus' *Handbook of Greek Theology*, an allegorical and physicalist reading of the myths, in which Zeus is the World-Soul or the Aether, Athena is the intellect of Zeus, and so forth. Cornutus himself claims to have taken this from the earlier work of Apollodorus, 'On the Gods.' On this subject, see Paul Decharme, *La critique des traditions religieuses chez les Grecs* . . ., 1904; S. Weinstock, 'Die platonische Homerkritik und ihre Nachwirkungen', *Philologus* 1, 1926; C. Müller, *Allegorische Dichtererklärung*, *RE* Suppl. 4; Geffken, 'Allegory', etc., in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*; Joosen-Waszink, 'Allegorese' in *RAC*; H. G. Gadamer, *Plato und die Dichter*, 1934.

The Neoplatonists (e.g. Porphyry in *The Cave of the Nymphs*) will be involved in the same movement, following it through to the end and so providing a point of contact with Christian allegorizing and the 'spiritual' interpretation of Scripture. Henri de Lubac has frequently directed attention to the profound differences between the two methods, despite their abundant similarities: while myth is the pictorial garb of natural and timeless order (and of no particular significance qua picture in itself), the spiritual interpretation of Scripture brings to light the deep and eternal meaning of the historical events of revelation and has its place in the internal dialectic of the beloved goddess, the Stoic virtue in its victory over death is a mutual glorification of God and oneself. Renown and disgrace alike, δόξα and ἀδοξία in the eyes of one's fellow human beings, cease in the light of this identity to be of any importance[29] except in so far as the other is (in God) the ἄλλος ἐγώ '"I" once again'.[30] Here, if anywhere, the arrogance of a philosophy that sets itself over against myth reaches its consummation: it conceives all differentiation in terms of the ultimate and ungraspable unity, even the difference between God and the human; as it conceives the dialogical element in their relation in terms of their indentity. Religion is the straining (πόνος) to subordinate one's individual reason to cosmic reason, in the perpetual ascent of human littleness to the level of divine-human greatness: Pascal's categories of *misère* and *grandeur* owe no small debt to Epictetus, whom Pascal so admired. In the dialectic of arrogant humility, Epictetus represents a point of equilibrium; Marcus Aurelius inclines to the pole of arrogance, Cleanthes to that of humility. In the latter's Hymn to Zeus,[31] perhaps the finest prayer of Antiquity, the element of dialogue breaks through even within the encompassing framework of identity: Zeus, to whose absolute and all-wise will the petitioner entrusts himself in prayer, is apostrophised in the opening word of the hymn as 'most glorious' (κύδιστος), that the one who prays may freely (ἑκών) respond to him who restores all that is monstrous or excessive to orderly proportion. The wicked, acting for the sake of their own individual renown, fail to meet him and thus achieve the opposite of what they most truly desire; but he will redeem human beings from their melancholy ignorance and grants them the grace to have a right judgment in all things, that judgment he himself possesses in his providential disposition of the cosmos:

> While we, thus honoured, in turn will honour thee,

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between the two Testaments. See H. de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit*, 1950, 20–38 and passim, 'A propos de l'allégorie chrétienne', *RSR* 1959, 5–40.

[29] SVF I.190.

[30] Zeno, ap. Diogenes Laertius VII.23.

[31] SVF I.537; discussion in Festugière, *Dieu cosmique*, 310–332.

Hymning thy works forever, as is meet for mortals,
While no greater right belongs even to the gods
Than evermore justly (δίκη) to praise the universal law
(νόμος).

The exchange of mutual honour is in no way conceived as some kind of barter but rather as an interior participation in God's self-glorification—in Christian terms, as a prayer for the gracious gift of the divine Spirit who alone can give a response worthy of God. The Stoic advance towards identity with God here takes on the form of a humble Yes, an unconditional assent to everything—unknown occasions of challenge and difficulty or of blessing—that may be encountered in the absolute order of the world. This act is the essence of wisdom (since it is directed entirely towards truth), ethics (since it submits itself to the norm of all goodness) and aesthetics (since the order of the cosmos triumphantly turns all disproportion back towards the glory of its proper measure).

Just as Aristotle, the scientist, sees his vision of the stars with the eyes of myth and as a moralist makes ardent supplication to the goddess, so does Cleanthes, the Stoic pantheist, pray with mythically-formulated devotion to the cosmic spirit. The philosophy of identification is bound to project itself into the realm of myth in order to become religion; and only in this act do the aridities of ethics and the smugness of self-regard win back something of the primordial vision of the radiance of being. Neo-Platonism was to be the final attempt to secure directly and systematically the character of reality as glory, the vision that was becoming more and more attenuated in a philosophy of identity, in that it resolves being as a whole into a ray coming forth from the Superessential, the Good. But even this effort is still conceived within the terms of a final, all-encompassing unity and lacks the capacity to unveil the glory of an absolute personal other, a 'Thou'.

b. Dialectic

Thus the dialectic of philosophical religion is already thrown into sharp relief: conceived in terms sketched out in a philosophy of identity, the least shift of tone at any moment can tilt godfearing pantheism over into godless atheism, as was to happen later, between Hegel and Marx. What human beings project beyond themselves on to the glory that exists in the supreme God is precisely nothing other than a projection and as such the innate power of the human subject. What they are continually discovering, in their scientific searching-out of the universe, in amazement and wonder, as a divinely ordered regularity, is also what they are progressively mastering; and the religious aura slowly gives way to the prosaic sobriety of the exact sciences. If the religious consciousness is turned into a modality of ethics by the Stoics, it is turned by the neo-Platonists into a modality of mysticism, even less able than ethics to escape from the dialetic of identity.

For mysticism, like Stoic ethics, is a bursting through the limits of individuality, an extension of the soul to embrace the dimensions of the universe. Already in Xenophon, if not earlier still, the soul is *quodammodo omnia*, capable of travelling in an instant to any place.[32] In the Eleventh Hermetic Tractate this is further developed: the soul can change itself into anything; it needs no wings to lift itself up to heaven—or, indeed, beyond, should there by anything beyond heaven.[33] In the 'Asclepius' Tractate, the human being is extolled as *animal adorandum*, 'since he can transform himself even into the nature of God, as if he were God himself', for this reason, that he is naturally 'related to the gods, connected with divinity'.[34] In God the human being is also related to all other beings in the world, an essential affinity (οἰκείωσις) prevails between them: Stoic philanthropy is ontologically grounded on an identity of essence.[35] In mysticism this identity in the depths of things is experientially realised and portrayed in the numerous accounts of ecstasy in which the soul, in dreaming or in waking, in this life or after death, lifts itself up to heaven, to the stars, to the vision of universal order, to God. The best-known of these accounts is the *Somnium Scipionis* (the concluding 'transformation episode' of Cicero's *Res publica*), where the soul of the great statesman beholds in a rapture the manifestation of the glory of the divine 'megalopolis'; the most consistent depictions of such experience—as far as they relate to identification—can be found in the Hermetic writings.

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[32] *Memorabilia* I.4.17.

[33] Hermes Trismegistus XI.19, ed. Belles Lettres I.154–155.

[34] Asclepius 6 (*ibid.* II.301–302). Even in Plotinus' earliest work, the soul is urged on towards the goal of boundless self-expression (*Enneads* I.6.9).

[35] *Cf.* the great text in Stobaeus' *Anthologion* which he ascribes to Aristotle (Stob. II.7.13). See S. Lorenz, *De progressu rationis* φιλανθηωπίας. Diss. Leipzig 1917.

In this connection, it matters less whether the identification of God and the soul is thought of and 'experienced' as happening through ecstasy (the expansion of the soul to the dimensions of divinity) or 'enstasy' (the indwelling of the godhead in the soul to the point of absorption). Both forms lie close to the point of tilting over into atheism or at least radical scepticism. Cicero himself had no atheistic intentions; indeed, entangled in the problem of contradictory representations of the divine and disillusioned by philosophical theology, he fell back upon traditional mythology; yet he lives entirely on a knife-edge in this respect. Sextus Empiricus lists the manifold sources of belief in God: invention by legislators, the divinising of human beings after death, powers of nature that are friendly to humanity, dreams and oracles, the sight of the stars, terrifying natural phenomena or other spectacles, tradition handed down from the infancy of the race.[36] In every case it is human beings who devise all this. Why was Sextus unable to retain an attitude of 'letting be' towards the gods, as Epicurus had done, four centuries earlier? Epicurus' 'pious reserve in respect of the gods' is celebrated;[37] but he allowed them existence only in the unlocalisable interstices of his world of atoms ('*Metakosmoi*'). The gods are as free from concern about human beings as human beings are free from the need for the gods to guarantee them felicity. For anyone who succeeds in overcoming the fear of fate and death by their own proud spiritual superiority, and thereby takes the future into their own control, 'will live like a god among men, since a human being who enjoys an imperishable inheritance of life is in no way to be compared with a mortal creature'.[38] A god interferes with no other being, either by wrath or by benevolence,[39] and human beings should seek to imitate the gods in this. Infinite duration holds no more true joy than does finite; the former can enrich only the flesh, but reason transcends its limitations and enjoys the fulness of bliss quite independently of the duration of fleshly being.[40] Thus it is 'meaningless to demand from the gods what human beings can do for themselves'.[41] This self-referential trend reaches its consummation in the renunciation of the beautiful, which is always accompanied by a yearning for self-transcendence: 'I gladly spurn the beautiful, which brings no joy, and scorn its foolish devotees.'[42] Epicurus' impact across the centuries resulted in his doctrine being directly presented—in the shape of the powerful cosmic epic of Lucretius, edited by Cicero—to the eyes of Vergil and Horace, who construct their own *oeuvre* in face-to-face confrontation with it.

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[36] *Adv. dogm.* III.14–29.

[37] Diogenes Laertius X.10.

A final attempt to reinstate religion, based on the idea of an atheistic doctrine of projection, is represented by Egyptian magic and theurgy: the power to create gods is, in all seriousness, attributed to human beings. According to the tractate 'Asclepius', the human subject is 'the creator of the gods that dwell in the temples, those gods who dwell in the neighbourhood of men; he not only receives the light of life but himself radiates that light'. While the gods in themselves are only spirit, only the 'head', it is the images of the gods, which through theurgy contain divine powers, that are at the same time also materialised forms, 'head and flesh'; and so 'man moulds his own gods in the image and likeness of his own countenance.'[43] Thus the vicious circle is finally closed: out of the idea of identity, which can emphasize now its pantheistic and now its 'pan-anthropic' tendency, there finally arises a pseudo-dialogue, which allows one pole to be seen as the creator of the other.

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[38] The conclusion of the letter to Menoikeus, Diogenes Laertius X.135.

[39] *Dogmata* 1, *ibid.* X.139.

[40] *Dogmata* 19–20, *ibid.* 145.

[41] *Gnomologion Vaticanum* (ed. P. von der Mühll) 65.

[42] *Epicurea* (ed. H. Usener) 512.

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[43] Asclepius VIII.23–24.

3. THE SECOND PIER: MYTH

a. Projection on the basis of philosophy

Aristotle had offered a philosophical and scientific reconstruction of the Platonic myth of the world-creator; but was it not possible for religion to follow a quite contrasting path? to read the Platonic myths 'in reverse' so that the quintessence of the mythical consciousness could be discerned lying hidden in it, salvaged and transmitted to a new age? Two paths seem to open up at this point. The first takes literally the picture of the demiurge looking up at the world of ideas and so posits a hierarchy and a tension within God, whether between God as creator and the unnameable superdivinity above him or between the Godhead as source of all good and its 'powers' and 'effects' as they reach the world. Here there are links with Pindar and Aeschylus and Hesiod, and the way forward lies open to the divine dramas and divine tragedies of gnosis. The other path stays closer to philosophy and builds it into its concept of revelation: the absolute divine being 'unfolds' and 'uncovers' itself (only) in so far as, at the same time, it conceals and encloses itself; it shares itself in so far as, at the same time, it preserves itself intact. The concept of revelation becomes a fundamental category for ontology in general which remains intrinsically a question of philosophy and theology (i.e. theio-logy) right up to the point at which non-Christian classical thought ceases to exist. This second path is the one pursued by neo-Platonism, though not without continuing admixtures and transpirations between it and the first.

There are two basic dogmas of a mythology that has developed into a philosophy. The first is that revelation exists as an inbreaking of light from above: this presupposes an hierarchical ordering of being; and indeed it is what actualises such an order, since this descent from above is a mode of being itself—i.e. the outflowing divine 'powers' are themselves substantive realities which extend down to the human level in an unbroken chain starting from the radiant source of light in God himself. The more mythically inclined variety of neo-Platonism claims sufficient knowledge to be able to name them: the hierarchy runs from the Beyond-God to God to the gods, the daimons, heroes, human beings and the rest of the cosmos. Through the medium of gnosis and neo-Platonism, early Christianity is thus touched by an echo of genuine ancient Greek mythology: it will have to struggle with gnosticism over the concept of authentic revelation and also, to still more enduring and far-reaching effect, with neo-Platonism and its philosophical language about revelation. The encounters between Valentinus and Irenaeus, between Proclus and Denys were considered in the second volume of this work. Plotinus, however, the most powerful thinker of non-Christian late Antiquity, transcends the existing dialectical opposition and demands portrayal in his own distinctive terms.

In an age in which philosophy already exists, a religion that has developed in mythical form cannot dispense with it. From Homer to the time of the great tragedians, it was possible to gain some vision of the wholeness of being from a particular aspect of the world or of history, just as much as by means of a sacral or 'sacramental' image, Pindar, for example, assembled the entire world of divine and human beings around the focal point of a festal triumph: the cosmic glory of all being thunders forth in the splendour of this one occasion. But Plato (surpassing Heraclitus and Parmenides) taught philosophers to focus attention on the totality of the world itself and related this to the outflowing radiance of the Form of the good: this is the truth and to this the integrity of the *kalon*, the beautiful, belongs. Anyone after Plato who wanted to introduce any dramatic tension into absolute being would have to demonstrate that only in this way could the idea of a universal good be preserved. There are mythical forms of religion that bring into the divine sphere a dualism of two or more mutually antagonistic cosmic principles, and so necessarily introduce a principle of ignorance into this sphere—the ignorance of the demiurge who does not possess the whole truth or the ignorance of an aeon, 'Sophia', who has the capacity to fall away from the fulness (πλήρωμα) of the divine and to unleash the material process of the present world order; such mythologies do not survive the encounter with philosophy. If such cosmic principles are supposed to be 'divine' and responsible for a world that is shaped and formed by them, then the 'ultimate' being of which they are part cannot as such be either good or true and possesses no sort of illumination from the divine glory. Thus these mystical developments, even when they appeal to insight or illumination (*gnôsis*), remain thoroughly sub-spiritual and non-rational and can only be consigned to the realms of imaginative fancy. If they are, nevertheless, to be justified at the bar of philosophical reasoning, they must produce something more than a pure appeal to the revelation of a god or a prophetic sectarian leader; they must produce the proof that it is uniquely *these* constructions of fantasy that satisfy the postulates of transcendental reason. Thus, where such systems possess any real self-understanding, they build up towards philosophy from their ground in myth, yet are always unable to reach that goal. For their starting-point is revelation conceived as a particularised *gnôsis* and such a perspective is bound always to be transcended by the universal *gnôsis* of philosophy.

However, since mythical thought is grounded essentially in the particular, while gnosis makes essentially universal claims, gnostic sectarianism can offer no resistance to the process of decline into a kind of hubris that is in the highest degree intolerable because it is in the highest degree riddled with contradiction. For its adherents, the highest truth, the truth of the god who saves, is revealed; but this is not the truth of being as a whole, because other areas of reality are governed by other, hostile divinities (the demiurge, Heimarmene, fallen Sophia) and thus are, as such 'untrue' and evil. The faithful are thus elect, predestined, and they cannot in any way be in communication with the non-elect. But this means that *in fact* their truth-claim cannot be universally valid, although that claim must be *personally* maintained by the believer. But if, as in many gnostic systems attempting to secure a foundation for their universality, the intra-divine struggle, whose theatre the world is, is given an eschatological happy ending, then that struggle must either have been less than serious (in which case the myth dissolves into a pure play of appearances in the face of philosophy) or else, if it had been serious, less than divine (in which case, once again, the philosophy of being as the absolutely true and good is still victorious over myth). Gnosis, then, cannot be understood except as the manifold form of the objectification of existential experiences, circumstances and longings in the human sensibility.[44]

This is not the place to go into the details of the mystery cults; precisely because of their cultic form, they are rooted even more deeply in myth than is gnosis. And although they too cannot renounce some kind of universal claim without renouncing their identity, they do not set themseslves solidly in opposition to the official state religion. In practical terms they acknowledge that they are tolerated by the state religion and are content with fostering a sectarian consciousness. Although much in demand and in that sense 'modern', they indulge themselves in an archaizing and timeless mode of consciousness. The God whom they portray in their cultus makes no claim to any mode of presence in history and the contemporary world but this.

Nowhere is the fundamentally syncretistic structure of religiosity more clearly visible than in these last and most developed forms of ancient thought—a structure that can be seen as an everlasting kaleidescopic play of thematic colours between myth and philosophy, the one disguised as the other, each in the last analysis pushing the burden of proof on to the other. So on occasion revelation appears more as a cloak of disguise, promising mysteries within, a purely *literary* genre for the presentation of straightforward philosophy. Festugière has given a thorough delineation of the 'fictions littéraires du Logos de révélation':[45] knowledge acquired through dream or ecstasy, through the discovery of a book or inscription, through signs from heaven, through the revelation of a sage to a king, through the letter to someone or other of a prophet, through secret tradition passed on from father to son, or more generally by oral transmission. In the hermetic writings such forms are often no more than makeshift disguises for entirely orthodox philosophical instruction.[46] The god who gives instruction speaks like a professor in the lecture-room and the purely speculative content contradicts the theological form. Not only this kind of literature, however, with its reverential genuflections to fashionable half-knowledge, but even serious thinkers as well build into their schemes of things some sort of knowledge through revelation and attempt to give it a proper justification. Whereas Hesiod still operates in a mythical frame of reference that can mark out certain days as good or bad for a farming people, the next generation undergirds this doctrine of 'signs' in a 'scientific' manner, through astronomy and astrology (not yet distinct from each other); the Aristotelean treatise 'On Signs' serves as a basis for the stoicizing poet Aratos (quoted by Paul on the Areopagus), the first to give—in his *Phainomena*—a description of the constellations which is charged with intense religious feeling and to offer advice on how the divine signs manifest by them to human beings should be read. In this way the Platonic Aristotelean ecstasy in encounter with the mathematical order of the starry heavens[47] unites with the Stoic and religious sense that 'all things are full of Zeus . . . and we ourselves are of his kindred and he, like the best of fathers, gives to human beings propitious signs, spurs us on to work and does not let us forget our concern to gain our daily bread . . . Hail to you, Father, supreme miracle (μέγα θαῦμα).[48] It is *he* (or else the gods who are his powers) who reveals *himself* through the heavenly constellations, shows himself to human beings as worthy of service and presses himself upon them, as Manilius says: 'seque ipsum inculcat et offert'[49]—not indeed so as to make known his own interior life but rather to assist human beings in the pursuit of their earthly purposes.

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[44] In the gnostic perspective, all attempts to find deliverance invariably follow this path. See, e.g., Leisegang, *Die Gnosis*, 4th edn, 1955, and, most influentially, H. Jonas, *Gnosis und spätantiker Geist* I, 1934, II.1, 1954.

[45] Festugière, *L'astrologie et les sciences occultes* (= *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* I, 1950), 309–354.

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[46] *Idem*, 'Le logos herméneutique d'enseignement' (vol. II, 28–50).

[47] *Phainomena* (ed. Maass 1893), W. 469ff.

[48] *Ibid.* Prolog. V.1–18.

[49] *Astromomica* IV.916f., quoted from E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, 1954^{4}, 16.

It is only a short step from astrology to oracles; it is clear enough how reluctant someone like Cicero was to abandon the traditional Roman patterns of public and private religion on this point, but it is the neo-Platonists who first provide it with the required philosophical undergirding. Plotinus' pupils, Porphyry and Iamblichus, despite their vigorous disagreements on these matters, are at one in their concern for a philosophical justification of late antique superstition. Porphyry no longer possesses his master's freedom and distance from oracular religion, soothsaying and magic; in the struggle for human purification and liberation pure philosophy does not suffice him and he calls on positive religion for help, writing one book *On Philosophy from Oracles*[50] and another *On Divine Images*,[51] which he commends as symbolic representations of the essence of the gods. He expects as much benefit from unravelling oracles for philosophy as for those whose questions have to do with how they lead their personal lives.[52] And although in his 'Letter to Anebo', the Egyptian priest,[53] he put a long line of question marks against Egyptian religion, particularly its theurgical practices, he has no intention of rejecting it, no intention, above all, of rejecting prayer to the gods, which must be performed more spiritually or else in closer connection with material practices depending upon the rank and station of the divine being concerned.[54] He recommends theurgy in regard to the inferior daimons, distinguishing such practices from conventional magic.[55]

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[50] Ed. G. Wolff, Berlin, 1856.

[51] Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων ed. Bidez, *Vie de Porphyre*, 1913, 1ff.

[52] Eusebius, *h.e.* IV.7.

[53] Reconstructed by Thomas Gale in his edition of Iamblichus' *De mysteriis*, 1678, and reprinted in Parthey's edition of the same work, 1857, xxix–xlv.

[54] Ap. Proclus, *in Timaeum* 64a f. (ed. Diehl); cf. *De abstinentia* II.34,37 (ed. Nauck, 1886). Prayer and theurgy are treated by Proclus himself in a closely similar way at a later date; see *in Timaeum* 65a, *De theologia platonica* I.26 and 29. 'Faith' is what Proclus calls the highest kind of union with God. Prophecy is for him a divine gift of inestimable value (*De theologia platonica* I.26). On the magical and cultic power and significance of divine names, divine images, theophanies and miracles, and on the allegorical

The reply of Iamblichus (or one of Iamblichus' pupils) to Porphyry's question is contained in the *De Mysteriis*,[56] a definitive classic of this form of religion, which is at once in the closest proximity to and at the furthest distance from the Christian religion. The fundamental idea is (I.3) that knowledge of God 'is exalted above all criticism and any kind of judgment and transcends all rational demonstrations'; 'rather are we entirely compassed about by that union with the divine and filled by it: we are conscious of our own existence only in our consciousness of God'. Thus this knowledge is exalted beyond any kind of subject-object opposition: ἀντιθέσεως τε πάσης κεχώρισται.[57] Within this *a priori* framework, however, gods, demons and heroes are now all bound up together, so that they can be understood only in the sense established earlier of a dynamic radiating-out from the primal One. The entire mythical realm of the gods is now absorbed into the all-encompassing act of philosophical coming to awareness; the religious relation of I to Thou, as posited in prayer, grace, sacrifice and so forth, can be justified only within a more comprehensive frame of reference based on pantheistic identity. Religious consciousness is both human self-awareness and the revelation of the divine world: it is identical with both[58] and yet is also two-sided.[59] In its two-sided aspect it is at odds with any attempt at a psychological

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reading of Homer and Hesiod, as well as the Platonic myths, cf. the examples in Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen* III.2, 884–887; on lost works relating to this, *ibid.* 840.

[55] Testified to in Augustine, *De civitate* Dei x.9.23, 27.

[56] Ed. Gustav Parthey (*cf.* n. 53). On the whole question, *cf.* E. R. Dodds, 'Theurgy and its relationship of Neoplatonism', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 1947, 55f., and E. Pax, ΕΠΙΦΑΝΕΙΑ. *Ein religionsgeschichtlicher Beitrag zur biblischen Theologie*, 1955, 65–76.

[57] *Ibid.* I.3 (Parthey 10).

[58] In prayer and invocation, there is no calling of one upon another (ἕτερον), there is 'no confrontation, no distinction'—IV.3 (Parthey 185).

[59] Thus it cannot be assumed, as the (Stoic) philosophers assume, that the individual's *daimon* is no more than the reasoning power of a human being, the best and highest in him or her: this would do away with all religion (IX.8).

reduction of the religious *a priori*: ecstasy, for example, is not to be reduced to its concomitant psychological conditions, nor is the apparition of some higher being;[60] such visitations come 'from outside us, from the free will and determination of the gods alone'.[61] Nature provides only the basic dispositions that then allow themselves to be activated in a wholly supernatural fashion (ὑπερ φύσιν) by God.[62] What the gods 'show us out of the plenitude of their goodness' (χαρίζεσθαι) is grace, bestowed in love'.[63] From this perspective, then, all religious activity (prayer, sacrifice, theurgy) is an *opus operatum*, i.e. a symbolic action, whose full meaning is grasped, not by human beings but by God alone (which is why philosophical speculation will not suffice)—an action in which 'the symbols effect of themselves what is appropriate to them' and 'the mysterious energy of the gods, towards whom these symbols reach up, is perceived through the symbolic image proper to it, working in and of itself'.[64]

However, these dialogic, magical and sacramental aspects rest unconditionally upon a monistic foundation, which, in the last analysis, is the late Platonic perspective of the *Timaeus*: from the point of view of the gods, there is a perfect appropriateness in the relations between their essence and their manifestation. In them, 'what is unutterable in itself becomes utterable and they permit what is without form to shine through in their formal mode of existence.'[65] Thus their epiphanies are neither phantom appearances[66] nor 'pale imitations'[67] but—if the theurgical activity has been fully successful—'authentic revelatory images',[68] 'true *phantasmata* of the true'.[69] Over against the Middle Platonic mysticism of ascent, human imagination is here also given its rightful religious place.[70] But this rests on the idea (already found in the *Timaeus*) that the visible cosmos as a whole is a full and perfect incarnation of divinity, while it is primarily in the individual soul that there enters in an inappropriateness and tension between essence and appearance.[71] From the perspective of the totality of the cosmos, the All, the perspective of the gods, this incarnational appropriateness includes any and every world, even our sublunary sphere, and thus the All 'is the visible icon of the gods'. In virtue of this, everything depends ultimately on a 'harmony' of identity, a 'symmetry' and 'essential kinship' between God and the world, 'since mutual coinherence and influence can exist only in things that are similar in being and activity, or in some way similar in essence or deriving from the same source'.[72] All oracular religion depends on a pre-established harmony and is indeed its consummation; the means required for it find their concord only in the music of the spheres.[73] This principle also allows significance to even the most questionable proceedings in temple-magic: obscenity can be treated as a purely symbolic matter;[74] the threats discharged against the daimons in the invocatory formulae are always overtaken in advance by the gracious spontaneity of their will to manifest themselves; and so forth. Delusory visitations are possible only if inferior daimons intrude themselves in place of higher spirits as a result of some imperfection in the magical ritual.[75] But a 'true showing' (αὐτοψία) of the divine

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[60] *Ibid.* III.9 (Parthey 117–118).

[61] *Ibid.* III.14 (134, 12).

[62] *Ibid.* III.25 (159, 2–3), III.27 (164f.).

[63] *Ibid.* IV.1 (181, 9–12).

[64] *Ibid.* II.11 (96f., esp. 96, 19; 97, 5–7).

[65] *Ibid.* I.5 (16–17).

[66] *Ibid.* II.12 (93).

[67] *Ibid.* II.12.

[68] *Ibid.* III.28 (167, 12). II.10 traces the authenticity of appearances back to the trustworthiness of the gods (Parthey 90).

[69] *Ibid.* 167, 16–17; *cf.* II.10 (94, 16f.). God 'does not transform himself into a phantasm, nor does he decieve a man in any other way, but allows

his true appearance to shine forth in that which can impart truth to our souls'.

[70] *Ibid.* III.14 (133–134). There is a precise distinction between the imaginative forces as they rise up out of our own diseased nature, and their condition when touched and shaped by the gods: III.25 (160).

[71] *Ibid.* V.2 (200).

[72] *Ibid.* I.9 (32–33): the visible gods (the stars) are the sacred images of the intelligible ideas, and their mutual union is 'indissoluble' (I.19, Parthey 57–61).

[73] *Ibid.* III.9, VII.1.

[74] *Ibid.* I.11 (38–39). It is also possible that the idea can be allowed to shine out, in a kind of shock-effect, through an *opposite* image—an idea taken up by Origen and Denys.

[75] *Ibid.* IV.3 (184), VI.5 (245–246).

in its 'glory', its appropriate form of manifestation is also possible: the higher the rank of a divinity, the clearer and more beautiful and free from illusion is its appearance.[76] One thing remains quite impossible in this system of identity: that the divine should humble itself to serve human beings. Here Porphyry, who does speak of a 'service' rendered by the gods, is sharply repudiated by Iamblichus: if the divine grants some participation in itself, it is never changed by this, 'it does not move beyond itself, or become less than itself, it does not enter into any servile relation with what stands over against it and participates in it, but, on the contrary, makes use of all who serve it'.[77]

No doubt biblical motifs have already been built in to the system at this point, so as to provide a pagan 'neutralizing' of them, and conversely, pagan worship appears here in Christian dress; and it is precisely here that we can clearly see for the last time how impossible it is to complete the construction of the religious bridge. The mythical opposition between the giver and the receiver of revelation is maintained to the bitter end but only because the system is mortgaged in advance to a philosophy of identity. The *De mysteriis* is in this respect the most extreme example of a straight identification of myth and philosophy, in this sense of an Hegelian 'identity of the non-identical and the identical'. In fact, Hegel undertakes the same quest once more, at a far higher level of reflection, and seeks to integrate all forms of 'dialogic' faith into the monological knowledge of reason.

b. Openness

Nevertheless the last word of the pre-Christian world is not this self-subverting dialectic, which scintillates demonically between pantheism and atheism and in which all the glory of true humility is hedged in by the presumption and arrogance of pure knowledge or visionary concupiscence. If nothing more than this had preceded it, Christianity would not have had so protracted a struggle with the ancient world over the meaning of glory. It would have been able to set the false understanding aside and to put its own in its place, able to insert into the incomplete bridge the missing central section which would give final solidity to the projections of myth and philosophy, solidity in themselves and in relation to each other. But Christianity well understood that in the essentially unfinishable nature of the world's constructions it was confronted by something unsurpassably authentic, a definitive expression of the *humanum* of the world; such understanding was at least achieved at the point where the incomplete, torso-like character of ancient thought was not denied and glossed over at all costs but was subjectively experienced and admitted; and this authentic perception could not simply be argued away, overcome and discarded in the light of the new Christian vision of the glory radiating from God.

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[76] *Ibid.* I.3 (73), II.4 (76, 13ff.).

[77] *Ibid.* III.17 (139–140).

The varieties of hubristic dialectic (even in their humblest disguises) were relatively quickly seen through. But the struggle with those conceptual images that were able to make positive sense of the incompleteness, as the sole standard, the window, through which the everlasting light breaks through, lasted for millennia. Indeed Christians may well delude themselves if they imagine that in the present age they have put myth completely behind them, ancient religion half and philosophy almost completely behind them, so as to lay out its unique absolute fare on this tabula rasa. Certainly, Vergil vanishes unobserved at the peak of the mountain of Purgatory, where he delivers his pupil into the keeping of Beatrice, the manifestation of the eternal love. But could Dante have been led through the Inferno and Purgatorio by anyone except this *anima cortese*,[78] who imparts to him the most sensitive insight he possesses: *amor e il cor gentil son una cosa*?[79] An antechamber—but how indispensable, because it is only as either Jews or Gentiles that we can become Christians. And, more importantly, because it is into this antechamber-world of either Jewish or Gentile understanding that we must go out again and again bearing the good news of salvation, to live there and proclaim the gospel there.

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[78] *Inferno* 2.58.

[79] *Vita Nuova* 20.

We may indeed do so announcing with Karl Barth in tones of loud conviction that Christianity is not a religion, or, with Kierkegaard, that it is not a philosophy, or, with Bultmann, that is it not a mythology. But God would not have become human if he had not come into positive inner contact with these three forms of thought and experience. The evidence for this contact and this contamination is provided by the Bible itself, which attains its final and (for the Christian) binding form precisely in the great age of religion and syncretism. Those who want to 'purify' the Bible of religion, philosophy and myth want to be more biblical than the Bible, more Christian than Christ. What is invariably left after these supposed exorcisms is a pitifully abstract affair, that seeks to hide its wretchedness by exalting the slogan of 'holy poverty', the 'absolute seriousness' of its own impoverishment, as the *unum necessarium*, latching on to 'the Word' in one way or another, as if this Word, ascending to the Father, had not sent forth the Holy Spirit upon Church and world.

The 'syncretism' of the Bible is a fact denied by no-one. It begins in the Old Testament, where the last books to be written not only speak in a generally Hellenistic style (Maccabees), but in Stoic and (neo-) Platonic ways (Wisdom and, even, Ecclesiasticus).[80] Philosophical 'logos' enters into the service of Jewish thinking about God; Hellenistic universalism becomes the medium for the absolute claim of the Bible. The Epistle to the Hebrews, taking up from this tradition, will express the dialectic of Old and New Covenants in the garments of Platonic language and thought,[81] in close connection with Philo, who had already, as an irreproachably devout Jew, donned these garments.[82] Paul quotes Aratos, John speaks of the Logos, the Epistle of James uses the conventions of Stoic diatribe, the Deutero-Pauline letters take over the terminology of contemporary religious, cultic and political conceptions of *parousia* and *epiphaneia* without a trace of apprehension[83]—to take only a few instances; and all this points clearly to the fact that human thinking does not happen without concepts (philosophy) and images (myth), and the relation between 'religion' and 'revelation' is thus bound to be an intimate interior penetration of just this intense kind. This must hold as much for the most ancient parts of the Bible as for the latest; anyone who takes offence at this and wants to expunge anthropomorphisms from the Bible must either replace these ancient forms with the still more crude and naive mythologoumena of our 'scientific' era or else succumb to an irrationalist existentialism, which is simply neither able nor willing to give an account of anything over and above its own thought-processes.

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[80] *Raymond Pautrel, 'Ben-Sira et le Stoïcisme'*, *RSR* 1963, 535–549.

[81] F. J. Schierse, *Verheissung und Heilsvollendung. Zur theologischen Grundfragen des Hebräerbriefes*, 1955.

[82] C. Spicq, *L'Épitre aux Hébreux*, 2 vols., 1952–3.

However, it is enough for now to allude to these facts and to put them in their historical and systematic place relative to us; the formal and methodological problem has already been dealt with in the first volume of this work. What is now of decisive importance is the question of content: in what way did the last days of the ancient world come to provide Christianity with a meaning for 'glory' which it could not ignore or bypass, as classical culture drew together its vision of existence and, as far as was possible, transcended it in definitive, classical form?

The antique world in its decline saw with as much clarity as any preceding age just how precarious, ambiguous and risky such a characterisation of existence was bound to be in any circumstances—more than ever at the end of an era. It had, after all, sought to keep before its eyes the dark, shadowy, even terrible aspects of reality, but also to find a *locus standi* from which, without closing one's eyes to anything, it would be possible to say a bold and decisive Yes to the whole of experience. Homer did not avert his gaze from suffering and death any more than did Archilochus, nor did Heraclitus any more than Plato and Aristotle, Epictetus and the inventors of the great cosmic romances of Gnosticism.

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[83] E. Pax, ΕΠΙΦΑΝΕΙΑ (above, n. 56).

Even where whole areas of the world are rejected because they appear too ambiguous for a wholehearted affirmation we still find the search to arrive at an overarching perspective, to attain the point of view of a higher divine mind or of the supreme God himself, the point of view of a being who need take no responsibility for the catastrophes of the sublunary world or the whole material order. Dualistic, Manichaean systems were often no more than well-meant, if also awkward and ill-thought-out, attempts to vindicate the true God, the radiance of whose glory, so it seemed, could not penetrate the total darkness of this world. And on the other hand, many forms of philosophical and religious pantheism were only too ready and facile in dealing with this darkness, in explaining it as pure non-being, or pure appearance and no more, or as a more or less necessary ingredient woven into a comprehensive cosmic harmony. Yet even here we can recognise the ethical will and the struggle, often astonishingly strong, to make it possible for the whole of reality to be recognised as good and beautiful, no matter how much the individual may be devalued, ignored, or indeed expunged from the comprehensive picture of order.

It cannot be said that in the human longing to succeed in saying an unconditional 'Yes' there is concealed the kind of arrogance that cannot put up with a defective world, or that is confident in its own power to perfect it. Even for the philosophers the contemplation of 'the starry heavens above', which is primary for the classical mind, is not connected with the secondary sense of 'the moral law within' in such a way that the individual as such is allowed to claim, in Promethean style, any sort of identity, internal or external, with the order of the cosmos, although there is a marked gradation in the levels of religious awe expressed, ranging from pure humble worship to a proud consciousness of possessing a share in the highest degrees of reality and *logos*. It is well-known that the Hellenistic and later Roman cult of the ruler cannot simply be read in terms of human self-divinisation: when, in advanced civilizations (where the state apparatus is adequately developed) the royal office appears as the visible representation of divine power and order, permeated with the light of eternal glory, when there is a confluence of manifold forms of mythical thought and ritual, especially in the Greek world (the cults of certain dead heroes, semi-divine or clan ancestors, historical heroes with their particular shrines and festivals, etc.), when, finally, Alexander the Great is greeted by the oracle of Ammon as Son of God (and thus successor of the Pharaohs) and Hellenistic and Roman monarchs from then on begin to receive divine honours, all this occurs in the intermediate sphere of the *theion* as conceived in classical thought, the realm of divine brightness lying over this world, especially its most exalted parts. No-one seriously suggests that the royal personage possesses the unmediated essence of God. Any seriousness about this comes in the first instance from outside, when Christians reject the whole picture and abandon all these intermediate levels of reality that obscure the ultimate truth, on the basis of a completely new understanding of the Godness of God.[84]

It is certainly true that in Rome a hard-headed sense of *raison d'état* increasingly pervaded such 'advents', 'epiphanies' and 'apotheoses' of the monarch, events which left the individual all the more religiously unsatisfied the more he or she felt unable to identify harmoniously with the state—a sharp contrast to how things were in the republican era. Once the cultivated poets and artists of Alexandria had retreated into a private sphere of dazzling and playful conceits in their art-forms, the Roman imitators of a Callimachus or a Euphorion went on to put a bitter, sarcastic, brutal and intermittently obscene content into these technically flawless vessels. The process can be traced from Catullus to Martial by way of Ovid; and in their way, such writers sought to show their personal independence over against the pressure of the public sphere. Horace himself, the most gifted artist among them, a writer who achieved a perfect formal poise and transparency, represents no more of an advance than that of Stoicism over Epicureanism. Not for nothing is the long-dead Archilochus brought back into prominence at just this moment.

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[84] E. Lohmeyer, *Christuskult und Kaiserkult*, 1919; K. Prümm, *Religionsgeschichtliches Handbuch* (Herder) 1943, 54ff.; Otto Immisch, *Zum antiken Herrscherkult* (*Aus Roms Zeitwende. Erbe der Alten*, 2nd series XX, 1931); C. Habicht, *Gottmenschentum und griechische Städte* (*Zetemata* 4), 1956.

However, there are two phenomena that rise above this turmoil and, in their completely different ways, point to paths lying open that lead out of the enclosed labyrinth of the pre-Christian world. Both renew the attempt to see, to affirm and to point to the universal. Both shed a light upon it that continues to shine across the centuries and has up to the present day made their work an integral part of any attempt at poetry with a global dimension (Vergil) or religious philosophy (Plotinus). Vergil, 'Father of the West', laden with all the spoils of Orient, *spoliis Orientis onustum*,[85] is the consummation of culture's turning westwards. Almost three hundred years later, Plotinus once again embodies in and for this Western world the wisdom of the Orient and Greece; and Vergil, instantly perceived and acknowledged as *the* poet of Rome, continues to play the same role throughout the Middle Ages. Without him the great national epics of the Western world—Tasso, Camõens, Milton—would never have been composed. Only in the age of Winckelmann, Herder and Goethe does he yield his pre-eminence to Homer; and this frequently happens because of a more or less conscious undervaluing of his unique worth. As for Plotinus, it is through his eyes that the Cappadocian Fathers and Augustine read their Plato; he is the generative, fructifying power for Boethius and again for Scotus Erigena; through a work written in the spirit of Plotinus, the *liber de causis*, Thomas Aquinas learns to read and interpret Aristotle; he has a formative influence on the world-pictures of Dante and Nicholas of Cusa; and his translator Ficino inspires the whole Renaissance through the medium of his thought. Paracelsus and Copernicus are under his spell; England is full of imitators of him, from the Cambridge Platonists to Shaftesbury; up to the time of Rossetti, the Italians remain loyal to him; and Goethe's *sonnenhaftes Auge*, his all-seeing eye, recognises its like in Plotinus.[86] Vergil and Plotinus alike are the crown and summit of their age, in that they so signally open themselves to wider perspectives. But both are also—as sources and inspirations, for the most part—far greater than their followers, apart from Dante. They clear a space for their disciples to furnish. The question cannot be avoided of *why* exactly Rome turned to the Christian faith, if it was indeed, as Augustine depicted it, the counter-image of the heavenly city. How did it come about that Rome, harsh, warlike and calculating, immediately recognised Vergil as its own particular genius, the tender, utopian Vergil, preoccupied with nothing but peace, and celebrated him as only emperors had hitherto been celebrated? In Vergil, the subterranean stream flowing from myth into revelation becomes visible for a brief instant.

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[85] *Aeneid* I, 289.

[86] Franz Koch, *Goethe und Plotin*, 1925. More fully, Grunach, *Goethe und die Antike* (1949). For a brief sketch of the influence and legacy of Plotinus,

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see Richard Harder's last work, the introduction to his selection of readings from Plotinus (Fischerbücherei, 1958).

4 VERGIL

a. *The Glory of the World*

All previously prevailing categories—myth, philosophy, religion—are mysteriously shattered in Vergil:[87] he shares something with all of them, yet transcends them. As he makes his way step by step backwards from his final goal, he finds, at the sources of things, something like a path out into an open space, a place where the springs rise, a place of healing and of holiness: *sanctos ausus recludere fontes*[88] Such work of spiritual 'breakthrough' is possible only for a poet whose inspiration is primordial, uninfected by Plato's critical doubts—a *poeta vates*.[89] This achievement ascends through its three main stages with a dreamlike certainty—each stage marked by an unmistakable necessity of vision, a reposeful universality that nonetheless points beyond itself: these stages are stations on the road to the poet's attainment of real freedom—the *Bucolics* (c. 37 B.C.), the *Georgics* (29 B.C.), and the *Aeneid* (posthumous and incomplete, 19 B.C.). He begins, as is fitting, in his youthful *Catalepton* ('Allegretto') by learning a set of skills which he masters superbly, in admiring imitation of the finely-chased miniatures of the so-called 'Neoterics', Gallus and Catullus especially. Then he is shaken by the impact of the powerful materialistic epic of the unhappy Epicurean, Lucretius; it leaves its mark, in that it is this above all that spurs him on to imitate it in a wholly different, fundamentally opposed way. The contemporary historical scene is appalling; the Civil Wars are still raging and it is possible[90] that the expropriations of 50 B.C. affected Vergil's own patrimony. The flight of the aesthetes of the day into the idyllic pastoral world of Theocritus could not be an answer to the questions of that age and that world. There is an early, melancholy farewell to the poetic Muse, when Vergil goes off to join the philosopher Siro at Naples;[91] but later, in the *Georgics*, we find a still more decisive farewell to philosophy, whose devotees (he is thinking particularly of the Epicureans) are able to search out the nature of things and conquer fear and fate.[92] His way does not lie with them. He is a Roman, not a Greek, concerned neither with myths nor ideas but with reality, the *res* as it surrounds human beings in its harsh and uncompromising historical insistence. It is because of this that he is a *poet*, whose calling is to praise and to illumine—not by flight, like the Alexandrians retreating into pastoral life from the city, but through faithful perseverance in the limited, recalcitrant, unilluminated reality of the present, until it reveals its hidden face to the person who waits in patient trust. This is hard: *hic labor*,

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[87] Vergil's works are cited following Hirtzel's Oxford Classical Texts edition. B = *Bucolica*, G = *Georgics*, A = *Aeneid*, C = *Catalepton* [Translated quotations in the text are rendered directly from the Latin. Tr.]. See also M. N. Wetmore, *Index verborum Vergilianus*, Yale 1911.

[88] G 2.175. Friedrich Klingner, *Vergils Georgica* (1963), 87–89, shows that this formula is modelled on Ennius and Lucretius, and is imitated in Ovid and Statius.

[89] A 7.41.

> Well do I know how hard it is to tame the world
>   with words,
> To lend the poverty of things such splendid vesture.[93]

Such a programme may still appear to have links with the Alexandrians, who love to show off their art in the most perfect possible treatment of trivial or obscure objects: but the spirit of Vergil is entirely antipathetic to this. From his journey's end, the *Aeneid*, we can trace the route back upstream through the *Georgics* to its source in the spirit and resolve which already shaped the *Bucolics*. These still make play with the outward forms of Theocritean idyll but already they have the whole of historical reality in view, in the dreamy sure-footedness of a young sleep-walker. This 'dreamlike' character is a moral, not an aesthetic, matter: it is the will not to be held back by any premature narrowing of boundaries, any fixed theory or conceptuality. The *Bucolics* are a vision of the whole seen from the earth, analogous to the way the soul in Plato sees the totality of things in its pre-existent heavenly condition. They move along as if in a trance, feeling their way from place to place, grasping with clairvoyant certainty the scale of distances and relations, the deeper strata of things, and bringing them into a rare order and poise in the course of ten poems.[94]

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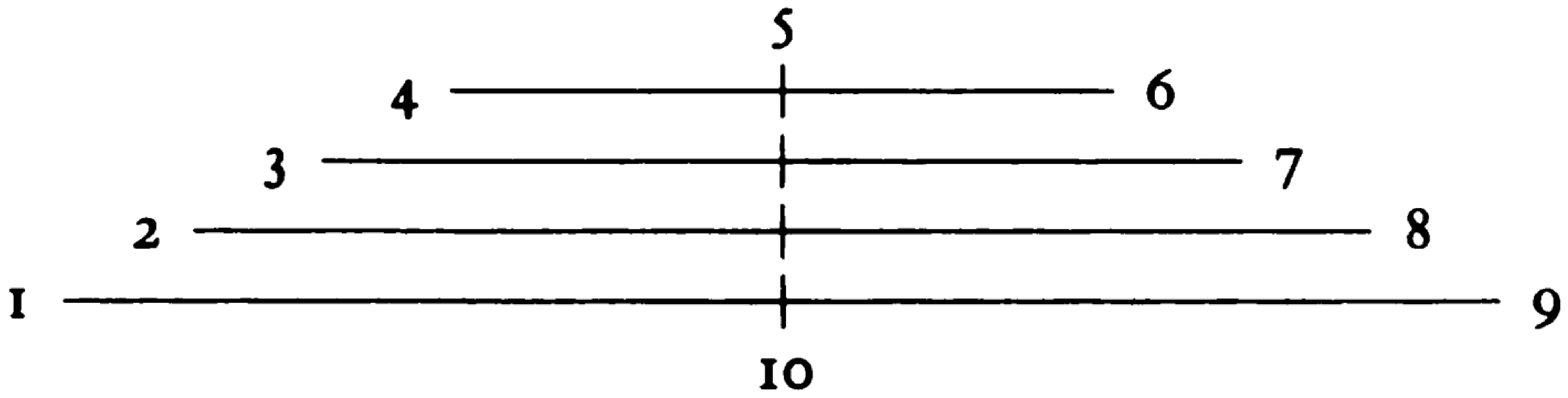
[90] 'L'episode peut avoir été . . . inventé de toutes pièces'; J. Perret, *Vergile* (*Écrivains de toujours*, 1959), 10.

[91] C 5.

[92] G 2.490–491.

[93] G 3.289–290.



The 1–9 stratum represents the naked conflict between the brutality of contemporary history and the timeless peace of rural existence: a man exiled from house and home speaks with someone still in possession of his own land and both wander together, singing under a night sky heavy with rain. The second stratum, 2–8, transfers the conflict to the interior life of human beings: the tragedy and drama of Eros, the lament of the rejected Corydon, with its insight into the disproportionate[95] and violent[96] character of all erotic passion, the lament of the deserted Damon as he perceives the alien and inhuman nature of Eros,[97] the unearthly magical incantation of Alphesiboeus. The third layer, 3–7, is the untroubled world of pastoral poetry and song, the world of Theocritus and baroque pastoral; but in Vergil it is no more than a narrow zone between quite different worlds. In the fourth stratum, the yearning gaze towards a wholly

transfigured and redeemed earth broadens out both forwards and backwards, forwards to the eschatological expectation of the return of a Golden Age and, in the fourth *Eclogue*, of a world redeemer and backwards to the 'protology' of a cosmogony and a mythical, primordial age in the sixth *Eclogue*. The fifth *Eclogue* stands on a lovely eminence, framed by the others, with its narration of the mystery of Daphnis' death and 'resurrection', Daphnis, for whose death the whole of nature mourns and in whose transfiguration and assumption to Olympus as 'a god, a god', all nature joins again in celebration and rejoicing. For 'the gentle Daphnis' gives peace to the natural order, the wolf no longer lies in wait for the sheep and the snare is no longer laid for the deer.[98] But immediately below this supreme vision (in the scheme of the whole as shown above), for the sake of poetic and cosmic equity, there lies the coda of the last *Eclogue*, a kind of ballast for the whole—the elegy for the poet's friend Gallus, who 'perished for a worthless love', *indigni amore peribat*.[99] Once more, and now for the last time, the question is posed: 'Is there no measure, then, no limit? For all this, Eros still remains unmoved, he has not drunk his fill of tears—no more than will the meadows have their fill of streams, the bees of clover or the goats of leaves.'[100] This is Eros as madness and disease, *insanus amor*,[101] burgeoning like nature itself and pitiless to human pain: of such Eros it is said, *Omnia vincit amor: et nos cedamus amori*.[102] But the poet takes his leave of Eros' victim, assuring him of his own hourly increasing love in helplessly youthful and vulnerable gestures; this is a tender-hearted concern, a love that is not erotic, yet bears the same name—*amor*. He bids farewell in this way, so as to urge a swift and resolute departure, because 'the shadows . . . the shadows . . . the shadows', thrice mentioned, are threatening to swallow up everything. And in the final verse of all, there is only the evening star and the flock driven home.

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[94] What follows is based on the researches of P. Maury, *Le secret de Virgile et l'architecture des Bucoliques* (*Lettres d'Humanité* III, 1944), 71–147, summarised in Jacques Perret, *Virgile, l'homme et l'oeuvre* (*Connaissance des lettres* 33), 1952, 14–22.

[95] *Quis enim modús adsit amori?* B 2.68.

[96] *Trahit sua quemque voluptas*, B 2.65.

[97] B 8.43–45.

[98] B 5.60–61.
[99] B 10.10.
[100] B 10.28–29.
[101] B 10.44.
[102] B 10.69.

It is certainly true that in Vergil's Arcadia a pure poetic-aesthetic world of symbols is created, surpassing any comparable Greek achievement.[103] But this is achieved in such a way that the framework of this ideal landscape is penetrated on all sides from beyond, to be only a cipher for the heights and depths of actual reality. The flight into the aesthetic is from the first presented as futile; the poet will only rediscover there all the dimensions of reality in heightened and more naked shape. He must triumph not by formal achievement but by the life of the heart; he must admit the powerlessness of song amidst the clash of weapons;[104] and so there is nothing for him to do but sing this song in the face of destruction and violence. All poetry ends in shadows,[105] and Eros, the lord of Arcadia, is shown forth in all his incomprehensible ambiguity: the untroubled mid-point of this work, the level of the third and seventh Eclogues, is simply a serendipitous moment that cannot be clung to, between the 'wondering entry over the threshold of Olympus'[106] and the precipitous drop into the all-devouring abyss. *Amor* is really the keyword of this poetry,[107] an *amor* that goes back past the changes and chances of time, beyond even Euripides (though Vergil lingers here for a good while: without him there would be no Dido), to Illiupersis, into the realm of the cosmic and daimonic: for Helen's sake half the world is destroyed totally and most of the other half as well. This god, this Eros, who alone ignores the bolt of Jupiter,[108] is here for the first time brought into the bloodstream of the West, which will repeatedly match him against that Christian *caritas* to which he cannot but be related—from Dante on through Racine, to Claudel. But even as he is being celebrated at the start of his career by Lucretius, as universal and omnipotent,[109] the power that consummates the sacred marriage between heaven and earth,[110] this daimon is being dressed in other garments by Vergil, in the tenderness of the poet's heart which shares in all delight and ecstasy as in all grief and devastation, dressed in the garments of a paradoxically restrained and chaste love. Vergil, mockingly called *parthenios* in the streets of Naples, never married. He is dominated by a selfless, even apparently useless love that never once counts on being loved in return:

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[103] Bruno Snell, 'Arkadien, die Entdeckung einer geistigen Landschaft', in *Die Entdeckung des Geistes*, 1946, 233–258.

[104] B 9.11–13.

[105] See the last line of the Aeneid.

[106] *Candidus insuetum miratur limen Olympi*, B 5.56.

[107] As Theodor Haecker rightly says in his little book *Vergil. Vater des Abendlandes*, 1935, 46ff—a work which is a simple declaration of love.

[108] A 1.665.

Enough, then, if you do no more than let me love
Whence might return of love come too for me?[111]

Nor is this the heroic love of friends, which Vergil exalts elsewhere (*nimium dilexit*)[112]; it is a whole-hearted reverence before all the forms of nature and fate, bound up with a willingness to share in all suffering, that is very different from Buddhist (let alone Stoic) compassion: 'a kind of courage and seriousness, a calm resolution and nobility pervades even the expression of compassion—something that in the Middle Ages would be called chivalry.[113] It is to this withdrawn, self-effacing presence that the things of the world become visible in their proper worth; and in this new visibility, they become for the first time capable of being truly celebrated by the poet. 'Vergil is always consistently a poet—which means a revealer of the radiance and glory of things: not simply a revealer of things without their radiance and their glory but, equally, not a revealer of an empty radiance and an insubstantial glory independent of real objects, which would make one an idle chatterer, an 'idealist'.[114] The Roman *pietas* that Vergil is later to praise in Aeneas flows into this gentle letting-be, that *pietas* which is a form of loving *reverence*—the son's for the father, above all, then the human reverence for the divine Father, then reverence for all families and all the ties that bind human beings together—quite distinct again from *erôs*, because it is the persisting and controlling element that underlies the aggressive urge of the god. It is not pure duty but, even as one adapts oneself to another and obeys, it is, at a deeper level, an act of reverencing. And again it is to this attitude of reverence that the graciousness and loveliness of things themselves is revealed. Nothing more clearly characterises *pius Aeneas* than the mysterious expansion in him of a childlike willingness to please the father, the authority that is also the object of love, in an attitude of reconciled acceptance before all of reality: *cede Deo*,[115] 'yield to God', becomes the basic postulate of all human virtue. If there is one element that remains thoroughly alien to Vergil's ethos, it is the Dionysiac; where this comes to the surface, it is mostly associated with destructive and inimical forces.[116] Nonetheless, the different forms of love are not all that sharply marked off from one another. It suited Vergil's purposes well—and he was to strike the chord of this motif frequently and firmly—that Venus was the mother of Aeneas, and so of Rome; Cupid, *Amor*, is even called Aeneas' 'brother'.[117] If Athena is the divine patroness and protector of the Greeks, for Vergil the wordplay Roma—Amor has real validity. To be sure, death appears, as always, standing across the path of love: Hades is the mid-point of the Aeneid (while in Dante it moves to the beginning of his journey). The hero meets Dido there, a suicide in the Euripidean tragic mould: 'her face averted, . . . unmoved as the hard granite or the marble of Paros',[118] just as Ajax's face is turned away from Odysseus in Homer. There is no question of Dido even remotely assuming the role of Beatrice; a convergence of human and divine love is still inconceivable and the visions of transfiguration in the third and fourth Eclogues remain no more than eschatological dreams. Nonetheless, they are not dispensable; they constitute the ultimate horizon of the poetic world-picture, something which is portrayed, though only sporadically and inadequately, in the Greek myth of the 'cosmic year', the cyclic movement of the universe, the ever-circling years that bring round again the ages of gold. For in fact the Aeneid's conception of time is in flat contradiction to this notion of a time in the natural order that runs a circular course. The 'ever-circling years' of the myth of Saturn's return, the return over and over again of the Golden Age, thus remain a part of Vergil's symbolic vocabulary. Even the fourth Eclogue, with its expectation of a coming redeemer—an already born redeemer—and the return of a Golden Age (no doubt composed on the first and most obvious level at the birth of the son of Asinius Pollio, who smiled at his mother as soon as he was born,[119] and referring at a deeper level to Octavian)[120]—even this work draws its ultimate meaning not from oriental or Hellenistic or Etruscan myth, though these may have provided some inspiration, but from the interpretation of temporal and historical existence at the end of the Aeneid.

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[109] *De rerum natura* 1.10–20.
[110] *Cf.* the fragment of Aeschylus' *Danaids* referred to earlier.
[111] C 4.
[112] A 9.430.
[113] Perret, op. cit. 160.
[114] Haecker, op. cit. 34.

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[115] A 5.467.

[116] Thus it is the Fury Allecto who stirs up the Laurentine women into Dionysiac frenzy (A 7.341f), in which they rush headlong into war and destruction. In sharp contrast, the Bacchic motifs in the Georgics are very subdued.

[117] A 1.667.

[118] A 6.469, 471. That Dido subsequently turns back again to the memory of the tender love of Sychaeus, her first husband, is one of those inconsistencies of which the Vergilian Nekyia is full (E. Norden, P. Vergilius Maro, *Aeneid* VI, 1916²); but this is largely to be explained as a sign of Vergil's care for an open vision of the totality of things, instead of a closed pattern of consistency.

The agricultural poems, the *Georgics*, are the next stage—provisional and temporary in the poet's own eyes[121]—in the journey back to the ultimate origins, back behind lyric poetry to Hesiod. The final step will take Vergil into the presence of Homer, to start all over again from this point and to do it all differently. Hesiod, the peasant from Askra: now it is Vergil who sings 'the song of Askra'[122] his Arcadian shepherd has become a down-to-earth Italian peasant. The lyrical mists of this peasant's earlier youthful incarnation are dispelled, leaving the view clear: a view of real life, in its harshness and its beauty.

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[119] H. Hommel, 'Vergils "messianisches" Gedicht', *Theologia Viatorum* 1950, 182–202 (included in H. Oppermann (ed.), *Wege zu Vergil*, 1963, 368–425) once again defends this thesis with much display of learning, in opposition primarily to E. Norden, *Die Geburt des Kindes*, 1924. On the instant smiling of the saviour, see Hommel, 383, 410.

[120] Macrobius, *Sat.* III.7.1: *Cum loqueretur* [*Vergilius*] *de filio Pollionis, id quod ad principem suum* [*Octavianum*] *spectaret adjecit*. K. Prümm follows this 'Formula of Concofd' in essentials ('Die Heilserwartung der 4. Eclogue', *Schol.* 1931, 539f, 1932, 239f.

[121] *interea*, G 3.40.

Beyond both realism and idealism, beyond both practical commonsense advice about farming (precedents for this can be found in Cato and Varro) and a more refined and exquisite poetry which only toys with such motifs (Nicander, Aratus), there is a quite different path that might be traced, as Klingner has shown: the path that leads from Lucretius to Empedocles and Parmenides and the ancient cosmogonies that preceded them, the path at whose beginning stands Hesiod.[123] Vergil combines both traditions in an inseparable unity in his own distinctive style, rooted in the soil of Italy: the serious and the playful which illuminates the serious—both are equally real. There are four books: on the soil, on trees, on livestock and on bee-keeping, four levels: the earth itself, vegetable life, sentient life and finally that glimpse of the divine spirit that hovers around us in the life of the bees—the sexless producers of sweet honey, inconceivably intelligent and courageous. Tilling the soil is arduous, the cattle are dull: in the first and third books, the tones that predominate are grave, often tragic. But the vegetable world is still as it was in Paradise: a joy to cultivate, it gives its gifts freely for the most part. In the second and fourth books, the books on plants and on bees, happiness and brightness predominate. Yet both lines of thought are blended together. The first book deals with *labour improbus*, the sweat of the brow that comes from the pressure of sheer necessity and only so produces nourishment for human need. Here Vergil distances himself from Hesiod: it is not because Prometheus stole fire from heaven that Zeus brought the Golden Age to an end and enjoined labour and drudgery on the human race as a punishment. Rather Jupiter himself concealed the spark of fire out of fatherly love:

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[122] Already in B 6.70, but more emphatically in G 2.176.

[123] Klingner, *Vergils Georgica* (1963), 11–14.

> The Father willed himself
> The tilling of the soil should be no easy task. First
> then, he caused
> The field to stir to life by human skill, sharpening the
> wits of men by anxious care,
> Not suffering his realm to lie asleep in lumpish
> idleness.[124]

God's grace is to be found concealed within *cura*, anxious care. Here the glory of the 'divine country'[125] hides itself: the countryman is involved in an unending struggle against the greater power of natural forces and this struggle broadens out, in the poet's treatment, to include the whole of our existential situation:

> And so by fate all things
> Run down towards the worst, and slip away, and are
> dragged back,
> As if a man who scarcely manages to hold his course,
> Rowing his skiff against the stream, should let his
> arms
> Relax, perhaps only an instant, and the current
> suddenly
> Sweeps him away down-stream.[126]

The peasant calendar of Hesiod and Aratus, marked by the courses of the stars, seems to salvage something from this vertiginous glimpse into the abyss of futility, to orient human beings towards what does not pass away. But then suddenly, at the end of the first book, the signs in the heavens turn into signs of the times: Caesar has been murdered and the Civil War unleashed, nature is out of joint and full of *prodigia*, apocalyptic intimations of some frightful thing to come. The gods of the fatherland are implored not to stand in the way of 'this youth' (Octavian): he is the last hope and if he fails then the chariot of history will run out of all control and 'the driver, vainly tightening the reins, is carried along by the horses, and the chariot will not respond to his steering'.[127]

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[124] G 1.121–124.
[125] G 1.168.
[126] G 1.199–203.

Yet the world of the trees and bushes and vines remains intact. Italy, the glorious land in the middle-earth, is praised and its soil, in which the age of Saturn still lives, is extolled as equal to or greater than all the dreamlands of the Orient.[128] Once the right soil had been chosen, and after the human labour of grafting and fertilizing, how richly and freely the fruit gives of itself! Nature, swelling in springtime, makes itself fertile. Harvest-time becomes a festival of thanksgiving: in spite of their *durus labor*[129] the country folk are fortunate, for the 'most equitable earth', *justissima terra*[130] has preserved the clearest marks of original righteousness.[131] The philosopher may be blessed, 'but happy too is he who knows the gods of the countryside.'[132]

The book dealing with cattle is dark in timbre, although it is involved in the fantasy planned for the future of writing a poetic 'Triumph' for Augustus on a vast scale (a plan that gives way to the still greater and more adequately designed *Aeneid*). Melancholy surrounds animal life, especially that of the noblest beasts, horse and bull, because mating implies mortality; when the *furor* of Eros lays hold on man and beast (Leander in the waves of the Hellespont appears in company with rutting animals), they suffer, they are driven madly to their own destruction. Domesticated animals may be depicted in ordinary bucolic terms but the temperate climes in which they thrive are surrounded by heat on one side and ice on the other: the habitable world is narrow. And then there are the plagues that threaten them: the book concludes with a terrible depiction of a *danse macabre*, where demonic flames must finally consume the heaps of pest-ridden carcasses.

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[127] G 1.513–514.

[128] G 2.136–176.

[129] G 2.412.

[130] G 2.460.

[131] G 2.474.

[132] G 2.493.

The bees of the fourth book represent spiritual life.[133] They are a kind of elevation of dumb Nature beyond itself into a realm of purity and radiance. They are diligent, 'great-souled' (*magnanimus*) [134] in their actions, in their self-sacrifice for the sake of the city, in the struggle against enemy tribes of bees. Their life is love and celebration or glorification—both words occur in the same line, where their voluntary death beneath an excessive load of the pollen they have gathered is extolled:

tantus amor florum et generandi gloria melli.[135]

We have no more than a faint hint that Vergil reinforces this idea of the participation of bees in the divine life by associating with it the Stoic philosophical conception of a general presence and immanence of the godhead in the natural order:[136] a faint hint, not even particularly apt for Vergil's purposes, and, in any case, nothing that is determinative for his perspective. It is more important, that the word 'immortal' occurs in connection with bees as a species:[137] this means that they participate in heavenly life in a distinct way; it is these small and insignificant creatures who earn such glory: *in tenui labor, at tenuis non gloria.*[138] So it is that they become a kind of pledge of immortality within the natural order. The conclusion of the whole work points, in mythical code, to this mystery, skillfully weaving together two distinct myths so that they cast light on each other.

There is the tale of Aristaeus who is inconsolable at the death of his bees and who is directed by his mother, the nymph Cyrene, to Proteus, whom he has hold on to by cunning (as does Menelaus in Homer) until he gives up the secret: Aristaeus must humbly placate Orpheus by sacrifice, since he is unwittingly guilty of the death of Eurydice, the eternally loved and eternally lost Eurydice, all but brought back from death and so mourned in a double measure of desolation. When this is done, new swarms of resurrected bees will take flight from the carcasses of the sacrificed animals. The tale of Aristaeus is an ancient one and the method of regeneration from animal corpses (known as *bugonia*) is sometimes commended and sometimes rejected in bee-keepers' manuals; but Vergil is the first to link this legend with that of Orpheus. Two aspects of nature, of *Dasein*: the tragic dimension of love that can never be consummated, the beloved gone beyond recall into the realm of the dead, and the cry of lament echoing through the world, the cry that cannnot be quieted. The human self unwittingly shares the guilt of provoking this lament and must humbly sacrifice to this weeping god. Who knows whether Protean Nature will not after all show us the right path to a magical resurrection beyond hope or conceiving?[139] Rilke's *Sonette an Orpheus* are the nearest thing to this mysterious finale to the *Georgics*. All Vergil's skill can be seen here in this reticence and refusal of resolution; the two conflicting myths are only loosely plaited together (in far too external a fashion, so the philologists say), like fingertips resting against each other. The legend that deals with death, the legend that deals with eternal life: but this suffices to let that radiant glow that lies over the entire work suffuse the end of the poem, a glow that arises from the poet's Yes to life in all its dimensions, the harsh and the beautiful. That Yes, however, can only be consciously uttered when it is a response to an ultimate, barely audible Yes on the part of being itself.

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[133] The theme is a traditional one, found in Aristotle, Pliny and Varro (honey is a secretion of the heavens, the residue of nectar. Bees have received—at most—spirit and skill from nature): examples in Klingner, op. cit. 163.

[134] G 4.4. Only Jupiter and Aeneas share this designation.

[135] G 4.205.

[136] G 4.221–227.

[137] G 4.208.

[138] G 4.6.

b. The Glory of Mission

The *Bucolica* had sought a full transfiguration of the world in the timeless realm of the beautiful, looking to lost origins and hoped-for consummations, but also in the expectant gaze towards Olympian heavens and apotheoses, and, tentatively, the expectation of finding in the world as it actually is an

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[139] *Cf.* the interpretation by Klingner, op. cit. 193–239—beautiful, reticent, yet full of genuinely profound illumination.

Arcadia beyond spatial location, a utopia, a 'no-place'. The *Georgics* are resolutely settled in this world, in the landscape of contemporary Italy, in the accustomed paths of human destiny, its ennoblement through hardship and its experience of the gracious gifts of nature in unremitting toil. Yet it is no isolated, sealed off here-and-now that is depicted but vigilant struggle against a menacing environment, conflict and war above all, conflict inside and outside the human spirit—and, on the wider canvas, sickness and death. There is still a trace, even here, of nostalgia for a lost primordial age, for the *final* establishment of a peacable kingdom, and, transparently, for the overcoming of death, for transfiguration and resurrection.

In both works, the historical world, the world of Roman reality, is viewed and conceived from outside. In the *Aeneid* the poet enters into it and so exposes himself to experiencing the essence, the heart, of the real world. The will had long been present for a celebration of the peaceable world empire to be established by his friend Octavian, the predestined ruler; but form and matter alike had so far eluded him. As far as material was concerned, two halves that failed to make a formal whole lay before him: the present, with its endeavours and successes in unifying the world, and the distant past of Rome, as it had already been celebrated in song by Ennius and Naevius—it descends from Aeneas and from Troy. This led back to the realm of Homer's primordial poetry but seemed also to lead all the further away from the present. In some most profoundly secret hour of creative inspiration the form for this enterprise revealed itself to the poet: as perhaps never before or again in the spiritual history of Europe, this was a moment in which the ethical and the aesthetic coincided.

The inspiration that came was to engage with Rome not in its being but in its becoming, not in possession but in longing, not in power but in obedient preparation for its destiny and so, most profoundly, in renunciation—even in the defeat and catastrophe that stands at the beginning of it all, the point at which it is no more than a grain of mustardseed, yet possessed of the destiny of growing higher than all other plants, growing into a mighty oak, as the first two books of the *Georgics* loved to depict it. What a tribute to Homer—and what a triumph over him!—to leave him to say all that is to be said about the victory and to choose as a starting-point instead all the wretchedness of defeat and flight! And what an opportunity too for the glorification of Rome: there are no long-drawn-out annals stretching back into the past to be written—the poet is indeed not an historian, the task is rather to let all the bright rays of the future penetrate the utter obscurity of the beginning. Two things that will affect the form of the poem are needed to make this possible. First, in the static dimension, a symbolic relationship between the two levels of beginnings and endings is required: the former is image and foretype, the latter reality and antitype. The skill must lie in the portrayal of the truth (the peaceable kingdom of the present or the near future) Solely in terms of the standpoint and mode of existence of the foretype. Then, in the dynamic dimension, the foretype must understand itself as such, as restlessly transcending itself, foreshadowing something beyond itself, conceived, chosen, called, sent, understood in terms of responsive obedience, in relation to something wholly other; in precisely this way is it the primal image of what is to come, the Roman ethos, Roman virtue. Such is the proverbial *fortuna* of Vergil, which puts him at a single stroke in a central position, from which, as from Rome, the roads lead off over the horizon and to which they return.

So the human being is a temporal and historical creature, an anticipation of what is to come; and when we are able to understand this path before us as the one meaningful road to follow (the *sens unique*), it is a task and a mission[140] and becomes something that serves the construction of a greater reality, into whose foundations it enters as a sacrificial offering and which will grow out from this sacrifice. But human beings can do this only in community: Homer's heroes were individuals, standing side by side, finished and self-sufficient entities like the statues of the Greek gods, unrelated to each other. The Roman hero personifies service to his people, his essential life is from and for his people; he is an ethical function of the people. More than this, he is *pius* in the sense in which the son looks up reverently to his father, ready to be at his disposal—to the father who represents for him kindred and lineage, *Volk*, divinity. The God who directs this temporally unfolding destiny can have no definitive form; his epiphanies in this or that particular form are provisional; they are themselves 'functions'. He is the Lord who lays on the hero the mission that will lead back to himself through the darkness and that continues to support him even when it threatens to become meaningless. What Vergil uncovers here is a strangely novel kind of heroism: in contrast to the Homeric heroes, there is a renunciation here of the 'high-profile', three-dimensional style of representation. There is something faceless and colourless about Aeneas, his doings and his gods. And it is this kind of heroism that is presented as an ideal to the level-headed calculating Romans. Vergil is educating his people, his emperor, to self-transcendence.

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[140] This has been most clearly developed by Hans Oppermann, *Vergil* (1938, included also in the symposium referred to in n. 33 above).

The parallels with Abraham, indeed with the whole style of existence of the Old Testament, are inescapable. The father of believers and pious Aeneas both understand themselves in terms of faith, hope and obedience; their meaning lies in an ungraspable and distant future. They themselves are only types and likenesses; that is what they are at the ethical level; but the correspondence between type and archetype, humility and glory, 'old' and 'new' covenant is what holds at the aesthetic level. What is clear from the perspective of Abraham and Aeneas is the distance between the two levels: I am only mission and service, the 'other' who (or which) is to come will be power and glory. Nonetheless it is possible from even this worm's-eye-view to have some share in the bird's-eye-view, for the one who serves in total dedication to his mission is an image of what is to come precisely *as such*: Abraham is the father of *all* believers, even—and especially—Christians; Aeneas is the foretype of *all* Romans, even—and especially—the present-day Romans who, in the person of Augustus, rule the world. The standpoint of a narrative permeated by anticipation and foreshadowing gives Vergil his ultimate opportunity. He brings into play the time of fulfilment, whose celebration is his final concern[141] as something describable only in terms of prophetic vision, and so as something as indeterminate and open as the predictions of the Old Testament prophets. At just those points where he allows the glimpse of a specific outline, where individual names and deeds (which the reader can locate historically in full detail) flash before the eyes of Aeneas, everything still remains wonderfully open from the hero's point of view: these shafts of information are for him more an assurance and confirmation of his overall hope than an advance determination of events. The great revelation from Jupiter at the beginning of the work is given not to Aeneas but to his divine mother and protector.[142] And after she has given him the golden shield on whose surface the whole future history of Rome, shines forth, up to the battle of Actium, to Octavian, Agrippa, Antony and Cleopatra, Vergil ends his eighth book with the incomparable lines:

His mother's gift
He gazes on with wonder, what it shows unknown to
him:
Yet he is glad, lifting the fame and destiny of his seed
upon his shoulders.[143]

The one point at which the father of the race has a direct visionary encounter with the future is in Hades, whither his departed father Anchises has summoned him for the sake of this confrontation with his descendants, as yet unbegotten but already existing as souls.[144] In theological terms, this is the mystical privilege of a founding father, comparable to the visions of Adam in Christian legend, Abraham's vision of his people in the stars of the sky, Moses' vision on the mountain (following Philo and Gregory of Nyssa), Paul's rapture into the third heaven (and according to legend and to Dante, his vision of Hell also), the experiences of John on Patmos,

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[141] As clearly emerges from G 3.10–39.

[142] A 1.257–296.

[143] A 8.729–731.

[144] A 6.724–739.

Benedict, Ignatius and Teresa. It is the vision that turns hope into certainty by its light, without destroying its nature as hope, a 'commissioning' vision that is given more for the sake of the children still in the loins[145] than for the father himself. This perspective of hope releases Vergil from the obligation to depict the Augustan present as an unsurpassable eschaton and so to narrow down the vista opened up in the two earlier works. Rather the hero's perspective derives from some elusive final point, from which only individual fragments of the whole form flesh into view, transitory moments of promise. National definitions and frontiers remain intact, just as, in the Old Testament, the Jerusalem of the last days still has its national identity; yet both still have a mysterious openness. Vergil recognises and desires for his Rome just this openness towards the indefinite; so runs Jupiter's pronouncement (*fatum*):

> His ego nec metas rerum, nec tempora pono:
> Imperium sine fine dedi[146]

The form whose depiction Vergil makes possible, the form in which Rome recognised herself, a form which puts him beyond all that had thus far been achieved in myth, philosophy and religion, creates an analogy to Scripture in the ethical-aesthetic sphere, without this simply licensing an evaluation of the Vergilian form as no more than a 'trial run' or a sideshow in relation to the Christian revelation. The content of this revelation will stand over against Vergil, no less incomparably different and fresh than Vergil's own achievement is when set against Homer and Plato. Nonetheless, what is happening here is a pivotal moment in the mysterious preparations made by providence for the birth of the promised child. This child would not be human without its historical 'horoscope', its *kairos*, which determines its fortune no less that that of any other child. This is the hour in the heavens where Judaism is in conjuction with classical paganism and Rome is made ready as the raw material, the vehicle, for the new moment. But matter and form are relative concepts: all matter is form for some further matter, all form is matter for some higher form. So 'Rome' as matter itself has a form which is relevant to that higher form whose matter it is. And that is the *kairos* and the *fortuna* of Vergil.

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[145] Hebr. 7.9–10.

[146] A 1.278–279. To them no bounds, no end of empire, I Affix; e'erlasting power I've given them!'

This can be dealt with more closely at three levels: mission as *Lebensform* of obedience, mission as *fatum*, mission as glory in humility.

1. The mission that takes Aeneas from Troy to Latium is laid upon him: the fundamental order (*ordo rerum*)[147] is an act of ordering—*is vertitur ordo*[148] Had it been left to Aeneas, he would have rebuilt Troy;[149] but this he cannot do. Still less can he be satisfied with a lesser Troy,[150] like that built by Helenus and Andromache in Epirus, which Aeneas passes by. This means only that he does not struggle on towards Italy *sponte sua*, on his own initiative (though this must not be translated 'against his will').[151] Through trackless paths, *via invia*,[152] he will and he must travel yet further, 'summoned by fate to other shores', while others may remain behind in peace.[153] *Diversa auguria*[154] and *auspicia* drive[155] the wanderers away and further still; they must seek and not find, interpret oracles and misunderstand them;[156] when Italy is in sight, they cannot land there[157] but must pass it by, for new and more perilous trials, like those at Dido's court. And there, where Aeneas seems to forget his vocation, he is harshly recalled to it by the divine father: the god had not saved him

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[147] A 7.44.
[148] A 3.376.
[149] A 4.340–344.
[150] *parva Troja*, A 3.349.
[151] A 4.361, rightly interpreted by H. Oppermann, op. cit. 162–163.
[152] A 3.383.
[153] A 3.494.
[154] A 3.4–5.
[155] A 3.375.
[156] A 3.102f.
[157] A 3.521f.

twice from the weapons of the Greeks for him to lie at peace in Dido's arms.

> Ev'n if so high a calling could not kindle him,
> If he could not endure such toilsome labour for the
> glory, promised him,
> Will then the father grudge his sons the citadels of
> Rome?[158]

Iulus, Anchises and all the gods continually remonstrate with him and urge him away. Aeneas has no option but the obedience to which his mother Venus has aleady exhorted him in the midst of burning Ilium ('Do not fear, my son, to follow what your mother enjoins or to obey her word!'),[159] the obedience to which he is driven in Carthage ('Yet again, a god spurs us on . . . We follow you, holy divinity, whoever you may be, and in reverence obey your behest').[160] Here and here alone Aeneas needs that Roman and Stoic indifference which makes it possible to sacrifice even what is most beloved for the sake of the mission ('In spirit, he sighs and falters from unbounded love, yet for all this he obeys the god's command').[161] *Mens immota manet, lacrimae volvuntur inanes.*[162] When the tempest rages as they near Italy and all the rudders are useless, the destiny that shadows him is embodied in the fury of the gales:

> . . . so let us follow commanding Fate,
> And turn our course where it calls . . . Give the sails
> to the wind.[163]

Once again, as for Odysseus, though in a new and different way, patient endurance appears as the fundamental human virtue:

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[158] A 4.232–234.

[159] A 2.605–606.

[160] A 4.574–576.

[161] A 4.395–396.

[162] A 4.449. 'His mind remains unmoved; yet unavailing tears run down his cheeks.'

[163] A 5.22–23, 28.

However Fate shall drive or hem us in, we must
comply!
Whatever Fate may be, all grief is patiently to be
endured.[164]

However, since this command is not an external burden but something that demands assent from the heart, Aeneas battles on towards Italy out of a love that is truly his own, as if to a home that is truly his own: *hic amor, haec patria est.*[165] What must be established there is the *urbs fatalis*[166] and the founder himself who journeys *manifesto numine* is *Aeneas fatalis.*[167] He comes with his people; but when they revolt in Sicily, he is obliged to leave the greater part behind and go on to the beloved land with only a remnant, a tiny number.[168] The chain of losses and disasters runs through the whole journey (for far deeper reasons than the corresponding pattern in the *Odyssey*). It runs from Aeneas' native city, where as well as everything else he has to leave behind even his wife Creusa, to the Lesser Troy of his kinsfolk, to Dido's love and her beautiful new kingdom, to Anchises his father and Mises and Palinurus his friends (the latter expressly marked out by the gods as a sacrifice to secure a safe landfall), Cajeta his nurse and, most grievously of all perhaps, Pallas, the slain son of his ally Evander. The hero may indeed be for his son a model of courage and endurance but hardly of good fortune.[169] As father of the race, he suffers in a mysterious fashion the entire future fate of his people and can set his calm acceptance against the ominous sayings of the Sybil:

Not one of these afflictions,
Lady, comes new and unexpected to my eyes.
I have foreseen it all, my heart has read and pondered
it.[170]

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[164] A 5.709–710.

[165] A 4.347. The motif that the Trojans themselves in some unimaginable primordial time had originated in Italy and are, with Aeneas, returning to the rock whence they were hewn is an incidental and subordinate bit of aetiology, more political in character. See A 3.96, 166f.; 7.119f., 206f.

[166] A 11.130.

[167] A 11.232.

[168] A 5.729f., 754.

[169] A 12.435–436.

[170] A 6.105.

These losses and disasters are bearable only in virtue of the unswerving faithfulness of hope, only in virtue, indeed, of the grace-given knowledge that there is a final consummation: *o passi graviora, dabit deus his quoque finem.*[171] 'You find your path in the midst of the fire',[172] and he who follows to its end is *certus.*[173] This security in the following of a given destiny (*data fata secutus*)[174] is what entitles Aeneas to be called *pius*, *magnanimus*,[175] and at last *ingens*[176] (because of his mission). So deeply anchored is this man in the all-pervading, all-supporting will of God that the Homeric 'council of the gods' which precedes the decisive conflict appears a pallid and long-outdated convention.[177]

2. *Fatum* is both the divine act of sending and the mission itself that accompanies it, conceived in advance; everything else said about it has only symbolic force, deriving from this basic definition. It cannot be understood unambiguously in terms either of Homeric myth, the hierarchical world of the Olympian gods with Zeus at the summit, or of Stoic philosophy, with its divine spirit immanent in the world. Our eyes are lifted away from both equally, towards a *mysterium*. At its most obvious, this appears in the vast number of oracular utterances, partial, more or less obscure, more or less clear prophecies, heavenly signs to strengthen or admonish: everything that goes to make up the picture of a strangely dismembered yet consistent alphabet in which the sense of the divine mission expresses itself. *Jussa deum cogunt*,[178] *Iovis imperium*,[179] *fata deum imperiis suis*,[180] *jussis ingentibus urget*

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[171] A 1.198–199 'My men, who have endured still greater dangers, God will grant an end to these as well.'

[172] A 7.296–297.

[173] A 5.2.

[174] A 1.382.

[175] A 1.260.

[176] A 6.411; 8.367.

[177] See the opening of Book 10.

[178] A 6.461 'the gods' commands compel'.

[179] A 5.747 'Jove's commands'.

[180] A 7.239–240 'fate's decree and the orders of the gods'.

Apollo,[181] *praecepta jubent*,[182] *coelestum vis magna jubet*.[183] The subject recurs, *numina magna deum*[184] or often just *fatum*, *fors*, *fortuna*. However, destiny itself is divided into distinct levels and senses: it may be a force that draws and spurs on, or one that restricts and delays, so much so that we find an echo in the diction (*fatum* comes from *fari*, to speak) of 'contradiction', *fatis contraria nostris fata*.[185] The polytheistic perspective that opens up here again derives from the very experience of the mission, not only from the old-fashioned requirements of the ancient epic style, not only to challenge comparison with Homer, but out of the same open and humble experience as always, which is able to shape the individual divine powers in a kind of hierarchy (with Jove at the head), so making sense of them. The power of opposition is called Juno—the 'spouse' of the supreme will! She follows through her own counter-plan, with its focus in Carthage:[186] and Rome's subsequent history will provide sufficient proof of the existence of this opposing power. What is remarkable in Vergil is that Aeneas is constantly enjoined to venerate Juno as well, to sacrifice to her, to win her over by piety (not magic);[187] that it is in and through this that final success is promised him and that, after the ultimate delays and restraints,[188] he does indeed win her to his side. The Romans will worship Juno better than any other nation.[189] What she has represented is positively integrated into the will of Jupiter.[190] 'Her fate',[191] which is only one partial aspect of the divine will, 'is conquered by Aeneas',[192] i.e. by Aeneas' missionary destiny as decreed by the father of the gods. Jupiter's ordinance is the highest and most sacrosanct, he cannot be outmanoeuvred by any other god. *Sic placitum*,[193] 'so it is in my resolve and my eternal pleasure', thus the 'father of gods and men' proclaims 'in mercy, with that look by which the skies and storms are quieted'.[194] The trembling Venus is reassured: 'My purpose has not changed'.[195] We may speak indifferently of 'God or Fate',[196] the options are open. As Lord of all destiny, Jupiter is *pater omnipotens*,[197] who 'rules the fortunes of gods and men with his eternal power'.[198] He may make requests of Juno, at the same time as he imposes an ultimate veto.[199] Miraculously, when she finally gives way, he can grant her prayer and willingly declare himself vanquished.[200] All this is fully worthy of a conception of God and goes far deeper that the abstractions of philosophy.[201] Vergil's idea of the heavenly abode of the gods has this in common with Homer's that here too both sincere and worthless prayers ascend to it, and here too it is more often recorded that a prayer is heard, wholly or partially.[202] There is sorrow too in this heaven.[203] Between God and humanity there is a relation of love that cannot be articulated but can only be revered in silence, which makes itself manifest perhaps most beautifully in that the gods (as so frequently in Homer) make themselves known only as they pass from our sight, and the human beings to whom they have appeared stretch out their arms after them in longing.[204] *Pietas* is also a quality of God.[205] Venus is the most anxious of mothers and she pours out something of her own distinctive essential character over all the divine-human relationships in the *Aeneid*.

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[181] A 7.241 'by his dread commands Apollo urges us'.

[182] A 6.632 'our instructions decree'.

[183] A 7.432 'the mighty majesty of heaven commands'.

[184] A 2.623.

[185] A 7.293–294 'fates, to our fates still opposed'.

[186] A 1.11f.

[187] A 12.841; 3.435–440, 545–547; 8.60–61, 84f.; 12.178.

[188] A 7.315; 10.622f.; 12.135f.

[189] A 12.840.

[190] A 12.819–828.

[191] A 7.293. So says even Turnus, who is under Juno's protection: 'For me too a destiny of my own is decreed', A 9.136–137.

[192] A 7.310.

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[193] A 1.283.

[194] A 1.254–255.

[195] A 1.260.

[196] A 2.779; 8.398, 9.211, 214; 12.321, 677.

[197] A 1.60; 3.251; 4.25; 6.592 etc.

[198] A 1.229–230.

[199] A 12.800, 806.

[200] A 12.833.

[201] On this, see the fine and accurate remarks of Perret, op. cit. 157–159. This is not contradicted by the fact that the ancient image of Zeus' scales of justice reappears at the supreme moment of historical decision, and that the decision seems to go to the very heart of the father of the gods, so that he is almost indistinguishable from the precarious indeterminacy of the *kairos* itself. Even this is the poetic expression of something that need not be unworthy of the concept of God. See A 10.104–113; 12.725–727. There is no description of how Turnus sinks in the scales; rather the whole situation is resolved in the dialogue between Jupiter and Juno.

[202] A 9.630 (Iulus' prayer). Arruns' prayer is only half heard (A 11.794–795).

[203] A 10.465.

It is true that something of the ancient Italian peasant religion survives in the lack of definition in his depictions of the gods;[206] but at least it is not the case with him that these gods are 'grey' and abstract, 'spiritless machines'.[207] At best one can say that even here the visage of the gods reflects something of that light which is to be discerned in the faithfulness of the obedient human hero. The only thing portrayed in full light and three-dimensional form is the mission itself: for its sake not only the gods but even the hero as well recede into the shadows. It is this that is exalted at the expense of the human agent, though that exaltation refers to a glory manifest only in the future. This mission is to a great extent already familiar to the poet and his readers: it is the past and present history of Rome. In the tragic episode between Aeneas and Dido, historical truth is presented to view in a parable—the history of the struggle between Rome and Carthage, and, still more, the contemporary triumph over Cleopatra, who had wholly seduced Antony and almost succeeded in doing the same with Caesar, and who, after Actium, took her life as Dido had done. And yet more again: we see the whole struggle between the charms of the eternally seductive Hellenistic East and the Western missionary energy of Rome. In the second part of the epic, the Italian episodes, we have not an account of individual military struggles, portrayed with insignificant romantic elaborations, but a parable, once again, of the particular historic mandate of Rome to unite the tribes of Italy and integrate them under the aegis of her own particular qualities.[208] The commissions laid upon Rome are displayed and conceived in their historical and geopolitical dimensions. Only one later work attempts as much, Claudel's *Soulier de Satin*, but this remains itself only a parable, for all the real history incorporated in it, whereas history is the central matter of the *Aeneid*. To be sure, it is a history which manifests itself in symbol and in embryo, so that it may be fully understood and so may be carried forward and perfected in the right way on the basis of this understanding. Here, though, the glory of imperial Rome is further transcended in another order of glory, still unknown to Rome itself.

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[204] A 1.402–410, and the whole preceding episode (*cf.* A 2.620–621). Apollo is likewise recognised by the Greek princes at the moment of his disappearance (A 9.457–460) and Anchises' fading manifestation leaves a sense of yearning in its wake (A 5.740f.).

[205] A 5.688.

[206] Walter Wili, *Vergil* (1930), 118.

[207] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, II (tr. by E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson, London 1894), 302–303.

3. The self-effacement of Vergil's hero before the task laid upon him intensifies and fixes in stable classical form a Greek motif which runs from the endurance of Odysseus through to the humiliations of the heroes of Sophocles and Euripides. But while these last are starkly outlined in their incomprehensible doom against a lightless heaven, and the Homeric variety of endurance is never more than the trial of one man's great heart, Vergilian humiliation contains within itself a meaning, a hidden radiance, in that it occurs in the context of obedience to God. It certainly borders close on meaninglessness in the sense spelled out by Hegel in connection with the casual sacrifice of the person for the purposes of the state, typified by the mass slaughter of the dramas of national history. But it is not so with Vergil. The *Georgics* provide an earthly and healthy dose of ancient Italy: the human person is, qua human being, ***humilis***, lowly, close to the soil[209] and thus unobtrusive, unsung, ***inglorius:*** 'I long

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[208] This constitutes the 'condition' stipulated by Juno for her consent to be given (A 12.820–828).

[209] *Cf.* the use of ***humilis*** in B 4.2; 2.434; 5.17; G 3.108; A 3.522 (***humilis Italia***); 4.255 (***humilis volat***); 7.157; 8.455 (***humile tectum Euandri***, both lowly and simple, modest) *Cf.* B 2.29.

to be at pleasure, obscure among the streams and woods'.[210] This attribute passes imperceptibly into another, which belongs to the poet himself, living his hidden and secluded life in Naples: *ignobilis*, unheard of.[211] This may well be prompted by Epicurus' λάθε βιώσας, but in Vergil it is bound up with the lowliness of the earth, more deeply with the humbling that is involved in the life of the person with a mission.

Once again, we must recall Aeneas' situation in its entirety: in the background is the fall of Troy and (worse still) the divine prohibition against rebuilding it. Driven by the gods, he must appear with his people before the Italians as *desertor Asiae*,[212] the Asian fugitive, as a beggar[213]—just as he had stood already before Dido;[214] his people are abused as Trojan cowards,[215] womanish Phrygians.[216] Only with difficulty do we realise the demands Vergil is making of his Roman audience, when he sets the beginnings of their fate in the most shattering defeat of the history of the ancient world. In the two first books, the word *victus* echoes many times: the 'conquered Penates' are carried from Troy[217] to appear, battered and humbled, before Dido.[218] Thinking back to the *Bucolica*, we can see that they too begin and (apart from the envoi) end with a forced exile from the house and home.

Nos patriae finis et dulcia linquimus arva.
Nos patriam fugimus . . .[219]

What a position for a poet to be in—*carmina nulla canam*![220]

[210] G 2.486.
[211] G 4.564.
[212] A 12.15.
[213] A 7.229, 237.
[214] A 1.519f.
[215] A 9.598f.
[216] A 9.617.
[217] A 1.68.
[218] A 1.529; *cf.* A 2.354, 367, 452, 668.
[219] B 1.3–4 'We our country's bounds are leaving and its sweet fields,/ We fly our native land'.
[220] B 1.77.

Songs fade away helplessly in the noise of war.[221] The shepherd can respond only with a 'rough and artless',[222] 'naive'[223] song. And Aeneas is not overcome by shame at what has brought him low but spends a whole book recounting it in every detail. The gods have fled their shrines and abandoned their altars: fate has decreed against Troy.[224] Yet suicide is no more acceptable than rebuilding the ruins. Odysseus—an Old Testament figure in this, at least—is allowed to return to his own after long wanderings in exile; Aeneas must go to the most foreign of places, there to 'raise Troy to heaven by his deeds'.[225] But even the great affair with Dido ends in inglorious humiliation: destiny compels him to make a dishonourable departure and his masculine arguments are subdued and flat over against the perennial justice of the betrayed woman's cause. He pleads his excuses but his guilt lies deeper and further back than his denials reach: he has chosen this involvement and the pathetic suicide of the wretched Dido must be laid at his door.

The hero, then, is a tree stripped of its foliage. He must become accustomed to the poverty of Italy.[226] He comes to 'poor Evander's house[227] and they wander through what will one day be the Roman forum, where the lowing herds now graze all around and the king 'leads great (*ingens*) Aeneas in under the roof of his cramped dwelling', into the very cottage once entered by Hercules, and implores him: 'Guest of this house, be bold enough to look on riches with contempt; make yourself worthy of the god, make yourself like him [who entered under this roof, i.e. Hercules], and do not come scorning our poverty!'[228] Even the haughty Turnus must at last find himself in the guise of a lowly suppliant, ***humilis supplex***,[229] so that the epic may end with Aeneas' sword in his heart, sending his enemy's 'bitter' or 'disgraced' (*indignata*) spirit to the shades below.[230]

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[221] B 9.10–12.

[222] B 2.4.

[223] B 6.5.

[224] A 2.350–352.

[225] A 3.462.

[226] On this theme, see W. Meyer, *Laudes inopiae*, Diss. Göttingen 1915.

[227] A 8.359f.

[228] A 8.360–368.

[229] A 12.930.

There can be no doubt that this characteristic belongs to the inmost essence of Vergil who, with all his good fortune, was himself constantly placed in a lowly position: Homer and his absolute poetic capacity must have hovered above his head, an ever-present judgment, just as Goethe was constantly aware of Shakespeare towering above him. Even though Vergil's conception was wholly new, it needed to clothe itself in antique garments, many of them outmoded and faded, many by that time transformed into decorative conventions and no more (the Cyclops, Scylla, the eternally recurring shipwreck scenes, the games, etc.). The gods could no longer preserve their ancient splendour. And the narrative of the second part of the poem is thin stuff compared with the *Iliad* on which it is modelled. One can well understand why the dying Vergil ordered the burning of the *Aeneid*, which was preserved for us only by the express command of the emperor. Hermann Broch, in *The Death of Vergil*, broadens out this situation of futility and disillusion to archetypal dimensions, the situation that finally overtook, the labours of Rome's greatest poet. A work full of the most felicitous inner balance still has to endure the sorrow of coming up against its limits. Where then is its point of balance? In Vergil's devotion to Augustus, on whom falls the full, overflowing light of his regard. From the first Eclogue onwards he is the eschatological bringer of salvation, the child for whom the world has hoped and waited; at the beginning of the *Georgics* it is to him that prayer is addressed in a flood of mysterious words that abandon all measure and proportion; to him is addressed a eulogy in which all the spiritual riches of the world are gathered together. It is towards him that the Abrahamic hope of the first ancestor Aeneas moves. Thus the whole *oeuvre* is a work of limitless, apotheosising love. The prophetic hope is *spes* and *vaticinium ex eventu*. A whole world and, at the same time, a whole state ideology is laid at the emperor's feet. The gods do not dazzle the reader: they are a function of Rome's mission. Aeneas does not dazzle us, he is only a pointer, a longing hope directed towards the imperial superman. But Augustus is succeeded by Tiberius; Tiberius by others; and Vergil was 'only a fool, only a poet'. The knowledge that his work and his world are poised over the depths of his own selfhood gives him a strange quality of stillness and quietness, even vulnerability, a humbling that comes from within not from without. The aura that lies over his shrinking, ungainly, always sickly form (perhaps he was tubercular) is no imperial endowment, but radiates from within. It is precisely *thus* that Vergil is the father of the West, the object of universal love, of whom all those with understanding hearts have spoken only in terms of the highest veneration. Thus 'he is at the centre of European civilisation, in a position which no other poet can share or usurp' (T. S. Eliot).[231] 'He is, across the millennia, the supreme spiritual genius of the West. In him is the pure nectar of Antiquity, yet only Plato rivals him in transcending that Antiquity' (E. R. Curtius).[232] 'That Latin name in which the spiritual direction of Europe is bound up as though in a knot that cannot be touched or unravelled . . . There truly exists a spiritual concept of Europe, stronger than races and peoples, events, epochs and history, and it is either inseparable from the name of Vergil or else sees him as representing a boundary marker over against some corresponding understanding of the continent. It would be hard to find another name in history of whom the same could be said without presumption' (R. Borchardt).[233] The testimony is unanimous.

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[230] A 12.952.

But it was Christianity that threw its mantle over Vergil's poverty, in that it saw him as *the* poet *par excellence* and allotted him in the Middle Ages a place second only to Scripture. It took as self-evident the interpretation of his love for the bringer of salvation, the divine child, the one who will establish the reign of peace, in terms of the Child who was to come into the world ten years after his death. The emperor Constantine opened the Council of Nicaea with the reading of his fourth 'messianic'

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[231] 'What is a Classic?' (*On Poetry and Poets*, 1957, 53–71), 68.

[232] *Zweitausend Jahre Vergil. Kritische Essays zur europäischen Literatur*, 1963^3, 26–27.

[233] 'Vergil', *Corona* I.3, 1930, 296.

Eclogue.[234] Only in this Christian salvage operation is the gap closed which otherwise dooms the prophet, considered simply in himself, to linger under the dispensation of ancient religion. That portion of the unfinishable bridge which he is obliged to push to its conclusion, so as to round off his work—i.e. the identification of true 'glory' with Augustan Rome—is the only element that, itself excessive, introduces any imbalance into his beautifully poised architecture.

[234] On Vergil's legacy and influence, see esp. E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literaturgeschichte*, 1954², and the bibliography in Perret, op. cit. 182f.

5. PLOTINUS

a. God in All and Above all

The second figure who sums up the achievement of the old world and offers it to the new is Plotinus (who died c. A.D. 270).[235] Although chronologically post-Christian, he is still untouched by the Christian ethos, entirely caught up in his own vision in which he attempts to draw together and integrate all the philosophical awareness of the ancient world – the philosophical awareness and, even more, the religious awareness, since all the real value of myth is seen by him as summed up in religion, not in the inconsequential manner of the religious syncretism treated above, but in a passionate return to sources—as in Vergil—the sources where all things are still to be found together, not yet divided from each other. So too he moves beyond the dualism of myth (as revelation from God) and philosophy (as the victorious work of human thinking): for Plotinus, being itself is the divine and its total revelation is for him so overwhelmingly glorious that it far outshines all the splendours of particular myths. Plotinus refers to a great many myths—not just to resolve them into cosmological assertions in the old allegorical fashion but to elucidate how the single and complete theological revelation of being appears in them. His thought, through often taking its point of departure in scholastic-type problems, is not a school orthodoxy; he is not a disciple but a founder; his thought both has a spare, economical exactitude (he makes very sparing use of ὑπερ-formulae) and is inspired and pervaded by a silent bright glow of intensity. Like Vergil, he is 'an uncommonly pure and unassuming personality'[236] who lives in silent and unrecognised retirement in Rome, enjoying high honour only in a select circle of cognoscenti; aristocratic Romans entrust him with the guardianship of their children; incurably sick and shunned by his disciples, he dies alone on an estate in the Campagna. There have already been hints enough given about his legacy to European thought—not to mention Arabic as well; it is through him that the entire heritage of classical thought is authoritatively transmitted to the most intellectually powerful of the Church Fathers – Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, Dionysius, Maximus; they vie with him in the task of providing an exhaustive metaphysical account of being. The scholastic conception of philosophy is coloured by him, from Boethius and Eriugena to Albert, Bonaventure, Thomas, Eckhart, Dante, Nicholas of Cusa, Gerson and Ficino. It is to him that the humanists turn back to open up afresh the vision of a holy and whole totality of being, beyond the dust of the schools, and to him that those thinkers turn who are rapt by the vision of the unity of all things and its glory, once the Stoicism of the Baroque age and the Enlightenment are past—Bruno, Shaftesbury, Herder. In him Hegel recognizes his one great predecessor; and it is in terms of Hegel[237] that Plotinus today is often interpreted, in the hope of finding there a speculative justification for his system. Yet this is simply one of the two possibilities of interpretation presented to us by Plotinus' work, which indeed presses us to decide how we are to read it in a way unparalleled in writings from the age of transition between pagan and Christian eras. Christians understood this work as a theological philosophy and used it accordingly; non-Christians in the modern age interpret it, apparently with just as much reason, from the point of view of an idealist 'identity philosophy'.

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[235] [Balthasar refers to Plotinus' works as far as possible in the new edition of Harder, continued by Theiler and Beutler, of which the first three volumes had appeared at the time of writing. He also utilizes the standard critical text of Henry and Schwyzer, as much of it as had appeared at this date, supplemented from the older edition of Bréhier. The English-speaking reader will note also the Loeb edition of A. H. Armstrong (1966–). Translations in the text do *not* follow existing English versions, as these do not always lend themselves to excerpting at precisely the points Balthasar requires; extracts are thus translated in a way reflecting as closely as possible the structures of the German versions used by Balthasar but checked at each point with available English translations to secure some minimal recognisability in vocabulary.]

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[236] Harder, *Plotinusauswahl*, 1958, 8.

[237] Or at least in relation to some corresponding variety of idealism, as in Bréhier's significant work *La philosophie de Plotin*, 1928. This was criticised by Karl-Heinz Volkmann-Schluck, 'Plotin als Interpret der Ontologie Platons', *Philosophische Abhandlungen* X, 1957^2: 'Bréhier's interpretation manifestly moves in the direction of modern idealism' (8). But Volkmann-Schluck's essay falls into just the same one-sidedness: 'In what follows, we shall seek for a means of understanding him [Plotinus] by way of Hegel's concept of *Geist*' (11).

Plotinus stands in awe and wonder before the glory of the cosmos: it is manifestly a vast ensouled organism, in which all individual souls, rational and irrational, have their share (this is the late Platonic, Aristotelian, and, above all, Stoic element in his scheme). Throughout this glorious world radiates the presence of an eternal and intelligent spirit in which *noêsis* and *noêma*, the act of thought and the object of thought are one (Aristotle's god, νόησις νοήσεως);[238] and in the ultimate ground of this spirit there is an unutterable generative mystery at work which in all the splendour of the cosmos simultaneously reveals and hides itself, present everywhere yet unapproachable (the Platonic divine 'Good', 'beyond definable being', ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας, Rep. VI. 509b). All intellectual activity in Heaven and earth circles around this unattainable generative mystery, all longing love (ἔρως) struggles upwards towards it, all the beauty of the world is only a sign coming from it and pointing to it so that as he contemplates and seeks to understand the things of the world the philosopher is compelled at a deeper level to run away, to let go, to turn again (ἐπιστροφή) to the uniqueness of absolute unity. But Plotinus, in seeing beyond the Stoic and Aristotelian to the Platonic God, penetrating past the God immanent in the world to the eternal spirit at rest in itself, the transcendental mystery of ultimate origin, finds the way open to the depths of a unique mystery in being itself: once its potential is unfolded, it possesses an all-prevailing 'implicative' urge [to simplicity and unity], towards the height or the depth or the centre, that centre in which the centres of all beings coincide;[239] but this is no more than a response to the equally all-prevailing *explicatio* of the divine ground of being out towards the frontiers of worldly reality. This primal moment of actuality is not a falling-away in the life of God, nothing that needs to be cancelled or remedied. In this respect Plotinus is as much a 'Western' thinker as his Greek spiritual forebears and his European disciples. Woe to the person who thinks as the Gnostics do, the Gnostics that find fault with the world so that they are compelled to find fault with the Creator,[240] who pretend to give honour to God by spurning the reality of the world. 'If you love someone, you love all that has to do with them; you love the children if you love the father. But every soul derives from the eternal Father'.[241] Epicurus had denied providence and taught that we should give ourselves over to pleasure; but 'this doctrine [Gnosticism] is far more brazen: it insults the Lord of providence as well as providence itself', and so destroys all possibility of virtue.[242] For Plotinus, in contrast, the vision of the starry heavens directly reveals the certainty of the world's divinity, and an 'awed reticence' (ἐυλάβεια) fills the soul: it is 'the manifest and glorious image' of an 'unimaginable wisdom', a 'wondrous intellectual power' reveals itself in this vision;[243] how can the stars be anything but 'divinity made manifest'? Why should we rob this world, springing forth from God's spirit, of its maker and seek to confine him to a meagre 'beyond'? Let us rather grant all realities a share in God, 'let us not confine the divine being to unity, let us allow it to be seen just as much in multiplicity, as God himself elects to reveal himself in this way; this means considering the almighty power of God which, while remaining what it is in itself, is still able to bring forth a multitude of gods dependent on him and deriving from him and through him.[244] There is no trace of world-weariness in Plotinus' yearning to get back to the primordial source.

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[238] 'Plotinus . . . soared upwards into the highest region, into the Aristotelean thought of Thought; he has much more in common with Aristotle than with Plato', Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* II, 429.

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[239] κέντρῳ κέντρον συνάψας, VI.9.10; *cf.* V.1.11, II.2.2, and, more comprehensively, VI.5.4–5.

[240] II.9.15–16.

[241] II.9.16.

[242] II.9.15, V.8.8, III.2.3.

[243] II.9.8.

Of course he had to wrestle with the question of how the early Plato, in flight from the world and the flesh could be reconciled with the later Plato of the *Timaeus*, where the cosmos in its eternal spiritual materiality is itself 'a blessed god'. The question is expressly posed[245] and the first and predominant answer is given (following the sense of the *Timaeus*): the development of God into Intellect and World-Soul is not a falling-away from primitive purity. Intellect and World-Soul are not temporally generated and so do not undergo any sort of process (in a gnostic or evolutionary way);[246] they are perfectly good and beautiful just as they are. The question of a 'fall' is first posed in the case of individual souls, and it is resolved by Plotinus in close engagement with the text of the *Timaeus*—i.e. in the most optimistic way possible. In the first place: as Intellect unfolds within itself the infinite multiplicity of thinking and contains it all within its own unity, so the Soul of all things unfolds itself into the countless multiplicity of individual souls, which themselves represent just as eternal and divine an aspect of Soul as its comprehensive totality. For Plotinus, individuality is, taken all in all, thoroughly positive;[247] it develops from above, from God, *ratione formae*,[248] not from below, *ratione materiae*. But when the individual soul within the Soul of all (which in turn gives form to the material totality of the world)[249] is in its right place, in a state of well-being, it still has a tendency to separateness and encapsulation in itself. The World-Soul sovereignly forms its material embodiment in and around itself (so that this material element rests within the Soul that sustains it, like a net submerged in water),[250] draws the fleshly order closer to itself and allows what is below it to come into its vicinity—we too 'were there: all other men and even gods as well, pure souls and true intellect, united in and with the whole of being, portions of intellectual substance, not divided or separated, no, but belonging to the All'.[251] But while all this is true at one level, we have now become beings tormented by desires, joys and sorrows, deluded by the phantoms of the material order[252] and wearily sinking downward.[253]

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[244] II.9.9.

[245] IV:8.1.

[246] IV.7.8: a polemic against the view that the spiritual soul or intellect is a product of the vegetative and sensual soul. If we were to take this seriously, the spirit would first develop out of the soul and finally God from intellect—or, in Aristotelean terms, act would arise from potency. But this contradicts the most elementary axiom of philosophy, for which all potency presupposes act (V.9.4, II.5.3). It is quite impossible that intellect should arise out of the bodily (IV.7.2). Any kind of evolution in the cosmos is thus ruled out: 'the All was never a little child, still to come to its full stature, its limbs progressively growing and its body taking shape' (II.9.17).

[247] IV.7.12, III.1.8, IV.3.5: individuality does not disappear at death, 'otherwise there would be a Socrates only so long as Socrates' soul is in the body; and precisely at the point when he enters the highest realm, he must exist. But nothing of what is disappears [in the transition to a higher level]; thus individual intellects also do not disappear in the higher realm, for their differentiation is not in any way corporeal. Each individual remains in its alterity and possesses its own peculiar being. So it is too with souls.'

But Plotinus underlines three things here: (i) that the soul as such cannot become evil[254] and that something within it always remains 'above';[255] (ii) that the descent of the soul as such has a twofold sense even for the individual soul: for it too it is 'a freely chosen change arising out of the fullness of its powers, in order to form what is below it',[256] in which it draws profit even from the unpleasant experiences it has brought about and becomes conscious of many things that it would not otherwise have recognised as possibilities in its own beings;[257] (iii) that the All suffers no diminution even when contemplated in relation to this 'falling away'. That which has fallen away is indeed far from the source of things, but 'that too is till a miracle (θαῦμα)'.[258]

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[248] *Cf.* Plotinus' dialogue with himself in V.7, 'Whether there are ideas of individuals'. The question is answered in the affirmative, since, in particular, 'differentiation can mean a diversity of beauty' (V.7.2). 'We must not think that the plurality of souls exist because of the quantitative extension of bodies; prior to bodily existence, both the plurality and the unity of souls existed (VI.4.4, *cf.* IV.3.8).

[249] Hence the question as to whether the individual souls formed the physical world along with the World Soul (although they were not conscious of it) is answered affirmatively but with the qualification that they did and do so only in so far as they are united with the World Soul and remain at one, and have not sunk down to the level of their own separate individual wills (V.1.2, *cf.* IV.3.6).

[250] IV.3.9.

[251] VI.4.14.

[252] VI.4.15, IV.3.17.

[253] See the whole of IV.8, 'The soul's descent into the world of bodies.'

[254] I.8, 'Whence comes evil?' (esp. 4).

[255] IV.8.7.

[256] IV.8.5. This is at once interpreted as a creative-erotic impulse; *ibid.* 6.

This depends on the fact that in the All there prevails a just order, a distributive justice, that preserves harmonious balance—a 'providence' that is not an external tribunal but more significantly and interiorly a universal Logos.[259] However Plotinus may seek to resolve the issues of death, suffering and poverty, the sufferings of the righteous, anguish and guilt,[260] he never entertains the least doubt as to the total harmony of the divine cosmos. If we wish to talk of a 'descent' or a 'fall', we must always set over against this the reverse side of the descent which is the drive upwards of what is lower in the scale of being.[261] In any event, the divine energies are not weakened by their outpourings and at the highest level the capacity for generating the forms of multiplicity disappears.[262] The great tractate entitled 'On the Truly Existent: whether it can be one and the same with itself, while being everywhere, as totality', is careful not to give the impression that there are gradations of distance between the divine hypostases—the One, Intellect, Soul; 'we are not at a distance from the truly existent, we are within it/him, and he is not distant from us'.[263] At the heart of each hypostasis is the reality next above it, so that they all share a single centre and focus. And if we still speak of distance, *diastasis*, it is only relative to those distinct, warring portions of the whole that are, nonetheless, eternally comprehended and reconciled in the plan of the whole[264]—just as if a single general were in charge of the disposal of both forces in a conflict.[265] Even the fall of the souls below their proper level has something of this Logos-related character; they 'do not go forth by compulsion, nor by constraint', but as naturally 'as children leap for joy or as men are drawn by sexual desire'.[266] From the point of view of 'Logos', the whole notion of 'fate' is, as it were, neutralised; and even if it is true, as the *Timaeus* says, that everything is formed from *nous* and *anagkê*,[267] since God must go forth from himself into the totality of the world and the 'nothingness' of matter, nonetheless '*nous* triumphs over *anagkê*'[268] so completely that the world presents to us a perfect drama with opposed yet ultimately, in the light of the whole structure, harmonious roles devised by the divine reason itself.[269]

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[257] *Ibid.* 5.

[258] III.3.3.

[259] *Cf.* the whole of III.2 and 3, 'On Providence', esp. III.2.14.

[260] These questions preoccupied Plotinus above all at the end of his life, as his thinking drew closer and closer to the realities of life and struggled harder with them. The solutions he proposed take on board many features of Stoicism, but remain, sadly, unsatisfactory. However, he was faithful to the end to the vision of divine harmony in the cosmos, however muted his arguments may sound. Thus in I.4, 'On Happiness' and III.2–3, 'On Providence', death appears as an act of divine mercy, which releases the sufferer from his or her bonds—though admittedly in such a fashion that re-embodiment in an eternal world and an eternal cycle of reality follows.

[261] VI.4.12, IV.3.6.

[262] VI.5.8.

But does this mean that this drama *must* be played out, that God *must* emerge from his unapproachable mystery in this multiplicity of Intellect and Soul? What does 'must' mean when applied to the Absolute? In no sense can it mean some kind of necessity or requirement, 'for what is entirely simple and truly self-sufficient is wholly a stranger to necessity', even necessity 'arising from its own self' (as is subsequently the case with Intellect).[270] *Enneads* VI.8 (39) raises the question of 'the freedom and the will of the One'[271]: do these concepts permit of application to the One? As far as God's essence is concerned they are as little applicable as the idea of an external 'must'. 'God does not 'happen' to be, but must be, and this necessity of being is the root and principle of all other necessity . . . Or, better, God is not that which he 'must' be; for all other things must wait to find out under what form the King will show himself to them. For that which he is he himself establishes, and so appears not as one who rules by chance or contingency but as truly and essentially King and true Principle, as the Good-in-itself, not as one that acts according to the good'.[272] Everything depends on our following through the convergence of what in the 'world' (and even in the highest level of Intellect) we know as reason and (free) will towards an unattainable vanishing-point in the Absolute. God, in himself and in his sharing of himself, is 'beyond-reason' but he is no less 'beyond-will': 'an almighty power potentiated of itself, that which is what it wills to be, or rather which leaves will itself behind among existent things, being itself higher than all willing, with willing inferior to it.[273] So the necessity of God's being is simply the expression of his perfection, since it is the highest freedom to be, incapable of increasing or bettering itself (which is what such freedom otherwise does). Thus he is 'overflowing potency' (ὑπερβολή τῆς δυνάμεως) and, as such, he is both his own 'necessity' and the law of all other beings.[274]

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[263] VI.5.1.

[264] III.2.2.

[265] III.3.2.

[266] IV.3.13.

[267] *Tim.* 48A, 1.8.7, and also III.2.2.

[268] In the same passage of the *Timaeus*.

[269] III.2.15–18.

[270] V.3.13.

[271] On the correct understanding of this treatise, see Bréhier's note in volume 7 of his edition, 119–132.

The lordship of the Absolute is now firmly established and it becomes possible to understand its 'manifestation' in the universe as the epiphany of its own inner necessity (rationality) or, on the other hand, as that of its unconditionedness (freedom): both are saying the same thing. God is 'lord over himself',[275] 'choosing himself and willing himself',[276] 'loving himself',[277] and so also 'subject neither to any substance nor to himself, but rather the ground of all substantiality'[278] and thus 'wholly free activity' (ἐνέργεια καθαρῶς ἐλευθέρα),[279] indeed 'that which lies above and beyond all and which alone is only free'.[280] What must always be said of Intellect and Soul is pre-eminently true here: 'The primal ground of things has no need of the things that come after it'.[281] But if all beings down to the very lowest possess in their nature the power of generation that corresponds to the desire to share that nature by diffusing it, how can the 'inexhaustible potency', 'the primal source of all being' be lacking in this 'obligation'?[282] It is, then, an 'eternally resourceful infinity, never tiring and never emptied out, never exhausted existence that is in itself brimming over, so to speak, with life.'[283] As 'the primordial energy of all things', it is 'a wellspring that has no source but itself, sharing itself with all rivers, yet never exhausted in this giving but remaining at rest in the streaming forth; while the floods coming forth from it are mingled with one another in their beginning; yet for all that, they already know along which channel among them their own waters will flow.'[284]

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[272] VI.8.9.

[273] VI.8.9.

[274] *Ibid.* 10. Plotinus develops this intuition of the character of the Absolute as beyond both necessity and freedom, starting from the problem of the potential being as a 'world', in twelve arguments, extending from VI.8.13 to VI.8.18.

[275] κύριος ἑαυτοῦ, *ibid.* 15.

The image of the brimming wellspring or the sun[285] can be readily applied but always with the qualifying οἷον, 'as it were'. It can also be negated: at any rate, the beings that proceed from God are not powers 'radiating' from him[286]—since the Good which radiates and overflows remains throughout integral in itself; and God is present in and to these things in such a way 'that he in no way needs to pour himself forth', or, 'while remaining in himself as the Whole', to have 'another reality, proceeding from his own yet distinct from it' (rather like what the Gnostics meant by Sophia).[287] Rather the primal source of all things remains unshakably the same in and with itself, as 'King of kings and father of the gods',[288] and the totality of the cosmos is its 'throne[289] (this 'throne', for Plotinus, constitutes the ultimate essence of beauty).[290] As the One, it is so royally solitary that it has nothing over against its pure singularity; it is so 'wholly other' that it can be called 'not-other' (as Nicholas of Cusa, like Plotinus, was to term it).[291] But for just this reason, the One is not separated from anything: *because* God is the absolutely transcendent, *therefore* he can be the absolutely immanent in all things. Thus Plotinus does reject not only the utter 'beyondness' of Aristotle's God, reposing in himself, but also the Platonic χωρισμός[292]—though without thereby committing himself to Stoic pantheism (by which he is even less impressed). And once the divine transcendence is secured, he is able to expound God's immanence in terms of his self-unfolding, *explicatio*: 'just as the One cannot exist alone—otherwise everything would remain just as buried and obscure since the One would have no form . . . so too the Soul cannot exist alone, without that being manifested which comes into being because of it. Within each being there dwells the urge to bring forth what ranks next after it and so to unfold itself, to advance toward the goal of sense-perceptible manifestation as though from a seed within an imparticipable source. Yet in this movement the higher level abides always in its own place and as it were gives birth to the lower level by virtue of its superabundant power, whose fullness it carries within itself, and which it cannot hold back within the bounds of jealous miserliness; for it must for ever advance until the entirety of reality has reached the last level possible, . . . for nothing can prevent any and everything, according to its own capacity, coming to have a share in the being of the Good.'[293]

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[276] τὴν αἷρεσιν καὶ τὴν αὐτοῦ θέλησιν, *ibid.* 13.

[277] ἑαυτὸν ἀγαπήσας, *ibid.* 16.

[278] *Ibid.* 19.

[279] *Ibid.* 20.

[280] *Ibid.* 21.

[281] VI.9.6.

[282] V.3.15.

[283] VI.5.12.

[284] III.8.10.

[285] V.3.12.

[286] *Cf.* the comprehensive defence of the idea in VI.4.9–10.

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[287] VI.5.3.

[288] V.5.3.

[289] *Ibid.*

[290] I.6.2.

[291] VI.9.8. Only matter, in its ultimate opposition to God, can be called *wholly* other: II.4.13.

[292] VI.5.8.

So it is that, at the end of the classical period, a theological ontology is at last arrived at which provides definitive formal structure for the subsequent development of Western thought. The formal element of this conception of transcendence and immanence continues, as such, to hold good, even when the Christian revelation fills that form with an entirely new content. In this context, the divine freedom is not only the conclusion of an inductive argument from the world to some supereminent limit concept but makes itself known in a hitherto undreamt of manner. While the movement outward of the royal majesty of God in the Old Covenant-glory that can now indeed definitively be called the glory of the *Lord*—causes the dimension of immanence to recede for the moment, this latter emerges fully in the encounter between the New Testament (and its proclamation of the Holy Spirit) and Greek ontology. In relation to the biblical revelation, the concept of Creation is truly able to come into the light for the first time, with the experience of God's freedom through his historical action. This concept is already[294] very thoroughly signalled in advance, as far as its formal problematic is concerned, in Plotinus' scheme, and can take on board in many ways the stimulus, and the warnings too, that can be found there—even when its new content is joined on to this schematic structure. Here we may grasp how Plotinus, in a similar position to that of Vergil, is an unrepeatable moment, a *kairos* of human thought in the mode of Advent expectation, which gives decisive direction to the philosophy of the Christian era.

b. The Defining of the European Mind

The expectancy in which Plotinus holds himself and the firm direction in which he sets himself become clear when we consider his doctrine of Intellect (*nous*). Intellect is the essential act of pure thinking, understood as separable from 'accidental' thinking (the life of Soul) as a higher limit-concept (*intellectus archetypus*); as such it must be thought of as the precondition for all derivative modes of thinking. Pure thinking as a unity-in-duality (ἓν πολλά)[295] the tension between *noêsis* and *noêma* which eternally reaches conclusion or resolution in identity through the act of thought (ἐνέργεια). There is an unsurpassable priority of object over subject: the latter 'contemplates' (not 'constructs'), and the prior reality that is contemplated is the form, εἶδος.[296] Yet what is thought cannot exist outside thinking and in *this* sense be prior to it (this holds only for sense-perception); 'rather Intellect *is* itself its own objects . . . it is identical with them'.[297] But as thought it establishes itself on the basis of what is thought, 'it finds security in forms'.[298] In Intellect there is a movement (κίνησις) of self-seeking, so as to discover itself eternally in the object, to return to itself by this route and achieve rest (στάσις) thereby.[299] In Intellect's act of seeing there is an element of *Sehnsucht*, of yearning: ἔφεσις γὰρ ὄψεως ὅρασις.[300] Thus the act of thinking in its ἐνέργεια is also *erôs*,[301] but an *erôs* that always possesses and embraces its object in pure thinking and so, *qua yearning, is set at rest*. This is why Plotinus calls Intellect that which needs only itself, in distinction from the One which does not 'need' even itself.[302] But again, the form that is thought *exists* purely in so far as it is thought; it has its actuality, its effective and operative reality (ἐνέργεια) in thinking, so that the ἔνεργεια of subject and object is identical—or, in other words, thinking and existing are one and the same.[303] But since pure reason is always 'in act', and therefore henceforth is what it perceives:[304] so too being is always actual, and indeed is so in its totality, which includes the sum of all its differentiations into individual forms. In pure thought and being, every potential (which is present there as the ground of duality) is always already actual.[305]

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[293] IV.8.6.

[294] 'Already' although Plotinus lived after Christ, his ontology is still independent of the Christian variety; he is following through to the end the lines of spiritual insight developed in classical Greek philosophy.

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[295] V.3.15.

[296] III.3.1.

[297] V.4.2.

[298] VI.9.3.

[299] V.6.5.

[300] *Ibid.*; *cf.* V.3.10, ἔφεσις . . . ἀτύπτως ὄψις.

[301] V.3.10.

[302] V.3.13.

[303] V.9.8.

There is, then, a complete reciprocity between thinking and being which yet never does away with this always presupposed and always transcended otherness (the Platonic *heterotês*).[306] 'In so far as [the One] thinks, it makes itself Two, or, better, *because* it thinks it is Two, and because what it thinks is itself it is One'.[307] To the extent that we have to do here with the primordial 'mutuality of sameness and otherness', each individual object of thinking (as identical with itself, yet limited as much by the thinking subject as by those objects of thought that are 'other' to it) will itself possess this mutuality.[308] Plotinus constantly uses the example of science, built up from countless individual propositions, yet constituting only one coherent ('sy-stematic') and simple truth in the intellect of the knower.[309] In this doctrine of the duality-in-unity of thinking and being, Plotinus seeks to comprehend in his vision the whole overcrowded sum of the philosophical tradition: Plato's world of ideas comes into its own but so too do Parmenides, 'to the extent that he makes being and intellect coincide', Heraclitus, Empedocles and, finally, Aristotle.[310] What is in view is a form of objective idealism, or 'ideal-realism', which grounds all being in its logical nature, its primordial character as that which is thought by archetypal Intellect.[311]

But now the question is how this duality-in-unity is related to pure and absolute unity. Of decisive importance here is

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[304] III.6.2.

[305] II.5.3.

[306] 'Differentiation is what makes possible the thinking subject and the thought object', V.1.4.

[307] V.6.1.

[308] V.3.10.

[309] V.9.8; IV.9.5, III.9.11; VI.4.16; VI.5.7.

[310] V.1.8–9.

[311] V.6.6.

Plontius' doctrine that the uniquely intended, sought and striven for object of Intellect what it strains towards in all its thinking, is the One itself,[312] which, however, can never be an 'other' to thought, an object since it remains always essentially not 'the other'. But how does thinking Intellect come to be other than the One in the first place? At this point the word τολμᾶν or τόλμα comes up again and again[313]—risk, 'venturing oneself', perhaps 'inquisitive presumption': in any event, the desire to know what God is. And the journey, the κίνησις, of reason through all the forms of being and conceptuality is the—fruitless?—journey in search of the knowledge of God. All that it encounters, time and again, is existent reality (ὄν) which means determinate reality, though this does not imply limitation for Plotinus. Being, however, especially in so far as it encounters thinking, is *form*: the concepts of οὐσία and εἶδος or μορφή are coextensive.[314] 'Being (οὐσία) that is derived [from the One] is perceptible form (εἶδος), and one can say that nothing other than form *can* spring from such a source. But this is not the form of any particular thing but form in general, which leaves no individual form outside its scope. But that One is necessarily form*less*, and because formless so too without the character of being—which must always involve 'being something or other' (τόδε τι) and so must be circumscribed (ὡρισμένον)'.[315] Plotinus' aesthetic is founded on this statement: all being is beautiful because it is form, in its encounter with Intellect. The One is beyond being and Intellect and Form and Beauty, as their common source. On the other hand, the 'form' of being is in no way the individual form of specific things, and can in this sense itself be called 'formless' (ἄμορφον), 'although it has form from other points of view',[316] i.e. as object of Intellect. Accordingly both Intellect and being are secondary, a reflection from the point of origin that lies beyond and prior to their duality—which is as such the 'place' of what is 'formed', of the beautiful, of knowledge and love. Intellect and being are thus boundless and infinite in their inextricable mutuality: this healthy and fruitful ἄπειρον in the celestial world (not only in the material sphere) is, for Plotinus, a participation in the One, a direct reflection of God and his power.[317] Also, Plotinus, in expressing the nature of this 'good infinity' as thoroughly as he can, does not shrink from postulating a 'spiritual materiality' in the realm of eternal Intellect and being—something obscure in itself, it is true, but for ever perfectly illumined, perfectly actualised, awakened to definite and substantial life;[318] for every form presupposes something that has *been* formed.[319] This 'material' character belongs naturally not only to the *noêma*, but just as much also to *noêsis*, since Intellect in proceeding forth into the act of knowing is itself empty, the capacity for that cognitive form that it will encounter (*intellectus possibilis* or *passibilis*, *quodammodo omnia*, *tabula rasa*, as St Thomas would put it). That is why the comparison between matter and intellect is perfectly possible.[320]

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[312] V.4.2.

[313] V.1.1. Here 'presumption' or 'curiosity' is depicted as 'an entry into the realm of becoming, a primordial differentiatin and the will to belong to oneself'. On bold presumption (τολμηρότατον μέρος of the lower part of the soul, which draws itdown into the material, see V.2.2; and in VI.9.5 we read of the presumptious daring (τολμήσας) of spirit, standing aside from the One so as to marvel at it as a θαῦμα.

[314] V.1.7.

[315] V.5.6.

But now we can no longer avoid the question of whether Intellect has found what it has been seeking if, in its endless journey through the *noêmata* in search of the One, it always returns, in the same moment as it moves outward, to the identity of an encounter with itself. If thought (and thus too reason, *nous*) is and remains secondary, then surely it must transcend itself; but if we designate this transcending movement as the *erôs* which sets thought in motion, is this *erôs* more than thinking or simply its inner dynamic? and is the Plotinian *nous* then a 'blessed god' in its repeatedly depicted identity with being, or does it belong with what is no longer divine, whose movement towards the One is never more than unfulfilled yearning, until the One itself satisfies it? *Inquietum cor, donec requiescat in te*: so Augustine was to translate Plotinian *erôs* into Christian *desiderium*. Plotinus wants to hold on to both aspects at the same time in his philosophy: he expressly defined heavenly *erôs* as an eternal quest,[321] which is also immediately an eternal discovery. Movement and rest coincide here; Intellect, endlessly moved in itself (since it returns upon itself in all its eternal going-forth through the whole of being and its separate phenomena), is yet overall eternal repose as well.[322] 'Its thinking is not seeking but possessing; its bliss is not something arrived at but it is eternally all things; it is itself authentic eternity'.[323] So there is nothing it lacks; it possesses in its infinite cycle of activity what it has constantly been seeking—the One. It is 'heaven', 'the epiphany of God'.

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[316] VI.7.32.

[317] II.4.15.

[318] II.4.5, II.5.2–3.

[319] *Ibid.* 4.

[320] In III.6.18, Plotinus compares the soul with the lower level of solid matter, in which, naturally, differentiation becomes far wider as the last traces of spontaneity and inner form fall away.

It is a rare and strange fate for a thinker both to draw together and bring to conclusion the themes of Antiquity and to open up the realm of Western philosophy: it means being compelled to put side by side the fulfilled and the unfulfilled, the joy of discovery and the torment of searching. Thought indeed thinks the whole of being in a cyclical motion that is open but cannot be transcended, for just as being only exists in being thought, so thought exists only in encountering existent reality, and comes to its own reality through what is thought: both share a single *energeia*.[324] But in this cyclical motion what occurs is that thought always encounters only οὐσία, i.e. determinate, intelligible being that has already found logical form. So it eternally finds only itself. But if this self-encounter is what Intellect is, and if Intellect is God and God is Intellect, then it is not evident why the One, which Intellect seeks in its going-forth, can and must be something other than the depths of Intellect (or being) itself, that which is presupposed as the origin of that going-forth and the goal of that return upon itself. Why should we not once and for all interpret Plotinus in a Hegelian direction and dismiss and discard all other aspects of his teaching as relics of a bygone epoch—a mythical form of thought that expects revelation from God, or, better, a vocabulary derived from the (Egyptian) mysteries that has already been historicised and aestheticised, since neither Plotinus nor anyone in his age seriously believed in such mysteries any longer?[325] Only in this way, it seems, can we give any consistency to his thought: *nous*, which possesses the One in its own depths, then becomes the *a priori* of all acts of knowing in the cosmos (the World-Soul) and the human sphere (the individual soul). All discursive reason is still thought of as comprehended in and made possible by an absolute, 'divine' reality, in which all self-alienating going-forth is always already a return to itself, all understanding of facts is self-understanding, all seeking is finding.

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[321] *Cf.* the whole of III.5 on *erôs* and its subdivision into human, daimonic and divine. Heavenly *erôs* is a 'mediator between the one who longs and what is longed for, the eye of yearning that makes the lover, by its power, able to behold what is loved, though it is there beforehand and, even before it bestows the capacity of vision, it is itself sated with what it beholds'. *Erôs* thus becomes an eye fulfilled in seeing and a seeing that already carries its image within itself (III.5.2, III.5.3). Over against heavenly *erôs* stands the lower, daimonic variety, by nature incapable of fulfilment, as it constantly struggles and turns about to its goal (III.5.7).

[322] 'Intellect abides in stillness and yet moves about its own self' (II.2.3).

[323] V.1.4.

[324] V.9.8 : Μία οὖν ἀμφοῖν ἐνέργεια.

There is undoubtedly much in Plotinus that gives coutenance to such a radicalising reading in terms of modern thought—not least his notion that all being is 'form': why should this not be taken in the Kantian sense? 'Being' then becomes what is logically intelligible to Intellect, what objectifies Intellect; beyond this may lie postulates but nothing that can be objectified as having existence—or even nothing at all, as Hegel rightly concluded, if Intellect, as it returns upon itself, can leave nothing beyond or outside its own synthetic identity. What sort of 'revelation' can it then expect? Whence can it come except out of the depths of Intellect itself? But Intellect and being are always there, always present already παρεῖναι, παρουσία, συνεῖναι;[326] they are always manifest to anyone with eyes to see, coming forth, indeed, from the place of eternal beauty. All that is needed, therefore, to encounter the unsurpassable glory is the right way of looking, with open eyes, the *theoria* which breaks through from the depths of Intellect or being. This is the path which modern philosophical aesthetics will follow, in so far as they mark themselves off from theological aesthetics, which by now has a sharper and more distinctive profile. In Plotinus the anti-Gnostic and perhaps to some extend anti-Christian affirmation of the world as the best it could be, the loveliest, the most divine, the affirmation outlined at the beginning of his work,[327] points towards this differentiation, as does, above all, the relentless reduction of all the activities of life and spirit to *theoria*.[328] All activity (ποίησις) happens for the sake of contemplation, even indeed in sub-spiritual nature, where the *logoi* (*rationes seminales*) are what act and direct, where *phusis* is a (slumbering) soul which, remaining in itself, organises the material that surrounds it. Plotinus is here developing a fundamental feature of his teaching, the unity of *energia* as *actus* (*substantialis*) and as *actio* (*ad extra et infra*). The stronger the inner act of a substance, considered as its active 'possession of itself', the more powerfully its *energeia* radiates out from it beyond itself.[329] Thus nothing is more productive than contemplation; action is only its radiation outward.[330] So too the *logos* within Intellect is eternally the precondition for the 'word' of meaning that proceeds outward (λόγος ἐν προσφορᾷ);[331] and Plotinus can never sufficiently stress how silently and secretly and self-concentratedly all real action and creation goes on. It is not a matter of hearing but of seeing;[332] the word is secondary, a necessary expedient,[333] and Intellect 'brings forth its work in silence, so that creation is effortless'.[334] 'Silently and without being moved Intellect has shaped all things'.[335] *Theoria* is the twofold activity of, on the one hand, a total absorbtion in the perception of being as *noêma*, so fully surrendered to what it beholds that the beholder forgets himself in what is beheld, and is 'lost' in the intensity of the vision,[336]—and yet, on the other, also of a return to oneself, an encountering oneself in the object.[337] For the inner reality that stirs us is unknown to us—like a man who catches sight of his own reflection, and reaches out in search of it, not knowing where it comes from'.[338] Ultimately, the goal is for the seer to become the seen,[339] like those heavenly images of the gods that contemplate themselves.[340] Everything, even thought proceeding towards the world of sense, has this reflection or return (ἐπιστροφή) or self-relatedness at its foundation;[341] at the basis of soul lies the reflexivity of *nous*, and thus the soul, to the degree that it turns back to its origin in *nous*, finds itself,[342] like Intellect when it strives upwards towards the One, 'attaining not to another but to itself'.[343] 'All this is one, *nous*, *noêsis*, *noêton*'.[344] This leaves nothing except the One in its moment of eternal self-identity to define what Intellect stretches out towards: God is nothing other than the 'inner depth' of things,[345] the centre of that circle whose periphery they consitute,[346] the source to which they are the stream, the light of which they are the radiance, the root of which they are the branches,[347] so that they come at last to the realisation of their own divine nature—θεόν γενόμενον, μᾶλλον δὲ ὄντα.[348] Plotinus—otherwise a stranger to the historical dimension—here adopts an eschatological idiom. 'Why does the soul not remain there above? Because it has not yet wholly won free. But the time will come when we shall behold without interruption, with no more interference from the flesh'.[349] 'All is not yet one; but it will one day be so'.[350] However, the motif of the soul's self-contemplation, beholding with wonder its inner divine glory (a theme translated into Christian terms by Gregory of Nyssa)[351] is depicted lovingly by Plotinus.[352]

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[325] Thus, for example, Bréhier; *cf.* his note in vol. V. 85ff.

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[326] VI.9.4, VI.9.7, and esp. V.5.8, where God's 'future' is described, a 'future' for which everything is always ready without qualifications at hand. 'It does not 'come', or it 'comes' without coming; it appears, although it does not come, for it is already there before all things, before the future known to intellect'.

[327] II.9.8f.

[328] See, on this, the whole of III.8, 'On nature, contemplation and the One.'

[329] IV.3.10, IV.5.7.

[330] III.8.5.

[331] V.1.3.

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[332] V.5.6.

[333] III.8.6.

[334] V.8.7, *cf.* III.8.6.

[335] III.2.2.

[336] I.4.10.

[337] Self-knowledge is a divine ordinance, so that we are bound to enquire about the nature of enquiry (IV.3.1).

[338] V.8.2. Elsewhere the image of Narcissus is used pejoratively: I. 6.8.

[339] V.8.11.

[340] *Ibid.* 4.

[341] Volkmann-Schluck, op. cit. 82; V.3.6.

[342] V.3.7.

[343] VI.9.11; *cf.* V.3.4–5.

[344] V.3.5.

[345] VI.8.18.

Yet if we go further than these themes (which point us again to Hegel) we do Plotinus a manifest injustice. Although the centres of Soul, Intellect and One coincide for him, this does not lead to an abolition of their hierarchy. The modern conclusion that the ultimate synthesis is achieved at the level of intellect is bound to degrade the One to the level of a function of *nous*, a moment within it, for the sake of this conclusion. The philosophy of absolute Spirit thus becomes ultimate; and, correspondingly, the aesthetic of a proportion between *noēsis* and *noēma*, seen from the level of Soul, is at best an aesthetic of the 'Sublime', the elevation of the spiritually 'noumenal' soul above its sensible 'phenomenal' substrate—the aesthetic developed in German Idealism from Kant to Schiller and Schiller to Hegel. But the crown of the whole of Plotinus' philosophy is the difference posited between the levels of Intellect and One, however paradoxical, indeed 'mythical', this differentiation may seem to the philosopher. It is in fact a theological point, though in a sense hard to pin down. What is in view is in no way a divine self-manifestation comparable to what is found in mythology but a manifestation that breaks forth from the central depth of being itself, in the sense explained in the first volume of this work.[353] Understood thus, the 'glory' that breaks out is that of being itself, or, more precisely, as Plotinus draws careful boundaries here, it is the 'glory' that breaks into the sphere of Intellect and being from what is above being and bestows on it its absolute and transcendental beauty. But it is just this lifting of the vision above the level of being that gives this radiating-outward of beauty a more than philosophical character and makes it specifically theological; and this is just what is completely lost sight of in modern idealistic interpretations.[354] The division of absolute being into two spheres, one wholly rational, the other, as a result, emphatically irrational was clearly, for Plotinus, the only way to bring philosophical attention to bear on the *descent* of inbreaking glory without falling into gnostic mythology. This 'descent' alone permitted him to follow though in a consistent way his aesthetics as an aesthetics of 'glory', a non-biblical but theological aesthetics which cannot be captured in the categories of modern idealism. It was his Greek heritage that made this possible, that vision which since the earliest ages of myth had been able to view being as a divine epiphany. When this 'sun-like eye' (Goethe's phraseology, is as well-known, stems from Plotinus)[355] later loses its power of vision, the responsibility of reawakening the sight of the blind falls to those to whom it is given to see the glory of God in flesh: to the Christians. On them is the task laid of finding God in all things.

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[346] *Ibid*

[347] VI.9.9

[348] *Ibid.*

[349] *Ibid.* 10.

[350] V.2.1.

[351] *Cf.* my book *Présence et Pensée.*

[352] I.6.6; *ibid.* 9; V.9.2, IV.7.10.

[353] Vol.1, p. 145: 'The formal object of theology . . . lies at the very heart of the formal object of philosophy . . . Out of those mysterious depths the formal object of theology breaaks forth as the self-revelation of the mystery of Being itself.'

[354] It turns up, undeniably, for a brief moment in Fichte and the later Schelling, but what is decisive for these writers is still Hegel's scheme, especially in a generally materialistic climate of thought.

[355] ὀφθαλμὸς ἡλιοειδής, I.6.9. What this means is that the eye possesses light within itself, which then streams out to encounter what is outside. *Cf.* IV.5.7; for the literature, see the note in Harder's edition, vol. 1, p. 382.

c. The Beautiful and the More-than-Beautiful

The real Plotinus never rested content with speculation in the modern sense. Throughout his life he was to stand speechless before the miracle of being that transcends all reason. That there *is* something, that what is is a world of such immense wonder, this is for him the clearest possible revelation of the source lying behind all things, the groundlessly self-giving Good. 'Where is the one who has brought forth such beauty, such boundless life? Where is the Father of being to be found? You see that beauty which is poured out over all manifest forms . . . but whence do these intelligible forms come? Whence comes their beauty? Their origin cannot be any one among them . . . It must be what is formless, not lacking in form, but the source from which all intellectual form comes . . . And since it was able to create all things, what magnitude will it possess?'[356] So we find it casually remarked that 'The fact that the First exists is evident from what exists after it; to enquire after its foundation means to look for some foundation other than itself; but the primal foundation has no foundation'.[357] Thus, 'Whoever knows himself, knows also whence he has his origin'.[358] This is how the name 'Father' is used here. The greatness of the Father may be judged from the nature of the world, the 'Son'.[359] The 'Son' is what is generative, what possesses the will to share itself, what has bestowed on all things something of the Father's power.[360] In itself it has need of nothing,[361] it is 'the more-than-good which is good only in respect of others, not for its own sake',[362] and in which, therefore, all things are contained and hidden.[363]

[356] VI.7.32.

[357] VI.8.11. On Plotinus' aesthetics, see the extensive bibliographies in E. de Kayser, *La signification de l'Art dans les Ennéades de Plotin*, 1955, and F. Bourbon de Petrella, *Il problema dell'arte e della belezza in Plotina, 1956*.

[358] VI.9.7.

[359] V.8.12.

[360] V.4.1.

[361] VI.9.6.

[362] *Ibid.*

[363] V.5.9.

The reverent and wondering tone of what Plotinus says is no mere literary drapery but the expression of an immediate sensation. The intellect perceives beyond its own being something marvellous, a θαῦμα,[364] something sublimely worthy of veneration, σεμνόν,[365] something at whose 'blinding light' we can as little stare as we can at the sun's brightness;[366] 'amazed dread (θάμβος) seizes whoever beholds this'.[367] It is something that cannot be accommodated in any concept, still less in any utterance, something that is ἄρρητον and nameless; at best, it can only be hinted at.[368] It is something of which we become 'capable' only in so far as we leave everything behind—ἄφελε πάντα[369] forsaking our very selves,[370] 'letting go' even of God, ἀυτὸν ἔα.[371] It is not we who lay hold on it; it lays hold upon us.[372] If you try to seize him, he escapes you; and, still more, you escape him'.[373] *Faute de mieux*, we may call it or him the One, but not in the sense of a mathematical unit or of a single individual substance:[374] 'we are talking about what cannot be talked about[375] and all our images get no further than the forecourt of the temple. We must again return to the language of the *adyton*,[376] the pure and endless power of all (δύναμις πάντων),[377] the *apeiron*, the unlimited sphere of ungraspable plenitude: 'for if you think in terms of Intellect or God, it is not enough'.[378] 'We may express what That One is not; what it is, we do not say. What, then, we say about it derives from those things that are posterior to it . . . Just as those inspired of God or possessed know enough to be sure that they bear something greater within themselves, even if they do not know what it is, so we shall not be held back from possessing it even when we cannot express what it is'.[379] To ascribe to it thinking, reflecting and choosing seems questionable for Plotinus, as these things are adequate descriptions only of *nous*.[380] How this affects the concept of providence has already been indicated.

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[364] VI.9.5; III.8.10.
[365] III.8.9.
[366] V.8.10.
[367] III.8.11.
[368] V.3.13.
[369] *Ibid.* 17; VI.8.21.
[370] III.8.9.
[371] VI.8.18.
[372] V.5.9.
[373] *Ibid.* 10.
[374] V.9.5; *ibid.* 4.
[375] V.5.5.
[376] VI.9.11.
[377] V.3.15, V.4.2.
[378] VI.9.6.

But it is impossible to have things that have come into being without there being a primal source. However ungraspable and unknowable it is, it remains the one thing necessary. We are pressed in this direction on the basis of all that the knowing, desiring, and wondering at worldly truth, goodness and beauty actually mean. The One 'abides in itself and enters into no other; but all other things depend upon it, just as they all, through their yearning, have found where it is. This is that *erôs* 'that waits at the door' (*Symp*. 203c), always coming from outside into the presence of the beautiful and striving after it, content if it may thus have some share in it. Yet even here, the lover still living on the earth possesses this beauty only in such a way that he cannot cling to it as his own but only stands on its frontiers . . . For this very reason, because that One abides in itself, it suffices for all things'.[381] The ascent of the *nous* towards identity is indeed profitable for knowledge of the One; and yet again, it is also useless: 'We may learn, thanks to Intellect, the existence of that which is beyond Intellect; but to know it, to know how it is constituted, we must leave Intellect behind'.[382] To attain to the One is only possible when we are 'caught up' (ἀρπασθείς) into the 'desert place' (ἐν ἐρήμῳ),[383] in an 'upward leap' (ἀῖξαι),[384] in a 'dreadful yearning' that freely cuts loose from all the forms of seeing and conceiving, so as 'alone to encounter the Alone'.[385] 'Suppose it happened that the soul was fortunate enough to have the One come to it or, rather, to reveal Its presence to the soul once it has turned away from the things around it and made itself ready, as beautiful and as like to It as possible . . .: then it may befall that it suddenly (ἐξάιφνης) sees It appear; and nothing lies between them, they are no longer two but one, there is no more distinction so long as It remains there (the earthly lover and beloved who long to merge into one another are an image of all this); the soul is no more conscious of the flesh . . . it no longer beholds itself but only What it has found. It would not change this state for anything, even if it were promised the very vault of heaven entire, for it knows well that there is nothing better, nothing to be preferred. It can ascend no higher; everything else, no matter how exalted, would force it downward again . . . No error is possible for it there: how could there be anything more true than Truth itself?'[386]

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[379] V.3.14.

[380] III.9.9. but *cf.* V.17, where 'a kind of self-awareness of his own capacity' is ascribed to God! On the other hand, there is no question of God 'remaining-in-himself so as to guard the purity of his unity' (VI.9.6). *Cf.* the whole of V.6, 'That what is beyond being does not have intellection.'

[381] VI.5.10.

[382] V.5.6.

[383] VI.9.11.

[384] V.5.4.

This union is indeed dressed in the language of 'enthusiasm' (ἀναβακχεύω,[387] ἐνθουσιάω);[388] but more important is the language of love which, as is evident, distinguishes sharply between heavenly and earthly *erôs*, and portrays love for the divine One in terms of chaste reticence. Turning away from God, losing oneself among other things, is for Plotinus infidelity, whoredom![389] though he calls God Father rather than bridegroom. The soul that has gone astray and that 'perceives its own disgrace, purifies itself from what is earthly, and sets itself again on the road that leads to the Father, that soul finds where its good lies'.[390] At most, we hear of a 'touching',[391] but one in which 'we lay hold of that One with our whole self, and there is no part in us with which we do not touch God'.[392]

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[385] VI.7.34. This famous dictum already appears in Plotinus' earliest work (1.6.7) as well as in V.1.6; Porphyry in his arrangement of the Enneads makes it Plotinus' last word (VI.9.11).

[386] VI.7.34.

[387] I.6.5, VI.7.22.

[388] V.3.14, VI.9.11.

[389] VI.9.9.

[390] *Ibid.*

[391] ἐφάψασθαι, θιγεῖν, VI.9.4; ἐπαφή, *ibid.* 7 and 9, I.2.6; θίξις καὶ οἷον ἐπαφή μόνον (!) ἄρρητος, V.3.10, *ibid.* 17.

What such yearning seeks after, what no name suffices for, is haltingly described (following Plato) as κάλλος ἀμήχανον, 'indescribable', a strange and terrible beauty that leaves us 'disarmed and helpless and utterly wretched',[393] and ultimately as 'more-than-beauty' (ὑπέρκαλος)[394] as 'excess of beauty' (περιουσία τοῦ κάλλους).[395] These words are not (as in later Neoplatonism) exalted expressions that can be used at will, but rarely employed utterances, carefully and exactly pondered, which, taken together, give shape to the fundamental stance of the Plotinian aesthetic. It is constantly repeated that the One is exalted over all beauty (which has its proper place in the duality-in-unity of *nous*). The One 'does not deign to be beautiful';[396] if the Beautiful makes us weak with longing, stirs us and kindles desire in us, the Good is already present long before; love for the Good is innate in us, present even in sleep and we are so accustomed to it that we fail to notice it.[397] The Beautiful is more in evidence but also more dangerous; it can torment us and even draw us away from the Good without our noticing, as the lover lures the girl from her father's house.[398] 'The Beautiful is the object of astonishment, but the Good is the object of striving—or rather, whoever has not yet beheld the One strives towards it as the Good; but whoever has caught sight of it and is granted to wonder at its loveliness, is filled with joyful amazement, with a terror that is without pain and loves this true Love and sets at nought the torments of desire that belong to all other loves, spurning all that once seemed fair. So it is with those to whom there comes a manifestation of a god or a daimon; they can no longer allow that there is beauty in other material forms as once they did':[399] He has attained the One through worldly beauty through the Intellect which conceals in itself 'all beautiful forms'; this is how he has come to that 'trancendent sphere, to the source and wellspring of the Beautiful' which 'has the Beautiful cast about itself like a veil'[400]—'for all that is beautiful is posterior to the One and comes forth from the One as daylight from the sun.'[401]

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[392] VI.9.9.

[393] Plato, *Polit.* 509 AB, *Phileb.* 16 A; Plotinus I.6.8, *cf.* II.9.9: σοφία ἀμήχανος V.3.16; ἀμήχανος δύναμις.

[394] I.8.2.

[395] VI.7.32.

[396] V.8.8.

[397] V.5.12. The chapter as a whole deals with the transcendence of the Beautiful by the Good.

[398] *Ibid.*

In this way the ultimate structure of the beautiful is laid bare: it has its proper existence in the realm of *nous*, the realm of form, of the mutual transparency of subject and object, otherness and identity. But at the same time this 'proper' level of existence subsists only as an epiphany of the mystery of and a summons back towards that mystery. It is (horizontally) the outward radiation of reality; but the ray that links what is illuminated with what shines upon it comes (vertically) from above. It was this structure that provided our starting-point at the beginning of the first volume: *forma* and *splendor*[402] combine in a kind of anatomy of beauty[403] but in such a way that there is no beauty without the more-than-beautiful—what we are here calling 'glory'—and no understanding of beauty without reference to it. The *fascinosum*, which is the radiance sent forth by beauty at every level of Intellect, Soul and nature, signifies beauty itself, yet also signifies that there is *in* beauty something *beyond* it. The structure of the Beautiful inscribes itself within the formal structure of a doctrine of God. The 'in' here is not voided of force by the 'beyond'; there is no reduction to 'pure appearance'. But the radiance of manifestation presupposes the One, from whose centre all the rays emanate and *become* manifest. For Plotinus, Intellect and Soul are not entities illuminated from outside themselves but possessing their own particular and contingent structure; rather the structure of both is the product of the irradiation. What is 'generated'

[399] I.6.7

[400] I.6.9

[401] VI.9.4.

[402] Vol. I, 19–20.

[403] V.1.6: the chapter as a whole contains the deduction of plurality from unity.

from the One is necessarily Intellect, which necessarily seeks to know its 'father' and is a 're-flection' and thus an objectifying of the object—and so too a doubling within the unity of intellectual being and in this sense a mirroring process. The reflection of the light as it shines out gives birth, according to Plotinus, to the form or determination of being in its objectifiable mode, and (the same thing seen from the opposite point of view) to the determination of thought as a movement directed towards that which shines into the mind, which the mind must make its own. The infinite interplay between subject and object, the play of concealment and unveiling, of wonder at what is other and discovery of what is one's own, of *erôs* and identity (superbly depicted by Novalis in his story, 'The Young Men from Sais'), is the play of beauty. But this play can only happen in the unifying light of the Good, which gives it its pleasure, its brightness, its inexhaustability. And this light desires to be recognised by those involved in the play of beauty as the more-than-beautiful, since no individual form satisfies the soul's yearning: ἴχνος τοῦ ἀμόρφου μορφή. Form is the trace left by what is formless.[404]

Plotinus' treatises on aesthetics in the strict sense must be read primarily from this point of view if they are to be read rightly: the early work 'On the Beautiful' (I.6) and the later 'On Intelligible Beauty (V.8), which should be read alongside III.8, 'On Contemplation'. The first of these is an *haute vulgarisation*, in which the work's lack of speculative depth is compensated by energetic idiom. Starting from what is already an orthodox academic definition of beauty in syncretistic Stoicising terms (a definition we also find in Augustine),[405] as 'the harmony of parts with each other and with the whole, united with beauty in colouring', Plotinus criticises the first element of the definition, symmetry: if this were to hold, the totality of the foundation of all cases of beauty, the non-measurable – as, for example, ideas, the axioms of a science, virtue, Intellect itself, which stands alone—could not itself be beautiful. And colour is itself a *simple* property but its *beauty* must first be demonstrated. Symmetry is only the expression of a unity that lies deeper or higher, of unity or idea which is able to organise itself powerfully; and, just as the superiority of the idea over material multiplicity[406] shines through, and gives quantitive structure to the darkness of matter, so too 'colour' is the *qualitative* manifestation of the light of the idea, which is why light (or fire) and beauty are primitively related.[407] Existent reality (Intellect) is both illuminated from its source and itself a source of light; the idea (Intellect = form = *eidos*) gleams and flashes, λάμπει καὶ στίλβει ὡς ἂν εἶδος ὄν.[408] It is certainly in the first place the light of what is superior (κρατοῦν), because it is totality and interiority, that impresses 'inner form' (ἔνδον εἶδος; the first appearance of this well-known concept)[409] on the external; equally certainly, in Platonic style, it can be said that it is the brightness of the soul bringing itself towards unity, the virtuous soul that has purified itself and mastered itself and become united in itself.[410] But Plotinus does not stop here, with this 'inner form'. The soul cannot claim this form as its own, for it can exist without it: it finds it beyond itself, in Intellect, which 'is beauty for it and, indeed, no stranger to it but that whence it comes; only so is it truly Soul'.[411] In Intellect and only in Intellect are being, Good and Beauty identical; this is the way, then, in which Soul must find unity, in the sphere above itself. Only here, in the realm of the 'divine', can the soul be itself.

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[404] VI.7.33.

[405] Vol. 2, 121.

This is the point at which Plotinus' early work remains, with this idea of transcendence in the Intellectual and divine sphere. The negative aspect of 'flight' from the sensible world predominates, and we find it said—with a directness that does not appear in the later works—that the soul united in and with itself in Intellect 'has become wholly and absolutely pure, true light'.[412] Even this 'first transcendence' that leads

[406] 1.6.2.

[407] *Ibid.* 3.

[408] *Ibid.* 3.

[409] *Ibid.* 3.

[410] *Ibid.* 4–6.

[411] *Ibid.* 6.

[412] *Ibid.* 9.

us from soul to the purity of Intellect, can display relatively immanent *and* relatively transcendent aspects; the latter is actually strongly stated in I.6, which deals with the 'mysterious path inwards', from appearance to substance, from what is pleasing to what is worthy of honour, from losing the self in the other to finding the self in the identity of Intellect. If this is taken no further, it opens the door to the development of a purely idealist aesthetic in which the 'more-than-beautiful' is practically swallowed up in the 'properly beautiful, the intellectually beautiful'. But Plotinus can also stress the immanent dimension more strongly, even when dealing with this aspect—at least as the indispensable starting-point for all transfiguration. If we are to engage with the Beautiful, we must be able to see it everywhere. Only those moved by love (ἐρωτικώτεροι)[413] can do this; and, as in the *Symposium*, this is brought about by engagement with the sensible embodiment of the Beautiful.

In the fine treatise that forms I.3 of the *Enneads*, the question is raised of what sort of human beings are receptive to higher things, divine things. Three categories are indicated, philosophers, musicians and lovers. The erotic lover 'possesses a particular kind of recollection of beauty', possesses in what is beautiful to the senses a *point de départ* for the ascent to the spiritually and intellectually beautiful.[414] The musician is enchanted by the rhythm and proportion and is, as it were, already on the level of Intellect, needing only to make a final break with the material world.[415] The philosopher, in contrast to both, is already 'prepared, fitted with his wings, as it were, needing no further separation from the world; he *is* already on his way to what lies above, and needs no more than to be given direction'.[416] But even the philosopher's movement is in its own way 'erotic'—i.e. it starts from the beauty of the world in which the 'glory' of its ultimate ground appears. 'How should God himself fail to be present here below?'[417] 'How shall someone blind to the world of the senses learn to contemplate the intelligible realm? What musician, aware of the intellectual relationships of harmony, could fail to be grasped when he hears a chord of sensible sounds? What geometer or mathematician, familiar with relation, proportion and order, will not rejoice to see them with the eyes of the flesh? . . . From such experiences, *erôs* grows. There are those who are transported into the realm of Intellect by a glimpse of the beauty figured forth in a human face . . . seized by trembling awe, they say to themselves, 'How glorious this is! and from what glory must it spring!'[418]

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[413] *Ibid.* 4.

[414] I.3.2.

[415] *Ibid.* 1.

[416] *Ibid.* 3.

However, Plotinus' aesthetic doctrine appears in all its fullness only at the end—without any attempt to bypass the realm of *nous*. *Enneads* V.8 sets out to locate beauty firmly as being at home with form. This form is to be found in the intellectual interiority of nature and in the inner spiritual intellect of the artist who imitates nature not in what she produces but her manner of producing it[419] – which effectively silences Plato's critique of art. 'Pheidias created his Zeus without any model in his sense-experience: he apprehended him as he would be if he, Zeus, deigned to reveal himself to our eyes'.[420] If the artist in his or her creating beholds God, just the same holds for nature itself: neither blood, nor colour, nor external shape constitute the beauty of a living substance, but something radiating from within, an inner unity and simplicity which contains from external form within itself as well as its material. 'Whence comes the glowing beauty of the much-fought-over Helen, the grace of all those women like to Aphrodite, the beauty of Aphrodite herself, or of any human being endowed with perfect loveliness! It is always a question of some interior quality that excites us and the splendour of form resulting from this quality awakens our interiority by its own,—awakens, as Plato has it, our recollection and directs us towards that realm where outer and inner, what is thought and the act of thinking, the beloved and the lover are transparent to each other and merge into each other. The soul becomes the material upon which the light works; what shapes the soul from above takes possession of it and it becomes 'light that shines from the greater light of the primal beauty'.[421] The objective and the subjective moments in all beauty thus converge in that realm in which all duality is wholly transparent in unity and the darkness of opposition is done away. Shape and form are still preserved but in that realm zest and movement are bound up with each other, likeness and contrast require each other; each entity has all the rest in itself, each sees all things in each and every other, the totality of all things is all in all and each in all and there is 'immeasurable brightness'.[422] This is the world of ideas—not of 'concepts', for the eternal 'images' are living essences; there each sentence is an image that is lived and full of being.[423]

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[417] II.9.16.
[418] *Ibid.*
[419] V.8.4.
[420] *Ibid.* 1.

This realm of beauty possesses an inner inexhausibility that permits no satiety or weariness—an idea which provides a central inspiration for Gregory of Nyssa and decisively shapes the whole of his theology of love. 'This inner inexhaustibility comes from the fact that the stillness that is there leaves no room for rejection or scorn and to this we owe our own repose. Lost in contemplation, we gaze more and more, and, as we understand that we share the limitlessness of what we contemplate, we abandon ourselves to our own nature.[424] Here, being and Wisdom coincide. 'True Wisdom is being, true being is Wisdom; being has its own worth and dignity from Wisdom and being is authentic being because it springs from Wisdom'.[425] 'Authentic' being is being which is, as such, identical with beauty: 'for where can there be any beauty devoid of being? And where beauty diminishes, so does being. Being, then, is what is always longed for, because it is identical with beauty, and the beautiful is a fit object of love because it is being'.[426] Here below, both are equally fragile and ambiguous: being is only becoming, beauty is only appearance, but both point to the realm of identity, without which nothing would be intelligible. And yet, at the very heart of this 'first beauty', the One is still present, that which subsists beyond the Beautiful,[427] the object of all the love and striving drawn out by beauty. Already in the contemplation of the beautiful there is a self-contemplation, a rising above subjective consciousness; and so the gaze is led towards the One, which is pursued through all the world's phenomena. And more yet, we 'become no longer a beholder but an object of beholding for an Other whose gaze is upon us'.[428] In this ultimate suspension between being-in and being-for-oneself, 'we know our identity with what we behold'[429]; we are in the One and in the presence of the One.

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[421] *Ibid.* 2–3.

[422] *Ibid.* 4.

[423] *Ibid.* 5.

[424] *Ibid.* 4.

[425] *Ibid.* 5.

Once more Plotinus draws together the various strands of the Greek heritage in his vision of being as Beauty, because it is the revelation of the divine. Beauty is thus characterised by an inner differentiation between radiance and form, light and harmony. It is in the fact that his formal ontology and aesthetics leaves the way open to pure philosophy and self-conscious theology that Plotinus represents a moment of *kairos*; it is in this that both the risks and the fruitfulness of his thought for future ages lies. Christian theology will take over his basic frames of references, for the understanding of the Trinity (with *nous* transformed into Logos), of the mystical Christ (for which the relation of the World-Soul to the individual soul furnishes an analogy), of the conversion of the sinner (patterned on Plotinus' ἐπιστροφή), of purgation, illumination and union as the stages on the soul's path to God, of the nature of the creature's love for God, which the whole of Plotinus' thought defines as yearning (ἔρως, ἔφεσις, πόθος) for the Absolute. How far such frames of reference are appropriate for a Christian content can only be judged according to how that content itself is understood.

[426] *Ibid.* 9.
[427] *Ibid.* 8.
[428] *Ibid.* 11.
[429] *Ibid.* 11.

II ELABORATIONS

A. THE THEOLOGICAL APRIORI OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF BEAUTY

1. THE CHRISTIAN STARTING-POINT: THE FATHERS

The Christian event, as the estuary and goal of the biblical story, ushers in a completely new experience of the divine glory. This new thing provides not merely an additional dimension to what mankind had already known of glory; it completely transforms it. Christian experience is not only an 'experience of newness'[1] but an experience of uniqueness: to such an extent that, in comparison, all other experiences of God retire together into some kind of generic category of their own, while it alone remains as the one central point, dispensed from above, unattainable from below. The understanding of the new, incomparable centre in its own self-exposition will be from now on Christian 'theology': *logos* about God, derived from the *logos* of the God who expresses himself in the prophetic and incarnate Word.

But of course all the mythical, philosophical and religious knowledge that Antiquity had of God was always itself theological. To the men of Antiquity God was always truly revealed in the cosmos, and the fundamental resolution of human existence was to be found in its transcendence in God as the ground, form and goal of human existence. It is superficial and wrong to reproach these men with having 'divinised' the cosmos; if the category of divine creative freedom necessarily escaped them, they had nonetheless given formally correct expression to the relationship of transcendence and immanence between God and the world in the double aspect of their religious cosmology: in the cosmos (especially in the stars of heaven) the 'beauty of order' of the absolute shines forth, while cosmic being as a whole radiates forth dynamically from its source in God back to its source in God. If among the early Greeks the transcendence of the finite human form in this absolute ordering could be experienced as the highest tragedy and questionableness of the human, late Antiquity, in so far as it remained religious, had resigned itself to the tragic and let the question be swallowed up in a loving faith in an all-embracing goodness, in spite of all and transcending all.

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[1] Karl Prümm, *Christentum als Neuheitserlebnis* (1939).

'What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you,' says Paul to the sages of Athens. And once Christianity had spent its first century in understanding and proclaiming its own distinctiveness, it had then in its proclamation to the cultural world of Antiquity to go on to introduce itself as the gracious fulfilment of all humanity's 'seeking after God', 'if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us' (Acts 17.27). So, to borrow one of Claudel's images the forest of Greek pillars bend over in preparation for the gothic keystone, which is set in place from heaven.[2]. Or to use another image: Christian theology surrounds its new mystery with the theological philosophy of Antiquity (in which all the religious thought of mankind is present), just as the plain piece of bread is surrounded by a costly monstrance. But this now means that Christianity uses the conceptual resources of Antiquity in order to approximate in thought its own mystery of faith, so far as that is possible; it means, for our particular inquiry, that it availed itself of the ancient concept of glory, in order to lend expression to the biblical and Christian event of glory. And, because it encountered a very late form of Antiquity, it was the concept of glory not of archaic and classical Antiquity, but specifically of Hellenistic Antiquity that it used.

It is in this encounter that we must perceive the greatness and tragic questionableness of Christian theology, art, culture and politics, from the second to the twentieth century, even if the cathedral built over the ancient pillars, the monstrance fashioned out of ancient gold were, down the centuries, repeatedly plundered and half-destroyed (but then again rebuilt and extended), and if too—as our second volume showed—as the modern period approaches, the distinction between ancient beauty and Christian glory is more and more keenly felt and experienced. Seen as a whole Christianity has preferred to think of itself in foreign categories: this was the price it had to pay for the boldness of Paul (and of Jesus himself), in bearing the Gospel directly to the Gentiles who conceived God, the world and mankind in long established, special thought-forms. So the new, without renouncing its demand for penitence and conversion, was first seen predominantly in terms of fulfilment, (a tendency which in the Middle Ages even increased) and because in Antiquity God and man met one another in the mediating concept of the (macro-) cosmos—in which God expresses himself and of which man is a small, all-embracing instance—Christianity for more than a millennium became cosmology.[3] This is true both in the East, from the Alexandrines and the Cappadocians to Denys and Maximus, where the ancient θεῖος κόσμος everywhere re-emerges in Christian form, and in the West, if the more historical vision of Augustine is supplemented, and often almost masked, for the Middle Ages by Boethius, the Carolingian theologians, and John Erigena, if, instead of Anselm, it is Denys and the *Timaeus* who offer the framework for a view of the world: we find it in the Victorines, the school of Chartres and their spiritual relations, in early and high Scholasticism right up to Dante, Ryckel, Nicholas of Cusa, Ficino. With Origen, Basil and Ambrose, with Augustine and Bernard of Chartres, with Thomas and Nicholas of Cusa, even with Eckhart, the 'philosophical' cosmogony and the doctrines of creation drawn from Genesis mutually illuminate one another; and it matters little in all this how strong at times in the beginning the share of early or late Platonism, of Aristotelianism or Stoicism may be.

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[2] 'As formerly when, brought from heaven, the head above the temple,/ The key-stone of the vault comes to intercept the pagan forest./ O my God, I see it, I see now the key that brings deliverance,/ It is not the one that opens, but the one that closes!' *Deuxième Grande Ode: L'Esprit et l'eau* (Gallimard, 1957, 42).

From that it becomes clear—in a very rough and ready way—how the biblical glory of the Lord God could be thought and expressed in the categories of the ancient understanding of the glory of God and the world: and it was all the easier because this understanding was, in its very origins, a complete theology, which was only waiting to be purified in the Christian realm and then to continue its existence in a higher mode. *Spolia Aegyptiorum* (Exod 3.21–22; 12.35–36), the famous image, so much discussed by the Fathers, expresses the essential: the investment of the rightful heir with the goods of an earlier culture, whereby these goods are indeed consecrated by their holy use but yet cannot be transformed into that sanctifying process itself. God and silver serve as a monstrance (i.e. as a pointer); they do not become what is thus manifested. So all 'Christian culture' remains in an ineluctable crisis: very often, indeed in the best cases, the framework is understood as exhibiting the central mystery which may indeed remain virtually inexpressed—Denys is a good example, for he virtually never speaks of the Cross and Resurrection but regards the whole cosmos as liturgical worship; often the showy splendour of such cosmic and mystical piety leads to a forgetting of Christ, and the world of beauty overshadows the mystery of the biblical glory, and one must wait for Luther—whose influence is only slowly beginning to be felt in the Catholic realm—to bring the sharpness of the crisis to consciousness. Yet with the supposed collapse of the 'Platonic' tradition through the rise of the modern natural sciences the question is only shifted: certainly to begin with (with Kant and his various followers) a new anthropocentrism replaces the old cosmoscentrism,[4] yet this means no more than taking seriously the freedom of the human spirit and (something that was always known) the teleology of nature at the level of mankind; so the old religious θεῖος κόσμος and the enthusiasm for it—in Schelling, Darwin, Soloviev, Teilhard de Chardin—must rise up again virtually unchanged, and the question about 'beauty' and 'glory', about oblivion of Christ and consciousness of Christ, be posed again without alteration.

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[3] 'The Cosmological Method' in: *Love Alone: The Way of Revelation* (E. T. London 1968), 11–24.

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[4] 'The Anthropological Method': op.cit. 25–42.

Christians feel themselves to be the legitimate heirs of all revelation of God in the world (Homer, Aristotle), of all reference to and exposition of God by men (the tragedians), of all loving ascent to God and attachment to the Absolute (Plato, the Stoics), every homecoming of the creature to the One (Plotinus), every courageous pilgrimage, full of renunciation, through time towards a future *civitas* (Virgil). There is only one God, 'sought' by the Greeks as the 'Unknown', now revealed to the Christians by grace. So the veil is lifted for the converts, but it is still the same vision: for Clement of Alexandria, for the Neoplatonist and Christian bishop, Synesius, for Nonnus, the poet of the epic of Dionysus and the paraphrases of John, for the speculative philosopher of emanations and the Trinity, Marius Victorinus, for the statesman, Boethius, who let himself be consoled as a Christian, on his approaching death, by ancient philosophy.

Three great themes of Antiquity pass almost unbroken over into the Christian: the theme of the procession and return of creatures from God and back to God, a theme that rules theological systematics from the *Peri Archôn* of Origen to the *Summa* of Aquinas, a theme which the Johannine Christ makes his own (Jn 16.28) and which is so formal that it seems to include within itself, without reservation, both the non-Christian and the Christian. Secondly, there is the theme of *erôs* as the fundamental yearning of the finite creature for transcendence in God as the primordial unity, the primordial beauty, a theme which is applied by Philo to the men of the Old Testament, by Gregory of Nyssa (in his *Life of Moses* and his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*) used to express a general, theological ontology, embracing both the Old and the New Testaments, of the fundamental condition of the creature,[5] in Augustine appears in a still deeper form as the Christian, restless *desiderium* of creaturely need for the God of Love and thus extends throughout the Middle Ages in this form, shimmering in a multitude of shades in Bernard, William of St Thierry and Richard of St Victor, and again in Dante, Petrarch, Ficino and Michelangelo. Finally there is the theme of the beauty of the spiritual soul: a theme which traces its descent back to Plato and Plotinus, a courageous, world-affirming theme, which does not mourn the passing of physical beauty in a melancholy vein, but dares to see it as the reflection and sensuous image of a deeper, indestructible glory. It is only necessary to link the antique perception of the beauty of virtue with the Christian theme of justification through redeeming grace to show, apparently effortlessly, its validation within the system of Christian theology: the ancient, actively achieved harmony of virtue (which however—as with Pindar—is based on the graceful nobility of nature, φυά) becomes Christianly admissible when it rests on justification given by the free love of God and the divine virtues infused with it: here the theological aesthetic of the commentaries on the Song of Songs should—with an indissoluble union of *agapê* and *erôs*, of the glory of God and the beauty of the soul—afford an almost inexhaustibly variable treasury of themes: from Origen and Methodius, from Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose and Bede, there stretches the unbroken procession of these commentaries through the monasteries and universities of the Middle Ages to Luther and into the Baroque period.[6] The biblical *erôs*-motif, expounded in relation to Christ and his Bride (Church-Mary-the soul), leads both to the heart of the distinctively Christian mysteries (for the sake of which alone the whole external theology of the councils and the schools is worth studying) and also to the deepest justification of the *spoliatio Aegyptiorum*, i.e., *Platonicorum*. Or to put it another way: the glowing heart of the mystery of Christ is pure beauty, if it is true that all revelation, all faith, all suffering and death, takes place for the sake of the marriage feast of the Lamb, where creaturely and Christian truth and goodness is transfigured in the eschatological glory.

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[5] *Présence et Pensée. Essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Grégoire de Nysse* (Paris, Beauchesne 1942).

None of these three themes—procession-return, *erôs-desiderium*, the beauty of the soul-eschatological marriage feast—can be spared the critical question: in what relation they stand to 'philosophical' beauty and 'biblical' glory. Wherever the monstrance has referred to itself instead of the bread and has drawn men's gaze to itself, it has awakened Christian mistrust and finally called down upon itself Christian iconoclasm. And yet such iconoclasm was never a solution, because it is negative and contradicts the universality of Christian truth. In the end there remains a critical balance which demands, ever again, Christian watchfulness about what is distinctive. This is still to be dealt with in the final part of this book.

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[6] For Luther see E. Przywara, *Humanitas* (1952), 386–396. In general: F. Ohly, *Hohelied-Studien. Grundzüge einer Geschichte der Hoheliedauslegung des Abendlandes bis vor 1200* (1958).

But for the meanwhile there is something else to be done which is no less difficult. It has to be shown how the ancient theological aesthetic (with its mythical *a priori* regarding revelation) was transformed through the mediation of Christianity into the modern, supposedly 'purely philosophical' aesthetic. That all ancient theory and practice (of the art) of beauty ascribed itself to the revelation of the divine, so that all canonical Western art is of a theological lineage, can be seen to be the result of what has already been expounded. For the men of Antiquity all worldly beauty is the ephiphany of divine glory. But while the Christian world prepared to give to this theological *a priori* its all-focusing centre and crown and for many centuries indeed gave itself out as the synthesis (not ever thoroughly thought out) of natural and biblical theology, it provoked counter claims from the history of human thought. The Renaissance and the Reformation destroyed this unreflected configuration from opposing directions: the former, with its enthusiasm for Antiquity, dissolved the Christian glory into an all-embracing cosmic revelation (which was then perfected in the Enlightenment), while the latter so stressed the distinctiveness of the biblical glory that by comparison all cosmic beauty faded and was submerged. All that resulted from this crisis—speculative aesthetics from Kant, through Schiller, Goethe and Hölderlin to Schelling, to Romanticism and to Hegel and the variety of post-Hegelian hangers-on—necessarily stands under a double judgment of the tradition: can such philosophical aesthetics be justified in the face of the theological *a priori* of Antiquity, to which it still for the most part appeals (in part against Christianity)? Further: can this aesthetics recover the fundamental presupposition, common to Antiquity and Christianity, that reality as such, being itself, is καλόν, radiant goodness, glory endlessly to be affirmed? And if it no longer has the power, what can such an aesthetics have to say? If the transcendental καλόν is to be removed from being, why then is being any better than non-being? If we have come to a period which no longer has any answer to this question, then the beauty that we meet with within the world will sooner or later be stripped of its radiance and worth; and even where it is still perceived it will simply be classified pleasant, as a mere quality of nature, to which one has no sooner succumbed, than in that very moment one has seen through it. Aesthetics then becomes an epiphenomenon of psychology and relinquishes any claim to being a philosophical discipline.

2. ENTRY INTO THE MIDDLE AGES

a. Harmony between God and the world

BOETHIUS

Boethius provides the foundation-stone for what in the Middle Ages can be called aesthetics.[7]. Doubtless Augustine's mighty synthesis lies in the background, into which in turn so much of Plotinus' teaching on beauty and Varro's books on music had flowed, but Augustine himself will be above all the patron of theology—Denys takes his place alongside him later, to rise in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to a position of the highest authority in matters of aesthetics. It is however Boethius who transmits the philosophy of Antiquity: he is the chief witness both for the middle (Neoplatonic) and for the later (Aristotelian-Stoic) Plato, and in his *Philosophia* even cites Euripides several times and calls him 'one who is more important than I'.[8] More important still is the fact that Boethius writes his *Consolation of Philosophy* in the same situation as Socrates: in prison, awaiting an unjust death. He is the innocently suffering just man of Plato's *Republic* who 'is held to be really guilty',[9] *justusque tulit crimen iniqui.*[10] Just like Socrates, quite in the manner of the Old Testament, the sufferer protests his innocence: 'never had anything seduced me from righteousness to wickedness'.[11] His path to death becomes, under the guidance of philosophy, a Platonic and Pythagorean 'following of God', 'making oneself like God'.[12] Socrates is frequently mentioned as the model, together with the tortured Zeno and the dying philosophers, Canius, Seneca, Soranus.[13] In the face of death philosophy appears and proves herself: she teaches how to pacify the mutiny against injustice, how to free oneself from earthly cases, how to relocate one's tiny, finite destiny within the immense, indestructibly holy order of the cosmos, where the sovereign Spirit and Will of the Most High can be caught sight of directly. 'The starry heaven above me' and no less 'the moral law within me': both point gently and ineluctably to God, directly before whom the dying one stands.

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[7] The main work is Edgar de Bruyne, *Etudes d'Esthéthique Médiévale*, vol 1: *De Boèce à Jean Scot Erigène*; vol. 2: *L'Epoque Romane*; vol. 3: *Le XIIIe Siècle* (*De Tempel*, Bruges 1946): cited hereafter as Br. Further: E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (2nd edn., 1954); Edmond Faral, *Les arts poétiques aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (1923).

[8] Boethius' theological works are available (with English tr.) in the *Loeb Classical Library* (*Theological Tractates*, ed. H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester, London, 1973). *De Consolatione* is cited: book-number, metre or prose, page-number (of the German tr. by E. Gothein in the edition in the *Bibliothek der Alten Welt*, 1949, followed by page no. of English W. Cited).

[9] I pr 4 (60)(157).

[10] I m 5 (62)(161): 'and the just bears the crime of the wicked.'

The inserted poems almost without exception revolve around the beauty of the world, a beauty which above all shines forth in the radiant order of the heavenly realm but also in the seasons of the year, in tree and beast, ocean and wind, lightening and rainbow. The pattern of the good and beautiful order is above,

Illic justo foedere rerum
Veterem servant sidea pacem,[14]

and yet, even though disturbed by matter, the order reaches down to the earth, where 'concord regulates the elements in equal measures',[15] a *concordia* which proves *amor* to be the law that holds sway throughout the world: 'Love is that which binds the chain of things, ruling the lands and the sea, and ordering the heavens. If it let go of the reins, everything now bound by mutual love would wage continual war . . . O happy race of men, if the love by which heaven is ruled should rule your souls!'[16] This love, sovereign over the cosmos, is so much the ever-present harmony that throughout the course of passive time it is present unalterably and uniformly; not for nothing does the *Consolatio* reach its climax in the famous definition of eternity as *interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio*,[17] while all time (according to the *Timaeus*) proves itself to be but a sunken 'copy of that continual presence', which in the 'infinite flow' of duration imitates the *simplicitas praesentiae*.[18] It does not depend on history, progress, the end of the world but simply on the drawing up of divine eternity from the well from which all time flows. In this sense 'each single thing seeks its own way back and rejoices in its return. None is consigned to any ordered course, except that which joins the beginning to the end, and makes it cycle secure.'[19]

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[11] I pr 4 (52)(149).
[12] I pr 4 (58)(157).
[13] I pr 3 (46)(143).
[14] IV m 6 (254)(373). 'Up there, by the just covenant of the universe, the stars preserve their ancient peace.'
[15] *Ibid.* [*256*][*373*].
[16] II m 8 (124)(227); *cf.* IV m 6 (258)373).

Only man, in his selfishness and his attachment to the transient and illusory, strives against the universal law. It was none other than he who drove himself out of Paradise;[20] he has himself preferred the unhappiness of disorder to the happiness of order. Instead of being sufficient for himself (*tui compos*,[21] *sufficiens sui*[22]), he has betrayed himself in his attachment to passing beauty, esteem, fame, nobility, wealth, in short all the benefits of the 'blind goddess', *Fortuna*.[23] But who is this *Fortuna* or fate or accident? It is—thus Boethius' answer can be pieced together—providence, reaching down into matter which is alien to the spiritual, accountable itself to the *regio dissimilitudinis*. The same power, which is manifest above and in the heavens and in the pure heart as 'pure providence', in the lower realms assumes more and more the form of destiny and accident;[24] the wise man however transcends this self-alienated form and discovers even in it the eternal and pure providence. He sees beyond the contradictory, apparently meaningless chances of life to what is rather advantageous to him;[25] he discerns the inner transience of the goods of *Fortuna*.[26] They are transient because they are as fragments of an exploded unity, to which they point, just as man himself rises from the fragmentary to wholeness, from the mortal to the immortal.[27]

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[17] V pr 6 (300)(423), 'simultaneously complete and perfect possession of boundless life.'

[18] V pr 6 (302)(425).

[19] III m 2 (136)(239).

[20] I pr 5 (64)(163).

[21] II pr 4 (94)(195).

[22] III pr 3 (138)(243).

[23] *caeci numinis*: II pr 1 (78)(177).

[24] IV pr 6 (242–246)(359ff.).

And now philosophy spreads out its central doctrine before the spiritual eyes of the prisoner, its doctrine of being, which one day will be formalised in High Scholasticism, first in the source material by Alexander's *Summa*, in the tractate on the transcendental determinations of being. If the evil man is always entrapped in a state of essential loss and thus never achieves the essential power he strives for, it is on the contrary a characteristic of the good man that he achieves what he wills, namely blessedness; for the good, which he possesses within himself, is that which gives satisfaction and rest.[28] He then who is capable, not only of the good, but of evil too, is capable of less and is less powerful, than he who is only capable of the good[29]—a thought which will determine the inner core of Anselm's doctrine of freedom.[30] He who possesses in himself the good as the blessed, understands his self-sufficiency and undivided simplicity[31] and it is just this mightiness of being which makes the good manifest as the most uncontemned, or, to put it positively, the most venerable (*veneratione dignissimum*). 'Well then, she said, do you think it obscure and undistinguished, or not rather splendid with all renown (*celebritate clarissimum*)? Consider however whether that which is conceded to lack nothing, to be most powerful and to be most worthy of honour, could lack any renown (*claritudo*), which it could not provide for itself, and whether in that respect it would seem to be lower . . . We must concede then that renown differs not at all from the other three determinations.' But where these four properties are found together, there cannot be lacking a fifth: happiness (*laetissimum*).[32] 'Sufficiency, power, renown, veneration and joy are certainly different names, but the substance to which they all refer is one and the same.' There is expressed here, as a legacy of Antiquity and a pledge of the Middle Ages, the transcendentality not only of the good, but of the beautiful, and that in its threefold aspect as the venerable, the radiant and the blessed.[33]

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[25] II pr 8 (122)(225).

[26] II m 3 (90)(191); II pr 4 (92)(193).

[27] II pr 4 (96)(197).

[28] IV pr 2 (206f.)(321ff.).

[29] *Ibid.* (214)(329).

[30] *Cf.* vol. II, 237f.

[31] III pr 9 (158)(265).

Immediately after this analysis Boethius appeals to the *Timaeus* and sings that prayer of praise in which he addresses God as the most glorious who has created the world as glorious after the model of his own pure goodness and fashioned the perfect parts into the most perfect whole:

> *tu cuncta superno*
> *Ducis ab examplo; pulchrum pulcherrimus ipse*
> *Mundum mente gerens similique in imagine formans*
> *Perfectasque jubens perfectum absolvere partes.*[34]

In this world of perfect, reflected beauty, it is man (as conscious spirit) who achieves the innermost participation in the Godhead (*participatione deus*): and this thought is *pulchrum atque pretiosum*.[35] From the insight that the absolute, divine goodness is at once uniform, powerful, good, beautiful and blessed, there derives an ethic for mankind according to which man is to stake his powers on goodness, and that means on unity with himself, and to await his blessedness that radiates from it. But that means however that for Boethius the transcendental demonstration cannot for a moment proceed along formal, *a priori* lines (by constructing, for example, an ontological proof of God's existence out of the convergence of the fundamental determinations), rather quite in the manner of Antiquity he reckons with the revealedness of God in the glory of the cosmos: the beauty of the world points to the primal beauty of God which is again expressed and proved in the world-harmony—everything is accomplished within this theological circle. Certainly there is the *a posteriori* ascent from the empirical experience of the beauty of the *grata intuitu species*[36] of a landscape, or a work of art, and there is given to men the spiritual power to strip away the transitoriness of this accidental, inessential beauty of things and to achieve the essential synthesis between virtue (as spiritual beauty) and its own radiance: he understands the *pulchritudo dignitatis*—in so far as this is conceived of not as an external position of honour but the essential worth of virtue.[37] This essential worth (*propria dignitas virtutis*) and essential beauty (*proprium decus*) is not inferred, but seen, and in this vision the proper worth and the proper beauty of absolute and all-fashioning being is made accessible for Boethius and for the men of Antiquity: a making accessible, in which it is more the self-disclosure of being which is experienced than the conclusion of reason's endeavour. On the circle of accessibility achieved between God and man rests both the culture of Antiquity and of the Middle Ages and, even if this can still be regarded as valid in the modern age (Goethe, Hölderlin), the beginning of the modern age can nevertheless be placed where its obviousness is first lost sight of (Duns Scotus).

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[32] *Ibid.* (160)(265ff.).

[33] In III pr 10 (174–175)(281–285) it is shown that the five indicated determinations of being are not joined to being as constitutive parts, rather each one reflects and expresses the identical whole under a particular aspect. This whole is designated Platonically as the 'Good', because this forms the content of the worth, value and therefore desirability (affirmability) of being.

[34] III m 9 (166)(273), 'You lead everything by a supreme example; Yourself the most beautiful, ordering the beautiful world by mind and forming it in a similar image and commanding the perfect to separate into perfect parts.'

[35] III pr 10 (174)(281).

The Christian figure is only lightly sketched on to the picture of Antiquity: from the prayer of Cleanthes[38] to that of Boethius it is a scarcely perceptible step. A greater freedom however is found in the transcendence of eternity over all time; but this is characteristically not discovered from the external revelation of the Bible but from the thinking creature's self-experience;[39] from this it becomes clear that there is no contradiction between God's freedom and the 'necessity' of his providence, from this the ultimate human attitudes to God are naturally derived: hope, prayer and humility, by which we enter *in illud inter homines deumque commercium sperandi scilicet ac deprecandi*, through which we *justae himilitatis pretio inaestimabilem vicem divinae gratiae promeremur.*[40] The circle that links human humility and divine grace, the circle formed out of hope and prayer: it is Antiquity breathing a Christian atmosphere, from which sin, Christ and the cross however are missing. The mystery of evil is that of its non-being.[41] So this powerlessness is always grasped anew by the providential power of being and led whither it does not will.[42] Even inwardly, for every existing nature strives from istelf (*sponte*) towards the good, even when it wills evil.[43]

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[36] II pr 5 (102)(203).

[37] III pr 4 (142)(251).

[38] See above 000–000.

Thus once again the Platonic music becomes the redeeming mediator leading disordered pleasure to ethically-harmonious joy. There is a threefold music: the cosmic (of the harmony of being), the human (of the harmony between the soul and the body as 'virtue'), the instrumental. The last, rightly exercised, helps the second to introduce one to the first. Many classical examples given at the beginning of the book on music confirm this power of music over human existence; the art of the ear (as later with Luther) is granted precedence over the art of the eye,[44] and visible proportions are traced back to musical proportions.[45] Music is primarily the order of being, even before it is audible to the sense; that the spirit perceives it, is for Antiquity and the Middle Ages much more important than the fact that it reaches down to the rhythm of the heart-beat and to the senses. Music can finally only be judged by the spirit, even when the senses are involved. But meaning makes for wholeness (*integritas*) and consequently harmony can only be achieved *confuse* and never extended beyond that which is 'nearest'.[46] It is impossible for an animal to understand a symphony. Music can only be understood thanks to the spirit's highest capacity for integration, which judges proportions from the perspective of unity and knows whether the dissimilar sounds harmonious in an ultimate unity: *consonantia est dissimilium inter se vocum in unum redacta concordantia.*[47] One can thus see why the subjective-psychological aspect of aesthetics cannot develop for the Middle Ages any disturbing thematic of its own: the harmony of man within the universe and of the senses within man in the rhythm and proportion of the whole texture of spirit and body is joy, pleasure; the *suavitas* of the ancient definitions of beauty is not to be thought of as a second, alien moment alongside *convenientia* or *consonantia* but simply as the way they are experienced.[48] This is already clear from the notion of integration found in the *Consolatio*: the agreement with itself (as virtue) is at once worth and renown and joy.

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[39] V pr 2 (270–272)(391–393).

[40] V pr 3 (280)(401), 'into that commerce of hope and prayer between God and men (whereby we) merit by the reward of just humility the inestimable response of divine grace.

[41] IV pr 2 (212–214)(327–329).

[42] IV pr 6 (252)(371).

[43] III pr 12 (192)(303), IV pr 2 (210)321).

[44] *Nulla enim magis ad animum disciplinis via quam auribus patet. De Mus* I.1; PL 63. 1169A.

[45] *De Arith.* II.1; PL 63. 1113.

b. Divine Majesty and Religious Awe

CASSIODORUS, BENEDICT, GREGORY

Cassiodorus, the same age as Boethius and Benedict, the mediator between the Romans and the Germans, outlived Boethius by half a century: the period of time he was a Christian. Now the *artes liberales*, together with theology, will be poured into the mould of monasticism. If with Cassiodorus and his powerful influence a broad stream of the aesthetics of authentic Antiquity flows into the Middle Ages,[49] there is also heard in him a just as authentic biblical sound, picked up indeed by a very Roman ear, a sound which will find an echo in the Roman Liturgy rather than in the mediaeval theologians. He may have admired, like Boethius, the harmony of the cosmic music and how it sounds without sound in the harmonies of number; he may have praised, more than Boethius, the beauty of the world: the sunlight, which streams softly down upon our bodily senses, and plays about us like the tenderness of grace (*gratia*), 'the green earth, the blue sea, the pure air, the sparkling stars: with what delight do we behold them all now.'[50] But if the passing world is itself so beautiful, then what must a glimpse of the 'incomparable majesty' be like! *Majestas* is the basic word for God and for his manifestation.

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[46] *De Mus.* V.1; 1286C.

[47] *De Mus.* I.3; 1173D, 'harmony is the concord between notes different from one another reducing them to one.'

[48] *De Mus.* I.1; 1168CD; Br 26f.

[49] 'Cassiodore qui . . . a exercé une influence énorme en Occident, nous semble être le protagoniste de la christianisation de l'esthétique grecque': Br I 73.

God is spoken of in human images, 'while he fulfils all things in quite other ways through the ineffable power of his majesty. He is holy force, which creates and governs the universe; he holds sway in his own majesty and eternal glory, as incomprehensible, inestimable, eternal power . . . he is peacably angry, he judges serenely, and nothing changes him when the wicked receive their punishment. He is great in his mercy towards human misery; he forgives the repentant immediately; through waiting he reforms the sinner . . . O incomprehensible majesty and merciful goodness!'[51] 'All things hasten towards their destruction unless they are prevented by the majesty of your merciful goodness!'[52] It is majesty which is first truly discerned by piety: 'How weak we are, in truth you know; the unequal struggle seeks after you, mortal weakness waits for you: for it is the glory of your majesty, if the bellowing lion is overcome by the powerless lamb.'[53] Within this incomprehensible majesty is gathered together the harmony of the world: eternal blessedness will be the vision of the many in unity: 'There it will be revealed how many number is, there will be contemplated the distinction (*discretio*) of lines reduced to unity (*absolute*), the harmony of music will be laid bare, the course of the stars will be obvious certainty, the highest truth will be open to view; we shall see with what majesty God's widsom has arranged each individual thing.'[54] We creatures stand before God under number—*auctori quippe suo omnis creatura sub numero est*[55]—and nothing belonging to the world is more certain than mathematics, for nothing is without measure and weight;[56] but God transcends number. So for Cassiodorus the music of the world—as bodily, spiritual and cosmic—is the appropriate and necessary response to the grace of the Creator, except that the accuracy of the response itself can not in turn be expressed in measure, number and weight.

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[50] *De anima* 12; PL 70. 1304B.
[51] *Ibid.* 1304D–1305C.
[52] *Ibid.* 1308A.
[53] *Expos. in Psalt.*, *Oratio*. PL 70. 1056C.

Cassiodorus has the feel of Antiquity for the beauty of the body as such, in its paradisal nakedness,[57] but also in its Christian function: for it is the body which 'sings the heavenly psalter, which makes the martyrs glorious, which is worthy of the affliction visited upon it by its Creator, which even accepted the life-giving cross of the holy Redeemer';[58] all this honour only when it is a fitting musical instrument for the soul. 'You tune, beloved artist, the organ of our body, by which man is made sensitive to the harmony of the Spirit.'[59]

To come to the soul, Cassiodorus once again chooses a descending path: from the primordial model, which 'dwells in unapproachable light . . . which we honour as inexpressibly hidden, which is everywhere present' as the unity of three Persons, 'in undivided majesty, radiant beyond any light, glory beyond any glorification . . . incommunicable sublimity.' Thence flares up in us something of 'I know not what delicacy, movement, clear shining, which can shine without the sun and see without any external light . . . The souls become so much more radiant if they work their good in the grace of God'. For the 'image and likeness of light', which the created soul is, can 'not be the truth in itself.'[60]

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[54] *De anima* 12; 1303B.

[55] *Variar.* I I *ep* 10 (*ad Boethium*); PL 69. 515A.

[56] *Ibid.* 514C.

[57] *De anima* 9: *de positione corporis*; PL 70. 1295–1298.

[58] *Ibid.* 1297C.

[59] *Ibid.* 1308C.

[60] *Ibid.* c. 3; 1288BCD.

Thus the soul is certainly a fundamental music which however only sounds truly through grace, in the obedient observance of the commandments of God. This is explained again and again in the commentary on the Psalms where he boldly links Pythagoras with David. Music is the doctrine of the harmony of things; in the observance of the commandments man is attuned to the sweetest harmony with absolute will and being;[61] and as all the strings are needed on a lyre, so all the virtues are needed for holy men.[62] 'Music is the art of fine modulation: if we lead a moral life, then we continually practise this art; if however we do evil, then we fall out of the music.'[63] If therefore (Platonically) the proper music of the senses can educate the soul (*per dulcissimas voluptates expellit animi passiones*),[64] then so much the more will the proper music of the soul bring the whole man into harmony with God. Through music 'which rises up from the hidden depths of nature', 'we think with measure, we speak beautifully, we move gracefully . . . we drive out all other (inappropriate) thoughts and therefore have the joy of listening to it alone.'[65] But music itself remains as a whole a parable of the ineffable, 'and so those have done right who have placed the ultimate reason for heavenly blessedness not in notes, but in the Creator.'[66]

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[61] *In Ps 97 conclusio*; 692BC.

[62] *In Ps 146.7*; 1036B.

[63] *De artibus ac disciplinis liberalium litterarum: C 5 De Musica*; PL 70. 1209A.

[64] *Variar.* 1 II *ep.* 40 (*ad Boethium*); 69. 571B, 'it expels the passions of the soul through most gentle delights.'

[65] *Ibid.* 571A.

[66] *Ibid.* 573B. For the whole subject: G. Sowa, *Die Musikanschauungen Cassiodors* (Diss. Bln, 1953). In order to express the emergence of music from the unapproachable grounds of being, the Carolingian writers drew on the myth of Orpheus, already used by Boethius in a curious hymn. According to Boethius (following closely Vergil's *Georgics* IV and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* X) Orpheus is the world-music which turned back its gaze into Tartarus instead of simply welling up from the primordial source of the Good: certainly he could soothe even Tartarus, and lead his wife out, but he looked backwards—for 'love is its own law'—and therefore lost the one he had brought up (III m 2, 198–200). In Regino von Prüm's *De*

Benedict, although neither a theologian nor a philosopher, made a greater impression on the West, with his pattern for the image of God and of man, than the great thinkers. His God is the biblical God, his man is formed by his standing before this God, and the reflections of the forms of Antiquity manifest here are not allowed for a moment to constitute a second, independent theme alongside the biblical. In the *Rule*[67] God is manifest as the ineffably present, before whom the creature stands without any protection: 'We believe that God is present everywhere and that "the eyes of the Lord in every place behold the good and the evil" ';[68] 'let a man consider that God is always beholding him from heaven, that his actions are everywhere visible to the eye of the Godhead.'[69] The all-seeing God is one who calls us to himself and the vision of himself,[70] inviting us by his voice[71] and so the first word of the Rule is a demand for hearing which immediately passes over into a call for obedience. It is a call to Christ the King and to his Kingdom,[72] whence it is sonship not slavery,[73] but a sonship exercised in a following of the sufferings of the One Son:[74] wherein God becomes our Father,[75] who shows us the way of life in *pietas*.[76]

Man appropriates the truth of this all-penetrating gaze and call of God in an ever-deepening *humilitas*: at each step he

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harmonica institutione (PL 132 500) Eurydice, called back out of the underworld by human music, becomes a parable of the *profunditas harmonicae subtilitatis* which cannot be drawn out by men into the light of knowledge. Similarly with the Anonymous of the *Musica Enchiriadis* (c. 19): the invisible harmony cannot be drawn out, even by the best musicians, into visibility: *dum videri videtur, amittitur*, it is lost, because its origins lie in the unsearchable-divine (PL 132 981–982).

[67] Cuthbert Butler, *S. Benedicti Regula Monasteriorum* (2nd edn. Herder, 1927): cited by chapter- and line-number.

[68] XIX.

[69] VII.41–43, *cf.* VII.70–73, 87.

[70] Prol. 37, 55–56.

[71] Prol. 49.

[72] Prol. 7–8.

[73] Prol. 12–13, 17.

[74] Prol. 129–131.

[75] Prol. 17.

[76] Prol. 50–51.

descends both into his creaturely nothingness and into his conformity to Christ. This humility is founded on total obedience which is nothing but the response to the calling word.[77] It begins with the fear of God, of him who 'penetrates the heart and the reins', who 'knows the thoughts of men',[78] in which fear any delight in his own will is lost; he who is humble submits himself out of love for God and out of his following of Christ to the will of the superior, submits himself silently to contradictory commands and even to the suffering of injustice, lives in the act and attitude of an open confession of guilt, is satisfied with the least regarded and most despised (according to the verse of the psalm: *ad nihilum redactus sum* . . .), indeed esteems himelf as lower than anything else (*ego sum vermis et non homo*); after these seven rungs of the descending ladder of humility,[79] man is so limited a personality as to be annihilated; the last five rungs[80] imprint on this nothingness the form of Christ, as it shines through in the objectivity of the holy Rule: in the whole of his behaviour, including bodily behaviour itself, he is to offer no kind of resistance to the form being imprinted on him by God through Christ and the community-rule: through humility he 'achieves perfect love of God, which casts out fear'[81] and which is the 'love of Christ'.[82] Utterly poor through humility, 'possessing absolutely nothing of his own', he can 'expect everything from the father of the monastery'.[83] He lives out of his encouter with the 'authority of the Rule',[84] the 'discipline of the Rule',[85] and in so far as divine order is therein laid upon him, then, even in the least things which it treats, 'humility, earnestness and reverence are appropriate';[86] but the Rule, mediated by the abbot, is the form of the incarnate God, and therein above all *discretio* ('the mother of virtue'[87]), *temperatio*,[88] *mensura et ratio*[89] (*omnia mensurate faciat*[90]), *humanitas* in the spirit of Christ:[91] gracious apportionment,[92] so that the favoured one may fashion his measure from the given measure. In grace God meets us as one who gives, as love. So in the guest Christ himself is to be received, received in humility, indeed with prostration of the body, that in him Christ might be worshipped,[93] and above all in the poor and the stranger, 'because especially in them is Christ received';[94] so the sick should know in humility that they are 'cared for to the glorification of God', because through them the sick Christ is attended to;[95] it is thus above all that the abbot should regard his 'burden' as a slave and steward of Christ, as one which required that he be loved rather than feared', that he set 'mercy always above judgment';[96] he is the 'representative of Christ', whose fatherliness must be felt in him;[97] he must 'imitate the gentle example of the good shepherd, who went in search of one erring sheep';[98] for his sons he must be transparent to the Lord. He may never wield his 'authority' as a lord but only as a slave, in fear of his own reckoning.[99] But if obedience to the abbot is extended in a gradated form to a general, mutual obedience,[100] this means that all should be transparent to God and to Christ on one another's behalf, so that in the 'chaste brotherly love' and in the 'honour offered to each other'[101] the form of the measure of God in their lives will always be recognised. But this is in fact the *gloria dei* manifest in the world. This glory should, according to the verse of the psalm, be rendered 'not unto us, but unto thy name', and 'he who glories, let him glory in the Lord',[102] 'that in all things God may be glorified'.[103] *Amore Deum timeant*: in love and through love should God be feared, with that biblical and also classical and Roman filial piety, for which an awesome distance is the closest (because only right) position to the beloved God and Father.

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[77] V.1, 9.

[78] VII.31f.

[79] VII.31–164; 'I am brought to nothing . . .'; 'I am a worm and no man'.

[80] VII.165–201.

[81] VII.202–205.

[82] VII.209.

[83] XXXII.6–10.

[84] XXXVII.3.

[85] LX.4–5.

[86] XLVII.9–10.

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[87] LXIV.48.

[88] *Ibid.* 44.

[89] LXX.9–10.

[90] XXXI.23.

[91] LIII.21.

[92] *De mensura cibi, de mensura potus*: XXXIX–XL; cf. LV on the allotting of clothes.

[93] LIII.2, 12–16.

[94] LIII.30–32.

[95] XXXVI.1–7.

[96] LXIV.20f., 37.

[97] II.3–4, 7.

[98] XXVII.21–24.

[99] LXIII.5–8.

[100] LXXI.1–4.

[101] LXXII.6–7, 11.

Gregory the Great inherited not only the spirit of Benedict, whose historical image he determined, and the great Roman style in which he clothed his own painful experience of human life, he also inherited the asceticism of ascent and the mysticism of Eastern, Evagrian monasticism. This latter would be hard to reconcile within the rest of his inheritance; but the lasting, and at times urgent, interest in the active and contemplative stages of purification remains in spite of all firmly encompassed by and related by an all-governing experience of the overpowering glory of God. Even more strongly than with Gregory of Nyssa (the Sinai theophany in the *Life of Moses*) this experience is centred on two Old Testament revelations of darkly dazzling glory: the night theophany to the sufferer Job (*Moralia in Job*) and the priestly-prophetic, mystically encoded theophany to the prophet of the captivity, Ezekiel (*Homiliae in Ezechielem*).

The categories of the concept of God in late Antiquity serve as a golden background for this biblical experience of God, and their dark tones are deepened by Gregory's painful fate. Rare, and in Christian intellectual history certainly unique, is Gregory's use of his favourite word *pondus* (weight, burden), nourished as it is at its heart by his own human experience and dependent only in a peripheral way on the Augustinian use (*pondus amoris*: the gravitation of Christian, creaturely *erôs* towards God). Alongside other uses—like the pull of the flesh, of corruption, of the blows of fate, the burden of virtue and especially of authority (*pondus auctoritatis*)—it regains a moment of the revelation of glory in the Old Testament: *kabod* originally signifies the importance or weight of a person; with his *kabod* Yahweh weighs down on the prophet, on Israel, on the world.[104]

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[102] Prol. 79–80, 84.

[103] LVII.18–19.

God is for Gregory the weighty majesty of the absolutely infinite, which holds sway in and over everything. 'Therefore he abides in everything, outside everything, over everything, under everything, transcendent by power, undergirding with support, outside in his greatness, within in his subtlety, sovereign from above, upholding from below, embracing from without, penetrating from within . . . and, as one and the same wholeness, everywhere supporting by ruling, ruling by supporting, embracing by penetrating.[105] He is, according to Job, 'higher than Heaven and deeper than Hell, wider than the earth and broader than the sea.' And Gregory comments: 'In bliss he will be clearly known as the almighty and yet never perfectly, for although we shall behold him in the glory of his light, we shall never really penetrate to his nature.'[106] He is the One who sees but who will never be seen as he is in himself, and therefore must be the more feared since he remains invisible, even when we raise our minds to the consideration of his majesty.[107] It is part of the genius of Gregory's concept of God that he, following in the wake of Gregory of Nyssa but almost more emphatically than he stresses the dialectic not only of earthly knowledge of God but also of the heavenly vision of God. He certainly says with Augustine that God hides himself as a bridegroom in order to be sought more passionately, so that the bride may find him more deeply and in more manifold ways;[108] but the seeking in finding remains the characteristic of blessedness for men and for the angels. 'They see him and yet still long to see him; and lest these be sadness in their longing they are satisfied in longing, but lest in their satisfaction there should be satiety, they long for satisfaction . . . In bliss we shall know within ourselves both thirst and its quenching.' We shall see God, but 'not as he himself sees'; thus our rest will be only a moving reflection of his rest, our eternity only an imitation of his eternity.[109] Indeed at the deepest level the lover wills the invisibility of the beloved God who is essentially inconceivable, and therefore the cry, 'Fly, my beloved, fly' (Song. 8.14) is the cry of the Church, 'filled with the prophetic Spirit, to the Lord who after death and resurrection goes to heaven, as if she wished to say: You, who were comprehensible in the flesh, transcend the grasp of our senses in the power of your Godhead and remain in yourself incomprehensible to us.[110] And after Ezekiel had seen the glory of the Lord in a manifest vision, he turned from Jerusalem to the captive, sinful brothers in Babylon. Then he heard 'behind him a mighty, thundering voice calling out: praised be the glory of the Lord in the place where he dwells' (Ezek 3.12). Gregory adds: the prophet has the glory of God behind him, for he is now travelling to Babylon; leaving contemplation behind him he proceeds to action.[111] All his life Pope Gregory hungered after pure contemplation and he never really knew (for it contradicted the ideology of his monasticism) that God's glory itself, unseen, goes into exile and lowliness, that precisely the descent from Jerusalem to Babylon, from the form of God to the Cross is glory. This descent of God remains for Gregory—as for the patristic period and Augustine and the now-emerging mediaeval tradition—the *means* for the ascent of man; but 'glory', as the heavenly blessedness striven for by man (even if the vision of God is its content) and as the 'transfiguration' of the world at the end of time, retains therefore a predominantly cosmocentric accent.

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[104] On this see: Max Walther, *Pondus, Dispensatio, Dispositio, Werthistorische Untersuchungen zur Frömmigkeit Papst Gregors des Grossen* (Diss. Bern, 1941). Walther traces the classical, biblical and patristic use of the word without insisting on any simple lines of force. In the New Testament *one* text seems important, where Paul speaks of the *aeternae gloriae pondus* and its infinite preponderance over the light afflictions on earth (2 Cor. 4.17), but it is unlikely that there is here any reminiscence of the weight of *kabod*. Still less R. Reitzenstein's reference (*Hellen. Mysterienreligionen*, 3rd edn., 355) to Mandaeism.

[105] *Moralia in Job* II.8; *cf.* II.14 (PL 75. 565CD, 575C).

[106] *Mor.* X.7 (PL 75. 928C).

[107] *Cuncta Videns minime videtur* . . . cum mentem in consideratione Majestatis ejus attollimus. *Mor.* XVI.15 (PL 75. 1040BC).

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[108] *Mor.* V.4 (PL 75. 683A).

[109] XVIII.28 (PL 76. 93–96).

[110] *Mor.* XVII.15 (PL 76. 29C).

[111] 1 I. *In Ezech. h.*10 (PL 76. 896A).

The philosophical theme of beauty, which had receded in Benedict and Gregory, is the more ready to be drawn out afresh, the more the theological theme of glory stands in danger of being constricted or not being recognised and exploited in its full breadth and depth. So for *Isidore of Seville* the beauty of the world becomes, quite in the manner of Antiquity, the most excellent way to God: 'from the beauty of the limited creature God lets us have a glimpse of his own beauty which is unlimited, so that man can find his way back to God along the same paths by which he turned away from him; and he, who from love of the creature alienated himself from the form of God, can again through the beauty of the creatures return to the primal beauty of God.'[112] Thus we light upon the germ of the aesthetics of the Carolingian theologians: in their affirmative engagement with classical culture, with representative art, which however, in conscious contrast to Byzantium, will be seen in the *libri Carolini* as a worldly, not immediately sacral or sacramental glorification of God and his kingdom.[113] This 'Christian freedom' will be won precisely through the fact that the authentic values of the art and literature of Antiquity were seen and acknowledged, and that the introduction of these values into the Christian realm was achieved by the freedom of allowing validity to the partial within a surpassing whole. Is not God, as he appeared in Christ, the insurpassable beauty to which our heart is more spontaneously attracted than it is to the always disappointing beauties of the world? 'What is easier to love,' asks Alcuin, 'than beautiful forms, sweet tastes, gentle tones, lovely scents, pleasureable feelings, the glories and joys of the world? The soul easily loves what will pass away like a fleeting shadow; and would it not be still easier for it to love God who is eternal beauty, eternal sweetness, eternal gentleness, eternal fragrance, eternal pleasure, eternal glory, eternal blessedness? Especially as Holy Scripture lays on us nothing more than that we should love God our Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength and our neighbour as ourselves, and that we have the promise from him who cannot deceive that his yoke is easy and his burden is light? Indeed love of this world is more wearisome than love of Christ, for what the soul seeks in the world it never finds—blessedness and eternity—for this lowest beauty passes away and perishes, and sooner or later leaves its lover in the lurch or is abandoned by its loves. The soul therefore should hold itself to its own border (*ordo*).[114] It is, in Augustinian fashion, the greater love which is right, but which now—something more than Augustine—justifies the inclusion of classical beauty within Christian beauty: and so it will remain right through to Alan of Lille, to Dante, and to the Florentine Renaissance.

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[112] *Sent.* I; PL 83. 540.

[113] PL 98. 1187–1188. In addition, Br I.267f.

c. The World as the Interpretation of God

JOHN ERIGENA

In Erigena's late Carolingian synthesis Western presuppositions are flooded with the results of Greek speculation: first Gregory of Nyssa in his boldest systematic utterances, then the Areopagite, who is freshly translated and commented on, and above all Maximus the Confessor who, himself already a synthesis of the whole theology of the East,[115] is likewise made available through the translation of his principal work, the *Ambigua*, taken over in his systematisations and inexorably built up into an all-embracing system of God and the world. What Erigena does in solitary daring at the beginning of the Middle Ages, Nicolas of Cusa will repeat at their end with just the same solitude and daring: the whole world-picture taken over from the philosophers and fashioned into a Christian utterance. For while it is doubtless Plotinus who provides the material for intuition and concept (in Denys' version), all this is nevertheless rendered dynamic—as one can already see in the Origenist *Peri Archôn*—in a biblical and historical way: for the outflow of creation from God and the *archai*, and the return of the world of the senses to its origins in God is a temporal process, the critical turning-point of which is Jesus Christ who brings into the static philosophy of Plotinus an eschatological stress and presses on to an insurpassable end. If God is at the beginning uncreated, creating nature, then the *archai* are created and creating nature, the sensible world created, but no longer creating nature, so that at the end, when everything has returned to him, God will be uncreated, but also uncreating nature: 'for what should the divine nature still create, when it will be all in all and will appear in nothing else than itself alone?'[116] This short question points in a flash to the problem: is God as it were exhausted by the process and is his explication at an end? Is Erigena in his radicalisation of Greek patristics to be seen as a precursor of Spinoza and Hegel, who also sought to offer a Christian philosophy?[117]

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[114] *Dial. de Rhetorica et Virtutibus*; PL 101. 946AB.

[115] *Cf.* my book: *Kosmische Liturgie, Das Weltbild Maximus' des Bekenners*, 2nd edn., 1961.

Doubtless Erigena wants to be a believing Christian, neither Christology (as the doctrine of Incarnation and Redemption) nor the doctrine of the Trinity presents him with any difficulty; but because in Christ the *whole* truth of God has become manifest, he is necessarily the personal inclusive concept and inner pinnacle of all philosophy. The more universal standpoint is therefore always right. In the conflict between *ratio* and *auctoritas* the conclusion must be: *nil aliud . . . vera auctoritas nisi rationes virtute reperta veritas.*[118] But

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[116] Works after the edn. of H. J. Floss in PL 122. DN = *De divisione Naturae*, CJ = *Commentary on John*, P = *De Praedestinatione*. DN V.1019BC.

[117] Anton Staudenmaier (*Joh. Scotus Erigena und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit* I, 1834) thinks fit to enlist the support of the ancient systematician in his attack on Spinoza and Hegel. On Erigena's sources: Henry Bett, *John Scotus Erigena* (Cambridge 1925).

[118] DN I.513BC, 'True authority is nothing else than the truth revealed by the power of reason.'

veritas is not properly to be found in the masterful concept but in the clear vision of the incomprehensibility of God which is no less emphatically extolled by Erigena than by Plotinus and Denys.[119] So ineffable is God that he can never be seen by any creature in his blessed eternity as he is in himself:[120] 'they would be blinded by the dazzling radiance in his sublimity';[121] 'the flowing radiance of the divine goodness is so mighty that it is changed, for those who wish to behold it, into darkness.'[122] So is 'the ineffable sublimity, withdrawn from all, designated as desert,[123] and if we designate the ways of being in the world that are entrusted to us as being, then God is not-being, 'which has emerged out of nothing into the something [of the world]'.[124] Indeed God is essentially unencompassable, even therefore for himself; 'it can at most be said: he understands himself, in so far as he understands that he is not conceivable'.[125] But it does not at all follow for Erigena that God goes out in the *archai*, the categories and individual things, in order to conceive himself; rather he insists on the two-edged claim that, in all theophanies or epiphanies in nature and grace, cosmos and Holy Scripture, it is the *non-manifest* that appears, the *inconceivable* that is conceived. Creation is *non apparentis apparitio, occulti manifestatio, negati affirmatio, incomprehensibilis comprehensio, ineffabilis fatus, inaccessibilis accessus, inintelligibilis*

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[119] And not only is God, transcendent over the world, incomprehensible, the ways and manners of his processions, even the ways of the return of the creature into the primordial origin remain unsearchable. God 'moves himself' *secundum excellentissimum modum, nulli creaturae cognitum* 'in a most excellent way, unknown by any creature' (DN I.522C), the creatures are changed *ineffabili modo Deoque soli cognito in suas causas* 'in an ineffable way whose causes are known to God alone' (DN V.989D). Such expressions are very frequent. Cf. 671C.

[120] [*Angeli*] *Trinitatem . . . non per seipsam aspiciunt, sed in theophaniis comprehensibilibus sibique connaturalibus* '[the angels] behold . . . the trinity not in itself, but in theophanies comprehensible and connatural to them. DN V.1000BC.

[121] DN III.623D.

[122] DN III.681B.

[123] CJ 304C.

[124] DN III.681A.

[125] DN III.620CD.

intellectus ... informis forma, immensurabilis mensure, innumerabilis numerus, carentis pondere pondus, spiritualis incrassatio,[126] *invisibilis visibilitas, ... indefiniti definitio, incircumscripti circumscriptio.*[127] And each time there is as much emphasis on the first word, indeed perhaps more than on the second. In the continuation of the text the example of the human spirit is introduced which, being invisible and remaining so, makes itself known in signs and parables, whereby the double-sideness of the phenomenon is expressed still more clearly: *dum silet, clamat, et dum clamat, silet; et invisibilis videtur, et dum videtur, invisibilis est, ... et dum* vult, *vocibus et literis incorporatur; et dum incorporatur, incorporeus in seipso subsistit.*[128] Indeed he can go so far as to say that 'the spirit also penetrates other hearts without *vehicula* and is mixed with other spirits and becomes one with them, and while it does this, it remains ever in itself. While it moves itself, it stands still, and while it stands still, it moves itself.'[129] It is therefore certainly manifest as spirit but in its transcendence over its manifest form, in which its freedom becomes apparent, that is, its being able to be quite other and therefore its being quite other.

The absolute otherness of God is especially manifest in the fact that the world is put together from contraries, indeed from contradictories. 'God creates not only the like but also the unlike, for he is himself both the like and the unlike. He is therefore the ground of contradictory things.[130] 'For he is the likeness of like things and the unlikeness of unlike things, the opposite of contraries and the contradiction of contradictories. And all that he gathers together and reconciles in a wonderful, inexpressible harmony. What appears disharmonious in itself, is, regarded within the all-embracing harmony of the universe, harmony and melody.'[131] If God had created for himself only the like then 'it would appear that he had failed in the creation of contrary and contradictory things and he would not be shown to be the creator of all things that reason had declared to be realisable.'[132] Together with Maximus Erigena here transcends the Origenist doctrine of the fall which traces the distinction and opposition between finite natures back to a cosmic fall (*veluti ex diametro sibi invicem e contrario repondent*).[133]

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[126] According to Gregory of Nazianzus and Maximus Confessor: ὁ λόγος παχύνεται. *Cf. Kosmische Liturgie* loc. cit. 347, 518f.

[127] DN III.633AB, 'appearance of the non-apparent, manifestation of the occult, affirmation of the denied, comprehension of the incomprehensible, ineffable utterance, inaccessible approach, unintelligible understanding, ... form without form, incommensurable measure, innumerable number, weight lacking weight, spiritual distention, invisible visibility, ... definition of the indefinable, circumspection of the uncircumscribable.'

[128] 'While it is silent, it calls out and while it calls out, it is silent; and the invisible is seen and while it is seen, it is invisible, ... and while it *wills*, it takes form in sounds and letters; and while it thus takes bodily form, it remains incorporeal in itself.'

[129] DN III.633C.

[130] DN II.510D–511A.

On the other hand the freedom of God is so securely established for Erigena by the absolute transcendence of the absolutely universal origin over every particular manifestation that any introduction of particular voluntary decisions by God into the universal history of the world seems to him blasphemous. Whence his decided struggle against Gottschalk's double predestination, and his attempt in the *liber de Praedestinatione* to enlist Augustine in his support. Philosophy and *evangelium* plainly converge here, the more so, as they must fundamentally be convertible one into another;[134] for as from the philosophical viewpoint only goodness can flow from the all-good origin, so Scripture never speaks of a double, but only ever of a single predestination, namely to the good:[135] Romans 8 and Ephesians 1 are rightly brought forward as the chief witnesses.[136] And the worldly *oppositio* of the elect and the reprobate must necessarily be dissolved in a final harmony, in which Erigena (with Origen, both Gregories and Maximus, but also with support from Plotinus and Augustine[137]) lets the damned by punished through the 'non-existent' illusoriness of their sensible natures, a Hell, which as absolute finitude cannot therefore in any way be thought of as coextensive with the divine, infinite eternity.[138] If the fire of punishment is depicted on the one hand as the self-destructiveness of sin and on the other as the unique glory of God as it is made known in its relation to evil—a theme which Nicolas of Cusa will take up—then this is no contradiction: it is the self-destructiveness of the lie in the flame of the immediate radiance of the truth. As the beauty of a virtuous man is exalted by his bearing within himself the possibility of vice, but as transcended, so the eschatological beauty of God in the universe is the victorious transformation of all evil into the good.[139] Erigena here (with the above-mentioned Greek fathers) uses the classical, aesthetic justification of evil through the cosmic harmony of opposites in a different way from Augustine and his followers,[140] who are in earnest in their attempt to make the notion of a Hell co-eternal with Heaven credible to us. The Greek argument—from Heraclitus to Plotinus—only works if redemption in Christ is thought of cosmically, in the manner of the Greek fathers, continued by Erigena, grasped afresh by Nicolas of Cusa and taken still further by the Idealists.

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[131] DN II.517BC.

[132] DN III.637BC.

[133] 'They correspond to each other as diametrical opposites.

[134] P I.1: *Conficitur, veram esse philosophiam veram religionem, conversimque veram religionem veram philosophiam* (358A). On the place of the book in the events of the time, *cf.* Maïeul Cappuys OSB, *Jean Scot Erigène* (1923), 102–127. 'It is established that true philosophy is true religion, and conversely that true religion is true philosophy.

[135] P IV.369f.

[136] P XI.3, 398C–399B.

Is all this biblically acceptable, or has the classical, philosophical thought-form finally triumped over the biblical content? The theological intention is clear. In the incarnate Word, who is the historical Christ (he is not relativized), lies the unity of all wisdom;[141] through his Cross and his blood human nature, which fell in Adam (and was torn into sensuality and sexual differentiation), is quite fundamentally[142] saved;[143] pleads in beautiful prayers for the full understanding of the Word of Christ, in which the ever-greater mystery of God reigns.[144] And so the 'philosophical' insight into God's majestic glory is brought to bear on the unique form of the revelation of God in Christ. He is addressed in what follows: 'You are always sought and always found and yet evermore not found; found in your revelations (*theophaniis*), in which, in a manifold way and as in mirrors, you encounter the spirit of the one who seeks you, in the way in which you are pleased to communicate yourself—not revealing what you are but that you are and what you are not—but in contrast not found in your transcendent nature, in which you transcend and rise above any understanding that resolves on understanding you and raising itself to you.'[145] But the two motives—the cosmological and the biblical, the revelation of God in nature and in the Word—remain ordered one under the other: both fall under the same category of 'symbol',[146] both are equally 'not appropriate' when it comes to mediating what is distinctive about God.[147]

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[137] *De Gen. ad litt.* XII.c. 32–33, n. 60–64; PL 34. 480–482.

[138] On the seeming character of Hell and its punishments: P XVII (417f.), DN V.949f., 971f., that Hell cannot be coeternal with Heaven: 963D.

[139] DN V.972AB. In this sense there is in the end *plenissima pulchritudo* . . . *absque ulla dissonante* [*natura*] *harmonia: ibid.* 965B 'the fullest beauty . . . a harmony without any dissonant nature.

[140] *Cf.* above vol. II.126f. (Augustine), 331f. (Bonaventure); vol. III. 82f. (Dante). Erigena speaks from the standpoint of a doctrine of universal salvation: *nulla pulchritudo efficitur nisi ex compagine similium et dissimilium, contrariorum et oppositorum.* DN V.982CD 'no beauty is realised except from the joining together of like and unlike, of contraries and opposites'.

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[141] CJ 139D–140A.

[142] *Cf.* the posing of the question: DN V.1003: how far is the whole healing of nature already a coupled event through the death on the Cross?

[143] DN IV.748AB; DN V.1002B, 1007C; CJ 306C.

[144] *O Domine Jesu, nullum aliud praemium . . . a te postulo nisi ut ad purum absque ullo errore fallacis theoriae verba tua, quae per tuum Sanctum Spiritum inspirata sunt, intelligam . . . Quoniam nihil ultra rationabilis anima etiam purissima inveniet, quia nihil ultra est. Ut enim non alibi aptius quaereris quam in verbis tuis, ita non alibi apertius inveneris quam in eis.* DN V.1010C. 'O Lord Jesus, I ask no other reward except that of understanding your words; which art inspired by your Holy Spirit, purely, free from any error of false theory . . . For even the most pure rational soul will find nothing else, because there is nothing else. For as you will find nothing more appriopriate than in your words, so you should not seek anything more plain than in them.'

[145] *Ibid.* 1010CD.

[146] CJ 307AB; DN I.507B.

[147] DN I.518.

Add to that, the fact that Erigena takes over from Maximus[148] the doctrine of the three laws—the law of nature, the law of Scripture (Old Testament) and the law of grace (New Testament)—in accordance with which the law of nature prescribes that we 'love all our fellowmen *equally*' (because in all there is the same nature), the law of Scripture 'is a help to the law of nature' and the law of grace (which can only be obeyed in the grace of Christ) demands the readiness to die not only for good men and friends but also for the wicked and our enemies.[149] The law of nature is therefore formulated here in a way already implicitly Christian and the law of Christ appears so to speak only as its final consequence. From this point on Erigena can build up the beautiful teaching that natural human love already (consciously or unconsciously) has to do with the primordial image of man, the Son of Man, Christ, and that therefore those who have aimed no higher become blessed in the man Christ, while the followers of the law of grace are raised to the blessed vision of his Godhead.[150] Christ is the *imago*, man is only fashioned *ad imaginem*; whoever loves his neighbour is directing his love to the *imago*, Christ, and thus himself becomes the image.[151] But for the follower of the crucified one the Son is the Bridegroom who leads his own to the spiritual marriage, to 'deification' (*theôsis*).[152] The turning-point of the world's history is Christ's death on the Cross when he breathed out his Holy Spirit and thereby introduced the return from matter and of the letter to the Spirit and finally the raising-up of all phenomena to the origin.[153]

The return by which the creature is raised up seems to respond to the going-forth which gave it being; the going-forth is depicted as the splitting-up of the centre into the radii, of the sun into its rays, of the one Idea (*verbum*) into the partial ideas (as world-principles), and from the principles things are poured forth. But within these there lies a kernel of striving after return, so that Erigena, on the basis of mature consideration, likes to assign the resurrection both to grace and to nature;[154] there consists no tendency to self-annihilation but only to a fulfilment beyond any conceiving: only formally is 'the end like the beginning';[155] it is the Christian blessed fulfilment that is meant beneath the Plotinian (indeed Buddhist) turn of phrase: the Chalcedonian ἀσυγχύτως finds,[156] through Maximus, an eschatological application: ascent into God, without mingling of substance, without annulment of individuality, but in such a way that God is all in all, which is a New Testament phrase (1 Cor 15.28), fashioned out of the Old Testament 'God is all' (Sir 43.27). The risen Christ now already fills the world, so that 'only a madman could say that his body is contained within the world':[157] boldly Erigena explodes the whole picture of the cosmos (today designated as 'mythological') and subordinates it to an unimaginable ideal or archaic firmament. Carefully, patiently, but inexorably, he demythologises the eschatology worked out in cosmic categories by many a Church father (Basil, Augustine) in order to make room through the philosophy of Antiquity for an ultimate vision of the whole Christ[158] in the *harmonia compacta*[159] (Nicolas of Cusa will speak of *complicatio*) of the 'manifold enfolded into unity'. So everything is resolved into a *gloria* of God manifesting himself in Christ who as *flamma ultima totum mundum implebit* in the *claritas manifestationis in omnibus.*[160]

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[148] *Kosmische Liturgie* loc. cit. 288–312.

[149] CJ 309AB; DN V.1003C.

[150] DN V.1012A.

[151] *Ibid.* 1013CD.

[152] *Ibid.* 1011B, 1014–1017.

[153] DN IV.744D–749A.

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[154] *ambabus cooperatricibus, ipsa quidem natura et gratia, resurrectio perficitur,* so indeed that grace works this *miraculum miraculorum,* but with the cooperation of natural causes. DN V.902CD.

[155] DN V.870C; 892D.

[156] DN V.894A. In the integration of the world it will be as in the integration of notes to a harmonious concord, in which 'each single note, be it produced by a human voice or a wind instrument or the lyre, does not lose its own quality'. The same applies with several candles which unite their light: *non confunduntur, sed solummodo adunantur.* Correspondingly with the intregration of the world. DN V.883.

[157] DN V.993B.

[158] DN V.994B.

[159] *Ibid.* 987B.

[160] *Ibid.* 997A, D, 998A 'as ultimate flame fills the whole world in the brightness of his appearance in all things.'

The question remains open as to whether such modes of thought are appropriate to their Christian content or whether Erigena (and later Nicolas of Cusa), although he *meant* something else, was not compelled by the logic of hs concepts to give expression to what he did not really mean. He wants to speak of 'creation out of nothing'[161] but rejecting pre-existing matter (as set forth in the *Timaeus*) he rejects any matter at all and is content with the 'radiations' of first principles, out of whose union and conjunction (as with Gregory of Nyssa) the individual things come to be. The mediation of this 'created-creating' nature, which is to be met with again in the twelfth century in Chartres, but which as the flowing emanation of God achieves no consistency, is not adequate to express the free encounter between creator and creature of the biblical understanding. And when, in imitation of Plotinus and Denys, the harmony of the world is depicted as the indwelling of the divine love in things, as *amor*—for *amor est naturalis motus omnium rerum*[162]—then such a category is insufficient to express the distance between this immanence of the divine love in nature and its epiphany as *caritas* in Christ. All is grace, said Erigena, but there is a distinction between *dationes*, those divine gifts by which each nature is rooted in itself, and *donationes*, by which existing nature is adorned, so that each being (including the subhuman) consists of *datio* and *donatio*, *natura* and *gratia*.[163] *Datio* is the gift of human existence as this particular being but *donatio* means that the being participates in all the values of the good and the beautiful.[164] Even in this doctrine, with its profoundly religious tone—which will hold good until the beginning of high Scholasticism—the basic biblical assertion cannot find expression. Here (in Greek fashion) the creaturely nature is throughout preconceived theologically, so that, when biblical revelation comes on to the scene, the theological language has already been exhausted and Christian reflection has to make do with the same categories. The ineffable glory of God may be strongly expressed in word and concept: but if, at the same time, it is defined as the point from which the diverging rays proceed and to which they return, then this God-point can be constructed through such convergence and it is then nothing more than the fixed point of the harmony of the world. In the same way the seven liberal arts have each their reason and their purpose: dialectic has *usia*, arithmetic *monas*, geometry *signum* (the point), astronomy *atom*, music *tonus* (whether this is to be understood as the single note or as harmony[165]). And if music is again taken cosmically—as the 'discipline which establishes by the light of reason the harmony in all existing things, whether they are in motion or at rest, and in all natural proportions'[166]—then God's being and will is primarily only the place where the oppositions of the world are softened into harmony: as with polyphonic music (*organicum melos*) where the qualities of sound which are so remote from one another are fitted together according to the laws of harmony, 'so the harmony of the universe is brought into unity according to the uniform will of God (*uniformis voluntas*) out of the different constituents of nature which, considered one by one, clash with one another.'[167] If this is the reason why Erigena so decisively rejects double predestination and why it is in listening to music that the 'inner sense of the spirit' (*interior sensus . . . mentis*) finds its point of unity in which the sounds are integrated into the unity of harmony,[168] then the philosopher genuinely hears the harmony of the world from the 'God-point', something which is then affirmed as a requirement and mystical possibility.[169] In these aspects of the doctrine the whole philosophy of the Renaissance up to Bruno, the whole of Idealism up to Schelling, is already perfectly transparent; so much are they branches springing fom the roots of Western thought, that they must spring forth by a kind of natural necessity. The paths to a valid distinction between philosophy and theology have now been clearly marked out in intellectual history, in a process which has not even today come to an end.

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[161] DN III. 634Af.

[162] DN I.519B.

[163] DN III.631D.

[164] *Ibid.* 631B.

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[165] J. Handschin, 'Die Musikanschauung des Johannes Scotus' in *D. Vierteljahresschrift f. Lit. u. Geistw.* V (1927), 320–321. DN V. 868D–869C; *cf.* DN II.602: the law of primal ground and goal applied to the individual elements.

[166] DN I.475B. There are also harmonies, for the knowledge of which the light of faith is necessary: CJ 343D.

[167] DN III.638A.

[168] DN V.965D–966A.

[169] DN V.970.

But again and again it has to be said that Christian thought, in appropriating to itself classical concepts—no, formulas of experience—does not thereby principally take over a world-view which has to be 'demythologised' but an encounter with God through the cosmos, into the heart of which it injects its own revelation of God. What it takes from Antiquity and carries forward is the enormous courage of its affirmation of being in any form (over against Asiatic weariness), its heroic endeavour to trace everywhere the *kalon* and the *agathon*, indeed even blindly to presuppose it wherever the apparent form of reality pointed to straightforward dissonance. Because for Antiquity the point of harmonisation is called God—and man only in so far as he imitates the activity and image of God, which is to say in his piety—Christianity could then inject into this theological cosmology its doctrines of grace, redemption and justification as the decisive kernel. It could say 'beauty' and mean 'glory'. But that here an objective confusion of language occurred becomes apparent to the beholder in the fact that the 'glory' of the *crucified* love of God is here above all presupposed rather than contemplated. This separation will take a long time to develop, along very obscure ways, and, in the moment when it appears ripe for a breakthrough, the Areopagite's 'sacral image of the world' will break once again like a flood on high Scholasticism and be determinative up to the time of Nicolas of Cusa, whose vision will be taken over by the Florentine Plotinians and again resolutely classicised. If Luther then broke the spiritual world in two in order to salvage 'glory' from the amalgam, if our own time gives up altogether the classical-theological tradition of beauty and no longer wants to read the order of the world theologically: what will become of mankind? It is to this alarming question that the way we must now tread will lead.

3. TRANSITIONS TO PHILOSOPHY

a. Sacral Monism

THE VICTORINES

It is not the lonely figure of the thinker, Anselm of Canterbury, that will give inner form to early and high Scholasticism but the view of human existence, mediated by Boethius and bearing his mark, uncannily radicalised by Erigena. Anselm alone took the distinctively Christian *mysterium* out of the philosophical monstrance and made of it the object of a passionately concentrated contemplation and inquiry: why did God become man? Why redemption through the sufferings of the God-man? All the data of the historical revelation had to be made to yield their inner *logos* and to come together into a synthesis,[170] the foundations of which certainly were laid down by the Fathers, Irenaeus, Athanasius, Augustine, but which now for the first time was constructed on a stringently pure theological basis. Anselm's synthesis had no real successor, for even Bernard and his school, emphatically patristic in reaction against the rising philosophism of Abelard, clothed their experience and utterance not in a primarily biblical but in a spiritual, contemplative, mystical robe of ultimately classical origin.[171]

Still more strongly and, for the ensuing ages, more authoritatively does this unity of classical and Christian contemplation control the school of the Victorines, centred on HUGH, who 'with his interests in mysticism writes the first aesthetic treatise of the Middle Ages'.[172] For such mystical aesthetics nothing is more characteristic than its taking over the classical, Boethian *erôs* without a break into Christian *agapê*: the words *amor*, *dilectio*, *caritas* are used as synonyms; even the sharp contrast between *caritas* and *cupiditas* points simply to the twofold—right or wrong, ordered or disordered—direction of *amor.*[173] *Amor* is, as for Boethius and Erigena, the vital-subjective side of the harmony of the world, which is rooted in God and therefore must necessarily (in the sense of the *Symposium*) be universal but as God's love at the same time uniform: love for all in the unity of God or love for the one God who himself loves all as Creator and Redeemer. *Ergo omnes Unum unice diligant, ut omnes ab Uno unice diligantur, quia nec alius praeter Unum unice ab omnibus diligendus est, nec alius praeter Unum unice omnes diligere potest.*[174] This *unice* (ἑνιαίως) is in line both with the (neo-) Platonic integration of all individual beings and individual loves into the all-embracing divinity and the biblical 'specificity' of the love of Yahweh for Israel, which as such becomes universal in Christ. To such balance between natural and supernatural love there corresponds in Hugh the balance between the immanence and transcendence of God, and therefore between the love of God in all things and the love of God beyond all things in himself. The restless impulse we find in Denys and Erigena (still to be found in Richard of St Victor in both his treatises on 'Benjamin') to tear to pieces all the veils of world-symbols and penetrate into the wayless abyss of God is in Hugh (in a Christian? or aesthetic? manner) softened into a love for the beauty of the world which as such is the first and steadiest bridge to the love of God. If the things of the world are *simulacra* (ἀγάλματα) *invisibilium*, through their countlessness a holy indication of God's power, through their beauty a holy indication of God's wisdom, through their usefulness an indication of God's goodness, then is 'the indication through image of the beautiful *in cognitione prius, quia in manifestatione evidentius*',[175] and because man 'as created wisdom is the principal sacrament of wisdom', he is as visible beauty the door but as invisible spiritual beauty the way to the contemplation of God.[176] Form (*forma*) is as such beautiful (*formosa*) because it is the mastering of unordered stuff (order, harmony) and therefore 'the determined form (*formatum*) is more like God than that which lacks form'.[177] Form is always the being arranged in relation to one another of parts (for example, body and soul in man) and therefore harmony, that is objective pleasure and blessedness; the love of one's own flesh (Eph 5.29) 'is music'[178]—and becomes pure music when the spirit is loved more than the flesh, an imitation in miniature of the objective music of the world. As all existence in the world is music (according to Boethius) and therefore pleasure, 'so too everything is created for man's delight (*deliciae*)'; it is therefore simply a matter of using and contemplating nature in 'ordered love' anagogically so as to be raised up to God. Significantly altering an illustration of Augustine's, Hugh demands of us that we not only admire the beautiful scriptural signs in the book of nature but learn to read them. For he only really *sees*, who understands the signs.[179] The legibility rests on the fact 'that visible beauty is an image of invisible beauty', that an 'affinity' (*cognatio*) and 'friendship' (*amica similitudo*) holds between the two realms, that man, who is in himself already the point of contact between the sensible and the spiritual, can experience and interpret the whole world as the beautiful body which gives expression to the glorious Godhead.[180] Hugh would like us to learn to experience 'the beautiful forms which delight the eye, the gentle aromas which quicken our sense of smell, the softness of bodies which are pleasant to the touch and welcomed with caresses',[181] as a universal approach to us of the inconceivable love of God, which creates us, gives us the world and dies for us.[182] In this sense he repeats the ancient derivation of *kalon* from καλέω, to call: God calls us back to himself through the beauty of the world.[183] Hugh knows indeed that of the two books which God has given man to read—that of nature and that of grace (of the Incarnation)—the first certainly presents objective beauty, though 'cannot enlighten the eyes of the beholder from within', while the second gives the power of sight with the truth'.[184] From this point of view the philosophical *theoria* remains pure theory, even though Hugh, and after him Richard, develop a doctrine of man in which the power of the imagination takes over step by step the mediation of the bodily to the spiritual, the symbol to truth.[185] But on the other hand it is almost the case that the light of grace is the means by which the spiritual senses are restored to grasp the universal harmony of love, by looking beyond transitory beauty to that which is permanent. 'The fashion of this worl passes away, says the Apostle, but the form, the grace, the beauty of this world, which is the other world, does not. This other world is in this world and this present world is less than that, for that world embraces this, which cannot however comprehend that.'[186]

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[170] See above, vol. II, 211–259.

[171] For the connexions see Endre von Ivanka, *Plato Christianus. Übernahme und Umgestaltung des Platonismus durch die Väter*. Johannesverlag 1964.

[172] De Bruyne II.238.

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[173] Hugh's works cited from PL 175–177, as vols. I, II, III. *Cf.* II.15D–16A: *amor est dilectio cordis, . . . desiderium in appetendo . . . Ordinate ergo caritatem, et jam malum nullum est.* II.958: *licet beatum esset, isto amore te* [scil. *animam*] *vel solam perfrui, . . . affectus dilectionis expanditur, caritatis gaudium . . . ampliatur.* 'Love is the delight of the heart, . . . desire in longing . . . Therefore set love in order, and, now it is nothing evil.' 'It is allowed that it may be blessed for you to enjoy this love, each alone . . . the feeling of delight expands, the joy of love increases.'

[174] *De arrha an.* II.959A, 'Therefore all things uniquely love the One that they may be uniquely loved by the One, because nothing other than the One is to be uniquely loved by all, nor can anything other than the One love all things uniquely.'

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[175] *Didascalicon* 7.16; II.823D–824B.

[176] *Ibid.* 7.17; 824D.

[177] *Ibid.* 824A.

[178] *Musica haec est ut ametur caro. Didasc.* 1.13; II.756D.

[179] *Didasc.* 7.3; II.814.

[180] *Expos. in Hierch. Coel.* 1.2; I.949–950.

RICHARD adds only a few new features to all this: a stronger emphasis on the element of mystical experience in the symbolic, contemplative ascent, even where the *excessus* is *supra rationem* and ultimately *praeter rationem*,[187] because in

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[181] *Ibid.* 950AB.

[182] *Arrha an.* II.959f.

[183] *In Hierch. Coel.* 1.5; I.1007; 1.3; I.982C.

[184] *Ibid.* 1.1; 926BD; *cf.* QQ *in ep. Pauli*: *sine omnimoda gratia nihil potest videre oculus mentis.* I.442.

[185] *De unione corporis et spiritus* III.286–294. Richard, *Benj. major* I. c. 6; PL 196. 70f.

[186] *De arca Noe morali* 4.9; II.680.

[187] *Benj. mai.* 4.17; PL 196. 156AB.

God *major est dissimilitudo quam similitudo.*[188] And further, because the folly (*infatuatio*) of human reason results in a final Christian intensification of *erôs*, which is depicted in the treatise *de Quattuor gradibus violentae caritatis*. It is the longing which turns to 'burning', 'drunkenness', *furor*, *desperatio*, 'madness' (*insania*),[189] but which is seen as the following of the God who 'has emptied himself in taking human form'. Therefore the mystic too must descend again into the ordinary world but in such a way that together with Christ he now wants to be 'anathema for the brethren' and in the 'madness of love' casts himself under the wheels of the omnipotence of the divine righteousness because his love too has become omnipotent in God:[190] *erôs*, which at last reveals itself as pure *caritas*; classical *theoria* with philosophical admiration (Richard always emphasizes *admiratio*[191]), which attempts to penetrate through the harmony of being into the innermost mystery of love of the same being. For this reason, too, biblical allegory is never pressed so far, is never so conscious of its goal and so unburdened as in Saint Victor. As with Gregory the Great it is again above all the complex of the Old Testament symbols of the days of Creation, the ark, the tabernacle, The Temple, of the Song of Songs, the visions of Ezekiel and of the Apocalypse which give to the ascending contemplation a similarly darkling gold background as in the splendid words of the Areopagite. Already with Bernard and his school and again with the Victorines, the Song of Songs becomes in a way the essence of the meaning of the world: here with the highest biblical authority human (and why not cosmic?) *erôs* is guaranteed and confirmed as the unmediated expression of all the mysteries of *caritas*, human passion as passionate feelings passes over without a break into the divine passion as the sufferings of Christ, enraptured love of beauty becomes the revelations of ultimate truth and wisdom: enthusiasm and inspiration flow into each other. No-one could reproach these theologians—Rupert of Deutz, Bernard and his friend, William of St Thierry, Richard, Philip of Harveng, to name only a few of the greatest names—with any clouding of the purity of the Christian heart; if they go much further than has been known yet in the history of theology in their use of *erôs* for the language of *agapê*, they stay all the time within the catholic universality of this love: the Bride is the Church (even mankind as a whole), realised symbolically in Mary, and the soul only in so far as it consents to the Church's love (as *anima ecclesiastica*).

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[188] *Ibid.* 162D.

[189] *De 4 gradibus*; PL 196. 1212–1213.

[190] *Ibid.* 1222–1224.

[191] The *Allegoriae in Vetus Test.* (attributed to Hugh: PL 175, 635–750) belong to Richard too.

'For these synthetic thinkers, who embrace the world in a religious totalitarianism, beauty is infinitely wider than for the moderns.'[192] This vision of unity is the signature of the age and embraces such contrary spirits as Bernard and Suger of St Denys, who are diametrically opposed to one another in their aesthetic viewpoints: the one the advocate of the greatest possible simplicity, the other the defender of an ecclesiastical architecture for which nothing can be too costly, too magnificent or too great to serve as a monstrance for the Christian mysteries:[193] he writes the *Magna Carta* for cathedral architecture which in the spirit of the Victorines leads from earthly beauty by means of an aesthetic and mystical anagogy 'up to spiritual perception of the higher beauty'. We find contrary spirits too like Hildegard who in her visions sees divine truths, attitudes and deeds embodied in powerful cosmic symbols, and the quarrelsome Gerhoh of Reichersberg who in Christology defends the essential equality of the glory of the glorified Son of Man to that of the Father against a modernist rationalism.[194] They are all members of the same spiritual family, manifest most clearly in their common front against the new profane philosophy: they represent the world-view of an unbroken sacrality.

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[192] De Bruyne, II.111.

[193] Suger of St-Denys, *Libellus de consecratione Ecclesiae a se aedificatae*: PL 186. 1239–1254.

[194] In a similar spirit Rupert of Deutz writes his book *de Victoria Verbi Dei*: PL 169. 1218–1507.

b. Discovery of the World

THE SCHOOL OF CHARTRES

The School of Chartres meditates on the origin of the world, drawing its inspiration both from the *Timaeus* and Genesis (*ad litteram* and *secundum physicam*): the interest shifts from God to the cosmos, symbolised in poetic myth by the 'goddess *Physis*' (*Natura*); to be sure, her metaphysical 'place' is derivative, standing in the third position after the *opifex* (Father, God) and the Ideas (whose embodiment, the feminine *Noys*, is the Platonic *Nous*)—considered in trinitarian terms it is the place of the Holy Spirit, Platonically the place of the world-soul. It is important that the two superordained principles only come into view for the natural philosopher in so far as they help to constitute the cosmos: the *opifex* as creator of matter, *Noys* as the one who arranges and adorns it. The focal point of the perspective has sunk, the vision is no longer, as with Denys and Erigena, directed towards the infinity of God (even where he is understood as the centre of the radii) but towards the centre of the cosmos, the uniting of matter and form, which is essentially where man is to be found, as the embodiment of the world: *microcosmos*. So at the beginning of Bernardus Silvestris' poem about the world (*De mundi universitate seu Megacosmus et Microcosmus*)[195] nature cries out weeping to *Noys* that matter is raw and without order, *Noys* complies and carries out the work of ordering the world by planting the ideas of God (and this includes the universal as well as the individual) in matter. Then she glorifies herself before *Physis* because of what she has done and promises to crown her with her fashioning of mankind to which *Physis* (as distinct from *natura*) contributes the elementary part, *Noys* the eternal and divine. So man comes into being as divine and earthly at the same time. The point of intersection of matter and form (as embodied Idea) is frequently described by the Chartrians as the marriage of Heaven and earth, and at the same time as *erôs* and harmony.[196] Matter's way of ascent to the point where it takes form, the Ideas' way of descent to being materialized, awake a countless number of soaring, dynamic world potencies (as *Pantomorphos*, *Urania*, *Genius*, *Psyche*, *Venus*, etc.) which come closer to a return of the cosmic δαίμονες of Antiquity than to pure 'allegories', behind which however the highest Godhead, who bears the name *tugaton* (the Platonic Good), fades into unreality.

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[195] Bernardus Silvestris, *De Mundi universitate*, ed. by Barach and Wrobel, 1876. Reprint 1964. Extracts in Victor Cousin, *Ouvrages inédits d'Abélard* (1836), 627.

It is here that ALAN OF LILLE's two nature poems, *Planctus naturae* and *Anticlaudianus*, the latter powerfully influential,[197] have their roots. In the first, Nature bewails the corruption of man which however does not primarily consist in sin against God (or Christ) but in the unnatural sin of sodomy. The dress of nature in the *Planctus*, the pictures in her house in the *Anticlaudianus*, as well as the description of the garment of *Theologia*, restore to these forms much of the magnificence which, woven out of classical themes, had been placed round the shoulders of the Godhead. Nature is God's viceroy, *prima vicaria procreatrix*, and as such takes over his attributes.[198] Again it is obliged 'to bind all together with one another though the legitimate marriages of proportions',[199] and in these marriage settlements 'to mint (*monetare*) the pure Ideas of *Noys* in the individual forms of things';[200] the union of matter and form is described as *connubium*, *osculum*, *unio*, also as *concretio*, growing together, which draws attention to the erotic undertone of the concept of the 'concrete'.[201] Certainly nature humbly confesses herself the originate handmaid of the unoriginate God, she confesses also her lack of familiarity with theology which, while it does not teach what is opposed to nature, at least teaches something different. In the first poem she calls on the priest, Genuis, who paints the pictures of things on parchment (a borrowing from Bernard) and who pronounces the anathema against all sinners. The second poem provides the positive supplement: nature wants to bring forth a perfect man in the place of rejected man: he will have to be God and man at the same time, therefore she needs for the soul a heavenly, supernatural helper. Prudence praises the plan; Sophia's help is enlisted; the seven liberal arts build the vehicle for the journey to Heaven; the matter is presented to theology; the ascent is made through the crystal heaven into the empyrean; in the place of God the Ideas dwell, as also Mary and Christ; the highest God grants the request, he directs *Noys* to choose the best Idea; the perfect man is fashioned and in a final battle (modelled on the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius) has to overpower all the vices. What is striking in all this is that while Christ is certainly to be found in this Heaven of virtues and Ideas,[202] though only as the son of Mary, he nevertheless remains apparently without a role in the new creation of man. And yet he is to become the 'heavenly man',[203] even the 'divine man' who 'will be human on earth and divine in the firmament, and so man and God at the same time'.[204] In which reality does the *doctor universalis* place us? 'The motive of the redeemer is introduced again and again without ever becoming established . . . The whole content of the history of salvation and of the heavenly hierarchy is effectively excluded.'[205] Huizinga means that the ethical and cosmological symbolic figures, which should be integrated at the heart of the perfect man, refer back to a sphere where 'the aesthetic and the intellectual were still unseparated, where philosophies sprung up within mythologies', where also 'the dogmatic formulations' were rooted.[206] A mythical sphere, then, which however without serious deliberation is placed immediately next to the Christian, dogmatic world to which Alan of Lille quite naturally belongs.

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[196] *Mundum silva [=hyle, materia] matre progenitum ne maritum sponsa gloriosior imparem recusaret, cujusdam foederis pactiones providentia curavit, quibus silvestris coelestisque natura congruo per congruos numeros modulamine convenirent.* (Cousin 628). 'The world was begotten by matter, lest the more glorious bride make an objection against her unequal husband, the agreements of whose agreements providence has cared for, and they agree naturally by congruent modulation, though congruent numbers, both in earth and in heaven.'

[197] Just what the central figure of *Natura* applies to: M. Gothein, 'Der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid' in *Arch. f. Rel. wiss.* IX (1906), 337f. etc.

[198] Alan's works in PL 210; *Anticlaudianus* in the critical edn. by R. Bossuat (P 1955; by book and verse number); *Planctus Naturae*: critical edn. by Wright, *The Anglo-Latin satirical poets of the eleventh century*, II. –476B.

[199] 433C.

[200] Ode to Nature, 447–448.

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[201] J. Huizinga, 'Über die Verknüpfung des Poetischen mit dem Theologischen bei Alanus de Insulis', in *Mededeelingen d. kon. Akad. Amsterdam* (1932), 89–199; *cf.* p. 121. E. R. Curtius, *Europ. Lit.* c. 6: Göttin Natura, which gives literature and connexions from the late classical Orphic hymn on *Physis* to Goethe's 'Fragment über die Natur' (*Tiefurter Journal*) which sets out a resolution and expansion of the Orphic hymn (translated by G. Chr. Tobler) with additions from Shaftesbury. 116–117.

[202] *Anticlaudianus* l.V.505–543.

[203] *Ibid.* l.V, 392.

[204] *Ibid.* l.I, 236, 239–240.

But his main interest lies in the cosmogonic, ideative process: how do the Ideas (in God) come to form (in things)? It is the ontological aspect of the problem of universals that exercised the philosophers of Chartres most intimately. God in this is only the *terminus a quo*. And since Alan actually attempts to reduce the whole of theology to an axiomatic basis (*Regulae de sacra theologia*[207]), the doctrine of God and the Trinity in particular is handled in axioms. It is the God who for Erigena was the identity of the converging world-lines but who now, necessarily, forfeits the classical tremor before the *tremendum* and the *ineffabile*. Alan's axioms will be influential: *monas gignit monadem et in se suum reflectit ardorem*,[208] *Deus est sphaera intelligibilis cujus centrum ubique, circumferentia nusquam.*[209] *Omne esse ex forma est*, with the explanation: *cum Deus forma dicatur, quia omnia informat, et omnibus esse donat, recte omne esse a forma dicitur.*[210] This is the universal teaching of Chartres, which necessarily sounds pantheistic, although it is not so intended, but is the result of the concept of God derived from world-convergence. So for Thierry of Chartres God is the *forma essendi* of things,[211] for all forms are ultimately 'indifferently' established in a unique form, the form of being.[212] So above all for GILBERT DE LA PORRÉE God is primarily pure form without any matter, from whom all forms proceed, first as Ideas, then as forms engendered in matter and growing together (*formae nativae, concretae*). Lest God be understood as the pure form of being (*id quo*) for worldly reality, Gilbert restores the creaturely concretion as composition to God himself (who has the Godhead for the *id quo* and the tripersonality for the *id quod*), something that brought upon him Bernard of Clairvaux' accusations and very nearly ecclesiastical condemnation. But is perhaps that being, which Gilbert sees as the universal form of the world and from which he cannot construct God, perhaps not God at all but the same mysterious reality, which the other Chartrians pointed to in speaking of *Physis* as the embodiment of the world—that reality which in another Platonic dialect (for example, that of Denys) is designated as the first and fundamental emanation or *archê*? And if that were so, would not the legitimate translation and continuation of the problematic thus opened up be the speculation, that unfolded in the thirteenth century under Dionysian influence, about being and its transcendental properties? That will be dealt with later. But it is hardly surprising that Amalric of Bène and David of Dinant, in following the teaching of Chartres about the constitution of the natural kinds through the one act of being of God as form, and in reverting to Erigena, arrive at a true pantheism, against which—too late—proceedings are instigated with ecclesiastical censures and the ban on the writings of Erigena.

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[205] Huizinga, loc. cit. 142, 174.

[206] *Ibid.* 179.

[207] PL 210. 621–684.

[208] *Regula* 3; 624, 'A monad begets a monad and in it reflects its own ardour.'

[209] *Regula* 7; 627, 'God is an intelligible sphere whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere.'

[210] *Regula* 14; 629. Two of these axioms were taken up in the book, made up of 25 axioms about God, *Liber 24 philosophorum*: ed. by Bäumker, *Studien und Charakteristiken* (1927), 194–214, 'When God is said to be form, because he informs everything, and gives being to everything, rightly he is every being said to be from the form.'

The impenetrable darkness of the objective problem of universals—how is universal nature present in individuals?—was pushed into the background by the struggle over the subjective aspect—how can the universal be recognised in individuals? The turning-point, associated with the name of PETER ABELARD is an event in so far as with the emphasis on the understanding's power of abstraction (though without as yet any satisfactory theory of the process) a demystification of universals resulted: since the mind, raising itself above individuals, *fashions* them out of the comparison of similarities, universals are no longer simply the sacred ultimate reasons lying next to the Godhead (ἀρχαί or πρόοδοι[213] or *primordiales causae*[214]), but general properties which the mind masters and which now no longer unambiguously transcend the individual. For Abelard they are indeed more or less vague general properties whose cognitive value diminished by contrast with the clear experiential knowledge of particulars: from here the route lies clear via Thomas to Ockham.[215] So while in this way the this-worldly, both particular and universal, comes together in the vision of the philosophers, space is again created for the incomprehensiblity of God.[216] The development of logic as an independent philosophical discipline has contradictory consequences for theology: on the one hand, a theological rationalism which will prove everything rationally right up to the Trinity itself; on the other, a defence of the *mysterium* through the method of *sic-et-non*.[217] On the first line lies the confidence that God has granted to the heathen by the light of reason the essentials about God, the Trinity and the Incarnation; so that those who will to follow this light can be saved—a catholic breadth which enrols Abelard in a great family tracing its descent from Maximus and Erigena and continuing through Nicolas of Cusa, More and Erasmus to the Enlightenment; the second line can be subordinated to the first as philosophical dialectic (for reason rules the *sic* as well as the *non*) and so once again endangers the Christian *mysterium*. So overall the pathos of knowledge as mastery of the world prevails and makes itself felt even in the theological realm: in cosmology God becomes the ultimate cause that constitutes the world, in logic the object of the system of axioms; moreover, in a daring new physics, he becomes the primordial model of worldly being.

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[211] *De sex dierum operibus* (Hauréau), 61.

[212] *Boethiuskommentar*, ed. by W. Jansen in: *Der Komm. des Mag. Clarembaldus zu Boeth. de Trin.* (1926), 16*.

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[213] Denys, *Div. Nom.* 2.11: PG 3 649B; *cf.* 11.6: χύσις 956B.

[214] Erigena, DN III.622B.

[215] In addition *cf.* Gilson, *La philosophie du Moyen Age* (2nd edn. 1952), 286–287.

[216] *Theologia christ.* III; PL 178. 1242A.

[217] *Sic et Non*, ed. Cousin (1836).

This new physics (conceived as the doctrine of nature but it could also be called metaphysics) understands the essence of being as *Light*.

ROBERT GROSSETESTE, the Chancellor of Oxford and Bishop of Lincoln, sharply sketched out the physical dimensions of this theory, certainly not without patristic inspiration from Basil, John Philoponus and Augustine, but also from Arabic treatises on optics. The *Liber de Intelligentiis* of Master Adam in Paris had made the spread of physics in to metaphysics and theology inevitable; Alexander of Hales and especially Bonaventure and Albert had taken over aspects of this, likewise the Franciscan Bartholomew of Bologna worked out the physical theory in his *de luce* theologically, while Dietrich of Freiburg worked it out neo-Platonically.[218] For Grosseteste light is matter: *formam primam corporalem, quam quidam corporeitatem vocant, lucem esse arbitror.*[219] But light has the property (according to Aristotle) of being able to extend from a point *subito*, timelessly, like a globe, so far as its power reaches, and therefore to multiply itself and beget itself. God therefore needs only to position one indivisible point of light to create the world; as this extends itself, material space will come into being. Grosseteste explains the distribution of matter into spheres, individual elements and individual bodies from the relations of reflexion of light reflected back on itself. The wonderful actuality and activity of the matter of light makes it appear in the sub-spiritual world as that which is most like the spiritual, indeed most like God;[220] not only is

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[218] Grosseteste, *Philos. Werke*, ed. Baur 1912 (G. Ph.). L. Baur, *Die Philosophie des R. Grosseteste* (1917); ditto, 'Das Licht in der Naturphilosophie des R. G.' in *Festschrift Hertling* (1913), 41f. *Liber de Intelligentiis* with detailed historical commentary ed. by Cl. Bäumker: Witelo 1908 (*L d Int*).

[219] 'the first corporeal form, which certain call corporeity, I choose to call light.'

[220] G. Ph. 52.

light in accordance with its nature both opening and revealing (*manifestabilitas*), but it has in its self-multiplying light in accordance with its nature both opening and revealing (*manifestabilitas*), but it has in its self-multiplying and 'as it were, self-begetting'[221] a power which is an analogue of life and spirit. Without appealing to the world-soul of the *Timaeus* and the School of Chartres, Grosseteste provides something like its physical justification and prefigures Schelling, Soloviev and Teilhard. How light begets colour will be shown in a special treatise. How through its reflection the numerical relationships develop, how through both light becomes the fundamental element of beauty and of the adornment of the universe,[222] can readily be ancitipated. Even the beauty of sound is derived from the beauty of light in contrast to the traditional theory of world-music which contrariwise traced back the optical to (in the wider sense) the acoustic laws of harmony. It is therefore hardly surprising that such a thinker should draw on the Augustinian theology of light and illumination in order to comprehend the process of coming to know the truth; as he does in his *de Veritate*, but without confusing physics and theology. Creaturely truth shows up only when it is seen in the light of eternal truth, just as colours show up in the light, and then becomes capable of revealing an existent thing, just as the colour revealed by the light for its part reveals bodies.[223]

But Grosseteste has also expressed this act of divine radiance of light in another way, this time in close dependence on Thierry, Alan and Gilbert's classical manner of speaking which had designated God as the form of all things. 'It seems to me that this is right: that God is form and the form of all things.' Form of such power at once of expression and of reality that it creates for itself its own matter on which it stamps itself and lends to it being and shape in an unbroken process of imprinting. *Ipsa [Dei forma] simul exemplar est et efficiens et formans et in forma data conservans.*[224] Creation is therefore a process of imprinting and expressing the form of God in individual forms and this artistic process awakens in Grosseteste first of all the concept of the beautiful: 'What then is form if not the being in itself of a thing and its fulfilment? But God is a still open finality, an imperfectible perfection, and therefore the most beautiful shape that shapes all else: *forma formosissima et species speciosissima*; he is as the one who forms all through himself *formositas omnis formosi*.'[225]

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[221] Cited by Baur from the unpublished commentary on the Hexaemeron: *Philos. des. R. G.* loc. cit. 81, 83.

[222] G. Ph., introduction by Baur, 76*.

[223] G. Ph. 137: *Potentia est lucis summae veritatis, quae sic illustrat veritatem creatam, quod ipsa etiam illustrata ostendit rem veram.* 'The power of light is that of the highest truth, which so illuminates created truth, that what is illuminated also manifests true reality.'

Grosseteste is a discoverer and speaks soberly; the *liber de Intelligentiis* worked the thought to death in a massive expenditure of effort which moreover axiomatizes God in the manner of Alan. It is true that in John's Gospel Christ calls himself the Light of the world and that God himself is Light without any shadow, as it is true that Augustine and Denys had let this biblical glory of God stream forth in a cosmological glory of light. But the consciousness of the unapproachability of God meant that not for one moment could they think that the concept of light could be applied to God univocally or even in such a straightforward analogy as holds between matter and spirit. That Master Adam does this and thus fashions a metaphysics of light that embraces naive theology, philosophy and physics, points again to the already-mentioned lowering of the focal point. God is unity, the world is manifold and has its origin in God *sicut rivulus in fonte*.[224] If therefore 'the first substance is light', as *maxime divinum et nobile*, then all 'participation in light is participation in divine being'.[227] Light is physically and metaphysically *simplicitas et sui multiplicatio*, therefore it is also *diffusivum sui esse et influens in aliud*.[228] Light is the most active, the most living,[229] in itself almighty,[230] the self-revealing; it is, as reflection, spirit and knowledge;[231] it is experienced as the most delightful, the purely *delectable.*[232] God is therefore eternal desire and blessedness in himself;[233] therefore too the desire for knowledge in the creature is that material and spiritual expansiveness which reaches out into the finite and encounters there a related yet other extension, knows like through like,[234] and lets that other desire come to rest in its own desire; it is *erôs*, *amor*. This metaphysic which transforms being from top to bottom into a radiant, flowing glory—the poetical expression of which will be Dante's Paradise, where all the forms are of light which stands out against other light and yet communicates in the universal light—has retained only a few references from biblical theology which help to justify an all-embracing cosmological parable.

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[224] *De unica forma omnium*; G. Ph. 110.

[225] *Ibid.* 108.

[226] *L d Int* 3, 'as a stream in a fountain'.

[227] *L d Int* 8, 9.

[228] *Ibid.* 9, 'being flowing from itself and into another.'

[229] *Ibid.* 13: *vita est actus entis diffusivi sui esse in aliud.*

[230] *Ibid.* 17.

But all these cosmologies together with their theological short circuits—God as being and form of the world—will be overtaken by the rising Aristotelianism which teaches the cosmological thinkers to construct worldly being, to which their interest is directed, neatly out of matter and substantial form and so to achieve a reality which does not come into existence through a depotentiation and dissection of the divine All-and-One, but is posited as one and good in its own right. With this Aristotelian foundation the thirteenth century could anticipate without anxiety the new Platonic assault, which—with a repeated Dionysian wave, initiated by Thomas Gallus and with a Proclus quickly gaining importance in the form of excerpts in the *liber de causis*—advocated a renewed form of the relationship of God to the world as dynamic, radiantly flowing 'processions' out from God: of being in general, of the true, the good, the beautiful in general, etc. Out of this encounter between Aristotelian existences and Platonically flowing being there is born, put schematically, the transcendental philosophy of high Scholasticism, which, from now on as philosophy (which knows itself to be exactly

[231] *Ibid.* 14, 15.

[232] *Ibid*, 16.

[233] *Ibid*, 23, 28 (Axiom 23.3).

[234] *Ibid.* 23f.

distinguished from biblical theology[235]), dares to maintain that all being as such is not only one, true and good but also beautiful.

c. Transcendental Aesthetics

FRANCIS, ALEXANDER, ALBERT, ULRICH

Philip the Chancellor was the first to develop in his *Summa de Bono* a treatise about transcendental properties of being, those, that is to say, which transcend every species and belong to every existent as such;[236] from this the author and compilers of the *Summa Alexandri* developed their own broader explanations,[237] then followed the anonymous writer from Assisi who was perhaps the young Bonaventure;[238] in 1245 Albert gave an exposition of Denys which Thomas Aquinas and Ulrich of Strasbourg heard, from a part of which the treatise *de Pulchro et de Bono* was developed, a transcript of which (in Naples) is probably in the hand of Thomas himself[239] and which clearly bore fruit for Ulrich in his treatise *de Pulchro*.[240] Thus during the decades from 1230 to 1270 the question of the transcendentality of beauty enjoyed wide prominence,[241] however it was solved: beauty identical with goodness or with truth or as itself a final, proper transcendental. With Scotus and the Nominalists the question is silenced, apart from stragglers like Ryckel (Denys the Carthusian) with his treatise *de venustate mundi et pulchritudine Dei*[242] and Nicolas of Cusa, who carries the mediaeval view forward into the Renaissance.

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[235] Thomas separates the philosophical doctrine of God or metaphysics (*theologia quam philosophi prosequuntur, quae alio nomine metaphysica dicitur*) very clearly from the theology of revelation of Holy Scripture: *in Boeth. de Trin.* 5.4.

[236] H. Pouillon OSB, 'Le premier traité des propriétés transcendentales. La *Summa de bono* du Chancelier Philippe' in *Rev Neoscol. Phil.* 42 (1939), 40–77. Possibly the *Summa Duacensis*, which only survives in fragments, offered the chancellor a model (on dating: P. Glorieux, *La Summa Duacensis*, 1955, 9f.). A couple of appendices to our question from William of Auxerre: *Summa Aurea* (printed in Paris, 1500), *lib.* 2, *tr.* 9.4 (*fol.* 57d), *lib.* 2, *tr.* 13.1 (*fol.* 67a) on the nature of beauty and the identity of goodness and beauty.

[237] *Summa theologica*, 4 vols. and supplementary vol.: Quaracchi (1924–1948): cited as SA.

[238] *Tractatus de transcendentalibus entis conditionibus* (Assisi, *Biblioteca Communale Codex* 186) ed. Dieter Halcour, in *Franzisk. Studien* 41 (1959), 41–106 (cited as TrT); in addition: D. Halcour, *Die Lehre vom Schönen im Rahmen der Transzendendalienlehre der Metaphysik der frühen Franziskanerschule von Paris* (Diss. Masch. Freibg. 1957), with literature (cit: Halc).

[239] Cited after the edn. of the *Opuscula omnia S. Thomae*, ed. Mandonnet, V.417–443.

The hunch that the posing of the question of transcendental philosophy in general, especially as it applies to the beautiful, is bound up with the Dionysian Renaissance is supported by the facts: with Alexander the most important support from the tradition comes from the *Divine Names*; Albert comments on this book; it is through his own commentaries on Denys[243] that Thomas is stimulated to a thematic and more original handling of the question and thus gives up for the time being 'his typical lack of interest in the question of beauty'.[244] Bonaventure's theology is throughout determined by Denys,[245] Ulrich's treatise derives from the second book of his *Summa* which is 'put together and arranged entirely from the point of view of the *Divine Names*',[246] and so already points externally to a connexion with the Areopagite.

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[240] Edition and commentary by M. Grabmann, 'Des Ulrich Engelberti von Strassburg O. Pr. Abhandlung De Pulchro' in *Sitz. ber. bayr. Ak. Wiss.* 1926.

[241] Important collection of texts: H. Pouillon, 'La beauté, propriété transcendentale chez les Scolastiques (1220–1270)' in *Arch. Hist. Doct. Litt. MA* 21 (1926), 263–329.

[242] *Opp. omnia* (1907) XXXIV, 227–253. In addition: O. Zückler, 'Dionys des Karthäusers Schrift De venustate mundi. Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte der Ästhetik' in *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* (1881), 636–665.

[243] Kovach 54 (see following note).

[244] To have confirmed this forms the pricipal service of the detailed investigation of the sources by Francis Kovach: *Die Ästhetik des Thomas von Aquin, Quellenstudien z. Gesch. d. Phil.* ed. by P. Wilpert (Berlin 1961). Further: Winfried Czapiewski, 'Das Schöne bei Th. v. A.' in *Freib. theol. Stud.* 82 (1964).

[245] *Cf.* above in vol. II Bonaventure's synthetic vision of the Dionysian and the Franciscan, and of the transcendental-philosophical and the christological: 270, 352f.

[246] Grabmann, loc. cit. 28.

The significance of all this becomes clear as soon as one asks: what is the object of the metaphysical statement about being and its transcendental properties? Thomas, here at his most competent and free from the suspicion of any dependence on Denys, will designate as *ens commune* or *esse*, that which for him is neither God nor yet the sum of individual worldly *entia* nor (what finally suggests itself) a conceptual abstraction (*conceptus entis*) but the first *created* reality proceeding from God, by participating in which all beings really are, something 'abundant, simple, not-subsisting',[247] 'universal',[248] 'flowing',[249] participating in an infinite manner and thence in itself infinite,[250] lending form inexhaustibly,[251] which however is distinguished from God by the fact that God subsists in himself, while being only subsists in finite beings. This being which Thomas uniquely discerned with his sharp sight and comprehensively defended but which was *intended* by Denys when he described being-in-itself as the first procession from God,[252] and which without doubt was intended by the other Scholastics when they explained it as the object of metaphysics: *this being is creaturely reality in so far as it is seen and conceived as the all-embracing manifestation of God*. It is therefore a *theophanic* being, in the classical but also in a thoroughly Pauline sense (Rom 1.18–21; Acts 17.22–29), to which unity, truth, goodness and beauty do not belong as properties possessed at one's own disposal–how could they, since this being does not subsist as such?—but with which it rather, in so far as they adhere to it, refers to the primordial ground of being which replicates itself in it like an image: *ipsum esse est similitudo divinae bonitatis*.[253]

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[247] *De Pot*. 1.1.

[248] *Communissimum*: De Hebd. 2.

[249] *Emanatio totius esse* as a general description of creation: S Th I.45.1. The whole question is headed *De modo emanationis rerum a primo principio*.

[250] *C. Gent*. I.43.

[251] *formalissimum: De nat accid; maxime formale omnium*: S Th I.7.1.

[252] *Div. Nom*. V.5 (820A); and above vol. II, 187–188, where Denys prefigures the Thomist *actus essendi*.

[253] De Ver. 22.2.2, 'Being itself is a likeness of the divine goodness.'

So this transcendental philosophy of the Middle Ages points back beyond the cosmos of late Antiquity, now really 'divinised' because closed in upon itself in the vibrations of its harmony of beauty, to another revealed being of God such as was met with in pre-Platonic Hellas. The kingdom *of beauty* (of the Thomist *esee non subsistens*) is as a whole, as being, transparent to a divine *esse subsistens* only comprehensible as *mysterium*, which is, as a hidden primordial ground, radiant *glory*. The *elevation of God over being*, now at last established by Thomas (over against all pantheism), secures at the same time for the concept of glory a place in metaphysics. This place was always intended and envisaged in every form of Platonism but while these addressed being and the other πρόοδοι reposing in it directly as 'names of God', the sublimity of God was not revealed as absolute *freedom*, the Godhead was therefore dragged into an unfree dialectic of in-itself and out-of-itself, hidden and revealed, resting and moved, as is the case with Erigena and is always the danger in all those who tie the innerdivine trinitarian process all too closely to the process of Creation,[254] something that later will have tragic consequences in German Idealism. The philosophy of the transcendentals was developed by early Scholasticism in a conscious approximation of classical ('natural') theology to a Christian understanding of the world, while by Thomas it would be methodically and neatly distinguished from Christian theology; all the same both shadowy notions remain close to one another and let the (natural-supernatural) theological *a priori* shine forth everywhere.

In this form the mediaeval, especially the Thomist, transcendental philosophy of being forms the (higher) centre and mediation between classical and modern metaphysics and in this context is the most valid representative of distinctively Western thought. It is required of being that as such it be something united, something true and something good and beautiful. The first, that it is something united, characterises every metaphysic, even Asiatic metaphysics, and does not allow the difference between being and God to emerge, just as the proposition *ens et unum convertuntur* positively obscures this difference and leaves the problem of different essences unilluminated. But that being is true, true and not illusion, not *maya*, is characteristic of the West from the time of Homer and the tragedians, and this truth holds precisely in difference: in the like-ness between God and being, in *aequalitas* or *rectitudo* (Anselm) as cor-respondence. And only on the basis of this truth can being as such be good and beautiful, in so far as the image-likeness means that God, in positing being, does the good and in so doing reveals the goodness which he is and which, as revealed, he acknowledges, approves and loves. *Prima processio quae est in mente, est secundum apprehensionem veri, deinde illud verum excandescit et accipitur in ratione boni*, as Albert splendidly says,[255] in imitation of an already-mentioned proverb of Alan's, which was, it must be said, intended in a trinitarian way.[256] But the doctrine of the Trinity is the final underlying guarantee of Western, transcendental philosophy: for only a triune God can render credible a world outside himself as true and good and yet in its free independence united with him, who is most free and most independent. The philosophical difference points back to a revealed, theological *mysterium* and is most happily confirmed by it. If the positing of something really united points back to the creative ultimate cause, to God the Father, then likeness, truth, correspondence point to the eternal *aequalitas* in God, the Son, who is the exemplary (or transcendently formal) cause[257] of the genuineness of being able to be opposite, and only then can the judgment of being good reveal the love between original and copy as the unifying spirit which offers a meaningful goal for the whole process. In this way the whole is good, an expression of divine goodness, whence the early Scholastic *summa*'s call themselves *de Bono* by preference. Were the truth of being not secured first, then the good would remain a mere Plotinian outflow which could certainly guarantee the goodness of the one who pours forth but not of that which is poured forth. Thus Gilson is right to point to exemplarism as the heart of metaphysics.[258]

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[254] Thus Erigena, the School of Chartres, in his own way Eckhart, more prudently Bonaventure. *Cf.* Alex. Gerken, *Theologie des Wortes. Das Verhältnis von Schöpfung und Inkarnation bei Bonaventura* (1963).

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[255] *De pulchro et bono*, loc. cit. 419, 'The first procession which is in the mind is according to the apprehension of the true, then the true itself is enkindled and is received in the reason of the good.'

[256] *Monas gignit monadem et in se suum reflectit* ardorem: Theol. reg. 3; PL 210. 624. 'The monad brings forth the monad and reflects its heat in itself.'

[257] On the relationship of exemplary and formal judgment: G. Schulemann, 'Die Lehre von den Transcendentalien in der schol. Phil.' in *Forschungen z. Gesch. d. Phil. u. Päd.*vol. IV. 2. Leipzig (1929).

In thus uncovering the trinitarian underpinning of such philosophy we have also revealed the external reason for the difficulty of assigning to the beautiful its systematic place: since the One, True and Good of being referred back to the trinitarian causality of God as Father, Son and Spirit, there seemed to be no more room in God for another transcendental. Whence, and in dependence on the Greeks, the first and most frequented way: that of understanding the beautiful as one manner of the good (καλόν καί ἀγαθόν). But the closeness of the beautiful to the concept of form and therefore to that which rests in itself, is pleasing in its shape and subordinate to no purpose, means it is also possible to see the beautiful as pertaining to the true. The *Anonymus* points to this oscillation of the beautiful between the transcendentals as a final, ineffable preciousness of being when he says: *pulchrum circuit omnem causam et est commune ad ista*;[259] and this in an expressly conclusive way because the beautiful, the good, the true, the one and being fundamentally presuppose one another. And yet even those writers who speak of the beautiful as a form of goodness or of truth may too be cited as witnesses to the transcendental validity of Beauty, not least those who let themselves be stirred by the great programmatic prepositions of the Areopagite about the all-pervasiveness of Beauty.[260] It is this which will have induced the already mentioned *Anonymus* to make the utterance, which is not further justified, that in general (*communiter*) four transcendentals were posited: the one, the true, the good and the beautiful.[261]

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[258] *La Philosophie de S. Bonaventure* (12th. edn. 1943), 120.

[259] TrT 65. The author is able to refer to Denys, *Div. Nom.* 4.7 (PG 3, 704B). where it says that the good and the beautiful are to be striven after 'according to every reason'; 'the beautiful encircles every cause and is common to it.'

[260] Passages in Halcour, 126f. (Robert Grosseteste, Thomas Gallus, Albert, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Thomas of York).

The Franciscan Impulse. If human existence, ascending from the beauty of worldly forms and rhythms is confirmed *a posteriori* by the beauty of the world, the leap from the acknowledgement of sensible and even spiritual beauty to the proposition that being *as such* is beautiful can hardly be attempted from below. That it was attempted for the first time in metaphysics by the Franciscans is once again determinative for the theological *a priori* of Scholastic philosophy which was endeavouring to set itself apart from biblical theology. As the proposition defended by Plato, Plotinus and Denys presupposed a Greek eye for being, so now in the Middle Ages it presupposed a Franciscan heart. The attitude of St Francis justified a certain experience of being which fashioned for itself in Chartres a first unclear expression, was formulated by the Franciscan theologians and which in Bonaventure fused with the Areopagitical experience.

FRANCIS OF ASSISI wants 'discipleship of our Lord Jesus Christ in his humility and his poverty', 'who was not ashamed to become poor and alien for our sake' even to the point of need which makes 'alms its legal right . . . for need knows no law'.[262] It is a launching oneself into the world 'without bag, purse, bread, money or staff' which renders the disciple unable to put up any resistance to the wicked, which constrains him to offer the left cheek if the right is struck, which prevents any demand for restoration if one is robbed.[263] In the nothingness of impoverishment everything beyond bare existence comes to man as a gift and, if he has become poor for God's sake, then it is so that he might receive everything as a gift from God, because he recognises it in all truth as his free gift of love. The Franciscan life is therefore pure, glorifying praise for the glory of the grace and love of God which streams forth from every being. The 'Hymn to the Sun' is praise through nature and together with her; the original rule is still more radical in that it demands this attitude of glorification urgently and soberly first from the brothers, then from the Church and then from mankind as a whole. 'Let us refer everything good to the highest and most sublime God and acknowledge that all goods are his, and give thanks to him for all because they all proceed from him; and he, the most high, most sublime, unique, true God should have and hold and receive all respect and honour and praise and blessing and thanksgiving and glory, he, to whom everything good belongs and who alone is good.'[264] But the brothers should hold one another in such honour while they admonish and encourage one another: 'Fear and honour, praise and glorify, give thanks and pray to God the Lord, the Almighty in his Trinity . . .'[265] The rule comes to a resounding conclusion in the great hymn of praise and thanksgiving (no. 23) which addresses the 'most sublime God, the holy and just Father, Lord and King of Heaven and earth': 'For thy sake we give thee thanks' for the goodness of Creation, of Redemption and the hoped-for coming again in glory and, because the poor sinners cannot render such praise, they invite Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit 'to give thanks to the Father for all, the glorious Virgin and Mother Mary, the angels, the saints and the elect in the order of salvation, then Holy Church in all her hierarchical orders, the religious, all children, boys and girls, the poor and needy, kings and princes, workers, farmers, employees and masters, all virgins, the single and the married, laymen and women, all minors, grown-ups, youths and the aged, healthy and sick, small and great, all people and kindred, all races and tongues, all nations and all men in the whole world, who live and will live: all we humbly beseech and implore, we lesser brothers and useless slaves', to love God the Lord 'who has given and gives everything good to us miserable and poor, rotting and loathsome, unthankful and wicked men.' Always and above all 'we will truly and humbly believe him and hold him in our heart, and love him and honour him, beseech, serve, praise, bless, glorify and raise him above all and extol him and give thanks to him, the most High, most Sublime and Eternal . . . who is without beginning and without end, unchangeable, invisible, inexplicable, inexpressible, ineffable, unsearchable . . . glorious, raised on high, surpassing, exalted, kind, lovable, attractive and always above everything else to all eternity the perfect object of our longing.'[266]

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[261] TrT 64.

[262] *Prima Regula S. Francisci n. 9; Holstenius: Codex Regularum III* (German tr. in Balthasar, *Die Grossen Ordensregeln* (2nd edn. 1961), 296–297).

[263] *Ibid.* n. 14 (how the brethren should go through the world).

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[264] *Ibid.* n. 17 (on the preachers).

[265] *Ibid.* n. 21 (on praise and admonition which all brethren can give).

The God of the *poverello* is in his glory very close to the ineffable, dazzling ocean of light of the Areopagite but his infinite streaming-forth is pure love which flows towards the one who praises in every element and creature in the world. The one who praises makes himself poor so as to be able to experience all being as the flowing love of God; so in the 'Hymn to the Sun' he passes 'from noble lord and brother Sun', 'sister Moon and star', gentle or harsh weather, from the spring, from friendly or fearful fire and from the material earth immediately on to those who 'for the sake of thy love forgive and overcome torment and trouble in peace', and to 'brother Death', like the elements gentle or fearsome, according as he meets a lover or a sinner.[267] But that means: 'Everything that makes it difficult to love God and anyone who makes it difficult for you, brothers or others, even if they beat you: everything you should look to as grace and wish it to be such and nothing else.'[268] Poverty as not resisting the flow of love has yet many other names: Queen Wisdom, Sister Pure Simplicity, Sister Holy Humility, Sister Holy Obedience; they all 'come from the Lord' and no-one possesses them without dying to himself beforehand; but their embodiment is the 'holy Virgin, the most holy Queen, the Mother of God, Mary', in whom 'all the fulness of grace and all goodness was and is'.[269] Yet this fulness of grace dwelling in her is God himself whose goodness contains originally within itself all the Franciscan and Marian virtues: 'You are goodness, you are each good, the highest good, Lord, the living and true God. *Tu sei amore et charità, Tu sei sapientia, Tu sei* humilità, *Tu sei patientia, Tu sei* bellezza, . . . *Tu sei bontà infinita.*'[270] God's beauty is revealed in the procession of his virtues amongst which Francis also names humility, which for him is one with the wisdom of self-spending love.

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[266] *Ibid.* n. 23 (prayer, praise and thanksgiving).

[267] *Cantico* in *Franz von Assisi, Legenden und Laude* ed. by O. Karrer (3rd edn. 1945), 520–522.

[268] Letter to a superior, *ibid.* 554.

If one looks from here at the doctrine of transcendentals in the *Summa* of ALEXANDER OF HALES, what strikes one is the way the analogy between God and the creature is developed. Everything true, good and beautiful about the creature is a gift of the Creator; true, good and beautiful are names of God, are predicated formally of him and only *per denominationem* of the creature. In the case of the *being* of the creature such a double predication is rejected, for here there is primarily opposition: that being which God possesses as a proper name no creature can partake of, for no common nature embraces both.[271] In the expression 'being' (existing) there is reference only 'absolutely' to the reality of this particular thing here but, as soon as it appears endowed with properties of nature and value, the relationship to the All-Good becomes apparent. In Chartres therefore the work of creation (which only posits 'matter') is distinguished from the work of endowment (*ornatus*) whch precedes the infusion of divine powers and privileges into matter. Erigena similarly had distinguished between *datio* and *donatio*:[272] a doctrine of

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[269] *Laude delle virtù* etc. *ibid.* 534–536.

[270] Blessing and praise for brother Leo, *ibid.* 552.

[271] SA I, n. 105 ad 5; *cf.* n. 109 ad 5: *ens vel essentia non dicit comparationem ad causam sicut bonum; immo cum loquimur de re secundum suam essentiam loquimur de ea absolute; sed bonum notat comparationem ad causam, bonum enim dicitur qui a Bono et quia ad Bonum.* 'Being or essence does not speak of comparison with a cause as something good; rather when we speak of something according to its essence, we speak of it absolutely; but good does denote comparison with a cause, for something is said to be good which is from the Good and because it is ordered towards the Good.'

[272] See above, 'Erigena', p. 000 nn. 47–48.

analogia entis which as it were starts with pure equivocation (*aequivocatio*) so that it can proceed to ascribe everything that the ultimately dissimilar, null creature receives, in spite of all, to the outflowing goodness of God—and that, in the end, includes even human existence itself.[273] 'Alexander' imagines this was already sufficient to have put behind him Gilbert's doctrine, that God can be called in *denominatio extrinseca* the *esse* of the creature; but his solution will not hold: it wavers between the abolition of the analogy of being and (therefore!) emanationism. Only Thomas will achieve final clarity here and thus do justice to the *Poverello's* deepest concern to find the glory of God in the humility-poverty-beauty of all being.

But one sees how for the Franciscans the transcendentals, including beauty, can be *a priori*. They are the self-disclosures (*notificationes*) of the infusion of final reality and, in so far as this infusion prepares finite spirit to gain insight into and to express the absolutely true, there radiates also the (Dionysian) ray of beauty. Expressly, to be sure, only apropos the *a posteriori* knowlege rooted in the sensible;[274] and the Franciscan interpretation of the transcendentals is no different. Even Francis had, as the *Legenda* say, 'discovered the transcendent beauty in beautiful things'.[275] But why is beauty transcendental then? The answer begins with the fundamental identification of the beautiful with the authentically good, in order then to continue to a conceptual prescinding from it and to approximate it to the true. The authentically good is (by contrast with the useful) the good-in-itself, to be aspired to for its own sake—that is the definition that Aristotle and Cicero gave—and that not simply because it is perfect (*perfectum*) in itself but, beyond that, because it is not contained in itself but opening, communicating and radiating itself (*diffusivum sui*)—corresponding to the Platonists. But while as itself fulfilled it helps the unfulfilled other to fulfilment (and therein acts preeminently as the 'good' worth striving for), in communicating itself it gives participation in its own unitedness: its united-fulfilled being (*unum*) is manifest and approachable (*verum*) in such a way that it does not relate the other to itself for its own sake (*utile*) but leads it in its self-communication to its own unitedness and perfection: it gives form as the perfect one; itself form (as *unum*) it impresses and ordains the other into the form. Here in the self-outpouring of the good lies the moment that reveals itself (embracing all other transcendentals) as beauty. The *pulchrum* relates itself to the *causa formalis*;[276] not for nothing is *formosus* derived from *forma*, *speciosus* from *species*, an idea of Augustine's[277] which he took over from Plotinus[278] and Hilary[279] and passed on to the Scholastics. At this point the beautiful can be seen as distinct from the good and shows its affinity with the true which on its side is grounded in the one. Form is unitedness in itself; the self-illuminating form offering itself to knowledge however is the truth; in so far as in self-existing form it remains unattainable and unavailable in its revelation, it is beautiful; for it points to its essential transcendent, sublime glory.[280] But then (as the Anonymous of Assisi adds, going beyond Alexander), no single thing is ever true for itself alone; precisely because it is true in virtue of its own form, by which it distinguishes itself, this distinction and therefore the connexion, the agreement (*consensus*), the harmonious accord of the individual existent with the universe belongs to the truth, and this truth 'gathers all individual truths into being and holds and protects them there according to their proper duration, and is a unique'[281] transcendental. Here it finally becomes clear how these thinkers could raise beauty to a property of being-in-itself and how they had to do this precisely from the interconnection with the one, the true and the good, with none of which the beautiful could be finally and completely identified. Even the conceptual constraint of the Trinity which would like to conclude with the Good was broken because in the beautiful a moment radiated which pointed unquestioningly from the good to the true (and therefore also to the one); 'The good tends towards that which flows from the origin by reason of its lack of differentiation, the beautiful towards that which flows from the origin by reason of its differentiation.'[282] That is: God is for us so much the good that he remains, beyond any fulfilment offered us, the unique and unapproachable: beyond the love of union there is the love of letting be (out of love). Here the beautiful stands as the constellation above the truth which in its differentiatedness from unity appeared to us as *the* Western charisma. The fourth transcendental is the seal of that charisma.

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[273] SA I, n. 116 resp. Alexander takes over the formulation of William of Auvergne. *Cf.* A. Masnovo, *Da Guglielmo d'Auvergne a San Tomaso d'Aquino* (Milan 1930), I.203f.

[274] SA I, n. 72.

[275] Thomas of Celano, *Vita 2a S. Francisci*, c. 124, n. 165.

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[276] SA I, n. 103 contra 1.

[277] *Ver. rel.* 40, c.20 (PL 34.138f.), *Divers. quaest. 83*, q.10 (PL 40.14).

[278] *Ennead* I.6.2; *cf.* the commentary of F. Creuzer, *Plotini liber de Pulchritudine* (Heidelberg 1814), 171f.

[279] Hilary, *De Trin.* II.1 (PL 10.51); on its use in scholasticism, *cf.* above vol. II, 296–297 (appropriation of beauty to the Son within the Godhead, because he is *species*).

[280] SA II, n. 76.

[281] Assisi Bibl. Comm. 186, 50 vb (cited from Harbour, *Die Lehre vom Schönen*, 140).

Hence the frequently quoted saying of Thomas: *pulchra dicuntur quae visa placent*,[283] with its deeper justification: *pulchrum respicit vim cognoscitivam* (beyond the distinguishing *ratio* of the good), central in its simplicity, if also traditional. It is found in William of Auvergne who, extending the proposition to the sensible and spiritual, includes the inner and outer 'vision'[284] and therefore traces it back to the Greeks and to Augustine.[285] Just as the Thomist account needs a transcendental broadening, so too with Augustine's well-known definition of beauty as *partium congruentia cum quadam suavitatem coloris*—a definition which can be pursued back beyond Basil and Plotinus to Clement of Alexandria, Philo, Cicero and the Stoics.[286] The Scholastics will attempt to understand the sensible moment of the charm of colour as a partial expression of a transcendental 'enchantment' of being. But this will occur more on the ontic than on the ontological level, more as a matter of natural philosophy than as metaphysics in so far as the Franciscans of Oxford—close to whom Bonaventure stands—seek to contain the radiance of God in the world as Francis had experienced and praised it within their theory of being as light. Moreover for Grosseteste the material sun is a genuine likeness of God in that by illuminating and warming it unites all things, gathers them to itself, befriends them and gives them peace.[287] Thomas of York in his *Sapientale* persists in an immediate thought of unity which grounds the transcendentality of beauty in this circular way: everything is beautiful because it stems from God, the primal beauty, who is the unity of all that is manifold. He needs, in order to validate this conclusion, a cosmological induction which he summons from the right place: in Cicero's *de natura deorum* where the world was described in detail as the most perfect and most beautiful.[288] For Bonaventure reference should be made to Volume II.

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[282] SA I.103.

[283] S. Th. I.5.4 ad 1, 'those things which please when seen are called beautiful'. 'It refers to the beautiful as a prayer that makes [something] known.'

[284] *De bono et malo* (in: Pouillon, *La beauté* etc. loc. cit. 315): *Quemadmodum enim pulchrum visu dicimus quod natum est* per seipsum placere *spectantibus, et delectare secundum visum, sic et pulchrum interius quod intuentium animos delectat et ad amorem sui allicit . . . Ipse* interior visus *testis est nobis interioris et intelligibilis pulchritudinis.* 'For just as we say that something is beautiful to sight because it is made *to please by itself* those who look upon it, and to delight in a visible way, so [we speak of] interior beauty because it delights the souls of those who behold and arouses them to love of it . . . *Interior vision* itself is a witness to us of interior and intelligible beauty.'

[285] Plato, *Hipp. major* 297e, 299a; *Gorgias* 474d; Aristotle: 'That is beautiful which is pleasant through the mediation of sight and hearing': *Topics* 6, c.7 (146a22); Plotinus: I.6.1, first sentence; Augustine; *De ordine* 2.11, n. 33 (PL 32.1010). Texts collected by Halcour: 44.

The Dionysian Impulse. By contrast it was only through the revival of Dionysian inspiration that the Dominicans achieved a transcendental aesthetic which however because of its drawings on Aristotle assumes clearer contours than Franciscan aesthetics. With Albert both strands of the aesthetics of Antiquity—the Aristotelian one of harmony and the Plotinian one of light, which had never formed a proper opposition—converge effortlessly; with Ulrich Denys once more gains the upper hand; with Thomas the true balance is found through his metaphysics of *esse* and *essentia* and his emphasis on secondary causality which that made possible.

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[286] *De Civ. Dei* 22.19, n. 2 (PL 41.781); proof of its influence in Pouillon, *La beauté*, 276–277, and Halcour, 49–50; 'congruence of parts with a certain gentleness of colour'.

[287] *Dionysioskommentar*, in extract in Pouillon, loc. cit. 320–323.

[288] *Sapientale*. Extracts in Pouillon, loc. cit. 323–327.

ALBERT, as already mentioned, lectured in Cologne in 1250 on Denys' *Divine Names* and in his audience there sat Thomas and Ulrich. The exposition of the fourth chapter, which is most important for aesthetics, exists in printed form as the treatise *de Pulchro et de Bono.*[289] Albert proposes a definition which he continually repeats and from which he derives all further characterisations. The principal moment of beauty is: *splendor formae substantialis supra partes materiae proportionatas et terminatas*, just as the body is called beautiful because of the *resplendentia coloris supra membra proportionata.* Thence follow the results: the beautiful exercises charm, it draws forth longing, *et hoc habet in quantum est bonum et finis.* And the beautiful gathers everything together, *et hoc habet ex parte formae, cujus resplendentia facit pulchrum.*[290] Therefore, not simply a freewheeling harmony between parts, but a harmonisation in virtue of an essential, transcendent form which gives form to all the parts (the Aristotelian moment), but which as such clarifies in itself and reveals its sublime radiance precisely as determination (*terminatio*) and the fashioning of relationship in the material. Winckelmann and Goethe could accept this definition; it is classically Western. Not primarily a theological, but an essentially worldly determination, which describes the form of the world primarily as aesthetic and includes the good as an effect of the beautiful. The 'material' parts could also be 'powers and acts of the soul',[291] whereby the definition can be extended to include the 'beautiful soul' and even God who is rightly called the highest beauty, because he is the highest unity in the multiplicity of his attributes.[292] Therefore it can also be said in a theological way—from above—that God is called beauty and absolute beauty, not only because he is the effective ground of all worldly beauty, but because (as Gilbert and Grosseteste had already said) he 'creates through his nature'[293] and, as the effective cause, is at once the model and the (quasi-) formal cause.

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[289] *S. Thomae Opuscula* ed. Mandonnet, vol. V, 417–443 (with many mistakes of transcription and printing). The booklet consists of an *expositio textus* in which are inserted 12 questions with *dubitationes, solutio, responsiones.*

[290] 420; 'the splendour of substantial form beyond the proportionate and determined material parts . . . the replendence of colour beyond the proportionate parts . . . and it has this insofar as it is good and an end . . . and it has this from the aspect of form, the resplendence of which creates beauty.

[291] 421.

Beauty has therefore a formal and a material moment: 'for beauty to exist, harmony (*consonantia*) as the subject (*subjectum*) and radiance (*claritas*) as the (shaping) nature (*essentia*) must come together.[294] *Claritas* is nothing other than the radiant and illuminating nature of the form of being, its self-mastery which it realises within itself and which 'from above' penetrates and orders what is inferior: *quibus* super*splendet claritas formae*. This self-mastery of a being, which however comes to it from being itself, is its being composed and present to itself, its perfection, in virtue of which it is also 'good' for another and worth striving for; if its own value is spiritual, then its goodness is *honestas*, which according to Cicero is that which *sua vi nos trahit et sua* dignitate *nos allicit*,[295] to which must be added, says Albert, only the moment of radiating over the proportionate parts in order to have beauty. The moment of gathering together is also already contained within the concept of form which Albet clearly distinguishes from mere radiating light: *congregare convenit* [*pulchritudine*] *inquantum est forma, et secundum hoc non*

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[292] 423. Walter Müller (*Das Problem der Seelenschönheit im Mittelalter*, Bern 1923) points to the continuity of the thought since Plato and Augustine, and its highpoint in the twelfth-century commentaries on the Song of Songs.

[293] 423: *facit per essentiam suam*. The fourth question (p. 424) asks expressly whether the beautiful as such is effective; the solution lies in the transcendentality of the beautiful; in so far as the absolute being (God) is beautiful, it is effective as the beautiful (as form) which it is: *pulchritudo quae est forma pulchrorum, facit pulchritudinem vel pulchra* formaliter (i.e. in the manner of being a form), *licet non effective*.

[294] 426.

[295] *De invent. rhetorica*, II.157, quoted already by Albert (p. 419, q.2) and again (p. 427, q.6); 'honourableness . . . which draws us by its own power and allures us by its *dignity*'

convenit lumini.[296] Form is the higher concept, which includes within itself that of light,[297] a concept of light of not only physical, but metaphysical dignity.[298] The form determines the being, it *is* finally its being, in it lies its truth and, in so far as this being true as illumination is its own dignity of being (*bonum*), the beautiful radiates from it. Hence the deeply significant words: *ipsi vero absolute respondet processio luminis; apprehensioni autem veri, secundum quod habet rationem boni, respondet processio pulchri.*[299] And the establishment of transcendentality: *inquantum unumquodque habet de pulchritudine, tantum habet de esse.*[300] Being and form dynamically include one another in a reciprocal way; 'for *esse est actus formae* and form orders everything to its act (its self-realisation)'.[301] In so far as the unformed longs to be formed it strives after form as its good but, because this form gives it its being, it strives after it as something beautiful for it.[302] But, because God is infinite goodness and beauty, the creature can 'progress eternally in beauty and goodness according to the strength of its being ordered after the original and according to the access this gives the creature to itself.'[303]

ULRICH OF STRASBOURG writes his great, unfinished *Summa de bono*[304] as theology articulated according to a trinitarian plan. In the treatise on the unity of the divine nature (bk 2) he deals with the 'divine names', drawing here on Denys: the basic name is goodness to which are added other names like light, beauty, love (*amor*). Thus while Ulrich genuinely seeks to offer a doctrine of transcendentals, its emphasis will necessarily be not on being[305] but on God. His philosophical point of departure is Albert, with whose definition he begins: 'as the form is the goodness of each thing, in so far as it is perfection, which is desired by that which is being perfected, so is it also the beauty of each thing, in so far as in virtue of its formal nobility (*formalis nobilitas*) it radiates like light over that which is formed'.[306] But since there is resistance on the part of matter and since the form cannot completely fashion any matter but only that which is proportionate to it, beauty is to be determined complementarily as *consonantia proportionis*: between form and the formable.

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[296] 427 (q.6, sol. and ad 1); 'to gather together is fitting [to beauty] in so far as it is form, and in this way not fitting to light'.

[297] . . . *quamvis lucem omnia habeant inquantum participant de forma.* 431.

[298] As de Wulf has rightly maintained: 'L'histoire de l'esthétique et ses grandes orientations' in *Rev. Neoscol.* 16 (1909), 236–259.

[299] 419 (q.1 sol.); 'To this indeed absolutely responds the procession of light, to the apprehension of the true however, insofar as it is genuinely good, there responds the procession of the beautiful.'

[300] 434, 'In so far as any one thing participates in the beautiful, it participates in the good.'

[301] 437 (q.11 sol.).

[302] *Ibid.*

[303] 438 (q.11 ad 4). For the other utterances of Albert on aesthetics, *cf.* Pouillon, loc. cit., 298f. and Grabmann (see n. 5 above), 16–18.

[304] Critical edn. of the first book by Jeanne Daguillon, 1930 (survey of the general plan: pp. 14*f.). The chapter on beauty (Bk II, tractate 3, c.4)

God is absolute beauty; because the form-light of his godhead informs the *suppositum* of his tripersonality in real identity (as it is put, under the influence of Gilbert), so he radiates forth creating *omne lumen formale, quod est pulchritudo omnium rerum*; and as the one corporeal light breaks up into colours according to the condition of the surfaces which it meets, so too the divine presents itself diversely according to the difference in those who receive it.[307] This statement is dangerously ambiguous: without qualification it sounds neo-Platonic; the difference of form contributes nothing to beauty.[308] This danger is only overcome, if the *recipiens*, as in Thomas' understanding, is not simply matter but in the first instance the essence which as such displays a positive, creative idea of God. Nevertheless Ulrich wants to counter the monistic tendency, underlining the fact that the divine beauty 'in itself or even in its copy' is, as that which brings perfection,

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critically edited by Grabmann (see above n. 5), a supplementary unedited text in Pouillon, 327–328. In the following page-numbers are cited from Grabmann.

[305] Ulrich deals with *esse* only in the fourth book apropos the doctrine of creation, where creation is appropriated to God the Father; there too he deals systematically with the relationship of *esse* and *forma*.

[306] Grabmann, 73–74.

[307] 75; 'all formal light, which is the beauty of all things?.

[308] *Ibid.* line 26.

the object of striving of creaturely beauty.[309] But he continually slips back to the Dionysian doctrine of light, as, by contrast with Albert, he sets light above form: *lumen est prius pulchro quia est causa ipsius.*[310] In his restrained way Thomas will avoid acknowledging the category of light, which belongs primarily to the world of the senses, as the universal key to the realm of the spiritual. Certainly he takes a position opposed to Denys and Ambrose whose view was that light could be applied to the spiritual and the divine only in a metaphorical sense and agrees with Augustine who wants to see the character of light in the spiritual realm as more true and more real than that in the realm of bodies; he explains this however as simply due to its character as revelation: *manifestatio verius in spiritualibus.*[311]

Since we are treating here of transcendental beauty, the speculations of the Scholastics from Alexander to Thomas of York and Ulrich on the beauty of the cosmos should not go unmentioned. They are all of a kind and come down to the classical, Augustinian and Boethian, idea that the universe, contemplated from a sufficient height with all its contradictions and all its darkness and even, for a number of writers like Bonaventure, with its eternal Hell, is an unsurpassably beautiful work of the eternal artist. Even here there is still detectable the will of Antiquity and Christianity to affirm, despite all objections, the goodness of being and of the eternal Creator. And in this way their reflections, which work happily with the biblical and Platonic triads of *mensura-numerus-pondus* and *modus-species-ordo*, reinforce the transcendentality of the beautiful in the sense of a theophanic presence of the glory of God in all being.[312]

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[309] 76. Grabmann attempts therefore to oppose Ulrich to monistic symbolism (*ibid.* 40–41), an attempt that only half succeeds. Ulrich will indeed later emphasise that everything effected by God possesses a model (*species*, following Augustine) in him; but how far it is an individual form, he does not say. Other formulations refer back to the School of Chartres and the theologians of the *Summa* of Hales, as when it is said that God is ever beautiful, while created things *ordine naturae primo fuerunt deforma, cum terra erat inanis et vacua, et post formata sunt, cum spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas bonitate et spirituali pulchritudine fovens et formans omnia* (82 *1.10–14*). The theological act of Creation is here, as in Chartres, equated with the cosmogonic process. Here too only the distinction of the orders of *esse-essentia* and *forma-materia* can bring clarity.

[310] 80 *1.20*; 'light is prior to the beautiful because it is its cause'.

[311] 2 d.13, 1, 2 sol.

As a final genuine witness of this world-view let us mention MECHTHILD OF MAGDEBURG, the title of whose work, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*,[313] itself betrays so much of her view. This time it is, without any Platonising backward glance, the pure Christian experience of God as 'the endlessly flowing, inexhaustible fountain',[314] which dissolves the creature, in so far as it does not resist this flow, in the 'torrent of longing':[315] 'if I radiate, you must illuminate; if I flow, you must melt.'[316] The flowing of God is for Mechthild both being in itself and out of itself, glory and humility, riches and poverty,[317] for it is the 'burning God in his longing',[318] who goes out of himself into the 'God-alienated' and thus awakens the longing of the soul, by overflowing over it and compelling it to flow together with it, overflowing into the alien: 'through the sinners', 'through the imperfection of the clergy', 'through the necessity of poor souls', in a total dissolving and therefore in a universal- and catholic-becoming of the loving soul which only thus realises its natural *quodammodo omnia* in grace. So once again it is an experience altogether close to that of the *Poverello*: the flowing gift of the Holy Spirit visible as the ray of the heart coming from the wound in the side, whence the 'blood of the Godhead flows out', and as the inexhaustibly flowing milk from Mary's breasts.[319] In a neo-Platonically spiritualised era, the wounds are imprinted on Francis, Mechthild is hurled through all the heights and depths of an incarnate love lest the love of the living God should lose, amidst all the philosophy of beauty, the power of its discerning glory.

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[312] *Denys the Carthusian* with his little work *De venustate mundi et pulchritudine Dei* (*Opp. omn.* vol. 34, 1909, 227–253) is a straggler who only echoes the utterances of Alexander and Albert speculatively, and contributes of his own only inspired descriptions of nature. *Omne ens est pulchrum*, . . . *forma quippe est species et decor rei* (229a), but this form stems from the 'sovereignly beautiful God' (230a). Then the beauty of the world is praised, 'and the scripture says most rightly: God's work is full of his glory. How desirable are all his works. Who could be sated with the vision of his glory?' (232a). Things are beautiful, beautiful too, according to Augustine, is the rhythmic cycle of the seasons; even if the parts of the world refuse to iron out contradictions, the world as a whole could not have been made more beautiful by God (art.8–10). Even the bizarre, ugly oddity, even the ridiculous is not excluded (236a). Nature is beautiful, man is beautiful, the angels who are closest to God are still more beautiful, God is the All-beautiful (art.20). With Richard and Hugh there must be an ascent from the beauty of the world to that of God (art.22).

[313] New German edn. in *Menschen der Kirche*, vol. 3 (1955), with a study by H. U. von Balthasar. E.T. by Lucy Menzies: *The Flowing Light of the Godhead* (London).

[314] *Ibid.* Bk I, c.8; *cf.* V.26.

[315] *Ibid.* VI.5.

[316] *Ibid.* II.6.

[317] *Cf. Ibid.* I.22.

[318] *Ibid.* I.17.

[319] *Ibid.* I.22; II.3; VI.24.

4. ST THOMAS AQUINAS

a. The Posing of the Problem

Beauty is seldom a central concern for St Thomas Aquinas, and for the most part his discussion is dependent on material presented to him by tradition. He calmly reviews this inherited material and tries to harmonise the elements that pour in upon him from Augustine, Denys, Aristotle, Boethius and his master, Albert, without, so it would seem, making an original contribution of his own to aesthetics in the strict sense. However, at another level everything is put in a new light by the fact that the doctrine of the transcendentals is interpreted in the perspective of Thomas's major creative achievement—his definition of *esse* and its relation to essences. As everything so far has shown, the material handed down was 'theological' in a two fold sense: Greek metaphysics was orientated towards the *theion* and the Christian view of reality took possession of this 'natural' aesthetics in order to complete and transcend it on the basis of revelation. Now Thomas sees *esse* as the non-subsistent fulness and perfection of all reality and as the supreme 'likeness of divine goodness',[320] and so God can no longer in any way be regarded as the being of things, except in the sense that he is their efficient, exemplary and final cause.[321] Thus in a new and much more radical way God is placed over and above all cosmic being, above everything that can be calculated or attained within the structures, real or ideal, of the cosmos: he is indeed 'the

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[320] *Ipsum esse est similitudo divinae bonitatis*; 'Being is a likeness of the divine goodness' (*De Ver.* 22. 2. 2); (*De Ver.* 22. 2. 2); *res . . . inquantum sunt, divinae bonitatis similitudinem gerunt*; 'Things insofar as they exist, bear the likeness of the divine goodness' (CG 3. 65). Numbers refer to the Marietti edition; for the Commentary on the Sentences to the incomplete Lethellieaux edition.

[321] S Th 1a. 3. 8c. & ad 1.

Wholly Other'. We can know that God is, but not what he is,[322] or rather, since there is no knowledge of existence without at least some indistinct apprehension of essence,[323] we have a knowledge which is surpassed and negated in a greater and definitive unknowing: a knowledge based solely on the argument from effects to cause and from essences on their various ascendant levels to God.[324] But it is precisely this which 'brings home his transcendence. And so, thirdly, he is known the more he is recognised to be remote from everything that emerges from effects . . . and he is known through negation'. Then follows this remarkable statement: 'In this progress of knowledge the human mind is usually most helped if its natural intelligence is strengthened by a new light: the light of faith and the gift of wisdom and understanding, by which the mind is elevated above itself in contemplation, in so far as it recognises that God lies above and beyond everything that it can know by nature. And since it cannot press forward to the vision of his essence, one may say that it is reflected back on itself through the superior light, and so Gregory's gloss on Jacob's saying, "I have seen God face to face" (Gen 32.31), can run: "When the eye of the soul turns towards God, it is thrown back by the lightning flash of the Infinite"'.[325] 'There is, of course, a certain proportion between the creature and God as between effect and cause, between knower and knowable, but then again, because of the infinite transcendence of the Creator over the creature there is no proportion between them . . .'[326] Detaching *esse* and its transcendental truth from God frees Thomas of any suspicion of ontologism, as if God were thought of, however unconsciously, as the first known.[327] Only Aquinas's doctrine of being gives negative theology (as it came down to him from Proclus (*Liber de Causis*) and Denys) the necessary safeguard against reduction to a purely conceptual dialectic between 'God in himself' and 'God for us', which we find in Erigena and which was a constant threat well into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Indeed, this dialectic will re-emerge not long after Thomas (in Nicholas of Cusa) and will continue relentlessly until it culminates in Hegel. However, from Thomas onwards it will have to declare itself, more and more clearly and explicitly, to be the antithesis to a philosophy of the analogy of being (in the aforementioned sense)—it will have to declare itself to be a philosophy of identity.

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[322] *In Boeth. de Trin.* 1. 2.

[323] *Ibid.* *6. 3; saltem cognitione confusa . . . scire quid hoc nomen significat;* 'knowing, at least by an indistinct apprehension, what this name signifies'.

[324] 'If someone enters a house and feels the warmth, and the further he goes inside the more he feels the warmth growing, he will be convinced that in the innermost part of the house there is a fire, even if he cannot see it . . . so, likewise, the man who contemplates this world: he finds all things arranged in their different degrees of beauty and nobility, and the closer they are to God, the more, he sees, that they grow in beauty and goodness' (*In Symb. Apost.*, a. 1, n. 878).

[325] *In Boeth. de Trin.* 1, 2.

[326] *Ibid.* ad 3.

Thomas's doctrine of the real distinction between *esse* and *essentia* is a philosophical thesis but it enables us once again to make a clear differentiation between the 'glory' of God and the beauty of the world; indeed, as the quotation above showed, it enables us to recover the true meaning of that glory as much for the ordinary believer as for the theologian. After Thomas other 'images of God' emerge and dominate thought: there is, for example, the God who is found within, on the journey through selfhood; there is the God of absolute subjectivity (Eckhart) and of absolute free will (Ockham) but in neither of these roles can he really be the God of glory. Then, on the other hand, there is the God who is the point of intersection where all the lines of the universe meet (Nicholas of Cusa), the God who will soon turn into the cosmic deity of the Renaissance. Thus, where our theme of glory is concerned, Thomas is a kairos, more through his general ontology than his aesthetics.

Thomas is a kairos in so far as ontology here shows itself to be genuine philosophy (and thus consciously disengages itself from the theology of revelation).[328] At the time it builds upon the 'theological' ontology of the Greeks and early Scholastics who had understood being, together with its properties, as dynamically transparent to divinity. He is a kairos in the even stronger sense that he sees man, to whom it has been given to reflect on being, in a peculiar state of suspension between nature and supernature: he is disposed by nature for the revelation of God in grace; and although he can make no claim to grace, without it he can never be fulfilled or complete. In this lies man's noblity.[329] It is a state of suspension which seems, in the individual, to accentuate the 'fluidity' of being and its transcendental openness to God. Thomas, in this way, is a kairos in the sense of being an historically transient stage between the old monistic world of thought which, whether Greek or Christian, saw philosophy and theology as a unity and the approaching dualistic world which, whether Christian or non-Christian, will try to rend philosophy and the theology of revelation asunder and to make of each a totality. Now the historically transient can nevertheless provide the conceptual means whereby the two halves are permanently held together if it is thought and worked out in a sufficiently comprehensive manner. Thomas never fails to remember the way in which being points critically to the eternal, hidden God nor the way in which reason points noetically to the possible revelation of that God, and consequently he wants all metaphysics to be seen as orientated towards 'theology'.[330] Because of all this Thomas does not forget that the illuminating revelation of the hidden God and the knowledge of him through faith and through the gift of the Holy Spirit does not invalidate negative theology but rather elevates and completes it. It is precisely the manifestation of the absolute ground of all being, with his eternal Word and Spirit, in the realm of *ens commune* which proves definitively how little God's essence belongs to the *ens commune*. When St John says, 'We have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father', Thomas offers this commentary: 'Just as if someone saw a king coming forth in his manifold splendour and, being asked to describe the king, answers by summing up all that splendour in a single word: he came forth like a king, so it is with the Evangelist. If someone were to ask him what the glory of the Word was like, the glory which he had beheld, he would not have been able to express himself adequately. And so he says simply: it was the glory as of the only Son from the Father'.[331]

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[327] *Ibid*. 1. 3.

[328] *Ibid*. 5. 4, where it is a question of a *theologia duplex*. The first is 'that of the philosophers, which by another name is called metaphysics'; the other is revealed theology, 'which is transmitted in Holy Scripture'.

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[329] S Th 1a 2ae. 5. 5 ad 2.

[330] 'Almost all the consideration of philosophy is ordered to the knowledge of God' (CG 1. 4). For whoever investigates the principles of being in general and its consequences (*ens et ea quae consequuntur ens*) and so applies himself to the *transphysica*, arrives at God (*cf. Proem in Expos. Met.*).

b. The Inheritance

It is the function of the wise man to put things in order and so Thomas works with the material put at his disposal by tradition. First of all, there are the definitions of beauty in which several already long traditions are summed up under three heads: Denys, Augustine, Aristotle. Denys says (in *Div. nom.* iv, 7)[332] that God, as the cause of all that is beautiful, gives to everything *consonantia et claritas* (εὐαρμοστία καὶ ἀγλαία): *consonantia* is the concord among parts, which is therefore essentially the same as harmony, proportion, order, fairness of aspect; *claritas* is the brilliant light that descends vertically upon this horizontally ordered structure.

Thomas makes the different expressions mutually equivalent: *debita proportio sive consonantia*;[333] then again, *proportio* is the same as *harmonia*,[334] *commensuratio*,[335] *conformitas*,[336] *convenientia*[337] and so on. *Claritas* stands on its own, although Thomas tries to reduce the second aspect of Augustine's description of beauty (of Stoic origin) to this mysterious Plotinian-Platonic aspect: *pulchritudo corporis est partium*

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[331] *In Joh. Expos.* 1. 1. 7 (n. 185).

[332] PG 3. 701C. The very first allusion to beauty in Thomas's works (1 d.3, 2. expos. 1 partis) gives Denys' double definition.

[333] S Th 1a. 39. 8. In what follows several citations will be made from Francis Kovach, *Die Ästhetik des Thomas von Aquin* (1961). It contains many misprints.

[334] *Proportiones in sonis vocantur harmoniae, et per quamdam similitudinem proportiones quarumcumque rerum harmonia dicuntur* (*In Div. Nom.* iv, lect. 8).

[335] Kovach, 121.

[336] *Ibid.* 123.

[337] *Ibid.*

convenientia cum quadam coloris suavitate ['The beauty of the body is the agreement of its parts together with a sweetness of colour'].[338] Thomas's predecessors had already amplified this definition (limited initially to the corporeal plane) in a transcendental manner by understanding *coloris suavitas* as the material mode of appearance of *claritas* in general. This can be seen quite clearly in, for example, Albert's metaphysics of form and light. Thomas does the same.[339] He extends the concept of beauty transcendentally to the point where he can even apply it to truth itself.[340] In his early writings, which show an affinity with Albert, he follows his teacher in placing form and beauty in direct relationship: *forma rei est decor ejus*,[341] *decor resultans ex forma et proportione partium*.[342] Under the renewed influence of the Areopagite, in the commentary on the Divine Names, *claritas*, as a transcendental property of being, is referred back, in line with the theological context, to divine *claritas*, from which it is derived.[343]

From St Augustine Thomas adopts the emphasis on the objectivity of beauty. Something is beautiful not because it is loved; no, it is loved because it is beautiful.[344] From Augustine and Hilary (mediated by Peter Lombard)[345] he derives the appropriation of beauty to the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, an idea from which St Bonaventure had drawn so many conclusions. For Thomas it is more just a case of receiving something handed down. However, it gives him the opportunity of quoting and inserting the Aristotelian definition alongside the Dionysian and Augustinian. For in addition to συμμετρία Artistotle laid down a further criterion for beauty: appropriate size,[346] without which something can at best be 'pretty' but not beautiful. Thomas generally interprets this aspect of beauty (again in the spirit of Aristotle) in terms of *perfectio*, which is an anticipation of his later, central concept of ordered being. Thus in the principal passage dealing with aesthetics in the Commentary on the Sentences Thomas lets all the diverse streams of thought converge: the divine person of the Son is 'beautiful' as species (Hilary), as perfect image (=*aequalitas and consonantia cum Patre*: Augustine), as possessor of the *perfecta natura Dei* (Aristotle); but as 'perfect Word of the Father' he has *claritas* (Denys), which shines upon all things and which all things reflect back (Albert). At the point in the Summa where Thomas incorporates this synthesis, somewhat modified (1a, 39, 8), he calls the Son *imago expressa Patris* and thus takes account of Bonaventure's favourite doctrine.

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[338] 4 d. 44. 2. 4. obj. 3 and passim 'the beauty of the body is the agreement of its parts together with a certain sweetness of colour'. For ancient philosophy cf. Pouillon and Halcour, op. cit. For Augustine: *Civ. Dei* 22. 19, n. 2; *Ep. 3 ad Nebrid.* n. 4; *De Ver. Rel.* 32, n. 59; *De Mus.* 6. 11, n. 32.

[339] 'We call a man beautiful because of a fitting proportion of members in size and position, and because of the fact that he possesses a brilliant (*clarum*) and bright colour. Hence, it should be taken proportionally in the case of others that each thing is called beautiful because it has the brilliance of its genus, either spiritual or corporeal (*claritatem sui generis vel spiritualem vel corporalem*), and because it is established in due proportion' (*In Div. Nom.* 4, lect. 5; ET, Vernon J. Bourke, *The Pocket Aquinas* (New York, 1960, p. 269). *Cf.* S Th 2a2ae 145. 2c, where Thomas quietly inserts the *claritas* of Denys in place of Augustine's *suavitas*, and for incorporeal things the *spiritualis rationis claritas*.

[340] *Veritas habet splendoris rationem, et aequalitas tenet locum proportionis;* 'Truth involves the idea of splendour, and equality that of proportion' (1 d. 3. 2, expos. 1). The second part of the affirmation has, as will be shown presently, a theological (Trinitarian) prehistory.

[341] 3 d. 23. 3. 1. 9, 1. 1 (n. 225).

[342] 3 d. 1. 1. 3, obj. 3 (n. 52).

[343] *In Div. Nom* 4, lec. 5: *omnis forma . . . est participatio divinae claritatis*; 'All form is a participation in the divine radiance' (*In Div. Nom.* 4, lect.5).

From Boethius Thomas takes over the notion that God in his absolute beauty conceived the world's beauty in his mind. Thomas puts this notion into a context which portrays God as the sun of goodness, which 'sends out its rays of light, *id est participationes sui*, in the creation of the world', as the Psalmist says: 'When thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good things'. 'When God's hand was opened with the key of love, creatures came forth'.[347] It almost goes without saying that in this world—and Thomas stresses this more than his predecessors—not only opposed essences but also the opposite of goodness, evil, must be fitted (*per accidens*) into the all-embracing harmony of cosmic order.[348]

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[344] Augustine, *De vera rel.* 32, 59; *In Div. Nom.* 4, lect. 10.

[345] d. 3 (for Augustine); 1 d. 31 (for Hilary).

[346] *Eth. Nic.* 4. 5 (1123a. 10ff). *Cf.* 4. 7 and Thomas's Commentary 1 8, n. 738; *Poet.* 7. 4 (1450b, 38f.); *ibid.* 8. 4 (1451a. 30f.).

[347] 2 *Sent.* Prol.

Lastly, Thomas adopts the idea of placing the *pulchrum* within and yet beyond the transcendentals, the *verum* and the *bonum*, in that, like Denys, he presupposes the fundamental unity of the good and the beautiful and, with Alexander, William of Auvergne and Albert, makes a conceptual distinction between the two, a distinction which brings the beautiful closer to the true. We strive after the good as a goal to be attained, while the beautiful is admired and loved for the sake of its form; it is that which is pleasing not for me but in itself as it is seen; *pulchra dicuntur quae visa placent*,[349] *id cujus ipsa apprehensio placet*.[350] It is its 'relation to the cognitive faculty' that distinguishes beauty from goodness and causes it to shine forth from the true as *pulchritudo veritatis*.[351] This last point is in line with Aquinas's inspired insight: *maxima pulchritudo humanae naturae consistit in splendore scientiae* ['The supreme beauty of human nature consists in the splendour of knowledge'].[352] For Wisdom plays before the face of God, but 'this playful action is not performed for the sake of extrinsic goals, but happens for its own sake. This is also true of the delights of Wisdom'.[353]

c. Being as the Likeness of God

The development of Aquinas's theory of beauty follows a serpentine course. It starts off very much from within an Augustinian and Albertine perspective ('form' as 'splendour'), yet without any explicit consideration of transcendentality; next he shows signs of influence by Aristotle and turns to the theme that seems specifically Thomist: the reduction to proportion and order (so much so that the aspect of *claritas* almost disappears). Then, in the commentary on Denys, he returns unexpectedly to the 'Platonic' point of view and at last, definitively, he expounds the transcendentality of beauty.[354] This reversion is bound to be surprising to anyone who considers that Thomas was an Aristotelian to the very end, in fact increasingly so; and that his image of God formally bears more resemblance to Aristotle's transcendent νόησις νοήσεως than to the Plotinian and Dionysian deity who pours himself out and expresses himself in the universe.

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[348] CG 3. 71. *Cf.* Kovach, 193–200 (on ugliness) and *à propos* the contrasts of the world.

[349] S Th 1a. 5. 4, ad 1.

[350] S Th 1a 2ae. 27. 1, ad 3 'that whose apprehension is itself pleasing'.

[351] *In Ps*. 44. 2.

[352] *De Malo* 4. 2, obj. 17.

[353] *In Boeth. de Hebd*. Prol.

Yet it is from Denys[355] that Thomas derives his most characteristic philosophical opinion, namely, the doctrine of the *actus essendi* as the primary, immediate and comprehensive cosmic operation of God. Thomas speaks of the *processus essendi a divino principio in omnia existentia*; *nomen entis designat processum essendi a Deo in omnia entia* ['The procession of existence from the divine principle into all existing things; the name of being designates the procession of existence from God into all beings'].[356] And though Thomas (like Denys) is opposed to the hypostatisation of the 'emanations' (being-in-itself, life-in-itself, etc) and understands them as a single divine cause, nonetheless for him the *per-se-esse* is *primum et dignius quam per-se-vita et per-se-sapientia.*[357] Consequently, Thomas expresses here not a specifically Platonic point of view but his own constant and fundamental position. The procession of being—Thomas also speaks repeatedly of its emanation from God[358]—is the procession of act-uality (it is not, as it were, just a naked being 'there'). However, ἐνέργεια, *actus*, actual essence can exhaust, a comprehensiveness that no concept can entirely exhaust; on the contrary, it is in relation to *esse* that every essence and every concept can be united. Far from being an external addition to a complete essence thought of as possible (an essence which may or may not exist),[359] it roots the possibility of every possible thing in reality, in the fact that an essence can be admitted to the vast fulness of real existence and to participation in it. Thus *esse* is *communissimum*,[360] that in which all communicate,[361] that which is most perfect[362] beyond all imagining—and at the same time 'innermost and most profoundly present in all things' (*intimum, quod profundius omnibus inest*).[363] In fact, as has been said, it is the foundation of the most interior unity of every singular and particular essence. It is that which embraces all things (and cannot be exhausted by any number of natures but on the contrary can be participated in more and more in an infinite way),[364] yet only in the sense that is is the actualising support

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[354] It is to Kovach that we owe the discovery of this line in Thomas's thought (59f.). Spiazzi (introduction to the *Met. Expos.*) dates the work between 1261 and 1264. Other similar datings in Kovach (43, n. 25).

[355] And, of course, also from the Procline *Liber de Causis*, which Thomas, dependent as much on Aristotle as on Denys, adapts. Thomas recognised the dependence of Denys on Proclus (cf. above vol. II, 151).

[356] *In Div. Nom.* 5, lect. 1 (Mandonnet 479, 480).

[357] *Ibid.* (Man. 489).

[358] *Emanatio totius esse a causa universali*; 'The emanation of all being from the universal cause' (S Th 1a. 45. 1); *esee rerum fluit a Verbo sicut a quodam primordiali principio, et hic effluxus terminatur ad esse rerum quod in propria natura*

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habent; 'The being of things flows from the Word as from a kind of primordial principle, and this flow is terminated in the being which things have in their own nature' (S Th 1a. 58.) *A Deo effluunt res, ut subsistant in propriis naturis*; 'Things issue from God in order that they may subsist in their own natures' (S Th 1a. 57. 2; *cf.* 104. 4, ad 2; *De Ver.* 8. 11c, towards the end.) *Formae rerum in mente divina existentes sunt, ex quibus fluit esse rerum quod est commune formae et materiae*; 'The forms of things exist in the divine mind, whence flows the being of things that is common in form and matter' (*De Ver.* 10. 4c. towards the end). *Influentia essendi*: Subst. sep. 7 (Mand. 101). *Esse manat;* 'being emanates': 1 d. 8. 1. 2; *esse diffunditure: De Ver.* 21. 2. 8.

[359] *Esse rei, quamvis sit aliud ab ejus essentia, non tamen est intelligendum quod sit aliquod superadditum ad modum accidentis, sed quasi constituitur per principia essentiae*; 'The existence of a thing, though distinct from its essence, is nevertheless not to be thought of as something superadded in the manner of an accident, but as, so to speak, constituted by the principles of the essence' (Met. 4, lect, n. 558).

[360] *In Boeth. de Hebd.* 2; *Subst. sep.* 1. 8.

[361] *De Pot.* 7. 2, obj. 5.

[362] *Perfectissimum*: S Th 1a. 4. 1, ad 3.

[363] S Th 1a. 8. 1.

[364] *Ipsum esse absolute consideratum infinitum est, nam ab infinitis et infinitis modis participari possibile est*; 'Considered absolutely, being is infinite, because it can be participated in by the infinite and in infinite ways' (CG 1. 43).

of natures. It only realises natures in so far as it realises itself in natures. In itself it has no subsistence but inheres in natures: *esse non est subsistens sed inhaerens.*[365] Thomas is adamant that this self-realisation of the real must not be understood as the actualisation of a potency. 'On the contrary', natures are potential *vis à vis* the realising act of being.[366] But because *esse* does not subsist, it cannot even be said to release natures from itself as its 'possibilities'; it is only in them that it comes to 'standing' and subsistence. Confronted with the infinite range of the possible that can participate in the act of being, only the divine intellect is able to 'discover' and posit the circumscribed forms, even if they are not joined to the act of being as an external addition,[367] but are, so to speak, stamped out from its constantly unlimited fulness. In an image reminiscent of Grosseteste, Thomas says that the forms are 'nothing other than a kind of seal of the divine knowledge in things' (*quaedam sigillatio divinae scientiae in rebus*).[368]

It is precisely here that a new kind of initimacy of God in the creature becomes clear, an intimacy which is only made possible by the distinction between God and *esse*. Allowing natures to participate in reality—God's most proper prerogative—is not to be understood as the disintegration or diminution (on the part of the creature) of God's being and unicity (which is how it is invariably seen outside the Christian tradition) and the essences of things must not appear as simply the fragmentation of reality, in a negative sense, but must be seen positively as posited and determined by God's omnipotent freedom and therefore are grounded in the unique love of God. In what we might call the 'real distinction' (circumspectly, because here we are dealing with an inexplicable mystery) God contemplated his Creation with free, so to speak, stereoscopic sight, which means at the same time that God preserves for the creature this wholly new plasticity: it is precisely when the creature feels itself to be separate in being from God that it knows itself to be the most immediate object of God's love and concern; and it is precisely when its essential finitude shows it to be something quite different from God that it knows that, as a real being, it has had bestowed upon it that most extravagant gift—participation in the real being of God. Thus *esse*, as Thomas understands it, is at once both total fulness and total nothingness: fulness, because it is the most noble,[369] the first and most proper effect of God,[370] because 'through being God causes all things'[371] and 'being is prior to and more interior than all other effects'.[372] But being is also nothingness since it does not exist as such, 'for just as one cannot say that running runs', but rather that 'the runner runs', so 'one cannot say that existence exists'.[373]

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[365] *De Pot.* 7. 2, ad 7. *Cf. De Pot.* 1. 1: *esse significat aliquid completum et simplex sed non subsistens*; 'Being signifies something complete and simple but non-existent'.

[366] It is a case of a simple circumscription of the mystery and not of a simple reduction of what elsewhere is acknowledged as the relation between act and potency. This is shown by the hesitant and cautious mode of expression Thomas uses: *esse inest substantiis ut quidam (!) actus ipsarum*; 'Being is in substances as a kind of (!) act of their own' (CG 2. 53); *esse ad recipiends*; 'Being is not referred to other things as receiver to received, but rather as received to receiver' (S Th 1a. 4. 1. ad 3). *Non determinatur esse per aliud sicut potentia per actum, sed magis (!) sicut acuts per potentiam*; 'Being is not determined by another thing as potentially is by act, but rather as act is by potentiality' (De Pot. 7. 2, ad 9).

[367] *De Pot.* 7. 2, ad 9.

[368] *De Ver.* 2. 1, ad 9. On this, see G. Siewerth, *Der Thomismus als Identitätssystem* (1939), 8: 'The proper determination of the essence (can)not "result" simply from the act as such as a necessary outcome, because the act possesses an infinite dimension, to which only infinite determinations correspond'. L. Oeing-Hanhoff, *Ens et unum convertuntur* (BGPhThMA vol. 37, 3, 1953) 38, 90.

This incomprehensible coincidence of fulness and emptiness in a different sense aroused the imagination of Nicholas of Cusa and inspired him to make the statement that beneath all precision lies the imprecise (*conjectura*). It also intrigued Pascal, who regarded man as being in an indefinable state of ontic oscillation between *grandeur* and *misère*.[374] It demands, as the irreplaceable foundation of any metaphysic, a constant, active humility which neither gives up all claim to the truth nor in any sense whatever makes itself master of ultimate, quasi-divine truth. The real distinction between existence and essence necessarily opens our eyes to the truth that God is self-subsistent being but it also closes our eyes and forbids us to cling on to what we have seen. For quite obviously the created intellectual spirit (if it is going to be able in any sense to know reality) is situated precisely within this distinction, in that active, illuminated fulness (*lumen intellectus agentis*) which at the same time remains nothingness (*intellectus possibilis*). In this distinction created spirit encounters the real whenever the real attains subsistence, i.e. in the subsistence of finite, material essences (*omnis cognitio incipit a sensu*). But these in their turn can only be object of thought if they exist, if they participate in *the* reality which contains in itself all that is real, which compenetrates and dominates it and, as it were, indifferently transcends it.

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[369] *De Pot.* 7. 2, ad 9.

[370] *Compend.* 1. 68.

[371] *In Div. Nom.* 5, lect. 1 (Mand. 491).

[372] *De Pot.* 3. 7.

[373] *In Boeth. de Hebd.* 2.

[374] *Cf.* above vol. III, 188–205.

The period following Thomas was not able to sustain this state of tension and either reduced *esse* to a supreme and completely vacuous essential concept, which—as pure being 'there'—can be derived, abstracted, effortlessly from essences: this is rationalism. The other response was so to consolidate *esse* in itself that it coincides with God and now generates essences from itself in the divine cosmic process: this is pantheistic idealism. The first way leads inevitably to the death of philosophy, to its dissolution in positivistic science. For when being is no more than just being 'there', something simply posited in a colourless, valueless way, it is robbed of its transcendental fulness, is in itself neither true nor good nor beautiful and this immediately affects the natures to whom it gives its 'thereness'—as we shall see later. And the second response also leads, in a roundabout way, to the same self-destruction of philosophy (as the transition from Hegel to Feuerbach shows). For if being necessarily generates itself in finite natures, it must itself be finite and so turns into the potentiality of man, with the result that finite man is greater than what he thinks in his philosophy. Man remains in both cases the question-mark left over behind reality, as the only 'glory', questionable yet worthy of our questions, which is left.

Both these reductive analyses of being, the logical and the essentialist, destroy its supra-logical and supra-essentialist mystery. Both extinguish the image and likeness that glow within being, the image which the Greeks had a presentiment of and constantly contemplated without being able to grasp it adequately in its distinction from God. And because they could not separate the image from God who creates in freedom, they were bound (as a result of the link between human thought and sense experience) 'to experience it onesidedly in its rootedness in the objects presented to the senses. And so intelligible essences appeared as being in the true sense, which Plato refers to the super-celestial realm of the Ideas and Aristotle to the cosmic *energeia* of pure, rationally moving, self-concretising form'.[375] The de-essentialising of reality, as demanded by Heidegger and as achieved by Thomas, is an extension within philosophy of the illumination by biblical revelation of the idea of God as creative principle. When God, in his knowing and omnipotent love, is seen as freely choosing to create, there can be no question of a restrictive fragmentation of being into finite essences. *Esse* can be suspended without confusion or limitation, in creaturely, free infinity and perfection, before the free God and only thus become the allusive likeness of the divine goodness: *ipsum esse est similitudo divinae bonitatis*.[376] Thus and only thus is the creature liberated in the presence of God and in relation to God and can aspire with all its powers towards God and love him without having to comply with the perverse demand that it deny itself in its finite essence. This demand hung like a dark cloud over philosophy from India to Greece and Arabia, and soon after Thomas it begins once more to cast its shadow—from Eckhart to Bruno, Hölderlin, Fichte, Hegel. The metaphysics of Thomas is thus the philosophical reflection of the free glory of the living God of the Bible and in this way the interior completion of ancient (and thus human) philosophy. It is a celebration of the reality of the real, of that all-embracing mystery of being which surpasses the powers of human thought, a mystery pregnant with the very mystery of God, a mystery in which creatures have access to participation in the reality of God, a mystery which in its nothingness and non-subsistence is shot through with the light of the freedom of the creative principle, of unfathomable love.

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[375] G. Siewerth, *Das Sein als Gleichnis Gottes* (1958), 50f.

[376] *De Ver*. 22. 2. ad 2. We must not forget here that, of course, we possess the aesthetic of Thomas in close association with Denys's Platonic theory of *erôs*, though his commentary on the Canticle has been lost.

d. Metaphysics as Aesthetics

It has already been shown that in his aesthetics Thomas works with speculative material that comes to him from tradition. It should, however, now be clear that this material has to undergo a re-evaluation as a result of Thomas's transformation of the fundamental structure of metaphysics. In the formulations he inherits it is a question of the transcendental definition of beauty. However, what Thomas does is to use beauty to define being, which can only be rationally apprehended in terms of the 'real distinction' (*esse* as opposed to *essentia*). The essentialist aesthetics of 'size, number and weight', of *convenientia* and *claritas*, is completely justified by the fact that reality realises itself only in essences. Moreover, since human knowing in every case starts off from concrete sense-experience, the starting-point of aesthetics will necessarily be (more than ever) corporeal beauty, experienced on the sensory, empirical plane: *pulchra sunt quae visa placent*. But the whole sphere of essences can only ever be synthesized at the superessential level, which transcends it, and consequently can only be finally grasped in thought at the superessential level.[377] The light of the *intellectus agens* is the light of *esse* as reality: with this orientation the intellect attains essences, and in this meta-logical light they become logically comprehensible. But this means that the essential categories of aesthetics thrive in 'spherically curved' space, that is to say, they have to express more than they seem able to convey: they express both themselves and the mystery of the 'proportion' between *esse* and *essentia*. Since all proportional relations between essences are established, attested, confirmed in their beauty by this incomprehensible 'proportion', it can be regarded as fundamental to all wordly beauty. Moreover, this 'proportion' is immediatley transparent to the primordial, free creativity of God, who is the hidden source of worldly beauty. Hence, Thomas can without embarrassment appropriate the entire, aesthetically theological metaphysics of the Areopagite but at the same time, thanks to the mediation of being, can be absolutely free from suspicion of any pantheism. He even found this understanding of being in Denys (as the first emanation) and needed only to give it his own interpretation for the final structure of his metaphysical aesthetics to emerge.

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[377] This means, of course, that the precise distinction between the *ordo essentiae* and the *ordo existentiae*, as proposed by the Neo-Thomists in order to investigate (like other essentialists) the essences for their own sake, cannot hold up.

It should now be clear why, for Thomas, the definitive aesthetic concepts do not centre around 'form' (with its essential parts and its interior light) but have to be concepts implying comparative relation: *ordo*, *ordinatio*, *dispositio*, *proportio*, *proportionalitas*. Reality realises only in a proportionality which, while incomprehensible in itself, is the foundation of all order and thus of all form. Proportion belongs primarily and properly to the order of quantity but, understood in a wider (and improper) sense, it is the '*habitudo ordinis*, for example, between matter and form because matter, in the order of being, finds itself fulfilled by form, and this happens according to proportionality, for *just as* form, can give being, *so* matter can receive the same being . . . and in such a case the passive potency of the recipient does not need to be commensurate with the active potency of the cause, neither with regard to number—for *one* artist might make his work of art in a variety of forms, such as the form of the chest or the form of the key, but the wood can only receive one of them—nor just with regard to design, for the artist can use his art to produce a beautiful object which, however, cannot be received as beautiful by a knotty piece of wood'. The conclusion drawn in the next sentence reaches sublimity:

'Consequently it is not unfitting for there to be a similar kind of proportion between God and the creature, although they are infinitely remote from one another; and so a union (even) between them is possible'.[378] But the creature itself is essentially a *proportio* between *esse* and *essentia*, so that its proportion in relation to God becomes 'the proportion of a proportion', what Thomas calls *proportionalitas*,[379] a suspension of a suspension.

In this creaturely suspension either *esse* or *essentia* or both can serve as principle: in one sense, essences have their principle in being; in another sense, being comes to be a principle in essences. However, where there are principles, there is order. *Ordo semper dicitur per comparationem ad aliquod principium.*[380] ['Order always has reference to some principle']. *Unde oportet quod ubicumque est aliquod principium sit etiam aliquis ordo.*[381] ['Consequently, wherever there is some principal, there must be some order']. And 'all order is a kind of proportion'.[382] It is God who is the ultimate provider of principle and so it is obvious that the provision of principle in the sense of order is an intellectual process: *ordo ad rationem pertinet*,[383] for only the intellect perceives proportions to guide them meaningfully to their end.[384] Thus all order in the cosmos, as Thomas time and again explains, is at once immanent and transcendent: since all things have their principle in God and are related to him, they can also be ordered to one another by means of the relations that underlie them.[385]

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[378] 3 d.1. 1.1 (n. 19). The same distinction between proper (quantitative) proportion and improper proportion (explained with regard to the God/creature relation) is made in *Quodlib.* 10. 8, ad 1; S Th 1a. 12. 1, ad 4.

[379] *Est enim proportionalitas similitudo proportionum* ['Proportionality is the similarity of proportions') (*De Ver.* 2. 3, ad 4), where what matters is the functioning not of the proportionate members themselves, but only of the two proportions.

[380] S Th 1a. 42. 3. More exactly: 1 d. 20. 1. 3 qla 2. For an exposition: Kovach, 152f.

[381] S Th 2a 2ae 2.1. Ed. A Pace, 'The Concept of Order in the Philosophy of St Thomas Aquinas', *New Scholasticism* ii (1928), 51–72.

[382] 8 Phys. lect 3 (n. 2064). In the context it is shown that 'nature is the principle for order, so that what lacks order cannot be natural'.

[383] *De Car.* 9, obj.2.

[384] CG 2. 24.

[385] S Th 1a. 21. 1, ad 3.

It is in relation to these fundamental ideas that Thomas interprets the aesthetics of the Areopagite. God, he says, is the ultimate principle of all beauty in so far as he causes *consonantia* and *claritas*. He is the cause of *claritas* in that he lets things participate in his own primal light; the cause of *consonantia* in two senses, first of all because God orders and turns all things to himself and calls them home (here again the etymology of καλόν from καλεῖν), and secondly because he orders and assembles things in relation to one another, 'and from the fact that all things are mutally in relation to one another in a definite order, it follows that all things are ordered towards one and the same ultimate'.[386] The fact that God is the principle of something other than himself cannot be explained in terms of any need on his past but by 'the love he has for his own beauty, for whoever has beauty of his own wants to multiply it as much as possible, that is, through the communication of his likeness . . . Thus everything is created in order as far as possible to imitate the divine beauty',[387] and this is true as much of the particular forms, by which things are distinguished from one another, as of the common possession of being, in which they communicate. For *ex pulchro esse omnibus existentibus* and this being is assigned to existent things through form,[388] in which it becomes the 'protective mansion' (*mansio conservativa*), even though 'all parts of the cosmos share in the common empire of reality'.[389] In this way they are fundamentally harmonised with one another and 'can come under the sway of a single order' and can also for this reason help and support one another. 'Just as the walls and roof are supported by the foundation and the roof protects the walls and foundation, so in the whole of things the higher ones give perfection to the lower ones and the power of the higher is manifested in the lower'. This is 'friendship' in objective reality and *debita proportio in partibus*, through which the whole forms an 'everlasting order'.[390]

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[386] *In Div. Nom.* 4, lect. 5 (Mand. 362–363).

[387] *Ibid.* 366.

[388] *Ibid.* 365, lect. 6, 368.

[389] *Ibid.* 369.

[390] *Ibid.* 369–370.

This order of the world in the whole and in its parts rests on a double necessity. The first and most fundamental is that it is due to God's own wisdom and omnipotence that, in his unfathomable freedom, he wants to manifest his goodness in the world. The second is that God bestows on essences what his wisdom and omnipotence have decreed as belonging to them. But this second necessity depends on the first, which means at the same time that all the merit of the creature, which fulfils its essence according to God's will, rests on a prevenient, inscrutable grace.[391] Since the real is God's most proper effect, and since the real depends on God's free goodness, everything, the greatest and the least, is preserved by his providential care for all beings. 'Everything that has *esse* in any way is necessarily directed by God towards some end, as the Apostle says, "Those things that are of God are ordered" (Rom 13.1)'.[392]

Modern science, which strives to investigate the order of the world more and more deeply, has its ready-made metaphysics in Aquinas's doctrine of order and relation, presupposing, of course, that science does not absolutise, in essentialist fashion, the laws it discovers but lets them rest on a profound creaturely proportion between existence and essence and thus be in suspension in relation to the absolute freedom of God.

Finally, it must be remembered that there can objectively be no 'definition' of the transcendentals, just as being itself is indefinable.[393] The circumscription of the beautiful, through such allusive concepts as *integritas* (*perfectio*), *proportio* (*harmonia*, *convenientia*), *claritas*, *ordo*, is a circle that does not permit any running off in one direction or univocal construction. The circle can be entered through the sensory experience of beauty, which has an irreducible primacy. However, it is clear that, like the other transcendentals, beauty too, even sensory beauty, can only be recognised by a free and rational mind: *solus homo* (as opposed to the animals *delectatur in ipsa pulchritudine sensibilium secundum se ipsam.*[394]

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[391] S Th 1a. 21a. 1, ad 3; *cf.* 1a2ae. 114. 1, ad 3; CG 2. 28–29. On this aspect, see A. Dyroff, 'Zur allgemeinen Kunstlehre des hl. Thomas', *BGPhMa*, suppl. ii (1923), 197f.

[392] S Th 1a. 22. 2.

[393] It is therefore foolish to regret that Thomas never 'defined' beauty. *Cf.* Kovach, 104.

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[394] S Th 1a. 91. 3, ad 3; 'Only man . . . takes pleasure in the actual beauty of sensible objects for its own sake.'

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THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Hans Urs von Balthasar

THE GLORY OF THE LORD: A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

By Hans Urs von Balthasar

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B. THE AESTHETICS OF TRANSCENDENTAL REASON

1. THE PARTING OF THE WAYS

a. Origins of the Modern Period

What we are offering here is neither a history of philosophy nor a general intellectual history; we are inquiring solely into what became of the classical experience of God's glory over the course of the centuries. And we are conducting this inquiry in such a way that the element of Christian glory within this philosophical survey is excluded as far as possible and reserved for the concluding, biblical section. We have already seen how the Early and High Middle Ages dutifully received and developed the classical experience of a world which reveals God, how they understood the historical salvation-event wholly within a comprehensive and cosmic context, to such an extent that the universal categories of beauty which we find in antiquity served largely as a conceptual language in which the total revelation of God—with its centre in Jesus Christ—was expressed. Admittedly, this monistic vision (Erigena, the Victorines) was undermined by the advancing philosophy of Chartres and Abelard and by the Aristotelian renaissance, but during the period of High Scholasticism the Franciscan and Dionysian wave had once again produced a system of contemplation which transcended Being, in which not only the believing but also the philosophizing Christian felt that he could dare to say that the reflection of eternal goodness and beauty is perceptible in all being. In terms of intellectual history, this precept disappears after Thomas Aquinas. His ontology, upon which it was based, remained without imitators—if this is understood in the sense of an elemental, historical experience of Being. Thomas's experience of Being gathered within itself and embodied the inheritance of antiquity in its entirety, of an Aristotle who is always transformed and imbued with a religious light by Plato (with his historical backgrounds!), Dionysius and Augustine. For Thomas, to contradict an experience of this kind would have been to cast doubt on whether the religious experience of mankind (which had drawn close to Christianity in its Greek guise) still had an obligatory character in the present.

It was Averroism, which since 1250 had purported to be the sole serious and radical interpretation of the sole 'scientific' philosopher, Aristotle, which brought the turning-point. It understood itself to be the attempt to ascertain how far human reason could go in the inquiry into the ultimate grounds of Being when it excluded and dispensed with all revelatory knowledge, be it Islamic (Avicenna!) or Christian. The fact that in 1270 initially fifteen propositions, and then in 1277, two hundred and nineteen propositions of Averroistic inspiration were condemned by the Bishop of Paris at first appeared only to be one event in the struggle between the secular philosophers and the Christian theologians, and for the latter it seemed in the broader perspective one which was by no means unfavourable, in that it stimulated an attempt (upon which Thomas had already painstakingly embarked) to draw the boundaries more clearly between philosophy and Christianity. And the more clearly Christianity, as it moved into the modern period, distanced itself from philosophy, the more clearly it had finally to begin to set forth its own irreducible understanding and possession of glory. In the background, however, there was a completely different line of decision: that concerning Plato and the openness to God which Plato inherits, which can be described as 'mythical' and which was permitted at least in principle by Aristotle in his lost *Peri Philosophias*. For now the Averroists placed philosophy, as the sole comprehensive science, above theology. The latter was based upon *fabulae* (myths),[1] while the ultimate science identified reality, rationality and necessity, with the result that God must create the world, which exists from eternity, of course in such a way that he produces only the One Being, which is his own likeness, and which he orders by virtue of subordinate causes in a descending scale from himself to the material plane. This is a God without freedom, without knowledge of creatures, or a true otherness with respect to the world. This is a mental creature which lacks psycho-spiritual individuality (since the *intellectus agens* is only a single—divine—reality), without freedom or immortality. A world (according to Siger of Brabant) of eternal recurrence. This is a man who is characterised in his highest powers of philosophical reasoning as Θεῖον, as is the case in Aristotle: 'Just as we call divine that which is best in the totality of beings, so too we call divine that which is best in man' (Boethius of Dacia).[2] But it is clear to what extent the original Greek opposition between gods and men is lost here in these undifferentiated statements. However much in subsequent ages theologians sought to identify what belonged distincitively to the nature of revelation, nevertheless they were simultaneously inclined to accept as fact and as counterpart the proudly resigned self-limitation of philosophy, and thus largely to renounce the infrastructure of a 'natural revelation' in order merely to cast light from within on the nature of faith for those who already believe.

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[1] Condemned theses, quoted following Gilson, *La Philosophie au Moyen-Age*, 2nd edn. 1952, p. 559, E.T. (1955), p. 406.

The late Middle Ages is a time of darkness like few others;[3] the social order is in ruins, war and plague prevail, secular and ecclesiastic façades are collapsing, the face of the visible Church is disfigured beyond recognition, especially through the great schism; and the radiance of the heavenly Jerusalem no longer breaks through the clouds to illumine God's earthly realm. Those realistic, often cynical spotlights on human existence, which have always accompanied the forms and images which transfigure and console—we mentioned at the beginning Archilochus, who repeatedly celebrates resurrections, or Martial, or many cynical and blasphemous wandering minstrels' songs—now take the upper hand in such a way that existence as a whole appears in the image of the dance of death. And just as Socrates and Boethius philosophised in the face of death, now numerous 'books of consolation' from Eckhart[4] to Peter of Blois, John of Dambach[5] and far beyond seek to interpret existence under the rubric of suffering.[6] But it is mostly classical, Stoic and mystical elements which predominate among the reasons for consolation, and only rarely do we find—as, e.g., in Catherine of Siena—that suffering enters so brilliant a Christian light that it can itself be understood as glory. And thus for the first time something is born in the Christian sphere which corresponds to the position of the Greek spirit in the age of tragedy, and the preconditions are created for the emergence of the sole tragedy to attain the metaphysical heights of antiquity during the Christian age: the tragedies of Shakespeare, above all his tragedies of kings.

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[2] *De summo bono sive de vita philosophi*, ed. Grabmann in: *Arch. Hist. doctr. litt.* MA VI (1932) (*Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*, II, pp. 200–204). As an Aristotelian, Boethius of Dacia can nevertheless feel an 'astonished admiration' of the 'first principle' and 'a love for it' and can find therein 'the highest delight' or bliss of man on earth.

[3] J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, E.T. London 1955.

In Thomas's ontology, the transcendental aesthetics of the classical period (which Dionysius sums up and passes on to Christian theology) achieves a state of balance: Being (*esse*), with which he is concerned and to which he attributes the modalities of the One, the True, the Good and the Beautiful, is the unlimited abundance of reality which is beyond all comprehension, as it, in its emergence from God, attains subsistence and self-possession within the finite entities. Where this balance is not maintained, then there are only two possible ways forward: either to formalise Being to the extent that it becomes the comprehensive concept of reason (which is the case with Scotus), and thus expressly or by implication to concede to reason the oversight and control of Being. Being then necessarily becomes the category which is both highest and most devoid of meaning, whose syntheses with their ever more concrete forms can be rationally reconstructed or, as in the Idealism which prevails between Kant and Hegel, can be pre-constructed by reason. We see immediately that Being which is formalized to this extent can still just possess the inner modalities of unity, truth and goodness, but no longer that of transcendental beauty. For how should the divine and mysterious *pleroma* radiate from this empty space? Since Scotist formalism provides the model for the scientific thinking of our day, it is to be expected that the consciousness of any transcendental glory must be alien to it, and must become ever more alien.

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[4] In his 'Book of the divine consolation' for Queen Agnes of Hungary who was in mourning for her murdered father, Emperor Albrecht I of Habsburg.

[5] A. Auer, 'Johannes von Dambach und die Trostbücher vom 11. bis 16. Jahrhundert', in: *BGPhThMA*, 1928.

[6] A. Auer, *Leidenstheologie des Mittelalters*, Salzburg 1947; F. Maurer, *Leid*, 1951.

The other way in which Being can be interpreted after Thomas is simply to identify it (once again) with God, as Meister Eckhart does, thus setting his stamp upon the conceptual model of late-medieval mysticism and to a large extent upon that of its spiritual descendants. Plotinus had avoided this identification and characterised the primal ground beyond Being as the Good. Dionysius followed him in this, but Erigena already inclined towards interpreting the God-world relation in terms of complication and explication, and for the school of Chartres, especially for Gilbert, God appeared as the form of Being which determines all else. This is the tradition which Eckhart continues, and Nicolas of Cusa will take up Erigena's scheme at the end of the medieval period. But if in the development of the Scotist model reason gains the upper hand over God, then in the logic of the Eckhartian model it is difficult to understand how there can exist a world outside God; and so the mystical self-annihilation of the creature must change sooner or later into a renewed appropriation of the Divine Being, which after Scotus and Eckhart now appears mainly in the form of spirit and freedom. Even in the medieval mystical tradition which follows Eckhart, the glory of the Absolute is called into question by the fact that it has little or no remaining space in which and through which it can become manifest. Both models turn into one another—as two forms of a pan-theism of the spirit or of reason—and form in their dialectical reciprocity the structure of philosophy between the medieval and the modern periods.

The high points of this whole period, which guaranteed it world-wide influence, justify its designation as the Germanic age. There are three great movements; Scotus and Eckhart (with their descendents: Ockham on the one hand, Tauler and Nicolas of Cusa on the other) determine both the scientific and the religious self-understanding of Europe. The thought of Suarez will follow that of Scotus, while Ignatius of Loyola, and later the *Grand Siècle*, belong to the family of German mysticism, and the points of origin for those elements of the latter which return to Germany through Tersteegen and Poiret still remain Germany and Brabant. The second movement is Luther and his age (to which in the broader sense Erasmus and Shakespeare belong). Itself standing on the shoulders of mysticism, the Reformation offers its own shoulders to the third intellectual event, that which extends from Kant to Hegel and Marx. If the Reformation shapes the religious spirit of England and America, then it is here that the spirit of Russia and the 'scientific' age as such are given their shape.

We can see from this list of names that the philosophical history of the age was very strongly influenced by Christians. Even if, in what follows, we do not treat the biblical and theological problematic as a theme in itself, it is nevertheless impossible to ignore the contribution made by spiritual Christians, even and precisely when these employ the conceptual language of their day in order to make themselves heard and to ensure their comprehensibility. The dynamic interrelationship of classical theo-philosophy and the Christian theology of revelation is indissoluble, because the transcendental claim of reason and the universal claim of revelation will always sit uneasily together. Thomas Aquinas himself brought both together in a bold paradox when he declared that it belongs to the nobility of human nature that we can attain perfection in our *desiderium naturale* for the very

Highest only through a free self-disclosure by God.[7] No matter how the interpretations of later Christian theology may have reduced this principle, the nexus which it contains will preoccupy the philosophy of the modern period and will dictate its decisions: this double inheritance, which is both Platonic and Christian, will not cease to fascinate the human mind.[8] In the late middle ages, 'mysticism' (which flows almost without interruption into humanism) functions as a universalising medium: it drives the divisive dogmatic formulas to a point where they become transparent, as we can observe in the dialogue which Ramon Lull and Nicolas of Cusa conduct with Islam and later in Sebasian Franck's understanding of religion. In an age which sees the hardening of confessional positions, Catholic consciousness responds to Protestantism not only with a dogmatic counter-position, but quite consciously with a world culture (the 'Baroque') which wills and knows itself in terms of universality—in a sense of geographical catholicity which, though undergoing colonial expansion, is still Augustinian. Finally, the Enlightenment and Idealism stripped Christianity of dogma to such an extent that nothing more can prevent its total absorption into a transcendental philosophy. And if from the very beginning (Augustine and his theory of predestination) and with Calvin, Bañez and Jansen, Christianity seems to have been given severe, anti-universal contours, then it is Protestant orthodoxy (in the dogmatics of Karl Barth) which has significantly and prophetically stepped beyond these limits today and has set Christianity face to face on this basis with the transcendental claim of reason and of Idealism (Schleiermacher).[9] It is precisely in Barth's dogmatics that (despite all the protestations to the contrary) a feeling for 'glory' emerges in a new and elemental way.

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[7] *S. Th.* II I, 5, 5 *ad* 2.

[8] *Cf.* my 'Geschichte und Integration', in: *Das Ganze im Fragment* (1963), pp. 201–215 (Eng. trans., *Man in History*, 1968).

[9] *Cf.* my *Karl Barth* (2nd edn. 1962), esp. pp. 181–259, also 'Christlicher Universalismus' (Origen and Karl Barth), in: *Verbum Caro* (1960), pp. 260–275.

b. Being as a Concept

SCOTUS, OCKHAM

The decision of DUNS SCOTUS to conceive of being as a concept springs from his concern for the formal object of philosophy in the face of Christian theology. If reason grasps Being alone as its first unlimited concept, then every anticipation of the self-revelation of the sovereign and free God is excluded. In this concept therefore reason transcends the distinction between finite and infinite Being, and thus becomes capable of attaining a natural knowledge of God and is not entirely unprepared for the Word which the free God utters. The concept has not only logical (expressive) universality, but also metaphysical universality, for it captures Being in its objective and all-comprehending ('catholic') generality, so that it can be univocally applied to infinite and to finite Being, that is to God and the world, to substance and accidents, to act and potentiality. That is its indistinction (*indifferential*),[1] which does not of course refer to the concrete reality of the oppositions which occur within it/them (where analogy holds), but to the objective content of the concept, to the 'essentiality' of Being, which as such pervades neutrally (*neuter*)[2] all its/their distinctions. 'Being' is therefore no longer reality, but the most comprehensive essentiality, 'ideality', the sole possibility of which is reality and which can on the one hand be infinite (God) and on the other finite (creature). 'Being' is therefore that which is wholly indeterminate, yet which can be determined by nothing other than itself. For Scotus, this paradox is the formal object of philosophy, which thus becomes capable from the very outset of achieving both too much and too little: too much, since in its concept of Being it raises itself above God and the world, comprehensively

[1] Works cited in the edition of Vivès, with the exception of the *Opus Oxoniense* which is quoted in the edition by Garcia (Quaracchi, 1912–14). *Qu. in Metaph.* 1.4 q 1 n. 6–7; *Op. Ox.* 1 d 3 1 3 a2 n. 14.

[2] *Op. Ox.* 1 d 3 q 2 a4 n. 6. That which exists is no longer neutral: *ibid.*, 1 d 8 q 3 a1 n. 11.

dominating the Absolute from the standpoint of a greater absolute, and too little, since reality, as insubstantiality, is silently eliminated in this realm of graded formalities and essences.[3] Even individuality is not determined by reality, but by a substantial 'this-ness' (*haecceitas*). Thus anything can be conceived of in this realm of essences with the removal of existence, and if existence is included in the concept of God, then this is so only as it were as the final consequence of his self-comprehending ideality. 'Who can fail to see that this position contains everything, in order through a form of speculation which is unmoderated by any *regula Fidei* (as in Hegel) to make the subsisting Spirit-God at the heart of the process of thinking (in contradiction to a *ratio* which univocally embraces Being . . . and potentiality) into the ultimate determination of substance and finally, by Spirit's resolution, into "reality"?' (G. Siewerth).[4]

The assignment of Being as Being to the philosophers—apparently in accordance with their own wish and their tradition since Aristotle and Avicenna—is made by the Christian theologian, who hopes thereby to make space for the revelation of the living God. Scotus believes that he can derive from the non-Christian history of philosophy the fact that the *a posteriori* proofs of God from contingency and movement can lead the spirit only to a 'First Principle' (Avicenna preferred to call this the *Primus*) within the nature of the world (*physis*),[5] the personality and freedom of which remain just as uncertain as do the immortality of the human soul and its future destiny of eternal bliss. In order to give the philosopher access to metaphysical transcendentality, Scotus consigns to him the neutral essence, which encompasses God within itself, as the formal object of philosophy, and he does so knowing full well, of course, that even this will fail to overcome his uncertainties, while not suspecting that philosophy, on the basis of this newly acquired area of 'ideality' and its essential 'necessities', will once again (as with the Averroists) outstrip theology. For theology's object is God's most free salvific words and deeds, and faith in these is its foundation. For Scotus, it is an essentially practical science[6] which offers mankind the help we need in order, first, to be able to pursue our supernatural calling and, second, to assist our reason, scarred by original sin, in the acquisition of a knowledge of God which is also in philosophical terms more precise. In a reawakening of the Augustinian tradition,[7] the distinction between what the philosophers call 'God' (τὸ θεῖον, *le Dieu des philosophes*) and what Christians know through faith as the living God of the Bible, is perceived during the late Middle Ages as a yawning gulf, but with a new anti-philosophical emotion which opposes to the 'necessities' of the philosophical enquiry into existence the sovereign and arbitrary freedom of the living God, which entirely counters any deduction of Creation from God (through the Platonic ideas). Thus the following tragic situation develops: at the very same moment that the distinctively *Christian* glory of God would have been ready to emerge (freed from the religious aesthetics of antiquity), it is deprived of the medium by means of which it could have been manifested. Since on the one hand philosophy is assigned to an undifferentiated and neutral sphere of 'existence' and the vision of God through the medium of the Creation in its actuality (Rom 1.18f.) is obscured and cast into doubt and, since on the other hand, as a consequence of this, the contemplative component of theology is relinquished in favour of one which is wholly practical and *gnosis* yields to pure *pistis*: therefore, although the 'sovereign' (*Herrschaftliche*)[8] dimension becomes manifest in the divine revelations for the theology of this time, a dimension that contains its own rationality within its sovereign and arbitrary will, because (as for Anselm) the *rectitudo* resides within the will of God, still the element of glory (*Herrliche*), the δόξα, does not truly become manifest; neither philosophical reason in its contemplation of existence nor theological faith in its practical, ethical and non-aesthetic orientation can any longer possess a sensorium for this. The philosopher, to whom the field of 'Being' is yielded, advances towards the ultimate principles—neutral to God and to the world—without ever glimpsing theological glory. He is empowered to approach them as reason, and they stand as 'intentions' before his eyes: and thus William of Alnwick (+ 1332) will be the first in his *Quaestiones de esse intelligibili*[9] to develop from every angle the question with regard to the mode of reality which pertains to the intentional.

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[3] *Existentia non est per se ratio objecti ut scibile est. Quodlibet.* 7, 8–9. On this, cf. Jean Gilson, *Jean Duns Scot* (the basic study today), 1952, pp. 451–466.

[4] *Das Schicksal der Metaphysik von Thomas zu Heidegger* (1959), p. 97. On the self-determination of God to existence in the Scotist François de Mayronnes, cf. E. Gilson, *La philosophie au Moyen Age* (2nd edn. 1952), pp. 610–611, ET *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (1955), pp. 466–467.

[5] This drastic reduction of the scope of philosophic proofs of God, everywhere present in Scotus, is carried out in the *Theoremata* (Vivès edn., Vol. 3), whether this is by Scotus (Balic) or not (Gilson). This criticism of philosophy will soon be radicalised by Ockham.

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[6] This is set forth in detail by the Prologue to the *Op. Ox.*, also the Prologue to the newly-edited *Lectura in 1. Sent.*, critical edition Vol. 16 (1960), Pars 4 (pp. 45–62).

[7] Gilson, op. cit., pp. 617–620.

WILLIAM OF OCKHAM, who was Scotus' confrère and compatriot as well as his most acute opponent, does no more than draw possible conclusions from the *esse univocum*. For if undifferentiated Being defines itself in its ultimate differentiations as *haecceitates*, why should we then not conceive of it from this pole as the utterly specific 'this' and view the determinative grades of the class and species as purely subjective schemes of classification, which point confusedly to what is individual and real? It is this alone which encounters sense experience, which—in the English empiricist tradition up to and including Locke and Hume[10]—constitutes the whole content of reality and presents it to thought. Thus it is the specific indivisible entity which is real, and in this 'specificity' there lies once again the univocity of Being, whose ground is only the possibility of being posited specifically by the infinite power of God's freedom. This possibility of the specific individual entity which occurs directly through the freedom of God is an intensification of the divine sovereignty which goes beyond Scotus and which gives a theological basis to positivism, which refuses to ask questions that go beyond the mere givenness of what is. This formidable Franciscan creates space even more radically for the sole sovereignty of God when, sweeping away the entire Platonic and Aristotelian tradition, he directly opposes to the yawning abyss of absolute freedom a world which is fragmented into irrational points of reality. With this rupture within the tradition of a mediating or natural (philosophical) theology, every contemplative dimension of the *fides quaerens intellectum* is in principle removed. Theology, which now closes itself in upon itself, must become fideistic and can ultimately be only practical. And the Franciscan image of God—love beyond the limits of knowledge—must therefore degenerate into an image of fear (which is no longer even that of the Old Testament), since this God of pure freedom might always posit and demand what is contrary; for instance, that man should hate him (Robert Holkot), that the innocent should be damned and the guilty saved (Ockham), and why should he not be able to destroy the world in such a way that it would never have existed (Jean de Mirecourt)? And, of course, the late Augustinianism of double predestination makes its appearance here with renewed virulence (Gregory of Rimini); from here, it will be bequeathed to the Reformers.

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[8] *Ibid.*, p. 599.

[9] Ed. A. Ledoux, Quaracchi 1937.

[10] Indeed, up to Berkeley, since God is powerful enough to permit the subjective immediate experience to persist even where its object had vanished: *ipsa re destructa potest poni ipsa notitia intuitiva* (quoted following Gilson, op. cit., p. 654).

We will ask in the following chapter how the central Christian experience could be represented in this philosophical atmosphere. Initially, it is evident only that this experience remains without the mediation to philosophy (in so far as radical empiricism can still be given this name), and to such a degree in fact that an entirely different logic is demanded for the mysteries of faith than for secular thinking (Holkot). The conceptual space between sensualism and formal logicism is the birth-place, devoid of metaphysics, of the modern 'natural sciences'. Following the removal of Aristotelian substance and of all causality, apart from that which relies upon immediate experience, and indeed explicitly of all hierarchies of values in the universe, which leads logically to a Democratic atomism, Nicolas of Autrecourt begins to investigate the laws of spatial movement, and is followed by John Buridan, Albert of Saxony, Nicolas of Oresme, from whom Copernicus and Galileo are directly descended. We cannot pursue these paths here, but should note how trenchantly positions are held only fifty years after the death of Thomas: how small the steps are, and how internally consistent, from an ontological formalism (Scotus) to empiricism (Ockham), and from pure theological voluntarism and 'positionism' to a positivism which possesses no values, and from there, quite consistently, to materialistic atomism. Along these pathways, nothing new has appeared down to the present time.

c. Being as Neutrality

SUAREZ

There is a direct line of descent from Scotus—despite the Renaissance—to Francesco Suarez, the father of Baroque- and Neo-scholasticism, for in this disciple of Ignatius Loyola the univocity of Being and thus the indistinction (*indifferentia*) of Being emerges anew. As it is here that the philosophical openness of the finite spirit to God is sought, and as indistinction is an Ignatian and indeed a basic Christian concept, this confrontation must prove illuminating.

What Ignatius will call *indiferencia* is nothing other than the 'detachment' of the German mystics and the *amici Dei*, which they themselves understood to be a serious commitment, involving the whole person, to the Franciscan ideal of poverty. Francis himself had seen 'wisdom, poverty and love' as one: the ascetic transcendence of all psycho-physical possession into a free receptivity to the love of God alone. We meet this too in Benedict as humility, in Augustine as the pure *desiderium* for the *caritas* of God, and in the early Church Fathers it bears the Stoic and Neoplatonic name of *apatheia*, which points back to pre-Christian forms of spiritual transcendence. Nor should we forget here that behind the constraining systematisations of the Stoa there stand Virgil and the Tragedians with their self-transcendence through suffering into their incomprehensible God-given fate, and behind these too, there is the Odyssey, whose hero conquers through his patience that bears everything.

Thus the pre-Christian *indifferentia* as the decisive proof of man's nature as spirit hovers between two poles: between blind faith in God, the courage of the heart, blind hope (chiefly in the poets) and a certain rationalised technique of withdrawal from all that is (in order not to be attached to anything), the self-projection into transcendence, the mastering of fate and ultimately even the mastering of the gods (chiefly in the philosophers). But in this indeterminacy we always find an exaltation of the heart, of the whole person, in the unity of thought and life. In the Christian world, this fundamental attitude is illumined by the love of God which breaks forth from the depths in the form of the πραΰς καὶ ταπεινός (Mt 11.29), who proclaims the 'poor in spirit' and the πραεῖς to be blessed (Mt 5.3, 5), always does the will of the Father and goes to his death into the incomprehensible darkness of God. Transcendence as a going beyond the self clearly becomes the yielding of the self (faith, hope, love) to the unfathomability of divine love. The technique of *apatheia* in antiquity for self-salvation from the world becomes, in the Christian age, the ascetic expansion of the heart and its preparation in order that it should flow into an unlimited readiness to love (*ecce ancilla*) and ultimately into God's ever greater glory of love in the Cross, which we encounter through grace: ad *majorem Dei Gloriam*. From Augustine *via* Benedict to Francis and Ignatius, this remains the primal truth which, though unchanging in its essence, is constantly illumined in new ways. Nor can it stand indifferently beside metaphysics with the latter's question as to the transcendence of reason; rather, it casts light on this very question and clarifies it from its own ultimate sublimity. But what is rejected in any case is the overpowering of God, either by a conceptual pre-apprehension of the mind or by mystical and ascetical technique. What is adopted in any case is the open acceptance of our fate, in daring and in trust, and this is so to such an extent that 'grace' does not destroy 'nature' here (only that *gnosis* which replaces daring trust with manipulative knowledge is destroyed: 1 Cor 13.9; 2 Cor 10.5); rather, the attitude of open acceptance is made both divine and eternal ('then there remain these three . . .': 1 Cor 13.13).

We must therefore ask in what ways the charisms of the founders of the great religious orders achieved philosophical expression. The charismatic *indifferentia* has rarely been immediately reflected in its philosophical counterpart, and so philosophical transcendence has rarely been the true initiation into the encounter with the glory of God. Not the least reason for this was the fact that intersubjectivity, upon which the ethics of the Gospel is based, failed to find an adequate philosophical foundation in the classical period, and even today has yet to become the principal theme of Christian philosophy. Accordingly, it is a largely Neoplatonic (and therefore undialogical) metaphysics which provides the conceptual underpinning for the Augustinian theology of *caritas*, to which the Benedictine theology of *caritas* (in Bernard and his school) also looks back. On the other hand, that which is originally Franciscan in Bonaventure is interpreted with reference to Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius, the Dominican charism (which is difficult to grasp) is referred back to Aristotle and, in the case of Eckhart, to Parmenides, and what is originally Ignatian in Suarez turns back to Scotus, so that there is no inherent unity between his philosophy and his commentary on the Exercises. Thus in historical terms Christian thought is not commensurate with the forms of Christian inspiration, nor does it seek to keep pace with it, but is content rather to cut a paltry coat for it from the huge store of material of extant thought. Neoscholasticism, to which period the contribution of Ignatius belongs, was particularly burdened by the weight of prior thinking, of what was apparently already contained in the treasury of tradition, so that the original Ignatian vision of *Divina Majestas* and *Gloria* was no longer able to create any original mode of conceptual expression.

SUAREZ[1] has recourse to the Scotist notion of 'univocal being', the *ens ut sic*, which as the simplest and most universal concept (*conceptus simplicissimus*)[2] is the precise object of metaphysical enquiry. This concept *habet unam simplicem rationem formalem adaequatam*[3] in itself, which, as 'abstracted' (*praecisa*) though 'real'[4] (*ratio quasi actualis*),[5] returns in all its logical *inferiora*, to whose level we 'descend' (*descenditur*)[6] in order to be able to conceive of individuality. If we wished to relinquish this univocal, all-embracing notion for the sake of an unassailable *analogia entis*, then all the clarity and the certainty of metaphysics would be threatened, 'and so we ought not to deny the unity of the concept in order to defend the analogy; rather, if we had to relinquish one or other of them, then this would be analogy, which is uncertain, and not the unity of the concept, which is based on certain and demonstrable grounds'.[7] This real concept 'must embrace God' (*debere comprendere Deum*), as well as the angels and all material substances and accidents.[8] A metaphysics which has knowledge of Being as a whole 'includes God in the sphere of its object' (*ut sub objecto suo Deum complectatur*),[9] and it can develop *a priori* the dimensions of Being as such (unity, truth, goodness) without direct reference to the *inferiora* (God and the world),[10] between which, for the first time, analogy and the principle of causality prevail. And yet God is the purest realisation of 'real Being' and thus the precise (material) object of metaphysics, its *objectum primarium ac principale*,[11] whereby of course Scotus' endeavours to constrain metaphysics and to set its limits with respect to theology, are lost sight of, and the vigorous attempts of the nominalists to create room for God's freedom are forgotten. Or rather: because the nominalistic reduction of reality to one plane, whether in terms of concepts (*conceptus*) or of sense experience (*experientia*), has abandoned the totality of actual reality between God and the world, Baroque Neoscholasticism can apparently recreate this by means of a constructive conceptualism. But once freed from the external theological discipline of faith and of the schools, what Suarez pursues with the complete naivety of the schoolman, becomes (as Gustav Siewerth has shown in his fierce analyses)[12] the direct foundation for modern metaphysics from Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz to Kant and Hegel. At the same time, it will unchangingly dominate the clerical activity of philosophical and theological Neoscholasticism (that is to say, beyond Hegel and the collapse of constructive Idealism); this shows clearly that the *de facto* occurrence of the scholasticism of the schools continues to confirm Suarez's naive point of departure, whether or not the latter is formally taught.

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[1] *Disputationes Metaphysicae* (*Opera*, ed. Vivès 1866, 1866, Vols. 25–26).

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[2] *Disp.* 2 sect. 2 nr. 9.
[3] *Ibid.* n. 11.
[4] 1, 1, 26.
[5] 1, 2, 12.
[6] 2, 1, 12.
[7] 2, 2, 36.
[8] 1, 1, 26; *cf.* 1, 1, 19.
[9] 1, 1, 19.
[10] 1, 1, 28; thus also *Disp.* 3.
[11] 1, 1, 19.

The conjunction of the opening of the heart's most inward idea of God within the biblical sphere and Greek, metaphysical speculation on the Θεῖον and the Πᾶν, this conjunction in which speculation apparently gains the academic qualifications to know *about* God, his essence, his thinking and his acting within the Creation, salvation and perfection (in faith), to receive Being laid bare to its depths and to manipulate it in these depths by conceptual means, with the support of an immense body of tradition which is composed of what has been 'worked out' partly dogmatically and partly in the schools, and has been already objectively thought (and which therefore is not to be thought through afresh): this conjunction stands behind metaphysics as it exists in the modern period both in the Church and beyond. A symptomatic expression of this was the controversy over grace between the school of Bañez and the Molinists, the pitiful controversy *De Auxiliis*, in which the young Society of Jesus allowed itself to become entangled and the very problematic of which presupposes that the theological metaphysician can peer from above into the interaction of the *Causa Prima* with the *causa secunda*, and that its precise, formal expressions and distinctions can be reduced to a single order of absolute validity. This is in essence the claim of the ancient Gnosis, and it is not so surprising therefore that at the outset of the Counter-Reformation the Augustinian General, Cardinal Giles of Viterbo, should have attempted in his 'Schechina' to renew the *Speculatio Majestatis* of the Kabbala and to transform it along Christian lines.[13] The Neoscholastic closed circle is virtually unbreakable: since the biblical revelation of God's depths, which the one who possesses the Spirit 'searches' together with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2.10–12), apparently invites us to bypass the philosophical mystery of Being, and since, with the disappearance of the sense of philosophical mystery, the sense of theological mystery also dissolves, and this, according to the axiom *gratia supponit, non destruit, elevat naturam*, ought to be an intensified and deepened feeling for the mystery of glory. But the clerical and Neoscholastic methods of instruction with their apologetic all-knowingness no longer convey any sense of this feeling, and they have a corresponding effect upon the preaching and the instruction of the Church, if not indeed on the prayer-life and contemplation even of those Christians to whose attitude this kind of enlightenment stands in stark and insurmountable contradiction. Whereas during the early Middle Ages, up to about the time of Bonaventure, theology and (objective) mysticism were indivisible—something to which Augustine and Dionysius, Gregory the Great and Erigena, the Cistercians and the Victorines, the Joachimites and the Spiritual Franciscans well attest—the 'mystic' is now identified increasingly in terms of his subjective experience of glory and is stamped as an exception, while the 'rule' is represented by the strictly logical and intellectualist metaphysics of the Church. Those who are concerned to restore the lost unity (Gerson, Nicolas of Cusa, Petavius, Gerbert, etc.) remain outsiders and often pursue paths which lead to speculative Idealism. What is characteristic here is that in Neoscholasticism, when the feeling for the glory of God was lost—that glory which pervades the Revelation as a whole but which is not perceived by conceptual rationalism, or concerning which it remains silent, or which it wholly removes by means of method—there perished also the sensorium for the glory of Creation (as 'aesthetics') which shone through the whole theology of the Fathers and of the Early and High Middle Ages. This sensorium passed pre-eminently to the poets and artists (from Dante to Petrarch, to Milton, Herder, Hölderlin, Keats . . .), but also to the great natural scientists (such as Kepler and Newton, the early Kant, Goethe, Carus, Fechner, Teilhard), whereby Neoscholasticism found itself doubly bereft and denuded.

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[12] *Das Schicksal der Metaphysik von Thomas zu Heidegger* (1959).

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[13] Ed. by F. Secret in: *Edizione Nazionale dei Classici del Pensiero Italiano* II 10–11, Rome 1959.

The conceptualisation of Being in Scotus and Suarez annuls the experience of reality and encloses thought in a sphere which is characterised by bare, essential predications, by the play of the analysis and synthesis of concepts, and accordingly by the inner-subjective opposition of the act of thought (*noesis*) and the content of thought (*noema*). That bare, essential predication represents an irreducible contradiction, becomes clear once again in Suarez. Although Being as the highest category is the 'most perfect'[14] category, it is also the one which is most hollow, because it excludes its own determinations, which all nevertheless belong to and are Being, so that this category is filled only through contraction to the level of the singular.[15] Within this contradictory space, which Suarez—following Scotus[16]—calls 'real', reason plays its game of juxtaposing concepts in statements before resolving them again into other, homogeneous concepts. For Suarez, as for Scotus, the word 'real' denotes that which is compossible, realisable, not that which is actual, for which only the *positio extra causas* remains, though this can no longer be the object of thought, because the essence as the 'real' within comprehensive Being has already been thoroughly individualised. This is the case unless, of course, we conceive of comprehensive Being (as a concept!) as reality, which would mean, however, that all that is possible is actual. But it is evident that this cannot be said, and thus actuality remains excluded from 'reality' as something which has no place and which cannot be thought. Or if it is comprehensive Being which is reality, and existence as that which is possible is constituted by its 'being ordered to Being' (*ordo ad esse*), then it will be constituted beyond God (and thus *vis-à-vis* him) in the sphere of comprehensive Being,[17] whereby the formal precondition for 'Molinism' emerges, in which the creature attains an ultimate particularity and freedom which is independent of the will of God.

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[14] 1, 1, 30.

[15] From this point of view, all-embracing Being is *minus perfectum* than that which is specific: *ibid.*

[16] 2, 4, 14.

On the other hand, the concept of Being belongs to the subject; the latter stands in opposition to the former—and to all the concepts which inhere in the former—as to that which is conceived. For Suarez these do indeed 'represent' the so-called 'external world', but these concepts, which are 'abstracted' 'intentions', are understood to be objectified representations of 'things'. It is a short step from here to Descartes and Kant; less than that even, for here the Copernican revolution has already taken place, viz. the turning from Being to mental concepts, from things (and God) existing *in themselves* to things conceived as existing 'for me' and 'from me'. From now on, the subject can regard itself as legislative reason. In an original synthesis, it pronounces judgment *a priori* in its luminous space over the initial concept of Being, which it has been given and which lies open to its comprehension, to which judgment other *a priori* and *a posteriori* judgments attach themselves. And it can assure itself of the correctness of this judgment through reflection upon itself in its action (*cogito*), and then either seek the ultimate certainty in that kind of reason whose postulates are archetypal, in which it participates and which is God (Descartes), or understand this participation as an ultimate identity of the finite with the infinite subject and, in conjunction with it, project and creatively produce possible real essences (*concipere*): statically (as in Spinoza) or dynamically (as in Leibniz and Fichte), or both together (as in Hegel). Beyond the realm of these projected essences, there remain at best those pure, irrational postulations *extra causas*, those positions which Ockhamism understood to be worthless atomic points of reality, and which in their lack of depth and their indivisibility already for Ockhamism are left over as pure matter: as matter which for Suarez is no longer (Aristotelian-Thomist) pure potency with respect to the act of form, but now appears—though colourless and actionless—to be constituted as actual Being. These are that 'passive mass', which appears in Descartes as *res extensa*, and which is the sole representative and last remnant of the external world and of the *Ding an sich*, the substratum of the 'classical physics', which in materialism (where the unreality of the conceptual realm which is constituted by the subject is perceived) must be raised to the level of the one sole reality which supports all things, even spirit and God. This *res extensa* is the pure quantitative element, the unlimited empire of numbers, and it is here that the metaphysical origins lie for the ideal of mastering the whole of the external world through numerical calculations. An ideal of this kind could never have arisen if the whole of reality had not already been stripped of its living depths and spontaneity, its own truth, goodness and beauty, and had thus been set in unmediated contradiction to the *res cogitans*. The foundations of our 'modern' materialism were laid long ago in the intellectual history of our Western, Christian tradition.

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[17] 31, 4, 5. Siewerth, *op. cit.*, p. 179, and even more sharply on p. 186.

Besides the logical and conceptual apprehension of Being, there has existed since the death of Thomas another parallel strain, which achieved its greatest impact during the Germanic age: the position that Being is God. Having developed initially in independence from the logical and conceptual thread, it soon becomes intertwined with the latter, and thus possesses its own history in this limited form up to the time of Hegel.

d. Being as God

ECKHART

Eckhart, thanks to his disciples Suso and Tauler and their innumerable successors, has become a father of modern intellectual history and spirituality. He is further confirmation of what the Origen-Evagrius case proved in the history of the early Church: ecclesiastical condemnations of individual extremist propositions from the writings of creative minds, even their proscription for posterity, do not prevent them bearing thousandfold fruit. They leave their mark on ideas which, consciously or unconsciously, esoterically or openly, have a determining influence on later thinkers in their most fundamental stances. Eckhart's case has also perhaps a personal resemblance to Origen's: an originally very pure Christian piety clothes itself in an unsuitable garment that ill fits the body. Origen expresses Christianity in Gnostic-Hellenistic categories. Eckhart has to (and therefore wants to) translate a very pure Christian experience of God in the technical language of traditional and contemporary Scholastic philosophy. No more than Origen is he an original philosopher like his confrère Thomas. He treats the great mass of philosophical speculation inherited from the past—Platonic, Aristotelian, Arabic, Patristic, Thomistic—in the way the Christians of Rome used the ruined temples of their city: as quarries.

So we have to divest Eckhart's wholly limpid and shadowless experience of God of its conceptual and verbal attire. It is an experience that is authentically Christian, even in its most daring conceptions, but it clothes itself in garments of the past and, thus disguised, bequeaths to the future a legacy with consequences almost beyond measure: Luther, but also Nicolas of Cusa, Spinoza, Böhme, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. Emphasising this in no way implies that Eckhart was 'really' a pantheistic Idealist or a Protestant with a forensic doctrine or justification. However, ideas have their own historical dynamic; they are governed by and obey their own laws, regardless of the meaning they had for their originator. In calling God 'Being', Eckhart performed an act of absolute religious devotion. He availed himself of a language, rooted in antiquity, which Augustine and Boethius, Erigena and Gilbert, had used with impunity. But he applied it directly to God and the creature's immediate dependence on God[1] in such a way that the derivation of a reality of being from God seemed to him like God's coming to being, as being's coming out of God. The assertion 'God is being' runs through virtually all his works, and the Thomistic mediation of the non-subsistent *actus essendi* is lost from sight. That loss has a spiritual cause. What Eckhart seeks is the total transference of all being, all unity, truth, goodness and glory to the one and only God, loved and worshipped above all things. Nothing that can be said and thought about God is too great, too bold, too unconditional: *id quo majus cogitari non potest.*[2]

The source is an experience of glory, which unfolds into four propositions and thus defines Eckhart's theological aesthetic:

1. God is beyond everything explicable by finality (the good) and propositions (the true). He is 'the Whyless'. The only thing worthy of God and appropriate to Him is what takes place 'whylessly' as a free act of homage. Shining through the face of things is an unquestionable and unfathomable mystery. 'The rose is without why; it blooms because it blooms'.[3] The words are those of Angelus Silesius, who had the profoundest understanding of Eckhart. He also expresses the other aspect of the truth: this 'whylessness' of the rose points to that first principle which is God:

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[1] *Non enim ipsum esse et quae cum ipso convertibiliter idem sunt* [the transcendentals] *superveniunt rebus tamquam posteriora, sed sunt priora omnibus in rebus. Ipsum enim esse non accipit quot sit in aliquo nec ab aliquo nec per aliquid, nec advenit nec supervenit alicui, sed praevenit et prius est omnium. Propter quod esse omnium est immediate a causa prima* (*Prol. gen. op. trip.*; L I 153). Our citations are from the critical edition: Latin works = L, German works = G, then volume and page number; n = marginal numbers; S = Sermons; D = Instructive Discources; C = Book of Divine Consolation; N = Of the Nobleman. For supplementary material: Joseph Quint, *M. E. Deutsche Predigten und Traktate* (Hanser, Munich, 1955) = Q; F. Pfeiffer, *M. E.* (1957) = Pf.

[2] *Prol. gen.* (Amplon) L I 38, 41; *Tab. prol.* L I 129; *Prol. gen.* L I 156f.; *Prol. op. propos.* L I 166f., *ibid.*, 181; *In Exod.* 3 n. 16, L II 21f.; *In Sap.* 5 n. 55, II 382; *Serm.* 6 n. 53: *Deus communis est: omne ens et omnium esse ipse est:* L IV 51. *In Exod.* 3 n. 21: *Omnis perfectio eget ipso, qui est ipsum esse . . . modus est ipsius esse, ipsi innititur, ipsi inhaeret:* L II 28; *ibid.*, 15 n. 29: *Deus autem esse est et solus dat esse immediate omnibus*: L II 34; cf n. 177 152; S 3 G I 55–56.

[3] *Wandersmann* I 289.

The rose which here thine outer eye doth see
Hath bloomed in God eternally.[4]

Eckhart himself speaks thus: 'In the Beloved, Love contemplates not How and Why, but purely and simply the spotless essential form. Thus the Holy Spirit is the Love between Father and Son, a pure and generous outflow, beyond efficient and final cause.'[5] The ultimate whylessness of love, of freedom, but also of thought and form: this is the root of Eckhart's strange statements about the 'uncreatedness' of the latter in the creature.[6]

2. This whylessness is perceived in the wonder of eternal being, its being always now, its fontal character (*fontalitas*),[7] the fact that it is unceasingly occurring and disclosing itself. Eckhart identifies this with God's eternal birth from God, the perpetual now of the Son's generation from the Father: *semper nascitur.*[8] When that birth takes place for me and in me, when I am born with the Son from the Father, then God is born for me as well.

3. What this comes down to is that being a Christian means simply, unresistingly, letting God be born, letting God happen. Eckhart calls this pure *fiat* the *passivum*, which is the very heart of the glorification of God. *passivum generaliter est laus, honor, gloria sui essentialis activi . . ., passivum enim . . . clamat et testatur in omni et ex omni sui perfectione et bono suimet egestatem et miseriam, activi vero sui superioris praedicat divitias et misericordiam.* The glorifier must not, therefore, take up the Glorified into himself as if he were trying to keep and possess Him for himself. No, it all has to be *quasi in transitu*, an endurance, and not a permanent possession acquired by endurance. So it does not belong to the glorifier, but comes from the Other and is in the Other, to whom all honour and glory are due, for that is proper to Him. 'For example, an

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[4] *Ibid.*, I 108.

[5] *In Eccli.* 24 n. 8, L II 237.

[6] *In Sap.* 1 n. 22, L II 343; Quaestio Utrum laus Dei etc. n. 11; *arca in mente non est creabilis* L V 60; *Serm.* 29 n. 301: *intelligere est increabile* L IV 268/.

[7] *In Sap.* 1 n. 38, L II 359.

[8] *In Joh.* 1 n. 8, L III 9.

expensive coat that servant wears when he attends his master does not give honour to the servant but to the master.'[9]

4. Man is meant, then, to be built up beyond himself in God. His course is a flowing stream, like the flowing essence of God and His grace: *Gnade enist niht ein blîbende dinc, si ist allez in eime gewerdenne.*[10] According to Paul, in the glorifying vision, we are transformed by the Spirit of the Lord into God's glory. Now 'it is said of the first of the just, of the Son of God, that He is the reflection of God's glory and bears the very stamp of His nature (Heb. 1.3), and this what we want to say: namely, that the virtues, justice and so on are unceasingly occurring assimilations rather than something with a fixed form, entrenched and rooted in the virtuous person. They are in a state of permanent becoming like gleams of light in ether and reflections in a mirror'.[11] Thus the whole of the life of faith is a movement towards divine sonship: *est ergo credere et fides quasi motus et fieri ad esse filium.*[12]

These four fundamental themes place Eckhart in a line with Benedict, Francis, and Ignatius: they signify a life of total disappearance, pure transparency to the ever greater glory of God. There can be no doubt that this and this alone is what Eckhart, as preacher, philosopher, theologian, and poet, with all the conceptual and linguistic means at his disposal, was trying to say. And since this was his one intent, he could treat all forms of expression with a sovereign freedom. He melted down the philosophy of every thinker and recast it into the central theological mystery of the divine birth. Appealing to Augustine's use of Scripture in the last three books of the *Confessions*, he was able to relate dynamically each and every Biblical text to the one mystery, from the same passage opening up very different perspectives on the one thing needful. In particular, he could and had to deepen his interpretation of the Genesis creation narrative by connecting it with the prologue of St John's gospel: the eternal generation of the Word is the ground and goal of all creation and gives it its form and measure. He was well aware that treating the Word of God in this way had something poetic about it. But everything that the infinite God wants to express about Himself is *sensus litteralis*; God, says Augustine, 'has made Scripture so fruitful that everything the mind can elicit from it He has seeded and sealed therein'. 'Plato himself and all the ancient poet-theologians (*sive theologizantes sive poematizantes*) used to teach about God, nature, and ethics by means of imagery, for the poets never wrote fables without meaning.'[13] But all philosophy becomes a parable, which, once detached from the context of a doctrinal system, points to the mystery.[14]

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[9] *Lib. parab. Gen.* 1 n. 25, L I 495–496.

[10] *Sprüche* 6 (Pf 599).

[11] *In Sap.* 1 n. 45, L II 368. The major aesthetic text in Paul (2 Cor 3.18) is cited by Eckhart with predilection: *cf. In Joh.* n. 106, L III 91; *ibid.*, n. 119, L III 104; *ibid.*, n. 155, L III 128; B 2 G V 32.

[12] *In Joh.* 1 n. 158, L III 131.

The mystery is the mystery of absolute love, the Love that created the world out of love[15] in order to shine resplendent in it. For the man who has received God into his innermost soul, 'all things taste of God, and God's image can be seen in all things; for him God is gleaming (*blinket*) all the time.[16] God shines (*liuhtet*) as brightly in worldly things as in the most divine.[17] At all times and in all circumstances God is aglow (*liuhtet*).[18] 'Man should grasp God in all things'.[19] He need not, therefore, flee the world; he has only to 'learn inner solitude ... to break through things to reach his God *in them*'.[20] Just as the thirsty man has the constant thought of drink in mind, so the man who loves God constantly thinks of God. However, he must not make do with a 'thought

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[13] *Lip. parab. Gen. Prol.* L I 450–451. Reference to the last books of the *Confessions*: *Prol. in opus Expos.* II, L II 321.

[14] *Cf.* Vladimir Lossky, *Théologie négative et connaissance de Dieu chez Maître Eckhart* (1968), p. 125. Lossky's great study is now the most accurate and unbiased analysis of Eckhart's thought.

[15] *Creaturae productae amore*: *Lib. parab. Gen.* n. 45, L I 125.

[16] D 6, G V 205.

[17] D 7, G V 210.

[18] D 21, G V 276.

[19] D 6, G V 203.

[20] D 6, G V 207.

God'.[21] Instead he must so humble and impoverish himself before God that the true and living God fills all the space within him.[22] God is nearest of all to us, but near through His loving will, and so it is only he who seeks and does God's will who dwells in God.[23] He is to seek 'only the most precious will of God and nothing else; whatever God then sends him, let him immediately accept and deem his best possession and be fully and completely contented with it'.[24] Transparent, pure obedience is 'being of one will with God, so that one wills all that God wills'.[25] Obedience is the 'virtue above all virtues' and the one perfect work that gives all other works their worth and fruitfulness.[26] It is 'the pure way to return to God'[27] and, at the same time, 'the true and best penance of all',[28] a perpetual attitude of confession before God, laying bare all that is one's own, offering it, handing it over.[29] It is the surrender of all finite images, exterior and interior, which as acquired and defended possessions can be played off against God and prevalent a total and transcendental opening up of the heart. The heart should be pure wax in the hands of God:[30] then the whole man, existentially and in free self-realisation, actually is what as spirit he potentially is: *quodammodo omnia*, and therein *capax Dei*.[31] But just as the 'intellect is "nothing at all" in order to understand all',[32] and just as the eye must be free of all colour if it is to perceive all colours,[33] so must the lover of God be calm and serenely surrendered (*gelassen*) if he is to make full room for God in himself.

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[21] D 6, G V 205.

[22] 'The soul is more closely united to God than soul and body, which make up *one* human being' (D 20, G V 269). 'Man must in no sense ever regard himself as distant from God' (D 17, G V 249).

[23] 'For the man who surrenders himself to God and seeks with all diligence only His will, the best is whatever God gives him' (S 4 G I 61).

[24] D 22, G V 285.

[25] C 2, G V 22.

[26] D 1, G V 185–186.

[27] C 1, G V 12.

[28] D 16, G V 244.

[29] D 21, G V 275; *cf.* S 11, G I 185–186: 'Nothing should be hidden within us that we are not prepared to expose completely and hand over entirely to God.'

[30] C 2, G V 55.

[31] *Expos. Gen.* 1 n. 155, L I 270–271.

[32] *In Joh.* 1 n. 100, L III 86.

Eckhart's *Gelassenheit* is one of the most beautiful illustrations of that unchanging Christian challenge of the saints which in the last chapter was described as the necessary condition of a Christian transcendental aesthetic. 'Whoever wants to receive all things must also give away all things: that is equitable trade and fair exchange.'[34] For 'the more we have of our own, the less we own of Him'. That is why poverty of spirit is the first of the Beatitudes in the Gospel.[35] 'The nobler things are, the more inclusive and universal they are; love is noble because it is all-inclusive'.[36] In the form of *Gelassenheit*, it is the organ of universal receptivity. All finite things are only truly known and received when they are accepted as the gift of the infinite Giver, who wants to give Himself in them; yet only the person who is serenely surrendered (*gelassen*) is capable of that.[37] Although he does make reference to Seneca and Stoic indifference, Eckhart's interpretation of them is completely Christian.[38] Indifference 'in adversity and prosperity, in sorrow and in joy',[39] means having the same love for all that God decrees, and thus, with the same love, deeply and gladly loving all men, who are of equal dignity with me.[40] Paul was prepared to get every one of his brethren into heaven at the price of his own damnation.[41] 'So long as you love just one person less than yourself, you are not truly loving yourself . . . In one man all men; and this man is God and man.'[42] Even though he is not constantly affirming it, it is self-evident for Eckhart that this great love is only mediated through Christ; it is the love He had for us, the love He gave us through His Passion.[43] True renunciation is based 'upon the precious Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect work of expiation; the more a man is conformed to it, the more all sins and punishments for sin fall from him. Moreover, the man must accustom himself to conform himself always, in all his actions, to the life and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, in all he does and consents to, all he endures and experiences. And in doing this, let him keep [Christ] before His eyes, just as He had us before His eyes.'[44] Suso and Tauler will recall the Passion more frequently and penetratingly, but they will add nothing new to what their Master had said before them. The indifferent person has handed himself over to God in everything, and so God takes over care and responsibility for him. To be in contact with him is to be in contact with God; God takes over his suffering, which comes to him only by way of God and in that way is transfigured by God.[45] Transfigured, for one no longer knows whether this suffering is bliss with God precisely because it is love, and one 'would be glad to suffer incessantly for love of God and of the good'. Or is this suffering a 'super-suffering', given infinite dimensions in God?[46] 'Since the Son of God could not suffer in His divinity and in eternity, the heavenly Father sent Him into time so that He could become man and capable of suffering'.[47] However it is experienced, 'only the sorrow that is suffering in God's will and from God's will is perfect sorrow.'[48] Eckhart thus completely transforms Indian/Greek/Arab *apatheia*: it is the opposite of a technique of preserving oneself from sorrow; it is not a question of pain or pleasure but of the total gift of oneself to eternal love.

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[33] *Ibid.*; according to Aristotle, *De an.* II (418 b 26). The image constantly recurs in Eckhart. C 2, G V 28.

[34] D 23, G V 295.

[35] D 23, G V 97.

[36] S 4, G I 67.

[37] D 21, G V 278.

[38] C 2, G V 20; C 3, G V 60; N, G V 111.

[39] S 5a, G I 81; S 6, G I 102; S 11, G I 200.

[40] S 5a, G I 79.

[41] D 10, G V 223–224; C 2, G V 21; *ibid.*, 26; *ibid.*, 40; S 12, D I 195; *In Exod.* 32 n. 270, L II 217.

[42] S 12, G I 195.

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[43] D 12, G v 232.

[44] D 16, G V 246; *cf.* D 17, G V 249; D 18, G V 259.

[45] 'And so it is that God suffers before I suffer, and if I suffer for the sake of God, all my suffering easily becomes for me consolation and joy' (C 2, G V 52). 'Everything that the good man suffers for the sake of God he suffers in God, and God is with him, suffering in his suffering'. And then 'my suffering loses its sorrow, and my sorrow is in God, and my sorrow is God' (*ibid.*, 53–54; *cf.* S 2, G I 36–37); 'The man . . . entrusted to God does not suffer. Were he though to suffer, the heart of God would be struck' (S 13, G I 214).

[46] C 2, G V 39.

[47] C 2, G V 48.

[48] C 2, G V 22.

And now indifference is seen in a Marian light: 'remaining maidenly and free, without any obstacle to supreme truth'. 'For a human being to conceive God in himself is good, and in that conceiving he is a virgin. But for God to become fruitful in him is better, for the only gratitude for a gift is to be fruitful with the gift. The spirit is a wife, in its gratitude giving birth in return, when it gives birth to Jesus once more in God's fatherly heart.'[49] 'As soon as Mary gave up her will, she immediately became the true Mother of the eternal Word and straightway conceived God.'[50] The more masculine the man is in giving and the more feminine the woman in conceiving, so the more perfectly successful are generation and birth. The more naked the spirit makes itself for receiving God, the better it conceives Him. This can be expressed in a philosophical analogy: 'Anaxagoras says that the intellect must be separated, unmixed, and naked if it is to be able to distinguish. Aristotle himself says that the intellect must be like an empty, that is, naked tablet. The greater the nakedness, the deeper the union. Therefore, the absolutely first act, which is being or form, rightly befits *prima materia*, since among all the powers of receptivity and acceptance it alone is utterly naked and pure.'[51] It is the nakedness of Paradise, a nakedness of which the spirit is not ashamed for it is the state in greatest conformity to its nature.[52] Again there is a philosophical analogy: 'Just as the thing seen exists for seeing and, *vice versa*, the seeing for the thing to be seen, the two coinciding in the act of seeing', just as, as a general rule, 'desire and the desired, active and passive, seek each other out',[53] so God and the ready soul come together in the 'kiss of his mouth' (Cant. 1.1). If, on the other hand, in the act of spiritual conception, we place obstacles, 'we do violence to God and kill Him'.[54]

[49] S 2, G I 26f.

[50] D 11, G V 226.

[51] *Lib. Parab. Gen.* 1 n. 32, L I 501.

[52] *Ibid.*, n. 124, L I 589.

[53] *In Joh.* 1 n. 177, L III 146.

[54] S 4, G I 74.

The doctrine of *Gelassenheit* attains its Christian completion in a Trinitarian context. The Marian womb receives the seed of the Father, and since the Father is eternally, at every moment, begetting the Son, the eternal procession of the Son takes place in the pure medium of receptivity. 'Were God to find man as poor as *this*, God would do His own work, and man would suffer God',[55] 'and the Father gives birth to His only-begotten Son as truly as in Himself . . . and [man's] spirit with the Father gives birth to the same only-begotten Son and to itself as the same Son and is the same Son in this light and is the truth'.[56] The mention of man's spirit shows that Eckhart remains aware that here the creature is caught up by grace into the inner life of the Trinity. But for Eckhart creation takes place for the sake of grace, nature at its summit touches supernature, createdness has its deepest and most secret roots in Uncreatedness and in the eternal procession of the Son, which happens now and at every moment and for ever. 'Where the Father gives birth to His Son in the innermost ground, there this human nature is suspended.'[57]

In God's birth in man rests the freedom that makes man at home in the Immemorial, the Absolute, the Unfathomable, in a depth from which, according to Eckhart, God Himself originates. The divine birth is the root of all ethics, for the act of giving oneself up totally in order to receive is *the* work *par excellence*, an interior, spiritual work that gives value to all exterior works and in fact takes the place of all exterior works, for it contains all fruitfulness in itself: 'this work is to love God . . . whereby all that the man with a pure and perfect will wants and would like to do in all good works is already done'.[58] True, the exterior work gives testimony to the interior,[59] but—here Eckhart is at odds with Aquinas and anticipates Luther—it 'adds in no way whatever to the goodness of the interior work'.[60] In God's begetting of

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[55] Q 307.

[56] S 2, G I 41.

[57] S 5b, G I 87.

[58] C 2, G V 38.

[59] *In Joh.* n. 169, L III 139.

[60] C 2, G V 40.

Himself in the soul is also to be found every commandment: the self-imprinting form as such bestows, in a process which happens now and at every moment and for ever, the natural law on the creature: 'Just as fire, by producing and communicating its fiery form in the sufferer, imparts to him all that goes with fire . . . so God, who in His perfection is Being and Goodness and Kindness, imprints what is good, imparting it, commanding it, moving and promoting and inspiring it.'[61] The content of such an ethic is the ever-greaterness[62] of self-dispossession: the disowning of all 'owning' (the fetter of self)[63], ever deeper poverty—the word now receives its comprehensive spiritual and interior meaning: letting go of self,[64] or even inadequacy, 'which God imposes on his friends so they lose every support . . . and find their support in Him alone.'[65] And 'the more complete and naked this poverty, the more one possesses this possession': God.[66] But man must let go even of this possession; he must 'for God's sake let go of God'.[67] This means going out into the 'wilderness', like Yahweh's leading of His people into the wilderness to wed her there (Hosea 2.14),[68] the wilderness where 'the spirit has no more why'.[69] But, in imitation of Christ, this way is a way that leads below—a *homo* of the *humus, humilis*:[70] 'Whoever would receive from above must of necessity be below in true humility'.[71] He must abide 'in humble self-annihilation and abasement',[72] still better by bearing the inflicted shame,[73] even the inner shame of insuperable temptations.[74] He must renounce interior consolation and joys in prayer, when the needs of his fellow men demand it.[75] But he must also come to terms with the limitations of his path to God; if he is really poor, in the one 'way' he has all others.[75] The more expropriated he is of his own justice, the more penetrated he is by the justice of God; indeed, he becomes (in the divine birth) a 'Word of Justice' himself.[77] The sermons on the chief commandment give the key and conclusion to all this: the highest love 'with all one's heart' for the highest Beloved 'is the standard for every lover and beloved'. Self-love is measured by love for God, not for the sake of His rewards or His attributes, but solely because God is God, and accordingly one's neighbour. According to St Thomas, each member or part loves the whole more than itself. This transcendence is natural, but nature is rooted in grace, because God is love, and to share in God's inner life of love is beyond all claim and thus beyond all reward.[78]

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[61] *Lib. Parab. Gen.* 2 n. 87–88, L I 549f.

[62] Eckhart continually insists on the infinitude and unendingness of the striving for an ever greater love, devotion, purity, availability. 'In this life a man never lets go of himself so totally that he finds himself in the position of not having to let himself go further' (D 4, G V 196). 'You never get to the end of progress' (D 22, G V 290).

[63] D 10, G V 218; S 6, G I 102.

[64] D 3, G V 194.

[65] D 19, G V 260–261.

[66] D 23, G V 299.

[67] S 12, G I 196.

[68] C 2, G V 46; *cf.* S 12, G I 193.

[69] Q 291.

[70] M, G V 115; *Serm.* 2 n. 17, L IV 19; *Serm.* 22 n. 206, L IV 191; *Exod.* 20 n. 240, L II 197 and passim.

[71] S 4, G I 73.

But this is not enough for Eckhart. He collects together everything beautiful and sublime he has found in the wide realm of philosophy to give form and multiple expression to the mystery. He heightens philosophy's powers of expression and raises it above its own level of systematisation. He uses it in a paradoxical and hyperbolic way, approaching problems from a variety of angles, thereby proving he is unafraid of contradiction. His audacities are intended to arouse a sense of the mystery. The whole of tradition supplies him with his material, which, sharpened and intensified, he bequeathes to a distant future. That future will not think, as he does, with a worshipping heart, and so will misuse his words and insights for the purposes of its Titanic Idealism.

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[72] S 5a, G I 82.
[73] D 17, G V 254.
[74] D 9, G V 214–215.
[75] D 10, G V 221.
[76] D 22, G V 285.
[77] *In Joh.* 1 n. 15, L III; *ibid.*, n. 50, L III 50; n. 171, L III 140.
[78] *Serm.* 30 and 40, L IV 271f., 335f.

If God is Being, Not-God is Non-Being. 'All creatures are pure nothing. I am not saying that they are of little value or really something after all. They are pure nothing.' And here is the proof: 'Add the whole world to God, and you have no more than if you had God alone.'[79] 'Our whole being consists in nothing coming to nothing.'[80] 'God begins where the creature ends.'[81] If God (and the idea in Him of the creature) is light, the creature, as it is in itself, is darkness. The words of the Gospel about the light shining in the darkness, about John not being the light but bearing witness to the light, sum up the whole God/creature relation. 'The just man or the just thing in itself is dark and does not shine. But in justice itself, its principle, it does shine. Justice shines in the just man, but the just man, being inferior, does not comprehend it.'[82] This is Plotinian: the inferior can never adequately express the superior, which is why the idea in the artist's mind is always more perfect than its material realisation.[83] This suggests new analogies: the creature relates to God like pure matter to form.[84] Its supreme opportunity is supreme passivity. God fulfils it as light pervades pure air. However, though light absorbs heat and retains it after the sun goes down, 'light puts down no roots and does not remain in a medium once the luminous body has gone'.[85] The fact that the creature takes into itself (as air absorbs heat) the gift or rather 'loan'[86] of God's being is less important to Eckhart than God's preservation of the creature in being through the perpetual event-act of His presence. Thus to be creature is to be constantly drinking God and, in the drinking, constantly thirsting, 'so that it is constantly in a state of becoming, and the becoming is its being'.[87] 'He who feeds on me', says

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[79] S 4, G I 69–70; *cf. In Exod.* 15 n. 40, L II 45.

[80] D 23, G V 294.

[81] P 5b, D I 92.

[82] *In Joh.* 1 n. 22, L III 18; *Lib. Parab. Gen.* n. 56.

[83] *Cf.* preceding volume, pp. 280ff. (Eng. tr.). The axiom frequently recurs in Eckhart: *In Joh.* n. 22; Lib. Parab. Gen. n. 43, n. 56, n. 61–62.

[84] *Prol. in op. propos.* n. 17, L I 176.

[85] *Lib. Parab. Gen.* n. 24, L I 494; *In Joh.* n. 182, L III 150.

[86] C 2, G V 36.

[87] *Lib. Parab. Gen.* n. 23, L I 493.

Wisdom, 'hungers more'. In his exegesis of this passage Eckhart distinguishes 'eating', in the sense of taking being into oneself, from 'drinking', in the sense of ever greater dependence on the grace of being.[88] And the more active the work of God, the more passive must the creature's disposition be, for only thus do the two become one in the pure act-event. This is a participation in the intra-divine act/unity of begetting and being begotten.[89] Thus 'building is the same as being built; either both are or neither is'.[90] True, in God the persons are distinct, but the event of the Godhead is one.[91] Because of this divine principle all natural events have a threefold character: they always involve *generatio* (generation, bringing forth), both active and passive, and the mutual love breathing within it.[92]

If God is pure event, Being does not suffice Him as a name: 'Being is His forecourt', 'His Temple is Intellect',[93] pure *per se* and *ad se*, spirit. The *quaestio* whether in God Being and Intellect (*intelligere*) are identical, is first of all answered by Eckhart in the affirmative, in keeping with tradition, but then he explains that the *actus secundus* is nobler than the *actus primus*; consequently, 'God does not know because He is, but He is because He knows; knowledge is the foundation (*fundamentum*) of His being'.[94] But in knowing—here is a further philosophical elaboration—things have not real but intentional being. For example, an image as an image has no being in itself, 'and the more attention you pay its being, the further you are led away from the thing whose image it is . . . Thus what belongs to the intellect is as such non-existent . . . and so all that is in God is beyond being and utterly intellect'.[95] From this point Eckhart takes a few swift steps forward: he sees the depths of God as absolute identity that comes to be—in thought, Eckhart transposes it beyond the

[88] *Super Eccli.* 24 n. 42–61, L II 270–290.
[89] *Serm.* 2 n. 6, L IV 8.
[90] *Lib. Parab. Gen.* 1 n. 51, L I 519.
[91] *Ibid.*, n. 14, L I 484; *In Joh.* n. 24, L III 20.
[92] *In Sap.* 1 n. 28, L II 348.
[93] S 9, G I 150.
[94] *Quaest. Paris.* n. 4, L V 40.
[95] *Ibid.*, n. 7–8, L V 43–44.

Trinitarian process.[96] Now if this depth is spirit and freedom, something of the spiritual creature must be grounded in its ineffability. Eckhart calls this the 'spark' or 'little castle': 'the intellect as such is uncreatable.'[97] This is just like Plotinus: the innermost motive core of the intellect (νοῦς) is the One (ἕν) beyond all *discursus*. At this point Eckhart reorders the transcendentals: truth (according to Thomas) is more in the mind, goodness is more in things, the mind tends towards the good. And so, Eckhart concludes, the Good is deeper than the True,[98] since it presupposes that being is placed *extra causas*,[99] and that means a *casus*, a *descensus*,[100] a fall, a descent, exile in the external.[101] This necessitates a Plotinian 'reassembly', the return to 'where there is no opposition. When the soul comes into the light of reason, it knows of no opposition'.[102]

Here Eckhart's entire speculative edifice enters into crisis. The philosophical material threatens to overpower the content it expresses. Parmenides and Melissus are invoked,[103] all the Platonists, Origen, Denys must play their part, Eriugena's cosmology is at hand. The elevation of intellect above love; the argument that it is primarily the intellect and only secondarily the will that is free;[104] the interpretation of creaturely perfection as pure relation to God,[105] pure ecstasy, of virtue as something flowing, eternally becoming, without root in the virtuous person, only like the reflection in a mirror, only like a gleam in the air:[106] all of this converges, against Eckhart's intention, towards the abolition of created natures and their proper operations, towards, in fact, an Indian kind of doctrine that everything is God.[107] Eckhart clothes Christian humility and poverty without qualification in the mantle of pagan antiquity's doctrine of departure and return. In so doing, against his most deep-seated intentions, he gives Christian accentuation and enhancement to the pre-Christian religious systems later inherited by the post-Christian *Geistphilosophien*. Thus the gory of Biblical revelation, which Eckhart had authentically glimpsed, is robbed of its expression. And though he knows and says that the innermost point within God is the infinite free 'I' of the God of Israel,[108] it is only a question of time before the move is made to construe all being in terms of that point of identity in the intellect where God and creature coincide. Looking forward from Eckhart to Luther, Hegel, and Heidegger, we can without difficulty discern the inner affinity between these great speculative systems.

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[96] C 2, G V 41; S 10, G I 173.

[97] *Quaest. Paris.* n. 10–11, L V 60.

[98] Lib. Parab. Gen. 1 n. 36, L I 503; *ibid.*, n. 53–55, L I 521–524.

[99] S 8, G I 132; Q 295; *Lib Parab. Gen.* n. 11: *cadit in plura . . . cadit in numerum. Cf.* n. 13 and n. 16, which is expressed in a completely Plotinian way: *natura non facit saltum, sed . . . ordine progressivo deficit paulatim* n. 73: *casus ab uno et per consequens ab ente et a bono. Exp. in sap.* n. 38: *cadit ab uno et cadit in distinctionem* (L II 359).

[100] C 2, G V 41.

[101] *Descendit foris, extra esse producentis et extra ipsius vivere et intelligere, obumbratum umbra temporis, vel saltem factionis* (*Lib. Parab. Gen.* 1 n. 62, L I 529).

[102] S 8, G I 136.

[103] *Prol. op. propos.* n. 5, L I 168.

[104] *Quaest. Paris.* n. 14, L V 62; *cf. Lib. Parab. Gen.* n. 63: *Voluntas autem et amor descendunt ab intellectu et cognitione* (L I 530).

[105] *In Eccli.* 24 n. 4, L II 233.

Luther, in particular, needed only to change the emphasis of one or two points in Eckhart's thought. The creature, after all, is and remains of itself sin and darkness[109] and, when inserted into the justice of God mediated by Christ, is ecstatically outside of itself. To be good is *adhaerere Deo*, something already taught by Augustine. Eckhart calls this adherent trust hope, confidence, love.[110] Luther calls it faith. Of their very nature neither attitude can involve mistrust; both possess interior certainty of salvation;[111] both cover a multitude of sins. Eckhart too stresses that 'the greater and graver the sins, the greater the immense gladness with which

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[106] *In Sap.* 1 n. 45, L II 368.

[107] Rud. Otto, *Westöstliche Mystik* (1926).

[108] Especially in the commentary on Exodus on the text 'I am who I am' (*In Exod.* 3 n. 14f.; *cf. In Eccli.* 24 n. 8–10).

[109] 'Man should consider that, in his natural being, of himself he is nothing but badness and misery. All that is good, all being good, has been lent him by God' (C 2, G V 36).

[110] D 14, G V 36.

[111] D 14, G V 239.

God forgives them.'[112] The exterior work has no value of its own; it is merely the outward radiation of the 'interior work', of 'faith'.[113] Any kind of 'trade with God', even in 'good Christians' is exposed as unbelief.[114] Looking at it in the light of Eckhart, one is hesitant about interpreting Luther's 'forensic' doctrine of justification as simply Nominalist; it may well also have Platonic features. Thus Eckhart can say: 'Being and every perfection . . . such as unity, truth, goodness, light, justice and so on are predicted of God and creatures analogically. Consequently, the good, the just and the like [in creatures] derive their goodness entirely from something outside of themselves, something above them to which they are raised up, namely God.'[115] Karl Barth's doctrine that the real subject of justice and faith in man is God Himself thus becomes unavoidable.[116]

The relation of finite to absolute Spirit will later cease to be seen as the adoration of pure loving abandonment. Eckhart prepares the way for this by interpreting that relation as a kind of speculation knowledge. For 'the secret way is inwards', while the exterior approach to God in the sense of a sacramental theophany (the cosmos and the Church) has almost entirely disappeared. Eckhart, so to speak, stares fascinated at the absolute point of identity with the divine in the subject. It is almost a challenge to speculation, and the distinctions between theism, pantheism, and atheism are immediately blurred. The relation between absolute and empirical subject, once placed at the centre of philosophy, moves inevitably from the atmosphere of prayer to that of concepts or intellectual speculation. And it is precisely through this that something crucial for us takes place: the waning of the category of glory.[117]

[112] D 13, G V 238.

[113] C 2, G V 40.

[114] S 1, G I 6–7.

[115] *In Eccli.* 24 n. 52, L II 281; cf. *In Sap.* 1 n. 41–42, L II 363–364.

[116] 'I say . . . that a good man, inasmuch as he is good, has a property of God'. God is not just the object of what he does but the subject too, 'for *what* he loves is God the Father unbegotten; *the one who loves* is God the Son begotten' (C 2, G V 44).

[117] Paths can be traced from Eckhart that lead not only to an admirer

This waning characterises the post-Christian philosophy of the modern era in contrast to pre-Christian philosophy (from the pre-Socratics through Plato to Plotinus), which had always preserved a glimmer of *doxa*. Scripture in both Old (Wisd. 13.1–5) and New Testaments (Rom. 1.18f.; Acts 17.22f.) speaks to Hellenistic man about this glimpse of glory. Now, though, history approaches a moment of decision: Christian man stands before the glory of the Christian God, which enables him to preserve something of the glory of creation; non-Christian man stands before the yawning abyss of reason and freedom, first opened up by Christians, and encounters there the self-glorifying Absolute. Faced with this destructive fissure, he once more invokes the aid and mediation of the glory of antiquity. That aid will sustain more than three centuries before being exhausted and leaving spirit to make its lonely and unavoidable decision. But since the darkening of the eyes of the spirit is the fate of a whole epoch, to which Christians also belong, this moment of truth compels them to make a specifically Christian decision of their own, a decision repeatedly postponed through the alliance with antiquity, one that even the Counter-Reformation did not completely make: self-surrender to the sign, in all its purity, of the glory of God's love revealed in Christ.

like Nicolas of Cusa (Herbert Wackerzapp, *Der Einfluss Meister Eckharts auf die ersten philos. Schriften des Nikolaus von Kues*, *BGPhThM* 39/3 (1962), but also, for example, to Böhme and Kant, and especially to Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Dilthey. Heinrich Maier Heimsoeth (*Die sechs grossen Themen der abendländischen Metaphysik*), Erich Seeberg, Ernst von Bracken in a comprehensive monograph (*Meister Eckhart und Fichte*, 1943), and Gustav Siewerth (*Das Schicksal der Metaphysik von Thomas zu Heidegger*, 1959) have indicated the fatal connecting lines.

2. THE METAPHYSICS OF THE SAINTS

a. Christology and Tragedy

Eckhart renounced the idea, to be found in antiquity and the Areopagite, of a relationship with God mediated through the cosmos. This desire for immediate contact with God was not only the first step towards idealistic speculation (already present, in rudimentary form, in the contemporary 'Brethren of the Free Spirit'), it was also a stimulus to critical reflection on the Christian's relation with God, reflection that was undertaken theoretically with hitherto unprecedented purity. This event left an indelible mark on the development of western metaphysics or transcendental philosophy and forms the antithesis to the ascendant speculation of modern philosophy. We must therefore give it the space it deserves in the course of this investigation, even though to some extent this will anticipate the later theological problematic. It is above all important to recognise that we are dealing here with an over-all turning-point in intellectual history, at which this distinctively Christian metaphysics (even though as yet incomplete) emerges for the first time.

This is the interim period when Aristotle's reputation is in the decline after the death of St Thomas and the condemnation of the Averroists, and the Neo-platonist upsurge of the early Renaissance has not yet taken place. Christians who do philosophy are intent above all on destroying misleading philosophical tenets. And yet the question of transcendentality continues to be posed. What is the open 'being' into which—according to Avicenna, Thomas, Scotus—the human spirit ascends? On the existential level it is experienced, during the sombre fourteenth century, as emptiness and darkness. Unprotected man is exposed to an uncertain destiny, the grounds for consolation derived by the Stoics and by Boethius from the surrounding divine cosmic order no longer apply, philosophical *apatheia* does not do justice to reality, since life is sorrow. In this interregnum between Aristotle and Plato a face emerges which both the great philosophers concealed: the face of ancient tragedy. Human existence, even when it attains authenticity and greatness, means suffering, physical suffering, of course, but above all spiritual. And it is this which distinguishes man. He finds himself exposed to a superhuman, divine destiny, the meaning of which remains indecipherable: is it wrath or benevolent providence? Suffering man can rebel against it, but at a deeper level he knows that he must place himself at the disposal of the divine disposition he cannot escape. He must give himself up in abandonment (*Gelassenheit*), which is not a technique for avoiding pain (*a-patheia*), but the patient perseverance (ὑπο–μονή) of Odysseus and Aeneas: patience, in the face of one's destiny, with the God and in the God. Tragedy existed before philosophy, and philosophy has not made it redundant. Christianity encountered philosophy, and not tragedy, and so its history of salvation always appeared just as an 'existent' in the background of existence: Christ with his redemptive suffering appeared above all as the 'way', the true method, leading to the truth (of the Father, of heaven, but also of gnosis): a way which led (as no other could do) through himself as man to himself as God. This 'way towards' was the realisation of what 'philosophical eros' (*desiderium*) could have as some kind of aim but could not attain without the descendant grace of God. Agape then appeared as an eros empowered by divine grace, expiated by the Passion of Christ and purified in the imitation of Christ. Augustine saw it as an insatiable longing, Thomas as *amor Dei* ('*naturalis*') *super omnia*. And it was all directed towards an experience of God, which could be expressed, with Aristotle and Denys, as 'a suffering of God' (θεῖα παθεῖν, *pati Deum*).

This suffering/experience of God was, however, in the main interpreted 'metaphysically'. Presupposed (as a way) was liberation from finite existence in the sense of an ascetical and practical, and then as a contemplative and theoretical, elevation of ἀπάθεια from images to pure, imageless being (the experience of light in Evagrius, Simeon, Palamas). But

Thomas had taught that the total 'indifference' of the *actus essendi* and the active, luminous 'indifference' of the *intellectus agens* should be understood as the objective/subjective openness of the creature as such. In Eckhart there was the increased tendency to conceive the being of God as spirit. The consequence of this for the doctrine of man was that Thomas's notion of the luminous openness of the act of being (which descends from God to every essence) would be based on the luminous open-endedness of the human spirit (which ascends from every essence to God). Eckhart thought of this empty open-endedness as freedom, but he explicitly, almost passionately, maintained that it was freedom, not of the will (that is, as inclination and eros) but of the *intellect*, face to face with the absolute free existence of the divine intellect. Eckhart came dangerously close to making an ultimate identification of the two freedoms; speculative Idealism will make the identification. And when that happens, the finite person is bound to be absorbed in the absolute person.

The other possibility was to interpret the transcendental locus of human freedom in relation to God in a Christological manner: to see indifference as 'tragic' patience in the face of the obscure destiny decreed by God, not only the active contempt of the world, *despicere mundum* (the Buddhist, Platonic and Stoic idea), but also the passive endurance of contempt by the world, *despici a mundo*. This goes beyond the *Supplices* situation, where the 'truth' of man is defined in terms of loss of the world, and takes account of the truth of original sin in general (the destiny of the sons of Atreus extended to the whole of humanity) emerging in the personal subject of destiny. But it also takes account of the truth of God's providence (a providence shrouded in obscurity) in the sense of grace, to which the sufferer can surrender himself. At the same time the barriers fall which in tragedy had obscured the ultimate metaphysical transparency of the situation: the barrier of thinking that God cannot suffer and must disappear when the one who suffers in his mission goes into the extremes of dereliction and death, for Christ is himself a divine person who suffers as man. The original barrier made the destiny decreed by God seem senseless and unjust and provoked man into Titanic defiance of God, and that made the sufferer seem greater than the one who inflicted the suffering upon him. In Christ suffering took on meaning because it was substitutionary; in the night, in which God hid himself, there was the darkness of an extreme love, which could still be affirmed even in non-vision and the naked faith of indifference. This theology was in a new way an elevation and fulfilment of metaphysics, because explicitly and for the first time it knew how to explain *ontologically* the *ontic* (historical) event of salvation. It was historical inasmuch as it revealed to concrete man (in his condition of guilt and death) where and how transcendence is to be found. It was personal inasmuch as only *one* concrete man (and not abstract neutral human nature) could be the subject of this self-abandonment and agony, in personal love for a personal God. At the same time it was universal inasmuch as his unique self-giving and suffering opened up for all access to concrete transcendence in the form of salvation. It is possible to measure the progress made in this period by this assertion in the *Theologia Germanica*, which takes up and expounds the Dionysian formula of *pati Deum*: 'Whoever wants to suffer God must suffer All in the One and not resist any suffering whatever. But this is Christ.'[1]

In the Eckhart school, with a clear choice of the Master's Christian life and rejection of his speculative extravagances, we have the foundation of the 'Metaphysics of the Saints',[2] which has left its mark on the whole of Christian thinking right up into the modern era, including Ignatius, Francis de Sales, Fénelon and Newman, and has drawn them all together into a single spiritual family. To see in all of this a phenomenon of mere 'spirituality', separate from so-called rigorous or scientific theology, would be foolish and quite mistaken. On the contrary, theology or theological metaphysics is the central phenomenon, whether we consider it theoretically or in terms of its impact on intellectual history.[3] This impact is to be judged in terms of the concept, fundamental to this work, of a distinctively Christian glory, which we deal with thematically in the final volume. For the present, in the foreground must stand the transcendental aspect, and then it becomes clear that the brief sketches which now follow are on the pinnacle and at the axis of authentic metaphysical investigation. This Christian metaphysics goes back beyond Plato to Greek tragedy and enters into dialogue with the existential situation of real man. And dialogue with Asian metaphysical ways of redemption becomes possible, too, starting with the Christian Eckhart, indeed only with him. The 'abandonment' found in Christian Neoplatonism (in its most rigid form in Evagrius Ponticus) may introduce this dialogue but cannot conclude it. Only when *despicere* becomes *despici*, and gnosis therefore becomes love, does the West have something of its own, something to offer the East that surpasses it in the same line.[4] The different configurations of this metaphysics are innumerable; we must content ourselves with presenting a few in brief sketches.

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[1] *Eine deutsche Theologie*, ch. 46, translated by J. Bernhart (Insel, 1920), p. 177.

[2] The expression comes from Henri Bremond, who takes this 'metaphysics' into consideration (vols. 7 and 8 of his *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France*) in the major figures in the spirituality of the *Grand Siècle*. But classical French spirituality, as Bremond himself clearly sees and shows, descended from the late medieval spirituality of Germany and the Low Countries.

b. Abandonment (Gelassenheit) and Imitation

TAULER, SUSO, THE AUTHOR OF THE *THEOLOGIA GERMANICA*

JOHN TAULER, both directly and through the Latin translation of the Carthusian Surius, was to have a very great influence on Europe. He vigorously opposes the Christian spirit to free-wheeling reason. 'Here they come now, the reasonable people with their natural light. Look how they turn inwards upon that natural light, their bare, empty, unspoilt "ground".

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[3] See my essay 'Theologie und Heiligkeit', in *Verbum Caro*. Skizzen zur Theologie I (1960), p. 195f.; ET, 'Theology and Sanctity', *Word and Redemption*. Essays in Theology 2 (New York, 1965), pp. 49–86.

[4] Above all: Henri de Lubac, *Aspects du Bouddhisme* I (Seuil, 1950), *La Rencontre du Bouddhisme et de l'Occident* (Aubier, 1952), *Amida*, Aspects du Bouddhisme II (Seuil, 1955).

They possess their natural light there as if it were their own property, precisely as if it were God, and yet it is no more than mere nature. The pleasure they take in it is greater than all the pleasures of the senses.' False light and false freedom seduce them into extreme arrogance, while the just, in contrast, are distinguished by their 'humility, fear, abandonment, meekness';[5] they reckon themselves 'the smallest, the most contemptuous, the weakest, the most blind'.[6] But while the latter have springs of living water within them, the former have only 'cisterns, for all their lofty intellect'.[7] The criterion that distinguishes the two is the fact that the reasonable people see in Christ only a way which one passes through and out of. 'But I say: no, no one can get beyond the image of Our Lord Jesus Christ'.[8] 'You can be certain of this: a good man never thinks he has got beyond anything'.[9] Anyone who fails to remain on the way of Christ, who is always also the door, 'in the end goes astray'.[10] For this reason the metaphysics of indifference, as is the case already in Eckhart ('Discourses on Discernment') and will be true in the Baroque age (Ignatius: 'Rules for the Discernment of Spirits'), has to be essentially a doctrine of discernment: between abandonment to the personal decrees of the Holy Spirit and the empty impersonal transcendence of one's own spirit.

In true abandonment everything is directed towards the supreme activity of worship, which 'the Son of God offered on earth to His beloved Father', and which 'completely surpasses all reason'.[11] Everything else happens for the sake of worship; the mighty work of building a cathedral, for example, ultimately only has one purpose: to make it a house of prayer, a place for worship.[12] False abandonment is prayer-less, whereas God wants to be prayed to.[13] It is above all love-less and stands merely 'in the light of its reason and in false interior freedom'.[14] While true abandonment is directed at an infinite liquidity of the heart, false abandonment leads to a petrification of the heart; its 'ground becomes as hard as a millstone', incapable of confession, blind and coarse.[15] In the Church there are well-informed people, spiritual persons especially, who inflict real martyrdom on the others, those who are genuinely indifferent.[16]

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[5] Tauler's Sermons in the translation of W. Lehmann (Diederichs, 1923), Bd. 1–2, Nr 40 I 176–177.

[6] Nr 19 I 82.

[7] Nr 60b II 92.

[8] Nr 15 I 74–75.

[9] Nr 54 II 53; cf. Nr 48 II 18.

[10] Nr 55 II 62.

[11] Nr 15 I 70.

[12] Nr 39 I 164.

True abandonment means constantly giving back to God all He has given us and 'returning it all to the ground and source whence it sprang'.[17] 'The man who with gratitude returns all things to God is a reliable and genuine witness'.[18] Christ always performed this restitution, because he 'sought the Father's glory alone'.[19] It is the acknowledgement of our essential poverty with respect to every spiritual good: 'Children, all our holiness and righteousness is absolutely nothing, and our righteousness is unrighteousness'.[20] Thus our act of restitution is not the noble ascent into the darkness of God as maintained and described by Denys;[21] no, it is merely letting go of all that is one's own, and of the things which are not God, as a sign that one prefers God. 'For God is a lover of hearts, and what matters to Him is not what is exterior but an interior living benevolence, which involves a predisposition to be ready for anything . . .'[22] 'Benevolence', 'predisposition': the offering of the heart to God, 'the calm peace of the man who is ready for anything to which the

[13] Nr 50 II 25–26.

[14] Nr 54 II 53.

[15] Nr 60a II 85–86; Nr 60b II 90.

[16] Nr 56 II 69.

[17] Nr 8 8I 35.

[18] Nr 21 I 92.

[19] Nr 13 I 66.

[20] Nr 56 II 69.

[21] 'Yet, on account of his littleness, he must not think that he is approaching the noble darkness, of which a saint (Denys) writes: "God is a darkness despite all the light". He is approaching only the darkness of his unknowing, in which he may give himself to God in simplicity without asking or demanding anything' (Nr 56 II 67–68).

[22] Nr 55 II 57.

Lord might lead him and for what He wants to do with him, like a slave, who stands before his master's table, just looking at him, waiting in readiness to do what is wanted of him'.[23] The Christian understanding of indifference is to be seen in the two sets of three virtues: 'humility, meekness and patience; faith, confidence and love'.[24] Tauler underlines (against Eckhart) the creature's capacity for autonomous activity. God made the creature, in its nobility and likeness to God,[25] capable of activity, but even this activity actively transcends itself in abandonment to God: 'Now faith goes and robs and takes away all of reason's knowledge and makes it blind; it must renounce its knowledge. Then comes confidence and takes away security and possession. Finally comes love and robs the will of all self-awareness and all property'. And likewise with the other three virtues: 'Humility sinks totally into an abyss and loses its name . . . and knows nothing of humility. Meekness has robbed love of its own will, so all things are the same for it and it encounters no resistance. It is not therefore conscious of having virtue. The virtue has lost its name. The same is true of patience.'[26]

However, the point of all this expropriation of all possession of virtue is simply to make the soul ready for God, and this is where Tauler's great experience begins. God works in our not-working.[27] When we fall silent, God calls us and invites us back to our source. These 'calls' from God take a variety of forms: he calls us through admonition and punishment, through providence from within and without, through joy and sorrow, through calls both sweet and bitter.[28] When man seeks God, God is long before in search of man, and like the woman looking for her lost coin, God turns the house of man upside down.[29] Man may hunt for God like one pursuing a deer with bloodhounds through fire and water, against lance and pike,[30] but God's hunt for man is even wilder. 'St Paul says: "I find within myself an eternal struggle. My inner nature contends with the eternal hunt of the spirit, and I do what I do not want, and I do not do what I do want." So these two hunt one another, and in between them comes God from above and hunts them both, and likewise grace, and where this hunt is truly understood, it is a very good thing, for "all those hunted by the Spirit of God are children of God"'.[31] He hunts the deer through its thirst for the water's source, but he acts like the huntsmen: 'When they are sure that they have the deer in the forest, they leave it to recover its breath for a little while, about an hour. In that way it regains its strength and can endure the hunt so much better for a second time'. So it is with the consolation and sweetness God gives man only to pursue him the more later on through desolation.[32] The emphasis is placed thus on darkness, on on 'trials and strange and peculiar ways which no one knows except the person who experiences them'.[33] No one 'can ward them off with wisdom', nor can they be 'avoided by force and natural adroitness', even if he does not want to stay there and what he longs for he cannot attain.[34] The stronger the previous feeling of consolation, the more intolerable is the present deprivation and bitterness.[35] It is 'winter', the same state Christ was in when He was abandoned by the Father,[36] in 'abandoned dereliction'.[37] It is 'the deepest misery', in which man understands the words of St Paul: *mihi absit gloria* . . .[38] It means being endlessly thrown up and down from the heights to the depths, from being in God to being in a situation where one no longer knows 'whether one still has a God',[39] where God acts as if he knew nothing

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[23] Nr 54 II 55.

[24] Nr 55 II 57.

[25] Nr 39 II 165.

[26] Nr 55 II 59–60.

[27] Nr 43 I 191.

[28] Nr 53 II 43.

[29] Nr 37 I 151.

[30] Nr 20 I 86.
[31] Nr 9 I 41.
[32] Nr 11 I 52.
[33] Nr 3 I 14.
[34] Nr 41 I 181.
[35] Nr 39 I 170.
[36] Nr 13 I 63.
[37] *Ibid.*, 64.
[38] Nr 50 II 31.
[39] Nr 39 I 170.

of all our torment,[40] where he 'behaves as if he heard nothing'.[41] 'Thus man hangs suspended between heaven and earth: with his higher powers he is raised above himself and above all things and dwells in God; with his lower powers, on the other hand, he is darkened down below all things in the depths of humility and is like a man who starts at the very beginning—he can stay in the lowest exercise of all . . . And so he is an important witness to Our Lord, because He is the one who came down from heaven and went back to heaven'.[42] In these men 'the greatest and the least are one. God has in fact so ordained it in nature that the highest is coordinated with the lowest. Heaven is the highest and earth is the lowest. Now heaven works nowhere so fruitfully as in the depths of the earth. And so the height of God works nowhere so fruitfully nor so divinely as in the deepest abyss of man.'[43] Man tossed about in this way can in the final analysis only seek 'joy in sorrow, simplicity in multiplicity, consolation in bitterness',[44] and press on between knowing and unknowing in faith, between certainty and uncertainty in hope, between peace and un-peace in self-abandonment and humility.[45] And so, with all that he possesses, he is shipwrecked on God: 'God has respect for such men. They have steered their ship on to the high seas, they have cast their net and had a big catch. When the net too comes to the heights and into the depths in this way, the ship with its net sinks, and everything is smashed to pieces . . . Everything sinks. Created nothing sinks into uncreated nothing. But this is something one cannot understand and grasp in words'.[46] Such self-surrender to God and his 'tempests',[47] when 'God out of great fidelity often shatters man to pieces',[48] is the imitation of God in the imitation of Christ. 'Then man can

[40] Nr 40 I 178.
[41] Nr 9 I 42.
[42] Nr 21 I 93.
[43] Nr 54 II 55.
[44] Nr 21 I 90.
[45] Nr 47 II 12.
[46] Nr 41 I 185.
[47] Nr 23 I 98–99.
[48] Nr 21 I 91.

say: "Lord, who are you that I must follow you thus into the depths, into the wilderness, into solitude?" And then the Lord may reply in this way: "I am man and God and I am far more than God". Man then might answer him out of his essential, recognized ground: "I am nothing, therefore, and much more than nothing." Children, that would be a beautiful reply, because the only real place for the activity of God, whose name is above every name, is in the ground of deepest self-abnegation.'[49]

For Tauler, the man who has thus abandoned and surrendered himself to God is the pillar of the Church and of the world, for with Christ he performs the one work that conditions and sustains all others.[50] His prayer will always be heard.[51] In a wholly contemplative manner he exists in an inward movement towards God, and in a wholly apostolic manner he exists in an outward movement towards sinners and the holy souls in Purgatory, and this 'in and out' movement is the fruitfulness of love.[52] As in Eckhart, he is abandoned in another sense; he lets himself be sent from prayer to his suffering neighbour.[53] As in Eckhart, he performs the interior work of letting God have his way, of letting him be born, the work which transcends action and passion and includes them both.[54] It is a work which corresponds to the Eucharistic life of Jesus: to eat God and be eaten by God; God's will as food, oneself as food for God.[55]

HENRY SUSO[1] does not add many new stops to the mighty organ of Tauler. In his 'Little Book of Truth' he defends his master, Eckhart, and he too clearly distinguishes between true and false reason, true and false freedom. 'Inflated reason', when it 'begins in part to understand eternal and non-begotten reason', imagines itself to be 'full of God and that there is nothing that is not God'; the real nature of things vanishes from its sight; it despises heaven and hell, angels and devils, even the humanity of Christ, because all contours disappear from its view and are lost in God.[2] But 'God's essential light permits only order and distinction': the irreducible opposition of Creator and creature, and the 'magnificent light of nature' does not count against it.[3]

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[49] Nr 55 II 60.

[50] Nr 5 I 20; Nr 19 I 84 end.

[51] Nr 15 I 72; Nr 40 I 179: 'These are they upon whom Holy Church rests, and were they not to be found in holy Christendom, Christendom could not last another hour. For their mere existence, the simple fact that they are, is of greater worth and utility than all the world's activity.'

[52] Nr 25 I 107–108.

[53] Nr 56 II 68.

[54] Nr 54 II 49.

[55] Nr 60c II 98–99.

[1] *Deutsche Schriften*, ed. K. Bihlmeyer (1907). LS = *Leben Seuses*; BWe = *Büchlein der ewigen Weisheit*; BW = *Büchlein der Wahrheit*; BB = *Briefbüchlein*, with chapter and page numbers.

Suso pledges himself, as in marriage, to divine Wisdom, who (in a not entirely credible vision) appears to him in sensible form,[4] and whose 'radiant splendour' breaks forth as 'pure light' with 'powerful beauty' from his devoted heart.[5] Immoderate asceticism forms a long preparation for his final initiation into the 'higher school' of 'abandonment' (*Gelassenheit*).[6] This abandonment will immediately express itself as 'dereliction',[7] especially in the form of human calumny, contempt, torment, but it can also become an interior feeling of 'eternal damnation'.[8] God's will for man in general is quite clear from revelation, 'but no one can say with certainty what the best would be, according to his deserts, for any one person in particular'.[9] There is no rule for this except self-surrendering abandonment to God's inscrutable personal will. There is only the offer of and preference for suffering 'for the sake of conformity' to the suffering Christ, for 'love conforms itself and makes itself pleasing to love whenever it can and wants to'. However, the one who is ready for suffering is repelled by the distance between the 'unique sufferer' and the sinners who claim to

[2] LS 47; 158, 159.
[3] BW 6, 356.
[4] LS 3, 11–14.
[5] LS 4, 17.
[6] LS 19, 53.
[7] LS 20, 57.
[8] LS 21, 62.
[9] BB 9, 388.

imitate Him. There is no imitation on an equal footing. All we can do is place ourselves in a 'great wide circle', with the Crucified at the centre, 'and widen our thirsty veins, opening up ourselves to you with great longing, O gushing fountain so rich in grace!'[10] Christ's suffering belongs to God's side: it is the best, the most exact, most exhaustive revelation and representation of his most extreme, most exalted, most hidden love.[11] 'My unfathomable love showed itself in the great bitterness of my suffering, like the sun in its radiance, like the beautiful rose in its scent, and like the blazing fire in its fierce heat'.[12] Suso's most sublime idea is, therefore, the praise and glorification of Wisdom streaming forth and offering itself for worship.[13] And precisely because God's suffering is the manifestation of his glory, those who suffer have 'so much glory in the will of God that everything that God decrees for them fills them with so much joy that they neither want nor desire anything else'.[14] They offer themselves so that the unfathomable, obscure and hopeless pain of the world may, through oblation, be transformed into a hymn of praise to the glory of God. Yes, all the world's pain, 'the groans of all the sick, the sighs of all sorrowing souls, the insults heaped upon all the oppressed, the tears of all poor and needy widows and orphans, the breaking of the will of joyful youth when it is in full bloom, every deed that gives pain to the friends of God . . .'[15]

Suso perceives that the wisdom of God reveals itself fully in the folly and weakness of the cross. This great insight discloses to him the two great mysteries of suffering and self-sacrificial abandonment: the Eucharist[16] and, pre-eminently, the compassionate soul of the Mother of Christ. The place where metaphysical transcendence reaches its highest fulfilment, where God's Wisdom is manifested, has distinctly

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[10] LS 31, 92.

[11] BWe 2–4, 206–19.

[12] BWe 1, 209.

[13] The whole of ch. 24 in BWe: 'How one must always praise God in an unfathomable way', 308–314.

[14] LS 32, 95.

[15] LS 31, 91.

[16] BWe 23, 290f.

Marian characteristics for Suso.[17] As in the liturgy, the texts about Wisdom take on this creaturely significance, which is only possible because the abandonment bestowed by grace ('Behold the handmaid of the Lord') becomes the chosen place and womb for the manifestation of the Son's giving up of himself to suffering.

The THEOLOGIA GERMANICA was written about 1370 by an anonymous member of the Teutonic Order from Frankfurt. It is an independent continuation of the Eckhart/Tauler tradition and was edited by Luther, first in 1516 and for a second time in 1518, with a preface that proves incontrovertibly, despite all later indications to the contrary, the reformer's dependence on the 'Friends of God'. It was translated into Latin by Castellio and Sebastian Franck, and then, in more than seventy editions, spread the spirit of German mysticism throughout Baroque Europe.

Its essential doctrine is one of differentiation: between self-sufficient reason and reason belonging to God. The greatest danger is 'where lofty natural reason is to be found, for it ascends so high in its own light and into itself that in the end it imagines itself to be the eternal true light'.[1] 'Now take heed how from the beginning it is deceived. It does not will and choose the good absolutely, for the sake of the good; no, it wills and chooses itself and what is its own as the best. This is false and is the first deception. Moreover, it imagines itself to be what it is not, for it imagines itself to be God, but in fact it is only nature . . . It likewise says and imagines that it has passed beyond Christ's bodily sufferings and that one is meant to be impassible and invulnerable (ἀπαθής) like Christ after the resurrection . . . In short, this false, deceived light flees everything that is arduous and repugnant to nature . . . It is of course true: he who can attain his best, that is the best. But that does not happen so long as man seeks and strives after his best. For if he is to find and attain his best, he must lose his best . . . and pursue, not his own will, but the commandments of God and of his superiors, and should in no way at all seek what is his own, neither in spirit nor in nature, but in all things only the praise and honour of God'.[2]

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[17] LW 8, 26; 10, 29; 18, 49.

[1] Cited from the edition of Josef Bernhart in the Dombücherei (Insel, 1920). Numbers refer to chapters. –20.

God is the 'being of all beings, the life of all the living, the wisdom of all the wise',[3] since he is the selfless Good, which 'loves itself not as itself but as the Good',[4] and he is only tripersonal in order to surmount the principle of self-hood in total self-giving prodigality.[5] Self-hood is the centring of freedom on a point which belongs to the self in its own right.[6] It is thus presumption. The essence of freedom in contrast, is to belong to no one, because it is absolute and universal.[7] Freedom and property is a contradiction: 'In heaven there is no property'.[8] Freedom is poverty with respect to coveting and the will to possess, since even the eternal freedom of God does not want itself but the Good, love. For this reason enlightened men give up 'all desire and choice, and commend and surrender themselves and all things to the eternal Good'.[9] 'The more "mine", "I", "me", i.e. self-hood and egotism, decrease in man, the more the "I" of God, i.e. God himself, increases in man.'[10] This growth of God in man is seen when man's love is 'pure and unalloyed', when he 'loves everyone and everything, when he wishes well of all men and all things and in purity favours and does the good.' It is the love of enemies that we see in Christ, who addressed his betrayer as friend, 'as if he wanted to say, "You hate me and you are my enemy, so I have love for you and I am your friend"', and on the cross he prays for forgiveness for all.[11] In the life of Christ, therefore, there appears the pure essence of the goodness of God.[12] Christ's (anhypostatic) human nature is in an attitude of pure acceptance of the activity of the divine nature; God and man 'are one and the same', and in the pure acceptance by Christ's humanity God acquires a place in the world where he can be completely himself as love and at the same time experience, by suffering, the anti-godly, the sinful. That is the central doctrine of the *Theologia Germanica*.

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[2] 40.

[3] 36.

[4] 43. *Cf.* 32: 'God loves himself not as himself, but as the Good'.

[5] The author expresses this, as does Eckhart, in such a way that he does not want to attribute either selfhood or self-identity to God 'except in so far as he requires them in order to be personal' (32, *cf.* 43).

[6] 3.

[7] 'To be free is to be nobody's property, and he who makes it his own property does wrong. Now among all that is free there is nothing more free or as free as the will, and he who makes that his property, and does not allow it to exist in its noble freedom, does wrong indeed . . . But he who allows the will to exist in its own free manner has contentment, peace, repose and happiness both in time and in eternity' (51).

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] 10.

[10] 16.

The work can be defended against the charge of Theopanism, which would allow the creature no ontological reality of its own: 'This must be known, that no creature is in conflict with God, or causes him pain or woe, in so far as it exists or lives, knows, has skill or power, or whatever. None of this is in conflict with God'.[13] 'In truth: conflict with God is neither a creature nor a work of the creature, but only disobedience'.[14] Nonetheless, the absolute abandonment of Christ to the will of the Father remains the model for every authentic relationship with God,[15] even though the author of the *Theologia* knows that the mystery of Christ 'is inexpressible, and has never been, and never will be, fully fathomed'. In other words, he sees that the humanity of Christ 'did not arrogate to itself the divinity whose habitation it was', because in it 'there was neither presumption nor claim nor demand, but only the claim and demand that the divinity should have what it deserved'.[16] In this sense the humanity of Christ is the place of God's manifestation, 'for in God without creation there is nothing except being and source; there is no operation. But the One who is all of this (that is, will and love and justice and truth and every excellence) takes a creature to himself and makes it his own, and it obeys him. It seems good to him to reveal himself, in

[11] 33.
[12] 18.
[13] 36.
[14] 16.
[15] 45.
[16] 15.

all that is most proper to him, in that creature. And behold, since there is a single willing and loving, it is instructed by him himself in so far as it is light and understanding: it shall then will nothing except the One which it is itself'.[17] Eckhart had maintained that as long as the creature is in God, it does not have a God; it must be distant from God so that God may be God above it. Here it seems as if God needs the creature beneath him in order to reveal himself in that which is most proper to him. And so the speculative idea emerges of the diffusive goodness of God needing the world in order to prove itself as love. Ought that which is most divine about God 'remain idle: What would be the good of that? Thus it would be just as good, indeed better, for it not to exist at all ... If there were no doing or happening or the like, what then would God Himself be, or what ought he to be, or of whom would he be God?' The speculative temptation that continues right up to Schelling and Hegel is beaten off, though it is already almost too late: 'At this point you have to turn round and stop. For if you were to go on and investigate further, you would not know where you were and how to find your way out again.'[18] And yet: ideas cannot be revoked. He wants to incorporate the speculation he has pursued, following Eckhart, at least in his Christology. Since he emphasises the anhypostasia to the verge of Monothelitism, Christ's submissive human nature really becomes the place in which God suffers, though Christ's soul, transcendentally turned towards the Father, rests beatifically in the Father's will.[19] The place where Christ is abandoned is the place where the sin of the world dwells, and so God's dwelling in this place becomes suffering. 'God is grieved by man's sin. Since this cannot happen in God without the creature, it has to happen when God is man or when God is in a divinised man', for this man, for God's sake, suffers because of the offence done to God: 'And this is the source of Christ's secret suffering, of which none but Christ says or knows anything . . . It is also a *state of God*, which he wants to have and which pleases him in man, and is God's own'.[20] 'And the more the will is free and unhindered so much the more painful is the not-good to it . . . This can be seen in Christ',[21] where through the mediation of the human nature the absolute Free and Good comes into direct contact with sin. It is plain to see: the sinner is a murderer of God.[22]

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[17] 32.

[18] 31.

[19] This is especially noticeable in the formulations in ch. 51, where the absolute character of freedom, its belonging to no one as his own property, is emphasised.

The abandonment of Christ means that he freely lets God's freedom be free in him. In Christ, therefore, humanity participates in the why-lessness of God. 'Were someone to ask the sun, "Why do you shine?", it would say, "I have to shine, I cannot do otherwise, for it is my characteristic and . . . in this shining I am completely unencumbered and do not arrogate it to myself. And the same is true of God and Christ in everything . . . willing, working and desiring nothing except the good precisely as the good and for the sake of the good. Apart from that, there is no why."'[23] This also applies to the Christian life: 'When man in this way cannot reach any further nor achieve any advantage, what else should he do? It is not practised for the sake of achieving some advantage or of attaining something, but out of love and for the sake of its nobility and because it is so dear and precious to God . . . For the man who does not do it out of love does not have it at all. He may imagine that he has it, but he deceives himself. Christ lives his life not for reward but out of love.'[24]

Here we are looking into the very heart of the theological aesthetic. We are looking at a 'why-less' ray of light from the sun of the good (as understood by Plato and Plotinus), which is given a deeper Christian meaning when it is seen to be absolute love. Eckhart thinks of it as a why-less freedom, and so it is passed on to Luther (who does not want it to be given a goal in works), to Francis de Sales and Fénelon (who speak

[20] 37.
[21] 51.
[22] 54.
[23] 26.
[24] 38.

of *amour pur*), and to Spee, Scheffler, Tersteegen, Zinzendorf and Hölderlin. We can also see now why all of Christian ethics depends upon this theological aesthetic of the saints: because the imperfect (the ethic for sinners) derives its inner form from the perfect, from the love of God in Christ, which is its own (original) ground and its own reward and goal. It is form alone which makes all emulation truly Christian.

The author of the *Theologia Germanica* knew how to interpret the theological opinion that in his Passion Christ enjoys beatitude in the highest powers of his soul, while in his lower powers he is in the night of dereliction.[25] For him the only happiness here below is to be found in resting in the will of God, who himself in the Passion of Christ descends into the night. When man makes no claim to anything, 'neither existence nor life, neither knowledge nor ability, neither activity nor passivity, nor anything else' and instead 'becomes completely poor and makes himself nothing, and in him and with him everything that is something, all created things', it can also happen that 'God himself becomes man, so that there is no longer anything which is not God or of God'.[26] Then man is 'penetrated and shot through with the eternal and divine light and enkindled and inflamed with eternal and divine love'.[27] But this 'becoming nothing' means descent into hell for the sinner (Christ, as our example, went through the experience of that). If he is to understand himself, the sinner must 'mark who and what he is: vile, wicked and unworthy of all good and consolation'; he must 'bear in mind that he deserves to be eternally lost and damned, which would be right and just, it would in fact be too little in comparison with his sins. And so he does not want or desire consolation, nor redemption, and as long as man is in hell, no one can console him, neither God nor creature'.[28] 'The soul of Christ had to descend into hell before it went into heaven . . for this hell passes, while heaven remains.'[29] Although hell is the awareness of selfhood, the experience of it takes place out of abandonment, and this is 'pure submission and obedience to eternal goodness',[30] which elects the sinner in grace.

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[25] *Cf.* 6.

[26] 53.

[27] 41.

[28] 11.

[29] *Ibid.*

c. In the Whirlpool of Glory

RUYSBROECK

The work of Ruysbroeck the Admirable, though partly influenced by Eckhart, is nonetheless original and stands on its own.[1] Through his own personal example (as prior of his foundation at Groenedal) and his instructions to Gert Groote, he gives the impetus to the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life (who will help to shape the Renaissance), and he will make an impression on Tauler. Hendrik Mande, Rulman Merswin and Hendrik van Herp will draw upon his writings; Blosius, the reformer of the Benedictines, regards him as a supreme authority, and through Blosius he will have an influence on Francis de Sales. Like the Rhineland mystics, but more forcefully than they, he vigorously opposes the misuse of Eckhart in the sense of a 'liberty of the spirit':[2] 'Whosoever then would know and study what God is—which is not permitted—he would go mad'.[3] Everywhere the firmly-maintained background is Christological, [4] ecclesial, sacramental spirituality, and any suggestion of an essential deification of the creatures is energetically rejected.[5]

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[30] 10.

[1] Critical edition of the Ruysbroeck Society (Antwerp, 1931f.). [Tr-Balthasar quotes from German and French translations. For 'The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage' (= A), 'The Sparkling Stone' (= S), and 'The Book of Supreme Truth' (= T), we shall make use, with occasional modifications, of the English translation of C. A. Wynschenk Dom (London, 1916).]

2 Represented by the false mystic, Bloemardine, and her circle. He writes his first work against her, 'The Kingdom of Lovers'. He continues the struggle in his second book, the 'Adornment' (II, chs. 74–77) and takes it up once again in 'The Book of the Four Temptations', where the gravest temptation is idle speculation, 'dumb cowering in oneself, vain self-examination'. Then again in T 4:'(They) are turned in upon the bareness of their own being . . . the simplicity which they there possess they take to be God . . . But in fact they have lost God' (ET, p. 230).

[3] A I, 21;ET p. 35.

[4] On Christ's humanity and his Passion, see: S, II; A I, 21; II, 65, 77.

The situation in which Ruysbroeck's central experience of God takes place is different from that of the Rhineland mystics. It is not the abandoned poverty of the sufferer which becomes for him the key to the fathomless depths of God; no, instead, at the point of Christian indifference, which seeks to live only for God's honour and glory, the luminous glory of god itself erupts and overflows, burning with Old Testament vehemence.[6] Perhaps nowhere in the history of Christian spirituality is the experience of *kabod* and *shekinah* more direct and personal.

At first sight there is much in Ruysbroeck's work that seems backward-looking. The longest treatise, an allegory, worked out in minute detail on the tabernacle and its furnishings, belongs to the world of Hugh of St Victor, and the four degrees, stages and steps of self-purifying love are reminiscent of Richard. The eternal, insatiable hunger of the soul of God, its 'eternal craving and continual yearning in eternal insatiableness',[7] looks like a passionate Augustinianism. And yet the fundamental experience—a very personal, solitary experience (which is however expressed, as in John of the Cross, with a claim to universal validity)—is quite different. It is the experience of a super-rational contact with God, which not only gives meaning and fulfilment to spiritual nature, and is consequently the centre of metaphysics, but is also the supremely free bestowal of God's grace and thus the centre of theology. From man's point of view this synthesis presents itself thus: 'A threefold unity is found in all men by nature, and also in all good men according to a supernatural manner.' The first is the unity of man in God, on whom he depends for being, life and preservation. In God is our archetype, which belongs to the divine essence; there we are 'without selfhood' and possess our ultimate unity 'within us in our depths and yet at the same time high above us, as the ground and the preserver of our being and of our life'. The second unity is 'really the same', though now considered as the centre of our spiritual life with its faculties and acts. The third is the heart in the sense of the centre of the unity of embodied spirit. This threefold unity of man is now 'as one kingdom and one eternal dwelling place . . . adorned and taken into possession in a supernatural way' by God.[8] For Ruysbroeck, this supernatural life exists for the simple reason that the spiritual soul is grounded on the personal God and thus on an eternal Thou. In him alone it can realise itself, though the possibility of this realisation depends on its free opening up of itself.

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[5] This forcefully reappears in the final, programmatic work, T, chs. 2–3, 8. 'The creature feels distinction and otherness between itself and God even in its most inward vision' (ch.II). 'Through his own power no man ascends into heaven, save the son of Man, Jesus Christ' (ch. 14; ET, p. 249f.) 'we are one with God, yet we must remain eternally distinct from God' (S 10).

[6] For example, the twelfth 'Book of the Beguines' and most forcefully of all in the 'Book of the Spiritual Tabernacle'.

[7] A II, 53; p. 121.

This becomes evident when one looks, not in an ascendant manner from the soul up to God, but in a descendant manner from God down to the soul. In the eternal generation of the Son from the Father 'all creatures have come forth in eternity, before they were created in time. So God has seen and known them in himself, according to distinction as the living Cause, and in an otherness from himself . . . This eternal going out and this eternal life, which we have in God eternally, and in which we are without our self-hood, from the beginning, is the origin of our created being in time. And our created being abides in the Eternal Essence and is one with it in accordance with its essential existence.'[9] In this way the dialectical ethic of relationship with God is given: 'And therefore God wills that we shall go forth from ourselves in this divine light (of the idea of ourselves in God), and shall strive ourselves in a supernatural way after this image, which is our own life, and shall possess it with him in action (actively) and in fruition (passively), in eternal bliss.' This notion of the archetype in God can be called Platonic metaphysics, but it can also be interpreted in Biblical terms as election 'before the foundation of the world' (Eph. 1.3). Indeed, since this election is accomplished 'in Jesus Christ' (*ibid.*), it can be interpreted theologically, with Bonaventure and Eckhart, as grounded upon the generation of the Word in the inner life of the Trinity. Ruysbroeck states this explicitly. Man's whole philosophical self-understanding is thus inevitably transformed into a theological, dialogal understanding. By doing this Ruysbroeck succeeds, even more clearly than Eckhart, in overcoming Fichte's fundamental premise, the anchoring of the empirical in the absolute subject. Not only does he take up Augustine's idea: 'Grace flows from within . . . for God is more inward to us than we are ourselves',[10] but he also sees that the reflection of the finite subject on and in its own unity enables it to perceive that 'the foundation of his being is without ground, and he possesses it only in this manner'.[11] Looking into his own ground, he sees beyond it into the eternal I, which for man is both the source of his own I as well as his eternal Thou, and in the final analysis this is because the eternal I is already in itself I and Thou in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the finite subject finds there also 'all creatures as yet without distinguishing selfhood as one being in their eternal cause'.[12]

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[8] A II, 2; p. 52f.

[9] A III, 3; p. 173f.

Using an image taken from the old cosmology, Ruysbroeck writes thus: 'God has created the highest heaven, a pure and simple radiance, which encloses all the heavens and all bodily and material things that God has ever created . . . The sphere which is nearest to this glowing heaven is called the First Movement'. Similarly, 'the essence of the soul is a spiritual kingdom of God, full of divine radiance, transcending our powers . . . At a level lower than this essence of the soul, where God reigns, the self-awareness of our spirit is like the sphere of the First Movement; for, the spirit is driven and moved from above in the power of God, both naturally and supernaturally.'[13]But the sphere of movement or reflection draws all its energy from the surrounding sphere, of which we are not conscious, of the depth of God, which discloses itself, to those who believe and love, as the place of

[10] A II, 3; p. 56.
[11] S 3; p. 184.
[12] T 10; p. 241.
[13] A II, 50; p. 116.

eternal beatitude. All the activity and teaching of Christ is meant to lead us into this depth, and 'whoever wishes to understand this must have died to himself, and must live in God, and must turn his gaze to the eternal light in the ground of his spirit, where the Hidden Truth reveals itself without intermediaries. For the Heavenly Father wills that we should see; for He is the Father of Light, and this is why he utters eternally, without intermediary and without interruption, into the hiddenness of our spirit, one unique and unfathomable word, and no other.'[14]

The originality of Ruysbroeck is that he experiences as an encounter, indeed as a 'nuptial encounter', the relation between the I that seeks its own ground and the God who discloses himself. His major work, 'The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage', is an exposition, in three stages, of the verse, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him'. 'In this meeting lies all our bliss, the beginning and the end of all virtues; and without this meeting no virtue has ever been fulfilled.'[15] But 'every meeting is a coming together of two persons, who come from different directions . . . The coming of Christ to us is from within outwards, and we go towards him from without inwards'.[16] The virtues play a great role for Ruysbroeck, but they are developed purely out of the New Testament, without regard for the philosophical systems of antiquity, and all of them together revolve round loving indifference. Serial order has no importance. They are in 'seven steps': willing what God wills, voluntary poverty, purity of soul and body, humility (a river into which flow four tributaries—obedience, meekness, patience, the reincarnation of self-will), seeking God's honour in all things, finally the vision of the ground and the union beyond all knowing.[17] In the 'Adornment' humility is the foundation stone of all the virtues, then comes obedience (to the Church as well as to God), abandonment, patience, meekness and kindliness, compassion for those in need of any kind and

[14] A III, I; p. 168f.
[15] A I, 25; p. 43.
[16] A II, 56; p. 125.
[17] 'The Book of the Seven Steps', 95–149.

generosity in giving help, zeal, temperance and sobriety, purity. Faith, hope and charity appear above all as a letting go of everything that is one's own, as a bold entrusting of oneself to God.[18] Because the nuptial meeting is experienced above all as the shining forth of divine glory, the soul is prepared for it by an abandonment which seeks and sees in all things the glory of God. Ruysbroeck's formulations are a direct anticipation of the fundamental principle of the *Spiritual Exercises*. The recollection of the heart in interior unity leads to a 'devotion to God and to his glory . . . Devotion impels a man . . . towards the service of God . . . We should praise God by means of everything that we accomplish. To praise God means that all his life a man is devoted to, reverences and venerates the Divine Omnipotence . . . in humble service.'[19] This self-forgetful humanity is rooted in the unbounded humility of Christ, whose 'soul with all its powers bowed down in reverence and adoration before the most high might of the Father' and for his sake also 'was humble and subject to the old law, and to the commandments, and also to customs of the country as necessary'.[20] It is rooted ultimately in this consideration, that as 'God has served [man] so humbly, so lovingly, and so faithfully', so it seems to the Christian that 'his worship of God and his lowly service are always falling short',[21] The awareness of this unceasing 'falling short', which can never be made up, is very typical of Ruysbroeck. On the metaphysical level, it establishes the idea that 'man remains constantly beneath himself',[22] an aspect which will continue in the infinite dynamism of the Idealists and Neo-Kantians. But the metaphysical level rests here on a theology of dialogue, and so, in the final analysis, it is the humanity of the lover before the ever greater glory of the beloved, which arouses this feeling of constantly falling short. And then again it is a lover's humility (not a Gnostic light-mysticism) which is the motive for the beloved God's coming to meet man so much as overwhelming *kabod*, *doxa*, *gloria*, majestic splendour.

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[18] S 6, 8.

[19] A II, 12–13; p. 64f. This is a very common theme. For example, S I, A I, 20, I, 25: 'at all times and all places to recall God and his glory and honour'; AII, 3; 'with all the other virtues to have in mind the praise and honour of God and to submit ourselves to him beyond things, opinions and ourselves'; A II, 65: 'to seek only the dear will of God and not ourselves, but to seek at all times the honour of God', and so on.

[20] A I, 3; p. 13.

[21] A I, 12; p. 429.

[22] A II, 15.

God gives himself through the mediations of nature as well as those of grace (as *gratia creata*), but he flashes forth through all the veils of mediation and touches as the Unmediated, as *gratia increata*. Ruysbroeck soars, swings, dances throughout his life through the veils towards what is immediate and glorious, that touches *him* and again and again eludes him. This is the encounter with Christ, his advent and parousia, '(His) inward touch or stirring . . . in his divine brightness'.[23] 'And above this touch, in the still being of the spirit, there broods an incomprehensible brightness. And that is the most high Trinity whence this touching proceeds'.[24] The soul's reflection on this point and act of touch transcends itself: 'By means of the enlightened reason the spirit . . . beholds and observes the most inward part of itself, where this touch occurs. Here reason and every earthly light fail and can go no further. For the supernal brightness brooding over all, which gives rise to this touch, blinds in its coming every earthly sight; for it is unfathomable . . . Yet the spirit is continually invited and urged anew by God and by itself to sound out and to discover what is stirring these deeps, and who God is, and what this touch is.'[25] In such an 'investigation', however, in the face of so much glory, as Ruysbroeck says, the spirit becomes 'impotent'.[26] 'That measureless splendour of God, which is full of incomprehensible brightness, is the cause of all gifts and of all virtues, that same uncomprehended light transfigures and penetrates the fruitive (passive) self-giving of our spirit in love, with the non-form and incomprehensibility of its light. And in this light the spirit immerses itself in the enjoyment of rest, for this resting is without form and without limit . . . And the abyss of God calls into the abyss (of the self-giving creature) . . . and this inward call is an inundation of the essential brightness . . . (which) causes us to be lost to ourselves, and to flow forth from ourselves into the wild darkness of the Godhead.'[27] Ruysbroeck interprets this inundation by the glory of God, which 'renders us impotent', as the finite consciousness 'being taken in' to the idea in God (which is God himself). It is, however, only one aspect of the supreme experience of God; the other is a renewed sense of being sent by God into self-consciousness, so that the life of love is an eternal oscillation between resting in God and acting with God's help, between *systole* and *diastole*. This image is perpetually repeated with variations: 'The Spirit of God blows us outwards, so that we can cultivate love and the practice of the virtues, but He also sucks us inwards, so that we can give ourselves up to rest and enjoyment. And this is eternal life. It is the same as when we exhale the air that is in us and again inhale a new breath . . . To go inwards in an unrestrained enjoyment, to go outwards with good works, and in both at all times to remain united with the Spirit of God.'[28] The one is 'death to oneself' and an 'inward-drawing transformation', and the other is 'sending out by God' of the 'faithful servants', who are at once 'called inside as friends'.[29] 'In moving inwards we have to be completely empty', in order to belong only to God, 'yet in the steaming forth he wants to be completely ours'.[30] But the Father utters the eternal Word in those who have been drawn in to God: it is the 'inundation of his light and grace' into the single ground of the soul. Moved by this Light/Word, 'the higher powers flow out to become active in all the virtues',[31] so that the two movements are once again one. 'This streaming of God into us demands of us a flowing out and a flowing back . . . into the same source from which that torrent has flowed.'[32] For 'God is a sea that ebbs and flows, pouring without ceasing into all his beloved according to the needs and merits of each, and ebbing back again with all those who have been thus endowed both in heaven and on earth, with all that they have and all that they can.'[33]

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[23] A II, 51; p. 118.

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] A II, 52; p. 119f.

[26] Of the angels it is said: 'They lose the power to act and fall powerless before the abysmal height of God' ('The Book of the Seven Steps', 12); 'Their flame is burnt out, they are liquefied and lost in their super-essence' (*ibid.*, 14). They are consumed and swallowed up in the abyss of the infinity of God, 'where all spirits lose the power to act and become impotent out of enjoyment' ('The Book of the Four Temptations' (German translation of F. M. Huebner, Dombücherei, 1924, p. 208).

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[27] A II, 54; p. 149.
[28] 'The Book of the Seven Steps', 14.
[29] S 9; pp. 201ff.
[30] S II, as also 12.

Man, however, who in loving abandonment surrenders himself completely to God and his glory, can, when he goes out, 'no longer think of and seek himself, but the honour of him, who has sent him out . . . He has a rich, generous core, rooted in the richness of God, and so he must uremittingly flow outwards and spend himself on all who have need of him . . . And so his life is an all-embracing life';[34] he has attained to the true Catholicity of love. 'He shall go out . . . with overflowing love towards heaven and earth . . . towards God and towards all saints . . . towards sinners and towards all perverted men, towards Purgatory.'[35] He puts his trust in the immensity of the love of God: 'Now, since this man is at home in such a universal love, he prays and beseeches God that his love and mercy may flow forth towards pagans and towards Jews and towards all unbelievers',[36] and for that intention he offers himself to God, as well as all the interior devotion of the saints and angels, of the Church and of Christ.[37] He takes 'as a model Christ, who was, and is and eternally shall remain, common to all . . . [who] had nothing of his own, but everything in common, body and soul, mother and disciples, cloak and tunic. He ate and he drank for our sake; he lived and he died for our sake . . . And the glory of his merits shall be common to all in eternity.'[38]

[31] A II, 3; p. 55.
[32] A II, 6; p. 58.
[33] A II, 40; p. 103.
[34] S 14; p. 220f.
[35] A II, 39; p. 102f.
[36] A II, 41; p. 105.
[37] A II, 63; p. 146.
[38] A II, 45; p. 109f.

Thus as Christ in His loving poverty is the common, Catholic outflow of God into the world and the world's flowing back into God, so the truly Catholic man 'gives himself away' 'in generous participation of love towards heaven and earth, and swells out and flows back . . . into the ground . . . from which all things proceed' with 'the fruits of his apostolate',[39] He is 'in constant activity and constant rest'.[40]

Considered speculatively, this rhythm of being swings round this narrow central point of indifference. Indifference, for the Christian, means Catholic love, which lets itself be robbed of form in the movement from the world to God and transformed in the movement from God to the world. Through being rooted in a personal ('mystical') experience of God, this Catholic love illuminates the rhythm of life common to all Christians—contemplation and action. Psychologically, it illuminates the oscillation of life between the three centres of man: super-ego, mind (consciousness)and heart (active potencies). Metaphysically, it illuminates the cosmological schema common in Indian philosophy, Plotinus, Erigena and Thomas Aquinas (the *egressus* of God to the world, the *regressus* of the world back to God), but it elevates it Christologically: the departure of the Son from the Father into the world and His return to the Father (John 16.28). But Ruysbroeck's understanding of Catholic love further elevates the cosmological schema by placing it in a Trinitarian context, since for Ruysbroeck God is not only rest (in his essence) but also activity (in the processions of the divine persons). This is not so much Eckhart's idea of the ultimate ground of the divine essence lying unattainable 'behind' the persons and the movement of their processions;[41] it is more the idea that the divine essence is the resting ground *in* the processions of the persons, the essential love which they are together.[42] Indifference, understood as Catholic love, holds everything together, even the apparently pantheistic aspect (the dissolution of self-hood as it flows back into the idea in the divine mind and thus into God), by making it just one pole in an absolute disponibility. From the very beginning Ruybroeck repeatedly took energetic precautions against the absolutisation of this aspect. His final experiences and words lie more in the experience of the everlasting flow, which occasionally appears (here there is affinity with Tauler) as a hunt for God and through God.[43] In certain states it is 'a fierce hot flash of the divine rays', which makes the heart 'frantic with love' and torments it with the unattainable excess of glory'.[44] It can mean floating through, wandering through every level of the world-order.[45] It can be a 'whirlpool', a 'whirlwind', and finally a 'loving strife' in the 'storm of love', in which 'the two spirits . . . sparkle and shine one into the other, and each demands that the other give what it is' and the finite spirit 'is burnt up in the fire of love'.[46] And yet this happens in such a way that the sun (which is God) shines over the lover in a complete zodiac: as Spring—summoning and enticing, as Summer—burning, as Autumn and Winter—cooling, until finally the lover is left in forsakenness.[47] All this is so personal and so colourful that, through a much more substantial relation with God, it makes credible the rejection of all forms of Quietism and places man outwardly in a tension, between the world and God, home and abroad, combat and crown,[48] which in turn, most unexpectedly for

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[39] A II, 50, p. 117.

[40] A II, 75.

[41] Though many expressions here show themselves to be influenced by Eckhart.

[42] T 9; p. 240: 'And there we may behold how the persons give place and pass away in essential love, that is, in their fruitive unity, and yet they dwell for ever, according to their personal modes, in the working of the

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Trinity'. In the same work (ch. 10; p. 240f.) Ruysbroeck explains how the world is created out of the common contentment of love of the divine persons and how this bliss pours itself out over the natures as the lordship of grace. *Cf.* also ch. 12 and A II, 37, where the person's unity of essence and love becomes the object of mystical experience. The divine essence is often described as 'twilight' and 'night', but this is the traditional (Dionysian) expression for the superluminosity and invisibility of the divine unity.

[43] A II, 5, 8.

[44] A II, 25.

[45] A II, 41.

[46] A II, 54; p. 122f.

[47] This whole progress is described, with consummate poetical power, in A II, 16–33.

[48] A II, 73.

the philosopher, but most correctly for the Christian, places him inwardly *before* God *in* God.

d. Espousals in the Night

THE WOMEN

Ruysbroeck's experience remains personal. Once schematised, it will have a certain influence, but in this depersonalised form it cannot claim general validity, any more than John of the Cross's personal way can. Human abandonment is not a sufficient basis for systematically anticipating the different ways in which God will reveal himself. In Christian terms it is Tauler rather than Ruysbroeck who is the central figure, the one who points the way forward. Let us now look at some of his specifically Christian themes. These already existed, of course, in the Patristic period and the early Middle Ages, but only now, with the emergence of abandonment (*Gelassenheit*), do they attain a properly metaphysical status by illuminating the essence of spirit—as *quodammodo omnia*—in the analogy of finite and infinite spirit. For as long as spirit was interpreted by the standards of 'eros' as the divine wisdom, its own characteristically dynamic and orientating light dwelt within, where it 'suffered divine reality'. As already mentioned, the historical mysteries of Christianity appeared chiefly as indispensable means of finding and keeping to this way. But when finite spirit found itself confronted with the unimaginable revelation of the personal God, its ultimate attitude (with all the 'longing' that might and must inhabit it) became one of open and defenceless expectation. It became an attitude of *apatheia*, which is no longer a self-generated ethical or mystical transcendence of the finite forms of what is into the all-embracing formlessness of being, but a 'passive' readiness to accept every positive impression made by God. The element of 'glory' no longer consists in the ascent of eros, which gazes upon the eternal, but in the encounter of the spirit, disponible and humbly ready to serve, as the 'handmaid of the Lord' with the Son who descends.

These themes had been adumbrated in the commentaries on the Canticle,[1] where they revolved round the central mystery of Christian theology, Only now, however, do these themes attain their historical *kairos*.

1. First and foremost there is the *Passion of Christ*, the dimensions of which are amplified. From being a particular event in history (of universal validity because of the dignity of the God-Man who suffers) it is amplified to become the concrete, normative and defining attitude of the historical creature in general, the creature, that is, which is sinful and alienated from God. Christ's substitutionary death on the cross now displays openly in the openness of his experience on behalf of all what, at the point of transcendence, the sinner's remoteness from God truly means. It is *night*. But it is no longer the metaphysical night of the Areopagite, based upon the ever greater being of God and the dazzling glory of his essence. No, this is the night in which God in judgment turns away from the sinner. This night has a fourfold depth into which we may sink. First of all, there is the consciousness of the sinner, who has lost God within himself, and who, emerging from the obscurity of being, can only experience existence as sinister and destructive. Secondly, there is the growth in awareness of the paradoxical presence of God, who is present as the one who is absent, who abandons, forsakes and judges. Thirdly, there is the assumption of this experience of the night into Christ's sinless experience of suffering. This alone brings the real content of the 'night' to 'light', by transforming the 'infernal' difference between God and the sinner into a modality of the difference of love between the Father and the (incarnate) Son. Fourthly, there is the participation by the engraced member of Christ in the experience of the Head. This participated experience can rest primarily on any one of the three other levels of the night. The experience of night can begin by simply revealing the reality of the sinner's situation before God (and will normally

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[1] Above all: H. Riedlinger, 'Die Makellosigkeit der Kirche in den lat. Hohelied-kommentaren des MA', *BGPhThMA* xxxviii/3 (1958); and F. Ohly, *Hohelied-Studien*. Grundzüge einer Geschichte der Hoheliedauslegung des Abendlandes bis um 1200 (1958).

do so), before the Christological dimension as a presupposition of grace enters in any way into the experience of faith. The pedagogical aspect of the night, which John of the Cross almost exclusively brings out (weaning away from the world, initiation into the nakedness of faith, which is as such pure surrender to God in the night), is hardly mentioned at all by name at this stage, but is there on the side, as an outcome of the night for those who suffer it. Transcendence thought of as night is primarily a Christian insight and was long experienced by Christians in the abyss before, in secularised form, it became a modern experience of existence. As a Christian experience it remains—in all the darkness and opacity that it is for the one who undergoes it—a function of the experience of the cross, where *passio* was extreme human *actio* and the supreme locus for the manifestation of the glory of divine love.

2. The attitude of abandonment (*Gelassenheit*) is feminine. On the purely creaturely level, it is handmaidenly, and on the level of the revelation of God's love, it is bridal. The entry of the idea of abandonment into the realm of transcendence becomes the occasion for women to express themselves in a Church that thinks of itself as womanly. The theological commentaries on the Canticle had all been written by men. From the Gothic period to the Baroque, *women* are prominent in spirituality. Of course, occasionally, the sensibility slips down from its metaphysical sublimity to the level of the private and erotic, but it is not the deviations that must be taken as the standard but the pure realisations. Loving, handmaidenly service is imprinted with the marks of the Lord: after Francis, almost all the stigmatics are women. And the hallmark for understanding and experiencing this suffering love is not (as it was in the mysticism of men in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries) the self-transcending mind but the defenceless and open heart. It is women above all who establish devotion to the pierced Heart of the Redeemer[2] and to the Mother of Sorrows. In its best representatives it becomes clear that this devotion is essentially ecclesial, that is

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[2] K. Richtstätter, *Die Herz-Jesu-Verehrung des deutschen Mittelalters* (1924^2); A. Hamon, *Histoire de la dévotion au Sacré-Coeur*, 5 vols. (1923–40).

to say, brings to our awareness the universally normative attitude of humanity before God.

3. A third aspect not only characterises the hidden heart of Christian piety, as do the first two, it also has a further effect, through its symbolic imagery, on general culture. All the spirituality of Christian antiquity and the early Middle Ages was a passionate quest for the Wisdom of God, a Wisdom that was hidden but revealed in Christ, and in this sense *philosophia*.[3] However, when, as in classical tragedy, the ultimate human attitude became one of abandonment and exposure to the night, then 'wisdom' assumed anew the traits of *folly*. And then this night of suffering transcendence reached a deeper level: it became the night of that folly which is sin and the night of God's Wisdom broken in folly on the cross. At that point the fool, the buffoon, became straightway the representative image of man. The fool is continually contradicted, as is obvious, by images of man preoccupied with wisdom, and this is more than ever true once antiquity's and Christianity's concept of the tragic is displaced and obscured by the Platonist Renaissance, the Enlightenment and classicist criteria of beauty. Nonetheless, the fool remains the 'classical' image of man in the West in the modern era: from Parzival to Prince Myshkin. The 'glory' that surrounds him is greater and more mysterious than the contours of the figure of the classicist ideal man. A special chapter must be devoted to the fool, because here a vital gleam of Christian faith becomes perceptible in the domain of art. It is precisely this mysterious and paradoxical flash of 'glory' which for the poets becomes a pure manifestation of man.

The history of spirituality from the Gothic age to the Baroque can only be outlined by means of certain representative figures. Important people such as Gertrude, Bridget, Joan of Arc and Teresa have to remain unmentioned; all that matters is that we bring out the common characteristics of this European spiritual family. The common factor is an interpretation of man based upon the transcendence of abandonment in the sense of a loving disponibility for God, upon the primordial being and absolute elective will of love, whose glory (*major gloria*) appears *for* and *in* this indifference.

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[3] Jean Leclercq, 'Pour l'histoire de l'expression "philosophie chrétienne"', *MelScRe* ix (1952), 221–226; E. Curtius, 'Zur Geschichte des Wortes Philosophie im Mittelalter', *Rom. Forsch.* lvii (1943), 290–309.

ANGELA OF FOLIGNO, who precedes the Rhineland mystics in time, is the direct daughter of the Poverello.[4] But through the particularity of her vision the understanding of poverty is expanded, in Angela, to metaphysical dimensions. She 'sees' God as the 'supreme being',[5] 'while everything else exists only to the extent that it derives its existence from Him Who *Is*'.[6] She sees God as 'the one who is being' and sees also 'in what manner he is the being of all creatures'.[7] But Angela sees this in an inexplicable non-seeing. Not only does the 'object' (of her vision) transcend all objectivity, so does the mode of experience which in its positive elevation arrives at the necessarily negative statement: 'In the end you attain the fulness of light and comprehend that you cannot comprehend'.[8] Having seen 'God in great clarity and fulness', she sees him later 'in total darkness, because he is a good greater than man's devising or understanding . . . And then the soul was given a most certain faith, a sure hope, an unshakeable trust'.[9] And were she to lose all perspicuous knowledge, all 'God's many and indescribable attestations of friendship', her constancy, says Angela, would not be shaken, that constancy produced in her by the 'All-Good who is seen in great darkness'.[10] For 'the soul receives more from what she does not have than from what she does have, more from what she does not feel than from what she does feel, and more from what she does not recognise than from what she does recognise.' The reason for this is that everything which even the most perfect soul, such as 'the soul of the holy Virgin, knows of this uncreated God, a God of such immeasurable governance, is nothing in comparison with that of which the soul *sees*, *perceives* and *recognises* that she cannot comprehend it, nor perceive it, nor see it, nor recognise it'.[11]

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[4] In one of her visions Francis calls her 'the only daughter to whom he ever gave birth'. Angela's works cited from the edition of M. J. Ferré, *Le livre de l'expérience des Vrais Fidèles* (Paris, 1927). Numbers refer to those in Ferré.

[5] 200.

[6] 123.

[7] 121.

[8] 130.

[9] 105.

[10] 106.

This recognition comes to her in the presence of Christ, for she 'sees and feels and recognises the lesser in the greater and the greater in the lesser; she finds the God who has not come into being in the God who has become man.'[12] 'And what shines (*resultat*) from these eyes and this face is precisely that of which I said I saw it in that darkness, breaking out from within'.[13] But what breaks out there is the incomprehensible identity of eternal, majestic 'fulness', charged with glory, and the eternal 'humility of God',[14] which shines forth with irrefutable clarity in the 'humility of Christ', in his poverty ('for poverty is the root and the mother of humility')[15] and humiliation for the sake of the 'miserable nothing' that is the sinner. Christ's humiliation, his infinite, 'indescribable, manifold and hidden' pain on the cross, is habitual, being rooted in the 'eternal saving decree which is ineffably conjoined with Christ from eternity and which evokes in him this supreme pain'. It is a 'pain which sprang from the ineffable divine light given to him'.[16] This 'incessant and immoderate pain', in the word from the cross about abandonment by God, bursts forth out of hiding so that it can be seen and heard by men.[17] But it began in the first moment of Christ's conception and lasts until his death.[18] 'For on the cross Christ began, on the cross Christ had his mid-point, and on the cross Christ had his end',[19] and so 'his pain was . . . without relief'.[20] It is the foundation of the mode of his human existence, and this foundation is the mode in which the humility of God is manifested.

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[11] 166. *Cf* the similar formula in Anselm: *comprehendit incomprehensibile esse*. See *The Glory of the Lord*, vol. II, p. 228 (Eng. tr.).

[12] 167.

[13] 107.

[14] 63.

[15] 95.

[16] 127.

[17] 129.

[18] 140.

[19] 194.

In the face of the humiliation of God Christian love is enkindled, and every kind of particular eros, about which Angela issues harsh warnings, is transcended.[21] Not only will the soul 'love every creature with all her powers, because in every creature she sees, recognises and discerns God . . . who humbled himself for this miserable nothing'.[22] Through God's grace she will transform herself into the properties of the humble love of God himself.[23] But in so doing she falls into that terrible dialectic which is characteristic of Angela: seeing herself in the humility of God, she will understand that she is 'nothing but pride'.[24] In order to come to the truth about herself, she will thirst for humiliation and reckon herself unworthy of it.[25] All that she does and says seems radically false to her.[26] She despairs of herself and feels and knows herself to be damned.[27] She lives like a hanged man dangling on the rope and unable fully to choke.[28] She is 'nothing but rage, despair, bitterness, arrogance and torment'.[29] Angela did not by any means describe these states simply as a participation in the cross of Christ, but chiefly as the most just lot that could befall her. Only through a grace that is incomprehensible to her are these experiences anchored firmly in the deeper transcendental experience of the God-Man. Then they coincide with the first experience that God is and accomplishes all the good in the creature, 'while we ourselves accomplish all the evil. And this is true annihilation: to see in truth that we are not the authors of a single good. Only those who acknowledge the aforesaid truth possess the

[20] 112.
[21] 130, 190, 199.
[22] 181.
[23] 187.
[24] 63.
[25] 44.
[26] p. 494f.
[27] p. 499.
[28] 97.
[29] 103.

spirit of truth'.[30] Then can the soul be shown the goodness of God's entire creation together with the sin contained therein.[31] Then she becomes capable of loving God, the all-inclusive being, for his own sake and all things for God's sake alone,[32] without expecting any reward.[33] Then the soul, beyond its total perversity, becomes in God 'completely little, dangerous to no one, troublesome to no one',[34] because she has been 'swallowed in the throat of humility',[35] but she is also 'completely true, completely just' and 'in possession of all the truth in heaven and hell and the whole world'.[36] However, because all is God and belongs to God, all this is real poverty and at the same time perfect Marian handmaidenliness.[37] And because love is the absolute principle of all action (whether acting with or without external works),[38] the soul that has thus gone beyond itself into God is at the same time both supremely free and supremely obedient.[39] She has gone 'beyond the abyss of her self-knowledge . . . and sunk into the infinity of divine goodness'.[40] This is, accordingly, *duplex inabyssatio divinae immensitatis et cognitionis propriae vilitatis*, a double descent into the abyss, which for Angela bears the definitive name of humility.[41]

JULIAN OF NORWICH[1] is a connecting link between Angela and Catherine of Siena. For her, too, contemplation of Christ's suffering on the cross stands face to face with contemplation of the absolutely universal goodness of God, which, as with Catherine a few years later, is also seen chiefly as the sovereign providence of grace. There is a complete absence of literary tradition and dependence, yet nowhere do we see more clearly the objective accord between the great metaphysical tradition (as represented, for example, by Plotinus) and Christian transcendentality. Julian sees everything in the perspective of the bleeding crucifix: 'God is everything which is good, and the goodness which everything has is God.'[2] But this vision can only be attained if one recognises that 'he has made everything which is made for love, and through the same love is it preserved'. This is shown to Julian by the 'plentiful shedding of his precious blood' and by 'the virgin who is his beloved mother',[3] and who is 'more worthy and more fulfilled than everything else which God has created, and which is inferior to her'—the universe.[4] Julian is initiated into the Catholic love of Jesus and Mary by a perpetual alternation between consolation and desolation, from which she has to learn that 'he keeps us safe all the time, in joy and in sorrow',[5] and that 'any man who voluntarily chooses God in his lifetime may be sure that he too is chosen'.[6] In Christ God loves all that he has created, and man, in faith elevated above himself, attains the same indivisible unity of love. 'If any man withdraws his love from any of his fellow Christians, he does not love at all, because he has not love towards all. And so in such times he is in danger, because he is not at peace; and everyone who has general love for his fellow Christians has love towards everything which is. For in mankind which will be saved is comprehended all that is, all that is made, and the maker of all; for God is in man, and so

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[30] 203.

[31] 67.

[32] 197f.

[33] 'I do not desire to serve and to love for the sake of any reward; no, I would like to love and serve for the sake of the goodness of the incomprehensible God', 160.

[34] 157.

[35] p. 494.

[36] 121.

[37] *Cf.* 95, 131.

[38] 202.

[39] 165.

[40] *Ut in hac profunditate vestrae cognitionis profundemini . . . inabyssemini in immensitate divinae bonitatis*, 182.

[41] 182.

[1] Tr. Balthasar makes use of a German translation of the short text of *The Revelations of Divine Love*. In what follows we shall quote from the

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modern English version of Edmund College OSA and James Walsh SJ, *Julian of Norwich: Showings* (Classics of Western Spirituality, New York 1978). Numbers refer to Julian's chapters and the page references of the translation.

[2] 5; p. 133.

[3] 5; p. 132.

[4] 4; p. 131.

[5] 9; p. 140.

[6] 20; p. 161.

in man is all'.[7] Julian clearly thinks of this 'Christian humanism' in transcendental and Christological terms. Only in this light do we understand why her anxious question about evil and sin can be answered so calmly by gazing at the cross and dereliction of Jesus.[8] 'Sin has its meaning'. It can be understood on the cross as initiation into the self-dispossession, into the love, of the forsaken Son, who is accused of no offence.[9] There is not the slightest question of *pecca fortiter*.[10]

Julian's vision is concerned with the universality of redemption. She does indeed say: 'I may not and cannot show the spiritual visions to you as plainly and fully as I should wish',[11] she distinguishes 'two portions': the first is 'clear and fair and bright and plentiful, for all men who are or will be of good will are comprehended in this portion'; this is, so to speak, the good thief aspect. The second is 'closed to us and hidden', for 'it is fitting to God's royal dominion to keep his privy counsel in peace', and even 'the saints in heaven wish to know nothing but what our Lord wishes to show them'.[12] But light shines through even this hidden portion in the vision of immense mercy when the Lord says: 'I will make all things well, I shall make all things well, I may make all things well, and I can make all things well; and you will see that yourself, that all things will be well',[13] namely, 'the union of all men who will be saved in the Blessed Trinity'. And in Christian simplicity Julian adds: 'It is God's will that we should know in general that all will be well, but it is not God's will that we should know it now except as it applies to us for the present, and that is the teaching of Holy Church.'[14] What was shown her in her visions she had always understood in a Catholic and universal way: she sees everything as the representative of all, in the name of all,[15] her visions belong

[7] 6; p. 134.

[8] 10; pp. 141ff.

[9] 13; pp. 146ff.

[10] 17; p. 154.

[11] 7; p. 135.

[12] 14; p. 150.

[13] 15; p. 151.

[14] 15; p. 152.

[15] 6; p. 133.

to all.[16] For this reason she has to surrender her anxiety about the salvation of a particular person to God's universal providential love: 'It is more honour to God to contemplate him in all things than in any one special thing.'[17] Perfect prayer unites the two: one prays not for something definite but that God's will be done and his honour respected—and one asks in faith, hope and charity for that definite thing, of which one knows that it corresponds to God's will and honour. 'So Our Lord wants us both to pray and to trust.'[18] In our own time such a wide and generous attitude of loving glorification of God has been seen perfectly in Elisabeth de la Trinité.[19] Julian's insight into universal redemption will be once again granted to Marie des Vallées, with whom John Eudes, the theologian of the hearts of Jesus and Mary, was closely associated.[20] But the insight will be granted together with terrible experiences of (mystical) night.

THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING. The anonymous fourteenth century treatise, *The Cloud of Unknowing*,[1] stands at a complex point of intersection. Its source is the classical theology of Denys, the school of Bernard and the Victorines, and it flows into the world of the *Devotio Moderna*, but at the same time it unintentionally offers a side-glance into late scholasticism's understanding of spirituality. For the contemplative monk who experienced it and described it as the principal characteristic of the way to God, the 'cloud of unknowing' is not the 'darkness of God' as he presents himself to the finite intellect, nor is it the incapacity of the sense-bound intellect to comprehend God; no, the 'cloud of unknowing' means exposure, in an attitude of transcendent indifference, in the 'no-man's-land' between the world and God. 'Thou must, as this *cloud of unknowing* is above thee, betwixt thee and thy God, right so put a *cloud of forgetting* beneath thee, betwixt thee and all the creatures that ever be made.'[2] The context of this experience is the same as the passive night of John of the Cross, except for the latter's hell-like abandonment:[3] it is a love that ardently stretches upwards in naked faith, beyond all sensation, even of the spiritual senses.[4] 'Smite upon that thick cloud of unknowing with a sharp dart of longing love'.[5] 'And mean God that made thee, and bought thee, and that graciously hath called thee to this work (of contemplation)'.[6] On the other hand, every thought about 'what is', such as particular attributes of God, the angels, Mary, the saints in heaven,[7] or even the mysteries of Christ's passion and one's own earlier sinful life,[8] every such thought must be pushed aside as distracting. All clearly-defined concepts and judgments are (as in John of the Cross) quietly and calmly to be discarded[9] in favour of a 'blind beholding unto the naked being of God himself'.[10] We are required to 'look [at things] as it were over [our] shoulders, seeking another thing', and if they annoyingly besiege the imagination and intellect, 'cower then down under them as a caitiff and a coward overcome in battle',[11] passing under them if we cannot pass over them. We are required, as it were, to 'hide from God' and 'conceal'[12] even our passionate longing for God. Now this perseverance in a state of emptiness before God is, in the final analysis, to be understood in Christian terms as the quintessence and supertemporal distillation of that love of God with which man, through grace, responds to God's temporal economy of salvation. This striving after the 'naked being of God' means, in fact, 'a naked intent directed unto God for himself',[13] and thus a 'meek stirring of love' for God the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier,[14] a stirring which is itself pure grace. 'And yet there is no soul without this grace, which is able to have this grace: none, whether it be a sinner soul or an innocent soul'.[15] The passivity of the 'work' of contemplation—'Let it be the worker, and thou but the sufferer'[16]—means in all seriousness that man cannot arrive at contemplation by means of exercise and training of the spirit. 'All good means hang upon it, and it on no means; nor no means may lead thereto'.[17] For the Christian this means 'humility' in view of one's own sinful weakness, and especially in view of the 'overabundant love and the worthiness of God in himself'.[18] The single thought of 'praise' ought to characterise this state and so pervade it[19] that even the thought of one's own sin gives way before it.[20]

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[16] 7; p. 136.

[17] 16; p. 153.

[18] 19; p. 158.

[19] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Elisabeth of Dijon*. An Interpretation of her Spiritual Mission, ET (London, 1956).

[20] Emile Dermenghem, *La Vie admirable et les Révélations de Marie des Vallées* (Roseau d'Or 9, 1926).

[1] Critical edition by Phyllis Hodgson, *Early English Text Society*, Original Series, ccxviii (Oxford University Press, London, 1944). [Tr. We shall make use of the modern version of Abbot Justin McCann, 6th and revised edn. (The Golden Library, London, 1964). Numbers refers to the *Cloud's* chapters and the page references of the modern version.]

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[2] 5; p. 13.

[3] *Cf.* the indication of place in ch. 21.

[4] Explicit mention is made of the incapacity of 'our ghostly wits' to lay hold of God, and precisely in this connection appeal is made to 'Saint Denis'. But it is clear from the context that by 'ghostly wits' all is meant is the reason, which cannot ascend to any 'unmade ghostly thing'. *Cf.* ch. 70; p. 95.

[5] 6; p. 15.

[6] 7; p. 16.

[7] 5; p. 14.

[8] 8; p. 17f.

[9] The 'sharp and clear beholdings of thy natural wit' (ch. 8; p. 18) are not rejected as bad in themselves, but because they impede contemplative transcendence. 'And therefore purpose thee to put down such clear beholdings, be they never so holy nor so liking' (ch. 9; p. 21).

[10] 8; p. 20.

It is possible to see in the 'cloud', in this no-man's land of indifference between the world and God, a parallel to contemplation in the Indian and Arabic traditions, with its formless void that nonetheless hides within itself an inconceivable fulness. However, while it is true that the *Cloud* can accommodate this kind of non-Christian contemplation, the indifference it describes nonetheless remains also a function of humble Christian love, which preserves within itself the 'spirit' of Christ and his cross. Then again one might to want to find a parallel in the *Cloud* to the abstract 'univocal' concept of being to be found in Avicenna, Scotus and Suarez, which remains in suspense between absolute and finite being and represents the true state and content of transcendence or metaphysics. However, the *Cloud* explicitly forbids any kind of metaphysical reduction of its doctrine and consequently avoids, through its simple attitude of love, the contradictions of which a philosophy built upon the concept of being necessarily runs the risk.

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[11] 32; p. 48.
[12] 51; p. 71.
[13] 24; p. 40.
[14] 7; p. 15.
[15] 34; p. 50.
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 51.
[18] 13; p. 26.
[19] 7; p. 16f.
[20] 16; p. 29. There is an uninterrupted transition in the author's thought from Mary Magdalene's being the 'sinner' to her being the pure contemplative, Mary of Bethany. *Cf.* chs. 16–17.

It is true, however, that the *Cloud* presents that universality and Catholicity of love which is the real heart of the Christian doctrine of indifference, and which also enables it to incorporate at a higher level the entire positive content of the Buddhist ethic of compassion: 'And that in this work . . . charity unto thine even Christian is verily and perfectly fulfilled. For why, in this work a perfect worker hath no special regard unto any man by himself, whether he be kin or stranger, friend or foe. For all men seem alike kin unto him, and no man stranger. All men, he thinketh, be his friends, and none his foes. Insomuch, that he thinketh all those that pain him and do him hurt in this life, that they be his full and his special friends: and he thinketh that he is stirred to will them as much good as he would to the dearest friend that he hath.'[21]

CATHERINE OF SIENA. The 'metaphysics of the saints', in the sense of an aesthetic of Christian transcendental reason, attains perhaps its purest and most exhaustive form in the *Dialogue* of Catherine of Siena (1378), where it becomes evident that the 'mystical' in her Christian experience is simply an elucidation of what is contained in every genuinely evangelical vision. The 'dialogue' that takes place here is the dialogue between infinite and finite reason, in Christian terms, between the triune God (whose voice resounds from the heights as the voice of God the Father) and the completely universalised soul, which has been broadened out to become the *anima ecclesiastica*. The attitude of this soul is at once both total indifference with respect to the will of the personal God of love and a totally urgent love, which identifies itself with this universal saving will. It is an attitude of self-offering and disponsibility for the plan and work of all-embracing mercy, not out of presumptuous self-determination but out of pure obedience to the Word of God, which seeks people to imitate the Son's work on the cross. As an attitude of self-offering in obedience, it is at the same time an earnest supplication that God's will may be done in the world and that, accordingly, one may be made use of to that end. This prayer of passionate indifference is penetrated and imprinted by the expository, explanatory utterance of God the Father, who speaks in his Son and through the Son's words and deeds, and who with His Holy Spirit expounds the Son in men's hearts. It is, in fact, the utterance of a three-fold Father: 'of me, God, your Father, the eternal Trinity'.[1]

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[21] 24; p. 41.

In those words resounds a voice that has never before been heard in Christian literature, a voice that will ring out again only in Péguy's *Mystères*. And yet it is a voice with a thoroughly credible ring, because it is nothing other than the echo of the Biblical Word in, as it were, the resonating chamber of the Holy Spirit and the ecclesial soul. Here the circumscribed Word of the Gospel is heard for what it is: the self-verbalisation of the depth of infinite being itself. In the process, the Biblical Word loses none of its precision or definition: it is a Word which clarifies, instructs, which relentlessly exposes things to the light and judges. Where need be, it is threatening, but equally it is a Word of comfort and promise, a strengthening and creative Word. It does not fail to accuse sinners, especially Christians, but without the slightest compromise of its absolute supremacy. Everything takes place in the atmosphere of familiarity made possible by the Christian revelation: the familiarity of the 'most beloved daughter' and the adored, truly 'idolised' Father, with the bridal relationship with the Son as the invisible presupposition. For Catherine, 'betrothal' and 'marriage' with the Word, the wedding ring that is visible to her alone, belong eleven years in the past, so do the 'crown of thorns' and the stigmata (which at her request remained invisible). As with Joan of Arc, her contemplative Passion was to be only the dim background for her active Passion in the world and the Church. By means of her life God the Father expounds his Son to the Church, an act that presupposes suffering and that can lead only to suffering. Catherine's church-political mission logically involves this exegetical aspect: in her very heart God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—expounds himself, just as her life must become the exposition of God to men.

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[1] Italian text: *S. Caterina da Siena: Dialogo della divina Provvidenza*, a cura del P. Innocenzo Taurisano OP (Rome, 1947). [Tr. We shall quote from the English translation of Suzanne Noffke OP, *Catherine of Siena: The Dialogue* (Classics of Western Spirituality, London, 1980). Numbers refer to chapters and the page references of the translation.]—135; p. 278.

It is crucial that we appreciate that such exposition can take place only where there exists an attitude of total ecclesial indifference. This is constantly presupposed and inculcated. God's 'servants' (as consecrated souls, especially members of religious orders, are called) 'are stripped of their own will and clothed in mine';[2] they 'want nothing but what I will'.[3] 'Because [their will] is not their own and has in fact become one with me in love, they can neither will nor desire anything but what I will'.[4] They 'go by this way of the will immersed in and subjected to my gentle will',[5] 'bowing humbly to Yes or No, whichever pleases my divine goodness'.[6] Catherine has a predilection for describing this indifference as 'desire', 'longing', 'thirst', but this should not arouse the suspicion that we are dealing here with *desiderium*, in the Platonic and Augustinian sense of the ontological love of the creature for the absolute God. What matters here is not attaining and possessing God, but the ardent desire to correspond with God's requirements and expectations. In the very first sentence of the *Dialogue* the object of desire is the manifestation of God's glory in his work of salvation.[7] Indeed, it is called *desiderio infinito*,[8] *fuoco del desiderio*,[9] *infinito affetto d'amore*,[10] *dolorosi desideri*,[11] even downright *spasimato desiderio*.[12] This longing is compared to tears of fire, 'and if you open your mind's eye you will see that the Holy Spirit weeps in the person of every one of my servants who offers me the fragrance of holy desire and constant humble prayer'.[13] But this longing is Catholic and universal: she longs for the salvation of all, for the coming of God for all. And if so many sinners escape the net cast by the soul, 'the net of desire had certainly been held out to all, because the soul who is hungry for my honour is never content with a fraction but wants them all. She asks the good to help her get the fishes into her net . . . She would have the imperfect become perfect. She would have the bad become good. The darksome unbelievers she would turn to the light of holy baptism. She wants them all, whatever their condition, because she sees them all in me, created by my goodness in such burning love and redeemed by the blood of my only-begotten Son, Christ crucified'.[14] And so, like Peter, she casts her net in obedience to the Spirit and will of God.

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[2] 48; p. 98.

[3] 84; p. 93.

[4] 84; p. 154.

[5] 104; p. 196.

[6] 91; p. 169.

While it seemed at first that her urgent petition must be directed at the 'renewal of the Church', now the soul 'stretched out her prayer, like one starved, to the whole world, and as if (God) himself were making her ask it'.[15] The bold venture of widening out her prayer in this most

[7] The first sentence begins: 'A soul rises up, restless with tremendous desire for God's honour and the salvation of souls' (1; p. 25).

[8] 3.

[9] 4.

[10] 11; *affetto di desiderio*, 66.

[11] 129.

[12] 167.

[13] 91; p. 169.

[14] 146; p. 308.

[15] 16; p. 55.

audacious manner is itself obedience and presupposes the revelation of God's boundless mercy, and God's self-revelation is essentially the self-disclosure of this boundlessness: 'Know that my mercy toward you is incomparably more than you can see, because your sight is imperfect and limited, and my mercy is perfect and without limit. So there can be no comparison except that of the finite to the infinite'.[16] 'My mercy, which you receive in the blood, is incomparably greater than all the sins that have ever been committed in the world'.[17] 'My mercy is incomparably greater than all the sins anyone could commit'.[18]

However, the finite as such cannot penetrate this infinity of love. Man's works, all that he has to offer, are of themselves finite. But 'I who am infinite insist upon infinite works'.[19] 'I ask you to love me with the same love with which I love you. But for me you cannot do this, for I loved you without being loved. Whatever love you have for me you owe me, so you love me not gratuitously but out of duty'.[20] Is there a solution? The solution is to be found in the God-Man, whom the Father has made the 'bridge' between heaven and earth.[21] He 'became our justice'[22] and has given us the capacity for infinite love when we imitate him. While our love for God is out of duty, to our brethren we can extend, in the God-Man, something of this 'infinite love'.[23] It happens in this manner: 'The soul cannot live without love. She always wants to love something because love is the stuff she is made out of, and through love I created her'.[24] And since the Creator made human beings as a race, in which no single member has everything or is or can be everything, he has given them 'reason—necessity, in fact—to practise

[16] 31; p. 72.

[17] 129; p. 260.

[18] 132; p. 268.

[19] 11; p. 42.

[20] 64; p. 121.

[21] 20ff.; pp. 57ff.

[22] 13; p. 50.

[23] 'You have nothing infinite except your soul's love and desire' (92; p. 170).

[24] 51; p. 103.

mutual charity'.[25] 'In this mortal life, so long as you are pilgrims, I have bound you with the chain of charity. Whether you want it or not, you are so bound'.[26] 'So the cleric and religious have need of the lay person, and the lay person of the religious; neither can get along without the other. And so with everything else . . . In my providence I wanted to make each of you dependent on the others, so that you would be forced to exercise charity in action and will at once'.[27] Now, however, only love for God is infinite and without measure, while love of neighbour, by nature, remains measured.[28] This order is, nonetheless, breached when God becomes man, for his 'longing for humankind was infinite'.[29] With God, in the crucified Son, it becomes possible for man to love his neighbour too infinitely, since he can place himself, infinitely and limitlessly, at the disposal of the work of God in Christ. This love is the heart of every fruit and every work that man can achieve. But because it is an imitation of Christ even unto the cross, it is also, therefore, essentially a humiliated love, a love exposed to insult, mockery, persecution.

Catherine is thinking here along simple, direct lines. The creature is nothing in two senses: created out of nothing, it is of itself nothing,[30] and through the nothingness of sin it is a reinforced nothing.[31] The root of all true love is necessarily in the self's acknowledgment of this nothingness and thus in self-humiliation. Out of love Christ humbled himself to our nothingness, for he did not distinguish between himself and the sinner. The imitation of Christ means, therefore, sitting down 'at the table of the cross' (or as Catherine also puts it, at the 'table of souls') in order to continue the work of love in a humiliation that does not make distinctions. 'When you think you discern vice in others, put it on your own back as well as theirs, acting always with true humility'.[32] 'If you reprove, in humility include yourself in the reproof. You should have compassion for one another and leave judgment to me'.[33] The one who loves 'prays to me for the sinner ... saying with perfect humility, "Today it is your turn; tomorrow it will be mine unless divine grace holds me up"'.[34] At the 'table of the cross',[35] however, the one who loves enjoys the food of suffering reserved for sinners in the fundamental virtue of patience, which bears all things and is 'the mark of love' and the criterion for the truth of all the other virtues.[36] The high estimation of patience, that 'queen' who is always accompanied by her handmaids, fortitude and perseverance,[37] shows that what Catherine means by love is above all unconditional steadfastness and generous disponsibility.

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[25] 7; p. 38.
[26] 148; p. 311.
[27] 148; p. 311f.
[28] 11; pp. 42ff.
[29] 75; p. 138.
[30] 'I am she who is not' (134; p. 273 and frequently).
[31] 131; pp. 262ff.
[32] 102; p. 194.

It is, therefore, Christian love in the self-evident form of the evangelical counsels, at least in spirit, where possible in fact. The whole book culminates in praise of the counsels, for which Christ is the norm.[38] Poverty means choosing to await everything from God alone and to let ourselves be dispossessed of all that is our own.[39] Virginity, for Catherine, is profoundly rooted in the dignity of our flesh established by God becoming man, in exclusive attachment to Christ the bridegroom, in the eschatological incorporation of our body into his glorious flesh so that we can see the Father together with Christ.[40] Finally, obedience, with which the book concludes, is the incarnation of disponsibility for God in the Church, and in this connection Catherine constantly emphasises that the full measure of perfection does not consist in the counsels as such, but in love. But obedience, rightly and spiritually understood, quite certainly is this full measure.

[33] 104.

[34] 100; p. 190.

[35] chs. 76, 78, 95.

[36] 95; p. 177f.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 178, *cf.* 119; p. 227.

[38] 151; pp. 318ff.

[39] 149, 151; pp. 313ff., 318ff.

[40] On the estimation of the body: chs. 113, 126; p. 212f., pp. 244ff.; on bodily incorporation into Christ at the resurrection: chs. 41 (conclusion), 42, 62; p. 5, pp. 85ff., pp. 116ff.

'Each of you will be rewarded according to the measure of your love (of your obedience)'. 'There are many who hold this obedience so ready and have so incarnated it within their souls that they not only want to see the rightness of the intention of those who command them, but they scarcely wait for the words to come out of their mouths. By the light of faith they understand their superior's intention. Thus the truly obedient obey the intention more than the word, assuming that their superiors' will is within my will, and that they give their commands by my permission and will. They obey the word because they have first obeyed their superiors' will with their own'.[41] Without this mystery of divine-ecclesial obedience, the indifference of love would never be unconditionally realised. Ignatius of Loyola will add nothing new to Catherine's formulation.

For Catherine the concreteness of love has its culminating point in the 'blood'.[42] Whereas, for Mechthild, the Godhead is streaming light, for Catherine of Siena, in Christ, it is streaming blood. Blood—which is at the same time fire and spirit. Blood—which gushes out ever afresh from the wound in the Saviour's heart as an unceasing and living stream of eternal love. Why the wound in the side? 'The actual deed of bearing pain and torment was finite and could never show all the love I had, because it was infinite. This is why I wanted you to see my inmost heart'.[43] The blood cannot fail to renew even the most degenerate Church and clergy. The blood forbids even the one dying in mortal sin to doubt at all, for such doubt would itself be the real and utterly unnecessary sin against God's mercy.[44] The blood makes the glory of God in all creation visible to the believer. God the Father describes it thus from his lofty height: 'Whether the world wills it or no, it offers me glory. True, the people of the world do not offer me glory in the way they ought, by loving me above all things. But I for my part draw from them glory and praise for my name. For my mercy and the fulness of my charity are reflected in them because I lend them time and do not order the earth to swallow them up for their sins. No, I . . . order the earth to give them a share of its fruits, and I command the sun to warm them and give them its light and heat . . . I give to sinners as I give to the just—and often more to sinners than to the just, because the just are ready to suffer, and I will deprive them of earthly goods in order to give them abundantly of the goods of heaven . . . By offering constant humble prayer my suffering servants turn (persecutions) into glory and praise for my name. So whether the wicked will it or not, they offer me glory in this',[45] for 'I always pluck the rose from your thorns'.[46]

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[41] 165; p. 357.
[42] 14; p. 50f.
[43] 75; p. 138.
[44] 132; pp. 266ff.

CATHERINE OF GENOA *and the Path to Luther.* One hundred years after Catherine of Siena we have her namesake of Genoa (1447–1510).[1] She was born into the Fieschi family, which was soon after ruined in the Fiesco conspiracy. Her experience of God she described with the radical categories of Eckhart, the ancient categories of hylemorphism, which we have encountered repeatedly, in Erigena and in Chartres, in Grossteste, Alexander, Angela and Eckhart himself. God is Being and the self-diffusive Good who gives form to all things. The creature, of itself, is nothing, indeed sin (just as in Plotinus it was matter that was objectionable).

'All the glory is God's, all the malice is man's.'[2] The tone is set in the very first assertion. 'I see clearly that all the good that is in me or in any other creature and even in the saints is God's alone'.[3] 'There was shown to me a living fountain of

[45] 80; p. 150.

[46] 143; p. 297.

[1] *Vita ed Opere di S. Caterina da Genova*, 13th edn. 1887. V = *Vita* (with the chapter numbers); P = *Trattato del Purgatorio* (with the chapter numbers); D = *Dialogo* (in great part inauthentic, though use is made of sayings of the saint. Even in the so-called authentic works or sayings it is difficult to determine the extent of the interpolations from other sources.) The major work on Catherine is F. von Hügel, *The Mystical Element of Religion*, 2 vols. (London, 1908). *Cf.* L. Sertorius, *K.v.G.* Lebensbild und geistige Gestalt ihrer Werke (Munich, 1939).

[2] V 40.

[3] V 9.

goodness in God, which was entirely in itself, without participation by any creature. Then I saw how he began to distribute himself to creatures . . .'[4] 'All along I have seen, and more and more clearly, that all that is good is in one place only, namely in God. All other good things below are only good by participation'.[5] This means that the sun, beauty, the sweetness of God become, 'through admixture with the creaturely, darkened, bitter, rotten'.[6] Hence we have the tendency in Catherine to turn back from all that is created to the absolute and original creative principle by means of self-negation and clothing with God,[7] by means of consumption from within and from without by the power and the goodness of God,[8] until the creature 'is led back to that pure Being from which she originated'.[9] Thus existence in the world becomes a torment for Catherine,[10] and the body is experienced by her as a prison.[11] This means, it must be admitted, that love appears in her works not so much as 'indifference' and more as the passionate transcendent impulse of eros: could there be a connection between Genoa and the Florence of Marsilio Ficino? It is a thrust into the absolute, and consequently it means going beyond all the powers of the soul together with its experiences, 'Because love climbs higher than the powers of the soul, these powers feel best under the influence of love . . . If someone were to ask me, 'What do you want? What are you striving for? What do you remember?' I would answer: 'Nothing except what love wants and strives for and remembers. For love has so filled me that I do not have to beg any more to nourish those powers. Rather it seems that if love did not exist, they would be bound to die of starvation and want'.[12] Because God is uncreated love, 'for that reason I say that I do not want created love . . . I want no love that passes through the intellect, memory and will. Pure love goes through all this and goes beyond it'.[13] 'Man must become outwardly blind, deaf, dumb, without taste, without the action of the intellect, memory and will. He must be so lost that he no longer knows where he is. He must be deprived of himself and appear foolish to other people'.[14] However, in this pure ascent he encounters eternal love as a judgment of the utmost severity: love is jealous of her absolute purity and fiercely burns up whatever at any point still clings to the finite or to itself.[15]

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[4] V 13.

[5] V 14.

[6] V 9.

[7] V 9.

[8] V 14.

[9] P 9, likewise V 35.

[10] V 9.

[11] P 17.

[12] V 40.

In this perspective we can understand the emotional dialectic so fundamental to Catherine's thought, which she repeatedly describes in the *Vita*, and in the treatise on Purgatory projects into the hereafter:[16] the infinite attraction exercised over the soul by the absolute love of God, and at the same time the torment of seeing oneself unworthy in the light of this love and consequently of having to plunge oneself, of necessity, into a purifying fire of judgment. The simultaneity of satisfaction (in fact the beginnings of glory) and intolerable torment[17] is not imposed upon man from outside but expresses the state of his self-consciousness. If he realises the co-existence of God's glory in him and his own sinfulness, then he must reply: 'I do not want this glory with such an adjunct; no, rather send me into hell'.[18] For the way through hell seems to be the nearest, indeed the only, way to go out and meet God. The experience Catherine has of God's contact with her soul are 'blows' from God's glory. They are very like the *toques* of John of the Cross and at the same time refer back to Ruysbroeck: 'From the presence of God flare up the jets of flame and scorching lightning-flashes of divine love',[19] 'sparks of that glory to which the soul is already near'.[20] They express the 'consuming' element in love, the fact that the soul, which rushes away from this fire in order to purify itself, in fact rushes straight into it, because there is only one flame, and only this one flame can purify it.

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[13] V 14.

[14] V 35.

[15] The whole of ch. 41 of the *Vita* depicts this remorselessness of the love of God, which brings to light the most hidden imperfections of the creature which it does not know itself.

[16] As she herself says at the beginning of chs. 1 and 17 of P.

[17] P 12 and the whole treatise, *passim*. Likewise in V, chs. 30, 39.

[18] V 39.

[19] V *ibid.* Likewise P 10.

Catherine presents us with the simultaneity of worthiness and unworthiness, of love and judgment. Metaphysically, it is the simultaneity of the fullness of God's glory and creaturely poverty and shame, which Eckhart in particular had expressed in the philosophical language of form and matter. This two-sided experience, which is characteristic of the whole of late medieval spirituality, leads uninterruptedly to Luther's *simul justus et peccator*. If we add to creaturely poverty the fact that man of himself—according to Ockham—is incapable of thinking of God, while the omnipotent God, on the other hand, has every capacity, by a decree of his will, to declare man to be whatever seems good to him, then Luther's fundamental doctrine appears in its continuity with the way that leads, in western thought, from Eckhart to Fénelon. We shall have to investigate this later.

e. Ignatius of Loyola and 'Representation': Glory in the Age of Baroque

Like all the great founders of religious orders, Ignatius derives his vision directly from the Gospel. With Benedict he sees the love of Christ as reverence and humility, with Francis as a cleansing poverty, the giving up of all personal possessions for the sake of total receptivity to the mystery of the cross. Indifference (*indiferencia*),[1] the central concept in the 'Principle and Foundation' of the Spiritual Exercises, shows how much Ignatius stands in late medieval tradition. It is in direct continuity with the Christian *apatheia* of the Fathers and the *Gelassenheit* of the Rhineland mystics, and in the *grand siècle* it will appear in its final form as *abandon*. The basic structure of the Exercises shows their historical roots even more clearly.

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[20] D 11.

[1] *Exercitia spiritualia* (Spanish-Latin text of Roothaan, Marietti, 1928) with the usual numbering of paragraphs; ET, J. Rickaby, second edition (London, 1936), p. 18f.; n. 23.

At every stage the principle of indifference means detachment from all created things for the sake of immediate union with God; it thereby places man in the transcendent 'neither God nor the world' situation of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. Similarly, the First Week of the Exercises involves the purgative and preparatory 'hell of self-knowledge' (*Theologia Germanica*), which strips the sinner, as he stands before the cross of Christ, of any consciousness of his own goodness. This enables him, dispossessed of any self-constructed pattern of life, to enter into the imitation of Christ, to which he is introduced in the Second, Third and Fourth Weeks of the Exercises by means of contemplation of the life of Jesus. Now this imitation is decided for the individual in a personal call from Christ himself. According to Ignatius, this call will ring out loud and clear during contemplation of the life of Jesus if that is being done in an attitude of 'indifference' and readiness for anything God may ask. It will imprint and bestow on each person a form of life which descends from above as a gift of grace. In that form of life the Christian, as matter totally receptive to being conformed to God, can conform to his will and so attain the perfection of the Christian life. There is a parallel here with Catherine of Siena. In the 'indifference' and readiness of her love, she was endowed with the stigmata of God's loving will and instituted in her mission. Similarly, the Jesuit receives his mission in that school of abandonment and contemplation which is the Exercises and is thereby enabled to fulfil a particular task without any mental reservations and from a disposition of transcendent universality, being basically ready for anything.

The continuity from German and Dutch spirituality to Ignatius is proved by his meditative reading of Ludolf of Saxony (who, in the introduction to his book, summarises the imaginative affective method of meditation in Pseudo-Bonaventure's *Meditationes*); he treasured that classic of the *Devotio Moderna*, the *Imitation of Christ*;[2] also the *Ejecitatorio de la vida espiritual* of the Benedictine, García de Cisneros,

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[2] This is the most widely read book in Christendom after the Bible, and yet, for all its sobriety and forcefulness, there is something strangely opaque about it. It rejects and eliminates every speculative element not only of

Abbot of Montserrat (the book was printed there in 1500 and doubtless became familiar to Ignatius during his stay in the monastery).[3] (More will be said later of the influence of the knightly and crusader ideals mediated through his upbringing and reading.)

What is absolutely decisive, however, is that, though Ignatius continued the idea of abandonment in all its Christian radicalism, he did not adopt the metaphysical formulation given it by the German mystics, most notably Eckhart. Christian abandonment does not imply, even when conceptualised and lived in an uncompromising way, the ancient hylemorphic model whereby God is form and the creature is matter. The practice of indifference, as understood by Ignatius, does not therefore mean the inevitable annihilation of man's own being and will. That interpretation, which is to be found in varying degrees of strength in spirituality from Eckhart to Fénelon, is the symptom of a latent monothelitism, not to say eastern-style pantheism. No,

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scholasticism but also of mysticism, and yet, at the same time, it abstracts from the colourful multiplicity of the Bible and—since it is written for those who have turned from the world—disregards the world, in all its richness, as a field for Christian activity. This really leaves only the personal-ethical order as a field for contemplation. The *Imitation* is a Christian Epictetus. In place of the openhearted readiness of a Catherine of Siena, a subdued and melancholy resignation runs through the book. Admittedly, there is love of the crucified love of Christ (II, 11–12), and desolation (II, 9; III, 50) and folly (I, 17, 5) are accepted for the sake of Christ. It is true that the idea of dispossession of all one's own good (I, 22; III, 40) and of total trust in the grace of Jesus is worked out thoroughly. But there is an excess of warnings about the world, the illusions of egoism, the dangers of speculation and of the active apostolate. In this way, even 'the idea of the imitation of Christ does not become the dominant perspective . . . There is no mention of the mediation of the God-Man, of access "through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, to the Father". The mystery of the Church, therefore, does not come into view either'. The individual 'is unaware that his love of God can only be fulfilled if it expands into love of neighbour and into the apostolate'. All the remains is a flight from the world, a world that has not been brought home in Christ' (E. Iserloh in *LThK* (1962) vii 764. *Cf.* by the same authork 'Die Kirchenfrömmigkeit in der Imitatio Christ', in *Sentire Ecclesiam* (1961), 251–267.

[3] For these sources, *cf.* J. de Guibert SJ, *La Spiritualité de la Compagnie de Jésus* (1953), 142–148.

the true mystery of Christian revelation is this: the perfection of the kingdom of God ('God all in all', 'it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me') can be pursued as the universal operation of God in the active co-operation of the creature—in abandonment, surrender, service. This co-operation can no longer remain at the level of indifference in the sense of *merely* letting things happen; no, the particular will of God, which is to be actively grasped and carried out, must also be actively pursued. For the Rhineland mystics, abandonment came in at the end; Ignatius transfers it to the beginning. In the Second Week of the Exercises it moves to a higher level through the central process of 'election'. Election means that a person, in the analogy of freedom between God and the creature, chooses 'what God our Lord gives us to choose', spontaneously and voluntarily cooperating in that particular choice which, in the eternal freedom of God, has been chosen for us. Progress is clearly made here beyond the concept in Eckhart, Suso and Ruysbroeck of the creature's returning to its eternal idea in God. Man's self-surrender to God is thereby accepted by God; he is 'honoured' to participate, in grace and freedom, in the elective act of God himself.

It is, however, precisely in this way that Eckhart's vision of the groundlessness and 'why-lessness' of God and of his entire self-revelation in generation and creation is fulfilled. When man's responsive act of freedom is taken up into God's free and why-less self-giving, it transcends all simply teleological ethics and enters the pure sphere of disinterested adoration and love. The essential definition of man is that he is created for the adoration and praise, the veneration and worship, the selfless service, of God, and 'thus' (as if to say, 'it goes without saying' or 'by the way') he will 'save his soul', find his salvation. As with Ruysbroeck, to be a true Christian is to exist purely for the 'ever greater glory of God', to be immersed in that glory, to be at its disposal, to radiate it through grace. This is the innermost religious kernal of Baroque culture.

Ignatius lays aside the metaphysical (hylemorphic) shell and concentrates on its theological kernel. This enables the spirituality of the modern era to survive, when Fénelon is discredited, the abrupt end of so-called 'mysticism' with more than a banal and enlightened Stoic moralism. The process demonstrated moreover how the fundamental evangelical attitude of receptive contemplation could survive inwardly and authentically, without involving strict monasticism, in an active apostolate in the Church and the world. Models for this had already been provided not only by Francis and Dominic but also by such influential figures as Ramon Lull, Catherine of Siena, Bridget, Angela Merici and Joan of Arc. In these cases the contemplative act itself was regarded as a work of the greatest fruitfulness, for both world and Church (an idea which continues from the Rhineland mystics through Teresa of Avila to Thérèse of Lisieux). But that is not all. This fundamental act, this fundamental work, of contemplation could also now be translated, without compromising its Christian integrity, into specific deeds in an active apostolate of service to neighbour.

Ignatius was the first person to justify and to propagate boldly this understanding of contemplation; in the age of Baroque it quite logically took the form of 'representation'. The imitator of the Lord places himself, in total 'indifference', at the disposal of his Master's will and command, without ceasing, for all that, to be a spontaneous and free human subject. For himself and for others he is still only the agent, the representative, of his Lord, like a viceroy, who more perfectly represents the king the more absolutely he places his personal, intellectual and creative powers at the service of the thought and will of his monarch. He remains a person, but his own person becomes as it were completely transparent to the person who sends him. Self-abnegation is no less radical in Ignatius than in Francis or Eckhart, but he avails himself of the Thomist metaphysical doctrines of secondary causality and the *analogia entis*, which is now at last taken seriously. By so doing, Ignatius achieves the inner synthesis of the two major parallel currents of the middle ages—scholasticism and mysticism. Baroque culture, in those aspects which from a Christian point of view are the most positive, builds upon the idea of representation. It underlies not only the apostolate of a man like Francis Xavier and of the entire Jesuit mission, including the experiment in Paraguay, but also the theatre, both secular and sacred, where a man—Calderon!—plays the 'role' entrusted to him in the 'costume' lent him and consequently makes present, re-presents, a fragment of eternal knowledge. The idea of representation thus brings about a new awareness of the manifestation of divine glory in the world. For now this glory finds a receptacle, in and by which it manifests itself, not, as with Eckhart, Ockham and Luther, a receptacle it has to smash to pieces in order to reveal itself in its uniqueness. No, this is a receptacle in which it can stand out clearly as the real glory of the Lord, the manifestation of absolute sovereignty. This deep level of Baroque consciousness deserves to be considered first of all in its own terms, independently of any connection with the Church's Counter-Reformation, on the one hand, or with political absolutism, on the other.

This living source of the idea of the 'ever greater glory of God' (*ad maiorem Dei gloriam*) is only a simple gaze directed, through Christ, at the Triune God;[4] in the loving and chivalrous service of this God Ignatius wants his life to be consumed. To the gaze of Ignatius God appears—as he does to the Fathers and to Anselm—as the one who is inexhaustibly 'ever greater'. The dynamic comparative conveys much more than any exclusive superlative, and yet he does not faithlessly regard it as impossible for God's grace and mission to find a form for expressing that glory in the Christian life. Luther's dialectic of law and grace, which never allows any kind of obedience to arise but constantly and consciously represses it, appears from this perspective as a defective faith.

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[4] The Trinitarian dimension of Ignatian spirituality is firmly established from the time of Manresa, where the Trinity in the image of an organ's three keys resounds forth into his heart and soul 'for the whole of his life' (*The Autobiography of St Ignatius Loyola*, ET, J. F. O'Callaghan (New York, 1974), p. 38). It again comes clearly into view in the fragment that has been preserved of the *Spiritual Journal* dating from the years 1544–45 (ET, W. J. Young (Woodstock, Maryland, 1958)). He 'prayed daily to each of the Three Persons' as well as to the Trinity as a whole, and he asked himself 'why he said four prayers to the Trinity', but immediately dismissed the question as 'totally irrelevant'. And in all this one discerns a total lack of interest in Eckhart's speculations about the one essence beyond the Trinitarian processions. As in the version at La Storta (*Autobiography*, p. 89;

Even prescinding from the idea of serving the Church, the mutual relationship of God and the world has a cosmic comprehensiveness, which, in the concluding meditation of the Exercises, begins to sound thoroughly Dionysian.[5] Already at the time of his conversion 'the greatest consolation he received was to look at the sky and the stars, which he often did and for a long time',[6] and later on he went off as a pilgrim, barefoot in Franciscan style, 'jubilant and loudly singing across the fields'.[7] It is the same Ignatius who deepens this vision of the world to a fourfold contemplating of the immanence of God in all created things. First, he is in them as the Creator, the bountiful Giver who draws near and offers himself through all his gifts. Secondly, he is in them as the Indweller who is present in and governs all things—in being as the source of being, in life as the source of life, in sense as

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Spiritual Journal, p. 16), mediation through Mary and Jesus to the Father is what matters most and is experienced with the utmost intensity (*Journal*, p. 1ff.). This is not contradicted by the fact that Ignatius also has visions which show 'very clearly the very Being or Essence of God under the figure of a sphere', or reveal 'from this Essence the Father [seeming] to go forth or derive' (*ibid.*, p. 27). At other times he sees 'sometimes the Being of the Father, that is, first the Being and then the Father . . . sometimes [the Father] in another way' (p. 31), or 'a partial revelation of the Being of the Father, and likewise of the Being of the Most Holy Trinity' (p. 34), or the indwelling of the other two persons in the Father (p. 15). These changes of aspect have nothing to do with speculation; they simply enable Ignatius to vary the direction of his devotion (p. 31), until he reaches the point where 'I am united, beyond all measure, with the love, so bright and sweet, [of the Trinity]'. Very often Ignatius's visions are accompanied by phantasms of luminous splendour, of the Holy Spirit (p. 4) and the Trinity as a whole (p. 19) as well as of the humanity of Christ (p. 20) and of Mary, of the process of creation, of the Eucharistic miracle (*ibid.*), as if the mysteries of the faith were being presented to him as they exist in their supreme form in divine glory. The glory of God, as it breaks in upon Him, can, however, also manifest itself as an 'interior word' (pp. 16, 44) accompanied by a corresponding 'loss of exterior speech', and this 'interior speech' possesses an 'interior inexpressible harmony' and stands in an immediate relation to the 'heavenly language of music' (*cf.* p. 44).

[5] The parallel with Denys has been shown in detail by E. Przywara at the end of his commentary on the Exercises (*Deus Semper Maior* III (1940), 369–407).

[6] *Autobiography*, n. 11.

[7] *Ibid.*, n. 79.

archetypal sense, in thinking and willing spirit as primordial Spirit. This indwelling of God exists at the natural level but takes a special form at the supernatural, where the creature is consecrated to be the temple and monstrance of God. Thirdly, he is in all things as 'the one who labours'. His tireless work in the world, at every level of reality and at every moment of history, supremely in the Passion of the God-Man, puts an end to any suggestion that God is uninterested in the world. Fourthly, as both James and Plotinus maintain, he is the good Father of lights, from whom every good thing comes down, so that in the end all spiritual subjects who harden their hearts against God are softened afresh so that they flow with the eternal fountain and shine with the eternal sun.[8] And so God is in all things; in everything the glory of Triune love shines and pours itself forth. In the concluding prayer, the creature who grasps this glory in faith offers itself up to God and asks to be made one of glory's rays: 'Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty', the sum total of my existence, both as an individual and in relation to others, 'my memory, my understanding and all my will', the Augustinian *imago Trinitatis* in the created spirit is thus referred back to its archetype, 'all I have and possess', in love's freely-chosen poverty; 'you have given it me, Lord; to you, Lord, I return it', in the *epistrophê* of Plotinus here given the higher meaning, in the spirit of Old and New Testaments, of the return of all beings and all hearts to the God of love, 'all is yours, dispose of it entirely according to your will. Give me your love and grace, because that is enough for me'.[9]

Obedience only became prominent in the thinking of the founder and his first companions at a later stage, that is, when, with their new Christian disposition of being ready for anything, they began to offer themselves openly to the visible hierarchical Church as instruments at her disposal. The Pope became the administrator of this store of 'readiness', the real 'general' of the new society, which became the outstanding instrument of the Counter-Reformation. The universal

[8] Exercises, nn. 234–237; Rickaby, pp. 208–210.

[9] *Ibid.*, n. 234; Rickaby, p. 208.

'device'—'To find God in all things'[10]—is not denied, but now these things become *par excellence* the things of the Church Militant. The Exercises first of all centred round the 'discernment of spirits', which was intended to help me make the right decision about what God's will was for my life; but the final word of the Exercises is *alabar*, praising, affirming and consenting to the things of the Church.[11] Ignatius 'praises' them just as Francis, in his 'Canticle of Brother Sun', praised the elements of nature as transparent to God. Ignatius praises them with perfect simplicity in an act of filial and chivalrous fidelity to 'the true Spouse of Christ our Lord, which is our holy Mother the Hierarchical Church'.[12] There is a slight touch of humour, or, at any rate, of wise patience, about Ignatius's love of the Church—in contrast to the impatience of Luther's reformation with its violent attack on dogmas, structures and images.

Give me my good old religion,
It's good enough for me . . .

Nevertheless, as was typical of the times, deductions came to be made, in the style of the Counter-Reformation, that Ignatius had not made, and the positive ecclesiastical structures and institutions were made into the definitive form of manifestation of divine glory. *Bellarmine* did this in ecclesiology, and Baroque art, with its tendency towards extravagant glorification, extended it to all the phenomenal aspects of the Catholic Church. It is true that this theology and art first of all inherit the forms of worldly beauty recovered from antiquity during the Renaissance, forms which are now *as such* reinvigorated and become forms of divine glory. It is also true that theology and art accomplish all this in a conscious act of faith and loyalty to mother Church, in a conscious rejection of the Protestant rejection of the idea that divine revelation can have any real visibility in the time of the Church's history or in the charisms of sanctity, which the Holy Spirit so richly poured out on the Church in this very century, and which the art of Tintoretto, El Greco, Zurbaran, Rubens and many others tried to represent visibly as the splendour of grace.

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[10] Joseph Stierli, 'Das Ignatianische Gebet: Gott suchen in allen Dingen' in *Ignatius von Loyola*. Seine geistliche Gestalt und sein Vermächtnis 1556–1956, Echter Verlag (1956) 151–182.

[11] *Exercises*, nn. 352–370; Rickaby, pp. 220–225 (Rules 'for the true sentiments which we ought to hold in the Church Militant').

[12] *Exercises*, n. 353; Rickaby, p. 220.

And yet not everything has been said. However high the light of antiquity may have risen above the natural world and made it into a theophany, the crisis of the late middle ages could not be undone. The spirit of critical philosophy, of empiricism, of the positive natural sciences, spread itself out beneath the Baroque ceiling, and men realised the precariousness of trying to summon Plato or even just Denys back to life. Luther was a fact. And so, despite their radiant power, there was something contrived about triumphantly celebrating ecclesiastical forms as revelatory icons of the eschatological Jerusalem, as anticipatory glimpses of a gorgeous Pozzo and Tiepolo kind of heaven, full of saints and angels. Despite its radiance it was unbalanced, it did not correspond to the equilibrium of the Gospel, and whatever the subjective sincerity of those who made this profession of faith, there was something objectively untrue about it. Not only do all boundaries disappear between natural revelation and redemptive revelation as proclaimed in Bible and Church, but even the scandalous form of the cross and the humble form of the Church are treated as if they were, without qualification, forms of worldly beauty, with nothing to radiate but the eternal power and glory of God. Cosmic glory breaks out from the cross, and from Bernini's Chair of Peter there shines anew an immediate form of the glory of the Christ who is raised on high. But there is an even greater paradox. The Church and salvation history have been fitted into the framework of a cosmos that manifests God, and yet now the Church has to restore to the world the light of glory, the very thing the world was in danger of losing, and which ultimately the Church had borrowed from it; both Church and world are now reflections of a borrowed glory. This dialectic was not to be guaranteed by the concept of representation in the Ignatian sense, and so Ignatian spirituality could survive unharmed the downfall of Baroque.

The substitutions and hidden exchanges reach their climax when political absolutism is transfigured in the religious lustre of ecclesiastical Baroque; in fact, the concept of representation to a certain extent embraces both spheres. Even imperial and royal representation could be understood, with the utmost Christian seriousness, as a service of the Kingdom of God—as can be seen in the cases of Charles V and Philip II. Pomp, sacred and secular, could be justified on the same grounds. The Escorial could be half palace and seat of government and half church and monastery; St Peter's basilica and piazza were the two things in one: the homage of all man's worldly art to the Church and the brilliant display to the world, by means of art, of the Church's ideals. The centre of unity and gravity in this kind of monolithic Baroque culture is to be found, of necessity, chiefly in its theatrical aspect and in the role played more than in the realities of life which act it out. The part can only be played in an existentially valid and credible manner if it can be accepted and carried off with total Ignatian 'indifference' and in the analogical process of election. If there is any deviation from this, the role, the business of representation, will be confused with the essence of glory, and men will cease to persevere in pursuit of the greater glory of God (*AD maiorem Dei gloriam*). What makes the Baroque so ambivalent, what makes the 'discernment of spirits' (the starting-point for Ignatius and the Rhineland mystics) so indispensable, is that there can be countless gradations from genuine pursuit of the greater glory of God to pseudo-religious self-glorification.

The principle of an active indifference, as understood by Ignatius, was a steep summit and a constant challenge for his numerous spiritual successors to climb. However, it concealed in itself the danger of two kinds of spiritual deviation, quite distinct from the deviation, already mentioned, in Counter-Reformation ecclesiology.[13]

The idea of an 'indifferent' opening up of oneself to the God who elects could very easily be interpreted regressively in terms of the received 'mystical' tradition, which was very much alive everywhere. Ignatius had already had to struggle hard against this tendency in his own lifetime (P. Araoz and the Spanish contemplatives and Quietists), and later on it attained the height of subtlety in the teaching of *P. Balthazar Alvarez* (P. de Ponte was his biographer) and, dependent on him, in the *Doctrine spirituelle* of *P. Louis Lallemant* and his school. These teachers quite rightly stress the importance of truly hearkening to God's inspirations, to the impulses and gifts of the Holy Spirit. But the onesidedness of the approach is betrayed by an anxious preoccupation with personal contemplating and a withdrawal from active apostolic involvement. As in ancient monasticism and German mysticism, action and contemplation are once again dualistically split up, and the primacy of (passive) contemplation is defended in a literalist sense. Suspicions and condemnations, on the part of the order's authorities, of the 'mystical' tendency gave an impetus to the opposite extreme, which, with relative correctness, emphasised the spontaneity of human action in the analogy of freedom and election, and thereby brought active asceticism to the fore (represented by P. Rodriguez' *Manual of Perfection*); in consequence, unexpectedly but inevitably, Ignatian 'indifference' was mistakenly interpreted to mean 'achievement' in the Stoic or Buddhist sense. This distortion becomes recognisable in the studied aloofness of its attitude to the world as creation and in the pseudo-ethical superiority that follows from it, where one's fellow human beings are regarded as illusory, irrelevant, perhaps even dangerous, which compromises the authentic Christian idea of the encounter of I and Thou. These two possible deviations are both forms of flight from the steep and narrow charism given to Ignatius.

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[13] And equally irrespective of the confusion of Christian indifference with metaphysical indifference, which creeps into Suarez, a confusion for which Ignatius himself never gives the slightest pretext.

The dangers show how exposed a peak is Ignatian transcendence. It can be baptised with the name 'obedience' provided one preserves an unrestricted sense of all its paradoxical implications. It is first and foremost obedience to God, beyond passivity and activity: an act which completely purifies all the powers of intellect, will and emotion and stretches them to the limit in order to place them at the disposal of God's eternal, free and loving will. Obedience, in this form, is faithful adherence to the will of Christ, to his obedience to the Father, and by the same token adherence to the faithful obedience to Christ of the Church, his Bride, who, in her spirit of faithful obedience, is our mother and educator. It is an obedience that transcends the oppositions of light and darkness, blindness and sight, for obedience, is 'blind' only in relation to what *I* can see;[14] in itself, as 'the holocaust of private judgment', it enables me to see, with the Church, what I do not see on my own.[15] This, then, is what the adventure of transcendence really comes down to, this is true metaphysical action: identification with the action of the Church (concretised in the superior recognised by her) as a Christlike obedience incarnate in the here and now.

f. The Final Systems

FRANCIS DE SALES. The spirituality originating in the Germanic countries spreads through a wide variety of channels. It goes as far as Spain and then reaches its climax in France during the *Grand Siècle*. Here it affects everyone: Francis de Sales, Jane Frances de Chantal and Camus; pious humanists like Louis Richeome SJ; the Capuchin, Ives de Paris; the Englishman, Benedict Canfeld, who passes on the radical mysticism of abandonment; the blind organist, Jean de Saint-Samson, who anticipates and propagates it; the 'French School' of the Oratorians and the Jesuit school, already mentioned, of Lallemant; the ardent spirituality of Vincent de Paul and Pascal; the apostles of devotion to the Sacred Heart; the great and untainted figure of the Ursuline, Marie de l'Incarnation; finally, Bossuet and Fénelon. These are just a few of the best-known names.[1] The tradition is of such an overwhelming richness that the common factors are easily lost sight of. And yet they are there: distinguishing characteristics, negative as well as positive, are at hand. The positive characteristic is that these are all systems of dialogue and transcendence: mind and heart are thoroughly purified and illumined to prepare them for a definitive and transcendent openness and readiness for God, which leads, through God's free and loving self-revelation, to loving union with Him. Abandonment or indifference, understood and practised as a humble love ready for suffering, is man's ultimate act in relation to God. God alone can lead man to union with Him: man does not really 'strive' for it (abandonment is not a religious form of *eros*); he just leaves it to God. The negative characteristic is the way the general religious fervour of the age expresses itself in a constant tendency to discursiveness, making comparisons and refinements, mutual observations, 'spiritual direction', and thus psychologising. This imperceptibly and very easily shifts the emphasis from a pure Godwardness (as in Ignatius) to reflections on transcendence. The devout mind is self-conscious and paradoxically takes self as its object in the very process of transcending and escaping from self. In still ardent faith the French write a critique of religious reason without noticing that they are anticipating the critique carried out by the Enlightenment in unfaith. The most fruitful impulses of the Reformation, which destroy this kind of introspection at its roots, did not come to anything, even in the spirituality of Port-Royal, which mostly remains at the moral and ascetical level. People automatically tend to look at themselves in a mirror. To justify herself, Teresa of Avila has to observe herself, consider herself, describe herself. Even a simple and straightforward person like Marie de l'Incarnation is compelled to write reports, in minute detail, about herself and her mystical experiences. This tendency to introspection rests upon the celebrated spirituality of the *Grand Siècle* like mildew (or should we say, like talcum powder?). In the case of Pascal there is the added factor of Jansenist brooding about predestination: 'Am I one of the

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[14] 'The white that I see I would believe to be black, if the Hierarchical Church were so to rule it' (*Exercises*, n. 365; Rickaby, p. 223).

[15] Letter on obedience to his confrères in Portugal, in: *Ignatius von Loyola: Geistliche Briefe*, with an introduction by H. Rahner (Benzinger, 1956), p. 248.

[1] See above all Henri Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France*, 12 vols. (1916–1936), the fundamental work despite its idiosyncratic

interpretations and choice of texts. *Cf.* L. Cognet, *Crépuscule des Mystiques*, 1958.

elect?' The result of all this is that, in the midst of a great flowering, one has a sense of decline and fall, which pervades all the glory of the Baroque age, a glory which spreads out, legitimately enough, half aware, half unaware, of its own fragility.

The crowning masterpiece among the works of St Francis de Sales is the great *Treatise on the Love of God.*[2] The title itself poses a problem: is it God's love of us or our love of God that is meant, or are the two combined, univocally as it were, in a higher concept? This problem is immediately and unequivocally resolved by the fact that the central theme of the book is our love of God as a response to His supernatural providence and as the perfection of all the virtues, powers and potentialities of man. Beginning with a summary psychology (Book One), Francis describes the 'Progress and Perfection of Love' (Book Three), its decline (Four), its fundamental acts (gratifying love and benevolence, Five) and prayer (Six). Certain liminal situations (rapture in love and dying of love) are brought in (Seven), and only then does he deal with love as conformity to the will of God, His commandments, counsels and inspirations (VIII), as perfect indifference (Nine). Finally, he speaks of the chief commandment (Ten), the chief virtue (Eleven), and, as a kind of appendix, practical methods (Twelve). This leaves only Book Two to recount 'The History of the Generation and Heavenly Birth of Divine Love', though this is mainly concerned with 'supernatural providence', 'divine inspirations' and the three theological virtues. This means that the most important thing of all—the whole objective history of salvation, Incarnation, Redemption, Justification, the Church and Christian life in the world (obviously because it belongs to dogmatic theology)—is excluded, and so all that this 'spiritual theology' is left with is an anthropocentric point of view. This naively unintentional anthropocentrism of a spirituality that imagines itself to be totally theocentric, and indeed excessively presents itself as such, characterises many of the systems of the seventeenth century and at least infects several others. The spirituality that knows everything about love and perfection secretly presupposes a univocation which compromises the *analogia entis*. It alligns itself with Baroque scholasticism's speculative univocation of being and, in conjunction with it, gives birth in the next century to pietistic rationalism. The regular, unctuous grandeur of the Salesian style, with all its superlatives, is the unconscious expression of this univocation in contrast to, say, the Ignatian style, which is sobered down to the point of dryness by the comparatives of analogy (with the ever-greater God).

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[2] *Traité de l'Amour de Dieu.* Cited from the *Oeuvres complètes de St François de Sales*, 4 vols., Paris, 1836.

Within these limitations Francis de Sales can say very beautiful things about love—as, for example, in the famous parable of the deaf minstrel whom a prince appoints to sing before him. Some of the time he listens to him attentively, but occasionally he leaves him playing his lute and goes off to hunt. 'But the musician's desire to do his master's will made him continue his music as carefully as if his prince had been present, even though he had no pleasure in singing, since he was deaf and his prince absent'.[3] 'The human heart, the true chorister of the love of God, usually enjoys listening to itself and delights to hear the melody of its own song'. Those who do this 'are deceived without noticing it. Instead of loving God in order to please God, they begin to love Him for the pleasure they feel in exercising holy love . . . for though this holy love is called the love of God, because God is its object, yet it is also ours, because we are the lovers . . . and this deceives us: we love the love because it comes from us, the lovers'.[4] 'It is difficult, I admit, to enjoy looking at a beautiful mirror for very long without catching sight of ourselves in it, even when one does not feel any particular pleasure in seeing oneself . . . Our aim ought to be to love God for His beauty, not to enjoy the beauty of loving Him. At prayer, if you notice that you are praying, you have not given yourself up completely to prayer'.[5] The person who prays for the pleasure of praying will abandon prayer in times of aridity.

[3] Book IX, ch. 9.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Book IX, ch. 10.

But in this instruction to love God solely 'because He is beautiful' is there not concealed the opposite danger? Does it not look as if the disinterestedness of Christian love has been now confused with aesthetic disinterestedness? Is the Christian contemplative act not identified, in a new kind of univocation, with this-worldly contemplation of the beautiful in general? Perhaps the very first sentence of the *Treatise* is relevant here: 'Introduce unity into diversity, and you create order; order yields harmony and proportion; harmony, where you have perfect integrity, begets beauty.' Beauty, not the glory of the Lord, is the dominant concept in this often very severe and ascetically demanding doctrine of love.

Another factor points in the same direction. It is more remote, but it strongly influences the spirituality of the *Grand Siècle*. The transcendence being strived for touches what Eckhart calls 'the spark of the soul', Ruysbroeck 'the deepest unity', the French *la cime et suprême pointe de l'esprit*[6] (or *la fine pointe*), which has all the appearances of a natural organ for contact with God, though, of course, it goes far beyond all sensory or categorical knowledge: you 'see without seeing, meet without recognising'. Bérulle will speak here of a 'state' beyond acts, of 'a zone of our soul unknown to us', which is 'the proper seat of grace'.[7] Here lies the danger of real transcendence being replaced by a kind of transcendental psychology, which, under another form of illumination, will be continued by German idealism.

Francis de Sales does not want to be tied down to the metapsychology of the *fine pointe*. What he is really getting at is the mystery of how the human will, by love and indifference, enters the divine will. One can speak of the will 'passing away' (the *trépas* of the will). 'Although the will cannot really die, sometimes it departs from the limits of ordinary life, to live entirely in the will of God.' 'The heart embarked on doing God's good pleasure (*embarqué dans le bon plaisir divin*) should have no other desire than to be carried along by God's will (*se laisser porter*).' 'The will that has died to self in order to dwell in the will of God has no particular wishes of its own. It is utterly self-obliterated and transformed into God's will, like a little child still unable to exercise his will to want or love anything except the breast and the face of his beloved mother.'[8]

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[6] Book IX, ch. 12.

[7] Bremond, op. cit., vol. VII, ch. 3, points out the *identité foncière* between the Salesian philosophy and Bérullism.

g. The Metaphysics of the Oratory

PIERRE DE BERULLE,[9] who founded the French Oratory in 1611, was also responsible for a spiritual synthesis of great significance, which developed in a variety of ways in his disciples, of whom only Charles de Condren can be discussed here. Our concern has to be with 'metaphysics'. Now in the Oratory all theological is rooted once more in the fundamental relation of the *analogia entis*, which, for the creature, is expressed by *religio*: the realisation of the infinite grandeur and majesty of God over and above the essential nothingness of the creature. In his beautiful introduction to Bérulle's works, the third General of the Oratory, Bourgoing, describes this fundamental attitude: 'To honour means to consider and esteem some perfection and excellence in another together with a respect and self-abasement proportionate to the degree of that excellence. Now since all excellences are divine and infinite in God, and are divinely human, and of an infinite dignity, in Jesus Christ Our Lord, by reason of His divine person, they are worthy of a like esteem, reverence and submission . . . Christ's pains and sufferings too deserve the same honour . . . So there is nothing in Him that does not deserve homage, honour, profound reverence . . . It is the essential act and exercise of religion, the creature's first obligation towards his God, the principal duty of the Christian towards Jesus Christ Our Lord.'[10] This primordial act does not originate in the creature's free deliberation and self-reflection, but is the response of homage to God's will for glorification. God 'wants to glorify Himself in us' and holds sway in us through His Holy Spirit in accordance with that will. He 'makes our soul adore the divine majesty, not only by its own thoughts and affections but also by the operation of His divine Spirit, who acts in our spirit, and makes it bear and feel the power and sovereignty of His being over all created beings by the experience of His grandeur applied (*appliquée*) to our littleness and by the experience of our littleness incapable of bearing His grandeur; for it is infinite and infinitely distant and disproportionate to all created being.' So 'this divine Being, adorable in all His attributes, has attributes that are apparently contradictory. He is infinitely present and infinitely distant, infinitely exalted and infinitely applied (*appliqué*) to created being, infinitely delightful and infinitely severe, infinitely desirable and infinitely insupportable'.[11]

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[8] Book IX, ch. 13. *Cf.* Book V, ch. 2.

[9] Works in the edition of Migne (Paris, 1856). In the 1960 facsimile of the first edition of 1644 Migne's page numbers have been inserted.

[10] 86.

Bérulle does not entrust the performance of this primordial metaphysical act to man's spontaneous deliberation; no, he makes it clear that it involves the co-operation and collaboration of God the Holy Spirit. In the analogy of being the analogy of the finite and infinite subjects is permanently in force. And in the concrete order of the world, as the supreme miracle of divine grace, the God-Man Jesus Christ is like the bridge between infinite and finite, between absolute glory and absolute adoration, the mediator of the religious act. Ontologically and psychologically, He is the full reality of analogy. One or two decades later, Pascal, in great turbulence, in a state of Jansenist shock at man's spatial and ontological disorientation (the Oratory has some influence here), will make this discovery for himself:[12] Christ is the definitive proportion between God and man, a proportion not found anywhere else. Bérulle had already established this truth by the simple contemplation of Christ and without prior consideration of man's sinfulness and incapacity for adoration. In Christ 'God incomprehensible makes Himself comprehended . . . God ineffable makes Himself heard in the voice of His Word incarnate, and God invisible makes Himself seen in the flesh that he has united with the essence of eternity, and God terrible (*épouvantable*) in the magnificence of His *grandeur* makes Himself felt in His gentleness, in His kindness and in His humanity.'[13]

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[11] 1417–1418.

[12] *Cf.* vol. III of this work, pp. 205–218 (Eng. tr.).

Both in His being and in His consciousness Jesus Christ is the point where glory is transformed into worship; indeed, since He is personally God in human nature, the transformation is total and perfect: 'You alone serve God as he deserves to be served, that is, with an infinite service, and you alone adore Him with an infinite adoration . . . From all eternity there was an infinitely adorable God, but there was still not an infinite adorer . . . O grandeur of Jesus, precisely in His state of abandonment and servitude . . . since from now on we have a God served and adored without any kind of defect and a God adoring without a [selfish] interest in His divinity.'[14] This precision is not just ontological, because it is expressed by Christ's own act of adoration; and yet it is not just functional either, for the particular act totally corresponds to the ontological situation of the God-Man. To express the unity of the two aspects Bérulle invents the idea of 'state' (*état*). This denotes the psychological and existential dimension of Jesus' ontological reality; constantly and precisely, His actions reveal His being. Now man is historical and goes through various states of life—the state of being in his mother's womb, the state of childhood, of maturity, of joy and sorrow, of living and dying. In Jesus all the states of a truly human existence are experienced and shaped into a precise expression of His eternal adoration of God. According to Bérulle, all Jesus' particular states (*les états*) are integrated in His general state as God and man, which, in precisely *this* integration, is the place of man's true transcendence towards God. In fact, here finite being's perfect act of homage to God (the foundation of all authentic knowledge of God) is performed with divine validity.

The integration of the states of human life in the state of the God-Man is familiar to us today through Odo Casel's 'theology of the mysteries', which is concerned with the question of how what is essentially temporal in Jesus becomes eternal. Bérulle provides a prudent and circumspect answer to this question. He sees that both the temporal acts and the temporal states of Jesus (e.g., His Infancy, Passion, pierced Heart, His Burial etc.) *emerge* primarily from His permanent and fundamental attitude as the 'perfect adorer' and are then contained again within that same attitude, not just as a permanent disposition of mind but as the harvest of all the real achievements of Christ in time. Like Eckhart, Bérulle especially emphasises the fact that the incarnate love of God is always Now, grounded in the eternal Now of the Trinitarian procession.[15] In this eternal Now of the God-Man 'the actual enjoyment, the living disposition, by which Jesus effected any given mystery [of His earthly life] is always living, actual, present for Jesus'; 'the interior condition of the exterior mystery, its efficacy and power, which make the mystery alive and effective in us', transcend time. If Jesus could take the scars on His body into glory, 'why can He not preserve something of his suffering in His soul, in the definitive state of His glory? . . . But what he takes with him in body and soul of his passion is itself life and glory . . . what remains in Him of these mysteries of his life forms on earth a kind of grace, which pertains to those souls chosen to share in it.'[16]

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[13] 217.

[14] 183–184.

This 'kind of grace' is Bérulle's central preoccupation. He does not dispute the dogmatic fact that sanctifying grace as such cannot be directly experienced at the conscious level, but can only be grasped by faith. Nevertheless, because of his christological orientation, he is bound to think of the life of faith as a transcendent participation in the fundamental state, at once both ontological and psychological, of 'the perfect Adorer', whose entire state has been opened up to all mankind and above all to the believing members of His Mystical Body. For Christ as Mediator and Substitute possesses in Himself 'two wonderful capacities (*capacités*)': one for the fullness of God, 'the other for souls, whom He contains in Himself, and has in His authority, in His power . . . a capacity that contains, conserves and protects'. For those with faith and love it is a capacity which 'in Christ gives them life and subsistence, strengthens them and makes them grow', a space which enables them to live more in Christ than in themselves.[17] One can see here how Bérulle gives a metaphysical foundation to the Pauline concept of the indwelling in Christ by faith and thus surpasses and removes the poison from the Platonism of Eckhart and Ruysbroeck, the Platonism which taught that the creature lives more in its divine idea than in its own existence outside of God. Existence in Christ, integrated by the integration of His human states in his fundamental state as the God-Man, is an existence which explains our spiritual capacity (*capacité* in the sense of the possibility of existing spiritually in another, the world or God) in terms of Christ's capacity for us.[18] 'For Jesus alone is our fulfilment, and we must bind ourselves to Jesus as to the one who is the ground (*fond*) of our being by His divinity, by His humanity what binds our being to God, the spirit of our spirit, the life of our life, the fullness of our capacity.'[19] At the same time, this potentiality of our faith is of necessity realised by our grace (always Christological in form) becoming conscious in a transcendent manner (according to Karl Rahner, 'non-categorically', to be precise). To partake of the divine life means to participate in the fundamental state and attitude of the 'perfect Adorer', Jesus, who in His freedom chooses us for a particular place within His states: one person shares with Him specially in being the Father's child, another shares in His contemplation in the wilderness, a third is incorporated into the agony in Gethsemane, a fourth in the dereliction of the cross.[20] The experience of one's own existence is the understanding of one's destiny; Christian experience of existence is the interpretation in faith of all that happens as a modality in the sphere of Christ's life, which therefore trains one in his perfect adoration of God's glory.

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[15] 921.

[16] 1052f.

The perfect example of someone incorporated into Christ

[17] 968–970.

[18] 916.

[19] 1181.

[20] 940–941. This idea was used impressively by Bernanos. *Cf.* my book, *Bernanos* (Hegner, 1954), p. 433 and *passim*.

and His states is the life of Mary in her unlimited *fiat*. The Oratorian school unites Jesus and His Mother in the closest possible way (as does St Ignatius, who speaks of 'the mediators'). St John Eudes, with his devotion to the hearts of Jesus and Mary,[21] also depends on Bérulle, for Bérulle, for all his inclination towards integration, never neglects the sensible and historical formation of the interior sentiment; on the contrary, he lovingly emphasises it.[22] The fundamental mystery for him is abasement (*abaissement*), which he contemplates above all in the infancy of Jesus (this devotion too and the 'spirit of infancy' are revived and promoted by the Oratory), and more precisely still in the act of the Incarnation itself, when the Word sinks into the womb of the Virgin. Bérulle's work, entirely directed towards transcendence in the sense of the Christological act of adoration, delineates in clear, vertical style the foundation of Christian metaphysics, though not without neglect of the ethics of love of neighbour.[23]

CHARLES DE CONDREN, the second General of the Oratory, had, at the age of twelve, a totally Old Testament kind of experience of God, which radically and decisively affected his life and thought.[24] While at work, he suddenly found himself surrounded by a luminous splendour, in which 'the divine Majesty appeared to him so immense and so infinite that it seemed that nothing but this pure Being could subsist, and that the whole universe must be destroyed to His glory. He saw that God had no need of any creature, that even His own Son, on whom His entire good pleasure rests, had to offer Him His life; that only the disposition of offering, of oneself and of all things, with Jesus the Victim, was worthy of His grandeur; and that it was not enough to love Him, if you were not willing to annihilate yourself, with His Son, for love of Him. This light was so pure and so powerful that it made an impression of death upon him, which was never effaced. He gave himself with all his heart to God, in order to be reduced to nothing in His honour and to live for ever in that disposition. At that moment he knew that the whole world was to go up in flames for the sins of men, to which the divine purity, holiness and justice had an extreme aversion, and that God looks with joy only on Christ and His Spirit . . . And the force of this divine light had such a powerful effect on him that he would have desired to be immolated, that very hour, in the presence of the glory that filled his spirit . . . He felt a special joy when he saw that the Son of God was always His Father's Victim . . . He realised that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was the fulfilment of the zeal of all those who wanted to be sacrificed themselves but knew they were incapable of honouring God worthily by their sacrifice.'[25]

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[21] Bremond, vol. III, pp. 629–671.

[22] Texts in Bremond, vol. III, pp. 57–59.

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 511–582. This meditation represents the largest part of the Cardinal's unfinished major work, *Discours de l'Etat et des Grandeurs de Jésus*.

[24] Detailed biography and doctrinal exposition by Denis Amelote (1643). Among his own works the following stand out: *L'Idée du Sacerdoce et du Sacrifice de Jésus-Christ* (edited by Quesnel, 1677), and *Lettres* (first edition 1642, later enlarged, quoted here from the fourth edition of 1644). See also Bremond (III, pp. 283–418); and Molien in *Dict. Spir.* II, 1373–1388.

Once again the root of this experience is a radical, Eckhartian *analogia entis*. Though saturated by an Old Testament image of God's *kabod* as a consuming fire, it is of philosophical origin. God, in His being all, is so inexpressibly glorious that beside Him everything else not only is as nothing but, truly speaking, *wants* to be as nothing. 'God's rights oblige us to accept that God is more in us than we ourselves are . . . and to perform for Him not only the duties of a slave'—obedience to His will and law—'but the duties of a creature, namely, adoration and the sacrifice of ourselves.'[26] As creatures we owe God not just individual actions but our very being. The central idea of sacrifice has an ontological foundation; it is not primarily soteriological. Condren refers back to sacrifices in classical antiquity (such as that of Iphigenia), to the Old Testament sacrifices; he could have

[25] Amelote I, 41f. Bremond observes correctly that the biographer has projected into this experience of Condren's childhood the whole of his later theology.

[26] Letter 25, p. 117.

quoted Philo and (even more so) Origen.[27] Franz von Baader will develop his ideas.[28] In sacrifice he sees the will to represent the truth (that God is all), but, of course, only in so far as the action comes from the creature: being assumed and transformed by God into God is something the creature no longer has the power to represent. Man can throw himself, for better or worse, into God's consuming fire; how the sacrifice is consumed is the affair of God alone.

But in Christ we can see what God does with the victim wholly consumed. 'Of Him, the perfect holocaust, nothing remained that had not been consumed (*consommé*) in the glowing furnace of the Godhead'. This annihilation (*exinanitio*) was, however, His surrender to the Father; His intention was to be 'consumed (or completed, consummated, *consommé*) into us, that is to say, to be all in us'.[29] Here Condren's idea of transcendence becomes clear: the total 'liquidation' of the sacrificed Christ in us is the presupposition of our own 'liquefaction' or annihilation into Him, but because Christ is God, His own burning up is also the creaturely mode of the divine incandescence itself. This is how God 'consumes/fulfils (*consommant*) His creatures into Himself, without being anything other than Himself'.[30] So what is consumed/fulfilled in us is the Christ who lives in us. Our effort must be to allow Him to live in us as much as possible, to hand ourselves over to Him, 'to the One who raises the dead to live in His divine power'.[31] From our point of view, this passing over is death, so it is not something we can become conscious of 'through any interior experience';[32] no, it is the entry into 'divine, incomprehensible life', to which pure faith alone is the appropriate response. It is the *adhaerere Deo* of the Psalmist, Augustine and John of the Cross, which voluntarily renounces any kind of comfortably reassuring comprehension.

[27] *Cf.* my anthology, *Geist und Feuer*, second edition 1951, texts 814–825.

[28] In *Vorlesungen über eine künftige Theorie des Opfers* (1836), *Fermenta Cognitionis* (1825), *Vierzig Sätze aus einer religiösen Erotik* (1831).

[29] *Considérations sur les mystères de Jésus-Christ* (1882), p. 74f.

[30] Letter 21, p. 108.

[31] Letter 30, pp. 139–140.

[32] Letter 32, p. 235.

FÉNELON. After such radicalism we find it strange and certainly unexpected that the very words of Fénelon about 'pure love' (*amour pur*) scandalised Bossuet so much that he set in motion an ecclesiastical condemnation. The radicalism of the analogy formulas quoted above is not very far behind Eckhart at his strongest: for Bérulle, the creature had to become 'pure relation' to God or to relate to Christ in a way analogous to the relation of His anhypostatic human nature to His divine person. Condren's annihilation-formulas in a way went even further than that by comparing sacrificed man to the accidents of bread and wine in the Eucharist: 'So Christ must be our substance too.' This identification of God with being, inherited from the medieval German mystics via Benedict Canfeld, as an influence on the Oratorians Olier, Gibieuf and Bourgoing, on Renty and Bernières, and later on Madame Guyon,[33] through whom it reaches Fénelon. If one surveys the path taken by the 'Metaphysics of the Saints' since the late Middle Ages, one is struck by the fact that, though it was always primarily a theology of contemplation for contemplatives, at the same time it clearly perceived in its beginnings the active, soteriological and apostolic efficacy of the attitude of abandonment to God. For Eckhart and his disciples the 'essential work', the birth of God, was the origin and form of all external works that have as their goal the diffusion of Christian life on earth; the most perfect example of this quality is to be seen in Catherine of Siena. Ignatius strove to achieve a balance between contemplation and action, indeed, so far as was possible, the integration of the two: the Christian should be *in actione contemplativus* by dying to all earthly love and then 'loving the Creator in all His creatures and all them in Him'.[34] The French, though, seem so preoccupied with their personal encounter with God that Catholic openness to the world recedes into the background, or remains alongside contemplation as an isolated external factor.

[33] L. Cognet, *Crépuscule des mystiques* (1958) and 'La spiritualité de Mme Guyon', *Revue XVII siècle*, special number (11–14) devoted to Fénelon. Fénelon's works are quoted from the Paris edition of 1852 (10 volumes).

[34] *Constitutiones*, pars 3, c. 1, n. 26.

Thus, for Fénelon, who had, of course, studied in detail the poetry and philosophy of classical antiquity,[35] *indifférence* acquires certain autonomous and therefore pre-Christian and aestheticising features. When he and Mme Guyon refer, with all their historical knowledge, to the universal Christian tradition of *apatheia*/abandonment/indifference,[36] they see in it a kind of 'secret tradition' of true perfection.[37] For the majority of Christians, with their more modest pretensions, ordinary Church doctrine is sufficient; indeed, it would be imprudent to try to lead the imperfect by force any higher.[38] Fénelon's fundamental vision, concealed behind this doctrine of *apatheia*, is the necessary overcoming of Eros by Agape. Eros is the creature's love of God, in so far as the creature is a 'nature', which necessarily strives for its perfection. Eros is not egotistical in the sinful sense (though original sin tragically puts its seal on love's fall into egocentrism and for man makes that fall definitive), and yet, considered simply as a function of created nature, it is incapable of loving God purely for His own sake. Nevertheless, Fénelon demands that 'pure love' at all costs, the love that gives God absolute preponderance over the loving 'I'. This preponderance is not based primarily on the supernatural grace of Christian Agape, but (as with the Oratorians, but with St Thomas Aquinas as well)[39] is ontological. It is the act of man, not in so far as he is a *nature*, but in so far as he is *spirit*. For as spirit man is open to the *analogia entis*; as spirit he is capable of realising God's absolute preponderance over the creature and thus the absolute necessity of His being preferred above all things. As spirit-love the act of love is a clear *choice*: it chooses the beloved without second thoughts or secret self-concern.

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[35] The following were written for the Dauphin: the pedagogical Homeric novel, *Aventures de Télémaque*; the translation of part of the Odyssey (Books 5–10, and a summary of the other books); a 'Sketch of the Lives of the Ancient Philosophers with an Anthology of their Most Beautiful Sayings' (from the pre-Socratics to the Stoics), the amazing *Dialogue des Morts*, with characters both from the Iliad and from history from the Romans to modern times; a book of *Fables*.

[36] At the end of the three volumes of Madame Guyon's *Justifications* (Cologne, 1720) there is a 'Collection of Some Quotations from the Greek Fathers', the authors quoted covering the whole of Christian tradition. *Cf.* on this: Jeanne-Lydié Goré, *La notion d'indifférence chez Fénelon et ses sources* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1956), p. 75f. Fénelon was, typically enough, dependent on Clement of Alexandria and wrote a book about him (*Le Gnostique de S. Clément d'Alexandrie: opuscule inédit de Fénelon*. Publié avec une introduction par le R. P. Dudon SJ, Paris, Beauchesne, 1930). In fact, Clement was the first person to try to explain the transcendental dimension of Christian *agape* in terms of the ancient concept of *apatheia*. *Cf.* Theodor Rüther, *Die sittlichen Forderungen der Apatheia in den beiden ersten christlichen Jahrhunderten und bei Klemens von Alexandrien* (*Herder, 1949*).

[37] Dudon, 125f.

[38] *Instructions sur la morale et la perfection chrétienne* 20 (VI, 117a).

Now, since God as beloved is Himself absolute love and 'the glory of God', He can act only for Himself and His glory. He is necessarily jealous of this immediate glory; indeed, as He Himself says (Is. 42.8), He can give it to no one. On the other hand, the lowliness and dependence of the creature is such that—unless it wants to make itself an idol and infringe the inviolable law of creation—it can do nothing, say nothing, want nothing for itself and its own glorification.' As the absolute, however, God is not 'Something Else' outside and alongside us. If we really love, we do so only in virtue of His absolute love in us: 'You yourself love yourself in me ... you are more present to me than I am to myself. This "I", on which I lavish so much care and attention, ought to be a stranger to me when compared with you. You have given it to me, without you it would be nothing, so it is your will that I love you more than it.'[40] Since God created all things for His own glory, 'to attain the essential goal of our creatureliness, we must prefer God to ourselves and strive for our happiness only for the sake of His glory, otherwise we would be turning his order upside down'. 'To the objection that God has given us a natural inclination to the happiness that He Himself is, perhaps we can say that He did so because He wanted our union with Him to be realised with greater ease . . . the motive of our own beatitude is not forbidden, but it has to take second place to that other motive: we must want God's glory more than our own happiness.' 'We would have to love Him just as much, even if (we are supposing the impossible!) He did not want to be in us as our beatitude', even if—and this really is something God could do[41]—'He annihilated our soul at the moment of death.' 'If one accepts these presuppositions as real possibilities, there is no longer any promise for me, no reward, no happiness, no hope for the life to come . . . but could I therefore exempt myself in this ultimate moment from the love of God?' What is more, if God were compelled to promise me eternal life, in other words, Himself, without fail, on the grounds that I am His creature, then he would be dependent on His creature, 'He could no longer exist without it, it would become a necessary being.'[42]

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[39] On this see Pierre Rousselot's detailed work, *Pour l'histoire du problème de l'amour au moyen-âge*. *BGPhMA* VI, 6 (1908). But Rousselot shows clearly how St Thomas unites the two forms of love, the natural and the spiritual aspect, inseparably, whereas Fénelon unhappily and abstractly tears them apart.

[40] *Instructions* etc. 18 (VI, 101a, 101b–102a).

So, then, an absolute love of God even without any promise of eternal life. Are we coming close here to the heroic love of the Old Testament, where eternal fidelity to God is sworn *ad tempus*, in the clear knowledge that 'in the underworld no one praises Him any more'? Or are we to see in this Old Testament fidelity the coming into play of a paradoxical Messianic hope, incomprehensible to the Old Testament itself? If we do, then perhaps we are coming close to the *amor intellectualis* of the Jew Spinoza, for whom this hope no longer exists. And does this not lead logically to Hegel, according to whom there is likewise no hope of eternity for the individual spirit, which is just one passing moment in the infinite ascendancy of Absolute Spirit? It is then a short step to materialism. Mysticism and atheism in a strange way look one another in the eye,[43] for common to both is disdain for human finitude in the interests of an all-embracing Whole in which the little 'I' disappears.

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[41] A supposition which St Thomas Aquinas could never have made, presupposing as it does post-Thomist voluntarism. Once created immortal by God, the soul has immortality because of its nature and thus as the presupposition of all its spiritual acts in itself. God cannot, therefore, annihilate it without contradicting himself.

[42] *Instructions* 19 (VI, 109ab; 11b–112b).

[43] *Cf.* Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik* I/2 (1939), 344–356.

Fénelon is an impatient educator; monotonously he demands 'emptying, annihilation of my own limited being' in order to enter God's infinitude,[44] 'external mortification . . . for then God takes it upon himself to take hold of the ground of the soul . . . and he does all that is necessary to detach man from himself, and though the coat is costlier than the shirt, you feel the loss of the shirt more than the loss of the coat. In the end all that is left is bitterness, nakedness, shame.' 'You realise you depend on something, only when it is taken away from you.'[45] One would like to be spiritual, great in virtue, but that means 'letting oneself become small' (*se laisser apetisser*).[46] Everything must serve the loss of self, which must not be content with resignation, but must press on to real self-abandonment (*abandon*). 'It is sufficient, when suffering, to be little and abandoned (*abandonné*). That does not mean courage, but something less and more: less in the mediocre eyes of virtuous people, more in the eyes of pure faith. It is a littleness in itself which transfers the soul into all the greatness of God.'[47] The philosophy of abandonment has its deep roots in Christ abandoned on the cross. For us this means: 'The night of pure faith, in which everything is agony . . . Not only does God hide Himself from us, He also hides us from ourselves.'[48]

And yet Fénelon's doctrine lacks a Christological emphasis; instead it remains spiritually idiosyncratic with its abstract idea of indifference; abstract, because it comes from a dissociation of nature and spirit. It is a mysticism in the state of scholasticism and thus, as in the case of Francis de Sales, in constant danger, through sheer 'theopanism', of turning into a pantheist univocalism. The state becomes more important than the object, for if someone really does want to rise above hope, must he not also get beyond 'I and Thou'? Once again

[44] *Manuel de Piété* (VI, 54a).

[45] *Instructions* etc. 22 (VI, 121b).

[46] *Ibid.* (VI, 124b). *Cf. Correspondance* (VII, 266a): 'Laissez-vous donc apetisser par vos propres défauts . . . Le grand point est de vous mettre de plein-pied avec tous les petits les plus imparfaits.'

[47] *Instructions* 37 (VI, 151b).

[48] *Correspondance* (VII, 263a).

speculative idealism seems to have been anticipated by a pious idealism. Once again everything is to be worked out in terms of the glory of God, with direct reference to the total gratuitousness of God's love, the centre of an 'aesthetic theology'. And yet in Fénelon's work the glory of God fails to shine as it should: the search for selflessness is far too self-concerned.

True, Fénelon's tedious trial and final condemnation are muddied by an odious political background and by the conflict of personal ambitions.[49] True, it is not difficult to vindicate Fénelon[50] and to promote him to be a patron of the authentic spirituality of our century. Nevertheless, he brings something to a close, and the sentence against him—the last in a series of condemnations beginning in Spain against the *Alumbrados*, continuing in France against the 'mystical Jesuits' (B. Alvarez, Lallemant, Surin), the verdicts against Port-Royal and the beginnings of the Enlightenment coming out later—historically speaking represents an abrupt termination.

The 'Metaphysics of the Saints' was a procession of widely differing figures, presenting at every stage a penetrating insight into essential truths, but leaving out, in the historical period covered here, other attributes that must be taken into account if a complete theology of glory is to be achieved. The theopanist aspect from Eckhart to Fénelon offers an open flank to Idealist speculation. All in all, only Ignatius of Loyola had the balance right. And so it is one of his sons who gives us a final synthesis to draw this period to a close.

CAUSSADE. Forty years after Fénelon's condemnation, in the middle of the Enlightenment, in a commentary on Bossuet's treatise on prayer 'against the false mystics of our time', Caussade[51] succeeded in expounding, in intact form, the heart of Fénelon's doctrine. What is more, he summed up the entire 'Metaphysics of the Saints', from the Rhineland mystics to St John of the Cross and the French School, in a unity of persuasive simplicity.

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[49] R. Schmittlein, *L'aspect politique du différend Bossuet-Fénelon* (Baden, 1954).

[50] Henri Bremond's *Apologie pour Fénelon* (1910), later frequently endorsed, for example, in the fine book by François Varillon SJ, *Fénelon* (Aubier, 1954).

[51] On Caussade, see *Dict. Spir.* II, 354–370. Works: *Instructions spirituelles . . . suivant la doctrine de M. Bossuet* (1714), new edition with an introduction

Once again the main idea is indifference[52] or abandonment (*abandon*), understood as love—'L'art de l'abandon n'est que celui d'aimer',[53] and thus as unconditional self-surrender, being at God's disposal in transcendent openness to His provident will.[54] In every situation of life abandonment is a unique, sustained act, passive and universal in relation to God, to be terminated in every case by Him in active and finite conduct and behaviour.[55] The all-important thing is the 'inner work' (Tauler) of absolute openness, like the *fiat* of the Mother of God, and proves itself in the act of obedience. This *fiat* sums up 'the entire tradition of Old Testament spiritual theology'.[56] It means 'receiving everything and letting God act'.[57] The *fiat* is the pure, naked, undefiled faith which does not want to decide for itself and so does not want to know anything; it is thus 'faith in darkness'.[58] Or rather: this total faith (John of the Cross) is the indissoluble unity of faith, hope and love, which are together 'just one single

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by H. Bremond (1931). P. Ramière composed the central work out of Caussade's letters: *L'Abandon à la Providence divine* (1861). The 5th edition (1867) includes numerous letters to the Convent of the Visitation in Nancy. We shall quote from the 20th edition (Gabalda, 1928) and use its page numbers. 'II' refers to the second volume. [Tr.—Kitty Muggeridge has published an English translation of Father Olphe-Galliard's 1966 reconstitution of the original text under the title *The Sacrament of the Present Moment* (London, 1981).]

[52] 72.

[53] 134.

[54] *L'être propre étant livré au bon plaisir de Dieu, ce transport fait par le pur amour s'étend à toute l'étendue des opérations de ce bon plaisir* (64–65).

[55] *Un même acte universel et général, [qui] n'est point du tout limité par le terme ou par l'ordre spécial.* The termination of the act is then no longer humanly limited, but derives from the will of God, 'who terminates Himself in it' (65). *Accomplissement actif de la volonté divine . . . et acceptation passive de tout* (79).

[56] 2.

[57] 49.

[58] 114.

virtue', though in an infinite variety of possible gradations, all making up the personal richness of Christian life.[59] 'One can just as well call it pure love (*pur amour*) as pure hope, pure faith', since 'the darkness and the shadows of the night are totally pure'. The Christian rests in this holistic act: God's 'mercy leaves me, instead of certainty, pure hope, which in value immeasurably outweighs certainty, without depriving me of the merit of my surrender . . . And on what is this firm hope founded? On the treasures of the infinite mercy and infinite merits of Jesus Christ.'[60]

By understanding the act of faith universally and transcendentally, Caussade rediscovered not only the content but also the act of Biblical revelation. He saw the importance of the (Kierkegaardian) category of the 'moment' (*le moment présent*, which contains the 'one thing needful'),[61] and thought of this as the Holy Spirit's exposition of the Word of God in our hearts, an exposition which always takes place in the here and now, indeed, as the continuation of the one revelation in Christ through all the ages: 'The Holy Spirit holds His pen in His hand, and holds His book open before Him, in order to continue the history of salvation, which is still not closed, and the content of which will be exhausted only at the end of the world.'[62] All the mediation of the Church comes in only at a secondary level: 'God still speaks today, as He spoke to our fathers, where there were no spiritual directors or methods. it is fidelity to God's order which constitutes the whole of spirituality.'[63] 'The beautiful book of the Holy Spirit is currently being written, is just being printed.'[64] With all the passion of the *Devotio Moderna*, Caussade warns against the decadence of a compartmentalising theology and invites his readers to follow God, as Abraham did, as Israel did, without knowing where the journey will end. 'If you have neither map nor path, neither wind nor tide, you are bound to have a successful journey'.[65] 'Let us abandon ourselves to God without thought of the vain and futile systems of sanctity.'[66] 'March off in the direction you are sent, and without knowing the map, walk blindly on.'[67] 'The doctrine of pure love can only be experienced through God's action, and through the effort of reason.'[68] 'Come, I want to teach you a mystery, to outwit all these clever minds . . . Come, not to know the map of the land of spirituality, but to possess that land.'[69] Lucifer was an enlightened and beautiful spirit (*le plus éclairé de tous les beaux esprits*), 'but dissatisfied with God and with His order'.[70]

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[59] 59–62.

[60] II, 263.

[61] 43–44, 88ff.

[62] 133.

[63] 1.

[64] 35.

If man, abandoned man, sets sail 'on the vast ocean of the will of God',[71] and if he accepts from Him, at every moment, the bounds[72] and the order[73] established by Him, he must, if he is to attain these standards, lose all standards of his own. 'Tear, like threads, all the soul's notions, all the soul's standards! You must lose the very ground on which you stand.'[74] The ability to do what at any given time is 'the best', to do God's will in the present moment,[75] is an unmysterious mystery, an artless art'.[76] For it is not the art of man, but of the Holy Spirit, who inspires him. A good musician, even in half-unconscious improvisation, plays everything according to the laws of his art, 'which cramp the spirit when followed too conscientiously.' So the person trained in surrender is no longer able to preface his action with cautious deliberations: 'All he can do is act at random (*à l'aventure*), since only then is he able to give himself up to the genius of grace, with whose guidance nothing fails.'[77] But it is precisely this initiation into the total docility of naked faith which demands (as John of the Cross showed) that God hide Himself: He dresses up in strange masks (*déguisé*),[78] appears (as Kierkegaard says) incognito. 'The life of faith is nothing other than an unceasing pursuit of God through all that disguises Him, disfigures and, as it were, destroys and annihilates Him'.[79] Then God no longer stands before the soul, but 'behind it and propels it in front of himself: since he is no longer the clearly-perceived object of its perception, he is the invisible ground of its activity.'[80] Thus Joseph 'deceived' Benjamin and 'allowed him to weep';[81] thus God plays a game of 'tricks' and 'impostures' (*tromperies*), and the soul glides 'dreamlike' through the veils.[82] A dream full of 'anxiety, despair, fear',[83] because the 'infallible means of darkness' demands it.[84] The soul really must learn to do without support both in and outside itself, to be 'sheer weakness'[85] precisely in the endurance of suffering,[86] to consider itself completely useless, humiliated[87] like a 'shattered jug, no longer of use to anyone',[88] to 'hold itself in such low esteem that it disappears before its own eyes'.[89] In short, 'the soul is as light as a feather, as fluid as water, as simple as a child, as mobile as a globe, in order to receive and obey every movement of grace.'[90] For 'God wants to dwell in us in a poor way (*pauvrement*) and without all the accessories of sanctity (*accessoires de sainteté*) which make souls a cause of wonder'.[91]

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[65] 69.
[66] 104–105.
[67] 90.
[68] 77.
[69] 51.
[70] 139.
[71] 29.
[72] 65.
[73] 78.
[74] 111.
[75] 85.
[76] 93.
[77] 124.

[78] 25, 123.

[79] 27.

[80] 120.

[81] 120.

[82] 119–120.

[83] 117.

[84] 114.

[85] 105.

[86] *Qu'il est avantageux de souffrir faiblement . . . plutôt que grandement, fortement et courageusement!* (II, 264).

[87] 105f.

[88] 56.

[89] 158.

[90] 88. On being a child (56).

[91] 104.

In this night of faith, whenever God's will meets the readiness of the soul, at that moment the act of revelation, the act of nuptial union, the act of communion, can take place: 'O festin, ô fête perpétuelle! Un Dieu toujours donné et toujours reçu, dans tous ce qu'il y a sur la terre d'infirmité, de folie, de néant!'[92] This is the 'communion de tous les instants'[93] and the adoration through all things and situations of life. 'For things proceed from God's mouth like words. At each moment what God does is a divine idea, signified (*signifiée*)[94] by a created thing.' Everything is consequently a 'sacrament'.[95] God's 'water surrounds me. Everything becomes bread to feed me, soap to wash me, fire to purify me, a chisel to sculpt in me heaven's outlinc'.[96] 'Everything is God's hand. Everything is divine earth, air, waters. His action is more extensive, more present than the elements of the world. He penetrates you through all your senses, provided you use them in accordance with God's commandments . . . All bodily states under His influence become effective mediations of grace.'[97] 'Everything is full of meaning, everything makes perfect sense. This line ends here, because it has to; no comma is too much, no full stop redundant.'[98]

What a strange aesthetics in the midst of the night of faith! It is like the back of a piece of embroidery, where only tangled threads can be seen, and yet everything is done, 'stitch by stitch', for the sake of the perfect sample, which will only be turned round and become visible in eternity.[99] Occasionally, as if by chance (when God wills it), rays break forth from this invisible beauty, revealing accidentally the hidden substantial glory: 'Everything extraordinary that we perceive in the saints—visions, revelations, interior locutions—is but a reflection of the sublimity of their state, which is guarded and concealed in the exercise of faith. For faith guards everything in itself, since it knows how to see and hear God in everything that occurs from moment to moment. When this is perceptibly and externally revealed, nothing is happening that faith does not already contain within itself; only the grandeur needs to be made visible and the soul stirred to exercise. Thus the glory of Tabor and the miracles of Christ were, not an increase of His grandeur, but lightning flashing out from time to time from the dark cloud of His humanity in order to make it venerable and lovable for others.'[100] So God makes His grace visible in some of His saints for the salvation of many. 'But there is a multitude of other saints in the Church who remain hidden; destined to shine only in heaven, they spread no sort of light in this life, but live and die in deep darkness'.[101]

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[92] 40.
[93] *Ibid.*
[94] 44.
[95] 46.
[96] 49.
[97] 50.
[98] 36.
[99] 37, 122.

Now this darkness is at the same time the light of the Word of God. 'God speaks. He speaks a mystery, so it is a death for my senses and for my reason, for it is proper to mysteries to sacrifice senses and reason. The mystery is life for the heart by means of faith; for the rest, only contradiction reigns. The divine action kills and quickens at the same time, and the more deeply aware you are of death, the more you believe that there is life; the darker the mystery, the more light it contains.'[102] Faith is the way to God; it always has been: 'Faith is the spirituality which sanctified the patriarchs and prophets, long before people made so much fuss about it (*avant qu'on y eut mis tant de façons*) and long before there were so many experts in it.'[103] Faith still sanctifies today, but 'not through studying books . . . for what instructs is what happens from moment to moment: it educates us in the science of experience, which even Christ wanted to acquire before He began to teach'.[104] This experience of faith is the real presence of revelation, for the work of the Holy Spirit is

[100] 63.
[101] 64.
[102] 38–39.
[103] 8.
[104] 41.

'an inexhaustible source of ever new insights, new sufferings, new actions, new patriarchs, new prophets, new apostles, new saints, who do not need to copy the life or writings of their predecessors, but merely to persevere in constant surrender to your work'.[105] Caussade regards it as self-evident that this surrender should demand Fénelon's *amour pur*: 'Were we to love God a little for the sake of His gifts, He would be loved for His own sake when the gift was no longer noticed.'[106] And 'if the divine goodness does not require us to despise the happiness for which we are destined, it surely has the right to be loved for its own sake without any regard of our own interests'.[107] That is well said and corresponds to the metaphysics of the saints in every century.

One can see how Caussade, protected by the sound doctrine of his order's founder, avoids the snares of Quietism—indeed, he explicitly attacks it.[108] He does not express total surrender with the kind of ontological concepts that deny or paralyse the proper activity of the creature, and yet he does not abandon the radicalism of the tradition discussed in this chapter; he just reconnects it more closely with Biblical revelation. In this form Christian transcendentalism is unsurpassable and the proper partner in dialogue with every form of Asiatic or Sufi mysticism (Al Hallaj). Caussade clearly saw that every attempt to give created reason *more* than the surrender of the perfect fiat (*more* in the sense of a speculative or mystical idealism) would in reality deprive it of its noblest act and clearly turn it into something *less*.

Nevertheless, this Christian transcendentalism from Eckhart to Caussade cannot yet be proposed as the definitive form of Christian 'metaphysics' (there can be no such thing). However precise his comprehension of Christian transcendence as such, he remains within it—it is after all a spirituality predominantly of contemplatives—and does not exhaust the complementary act of *conversio ad phantasma*, of the Ignatian *hallar Dios en todas las cosas*. To reflect on this act without

[105] 42.
[106] 121.
[107] 176.
[108] 85.

throwing away the results of transcendental spirituality is reserved to our own times. Just as Eckhart said you should give up contemplation in order to take broth to a sick man,[109] so Caussade demands: *abandonner cet abandon même*.[110]

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[109] Discourses of Instruction 10.

[110] II, 157.

3. FOLLY AND GLORY

a. Holy Fools

The classical art of antiquity took its canon of beauty for the human figure from the gods; our study began with this derivation of beauty from glory. What image of man should be canonical for Christian or post-Christian art, when the 'Metaphysics of the Saints' just described, intentionally or unintentionally, gains validity? This question must at least be posed, even though we cannot be expected to provide a detailed, art-historical answer to it. Poetic art offers the best outline of an answer. Antiquity's influence on architecture and music was much more neutral and inconspicuous; painting may well have been dominated by the cultic icon in its abstract and heavenly dignity: but literature is meant to reveal what the living man of flesh and blood is and the standard by which he is measured. There is a constantly recurring attempt to reassert antiquity's canon with or without its gods (or with its gods reduced to ideals), and there is a typically Germanic version of this: the man of chivalry's ideal of *mâze* (measure), of relative originality and susceptible of stylisation in a Christian direction as well as in a classical pagan one. And yet, astonishingly, very little by way of an image of the living human being has come down to us intact from this late classical and classicist art. Only the original myths themselves are intact—Antigone, Oedipus, Alcestis, stimulating new emulation in every generation. In addition, there is the small contribution of the Germanic myths—the achievement of Hebbel and Wagner in their Nibelungen, and possibly also Roland, Gudrun and others.

For a long time, in countless Latin and vernacular legends, the saints were the canonical image of man, but the heart of sanctity, abandonment in transcendence to the open will of God, cannot be put into epic or dramatic form; only the indirect, accidental effects—miracles, heroic achievements, strange behaviour—offered narrative material capable of gripping a reader. But the saint as hero was a mistaken interpretation, and the more clearly this was seen—the history of this kind of discernment lasts well into the last century, perhaps into our own—the more sharply were the genres distinguished.

But if the saint disappeared into intangibility (though no less dear to pious hearts), how was living art to measure man? The simple adventure story—from the Alexander novel to Amadis—is indeed entertaining, but does not answer the metaphysical question about the nature of man. And in the Christian world all the lustre of mighty deeds was always outshone by the unsurpassable deed of the Redeemer's Passion. The saints stood beside the emperors, restraining, guiding, directing: Athanasius beside Constantine, Ambrose beside Theodosius, Maximus beside Heraclius, Benedict face to face with Totila. The great encounters of worldly power and sanctity in medieval and modern times have been described by Reinhold Schneider:[1] dramatic situations exposing the rift between earth and heaven, a rift which in a Christian context deepens still further the rift between ethos and power (Plato and Dionysius of Syracuse, Aristotle and Alexander, Seneca and Nero). But a rift is still not a figure.

However, when literature from the Middle Ages to the present day is examined straightforwardly in terms of what has an immediate affinity with us, what concerns us, touches us, moves us, then one figure does stand out. In the world of chivalry it is Parzival, in the age of humanism it is *The Praise of Folly*, in the Baroque it is Don Quixote and Simplicissimus. And once this gallery of representative fools and buffoons has come to our attention, it is joined by an immense band of dubious characters from the wandering clerks and François

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[1] *Cf.* my book, *Reinhold Schneider* (Hegner, 1953). Among others, the following pairs are considered: Anselm and William the Conqueror, Louis XI and Francis of Paola, Francis of Assisi and Innocent III, Celestine V and Boniface VIII, Charles V and Las Casas, Henry VIII and Thomas More, Pius VII and Bonaparte, etc.

Systematically: *Macht und Gnade* (1940), *Weltreich und Gottesreich* (1946), *Macht und Gewissen in Shakespeares Tragödien* (1947), *Herrscher und Heilige* (1953), and numerous other writings.

Villon through Brant's *Ship of Fools* to Quevedo and Goya, but also from Shakespeare's comic and tragic fools (Hamlet, Lear with Edmund) to Kapellmeister Kreisler and Dostoievsky's *Idiot* and to Rouault, to Hofmannsthal, Chesterton and Unamuno. What is the meaning of this *ostinato*?

The classical hero without his gods may still be 'beautiful', but he is no longer glorious and soon seems boring. But there is a gleam of unconscious, unintended sanctity about the real fool. He is the unprotected man, essentially transcendent, open to what is above him. In the post-Christian era 'classical man' in his beauty is always somewhat melancholy. The real fool never is. Since he is never quite 'in his right mind', never quite 'all there', he lacks the ponderousness that would tie him down to earth. He stands nearest to the saint, often nearer than the morally successful man preoccupied with his perfection. The Russians knew that the fool belongs to God, has his own guardian angel, and is worthy of veneration. And yet the fool is not the saint. He is not in any danger from purism or exclusiveness, which, especially during the final days of the 'Metaphysics of the Saints', separated candidates for sanctity from the existence of ordinary mortals. Thus even the pure fool, Parzival, is convicted of being a great sinner, Simplicius is self-evidently one, and Don Quixote never sees himself for a moment as anything else.

There is also a transition. The saints follow in the footsteps of Jesus, who was despised, abused, thought to be mad (Mk 3.21) and possessed (Mt 12.24; Jn 7.20; 8.48) and yearn, for the sake of Jesus, to be regarded as fools. In their abandonment to God's every command, the finger of their yearning points in this direction, and they know that, as the imitation of Christ, it could be pleasing to God. They may not strive after it, but they rejoice when the grace is given to them. The extreme gestures which they have to perform, such as when the Poverello strips himself naked, can be interpreted this way. 'The madman, *il pazzo*', children called after him. At the Portiuncula chapter, in the presence of the Cardinal of Ostia, he informed the friars that the Lord had told him he was to be 'a fool in this world', and that Christ wanted to lead them along no other path than that of *this* wisdom. Angela of Foligno shrieking outrageously at the church door, is regarded as insane although she does not will this; and many others shared the same fate. But it is not just a matter of the saints doing what is in human terms abnormal, and which leads to their being decried as foolish. In the self-surrender of the saints there are transcendental possibilities which they do not foresee. Some saints, who like Paul offer themselves to be accursed by God in place of their brethren (Rom 9.3), are plunged into the depths—not only of abandonment by God, but also of explicit experiences of Hell, even to the point of being handed over for a time to demons, whether in the form of physical torment or as a deep spiritual experience of what the anti-divine spirit is. These experiences lie in the realm of Christological (soteriological) *a priori* of Christian transcendence. As an example it is sufficient to mention the tribulations of Blessed Christine von Stommeln.[2] St Ignatius Loyola's words can count as definitively valid. In the first contemplation of the life of Jesus he at once emphasises that we must imitate the Lord 'in putting up with all injustice, all abuse, all poverty',[3] and at the climax of his introduction to the making of a truly indifferent choice of a state of life, he demands 'the most perfect subjection'. This consists in desiring 'to be poor along with Christ in poverty rather than rich, to be insulted along with Christ who was so grossly insulted, rather than to be well thought of: I would rather be thought a helpless fool for the sake of Christ who was so treated, rather than to be thought wise and clever in the world's eyes'.[4] Novices are to be examined to see whether they 'accept and desire with all possible energy whatever Christ Our Lord has loved and embraced. Just as the men of the world who follow the world love and seek with such great diligence honours, fame, and esteem for a great name on earth, as the world teaches them, so those who are progressing in the spiritual life and truly following Christ Our Lord love and intensely desire everything opposite. That is to say, they desire to clothe themselves with the same clothing and uniform of their Lord because of the love and reverence which He deserves, to such an extent that where there would be no offence to His Divine Majesty and no imputation of sin to the neighbour, they would wish to suffer injuries, false accusations and affronts, and to be held and esteemed as fools (but without their giving any occasion for this)'.[5] This final clause has not held true of all Christ's disciples, as will be shown, and yet it seems necessary to add it if the call to folly is to be accepted with complete indifference and not rashly anticipated.

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[2] A detailed account can be found in Theod. Wollersheim, *Leben der ekstatischen und stigmatisierten Jungfrau Christine von Stommeln* (Cologne, 1859); *Acta SS Juni* IV (1707), 270–454. Many examples, nowadays forgotten, in J. Görres, *Christliche Mystik*.

[3] *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola*. In a New Translation by Thomas Corbishley SJ (London, 1963), n. 98, p. 44.

[4] *Ibid.*, n. 167, p. 59f.

Such naive anticipation is reported of the Byzantine saints.[6] *Simeon the Fool* makes his way from the world into the monastery, from the monastery into the desert, from the desert into the most extreme form of humiliation, with the intention at the same time of winning souls for Christ: from now on he will 'play the fool for Christ's sake', in the 'loneliest of struggles'. It really is a 'game' for Simeon—as it is for *Andrew the Fool* as well—and so they live a consistently double life: foolery by day so as to 'expose, by ever new forms of foolish provocation, the folly of the world, everything speaking and acting in a way that goes against the grain of the world';[7] by night an unexpected visitor witnesses the outbreak of glory from behind the carefully guarded mask: 'The fool appears to him in a radiant, regal form, his face shining like the sun . . . the glory of the Lord gushes out of him.'[8] The incognito can be kept up only by annoying behaviour, and only in an utterly indirect way through symbolic gestures (as in the case of the prophets), through miracles, albeit still shrouded in madness, through preaching the Word of God in disjointed parables and scarcely intelligible hints. But under the protection of his folly's freedom, the Christian can approach people unreached by official churchmen or no longer moved by fossilised forms of piety. This form of life is explicitly described as lying beyond *apatheia*, indeed as a crossing of the frontier of the measure proper to human nature.[9]

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[5] *Examen Generale* c. 4, n. 44; St Ignatius Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*. Translated with an Introduction and a Commentary by G. E. Gans SJ (St Louis, 1970), p. 107f.

[6] St Symeon the Fool (PG 93. 1669f.) and St Andrew the Fool (PG 111.611f.). On the latter: Sara Murray, *A Study of the Life of Andreas the Fool for the Sake of Christ*, (Munich, 1910). On both: Ernst Benz, 'Heilige Narrheit' in *Kyrios* 3 (1938), 1–55. On Symeon: Water Nigg, *Der christliche Narr* (1956). On the fools' forerunners among the Desert Fathers, see Stephan Hilpisch, 'Die Torheit um Christi willen', *Zft f. Asz. u. Myst.* 6 (1931), 121–131.

[7] Benz, op. cit., p. 10.

The only true penitent fool in the West,—apart from the Russians, is JACOPONE DA TODI (+ 1303), doctor *utriusque iuris* and advocate, follower of the Poverello. Having discovered a hairshirt on the body of his dead wife, he decides spontaneously to live henceforth as a fool. His ecstatic leap beyond reason gave birth to his unprecedented poetic inspiration; songs to God's foolish love were given to him of a kind that had never been heard in dialect. He accomplished this before Dante, whose power on occasions he anticipates, and before Eckhart, whose understanding of the 'whylessness' of God he possesses because of his own folly:

Goodness knoweth no why,
Why doth outward fly.
Seek not healing balm,
In thy sickly sinful harm.[10]

The frailty of all that is earthly taken as far as the *danse macabre*; the glory of the love of God taken as far as the Franciscan embracing of all God's beloved creation; the plunge into the bottomless depths of the divine essence, and then, on the other hand, after his entry into the Franciscan order, the hard earthly struggle to maintain the purity of the order's original spirit taken as far as the horrendous five years of incarceration in the castle of the intensely hated Boniface

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[8] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[9] Texts cited in Nigg, pp. 38–41.

[10] Federmann, *Lauden des Jacopone da Todi*, 57.

VIII, whom he cursed in his songs and whom to the very end Jacopone resisted to his face; the desire to go to hell, when he dies, to take the place of all the damned and suffering: these are the hallmarks of the fool who, like Angela of Foligno, was hurled to the heights of heaven and into the depths of hell. Italian poetry owes its origin to him. Other names can be added: Giovanni Colombini (+ 1367), founder of the Jesuati, John of God, founder of the Hospitallers, and shortly afterwards Philip Neri; men famed for going to the limit and beyond. In fact, Philip Neri was the only saint to sneak into the heart of Goethe. And it was only thanks to his voluntary madness that John of God was able to gain Christian access to the inner world of the mentally ill, being exposed like these to horrific treatment with chains and blows.

b. Gallows-birds and Duellists with Death

The saints fly so high, soaring above even *apatheia* in their holy folly, that they discourage sinners. It is not surprising that the voice of Archilochus can be heard in the Middle Ages, but the way it sounds in a Christian age is remarkable. The indifference of the holy is an act of all-embracing love. For good or for ill, the indifference of the unholy, in fact of absolutely everyone, exists too: it is death. In the Christian world this death is not quite the same thing it was before. For every human being it is the brutal leveller, the ravager of all things, and yet death itself inescapably confronts one with a mystery: God's death, the death He died out of love. For the sinner expecting judgement this can make death doubly hateful and threatening: but it silently demands his love, for it reminds him of love, of everything in his wasted life that was intact, immaculate: this he will encounter anew. The songs about the fleetingness of life may sound cynical, even blasphemous: the tunes of the wandering scholars are travesties of sacred chants: hymns to Our Lady provide the elements of drinking songs and love songs. Yet behind all this stridency and bitterness, all the defiance and provocative arrogance, can be heard quite unmistakably the humble voice of the Prodigal Son, certain in his knowledge of grace. About the middle of the twelfth century it can be heard in the 'Archpoet'; a hundred years later in poor Rutebeuf, dissolute yet so tenderly devout; in the time of Dante in Cecco Angiolieri in Siena, drunkard author of a sacrilegious psalter; and finally in the most brilliant member of this clan, FRANÇOIS VILLON, baptised in 1431, Bachelor and Master of Arts, felon, recidivist, and jailbird, missing presumed dead at the age of thirty, author of the immortal 'Great Testament' and of a dozen poems, which, with perfect formal control, build up an extreme tension in much the same way as Jacopone does, but precisely from the criminal's point of view. For years in prison this man must have stood facing death. At the end he distributes the possessions left over from his life of mendicancy among his friends and among his enemies, for whom he wavers between bitter hatred and universal forgiveness. To his old mother he bequeaths, as a prayer for her to say, the most beautiful Marian hymn in French literature.[11] Alongside this are the crudest of brothel songs, as crude as they are because Villon is constantly measuring the distance in himself between Heaven and Hell, between baptism and sin:

> We love filth, filth pursues us;
> We flee from honour, it flees from us,
> In this brothel which is our home![12]

But he also writes about his own death, his long hanging on the gallows. From the vantage point of non-existence he surveys the great failure that was his life. He intensifies the contradictions of this situation in a 'Ballade of Contraries', in which he goes far beyond Qoheleth in experiencing and expressing the self-dissolution of finitude:

> I die of thirst beside the fountain,
> Hot as fire and trembling with chattering teeth;
> When in my home country, I am in a far land;
> When beside a fire, I tremble though quite warm;

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[11] *The Works of François Villon*. With Texts, Translation, Introduction and Notes. Edited by Geoffrey Atkinson (London, 1930), pp. 126ff.

[12] *Ballade de la Grosse Margot*, p. 175.

Naked as a worm, I am dressed like a Peer;
I laugh when weeping and wait without hope;
I find comfort in sad despair;
I rejoin and find no pleasure;
I am mighty without strength or power;
Well received, I am rebuffed by everyone.
For me, nothing is sure but an uncertain thing;
Nothing is obscure except what is clear;
I have no doubt in a certainty . . .[13]

In the 'Ballade of Unimportant Matters' is the refrain: 'I know all things except myself'. In the 'Ballade of Untruths' he sets out the complications and paradoxes that make impossible any tranquil knowledge of self and of existence: 'Only the coward is courageous, only the traitor is true'. In the 'Argument Between Villon's Heart and Body' the split runs right down the middle of man: when Heart tells him to remember, Body says he remembers well enough, but does not let it bother him. In the 'Epitaph' Villon addresses his *frères humains*: he asks them not to be hard of heart towards us (the hanged), but instead to beseech Lord to forgive us all. What is more, they should not despise the gallows-birds for daring to address them as brothers. They were justly condemned, and yet all men lack an accurate view of the good, so, as a precaution, the guilty should be pardoned. Hanging there, they are dried black and hard by the sun, chilled by the rain, tossed about by the wind as it pleases, and remain a strange kind of brotherhood:

Do not, therefore, join our confraternity,
But pray God that He may forgive us all![14]

At the beginning of the *Great Testament* there is a simple, honest confession of sin, based on what Scripture says about God not wanting the death of the sinner, but rather that he repent and live: 'Although I die in sin, God lives, and His mercy gives me pardon by His grace, if I repent in my conscience.'[15] And then, despite all the bitter complaints and curses:

[13] *Des Contraires*, p. 213.
[14] *Epitaphe*, p. 239.
[15] *Grand Testament*, p. 79.

If, through my death, the public good
Should be in any way advanced,
I should judge myself fit to die as a pernicious man,
So help me God![16]

For the salvation of others he is gladly willing to be hanged. We are all, every single one of us, 'deluded fools', *fous abusés, démis du sens, comblés de déraison*,[17] for, in oblivion of our birth, we all submit 'out of cowardice to a shameful death' instead of 'taking heart and placing our trust in God.'

One final challenger of death deserves to be mentioned here. He too calls death a fool, an imbecile, though he himself is not to be included among the especially 'unholy'. In 1400 JOHANNES VON TEPL held his vehement debate with death.[18] Death had robbed him of his young wife, loved by him above all things, and thus had confronted him with nothingness. True, Boethius is referred to,[19] Seneca, Aristotle, Plato are mentioned by name. But the situation is completely changed. Although mighty Lord Death approaches the wretched mortal with arguments similar to the ones Philosophy uses on the prisoner in the condemned cell, this is a book, not of 'consolation', but of bitter struggle and disputation. Not without compassionate irony, Death defends only *his* standpoint. Without him, the world would have been filled up long ago.[20] The 'workings of nature' demand that species constantly change and renew themselves.[21] It is part of being a mortal, finite creature that pain comes out of love,[22] for 'End is Beginning's sister'.[23] So wisdom consists in entrusting oneself to the great law of change: 'Break off, let go . . . he who will not drive past love from his heart must bear present pain all the time. Drive the memory of love from your heart, and you will soon be out of sorrow's reach.'[24] Nature herself advises such detachment: 'Love not too lovingly, sorrow not too sorrily.'[25] Keep your distance from man, he is only frail flesh, 'a latrine, a rotten carcass; a greedy gullet, a whited sepulchre', 'if you could see through to his interior, it would horrify you. Let love flow past, let sorrow flow past, let the Rhine run like any other water . . .'.[26] All that is earthly is mere concupiscence of the flesh: lust; concupiscence of the eyes: avarice; the pride of life: honour. Sheer vanity. 'The earth and all it contains is built on transience.'[27]

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[16] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[17] *Ballade du Bon Conseil*, p. 201.

[18] *Der Ackermann aus Böhmen*. Edited by A. Hübner in *Altdeutsche Quellen*, edited by Ulrich Pretzel 1 (1954^2). Cited by chapter numbers, 30.

[19] 29.

[20] 8.

[21] 10.

[22] 12.

[23] 20.

[24] 22.

But man has a countercharge. Death is not pure nature. It is first and foremost a vile and merciless enemy. It cannot destroy true love in its humble glory. It is the most hideous, the most unjust thing in God's creation.[28] It only mocks, it does not comfort; it only robs, does not repay. When asked for honest advice, it advises disloyalty. It annihilates, ill-treats, dishonours noble man, God's dearest creature, and thereby denigrates the Godhead. 'Now I know you are a liar and were not created in Paradise as you maintain.'[29] Man is capable of being faithful, and thus he gives the lie to death. He proves the contradiction: Death had said he would survive all mortal life, but once all life is dead, what can it mean to die? In the final analysis death is just a way of life; life is not a way of death. Life is eternal, death cannot be.[30] Man appeals against death to God.[31] And God as judge of both resolves the controversy: death is a mere servant of God, but that is all man is too; both have 'fought a good fight', but both have to restore what has only been lent them. 'So let the plaintiff have the honour; let death have the victory.' That looks like a decision against man, because what is the use of honour if death is victor? Nevertheless, the philosophy of death is no longer, as it was in Boethius, the philosophy of God. Death is the instrument of glory,[32] not an integral part of it. Glory towers high above created being and its passing, and to glory rises up the magnificent final prayer:

'Light sempiternal . . . founder of Hell's abyss . . . Creator of all the elements—of thunder and lightning, of mist, hail, snow, rain, rainbow, mildew, wind, hoarfrost, and of all their

[25] 24.
[26] 24.
[27] 30, 32.
[28] 15.
[29] 25.
[30] 31.
[31] 19.
[32] 16.

effects, the one and only Master Builder; Captain of all the heavenly hosts; Emperor whose fealty none can forswear; mildest, mightiest, most merciful Creator, have mercy upon me and hear my plea! . . . Well-spring whence all pure streams flow . . . of all beings, ephemeral, temporal and eternal, the almighty quickener, preserver and destroyer, whose nature, what thou art in thyself, none can fathom, fancy, see, or comprehend, Supreme Good above all goods, most noble, eternal Lord Jesus, graciously receive the spirit, in thy goodness receive the soul, of my dearly beloved wife. Rest eternal grant unto her, bathe her in the dew of thy grace, hide her in the shadow of thy wings. Take her, O Lord, into thy perfect contentment, that contentment which is for the least as for the greatest. Grant her, Lord, a dwelling-place in thine everlasting kingdom whence she came'.[33] As in Dante, the love of man and woman overcomes death and hides, praying, in the bosom of eternal life. In this masterpiece, for the first time, the New High German developed in the Bohemian Chancery of Charles IV entered German literature. It is 'a monument of the German language without equal before Luther'.[34]

c. *The Transformations of the Fool*

WOLFRAM

The theme of the fool, which receives its first metaphysical treatment in the poetry of Wolfram,[1] is not really a tragic theme. Tragedy dominates the ancient world of Eros and its Christian continuation. In Wolfram and Grimmelshausen the fool emerges from the protection of the forest, the forest of Paradise, one might almost say. He makes his way into, but also through, guilt and pain, shielded by the angel wings of his folly. The Parzival theme ('Parzival' comes from *perce à val*, 'pierce through')[2] originated in the world of fairytale—the fool who, by means of a question, is supposed to set an enchanted king free and attain the object of his desire. Behind the fairytale there may well be an ancient myth of a pure saviour who delivers a kingdom from sorrow and decay. In the Christian world there is only one true saviour; all the myths and fairytales become transparent to Him and consequently lose their weight. It is no accident that, in Christian literature, comedy on the whole outweighs tragedy. In Shakespeare the two are finely balanced, but in the English novel, right up to Chesterton, it is humour which increasingly has the upper hand. Molière has more penetration than Racine, Goldoni more weight than Alfieri. In Austria, with Mozart, Raimund, Nestroy, Hofmannsthal, Christian light triumphs again over the bogus gravity of Germany, though there too Jean Paul had more readers than even Goethe. From the margin (Hebel, Reuter, Keller, Timmermans) humour penetrates and transfigures the Kantian realm. We are talking now about the light of humour, for irony presumes to take on the perspective of God, and satire exposes pharisaically (accusingly or leniently) the faults of one's neighbour. Moral faults, notice, not sins; when sin is involved, only God is competent to judge the foolish man. The Christian humorist, though, knows about the mysterious relationship between engraced wisdom and sinful folly and about the abyss, at once open and closed.

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[33] 34.

[34] Wolfgang Golter, *Die deutsche Dichtung im Mittelalter* (1922²), 531–532. On the late medieval experience of death: Johan Huizinga, *Herbst des Mittelalters, ch. 11, 'Das Bild des Todes'* (8th ed., Kröner, 1961); *W. Stammler, Die Totenänze* (Leipzig, 1922); L. Spitzer, 'La danse macabre' in *Mél. A. Dauzat* (Paris, 1951).

[1] We are taking the Parzival material at the stage of evolution it has reached in Wolfram, although the fundamental conception of folly (*nicetė*), which changes from rustic uncouthness into the recognised folly of sin in the elect, and even the individual episodes of the story, are to be found in the unfinished epic of Chrétien de Troyes, *Li Contes del Graal* (ed. W. Roachs 1956). Wolfram gives the material not only its exterior and interior rounding off but also, and chiefly, its theological depth and its touching human cordiality, even if at times the story's themes lose their sharpness of outline.

WOLFRAM creates an epic of chivalry, but the values that underlie its conventional ethos come from beyond the world of chivalry: the lay Christian wisdom he calls *mâze*, which is almost the equivalent of Aristotle's *meson*,[3] the equilibrium between extremes, between body and soul, heaven and earth, with *staete* and *triuwe* as Germanic-Christian *constantia*, with *kiusche* as *temperantia* (discipline) and *schame* (sensitive appreciation of what is noble). Wolfram's epic is above all based on a transcendant folly (*tumpheit*), which, having been first a deficiency (the mother gives the boy a rustic upbringing in the forest), passes through full measure before becoming an excess (Parzival struggles to attain the symbolic Gral of the mythical tale and finally becomes King of the Gral). Chivalry, with its ideal centre in the round table of King Arthur, is the balance, hard won after much sacrifice, to 'an ethic and aesthetic of measure'[4] and, in this sense, the archetype of a beautiful world. This idea is indisputably valid for Parzival too (and behind him for Wolfram): it is the absolute unity of God's grace and the world's. Like Dante, Wolfram's hero strives to attain, as his ultimate goal (for him, it is a *conditio sine qua non*), faithful love of God and faithful love of his beloved lady. 'My desire has always been for both.'[5] The two loves are graded: 'great is my longing for the love of (Condwiramur), but greater still for the goal sublime.'[6] 'My greatest need is for the Gral, after that for my lady.'[7] But the loves are never separated: his 'great fidelity' to his lady is by his own will inseparable from fidelity to God. 'If I am to strive for the Gral, the thought of your chaste embraces must also drive me on'.[8] And so finally there appears on the Gral stone the inscription electing Parzival as king together with his wife and son, Lohengrin.[9] The knights of the Gral are religious men fighting an earthly battle for a sacred relic. They are all virgins, except for the king, who has a wife. Only 'lofty servitors' are chosen,[10] yet what is decisive is not 'stock' but pure grace. Thus the kingdom of the Gral is a symbolic and eschatological anticipation of the perfect unity of religious and secular, renunciation and fulfilment, pure availability (*diemuot*: willingness to serve—for the knights may be sent to rule over any land)[11] and earthly wealth.[12] From a modern Christian perspective, chivalry seems to be moulded and illuminated by one idea, which cannot *as such* be fully realised in time: as a reality at the end of the epic (though polarizing the entire action) it is 'fairytale' which, in so far as it is polarised, gives the whole chivalry a Utopian quality. Much later Cervantes will expose this Utopianism, but it also harks back in a way to the eschatology of Irenaeus, which was expounded in the second volume of *The Glory of the Lord.*[13]

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[2] 'Your name means "Pierce-through-the-heart"', Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Parzival* (ed. Lachmann), 140, 16; 81. [Tr. The number following the Lachmann references is the page number in the Penguin English translaton by A. T. Hatto (Harmondsworth, 1980)].

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[3] For example, the way Gurnemanz introduces the young fool to knightly virtue, the right measure between meanness and generosity, poverty and riches, loquaciousness and taciturnity, between courage in battle and mercy for the conquered (171, 7–30; 95f.).

[4] E. Köhler, *Trobadorlyrik und höfischer Roman* (Berlin, 1962), p. 22f.

[5] 389, 12; 200.

[6] 441, 11; 226.

[7] 467, 26–27; 239.

[8] 732, 19–21; 364.

[9] 781, 13f.; 387.

Thus Wolfram's chivalric ideal is in a strange tension between the immanent (which has the transcendent in and above it as an 'ideal')—the Kingdom of Arthur—and the transcendent (which raises up the immanent along with itself as its inner form)—the Kingdom of Gral. The tension can be seen in the fact that the story has two main heroes, Gawan for the Kingdom of Arthur and Parzival for the Kingdom of the Gral. But Gawan too is in quest of the Gral (he finds instead a magic castle from the Thousand and One Nights: Schastelmarveile and the Duchess Orgeluse), and Parzival strives for acceptance at the Round Table and succeeds. The two kingdoms are intertwined by all manner of familial and social relations. The desire for a totality of religious and secular (Péguy's ideal of the *temporel-spirituel*)[14] does not stop at the borders of Christianity. The ideal of the 'aristocratic man' spans the divide between Christian and pagan. White Christians travel to pagan and Moorish lands, and there they marry black queens and have children, who then—like

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[10] 493, 22; 251.

[11] 494, 7f.; 252.

[12] 796, 24–25; *cf.* 395.

[13] Volume II, pp. 92ff.

[14] Volume III, pp. 465ff.

Parzival's half-brother, Feirefiz, spotted black and white like a magpie—return to the Christian world and even find entry into the Kingdom of the Gral: a beautiful, humanist, ecumenical, lay world.

Behind this there is a corresponding awareness of the ambiguity of all that is earthly and human: God created 'the crooked and the straight', and he alone can divide them.[15] All things are inwardly double: 'Were one to place a love story on the scales and weigh it, one would never find anything but love *and* sorrow.'[16] 'With Adam's race there began both sorrow *and* joy.'[17] Thus Gramoflanz tells Gawan that he 'both gladdens *and* saddens' him.[18] Itonje cherishes 'both love *and* hate'.[19] And in a recognition scene: 'All who wanted to saw both joy *and* sorrow. Love drove them to it. Tears *and* laughter in one moved their mouths. It came from a greater love.'[20] And after Parzival has fought with his brother and the two have recognised each other, Feirefiz 'secretly laughed *and* wept'.[21]

And yet no picture of the world is as untragic as Wolfram's. However ambivalent the world and man and the kingdom may be, however easy it is for even the heart to become sinfully dual in *zwîfel* (ambiguity), there is still, at every level of human existence, the cohesive force of *einvalt*.[22] This key notion, which provides the foundation of Parzival's folly, is primeval in both the Bible and general human culture (antiquity). In human terms it is the heart's capacity manfully to withstand the world's contradictions, which is turned philosophically into the late Platonic ideal of uniformity, simplicity (ἑνιαίως). In Christian terms it is the 'simple eye' which finds light and vision in everything and leads, in the poor and emptied-out heart, to the vision of God (Mt 11.26; 5.8; 6.22f.; 10.16). Thus, in the history of spirituality, simplicity is almost a synonym for *apatheia*, *Gelassenheit*, indifference; but whereas these are closer to the mind, simplicity is closer to the heart. As *sancta simplicitas*, holy simplicity, the concept dominates the Christian world from the Fathers to St Bernard.[24] In antiquity and the Middle Ages, while *mâze* (μέτρον μέσον) is the basis of beauty, simplicity is surrounded by glory. This simplicity may be interpreted more philosophically or more theologically, or more in the direction of 'wisdom' (beyond 'science') or more in the direction of 'folly' (beyond 'wisdom'). Folly itself may wear a great diversity of colours: from the proud philosophical folly of, say, the Cynics to the mystical folly of the (*docta*) *ignorantia* of Denys, a theme which continues through the whole Dionysian tradition of the Middle Ages as far as the learned *idiota* and *laicus* of Nicolas of Cusa and the, by contrast, more self-conscious folly of the non-clericals, the 'unlearned' (*illiterati*),[25] who in fact are well-educated knights and courtiers; Wolfram counts himself as one of these. However, all this is very far short of the real Biblical 'folly of the cross', which theologians, especially of the early Middle Ages, are only too glad to interpret in terms of a folly of the 'higher wisdom' kind mentioned above.[26]

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[15] 264, 25–27; 139.

[16] 272, 15–18; *cf.* 143.

[17] 465, 1–2; 237.

[18] 609, 30; 306.

[19] 636, 5; 319.

[20] 672, 15f.

[21] 752, 23; 374.

[22] Just the term: 689, 27. In its content, the word *diemüete* covers the field of the concept. R. Gruenter, 'Parzivals "einvalt"', *Euphorion*, 52 (1958), 297–302.

Whatever the place of Wolfram's fool in this network, the whole poem is in any case immersed in an all-pervasive light.

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[24] Jean Leclercq, *Sancta Simplicitas, Coll. Ord. Cist. Ref.* (1960), 138–178; P. Lehmann, 'Die heilige Einfalt' in *Erforschung des MA*, Bd III (1960), 213–224; further literature in Alois Haas, 'Parzivals tumpheit bei W. v. Eschenbach' in *Philol. Stud.u.Quellen Heft 21* (1964), 295f.

[25] H. Grundmann, '*Litteratus-illiteratus*. Der Wandel einer Bildungsnorm vom Altertum zum MA' in *Arch.f.Kulturgesch.*, 40 (1958), 1–65, and the admirably documented article of Fr. Ohly, 'Wolframs Gebet an den Heiligen Geist im Eingang des Willehalm', *ZfdA* 91 (1961), 1–37; A. Haas, l.c., 232–235.

[26] The texts, for example, which A. Haas (296f.) cites as instances of the folly of the cross theme in the circle of St Bernard (William of St Thierry especially), in so far as they are not just paraphrases of 1 Cor 1–2, show this very clearly. In the Victorines the preoccupation is with the 'follies' of ardent love and desire, a theme of classical and Augustinian origin, and not primarily with the imitation of Christ.

The courtly poets delight in colour and light, but Wolfram goes further: the words *lieht*, *liuhten*, *blanc*, *clâr* are omnipresent. It is not primarily nature that is *lieht*[27] but human beings; the beauty of the human beings is experienced as the radiance of light, as *schîn* and *glanz*. Arthur has luminous eyes.[28] After his cure the face of Anfortas has the lustre the Frenchman calls *fleur*.[29] We hear of 'bright sweet boys' (*clâren süezen knabn*).[30] The young fool meets a knight who is 'brighter than anything he had ever seen' (*ern hete so liehtes niht erkant*).[31] Gawan's eyes are *reht ein meien glast*.[32] Beakurs 'was of dazzling appearance' (*pflac varwe lieht*).[33] But it is above all the women who are described as *lieht* and *clâr*, pre-eminently, Parzival's wife, Condwiramurs. A 'blaze of light' (*ein liehter glast*) emanates from her;[34] her face has a 'lovely radiance' (*ein minneclîch antlützes schîn*);[35] she is a spouse of light (*diu lieht gemâl*).[36] But Orgeluse too is pure radiance.[37] Of her it is said that she is so *lieht* that, even if no candles had been furnished, there could have been no night around her because of the shining of her eyes.[38] Similar things are said of Itonje and of Repanse de Schoye, where it is stressed that there is a correspondence between purity of heart and bodily radiance: 'Great purity dwelt in her heart. The flesh without was a blossoming of all brightness.'[39]

But the divine world shines no less brightly. When Parzival as a boy asks his mother, Herzeloyde, what God is, she replies: 'brighter than the sun'.[40] And because she has told Parzival that what distinguishes God is light (*unterschiet den liehten*

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[27] 516, 21.
[28] 661, 22; *cf.* 331.
[29] 796, 5–6; *cf.* 395.
[30] 74, 16; *cf.* 370.
[31] 122, 1; 73.
[32] 374, 24; *cf.* 186.
[33] 722, 9; 360; *cf.* 721, 21.
[34] 186, 20; 103.
[35] 186, 17; *ibid.*
[36] 619, 9; 742, 28.
[37] 612, 16; 624, 12 and passim.
[38] 638, 16f.; 320.
[39] 809, 13–14; 401.
[40] 119, 19; 72.

schîn), the boy thinks the brightly shining knight is God.[41] Later Trevrizent teaches him that God is 'a light that shines through all things' (*ein durchliuhtec lieht*)[42], because He 'shines through' (*glestet durch*)[43] even the walled darkness of our secret thoughts 'with an unseen leap', God as *durchliuhtec*, the light that shines through all things, is 'serenity'; even a radiant human being, like the dead Cidegast, can be given that name.[44] Thus Wolfram's world is an infinitely illuminated one (both naturally and supernaturally). Long before Claudel he discovered the analogy of transparent water and the eyes and light and baptism. On the occasion of the baptism of Feirefiz, he says:

> Trees have their sap from water.
> Water fecundates all things made that are called
> 'creature'.
> We see by means of water.
> Water gives many souls a splendour
> Not to be outshone by the angels.[45] (Simrock)

One must not overlook the fact that these attributes together constitute the beauty of this world seen as the glory of God raining in upon this world. So that glory is not, first and foremost, a hidden glory. It is significant that Parzival is constantly and loudly praised for being beautiful, radiantly beautiful, indeed as the most beautiful human being of all.[46] 'He bore the marks of God's handiwork' (God's *kunst* [or *gunst*] *lac an im*).[47] He is like a wingless angel that has blossomed out on earth.[48] He 'brings the vigour and beauty of youth with him'.[49] He is 'the glorious hero'.[50] As such his '*victory is innate to him*'.[51] Indeed, he is infallibly and perpetually victorious, even against the Knight Templar, even against triumphant Gawan. He has supreme *werdekheit*,[52] which can mean dignity, reputation, as well as glory. This must be borne in mind in considering Parzival's Christian life, his 'humiliation'. The fact that when the accounts of God's grace and the world's guilt are drawn up, the books can be balanced, indeed—in the fairytale and in its eschatologically proleptic significance—they must balance, is a real problem for the existential formulation of the question. And yet Wolfram is able to set forth purely the kernel of his *maere*, free from all ambiguity.

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[41] 122, 24; *cf.* 73.

[42] 466, 2; 238.

[43] 466, 21; *ibid.*

[44] 613, 1–2.

[45] 817, 25–30; 406.

[46] 727, 21; 362. Cunneware laughs when she sees him, having made the vow to laugh only when she saw the most splendid hero of all (151f.; 86).

[47] 123, 13; *cf.* 73.

[48] 308, 1–3; 160.

[49] 311, 16; *cf.* 162.

[50] 331, 24; *cf.* 173.

[51] 717, 22; *cf.* 358.

The starting-point is the boy's simplicity. This simplicity is 'supernatural' in the sense that it is the unaffected openness to God of someone who later on will be called and has already been chosen for a purpose. His 'natural' simplicity has two forms: first, it is something inherited from his parents, the good knightly 'breeding' which is bound to assert itself; secondly, it is the ignorance, artificially produced by his mother, of all courtly things, of the upbringing befitting his station. After meeting the knights in the forest, the knightly part of him awakes, and he becomes desperately keen to go to King Arthur. His mother lets him go but makes him dress in fool's clothing, and after his departure dies of a broken heart. Next come a few scenes of stupidity: the naive embracing of Jeschute, who has to do bitter penance for it, and who will later be reconciled with her jealous husband by Parzival; the naive slaying of Ither with the little javelin and the stripping of his corpse in ignorance of the fact that he is related to the red knight. Gurnemanz instructs him in courtly manners and thereby removes his natural foolishness. Now Parzival can look back knowingly on his former folly as a thing of the past.[53] But this cessation of folly for the purposes of chivalry is not enough to rid him of his folly for God's sake. It is precisely his training in *mâze* (which means, *inter alia*, not talking too much) that makes him miss the opportunity to ask suffering Anfortas in the castle of the Gral the question that would have redeemed him. True, a typical fairytale situation, but a Christian one too: it would have meant showing a mercy that lay beyond the ethics of *mâze*. This inadvertent omission earns him Sigune's double curse of the world of chivalry[54] and Cundrie's curse of everything to do with the Gral,[55] which in its turn triggers off desolation in his relationship to God. The simplicity of that relationship disintegrates in *zwîfel* and discontentment with divine providence, the repercussions of which are such in his knightly spirit that he is prepared bravely and defiantly to bear the weight of God's hatred of him, which he thinks he feels.[56] On the other hand, with an unselfconscious sense of election, he strives for the Gral, even though it can only be found 'unsuspectingly'.[57] He wants to wring it out of God, but in this respect too he is rent asunder, for no one can force anything out of God through anger.[58] That is what he is taught by Trevrizent, who has to admit, though, at the end: 'A greater marvel never occurred, in that, after all, with your defiance you have wrung the concession from God that His everlasting Trinity has given you your wish.'[59] Even when defiant: 'God will appoint me [through the Gral inscription]',[60] he speaks as someone who is still an undoubted sinner but already called by God.

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[52] 169, 2 and passim.

[53] 'I was a young fool—no man—not yet grown to years of discretion' (269, 24; 141). 'If ever I stripped a corpse, it was because I was dull of understanding' (475, 6; 242). '. . . as befitted his youthful folly' (744, 18; *cf.* 371).

This subtle Christian situation—there is a parallel here with Dante[61]—must be resolved, not just by explanatory instruction, but, over and beyond that, by a Christian confession. The central Good Friday scene (just as Dante goes through Hell on Good Friday) demonstrates Wolfram's supreme mastery. No human being can open himself up to God's grace by unconscious simplicity alone; there also has to be a conscious and free decision or choice. However, man affected by Original Sin, when he chooses God in this way, necessarily encounters his fallenness, which becomes evident to him in its depths in concrete actual sins. It is precisely this falling away from God which is his supernatural folly, his simplicity or stupidity in the bad sense. By disclosing to Parzival the absolute fidelity of God's grace, the Grail hermit, Trevrizent, Anfortas' brother, shows him at the same time that man's only response can be an equally unconditional fidelity to God (in the form of faith, hope, love, surrender), and that this is the only appropriate and wise attitude, the rebel against God being therefore simply stupid. Trevrizent's view of confession is what every modern *homme révolté* fails to see: the realisation which dawns on you only when you are at confession that the person who does not trust in God is 'out of his senses'[62] and 'sick in his wits' (*an den witzen kranc*).[63] 'God is named and is Truth', because 'God Himself is faithful and true'.[64] He who is not faithful and true falls from all truth. Originally the earth was created virginal in fidelity and truth (Wolfram takes over the Patristic theologoumenon of *terra/virgo/mater*), but through Adam and Cain's 'discontent and vainglorious greed' (*ungenuht, gîteclicher ruom*),[65] '*wrath*' (*nît*)[66] has invaded mankind and still persists. Man has fallen away from God, but God becomes man, and 'His faithful humanity fought faithfully against unfaithfulness'.[67] 'In His divine love he that is highest of all released us in Hell'.[68]

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[54] 249f.; 135f.

[55] 312f.; 164f.

[56] 332, 8; 172.

[57] 250, 29.

[58] 'You can gain nothing from Him by anger' (463, 1; 236).

[59] 798, 1–4; 396.

[60] 472, 9; 241.

[61] Gust. Ehrismann, 'Dantes Göttliche Komödie und Wolframs von Eschenbach Parzival' in *Idealistische Neuphilologie*, Festschrift K. Vossler (1922), p. 191: 'Parzival's confession in the presence of Trevrizent corresponds to Dante's *confessio* before Beatrice'.

Parzival's 'sins' certainly pose problems for moral theology which do not need to be dwelt on in detail here.[69] (Individual) guilt, which the sinner is conscious of, is dovetailed with objective sin, which, through some kind of culpable ignorance (*ignorantia*), he remains unconscious of, and when he does become aware of it, he discovers the abyss of original guilt and, precisely in that, the lack of supernatural love for God and neighbour. This whole catastrophe Wolfram grasped and described with intuitive accuracy, and so all the glorious light of his poem streams from the convergence of humble confession with descendant grace in the hero's lay shriving.[70] This convergence constantly underlies everything that follows: Parzival's permanent awareness of his sin,[71] his humble and resolute fidelity to God, and following from that his view of human courtly love (*Minne*) as 'great fidelity'[72] and his distinguishing of love's true fidelity from the amorous insanity that grips the Arthurian heroes[73] and—even worse—Gottfried's Tristan. True, 'Frau Minne' makes every man 'a fool', and Parzival, when he falls in love, 'loses his reason' and is 'beside himself' when he sees the three drops of blood in the snow which remind him of his wife.[74] But, for Parzival, human falling in love is safely contained within fidelity; it is part of creaturely simplicity and does not endanger it. To absolutise this 'folly', as Gottfried does, is, to Wolfram's mind, the reversal of all truth, which consists for him solely in the ecstasy of fidelity. After confession Parzival is now only one who serves, so the second chance to ask Anfortas the saving question (this time consciously and for that very reason as one who has been humbled) is given to him out of pure grace. And so the all-pervasive quality of Wolfram's poem is joy. Towards the end it goes from celebration to celebration, from reconciliation to reconciliation. What in the beginning was 'care' melts away into the simplicity of joy:

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[62] 461, 27f.; *cf.* 236.
[63] 463, 3; *ibid.*
[64] 462, 25; 236.
[65] 463, 25, and again 782, 23, *gît* is greed, avarice.
[66] 464, 21.
[67] 465, 9–10; 237.
[68] 465, 28–29; *ibid.*

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[69] Alois Haas, following the careful study by Jul. Schwietering, 'Parzivals Schuld', *ZfdA*, 81 (1944), has produced sufficient evidence from contemporary Scholasticism to justify Wolfram's ethics (l.c., 247–276).

[70] 501, 17; 255.

[71] 783, 7; *cf.* 388.

[72] 732, 8; 364.

[73] 532, 17–21.

[74] The long episode, 281–305, 6; 147ff.

You raised a brood of cares in tender years:
But the happiness which is on its way to you
has dashed their expectations.
You have won through to peace of soul
And outlived cares to have joy of your body.[75]

d. The Analogy of Folly

ERASMUS

Wolfram's poem, dating from about 1200, still just about belongs to a world of intact sacrality: the mutual symbolic reflection of sacred and secular is not regarded as Utopian caricature but as an adequate résumé of reality. A hundred years later we enter the age of Dante, Ockham and Eckhart, none of whom can develop the theme of folly, nor can their immediate successors. One more century and Villon is singing of the gallows and the Bohemian ploughman is quarrelling with Death. The theme of the *danse macabre*, already audible in Jacopone, places—with brutally constrained indifference—all existence under the sign of vanity, all idealism under suspicion of eccentricity. Only the artful humorists—Eulenspiegel, Reinke de Vos, the sturdy characters of Wittenweiler—seem to stand out against this gloomy background. Neither they nor the great band of fools assembled by Sebastian Brant, with bitter moral earnestness, in his 'Ship of Fools' of 1494, to attack them and even perhaps to reform them, have very much to do with our theme of 'the Glory of the Lord', still less 'The Exorcism of Fools' (1512) and 'The Guild of Knaves' (1512) written by the disputatious Franciscan Thomas Murner against the decadence of the Church and used later as confessional polemic.

Erasmus of Rotterdam's *Encomium Moriae* (1509),[1] in which Dame Folly boasts of being the all-governing cosmic principle, elevates the theme once again to metaphysical heights. The fixed point among all the shifts of Erasmus' thinking about folly (he was everything but a philosopher), the point from which an analogous unity can be seen is the position of the 'wisdom' against which his polemic is directed: the 'gloomy' wisdom of scholastic philosophy,[2] the 'gloomy worthiness of the male mind'[3] (by which doubtless he means the earnest triviality and scientific bustle of the humanists), and also the gloomy moralistic wisdom of 'the frogs of the Stoic ilk',[4] who, for the sake of pure *apatheia*, condemn all passions. The hallmark of reality, in contrast to the dreary 'truth' of philosophers and moralists but also of theologians, ascetics, ecclesiastics and monks, is everything that goes by the name of 'folly': everything that lies beneath the mind and in which it is rooted: all that is vital, passionate, irrational about love's and friendship's choices, the 'splendour of youth' in its perishability, even the self-love and self-contentment of a life of isolation, for that inevitably means some kind of illusion (when someone acts as if he were the be-all and end-all), in a word all 'the splendour of life'.[5] On the other hand, folly is also everything that lies *above* the mind: all that is gratuitous, unfathomable, playful, grace-ful; it is because of all this that folly is a goddess and at home in the world of the gods.[6] The deeper, Christian meaning of this supra-rational folly is the incomprehensible making straight of the crooked and ultimately the outplaying of sin by grace, the interpretation of evil on the cross as 'not knowing what they do', foreshadowed in Aaron's prayer for his sister, 'I beg you, Lord, do not hold us responsible for this sin, which we have committed in our folly', and in David's plea, 'I beg you, Lord, to take away the inquity of your servant, because I have acted in my folly.'[7]

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[75] 782, 27–30; 388.

[1] In the translation by Clarence H. Miller (New Haven and London, 1979). References are to page numbers.

[2] 22.

[3] 32.

[4] 57.

[5] All these themes are dealt with in close connection with one another (31ff.).

[6] 18, 24f.

[7] 131.

Stretching the meaning of folly to include both the highest level of grace and the lowest level of animality gives Erasmus unlimited scope in the game of connections. On the one hand, there is no doubt that the realities of human life, including its noblest values, are rooted in the sub-spiritual realm, which usually cannot stand up before the bar of pure spirit. Examples of this are heroism in a reprehensible war,[8] determination in hazardous and horrifying competition, the theatrical excitement of life in its multifarious masks and disguises,[9] the cleverness of life based on silly 'aggression and grappling with things' and on an irresponsible forgetting of earlier situations of guilt, a general immersion in things of the moment, a rejection of that 'high standpoint', from which 'human life in all its immense misery can be seen'.[10] Needless to say, such directness has to accept the dialectic intrinsic to it: 'What appears "at first blush" . . . to be death, will, if you examine it more closely, turn out to be life; conversely, life will turn out to be death; beauty will become ugliness; riches will turn to poverty; notoriety will become fame; learning will be ignorance; strength, weakness . . . success, failure . . . what is helpful will seem harmful; in brief, you will find everything suddenly reversed.'[11] The wandering scholars of the Middle Ages knew that, as did Villon in his prison cell.

On the other hand, all these relativities tend to get taken seriously and to be sanctioned before the tribunal of reason. The result is that reason, in the presence of the higher 'folly' of grace, not only makes itself ridiculous but proves its guilt as well. And then, as in Brant's 'Ship of Fools', all the states of human life, secular and religious (especially the latter), are bitterly exposed: huntsmen and insatiable builders, diceplayers and miracle-seekers, merchants and pilgrims, lawyers and philosophers, theologians and monks, kings and princes of the Church. Where ecclesiastics are concerned, Erasmus uses the sound criterion of the *Devotio Moderna*, in whose spirit he

[8] 35.
[9] 42.
[10] 49.
[11] 43.

was brought up.[12] At this point, when the idea of 'simplicity' becomes central,[13] the great tradition—of classical antiquity and the Bible, of Bernard and Wolfram—is brought in. For does not Paul attribute 'a certain folly' to God himself when he says that 'the foolishness of God is wiser than men'?[14] In the critique of the Church the 'analogy of folly' shifts more and more to the divine pole, so that, through the playful tone, unambiguity breaks through with Christian seriousness: 'The life-style of princes has long since been diligently imitated . . . by popes, cardinals, and bishops . . . to teach the people is burdensome; to interpret Holy Scripture, academic; to pray, otiose . . . poverty is embarrassing, obedience humiliating and unseemly . . . and finally, dying is disagreeable, death on the cross, disreputable.'[15] Erasmus shines light into the depths when he exposes Christian existence as an 'evasion' of reality and thus a betrayal of, and flight from, the truth: 'If there is some responsibility, they prudently shift that on to someone else's shoulders and pass the buck down the line from one to another. In fact, just as lay princes parcel out the duties of ruling to deputies, and the deputies pass them on to subdeputies, so too [ecclesiastical office-bearers] leave the practice of piety, in their modesty, to the common people. The people foist it off on those whom they call ecclesiastics, for all the world as if they themselves had nothing to do with the Church, as if their baptismal vows had had no effect whatever. Then the priests who call themselves secular—as if they were united to the world rather than to Christ—pass on the burden to the canons regular, the canons to the monks, the laxer monks to the stricter ones, both groups to the mendicant orders, the mendicants to the Carthusians . . .'[16]

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[12] Albert Hyma, *Renaissance to Reformation* (Eerdmans, Michigan, 1951).

[13] 'The privilege of simplicity and of truthfulness is the striking attribute of folly' (195). 'The pious strive with all their hearts to reach God Himself, who is purest and simplest of all' (269).

[14] 128.

[15] 110–112.

[16] 115.

At this point Dame Folly breaks off and concludes with a kind of bibliography: a few quotations from classical authors, many texts from Sacred Scripture. They are chaotically thrown together—it is after all the 'lower folly' which they are also meant to corroborate—and yet the great evangelical folly of Jesus does not fail to rise resplendent: the folly of the Incarnation itself,[17] revelation communicated to the simple, the foolishness of the evangelical counsels, the proclamation of the folly of the cross 'by simple, rough and ready heralds', the ass as a mount (instead of the noble stallion), the dove (and not a hawk or eagle) as the bird of the Holy spirit. 'Consider also that he calls His own followers, destined for immortal life, sheep. No other animal is more stupid.'[18]

Equally great is the folly of the life and theology of St Paul. To sum up: 'It seems to me that the Christian religion taken all together has a certain affinity with some sort of folly.' This can be seen in the fact that 'children, old people, women, and retarded persons are more delighted than others with holy and religious matters', and finally that 'no fools seem more senseless than those people who have been completely taken up, once and for all, with a burning devotion to Christian piety: they throw away their possessions, ignore injuries, allow themselves to be deceived, make no distinction between friend and foe . . . In this light, it is not at all surprising that the apostles seemed to be intoxicated with new wine and that Paul seemed mad to the judge Festus.'[19] Here Erasmus shakes the hand of the knight of La Mancha.

Erasmus would not be Erasmus if he did not end—inexplicably!—by committing the folly of fleeing from the folly of world and Church in a Platonic flight into the realm of pure spirit. The ecstatic flight of spirit from body, of the mind from the world up to God—that is the illogical conclusion of his treatise, which in the end closes its eyes before the radiant glory of true folly.

[17] 130.

[18] 129.

[19] 132.

e. Ridiculousness and Grace

CERVANTES

Cervantes' ageless masterpiece,[1] turgid life in fable's brightest hues, cannot be reduced to any formula or theory. Many-layered like all genuine humour, the world that is *Don Quixote* is deliberately susceptible of a multitude of interpretations. On each storey the light falls differently, yet top floor and ground are clearly part of the same building: at one level unintentional absurdity and burlesque, at another the light of grace descending from the heights of the Christian revelation of love, eluding all the textbook interpretations, *even* the various philosophical ones, e.g. Don Quixote and Sancho Panza as the ideal and the real, the tragic unreality of the ideal woman (Dulcinea de Toboso), and thus the illusoriness of every great human life. In the first place, we have to come to terms with the author's constantly and clearly expressed aim: to ridicule the ideology of the heroic and gallant Christian knight. This Utopian, fairytale eschatology marked *Parzival* and a hundred other epics and romances, the idea being that the Christian knight in his armour was the living analogy of the saint in his supernatural struggle for the Kingdom of God. Cervantes regarded this analogy, in the sense of a seriously attempted form of existence, as pure folly, totally out-of-date, and yet at the same time he was fully aware that it would be precisely in his hero that this out-of-date existence would survive as immortal foolishness. A travelling companion says at one point to the knight: 'Heaven be praised, for that history of your noble and authentic chivalries, which your worship says is printed [Don Quixote in the second part knows about the publication of the first], will consign all the innumerable stories of imaginary knights errant, of which the world is full, to oblivion, such harm they do to good manners, and such damage and discredit to genuine history.'[2] 'I'll bet', says Sancho, 'that before long there won't be a wineshop or tavern, an inn or a barber's shop where the history of our exploits won't be painted up.'[3] 'It is . . . so familiar to all sorts of people that whenever they see a lean horse go by, they cry: "There goes Rocinante!" . . . in fact, this story is the most delightful and least harmful entertainment, . . . for nowhere in it is to be found anything ever resembling an indelicate expression.'[4] If ever in the Christian era a myth was created, this is it: the merry myth of the ridiculousness of the Christian fighting as a knight for the Kingdom of God. In no way should Quixote be taken as a symbol of Christ Himself. However, by way of ingenious counterpoint, the novel provides many other examples of madness of a purely human kind, especially scorned erotic passion—crazy Cardenio,[5] Anselmo in the table of stupid curiosity,[6] Eugenio and Leandra,[7] Basilio.[8] This commonplace madness, provoked by particular incidents, is far removed from Quixote's constitutional folly, which is not 'psychological' but purely ideological. His folly closes the gap between the 'ideal' of God's redemptive grace in Christ and the 'reality' of the earthly, allegedly world-transforming actions of Christians. In his 'simple' faith and his well-intentioned conduct Quixote sees the gap bridged, but as he approaches his fate and failure, it is laughably evident to everyone that it is yawning wide open. Quixote thus becomes the true patron saint of Catholic Action. He is a bit of dogmatics neglected by Catholic theologians, a tract that can be written on the Catholic side only with and by means of humour, whereas Luther tried to express

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[1] [Tr.: von Balthasar uses the classical German translation of Ludwig Braunfels, *Der Sinnreiche Junker Don Quijote von der Mancha* (Büchergilde Gutenberg, Zürich o.J.). We shall follow, wherever possible, the English translation of J. M. Cohen, *The Adventures of Don Quixote* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1950). On occasions, a direct translation from the citations of Braunfels has been necessary in order to capture von Balthasar's sense. References will be given to part and chapter.] On the origins of the work

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and the reasons for its composition: Menendez y Pelayo, *Cultura literia de Cervantes y elaboración del Quijote* in *Estudios de critica literania*, 4th series, Madrid 1905. Philosophical commentary by M. de Unamuno, *Das Leben Don Quijotes und Sanchos*, German trans; no date, Phaidon-Verlag.

[2] II, 16.

[3] II, 71.

[4] II, 3.

[5] I, 23f. Cardenio has only moments of insanity in his interludes of rationality.

[6] I, 33. 'I am . . . inclined to abandon you to your folly', his friend Lothario tells him.

[7] I, 51.

[8] II, 19.

it tragically in the contradictory dialectic of *sola fide* and *simul iustus et peccator*.

Quixote is simple. As Sancho says, 'He has a heart full of simplicity. He can do no harm to anyone, only good to everybody. There's no malice in him. A child might make him believe it's night at noonday. And for that simplicity I love him.'[9] He constantly preaches and practises love of enemies.[10] He scolds Sancho for being a bad Christian. because 'you never forget an injury once done to you, though you should know that a noble and generous heart sets no store by such trifles.'[11] He preaches love on every occasion, presumes the best in other people[12] and instructs Sancho, when he takes over the governorship, to be always gentle and kind, as a judge to show mercy to the accused and the tears of the poor,[13] and in all this to ascribe nothing to his own merits. He sees his chivalry as pure service of God[14] and as faith's answer to the call and mission of God.[15] For him, the last knight in the 'strict order'[16] of chivalry, this means 'protecting those who need protecting and coming to the aid of the afflicted',[17] 'stumbling here, falling there, flung down in one place and rising up in another . . . succouring widows, protecting maidens, and relieving wives, orphans and wards.'[18] And when they do this, 'it is no concern . . . of knights errant to investigate whether the distressed, chained and oppressed persons they meet on the roads are brought to that pass . . . for their crimes or their whims. Their only task is to succour them because they are in distress, taking account of their sufferings and not of their villainies.'[19] And if monks 'in all peace and quiet, pray Heaven for the well-being of the world', then 'we soldiers and knights carry out what they pray for, defending it with the strength of our arms and the edge of our swords, beneath no roof but the open sky, exposed to the intolerable beams of the sun in summer and the biting frosts in winter. We, therefore, are God's ministers on earth, and the arms by which His justice is executed here.'[20]

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[9] II, 13.

[10] *Cf.* the author's prologue [24], where 'love your enemies' is tackled thematically.

[11] I, 21. Sancho will later say to his master: 'There is no reason, sir, to take revenge on anyone, for it's not right for a good Christian to avenge his injuries' (II, 11).

[12] For example, I, 17.

[13] II, 42.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] After the adventure with the flock of sheep: 'God, the provider of all things, cannot let us want, especially as we are engaged in His service' (I, 18). 'God who has put it into my heart to embark on this unparalleled adventure [which comes to nothing, because the sound is merely the swish of windmills] will take care to watch over my safety' (I, 20). Quixote is 'sent to earth' (I, 28).

[16] 13.

[17] II, 27.

[18] II, 16, and other very frequent descriptions of the mission: I, 1; I, 2; I, 14; I, 52 etc.

Quixote goes on to say humbly that he does not mean that the vocation of the knight errant is as virtuous and meritorious as that of the monk: 'I only want to argue from my own sufferings that it is most certainly a more painful and belaboured one, hungrier and thirstier, more miserable, ragged and lousy.'[21] Having taken his leave of the castle of the Duke, where he had been so cruelly mocked, he comes across some peasants transporting statues of the saints for an altarpiece. Quixote looks upon them with reverence as his unattainable models: St George ('one of the best errants in all the heavenly Host') and the Dragon, St Martin, on horseback, and the beggar ('he gives him half of his cloak. No doubt it was winter at the time, otherwise he would have given him the whole, since he was so charitable'), St James the Moor-Killer, and St Paul, hurled from his horse. 'These saints and knights professed, even as I do, the calling of arms. But the difference between us is that they were saints and fought in the heavenly fashion, and I am a sinner and fight in the human way. They conquered Heaven by force of arms, because Heaven suffers violence, but up till now I do not know what I am conquering by the force of my labours.' In any case, 'the wise Christian should not pry too curiously into the counsels of Heaven.'[22] So these four saints bridge externally the gap between spiritual and worldly chivalry; all that is left is the one between the holy and the sinful. In all sincerity Sancho thinks that 'we should set about turning saints. Then we shall get the good name we're aiming at rather sooner . . . A couple of lashings have more effect with God than a couple of thousand lance-thrusts, even against giants, or hobgoblins, or dragons.' To this Quixote replies: 'All that is so, but we cannot all be friars, and many are the ways by which God bears His chosen to heaven. Chivalry too is a pious order, and there are sainted knights in heavenly glory.'[23]

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[19] I, 30.
[20] I, 13.
[21] I, 13.
[22] II, 58.

He thinks of himself as an 'establisher of peace' (and in this role delivers an anti-militaristic speech),[24] the restorer, to the best of his ability, of the Golden Age (as he explains in his wonderful discourse to the goatherds), the last 'real knight' in a world of flunkeys.[25] He was prepared to make war all alone, against Islam[26] (very like Claudel's Marie de Sept Epées),[27] just as, all alone, he went into combat against the circus lions, though, admittedly, they were disdainful of battle with him.[28] The result of his interference in most cases is that things go from bad to worse. The whipped boy, Andrew, is afterwards beaten even harder, ending up in hospital, and begs Quixote not to defend him any more.[29] He causes havoc among a flock of sheep.[30] The liberated galley-slaves show their gratitude by pelting him with stones[31] and bring him into conflict with the 'Holy Brotherhood'.[32] 'I was born a very pattern for the unfortunate, and to be a target and mark for the arrows of adversity.'[33] 'Observe, Sancho, that virtue is persecuted wherever it exists to an outstanding degree.'[34] That was the way it was for Alexander and Caesar, for Hercules and Sir Galaor, brother of Amadis of Gaul. But for the Christian knight 'the path of virtue is narrow cramped and hard', [35] indeed, 'the narrowest path of all'.[36] Although Quixote himself is unaware of it, this superlative applies exactly to the ridicule which all his schemes, his incompetence, and the world's appetite for a joke conspire to produce.

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[23] II, 8.

[24] I, 37. *Cf.* his remarks against firearms, which make heroism impossible (I, 38).

[25] I, 11, a theme to which he frequently returns (I, 20).

[26] II, 64. 'I was just going to say that I should have been delighted if everything had turned out otherwise, for then I should have had to cross to Barbary, where by the force of my arm I should have liberated not only Don Gregorio but all the Christian captives in Barbary' (II, 65).

[27] *The Satin Slipper*, ET J. O'Connor (London 1932), 4th Day, 8th scene.

[28] II, 17.

[29] I, 4.

[30] I, 18.

[31] I, 22

[32] I, 45.

St Ignatius Loyola in his early life filled his head with the romances of chivalry and his autobiography shows some strange affinities with Quixote. On a solitary journey from Genoa to Bologna he loses his way and only escapes death after much toil and tribulation, but then, as he enters the city across a narrow wooden bridge, he falls into a ditch full of mud and extricates himself amidst the great laughter of a crowd of onlookers.[37] This kind of thing happens constantly to Don Quixote. As he climbs from his horse in the presence of the Duke, he falls headlong, while Sancho hangs by one leg from the stirrup of his pack-saddle.[38] On his solemn entry into Barcelona, mischievous boys put furze under the tails of Dapple and Rocinante, with the results that horse and ass rear up and rid themselves of their riders.[39] At great moments it is always like this, without mentioning the many thrashings, bruisings, pinchings,[40] the herds of wild bulls[41] and dirty pigs[42] unexpectedly rampaging over them as they sleep on the ground. In fact, the knight clearly quoting St Theresa of Avila can say to his squire: 'I was born, Sancho, to live dying, and you to die eating.'[43] The first part of the book closes with the knight in great humiliation, being imprisoned in a cage and then hauled back on an oxcart into his native village. The second part, on the whole the more subtle of the two, is even more extreme with its story of the cruel happenings at the Duke's court, where, beneath a façade of the highest honours, Don Quixote and Sancho become the butt of foolish quips and jokes, to the huge amusement of Duke, Duchess, and courtiers. Called a fool by a priest, the knight gently reproves him for it: Can it be right to censure me so harshly in public and without knowledge of the sin, to proclaim the sinner bluntly a blockhead? . . . I always direct my purposes to virtuous ends . . . whether he who so acts deserves to be called a fool, let your Highnesses decide.'[44] And so the author is of the opinion that 'the mockers were as mad as their victims, and the Duke and Duchess within a hair's breadth of appearing fools themselves for taking such pains to play tricks on a pair of fools'.[45] Don Antonio, who leads Quixote through the streets of Barcelona without his knowing that he has a placard on his back, exclaims: 'You have the knack of turning everyone who has to do with you into madmen and dolts.'[46]

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[33] II, 10.

[34] II, 2.

[35] II, 6.

[36] II, 18.

[37] *The Diary of a Pilgrim*, n. 91.

[38] II, 30.

[39] II, 61.

[40] *Cf.* I, 4; II, 11; I, 24; II, 27: II, 48.

[41] II, 58.

[42] II, 68.

[43] II, 59.

But what is the point of these humiliations, which our hero bears 'so silently and patiently',[47] so as to become 'the example and model' for every knight 'in the centuries to come'?[48] The answer is that he bears within him an ideal, embodied in the beautiful virgin[49] and lady, Dulcinea. He has never seen her, and yet he loves her and dedicates himself to her, as is proper for a true knight. For him Dulcinea is the 'sum of all beauty',[50] 'superhuman,'[51] so much so that he can pray to her.[52] He believes in her after he has pictured her in

[44] II, 32.
[45] II, 70.
[46] II, 62.
[47] I, 47.
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] II, 59.
[50] I, 43.
[51] I, 13.
[52] II, 22.

his mind ('in imagination I draw her as I would have her be'),[53] and for the sake of her greater glory he undertakes everything.[54] When people express their suspicion that she might be 'an imaginary mistress', the knight evasively replies: 'God knows whether Dulcinea exists on earth or no, or whether she is fantastic or not fantastic. These are not matters whose verification can be carried out to the full. I neither engendered nor bore my lady, though I contemplate her in her ideal form.'[55] Meanwhile she has been changed by a magic spell into an ugly and malodorous peasant woman, and only thus, in the form of her 'abasement', can Sancho make her visible to the knight.[56] But, in fact, Quixote serves her for her own sake with 'the kind of love', says Sancho, 'I've heard them preach about. They say we ought to love Our Lord for Himself alone, without being moved to it by hope of glory or fear of punishment':[57] the doctrine of *pur amour* on the lips of Sancho Panza and applied to the Knight of Sad Countenance. But Quixote still hopes for an eschatological dis-enchantment: 'when least we expect to, we shall see her in her proper shape'.[58] The foolery involves Sancho subjecting himself voluntarily to 3300 strokes of the lash on his 'wonder-working flesh', all for the sake of the dis-enchantment, though he only succeeds in whipping the trees.[59] At the end, when the knight has been defeated in a duel and compelled to return home, hope, because of the fatal blow, is slowly extinguished and vanishes into intangibility.[60] Only the watchword remains true: 'at every step to attempt the impossible',[61] and the conclusion has its own nobility. 'I did what I could.'[62]

[53] I, 25.

[54] '. . . since she will see that everything serves the extolling of her glory and her fame' (I, 31).

[55] II, 32.

[56] II, 16.

[57] I, 31.

[58] II, 33.

[59] II, 71, his power is *gratis data* (*ibid.*).

[60] II, 73.

[61] II, 17.

[62] II, 66.

The knight sees earthly things in the most exalted light; he alone knows them in their true worth.[63] He alone knows who the ladies and gentlemen here assembled 'really are'.[64] So he is aware of his own dignity: he knows the 'rules [of chivalry] better than any knights who have ever professed them in the world.'[65] Moreover, the ancient romances and epics 'do not paint or describe [their heroes] as they were, but as they should have been, to serve as examples of their virtues for future generations'.[66] However, if the historicity of these idealised figures is called into question, Quixote instantly rallies to their defence: he knows them, bears them all in himself,[67] so much so that 'I might almost say that I have seen Amadis of Gaul with my own eyes'.[68] In other words, Quixote is really the archetype, representative and successor of them all in this age so poor in the spirit of chivalry. It is almost as if his folly were the penance for all that was unconsciously foolish about the old chivalry, in his rationality demonstrating his superiority to it. In the first part the exterior foolish deeds predominate whereas in the second the author demonstrates more and more the interior supernatural rationality of his hero, so that at the end, after his final defeat, all his foolishness, like a light garment, falls unresistingly from him. Quixote's folly is 'systematic folly, if in folly system there can be,'[69] in a much deeper sense than Hamlet, who has method in his madness. One can even ask oneself 'which is the madder, the man who's mad because he can't help it, or the man who's mad by choice.'[70] This is why his associates are all reduced to 'amazement' (*thaumazein*), because his reason is so foolish, and yet his foolishness is so sensible.[71] The proportion of folly and rationality in him is constantly under investigation. At all events he is a 'noble fool' 'a fool garnished with intelligence',[72] a finely-educated fool.[73] When he gives Sancho instruction in wisdom, he 'raises his sagacity as well as his folly to the highest level'.[74] If Quixote is all chivalry's representative, one of his obligations is also to take on, in his own madness, the madness of a 'raving Roland', to imitate his 'desperation' and his 'penitential exercises', or rather to make them real in his own time.[75] And all of this he does out of pure magnanimity: 'The real test is to be mad without cause, for then my beloved is bound to think, "If this happens in the green wood, what will become of the dry?"'[76]

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[63] Thus he recognises the cheap barber's bowl for what it is: Mambrino's helmet made of finest gold (I, 21), and 'since the people see only a shaving bowl, they are not interested in pursuing it' (I, 25).

[64] I, 37.

[65] I, 25.

[66] I, 25.

[67] II, 1. *Cf.* I, 49.

[68] II, 1.

[69] I, 50.

[70] II, 15.

[71] II, 16.

Cervantes is the scourge not only of ancient chivalry but also of all the nonsense of the modern pastoral style and pastoral verse (a more harmless and yet often no less tragic madness). This runs through the whole novel, and Quixote constantly weaves it into his own adventure. The sickness that infects the whole of Europe from Renaissance to Revolution, with its own ideal of beauty, is handled here with a smiling indulgence, and yet also with savage and merciless medicines. Cervantes and Quixote are so far removed from these feeble imitations of the Alexandrines as Virgil was in the Georgics. The whole idyllic, erotic, tragic world of pastoral beauty is weighed and taken into account from a higher vantage point, but found to be too light in itself.

The main theme of the book is the virtue of Quixote (to which Sancho Panza is not really a dialectical counterweight but a positive complement, for his chief quality too is simplicity[77]. Quixote himself shows how the life of the knight is the integration of all the Christian virtues.[78] He lives a life of real and hard poverty (this is humiliatingly thrown in his face in the luxurious court of the Duke).[79] He lives a life of absolute chastity, which is attacked in a variety of ways, yet always in vain.[80] He lives in perfect obedience to his exacting, humiliating, all-consuming ideal. He preaches against litigiousness and the useless bearing of arms, and for the love of enemies which comes hard only to those 'who partake less of God than of the world, and more of the flesh than of the spirit'.[81] He knows magnanimity when he see it even in the roguish morality of the robber chief Roque, and does not fail to deliver a speech to his gang about the dangers for body and soul of their way of life.[82] On his death-bed he proclaims that 'God's mercy knows no bounds, nor can the sins of men ever limit or hinder it'.[83] In short, Don Quixote is so much better a Christian because subjectively he makes no claim to sanctity, and because objectively it is never possible, at any moment or in any respect, to count his ridiculous doings among the solemn deeds of God and Jesus

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[72] II, 18.

[73] II, 59. *Cf.* II, 33; II, 34.

[74] II, 43. He leaves 'Don Juan and Don Jerónimo in great amazement at the mixture of intelligence and folly shown by the knight' (II, 59).

[75] I, 25.

[76] I, 25.

[77] 'Sancho was one of the solemnest blockheads of our age' (II, 7). He himself speaks of 'the broad cloak of my simplicity—which is always natural and never artificial' (II, 8). When his master scolds him as an ass: '. . . all I need to be a complete ass is a tail. If your worship would care to

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put one on me, I should reckon I had deserved it, and would serve you as an ass for all the remainder of my life' II, 28). The Duchess is surprised 'at the greatness of Sancho's simplicity. For he had now come to believe that Dulcinea's enchantment was the infallible truth, although he had himself been the enchanter and the trickster in that business' (II, 34). His simplicity resembles Quixote's: 'Sometimes his simplicities are so shrewd that it gives me no small pleasure to consider whether it is simplicity or shrewdness that prevails' (II, 32).

[78] II, 18.

[79] 'Here Benegeli [the author's supposed Moorish source] exclaims in his writing. 'Oh, poverty, poverty! . . . Moor though I am, I know very well by the commerce that I have had with Christians that holiness lies in charity, humility, faith, obedience, and poverty. But, for all that, I declare that anyone who grows content with poverty must have much of God in him, unless it is that kind of poverty of which one of His greatest saints says: 'Possess all things as if you possessed them not', and this they call poverty in spirit. But that other poverty . . .' the righteous poverty that makes the poor ridiculous, that is admirable (II, 44).

[80] Quixote's extreme modesty: II, 30; II, 48, the ball scene (II, 62), the final temptation scene with Altisidora (II, 70).

[81] II, 27.

[82] II, 60.

[83] II, 74.

Christ. He recognises the absolute distance between God and man, between Christ and the Church (in so far as *he*, Quixote, embodies it). In a truly Christian way it is the good and nothing but the good that he wants, and yet, as he leaves this world, he has to see all his Christian chivalry as foolishness: 'I know my folly now . . . Now, by God's mercy, I have learnt from my own bitter experience . . .'[84] It is precisely in this way that Quixote's life becomes a permanemet monument of Christian existence and a reflected ray of the glory of God.

f. The Fool as Rogue

GRIMMELSHAUSEN

Simplizissimus (1668–1669) is 'the only great literary monument of the German Baroque to have retained its vitality into our own times'.[1] Kosch considers it 'the most important [German] literary monument between Wolfram's *Parzival* and Goethe's *Faust*'. Once again, though differently from Cervantes, the Christian fool is at the centre. While the contemporary romances of heroism and gallantry continue to spin out the ideology of chivalry, even after the horrors of the Thirty Years War, Grimmelshausen laughs in the face of this dusty old dream-world and does not even need his foolish hero to play the part of that world's judge and gravedigger. Like Parzival, he is brought up as a pure fool in the solitude of the forest—first of all in 'the most ancient office of shepherd . . . with all its glorious dignity',[2] 'perfect and complete in ignorance'.[3] Then, after the robbers' raid on the farm and the boy's flight, he is introduced by the hermit into pure Christianity, when the holy man inscribes 'on the tablet of [his] heart, soft and smooth as wax',[4] prayer, the love of

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[84] *Ibid.*

[1] A. Kelletat, Epilogue in the Buchklub Exlibris Zürich edition, 628.

[2] I, 2. *Simplizissimus* is cited by book and chapter from *Die Simplicianischen Schriften des Hans Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen*, edited by F. Riederer (F. M. Hendel-Verlag, Leipzig, 1939).

[3] I, 1.

[4] I, 9.

God, 'honest service'. After the hermit's death, this natural and supernatural fool is thrown out into the wild world of war, which is not only cruel and brutal, but full of unimaginable wickedness, such as the soldiers who 'first cruelly torture' [the country people] and then make them solemnly renounce God before killing them, because 'that is the best way of getting their revenge, ensuring their punishment both in time and eternity'.[5] The foolish boy first of all becomes a page; he has 'nothing more precious than a pure conscience and . . . a noble innocence and simplicity'.[6] That is why he does not understand the first thing about the world that surrounds him and calls itself Christian: 'Christ says: "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you . . ." But I found not only did no one want to comply with this command of Christ, but that everyone did the exact opposite . . . Things became blatantly clear to me, and I was forced to conclude that because of this public sinners, tax-collectors and prostitutes, who were vehemently hated for their wickedness and godlessness, were far superior to us modern Christians in their practice of fraternal charity.'[7] And when he hears sinners 'boasting of their sin and shame and vice' and begins to rebuke them, he is laughed at and written off as a fool. He decides to keep silent, but 'out of Christian charity he could not maintain it.' The pastor, when consulted, replies: 'Of course they are Christians, and I wouldn't advise you to call them anything else', though, mind you, if the apostles and the first devout Christians were to come back today, they too would be 'regarded as fools by everyone'.[8]

This question of the contradiction between God and the world (already the dominant theme in Grimmelshausen's first works, *Der satyrische Pilgram* (1666) and the *Histori vom keuschen Joseph* (1667)), as well as the gravity of the appalling chaos of war which Grimmelshausen experienced, makes the problem of the book's literary form seem of secondary importance. It is certainly influenced by the Spanish picaresque novel. The translations of Lazarillo de Tormes and Guzman de Alfarache (artistically superior to the German comic novels and adventure stories such as *Herzog Ernst* and *Fortunatus*), and not Don Quixote (also available in translation), were the ones taken as a model and provide the literary form for the story of Simplicius' life and military adventures. At first, like Quixote, he is the fool, a butt for the amusement of the officers and soldiers; indeed, they even contrive to 'make a fool' of him.[9] Yet, even at this rascally stage, he is the one who holds the reins. He enjoys the fool's freedom to tell his superiors the truth, even Christian truth.[10] This old theme allows writers, especially in times of absolutism, to speak the truth to their princes and the powers that be (e.g. Shakespeare and Molière). Yet, unlike Quixote, who to the very end remains the pure ideal fool suspended above reality, Simplicius the fool gradually becomes Simplicius the wily rascal; the one 'who could not adapt himself to the world'[11] learns to adapt remarkably well. While still a lad, he becomes the 'famous huntsman of Soest', successful, ambitious, haughty, pampered, and yet lacking any spiritual admonition or direction, something he frequently regrets. Like Parzival he is very handsome, and so, led astray by novels of chivalry,[12] on a trip to Paris, he falls prey to women and becomes a kind of gigolo until 'eventually, in sheer exhaustion, he grows weary of foolish pranks'.[13] Robbed of his physical charms by an attack of measles, he becomes a quack and charlatan, regarded in a new sense now as a fool. Next he becomes a musketeer, 'a real savage who cared nothing for God or His Word.[14] No wickedness was too much for me, since all the graces and benefits I had ever received from God were completely forgotten, and so I didn't pray for anything, neither temporal nor eternal . . . I was

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[5] I, 14.

[6] I, 24.

[7] I, 25.

[8] I, 25–26.

[9] II, 5ff.

[10] II, 7–14.

[11] II, 13.

[12] III, 3.

[13] IV, 5.

[14] IV, 8.

threatened with the gallows and the whip, but that made no difference. I carried on my godless way, and it began to look as if I was playing at despair and running on purpose towards hell.'[15] In all his ups and downs he is 'a ball of changeable luck, a model of mutability, and a mirror of human nature's inconstancy'.[16] And so in the religious sphere too he is tossed between remembrance of God and forgetfulness of God. When he is literally drowning, he prays fervently. Having been dragged to the bank, 'I should have just fallen to my knees and thanked the divine goodness for my rescue'. Once it is all 'behind him', everything is forgotten again, and yet not so forgotten that the memory of innocence, of the 'oath sworn',[17] of the 'natural law',[18] does not constantly break through. He remains suspended in the middle: in the company of the crafty villain Olivier,[19] he feels totally alien and strives by every means to escape. After this he joins up with the pious Brother of the Heart and accompanies him on pilgrimage to Einsiedeln, but cooks the peas in his shoes and follows the brother 'mournfully like someone being led to the gallows'.[20] At the shrine he is frightened by the devil as he comes out of the possessed person during an exorcism. He makes his confession and is converted to the Catholic faith, but the change does not last for long, 'because my conversion had its source, not in love of God, but in fear and dread of damnation, and so gradually I became quite half-hearted and lazy'.[21]

Grimmelshausen, with his unerring psychological perception, looks, not just at his hero's outward inconstancy, but at the inward quality of his virtue, which is again and again shown to be *calculation*. Simplicius 'has learnt' how to win people over to his side:[22] by playing the part of the generous benefactor, distributing gifts,[23] overlooking insults, praising everyone but himself.[24] So 'everywhere I went, I took care to make friends with those who otherwise might have had cause to hate me'.[25] 'I saw clearly that my own arrogance might inflict masses of enemies on me, so I decided I had to pretend to be humble, whether or not I really was.'[26] And later on: 'I became at once again a fellow who looked like a brave soldier.'[27] In his final judgment about himself, when he is trying to practise the principle of *nosce te ipsum*: 'I took care of my honour, not for its own sake, but for my own advancement.'[28] In the *continuatio*, he does not persevere in his chosen hermitage; instead of praying he looks out at the countryside and gets himself given alms in abundance. In fact, one might almost call him 'a hypocrite or holy joker'.[29] Grimmelshausen himself, like his hero, converted to Catholicism, but both retain a deep-seated Protestant mistrust of virtue, especially their own: there is no guarantee of its stability, nor of the purity of its motivation. The great goddess of the picaresque novels, as earlier of the medieval vagabonds and gallows-birds, is Fortuna.[30] Grimmelshausen turns her into a new metamorphosis of 'old Proteus'[31] and gives her the name 'Baldanders',[32] her nature being demonstrated by the cosmic transformations of a piece of lavatory paper.[33] This goddess rules not only the external lower world, but also the spiritual and religious. That is why no conversion of Simplicius' is absolutely definitive. After the superb conclusion of Book 5—'Adieu, world!' (taken from Guevaro)—a sixth book is added in which Grimmelshausen writes the first great German equivalent of Robinson Crusoe, transporting his hero off to an inaccessible South Sea island, where by rights he should become the perfect pious hermit. But then further Simplicius stories are added—*Courage*, *Springinsfeld*, *Vogelnest*, and above all the calendar stories spread round the country by Simplicius himself, which clearly show that the author's final word is not a contemplation that turns its back on the world but a wisdom that is hectically active in this changing world; not a wisdom that induces temporary madness as a prelude to the regaining of sanity in heroic disillusionment, but a wisdom whose final garb is the mantle of the fool.[34] Having become a calendar seller again, Simplicius addresses his public thus: 'Dear sirs and present good friends of mine![35] Not unjustly does that most scholarly and excellent of men speak of the likes of me: *Saepe etiam sub sordido palliolo latet sapientia.* A revolting mantle often hides a splendid wisdom.'[36]

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[15] IV, 11.

[16] VI, 15.

[17] III, 15.

[18] IV, 15: 'You may or may not be permitted to rob and steal. All the same I know that it is against the law of nature, which says that you should not do to someone else what you don't want done to yourself.'

[19] IV, 14–24.

[20] V, 1.

[21] V, 2.

[22] II, 31.

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[23] III, 13; III, 14; III, 16.

[24] III, 19.

[25] III, 8. Cf III, 11: 'I began to behave somewhat more reputably than before, since (!) I had such magnificent hope to have a little banner in the near future.'

[26] III, 14; cf. III, 19: 'I could behave so humbly it seemed I had never known arrogance.' In ch. III, 20 an old clergyman is taken for a ride.

[27] IV, 13.

[28] V, 28.

[29] VI, 1.

[30] The treacherous luck that is something like the Sirens (III, 16).

[31] VI, 9.

[32] VI, 9: 'I make you, more than other people, now big, now small, now rich, now poor, now high, now low, now happy, now bad, now good. In a word, now this way, now that.'

[33] VI, 11–12. At the end the paper says to Simplicius: 'The way you treat me now is exactly how death will deal with you.'

On his South Sea island the hermit fastens 'biblical texts and other lovely quotations' on to the trees to spur himself to devotion. The 'noblest' of these quotations, the only one recorded, runs as follows:

> O highest and greatest Good! dwelling in a light so
>   dark!
> That for very brightness we cannot see the greatness
>   of the gleam.[37]

This quotation, which Grimmelshausen derived from a polyhistorical source (Garzoni's *Piazza Universale*) and which Vittoria Colonna placed at the beginning of a sonnet, simply encapsulates the fundamental doctrine of Denys the Areopagite: Dazzling Darkness—which now appears to Simplicius as the foolishness, the roguishness, of divine glory.

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[34] As Paul Gutzwiller rightly argues in *Der Narr bei Grimmelshausen*, Diss. (Basel, 1959), 70–81.

[35] Cicero.

[36] First *Continuatio*, *Simpl. Schriften* I, 554.

[37] VI, 24.

There can be no doubt about the sincerity of the author's conversion to the Catholic faith; at the end even his hero ratifies his own conversion, compelled as it was in the first instance by the fear of Hell. Yet both of them are very pensive and reserved about the multiplicity of Christian denominations. The only real madman in the book, a man who thinks he is Jupiter and professes to govern and judge the world, is also the only one to consider a unification of the Christian Churches. He wants to dispatch a great German hero to restore universal peace to the world; he will abolish the 'exceedingly harmful divisions' and by 'his lofty reason' bring about unity.[38] Simplicius himself has a more modest vision. He admits he is 'neither Petrine nor Pauline' (Protestant); he just 'believes *simpliciter* what the twelve articles of the universal holy Christian faith contain', but he does not see why it should be 'unfitting for a Christian' to venerate the Mother of his Redeemer. In any case, are not all other religions of the opinion that they are the only true one? Faced with the mutual denunciations of the denominations, he must be allowed temporarily to postpone his decision until he can see things more clearly.[39] That is an almost Lessing-like point of view,[40] and was very common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries among those who could only see disobedience to the Gospel in the divisions of Christianity and consequently nothing of God's glory. Grimmelshausen manages to be a faithful Catholic and at the same time completely tolerant because of what he believes about God's unlimited mercy—at the time this was a rare achievement.

[38] III, 5.

[39] III, 20.

[40] 'One religion must be right, and the other two wrong. Were I to announce my allegiance to one of them without mature reflection, I might end up with the wrong one instead of the right one, and then I'd be regretting it for eternity. I would rather stay on the main road than get lost down a side-street. What's more, there are other religions besides the ones we have in Europe . . .' (III, 20).

So everything remains eschatologically open. The world is unbearably strife-torn, and man constantly has to look for the right way out of the labyrinth, but only God knows the door. Behind the vanity of the world the great struggle between Heaven and Hell is being played out. Hell, together with its strategy and tactics, is familiar territory, and in the final book it is again graphically described.[41] In the case of heaven there is nothing comparable, just a wide-eyed glimpse of the incomprehensible mercy of God embraced by faith. In the world the devil is glaringly visible everywhere, but God is not his opponent, but inconceivably transcends position and opposition. The meaning of the hermit's wonderful night song at the beginning of the story, 'Come, night's consoler, O Nightingale', is that, though we have to live in the dark, no night can prevent us from singing God's praises, and that it is not just beautiful sounds that harmonize in this praise:

Even the owl, which cannot sing,
Shows by its screeching
That it too wants to praise God.

And this 'harmony' sounds so lovely to the boy that he wants to join in.[42] In the course of his life the owl's screech becomes the screech of all the dark powers of this world and of the abyss, and the harmony dies away into inaudibility. Just occasional snatches of the melody can be heard later and are carefully recorded. There is the sweet music of the universe as represented by the spirits of Mummelsee, who are endowed with reason and mortal, though sinless, and can serve as an example to men, who have been chosen for something so much higher.[43] Simplicius hurls himself into this cosmic centre like a new Empedocles leaping into the crater of Etna.[44] There are the pure communities of Hungarian Anabaptists, who, like the 'Jewish Essenes' in Josephus, thought they could achieve a 'lovely harmony' of the kingdom of this world and the Kingdom of God, 'so much

[41] VI, 2–8.
[42] I, 7.
[43] V, 12–17
[44] V, 12.

so that it seemed to me it surpassed even the monastic life'.[45] At the novel's beginning and end there is the possibility of a total detachment from the world in the eremitical life, and in that perhaps a definitive anchoring of the heart in God,[46] though here too it 'could be necessary to proceed with caution, as if we were still living among people in the midst of the world'.[47] Finally, there is perseverance in foolish and roguish wisdom 'in the midst of the world' and in the incomprehensible contradiction between the wisdom of eternal love and the cleverness of the devil. The defenceless heart is exposed to both. Like Homer long ago, but now with a Christian intensity, man explains himself in terms of the ascent to the God of mercy.

g. The Christian as Idiot

DOSTOIEVSKY

The period in which classical antiquity was transmitted, the age of speculative theology, did not raise or develop the theme of folly, at least not in the deeper, metaphysical sense. Classicism confined itself undialectically to the beauty of the finite natural and human form. It went in for the evolutionary novel, in which the hero does indeed begin in relative folly or naivety but is then educated into wisdom, usually by a providence more human than divine (for example, by a benevolent secret society as in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*). Idealist romanticism, however, lives in the tension between the finite and absolute subject. The Absolute can inspire the man of genius to the point of foolish and farcical behaviour (e.g. Kreisler, E. T. A. Hofmann's conductor), and yet in the process he only proves his superior intelligence. On the other hand, the Absolute Spirit can also use as its base a spirit-less finitude or materiality—in other words, a non-ground of non-sense (*cf.* Baader and Schelling). Again, for Jean Paul, the hall of mirrors of the absolute 'I' can produce insane persons, but their insanity is merely a punishment for misunderstanding reality, not an expression of being exposed to it. When Idealism, fatigued by thinking, falls back into its Indian origins, as happens in the case of Schopenhauer, the whole world of the intellect becomes madness, a madness which aesthetics unmasks. This fatigue then teams up with the absolutised Eros of Gottfried's Tristan to produce the hybrid art of Wagner, who nowhere—neither in the revival of the myths of the Nordic gods nor in *Tristan* or *Parzival*—confronts real existence.

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[45] V, 19.

[46] As the conclusion to Book 6 describes it.

[47] VI, 21.

Then, quite unexpectedly, the folly motif reaches its climax in a work that surpasses all previous forms—Dostoievsky's *Idiot* (1868). With instinctive self-assurance the author discards triviality and frustration and roots the world of beauty in the sphere of glory. For here we have moved beyond the two great attempts in the modern age to reduce glory to beauty, to regard (classical) beauty as glory enough: Classicism and Romanticism. Classicism provided the images, while idealist Romanticism—the real creator of modern aesthetics—constructed the theory. However, once Marx and Tchernischevksy (1855) have left behind Hegel's philosophy and aesthetics, once God and the spiritual have been banished from the universe and its laws, the only choice left is between materialistic and atheistic aesthetics. Dostoievsky[1] had contacts with the early Communist circles and, along with many others, was condemned to death. In the bitter cold he was led out to the place of execution to be shot. He had expected certain death and had anticipated it in his mind, but instead he was sent off to the 'house of the dead', Siberia, where he was humbled into naked Christianity. On his return home appeared (after the Raskolnikov prelude) the three novels with a universal vision: *The Idiot*, *The Brothers*

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[1] [Tr. von Balthasar uses the German translation of *The Idiot* by E. K. Rahsin (*Sämtliche Werke* I, 3–4). We shall use the Penguin translation by David Magarshack (Harmondsworth, 1955). References will be to the page numbers of this version]. A general interpretation of the work of Dostoievsky can be found in my *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele*, Bd II (1939), pp. 202-419. On the 'Idiot', *cf.* the study by Walter Nigg, *Der christliche Narr*, pp. 349–403, with bibliography.

Karamazov, and *The Devils*. *The Idiot* the author's favourite book and his child of pain, contains all that follows in kernel.

'The fundamental idea is the portrayal of a truly perfect and beautiful human being. And that is a very difficult thing to do, especially these days. Every writer, not just our Russian ones but foreign writers too, every writer who has attempted to describe positive beauty has proved unequal to the task, because it is incredibly hard. What is beautiful is what is ideal, but the ideal, here just as much as in civilised Europe, has not been secure for some time now. There is really only one positively beautiful figure: Christ. This infinitely beautiful figure is without doubt an eternal miracle (St John's gospel is full of the idea: John sees the miracle in the Incarnation, in the appearance of the beautiful). I have gone too far in my explanations.'[2] Dostoievsky wanted to show, not the miracle itself, but the reflections of the miracle in a figure who can be called a Christian. The sphere of 'miracle' is superior to the sphere of worldly beauty. Prince Myshkin, last of his race, epileptic, spends his youth in the Valais Alps and is given a partial cure from a degree of self-alienating idiocy by a sensible doctor. In Switzerland he experiences the beauty of nature, which in the main causes him 'terrible depression'.[3] Later, after his return to Russia, fate places him between two very beautiful women. When he has to make a judgment about Aglaya, he says: 'It is difficult to pass judgment on beauty. I'm afriad I am not ready yet. Beauty is a riddle.'[4] For Dostoievsky, what that means is this: beauty is in no way a straightforward transparency for the divine: it can just as easily be a mask and sacrament of the devil. While the mountain landscape leaves Myshkin with the impression that he can 'hear some mysterious call to go somewhere',[5] the consumptive and mortally ill youth, Ippolit, is only irritated by it: 'What do I want with your nature, you Pavlovsk park, your sunrises and sunsets, your blue skies, and your smug faces, when all that festival, which has no end, has begun by refusing admission to me and me alone?'[6] Even if one accepts that 'my worthless life, the life of an atom, may simply have been needed for the completion of some universal harmony, for some sort of plus or minus, for the sake of some contrast, etc., just as the lives of creatures are daily required as a sacrifice because without their deaths the world could not exist', I Ippolit, must still confess that such cosmic harmony neither interests nor concerns me. For 'how can man accept responsibility for what he cannot understand', namely, that the harmony of the universe is built on pain and death? And so, as Ivan Karamazov will do later, Ippolit refuses to agree with this cosmic harmony and gives back his 'entry ticket' to eternal blessedness by means of the only action with which he can disturb the harmony or at least protest against it—suicide.[7] The great aesthetic argument from Plato to Augustine and Boethius, from Erigena and Bonaventure to Bruno, Hölderlin and Hegel, has lost its force. For the nineteenth century hardly anything divine shines through the beauty of this world.

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[2] *Raskolnikov's Diary*, ed., Fülop-Miller (1928), p. 168.

[3] 82.

[4] 105.

[5] 85.

But Myshkin is not a prince for nothing, a prince of ancient lineage. He shows he is conscious of this in his last great speech to the distinguished, partly grand-aristocratic gathering at the Yepanchins (he speaks in the shadow once again of his illness, which this time takes definitive hold of him): 'You think that . . . I am . . . a democrat, an upholder of equality? . . . I am afraid for you, for all of you, and for all of us. For I am a prince of ancient lineage myself, and I am sitting among princes. I am saying this to save you all, so as to prevent our class from vanishing for nothing into utter darkness, without realising anything, abusing everything and losing everything.'[8] He is one of Parzival's race, naive,[9] simple,[10] though his simplicity is not of the natural primitive kind that would need to be transformed slowly into Christian humility. No, by virtue of a mysterious deficiency, conditioned by his illness, he is, as it were, by nature inserted into humility. Like Don Quixote, he is a 'virgin knight errant'[11] and a ridiculous one at that, because in his naivety he lives by an ideal which contradicts all conventional experience of the world. Aglaya puts his letters into a copy of Cervantes' novel,[12] and recites to him, half jokingly, half in earnest, Pushkin's 'Ballade of the Poor Knight', in which the poet describes a medieval knight of Our Lady, who, in penitence, turns away from all earthly women and fights for Christendom. Finally he dies, 'ever silent, sad, and cheerless, of reason bereft', and is exalted by his Mistress to the paladin of the eternal Kingdom.[13] Cervantes/Pushkin now rises from the dead in the person of the prince, who listens to the ballade 'as embarrassed as a ten-year-old boy'. For Aglaya he is a person who has 'devoted his whole life to an ideal. This does not always happen in this age'.[14] In fact, in Christian times there was 'an idea stronger than any calamity . . . Show me anything resembling that force in our age of liners and railways . . . There is more wealth, but less strength; the binding idea is no more; everything has become soft, everything is flabby.'[15] Myshkin in the end is close to Simplicius in the sense that he moves, as it were naturally, in the world of sinners, and yet he is totally different from Simplicius, because he does not have the will to sin, but only the will not to distance himself in any way from the sinner, to be, simply and unreflectively, alongside him.

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[6] 451.

[7] 455f.

[8] 595.

[9] 'Prince, you're so naive' (306).

[10] 571ff.

From several starting-points the author moves on to the mysterious point of *identification*, which is the point of absolute *reality*, though ordinary awareness never makes contact with it.[16] Dostoievsky draws on his own experience: those five minutes before the execution. What enormous intensity, pregnant with eternity, what fullness they had! Myshkin has seen an execution and thinks his way into the condemned man's awareness of the time.[17] The moment is intensified by the feeling of absolute dread, by the 'absolute certainty' of what is approaching: the very moment nothingness appears, being totally disappears. At this boundary, one realises what it means to say: 'There shall be time no longer'.[18] In a quite different way, the tremendous sense of light and elation which is the prelude to an epileptic attack takes one beyond the bounds of time. Dostoievsky realised that this experience was ambiguous and made literary and philosophical use of the ambiguity; indeed, it was only as work on the novel proceeded that the humble figure of Myshkin began to distinguish itself in the author's mind from the proud figure of Stavrogin (the character in *The Devils* who thinks he has experienced identity with God). Myshkin himself knows about this ambiguity. True, it means a massive increase in 'direct self-perception' and, as a consequence (!), an awareness of a 'higher being'; but ultimately, it is an 'interruption of normality', because it is 'just an illness'. But 'what if it is a disease and abnormal?' and 'what does it matter to me that it is normal or not normal?' The 'fact' remains, 'it awakes in me a feeling undivined till then, enables me to experience greatness, fullness and eternity . . .' The fact that the consequences are 'stupor, spiritual darkness, idiocy' does not invalidate the first truth.[19] And then there is a third, omnipresent motif: the Holbein picture in the Basel museum, which Myshkin and Ippolit encounter again as a reproduction in Rogozhin's hall—the cadaver of Christ, lying horizontally, putrid blue. This is the death of Him who is priceless. His real death, not His apparent death. It is the victory of nature, which 'as some huge engine of the latest design . . . has senselessly seized, cut to pieces, and swallowed up—impassively and unfeelingly—[this] great and priceless Being'; on the day when God Himself is dead, eternal life coincides with eternal death.[20] For Dostoievsky this picture is the symbolic diacritical point between faith and unbelief, between Christianity and atheism: twinned to the point of identification in the most extreme differentiation.

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[11] 623.

[12] 219.

[13] The Ballade scene, 285f.; *cf.* 383.

[14] 282.

[15] 417. *Cf.* 563: 'In those days people seem to have been animated by one idea, but now they are much more nervous, more developed, more sensitive . . .'

[16] '. . . life [is] . . . the continuous and everlasting process of discovering it—and not the discovery itself' (433).

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[17] 46–49, 86–93.

[18] 421f. *Cf.* also Lebedev's prayer for the Countess Du Barry, who in her fear of death screams beneath the guillotine: '"Wait one more moment, Mr [Executioner], just one little moment!' And for that little moment the Lord will perhaps pardon her, for a greater *misère* than that it is impossible to imagine for a human soul' (228).

[19] 259.

There are three improbable ways into the depths of reality: 'the more real it is, the more improbable it sometimes appears to be'.[21] These ways allow at the same time both an insight into human hearts and a communication with them. This insight has nothing in common with 'depth psychology', and the communion has just as little to do with *tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*. Psychology 'establishes' things, whereas Myshkin understands by overlooking or forgetting or, if you like, forgiving. But he does not forgive because he 'understands', but because he loves. Everyone else 'understands' well enough the fault, the sin; it is clearly exposed, an objective reality. Myshkin forgives it by overlooking it, and thereby makes himself look ridiculous, an idiot. Indeed, the young nihilists subject him in a most offensive way to calumny and mockery in a pamphlet that is read out to him: 'The article . . . never mind, let's forget it. I just think—it is totally untrue', so there is no point in talking about it.[22] The fact that Myshkin does not bear any grudges, that, in so far as it concerns him, he forgives everything, means that he is all the more shamelessly deceived. 'The prince will most certainly forgive him, if indeed he has not forgiven him already. He may even have thought of an excuse for him. Haven't you, prince?'[23] 'To know that you have been deceived and yet to trust! That was all we needed! But then, what else could we expect from you?'[24] It is 'naivety, blind trust, unsuspicious of derision or ridicule',[25] and precisely that is the ultimate absurdity. That fact is not lost on the prince: 'You know, in my opinion, it's sometimes quite a good thing to be absurd. Indeed, it's much better, it makes it so much easier to forgive each other and to humble ourselves.'[26]

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[20] 85, 93, 250ff., 446f.

[21] 414.

[22] *Cf.* 301.

[23] 326.

[24] *Cf.* 356.

[25] 372.

Myshkin's love is frequently given the name 'compassion', but basically only to distinguish it from any kind of erotic love: 'Compassion is the chief and perhaps the only law of all human existence.'[27] Only an ignorant person could raise the objection: 'Even compassion must have a limit. Why, an exaggeration like that is—is quite incredible!'[28] Myshkin himself explains that he loves the dubious character Nastasya Filippovna 'not out of love but out of compassion'.[29] That is why he can say of her straight out: 'No, I don't love her.'[30] And yet 'his heart is pierced through' by her.[31] Nastasya, abused by a wealthy rake while she was still a minor, feels—in Hölderlin's meaning of the word—to the deepest fibres of her being, that she has been 'insulted'. She has an 'insatiable need for contempt',[32] 'a conscious delight in her misfortune'.[33] She plays the part of the 'shameless woman', the 'reprobate', to which she has been reduced.[34] She enjoys giving the 'theatrical performance' of a 'fallen angel'.[35] The prince loves her with a non-erotic love and so can see through the tragic game she is playing to delude herself and the world,[36] with the result that she finds herself in the hopeless situation of returning the prince's love in all simplicity (and that she does) but in the process having to give up the game she is playing (and that she cannot do). And so, on the one hand: 'The prince . . . is the first man . . . in whom I can

[26] 595.
[27] 263.
[28] 624.
[29] 244.
[30] 472.
[31] 473, 615.
[32] 69.
[33] *Cf.* 74.
[34] *Cf.* 201f.
[35] 613.
[36] 147, 196, 173f.

believe as a true and loyal friend. He believed in me at first sight, and I believed in him.'[37] On the other hand: 'And when I offered to marry her, she told me that she did not want condescending sympathy or help from anyone, nor did she want anyone to "raise her up to his level".'[38] Rogozhin, who loves Nastasya erotically to the point of madness, is savagely humiliated by her. He draws his knife, first against Myshkin, and then against Nastasya, and has the last word. At the last moment, she flees from Myshkin into the arms and on to the knife of Rogozhin.[39] She flees from the honour in which the prince held her[40] to the dishonour which she so obstinately maintains: 'I am incapable of self-humiliation from purity of heart.'[41] She is right about one thing: Myshkin's nature, his love, cannot be kept within the limits proper to marriage, which he offers each time only under constraint.[42] Just as unjustifiable from the worldly point of view is his attitude to money. He lavishes it upon rogues, despite dire warnings; gives away his lawful inheritance to lawless creditors; consciously lets himself be deceived; purchases the old liar Ivolgin's release from the debtors' prison; gives money to his slanderers; in short, he commits every conceivable kind of folly. And he lives these evangelical counsels in a totally unconscious way, without any awareness or intention of doing anything connected with perfection; on the contrary, he gladly gives heed to every criticism of his stupidity, indeed, to every pronouncement of his guilt: 'Yes, yes!' the prince said again, in terrible distress, 'you're right. Yes, I'm to blame'.[43] 'Oh, I feel that it was all my fault.'[44] Although at the same time he knows that 'it isn't *that* at all—it's something quite, quite different!'[45] And so he says with unsurpassable precision: 'Oh yes, I'm to blame all right! Most likely it's all my fault! I don't quite know how—but it's all my fault . . .'[46] That is the only way identification becomes possible. During the last minutes before condemnation, when I am quite alone, I think to myself: 'There are ten thousand of them, and none of them is being executed, but I'm going to be executed!'[47] Similarly with Rogozhin, the man who wants to murder Myshkin: the prince exchanges crosses with him as a sign of fraternity; he knows that he is involved with Rogozhin in a common sin;[48] they are both in a similar situation (the erotic obsession of the murderer and the ecstasy of the epileptic).[49] In the end, after the murder of Nastasya, Myshkin catches up with Rogozhin, caresses him in his delirium as if he were a little child, shares a bed with him on the floor, and sinks with him into fever and final illness.[50] In a similar way he had caught up with Nastasya at the moment of crisis, 'stroking her head again and passing his hands tenderly over her cheeks, comforting and soothing her like a child'.[51] The same is true of his relationship with Ippolit: he praises his 'confession' (the expression of his revolt against God and the cosmic order), and defends it against the criticism of both Ippolit himself and other people. 'I'm sorry you repudiate that confession of yours, Ippolit. It is sincere and, you know, even the most absurd parts of it—and there are many of them—. . . are atoned for by suffering . . . That idea that inspired you had certainly an honourable basis.'[52] This resembles the way Alyosha in solidarity listens to and defends the revolutionary manifesto of his brother Ivan—the 'Grand Inquisitor'. Being called 'a democrat, who has gone crazy over the modern nihilism' is a matter of indifference of Myshkin.[53] To the very end his conversations with Ippolit are conducted in a spirit of serious communication. Execution, epilepsy, the Holy Saturday picture: the three states of absolute isolation in which he unselfconsciously lives (there is never a word, never a thought, about the 'perfection' of this habitual abandonment, this transcendence and indifference). Only rarely is he asked about the Christian character of this state;[54] it suffices that people feel there is something disconcertingly unique about it—'the first honourable man I've come across' (Ganya),[55] 'the first man . . . in whom I can believe as a true and loyal friend' (Nastasya),[56] 'You're more honest than any of them, better, kinder, cleverer than any of them' (Aglaya).[57] The others say the same. And yet the prince does not live this condition in an unconscious dream-world; on the contrary, he is highly conscious and can be very decisive, as his sudden vehement outburst against Catholicism and for Russian Christianity proves. Catholicism is 'worse than atheism', because its use of 'the sword of Caesar' makes nonsense of Myshkin's state of life. It thinks it has to prop up the Church with 'universal temporal power', which immediately opens the way to socialist atheism. Both Catholicism and socialism are 'begotten of despair'; both seek to 'quench the spiritual thirst of humanity' without that one 'word of Christ' on which everything depends,[58] the last word Myshkin utters, in extreme excitement, before his epileptic attack in the Yepanchins' salon: love.[59]

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[37] 186.

[38] 473.

[39] 249, 498, 638.

[40] 624. Myshkin is not only willing to 'take [her] just as [she is]' (195), he also thinks that she will be doing him an honour, not he her (*cf.* 196).

[41] 495.

[42] 'And how can one love two persons at once? With two different kinds of love?' (627).

[43] 622.

[44] 625.

[45] *Ibid.*

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[46] 627.

[47] 91.

[48] 'If you hadn't raised your hand against me then (which God averted), what would I have seemed to you *now*? For I did suspect you all the same. The fact is, we were both guilty!' (402).

[49] 258. 'Almost all' they talk about together is the epileptic experience, and Rogozhin says that at that time Myshkin was his brother.

[50] 640–657.

[51] 616.

[52] 562.

This word expresses 'the whole essence of Christianity', the 'whole conception of God', the 'fundamental idea of Christ',[60] if we understand love in its deepest sense: as

[53] 617.

[54] 420.

[55] 152.

[56] 186. *Cf.* 207: 'Rogozhin, come along! Goodbye, Prince. You're the first human being I've seen!' And 494: 'You alone are capable of loving not for yourself.'

[57] 378. *Cf.* 467: 'I think you're the most honest and truthful man I know.'

[58] *Cf.* 587f.

[59] 597.

[60] 253.

communication with the sinner, as communion with his guilt without the will to distinguish oneself from him and as the exchange crosses with him, as Holy Saturday, when Love died the death of sin with sin and for sin. The idiot knows for certain that no atheism, no revolutionary anti-Christian protest, ever touches the depths of this Holy Saturday mystery; it cannot, nor does it want to touch them. They will never talk about *that*.[61] Here all the rest is left behind. Here love always conquers in silence. But the person who dares to build his life on this scandal for all philosophy, theology and secular culture is destined to be ridiculed with such intensity that even Dostoievsky does not stand by his idiot, but takes flight in a naive, nationalistic chiliasm and puts impossible words into the mouth of Myshkin: 'Show [the Russian] the renaissance of the whole of mankind in the future and, perhaps, its resurrection by Russian thought alone, by the Russian God and Christ, and you will see into what a mighty, truthful, wise, and gentle giant he will grow before the eyes of the astonished world.'[62] So he is powerful, wise, a giant after all! It is true that 'humility is a terrible power',[63] but it cannot be used to drive the turbines of humanity. Myshkin's uncalculated destiny is to remain the ridiculous idiot. That is what everyone constantly calls him, whether *sotto voce* or unintentionally aloud; he is the man who is there, as it were by chance, to receive furious slaps in the face.[64] He is called, for want of a better word, a 'lamb'.[65] He is and remains 'a complete child',[66] and can be at his best with children.[67] He is practically incapable of loading a pistol,[68] and refuses a duel of honour ('There's nothing for us to fight about. I'll apologise to him, and that's all').[69] This humility provokes ridicule everywhere, but, almost incidentally, it also proves that pride is no less ridiculous. Thus, in the case of Ippolit's pathetic suicide, which is treated in a very comical way ('. . . in your place I should . . . make a point of not shooting myself just to show them'),[70] and which, at the decisive moment, completely fails, because 'purely by chance' the firing-cap had been forgotten.[71] 'That is just like him', comments Aglaya. [72]

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[61] 250, 253.

[62] 588.

[63] 434.

[64] 146.

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] 101.

[67] Myshkin's story of the children and poor Marie (94–104).

[68] *Cf.* 392.

[69] 398.

Myshkin's idiocy eludes all psychological explanations, precisely because part of it—though only a part—is caused by his illness. On no account can it be said that his illness is a psychological stroke of luck in the sense that it transfers him to a state in which he can understand the state of his fellow men better, since he can share their experience without the dividing wall of individuality. Moreover, even the sinners play at confession and revelation as a party game; each tells the worst thing they have ever done, the idea being that 'the game loses its point as soon as anyone deviates, even in the slightest, from the truth'.[73] It is not hard to imagine the fun Dostoievsky would have had with depth psychologists and Freudians had he encountered them in his own lifetime. The chief function of Myshkin's illness is as a veil; it veils the Christian mystery from himself and from others. It is the mystery of the glory of absolute love descending from above, the love whose magical power lies beyond both disclosure and concealment, memory and oblivion, objective and creative interpretation. It also lies beyond idiotic simplicity and the most penetrating clarity of mind. Aglaya tries to explain the force of this mystery in Myshkin by distinguishing higher from lower mind; though the latter may be faulty, 'the most essential part of your mind is much better than in any of them'.[75] That is true, for Myshkin quite obviously possesses the gift of discernment, a knowledge of hearts that is often little short of prophecy; he knows people's hearts

[70] 456.

[71] 459.

[72] 464.

[73] *Cf.* 175f.

[75] 467.

better than they do themselves. And yet this charismatic aspect is not the most important thing about Myshkin, not even the most conspicuous. No, the most important thing about him is without doubt that simple love which is not really at home, cannot settle down or be classified, here below—Aglaya describes it as 'medieval Platonic love'.[76] Certainly, it is clearly distinct from original transcendent Eros, for that is wise, but Christian love is foolish and, in its earthly form, ridiculous.

Dostoievsky was able to expound the Christian theme of the fool with such discretion and at the same time such precision that he remains its master. True, Gérard de Nerval in a unique way had handled the theme of a Spirit-impelled madness practically and with artistic skill, but in the sphere of medicine and human ethics. True, Bernanos in his *Diary of a Country Priest* (1936) will deepen it theologically and ecclesially. He paints a vivid picture of a priest closely conformed to the Christ of Gethsemane, a man exposed to humiliating ridicule, and suffering vicariously, as Myshkin does, from an inherited illness, though losing thereby something of the delicacy and lightness of the Russian figure. Graham Green's 'whisky priest' (the novel's very title lays claim to the word 'glory'—*The Power and the Glory*, 1940) continues more the line of Simplizissimus than that of Myshkin; if the author's claim is to show the same truths as Dostoievsky, in Christian terms he is wide of the mark.

h. Christ in the Clown

ROUAULT

One more name must be mentioned, though it is not the name of a writer: *Georges Rouault.* At first, he attempted to represent Christian things in the language of beauty—until 1903 he was painting angels and other religious subjects, but then the prophet Léon Bloy with his *Femme pauvre* opened his eyes, and in order to express the vision of glory that had

[76] 283.

burst in upon him, he smashed the canonical form. The inconceivable light breaks from the 'humiliated and offended' alone; the caricature of the bourgeois brings to light the truth about him, the truth hidden from him; prostitutes need to be depicted only as they appear to the straightforward Christian eye. But it is in the clown that the most open image of human existence is to be found: wanderer without a homeland, unarmed and exposed, in the very ridiculousness of his costume revealed in all simplicity.

In his pictures of clowns Rouault perfects a theme that made its first gentle appearance in Watteau's portraits of the italian comedians. In his enchanted Mozartian world, where music is in the air, Pierrot is at first only one charming character among many (the London 'Masquerade' and Italian 'Serenade', the Berlin 'Love at the Italian Theatre').[77] However, in the comedian picture of Althorp,[78] he is in melancholy isolation, and in the late 'Gilles'[79] he is totally dissociated from the hectic goings-on behind him and stands motionless before the beholder as a man of mystery. From Daumier and Baudelaire right up to Beckmann, Picasso, and Rilke (in the fifth *Duineser Elegie*), 'gypsies', the 'children of the ever-rolling wheel', 'knowing well all the routes to Heaven', 'far removed from the gurgle of lofty classicism or the last secret arms manufacture for world peace' (Rouault),[80] become an increasingly eloquent image, which receives its most powerful eloquence in the work of Rouault. The 'Tragic Clown' of 1903, whose features are scarcely distinguishable because of the sheerly disfiguring way in which they have been sketched, and the unfathomable 'Head Of A Tragic Clown' (1904), looking terribly through a veil of dark grey-blue, introduce the long series of portraits, in which it becomes almost irrelevant where the disfiguring element, the sinful element, wells up from: from this particular human being's cesspool or from other people's, those who deposit the ordure of their own ugliness on the person portrayed. In any case, what is comic and grotesque is tragic, and the artist's revolt against the disfiguring of men, like Dostoievsky's, increasingly becomes compassion. If the clown is the representative and summing up of all that is humanly grotesque, his portrait is bound, imperceptibly and in a continuous process, to turn into the image of Christ. The early 'Christ With The Crown of Thorns' (1905, New York), with His face streaked and contradicted by bright colour, is very close to the clowns; conversely, a picture like the 'Old Clown' (1917) has an affinity with many a portrayal of the face of Christ. It takes the eye of faith to see in Christ the humiliation and offending of eternal love and in one's disfigured fellow human beings the glimmer of the grace of Christ. Rouault's interest shifts more and more to producing this glimmer by means of hitherto unknown methods of painting. Colour, in the service of the eye of faith, receives a luminous power, indeed, a transparency and phosphorescence, which glows through even the late landscapes, making them holy ground. The effect is the same whether the scene is enlivened by a Christ with women or by ordinary poor people, whether it is called Galilee or some quite other place. And this is a poor, almost desolate world as far as its forms are concerned—the exact opposite of a classical landscape of Claude Lorrain or of one of the Impressionists. The glory that nevertheless fills it is not vegetative or atmospheric; it is more immanent and at the same time more transcendent; it is the same glory that streams from the face of despised and dying love. So the same interior style can hold sway over the two dark 'Miserere' series as well,[81] where the indictment of bourgeois society, sharpened by the horrors of war, changes into a profound fellowship in suffering with trampled, disfigured mankind. Only *one* clown, sorrowful unto death, still silently poses the question: *Qui ne se grime pas?*[82] Now identical gestures, by means of imperceptible modifications, express apparently contradictory things, in a kind of *coincidentia oppositorum*. 'The same throwing back of the head conveys, in one case, a Virgilian sense of sadness' (the wonderful picture in question has the subscript: *Sunt lacrimae rerum*),[83] in another case, the hope of a man condemned to hard labour,[84] somewhere else the resignation of a dying man,[85] and then immediately afterwards the odious complacency of a conqueror,[86] finally the regal suffering of the Virgin of the Seven Swords,[87] and then again the fixed gaze of a blind man consoling and guiding one who can see.[88] Man can also appear, as in the late Middle Ages, as a skeleton; indeed, to the eyes of this visionary it matters little whether he is clothed with flesh or not, whether the human condition is expressed by a tender feeling for the presence of Christ ('Seigneur c'est vous, je vous reconnais')[89] or by a mouldy sepulchre with piles of skulls to left and right and the black cross in the middle ('Celui qui croit en moi, fut-il mort, vivra').[90]

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[77] H. Zimmermann, *Watteau* (1912), p. 24, *cf.* 183, 165, 35, 36.

[78] *Ibid.*, 57 and the copy 139.

[79] *Ibid.*, 96–97.

[80] *Le Cirque de l'Étoile filante* (Paris, 1938), p. 10.

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[81] 58 etchings, printed 1927, published in Paris, 1948; a book edition in small format appeared at the same time.

[82] Plate 8.

Here the clown image and the whole metaphysics of that 'principal reason' (Myshkin), which in this chapter we have seen as honest, foolish, indeed idiotic reason, is superseded. The games of the fools from Parzival to Don Quixote and Simplicius were a merry prelude to the seriousness of the Idiot, but now the destiny of that lonely individual has become the destiny of mankind, a destiny which, at the point where human existence was proclaiming its senselessness and idiocy, has been taken up by the gentle divine Idiot on the cross. He silently contains everything in himself and imprints on everything His form, the form of the divine mercy, for which it is a matter of sublime indifference whether its glory is manifested invisibly in earthly beauty or in ugliness.

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[83] Plate 27.

[84] Plate 6.

[85] Plate 47.

[86] Plate 49. From the introduction by Abbé Morel (p. 12).

[87] Plate 53.

[88] Plate 5.

[89] Plate 32.

[90] Plate 28.

4. THE KNOT. NICOLAS OF CUSA

a. The Remaining Themes and the New Beginning

After we have traced in rapid brush-strokes two lines which have their origin in the Middle Ages and reach out into the modern age—the 'metaphysic of holy reason' which begins with Eckhart, Ruysbroek and Tauler and continues without a break to Fénelon, and its reflection in the literary realm which as the 'metaphysic of foolish reason' reaches into the present, it is a matter of tracing both lines back to their source and—which is relevant to our problem—considering the whole intellectual scene at the beginning of the modern age. But first one thing is clear: neither the indifference of the saints nor the thrown-ness of the fool can raise any claim to conquer as a whole the world and existence therein. On either line human totality is not visible or only insufficiently so: the prevailing passivity before God (as the fashioning creator spirit) only with Ignatius of Loyola found an inner synthesis with active spontaneity; the fools on their side are only effective either as a stimulating contradiction (Jacopone), as a rebel (Villon), as a timeless and rootless utopian (Don Quixote), or they stride out over an incipient realm of folly (Parzival), often to become cunning rogues (Simplicius); seldom do they achieve a lasting memorial (even after they have sunk: Myshkin, close to whom one could place Kierkegaard and Bloy), or something both concealing and embracing at the point where all worldly reason comes to an end (Rouault). But to mock this worldly reason as folly, *a priori*, from a higher vantage-point, as Erasmus did for example, is to cut the knot before it has ever been tied; it means, expressed more deeply, precipitately to identify the analogy between created and uncreated reason with the contradiction between sinful-fallen and divine-redemptive reason.

Both the 'metaphysics of the saints' and the theme of the fool attempted in their own way to short-circuit the problem: they skipped the reality of the world which was left as a nominalist-positivist scene of wreckage, and they sought the gleam of the divine glory in an immediate supernatural. A third line then needed to be drawn, that of the Reformation, which in its original impulse rejected the philosophical mediation just as much. Only its consequences can be mentioned here: the sundering of ecclesiastical unity, and all the theological and political consequences that flowed directly from it, contradicted the nature and the task of the Christian Church to such an extent that it—in so far as it was disunited—lost its credibility for the world and with it its role as mediatrix of divine glory. So the first great movement which originates at the end of the Middle Ages, the re-awakening of classical metaphysics (in all its breadth from myth through philosophy to religion), becomes not only an intrinsic philosophical necessity—as the sinking down again of a positivistically uprooted reason into the fruitful soil of origin and heritage—but even more, the vital necessity for the existence of a Christian culture, which has to secure an elemental enduring religious unity, beyond the destructive hostilities of the confessions. That thereby the great ecumenical outlines of the Middle Ages have to acquire a 'liberal', finally an 'enlightened' colouring, in the context of the modern age, belongs to the unavoidable consequences of the disunity of the Churches.[1]

The first major movement, which embraces humanism (fifteenth century), the Renaissance (sixteenth century) and further the baroque (seventeenth century), the Enlightenment and German Idealism from Winckelmann to Schiller and Goethe, and to Schelling and Hegel (eighteenth–nineteenth centuries), can therefore be recognised as a cry to the *mediation of antiquity* for help by the Christian community, threatened by the loss of the world. There is something paradoxical about that, in so far as the whole of Christian intellectual history from Origen and Augustine through Boethius and Erigena to High Scholasticism was a perpetual dwelling in the thought-world of antiquity, and indeed with preference for the Platonic-Plotinian realm, which now once more—in the highest degree traditionally—was entered with rapture (after Dante and Petrarch) by the Florentine and the other Italian natural philosophers, and was made fruitful for metaphysics, art and religion. The darkening of human existence in the later Middle Ages, and also the darkening of the Christian realm of thought in late scholasticism, sufficed to give the impression to young eyes who beheld afresh the divine glory in the beauty of the cosmos, that they saw this for the first time since the Greeks. And because the Platonic-Plotinian view of the world understood itself as 'revelation'—an event in which the distinction of natural and supernatural becomes questionable, as the theology of the Fathers of the East and the West clearly indicates—it cannot be long before, for a further time in the long Christian tradition, the revelation of Christ is understood as the pinnacle, summation and synthesis of the whole divine revelation in the cosmos. Now more than ever are Plato and Plotinus 'baptised' as Christians before Christ, more than ever can the ancient gods be interpreted as partial aspects of God (as they seem to us in Homer) and be incorporated into Christian art and literature, more than ever the doctrine of the *Logos spermatikos* is seen to be valid not only in the case of the philosophies but in the religions inseparable from them, more than ever will the distinctively Christian be regarded as the highest example of the universal bridge between God and man.

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[1] As Friedrich Heer has again and again convincingly shown.

But the wheel of history never turns backwards; on its spiral the point of the Renaissance lay higher than the point of antiquity, and so one or a few turns higher in either a Christian or a post-Christian realm in which no way lay open for a return to the naivety of the classical relationship to God. The passage of time becomes visible in the second major theme which will hold sway over the same period of the modern age and entwine itself with the classical theme, complementing it by a dialectic of contradiction: it is the theme, already familiar to us from Eckhart (where it had been broached, but was then abandoned), of the *speculative doctrine* *of God*, proceeding from the (Christian) experience of immediacy between the infinite and the finite I. A theme which was certainly already present in Plotinus and more strongly, because with a Christian edge, in Augustine, but which right up to Eckhart remained hidden under a double carapace: the theme of the classical 'shyness' before the divine and direct vision and utterance, and of the biblically deepened reverence before the unapproachable *Doxa: qui scrutator est Majestatis opprimetur a Gloria* (Prov. 25.27). And yet a friend of God like Eckhart was to tread the 'mysterious way inwards' which was reserved not for the slaves but for the friends, sons, heirs in Christ, immediately into the heart of the Father, indeed into the supra-trinitarian *Ungrund* of the still, dark Godhead. We heard the frightened cry of the 'Frankfurter' at the very edge of this abyss, his warning not to go further here, and saw at the same time how he succumbed to the fascinating temptation. For here too there was no way back, already the God of the Old Testament had been given up; Jewish Kabbalistic speculation invaded him, leading to Spinoza, to the Hasidim, to Salomon Maimon, to Hermann Cohen; it was rather the God of the New Testament that pointed the way from Boehme to Baader, from Fichte's speculation about the 'I' to the understanding of Christ in the young Hegel and to the pansophism of Rothe.

But decisive and characteristic of the age is the infinitely varied combination of both themes, something that constitutes both what is fascinating and kaleidoscopically ambiguous about the epoch and which finally, with Hegel, turns out to be a finished and done-with intermezzo. Where in antiquity the gods stood, there opens up now the realm of the relationship to the infinite I, a realm which will finally be controlled in different ways—ethically (Schiller), aesthetically (Schelling), erotically (Novalis), speculatively (Hegel), whereby, if not indeed the categories of the beautiful, yet certainly those of glory understood in either classical or biblical terms will pale.

Out of the combination of these two themes there finally emerges by itself the third principal theme of the modern age: that of evolution, which was entertained speculatively for a long time before experiment supported it. The world can come to lie nowhere else now than in the gap between the finite and the infinite I, and because, as long as pure materialism is avoided, the infinite I, even if simply as an idea, has the primacy, the world and man can in the end be nothing more than the goal of its Odyssean voyage of self-discovery. With the insertion of God into the world-process, however, his sovereign freedom over man is lost; speculatively, man emerges as an absolute standpoint, and consequently remains—in Feuerbach—the unique *divinum* in the landscape of thought.

At the point of departure of this double theme—classical mediation and speculation about God and Spirit—there stands, as almost an erratic block, NICOLAS OF CUSA,[2] who with a mighty hand ties together in a knot the threads of the great Western tradition—Hellenism and Christianity, past and future. Again, and with remorseless energy, fissiparous thought is plunged again into the primal philosophical act, as it achieved its finite and (as we said above) formally unsurpassable, classical form with Plotinus. This primal act, which enfolds all and can ever only posit itself and reflect itself, is the analogy of being: God is all *in* all, because he is inescapably all *over* all. So—as was noticed apropos

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[2] The works fundamentally from the Paris ed. by Lefèvre d'Etaples (1514) cited (reprint 1962) by page (folio) *recto* and *verso*. The critical edn. of the Heidelberg Academy, so far as it has appeared, has been drawn on (in vol. XIII *De Non-Aliud*, ed. by L. Bauer, which is missing in the Paris edn.), similarly edn. by Petzelt (*Philos. Schriften*, vol. I, Kohlhammer 1949) and the translations with commentary of the *Philos. Bibliothek* in the Meinerverlag. The 'Cusanus-Texte' in the Sitzungsberichte of the Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften will be cited *passim*, also the 19 *Predigten 1430–1441* (Kerle 1952) and the old translations by Scharpff (N. v. C., *Wichtigste Schriften* 1862).

Abbreviations: DI: *de docta ignorantia*, A: *apologia* DI, C: *de conjecturis*, DA: *de deo abscondito*, QD: *de quaerendo deo*, F: *de filiatione Dei*, DP: *de dato patris luminum*, G: *de genesi*, IS: *idiota de sapientia*, IM: *idiota de mente*, SE: *de staticis experimentis*, VD: *de visione dei*, PF: *de pace fidei*, CA: *cribratio alchoran*, LG: *de ludo globi*, Pr: *de principio*, B: *de beryllo*, P:*de possest*, NA: *de non-aliud*, V: *de venatione sapientia*, ATh: *de apice theoriae*, S: *sermones*.

Erigena—his scheme of thought returns again at the end of the Middle Ages: the world as explanation of the inexplicable, or as Nicolas puts it: as *explicatio* of *complicatio*. Philosophy is always simply the view through the unfolded into the enfolded, which is shown in the unfolded to be non-unfoldable. If Plotinus and still more Proclus and Erigena provide the classical foundation, then Eckhart offers the counter-theme that points to the future. With Plotinus the *nous* was already an image of the One, in its moved identity of thinking and thought, of its clear and yet dynamic transparency to itself, in its uniform integration of all that will be unfolded in the realm of the *psyche*: but it is only with Eckhart that the theme—in the solitary bringing together of the infinite (paternal-trinitarian) and 'created' (filial-begotten) spirit—contains a virulence, which with Nicolas will be used again in the problematic of *mens*: human spirit so much a reflection of divine spirit that, at the same time, as a reflection, it takes over the divine features as a 'second god' and genuinely becomes the creator of a reflected world (that of numbers), just as God is creator of the real world of things. Nicolas himself never consciously steps over the boundary of the analogy to an idealism of identity, but for those who are determined to make such a transition, everything is ready prepared.

Therefore, looked at as a whole, Eckhart is interpreted in accordance with Plotinus; the proof of this lies in the totally sovereign role of *desiderium* (as intellectual-ethical *eros* for God), while the theme of abandonment (*Gelassenheit*), which determined the 'metaphysics of the Saints', finds scarcely an echo. Thus Nicolas signifies a renewed, energetic replanting of all the fundamental truths of positive Christian theology in the total, cosmic and metaphysical revelation which seems to it. As examples there could stand: *De Dato Patris Luminum*, a verse of the epistle of James (1.17) which will be commented on (certainly with little strain) completely in accordance with Plotinus,[3] *De Genesi*, where the biblical account of creation is allegorised in a traditional manner (with reference to Basil,

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[3] DP fol. 193r–196v.

Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and with echos of Chartres) and interpreted in the spirit of the *Timaeus* and Plotinus,[4] or *De Sapientia I*, where the simile of scent from the Song of Songs is interpreted neoplatonically in the manner of the Fathers (Gregory of Nyssa).[5]

If Nicholas, who was brought up by the Brethren of the Common Life, is happy to designate himself in their sense as *idiota*, this can only be justified objectively as a polemical thrust against the school philosophers, and his way of speech which often reaches the limits of presumptuousness has nothing to do with the ideal of folly, manifest from Parzival to Myshkin; at most, it reflects the Plotinian-Areopagitical reduction of the philosophical act to its 'simplicity': for the rest, Nicolas makes no secret either of his learning or of his will to gather together the whole of the Western tradition and as much as possible of the Eastern tradition (*The Sifting of the Koran*) in a synthesis with power to shape future thinking. Later Scholasticism has fallen from the spiritual to what is merely of the understanding; with it there is no longer any salvation. 'Because they hold wisdom to be nothing else than that which can be grasped by the understanding, and blessedness as nothing else than what they can attain, therefore they are far from the true, eternal and limitless wisdom and have devoted themselves to the finite.'[6] Where true authority and its chief emphasis lies, becomes recognisable when one hears the praises that he bestows on Denys the Areopagite: he is 'the greatest among theologians',[7] the 'great' and the 'divine',[8] the 'holy',[9] 'our Denys';[10] *florilegia* from his works support the main scaffolding of Cusan thought.

This means too that for the last time in the Catholic realm—perhaps until the new and differently-fashioned beginning found in Blondel's *Action*—the fundamental articulations of the historical revelation remain enclosed within the parameters of the paradox of the *analogia entis*. This paradox is not simply the harmonious rhythm of 'contraries', but, as with John Erigena, the coincidence of opposites (*coincidentia oppositorum*), which lie side by side, unseparated, in the transcendent being of God. How else should the Incarnation of God, as the coincidence of God and the creature, of unlimited and limited, of election and reprobation; how else should the Church, as the coincidence of the historically particular and the humanly universal; how else should faith, as the coincidence of not-seeing and a transcendent seeing on the part of reason; how else should grace as the Absolute making itself accessible, without which no finite spirit could think; how else theology, as the emptying fulfilment of the philosophical act; how else even the Trinity, as an expression of the supremely living transcendent unity, not-otherness, almightiness of the Absolute, reserve here any fundamental surprises which are not already contained more hiddenly or more openly in the primal paradox? It must be noticed that Nicolas neither is not wants to be any kind of rationalist or liberal, that he wishes the *understanding* of faith (*intellectus fidei*) to be interpreted throughout in the Anselmian sense as *intellectus* fidei, and understands himself as a faithful son of the Church (in which as vicar-general of Rome he was the highest next to the Pope, his friend Pius II). But that is only so because he understood the act of faith itself in the classical sense as the pinnacle of the philosophical act, in an inner analogy (of philosophical and theological faith), which could endure no breach.[11] No breach, then, such as Luther will shortly maintain between the God of faith and the God of reason; but then is not Nicolas already prepared for that darkness, that paradox of the Lutheran God? Do these two Germans, the one starting from Denys, the other from Augustine, really stand so far apart? One can ask how far the Cusan analogical panorama of the utter otherness of the mystery of faith levels it down and renders it harmless-before all, the mystery of the cross, of the descent into hell and the resurrection, but also of the gracious leading of Israel and of the Christian people; one can ask how far Nicolas succumbs to the danger of sacrificing the distinctive glory of the living God once more to an aesthetic cosmic scheme; but one must on the other hand hold before one's eyes, what here once again, for the last time perhaps, makes possible a cosmic universal view of the glory of the living God as this is understood by the message and demand of St Paul. The God whom Nicolas encounters in all things is no *dieu des philosophes*, he is a God who combines the universal features of the Plotinian with the lights of Homer, the dark depths of Sophocles and the eternal longings of Virgil in the reconciling power of the biblical event. It is therefore right when Nicolas so often and in such prominent places goes back to Paul's utterances in Romans and the Acts of the Apostles about the hidden God being manifest in his creation, that he, transcendent over the world, is distant from no-one and wills to be sought longingly by all, always and through all things.[12] It can be said that here a German eye has been assimilated to that Greek vision which Paul appealed to in both places and pressed into service. That vision, for which the simplest was the most incomprehensible, as the *idiota* says: *qui mecum inteutur absolutam facilitatem coincidere cum absoluta incomprehensibilitate, non potest nisi idipsum mecum affirmare.*[13]

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[4] G fol. 69vff.

[5] IS 1, 76r.

[6] IS 1, 76v.

[7] NA c. 14. Baur 29.

[8] A fol. 36r.

[9] A 40r.

[10] A 38r.

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[11] K. Jaspers, *Nikolaus Cusanus* (Piper 1964), 58f.

So one can expect from Cusa a vision of the unity of what in the context of the vision of reality found in Plotinus, Eckhart and the Bible may be manifest as 'glory'. We set forth this vision here, and we shall unfold it subsequently stage by stage.

b. Total Glory

It follows from what has been said that the Christian elevation of Plotinus' vision of God and the world formally implies the most favourable opportunity for an aesthetic theology. For Plotinus, Proclus and Erigena the world is the manifestation of the unmanifest God, which brings the fundamental aesthetic plan of form-light (harmony-idea of the spirit) into its highest use; but Christianly (=according to Eckhart) the unmanifest *(Un-)grund* of God is absolute freedom, which therefore, *when* manifest, implies the non-necessity, and therefore the sovereignty, of its manifestation. Both, taken together, imply: the 'shining forth' of the incomprehensible in the world-harmony (and its Heraclitean tension of contradictions reduced to unity: war as peace) is the shining forth of absolute sovereignty in a tension governed by law. But the self-glorification of God in his world rests upon his freedom, and therefore on his unfathomable love; so the relationship becomes bridal: the heart of the aesthetics of Nicolas is on the one hand the Trinity—Spirit-Love as glory between Father and Son—and on the other the wedding of God and the world in Christ in the mystery of the Spirit and the Church.

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[12] Introduction of QD (197r) and the taking up again of the theme at the end (200r), the same broadly in the introduction to P (174v–175r) with reference to Acts 17.28: 176r (bottom), and once again reflecting on the beginning: 183v.

[13] IS 2, 79r. [he who beholds with me absolute facility coincide with absolute incomprehensibility cannot but affirm the same with me.]

The words *resplendere*, *relucere*, are everywhere, as an expression of the hidden revelation of God in the world. To begin with, in a platonic way: 'As in every spoon only the one, most simple form of a spoon shines forth in different ways, in one more, in another less, in none exhaustively (*praecise*)',[14] 'thus the infinite form is only one, the absolutely simplest, and it shines forth in all things as the precise original of each and every individual thing that can be formed'.[15] And this divine 'original shines forth in the mind as the truth in the representation',[16] 'it shines forth in it as God, who is all', so that the mind can make use of itself to come to know everything.[17] And since the creative radiance of God can encounter nothing since nothing is outside him, 'the creature can be nothing else than this radiance (*resplendentia*) itself.'[18]

[14] IM 2, 82r.

[15] *Ibid.*, 2, 82v.

[16] *Ibid.*, 3, 84v.

[17] *Ibid.*, 3, 87r.

[18] DI 2.2, 14r.

In God as the not-other 'all other things shine forth (*elucescunt*)',[19] as likenesses in the original: 'therefore the original is the standard and ground of the image: and thus God shines forth in the creatures as the truth in the image.'[20] So far, this is Platonic. But the original is eternally-living Person, and therefore his 'manifestation' is 'speech': the sensible world is language, is a legible book (*libri mentis ejus expressionem continentes*),[21] indeed precisely a 'voice, in which God causes his spiritual Word to shine forth in a manifold way, so that all sensible things may be a manifold speech of God the Father through the Son as Word in the Spirit of all, with the end result that through sensible signs the doctrine of the highest teaching office is poured forth into the minds of men . . . so that man is the ultimate purpose of the sensible world and the glorious God the beginning, middle and end of all his works.'[22] Particularly in the *Beryl* is this thought strictly followed through and demonstrated with supreme skill, viz. that the ancient philosophical quest for the essence (*quidditas*) of things in their distinctiveness and uniqueness was bound to founder so long as they could not be conceived of as *intentions* (*intentiones*) of a God who communicates himself in the creation freely and sovereignly. 'So I say with the wise that there is no basis for any of the works of God in the understanding, but to the question why the heaven is heaven and the earth earth and man man, there is no other reason to be given than that the creator wills it so. It is so, as Aristotle . . . says: to investigate further would be a foolish and arbitrary search for a proof of the first beginning, what it was or was not . . . The will of the creator is the final reason, and the creator God is simple Reason, which fashions out of itself, so that the will is nothing else than reason or intelligibility (*ratio*), indeed the ultimate source of any intelligibility.'[23] The Presocratics, Plato and Aristotle 'attributed necessity to the first cause', in order thus to lend a necessity derived from thence to intelligible unities in the world, but in vain, for the contingent could not be absolutely explicated from the Absolute.[24]

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[19] NA c. 9 concl., Baur 21.

[20] A 36v.

[21] FD 66r. The whole *Compendium* revolves round the problem of the existent as the language and expression of Being. [books containing the expression of his mind.]

[22] FD 67v.

There is therefore only 'one unique possible solution. For what does the creator *will*, when, through the revolution of the worlds and the instrumentality of nature, he draws forth from a thornbush such a beautiful and fragrant rose? What else can be the reply than that that astounding reason intends (*intendit*) to reveal in this its word, how deep is its wisdom and its intelligible motive and how great the riches of its glory, that it so lightly places such a wonderful and symmetrical beauty by means of such a slight thing in the apprehending sense, arousing joy and enhancing man's whole nature with sweet harmony.' And from the rose thought rises up to the higher revelations: in the whole life of living things, in intellectual apprehension holding sway beyond the relatively intransient forms (Aristotle!) and transient individuals. 'And so the teaching of the Gospel becomes ever more manifest, which gives to creation the purpose that the God of Gods is revealed in Zion in the majesty of his glory, which is the manifestation of the Father in whom is all delight.'[25] Because created things correspond to God's intention, they are good, as God himself says in the story of creation, 'so that the universe is a perfect revelation of the glory and wisdom of God.'[26] He himself remains beyond any worldly structure of beauty: 'above all multiplicity and number and harmonic proportion', and only 'to be seen without measure, number and weight',[27] to which vision the world points, as Trajan's column points to the 'knowledge of the glory' of this Caesar and to the indirect 'experience of his fame'; 'the column itself is not different from his will, even if the column is by no means will . . . but in the will wisdom and ordering sense are made known . . ., and the costliness of the work, which someone powerless could not have fashioned, is a reflection of the power of Trajan.'[28]

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[23] B 29, 189v–190r.

[24] B 36, 192r.

[25] B 36–37, 192r–v.

[26] NA c. 23, Baur 55.

[27] A 36r.

As a preparation for a sermon on the Song of Songs ('Behold, you are beautiful, my love') Nicholas excerpts freely from the treatise of Albert *de Pulchro et bono* and intersperses it with his own comments.[29] Albert's definition of beauty as 'the radiance of form beyond the proportionate parts of the matter' with the additional determinations, that the beautiful draws longing to itself and unites all things, could offer Nicolas a congenial starting-point: the double dimension—the material or horizontal one of *consonantia*, the formal or vertical one of *claritas* or *resplendentia*—could be applied in a transcendental manner to the relationship of God to the world, and render unnecessary for Nicolas any more than a merely formal separation between the beautiful and the good. More important for him (and going beyond Albert) is the relationship of the transcendental good-beautiful to the human mind: even if the higher senses pass an inchoate judgment on the beautiful, only the mind which is open to all being possesses it and can—from the transcendental idea of the beautiful which, as mind, it has and *is*—judge the degree of the concretely beautiful.[30] It *is* the simplified fullness of the beauty of the world: here Plotinus' concept of mind becomes decidedly more important than the *eros* of the *Symposium*, which strives after the beautiful because it does *not* possess it. Thus the *mens* for Cusa (Plotinus' νοῦς) is only a created copy of the divine primordial beauty, which—in contrast to Plotinus—has to know itself as beautiful, in order

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[28] NA 9, Baur 20.

[29] *Excitationes, lib.* 8, vol. II fol. 139v–141r., in Jos. Koch, *Cusanus-Texte* I, Predigten 7. Untersuchungen (*Sitz. ber. Heid. Akad.* 1942), pp. 167–168 quoted as Predigt no. 240, without reference to Albert.

[30] *Natura . . . intellectualis . . . boni et pulchri naturam intellectualiter participat, quia haec est forma ejus . . . Nisi judex qui est intellectus in se haberet speciem pulchritudinis omnem sensibilem pulchritudinem complicantem, non posset judicium facere inter pulchra, dicendo hoc esse pulchrum, illud pulchrius, quare intellectus est quaedam universalis pulchritudo seu species specierum, cum species sint contractae pulchritudines . . . sic intellectus est vis complicativa omnium specierum intelligibilium, . . . antecedenter in se complicat omnes naturales pulchritudines, quae per species in universo implicantur.* fol. 140v.

(as the ultimate source of all self-conscious mind) to be spiritually beautiful: 'But when beauty beholds or understands itself, then it is impossible that infinite love should not be enkindled thereby. See here the trinity in a unity of the essence of beauty, where the source of the beautiful gives birth to an understanding of the beautiful from which love proceeds.' This self-mastered beauty is the intradivine glory whose authentic place is the Holy Spirit: '*omnipotens autem gloria procedit ex omnipotenti intellectu se intelligente*, . . . for without infinite glory the begetting almightiness cannot contemplate the almightiness begotten from it', and the glory therefore proceeds in order that the infinite understanding might become infinite 'goodness or love or delight or blessedness or joy'.[31]

Here there branch off important doctrines of Nicolas of Cusa: first, the general doctrine that the world could be created only for the sake of this intradivine glory, for the sake of its communication and knowledge,[32] and that, correspondingly, 'the science of praise (*scientia laudis*) is naturally born' in beings capable of knowledge, because the creaturely mind, reflecting on its nature, must think of itself as a ray of the glory of God, and therefore indeed is called to imitation of what is praiseworthy.[33] More important, and for Nicolas more characteristic, is the fact that the intradivine glory, even if it shines forth essentially in the creation, remains incomprehensible and unapproachable for the creature so long as God Himself in his freedom has not unlocked for the spiritual creature his inner mystery.[34] For the view from heaven to earth is one thing: this view sees only order, harmony and beauty; the heavenly Jerusalem is, so far as it extends, the region of love and therefore of beauty.[35] To the view upwards from below, however, the eternal love must make itself accessible by grace in order to be caught sight of at all, and if it then needs the freedom of the creature to respond to this love, it is once for all excluded by divine love's nature as grace, that man should 'attribute to himself the glory [the renown] of attaining blessedness', something Nicolas, together with Augustine, powerfully establishes against those philosophers who think to ascend to God by their own strength. 'For they did not know that the blessedness of God is grace', that only God's incarnate Word and his Spirit breathed into our soul draws us into the kingdom of his inner glory.[36] 'Thus Jesus Christ is the medium without which God's glory cannot be communicated . . . and the gift of Christ, the Spirit, folds into himself the power of each gift.' But this means in the concrete order subject to sin: 'there where the Father did not spare his most beloved Son and his Son gave himself up to death, so that we might acquire through the merit of his blood the purification of our souls: there God revealed best the praise of his glory (*laudem gloriae suae*), so that we might praise his infinite love and see, beyond refutation, that he is the only one to whom glory is due.' Where we 'acknowledge that we are in need of the grace of redemption and implore it in all humility, there we give God the glory, as is fitting, and the more greatly, the more we acknowledge our depravity.' So it is glorification by faith alone, for 'faith alone (*fides sola*) is able to strengthen the weakness of our spirit by the Spirit of Jesus, who lives in us by faith. For it is not in its own power that our spirit can become *speculator majestatis*.'[37] So God draws his glory out of everything: 'He made me man to prove by means of me his great power, by raising me to fellowship with the angels. He made me frail and weak to prove by means of me his power, by accomplishing his mighty works in me. He allowed me to sin, to show by means of me the power of his mercifulness and grace, when I am converted to him. He let me go astray to show by means of me the power of his wisdom in which he can raise me up again to knowledge of the true . . . life. He let all men sin, so that all might need grace, in order to prove the riches of his grace in Jesus Christ the Saviour of all.'[38]

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[31] *Excit. lib.* 6, vol. II, fol. 103v. (Koch no. 181).

[32] Apart from the two sermons just quoted, cf. also B c. 3, Letter to Albergati (*Cusanus-Texte* IV, Briefwechsel: 3. Sammlung, ed. by G. v. Bredow, p. 26): 'Nothing induced the Creator to raise up this universe, this most beautiful work, except his own praise and glory which he wished to show forth. So he who is its origin is also the goal of creation. And because no king is recognised without praise and glory, the creator of all things too willed to be recognised, so that he could show forth his glory.'

[33] Letter to Albergati, 377.

[34] *Excit.* fol. 104r–v.

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[35] *Excit.* fol. 141r.

[36] *Ibid.* fol. 104v–105r. The *gloria invisibilis* is only perceived *per auditum*, only by faith, not by vision. Therefore all 'knowledge of the kingdom of God' is convicted of *stultitia: Excit. lib.* 6, fol. 109v (Koch no. 183).

[37] *Ibid.* 105v–106r.

And yet these intimately Christian sounds are inseparable from the universal concept that all being is a revelation of the 'beauty or glory of God': for both concepts apply to God identically, so that with Nicolas (as with the Victorines) philosophical longing and Christian love are of a single essence: *desiderium enim* sive *amor immutat continue amantem . . . attractione pulchritudinis* seu *gloriae dei. Nam non est gloria nisi in regia pulchritudine.*[39] But this *eros* is for Nicolas itself *caritas*, because the attraction exercised by God's beauty is the answer of grace to the revelation of grace: *pulchritudo de se amabilis caritas est, et ideo sine caritate nullus videbit absolutam pulchritudinem.*[40]

But a few years after this sermon (1456) there was founded in Florence the Platonic Academy (1462); and even Nicolas' knowledge of the beauty of God,[41] of the 'beauty of his countenance',[42] with which the beauty of the world 'bears no kind of comparison',[43] is essentially determined by a vision of the world. The light from above is refracted in the sweet harmony of the cosmic numbers, the knowledge and understanding of which is mankind's authentic heritage, and which form the visible ornament which, as is again and again emphasised, earns for the world the name of *cosmos* which at the same time expresses the fact that it has been 'adorned' from elsewhere.[44] But this cosmos is so little something at rest that it is only comprehensible as the confluence and harmony of two contrary movements: as 'a kind of coincidence (*coincidentia*) of the descent of the identical to the non-identical, and of the ascent of the non-identical to the identical'; for the act of creation is the 'calling-out of the non-identical to the identical (*evocat Idem Nonidem in Idem*)',[45] the pyramids of light and darkness interpenetrating one another,[46] whence develops conflict (*oritur pugna*);[47] aesthetically speaking it is again the appeal of the beautiful (*kalos* from *kaleo*), now more believable because things are understood as 'words' of God. Thus it is possible to think that, from the point of view of ascent, the proportion of the material can become a condition for the radiance of form: 'Proportion is the place of form, for, without a proportion suited and measured to form, form cannot radiate forth . . . Proportion is like the suitability of the surface of a mirror to the reflection of a picture; when that no longer offers itself, then the representation ceases. Correspondingly the infinite, original unity can shine back only when the appropriate relationship is at hand, and this lies in number. The eternal spirit is like a musician who wills to render perceptible his thoughts: he takes a multitude of sounds and brings them into a relationship corresponding to harmony, so that in the medium of proportion that music sounds forth gently and perfectly, when it comes across itself there as in its hereditary place.'[48]

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[38] *Ibid. lib.* 4, fol. 58v (Koch no. 56).

[39] *Ibid. lib.* 8, fol. 141r. [For desire *or* love continually changes the lover . . . by the attraction of beauty *or* of the glory of God. For there is no glory except in the royal beauty.]

[40] *Ibid.* 141r. [charity is beauty lovable by itself, and therefore without charity no-one will see absolute beauty.]

[41] *Cf.*, e.g., QD 198r–v.

[42] VD 101v.

[43] P 175v.

But for Nicholas there stands between God and the world of the senses the created mind (*mens*, νοῦς), which, as God is the uncreated light and principle of everything, so after God and as his image and likeness is the created light and complicative principle of the materially unfolded world. In this mediation 'the mind is a kind of divine number, suitably proportioned in the best way to let the divine harmony radiate forth and thus to gather together into singleness all sensible, understandable and rational harmony . . . in such a manner that each number and each relationship and each harmony which proceeds from our spirit itself lays hold of our spirit as little as our spirit lays hold of infinite spirit. For this is also a divine number, it is indeed so much number that it is one simple unity, which brings forth its (particular) number out of its power',[49] in other words: the unity of the created spirit remains derivative; even when it is itself a 'qualitative number' in God's creative intention, it is as a 'this', indeed already a real number, and therefore the substrate called upon for God's manifesting glory. Man is a 'creative' unity in his effect on matter, as mathematician, technician, artist, but for the uncreated unity he is the many, which holds itself open to the grace of the intradivine unity. Nicolas of Cusa therefore prepares the ground for the ethos of two-in-one of the developing Renaissance.

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[44] P 183r–v; G 70v.

[45] G 70v.

[46] C 1.11, fol. 46r–v.

[47] G 70v.

[48] IM 6, 85v.

c. Training in Analogy

What we have just outlined needs depth if it is not to remain schematic. It will prove that Cusa certainly provides a provisional sketch for the structure of the period—from the Renaissance to Hegel—which is just opening up, but in the best elements of his foundation outlives its collapse. His renewal of antiquity is more than renaissance: it is a retraining in the lost primordial articulations of human thought; his sketch of a philosophy between spirit and God can (but need not) be judged transcendental in the modern sense. From the classical point of view (as philosophy of being) and from the modern point of view (as philosophy of mind and of freedom), Nicolas' effort of thought always serves the accomplishment of the *analogia entis*.

I. CLASSICAL POINT OF VIEW

It is renewal against a scholasticism blinded to the mystery of Being: 'Blind and without knowledge of their blindness they imagine they can see, and in their imagining they are hardened in their doctrinal positions, just as the Jews, missing the spirit, are in the letter.'[50] Renewal therefore of the esoteric character of all theology: of the classical-'natural' and *a fortiori* of the Christian theology. The true God is encountered in rapture (*stupor*), in the suddenness that comes upon one (*quasi via momentanei raptus*, Plato's 'εξαίφνης),[51] 'the true theology cannot be entrusted to books', 'it is discourse about the kingdom of God, and this our master Christ calls the hidden treasure', which is only found by the poor in spirit: 'while today most of the professors, who administer the field of Holy Scripture and have heard that the treasure of the kingdom lies hidden in it, prize themselves already as wealthy owners.'[52] There are writers who can lead the way to true theology, such as Denys and his commentators, Maximus, Erigena, Hugh of St Victor, Robert of Lincoln, Thomas Gallus;[53] and others like Marius Victorinus, Proclus, David of Dinant, who are not suitable for everyone, as the unhappy attacks of Johannes Wenck on Nicolas more than sufficiently demonstrate.[54] There is not a twofold doctrine of God: a mystical and a so-called 'scientific'. In the case of God, the scientific means understanding that all creaturely knowing about the being of the origin remains a 'mirroring and a parable',[55] speech in riddling images (*aenigmatice*)[56] and therefore in conjectural outlines (*conjecturaliter*). Hence the titles of two of his early works: 'Of learned (i.e., become conscious of this itself through thought)

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[49] IM 7, 86v.

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[50] A 40r.

[51] A 36v.

[52] A 35r.

[53] A 38r.

[54] Edn. by E. Vansteenberghe: 'Le *de ignota litteratura* de Jean Wenck de Herrenberg contre Nicolas de Cuse' in BGPhM VIII/6 (1910); Nicolas' answer is the *Apologia doctae ignorantiae* fol. 34vff. Rud. Haubst, 'Studien zu Nikolaus von Kues und Johannes Wenck', BGPhThM XXXVIII/1 (1955). Cusa was defended by his friend, Bernhard von Waging: *Laudatorium doctae ignorantiae* etc., in E. Vansteenberghe, 'Autour de la docte ignorance', BGPhM XIV/2–4 (1915).

[55] P 183v.

[56] P 177v.

Ignorance', and 'Of Conjectures' (as the basic philosophical outlines). To make serious metaphysical conjectures one must have attained the *experience* of metaphysical thinking.[57] For this the 'learned ignorance' becomes 'sacred' (*sacra*),[58] indeed 'most sacred' (*sacratissima*) ignorance.[59]

Each concept is finite and cannot contain the infinite, which it intends, and which announces itself and conceals itself in it. According to the formula of Proclus, it 'participates in that which is imparticipable'.[60] Thus the expressions of Erigena come back again: wisdom 'is known in no other way than such that it is higher than all knowing and unknowable, inexpressible in every expression, incomprehensible by every understanding, immeasurable by every measure, concluded in no conclusion, unlimited by any limit, brought into no relationship by any relation, comparable by no comparison, unformable by any form, . . . capable of being positioned in no positioning, undeniable by any denial, indubitable in any doubt, unsupposable in any supposition.'[61] Contrariwise that means that the nameless God can be called by many names, indeed by all names, for he is the object of all suppositions of naming: *hoc autem modo ineffabilis est effabilis, imparticipabilis participabilis*,[62] and there is 'the vision granted to us of the invisible God'.[63] 'Invisible are you, as you are; visible, as creation is, which it is in so far as it sees you.'[64] Thinking is the movement of this essential vision; so being created coincides with the *eros* that is drawn towards God, with the radical *desiderium* of the creature: *in idem coincidit esse et*

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[57] *Qui per doctam ignorantiam de auditu* [by hearsay] *ad visum mentis* [to clear vision] *transferuntur, ii certiori experimento scientiam ignorantiae se gaudent attigisse.* A 34v, *cf.* IS 1, 77r. It is a matter then of tasting knowledge *experimentaliter. Scire multas amoris descriptiones, quas sancti nobis reliquerunt, sine amoris gustu vacuitas quaedam est.*

[58] A 38v.

[59] VD 107v.

[60] NA c. 10, Baur 21.

[61] IS 1, 76r.

[62] FD 68r. [in this way then the ineffable is expressible, and the imparticipable participable.]

[63] A 35v.

[64] VD 104v.

desiderare:[65] a movement like the *ephesis* of the Plotinian *nous* to the eternally transcendent One, which opens and lights up an intellectual space through an infinite longing after the spiritually infinite. 'Thus this holy unknowing of your greatness is the most longed-for nourishment of my understanding . . . How could desire not desire to be more? Whether our will desire being or non-being, the desire as such cannot rest, but reaches out ever further . . . Thus the more I conceive you, my God, as inconceivable, the closer I approach you.'[66] Thus Nicolas calls all his sermon-outlines *excitationes*: incentives, stimulants.[67] The eternal movement towards Being is philosophical (as Aristotle always demands to ask the question about Being), as a quest after *quidditas*, about which one 'knows', in order to be able to seek it, and which in endless approaching 'is seen from afar' (with Gregory the Great).[68] This indestructible stretching-forth is either fulfilled by God, and then is eternal blessedness, in which the spirit 'is ever moved in a most blessed longing, so that it may attain that of whose gracious closeness it never has enough';[69] or it is, if God does not fulfil it, 'eternal torture: to possess a rational nature and never to attain to reason'.[70] That is Gregory of Nyssa,[71] Augustine and his thirst 'as the hart desires the waterbrook';[72] it is universally Christian, without giving up the classical basis, because God, in revealing Himself, 'increases to fulfilment what nature denies us'[73] and thus does not give up the *analogia entis* (and therefore negative theology).

The explanation of the analogy of being proceeds inherently from the 'inconceivable' fact, that God is all (otherwise he would not be God), and yet the world exists, and this real world cannot be added to God's reality as an increment. God must be all the reality in the creature, and yet not be immersed (*immersibile*)[74] in it by this in-being, remaining unmingled (*nec immisceri*)[75] with it, he must indeed therefore be restlessly immanent in it[76] only because he is already in himself in simple totality everything that it is in its individuating unfolding. So the opposition between *explicatio* and *complicatio* becomes to begin with the 'best guide' to the intellectual ascent, especially when it is observed how already the resolutions in the world (of what is sensible and manifold in the Spirit) foreshadow the all-embracing mystery.[77] 'Just as what is sensible to sense is not sensible to the understanding, because it is not apprehended by the senses therein, but is intelligible and understanding itself, so [similarly] everything that is worldly in the world is unworldly in God, because here it is divine', or rather is the one God Himself.[78] For on the one hand 'If he were not truly himself the being of the totality and of every individual, how then could he bring it forth out of non-being?'[79] And on the other hand, he must 'really be all possible being', something possible only if he 'is everything in an enfolded way'.[80] If he is *really* the possible in the unity, then he does not *need* to be unfolded, in order to be really himself; not for a moment does Nicolas' intention run in the direction of Hegel. God as God cannot be unfolded or increased, he is 'simplicity before every root',[81] therefore attainable by no analysis or synthesis,[82] his unity has nothing to do with number (which would be capable of increase or division),[83] but if each thing in the world is a something in order to be able to be and be the image of God, then it is God and yet always an other over against the things that coexist with it, something that cannot be said of God. With the discovery of this 'divine name': the not-other (*non-aliud*), Nicolas belives that he has taken a mighty step beyond Proclus and Eckhart. For this name is not only negative in the sense of a simple negation of the finite-creaturely, but is so negative that in any context he is so *pre*supposed (because anything is 'not-other' than what it is), and therefore simply supposed before anything, because in the context itself the 'other', the thing's particularity, commands attention.

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[65] G 73r. [to be and to desire coincide in the same.]

[66] VD 107v.

[67] *Cf.* IS 1, 77r: *motus desideriosus in excitatione*.

[68] ATh 219r.

[69] IS 1, 77r.

[70] *Ibid.* 76v.

[71] *Cf.* my *Présence et Pensée* (1942), first part: La Philosophie du devenir et du désir.

[72] QD 2000r.

[73] P 178v.

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[74] DI 3.1, 24r.

[75] DI 2.2, 13v.

[76] On the in-being of God in everything: *Possest*, German tr. n. 112.

[77] IM 9, 89r.

[78] P 183r.

[79] *Ibid.*

[80] P 175r.

[81] DA 2v.

[82] FD 67r.

[83] IS 1, 75v.

Yet it could seem, in so far as the not-other is the cancelling of the other, that it is the coincidence of the worldly opposites—*coincidentia oppositorum*. But it is that only because it is more than that; otherwise God would be perceptible as the point of convergence of these opposites. Indeed this route is passable gnoseologically and methodologically: 'I look by means of the contradictions to the origin', but 'the origin lies *before* the contractions'.[84] Whoever therefore 'transcends every opposition, he alone beholds the infinite simple form'.[85] For 'as otherness is without otherness in unity, because it is then unity, so too the contradiction is without contradiction is infinity . . . In infinity there is the opposition of oppositions without opposition.' And the conclusion for the one contemplating God is: 'There is neither anything different from you or anything opposed to you . . . for if infinity did not include each being in itself, then there would be no infinity.'[86]

So Nicolas succeeds in expressing the relationship of God to the world through reduplications and therefore by way of Eckhart[87]—'God is Being'—passes beyond Eckhart: God is

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[84] Pr, vol. II, fol. 10v; *cf.* A 37r: *super coincidentiam contradictoriorum Deum esse declaravi.*

[85] IS 1, 77v.

[86] VD 105v.

[87] In his *Apologia* he expressly supports Eckhart, of whom he says that 'the ordinary people are not fit to understand him, although the learned find much that is subtle and useful in his books' (A 39r). How much he owes to Eckhart has only recently become apparent through the researches of Herb. Wackerzapp: 'Der Einfluss Meister Eckharts auf die ersten philosophischen Schriften des Nikolaus von Kues', *BGPhThM* 39/3 (1962).

omnis formae formabilis forma,[88] he is 'not essence (*essentia*), but because he is the essence in essences, he is called *essentia essentiarum*'.[89] Therefore the transcendence of the Absolute should be expressed precisely in its immanence, he is *omne ens non entiter*,[90] as he is indeed in every other the (fundamental and therefore transcendental) not-other. With this reduplication Nicolas moves clearly beyond Eckhart and the immediate danger of pantheism and again back to Proclus and Denys, but in such a way that he cannot decisively transcend the classical, pre-Christian stand-point. He decisively wins back, through a firm anchoring in that very place, the analogical character not only of all worldly being, but of all worldly knowledge, and precisely metaphysical knowledge. For if God is the form of form and the essence of essence, then he establishes—as always—a creaturely form and a creaturely essence, and this is therefore not the pure 'nothing', which is ecstatically open to God-the-all (with the danger of a change into a man-the-all and God-the-nothing), rather is the fundamental experience the unlocalizable origination over against God of all world-being and world-thinking; while it is in God that the perfect reality and therefore exactness, precision (*praecisio*) consist, the derivatory thought can only be inexact, approximate, supposition, parabolic, and in the true sense of the word, 'reflective', speculative.

There is only one idea of everything, which is God,[91] and only in the idea have things their exactness, for any imitation could be other, infinitely more exact.[92] This thought, which is maintained from the beginning to the end of Cusa's work, is amplified and apparently modified only in so far as the mind, the reflected origin in the world, possesses an idea-character of its own, not however for the real, but for the unreality of numbers which unfold its simple essence. The

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[88] G 70r. So frequently: A 36r: *forma omnis formae*; P 176r: *nec forma alicujus, sed omnibus forma quia causa efficiens, formalis seu examplaris et finalis*; P 182v: *formarum forma* (is God as *entitas*) . . . *ideo omnium formarum complicatio*; NA c. 10; Baur 23; *Natura naturarum omnium*: VD 7, 102r.

[89] NA c. 10, Baur 22; VD 103r.

[90] A 37v.

[91] P 177r.

[92] IS 2, 79v; Pr, II fol. 10v.

'exact science' therefore, which mind unfolds from itself, is unreal and only approximately applicable to reality; its knowledge of reality, whatever it conceptually pretends to be, is only conjectural, something that applies to the 'philosophical' doctrine of God, as much as to the 'theological', in so far as this too necessarily makes use of human thought. The concept remains according to its essence image and likeness, something that in a certain way points back to Plato's mythological thought, but even more strongly foreshadows the artistic element in the philosophical thinking of the Renaissance. Yet while the latter is inclined to rest in the symbolism of the image, the enigmatic in all thought remains for Nicolas an occasion of perpetual unrest. Certainly he knows the blessed touch of God who is present to and in all things: 'the eternal wisdom is tasted in everything that can be tasted; it is itself the pleasure in everything pleasurable; it is itself the beauty in everything beautiful; it is itself the desire in everything longed for', but at once there is again the question of its ineffable fragrance which we are only pursuing in all these forms.[93] It can mean for the art of thought: 'through reason the spiritual sweetness is tasted in the essence of things, as an image of the sweetness of the eternal wisdom, *quae est quidditatum quidditas*.'[94] And for the senses: 'he who sees a beautiful woman and is moved in his spirit, pays God the glory and turns to admiration of the infinite beauty, a most distant shadow of the light of which stands here before his eyes . . .'[95] But it is, as the examples bear out, a renaissance of the platonic longing, and not of a glutted worldliness. For Plotinus and Erigena, as for Ficino, the manifold things of the world remain '*apparitiones sive lumina . . . unius Dei*, who, although one, cannot be manifest otherwise than in manifoldness . . . These lights are called theophanies, and in all these lights he makes known the riches of the glory of his Light.'[96]

To this thought about analogy in the classical manner there remains finally the insuperable problem of the establishment of the many out of the One. If pantheism is to be avoided—and Nicolas dismisses it as an indisputable vulgarisation of philosophy, for the real problems for thought only begin when one has passed beyond it[97]—then there remains for the unfolding of the unity of God in the world only the notion of a 'self-descent': not as if God could communicate less than himself (*communicat se indiminute*), but 'he cannot be so understood, as he is given, because the receiving of the gift takes place by way of descent (*descensive*).'[98] Yet what does it mean to say that no receptive 'matter' can be posited over against God, i.e. that no one is there beforehand to receive God's communication? Thus the final outcome can only be negative: for otherness there is not positive cause, it has as such no being,[99] the finitude of the creature emerges by change, *contingenter.*[100] But if no reason for the finite can be assigned within the *causalitas formalis*, then the question—why a world at all?—becomes insoluble by consideration of the *causa finalis* and *efficiens*. Plotinus had philosophised from its being and—by looking through to the mind and the One—had concluded that it had equal eternity with God: it is self-radiating goodness, beyond freedom and necessity. Since Nicolas of Cusa repeats the system in a Christian way in the *analogia entis*, he can experience and think the world only as contingency and an enigmatic likeness of God, and sees himself thus forced, without giving up the classically-attained analogy—to which belongs God-in-and-above-all and God's being not-other—to deepen it in a Christian manner.

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[93] IS 1, 76v.

[94] IS 1, 78r.

[95] *Excit. lib.* 7, II 119–120r.

[96] DP 4, 195rv, *cf.* 193v.

2. CHRISTIAN POINT OF VIEW

While *De Non-Aliud* (1462) contains the last radicalisation of the classical point of view, there lies in *De Possest* (1460) and finally (in the year of his death, 1464) in *De Apice theoriae*—

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[97] DP 2, 194r.

[98] DP 2, 194r.

[99] VD 14, 106r.

[100] DI 2.2, 13v; IM 6, 86r. This problematic is very clearly worked out by H. Wackerzapp, esp. 81ff.

after the Augustinian attempt of *De Visione Dei*—the Christian solution. Although it is close philosophically to Plotinus and further already prepared for by him, theologically it causes difficulties.

To the contingency of the finite there corresponds freedom as an answering concept in the Absolute. Plotinus sees it as the One's absolute being for itself, and somehow positively in the aesthetic dimension—as the purposelessness of the radiance of the Good. As a Christian, Cusa could have passed over from there immediately to the personality and love of God as the creator and revealer; but he considered that the philosophical form of analogy must be carefully introduced into the Christian context. The incomprehensibility of the God of negative theology is interpreted in the deeper incomprehensibility of the God of groundless Love: 'if anyone loves something because it is worthy of love, then he rejoices, if he discovers in the beloved infinite and inexpressible occasions of love. And the happiest realisation for the lover is when he grasps the inconceivable love-worthiness of the beloved. He would not rejoice so much if the beloved were comprehensible to him, as when it is clear to him that the love-worthiness of the beloved is completely incommensurable, indescribable, limitless and incomprehensible. That is the happiest comprehension of the incomprehensible and the tenderest learned ignorance, when he understands this in its way and yet does not understand it in exactness.'[101] Thereby, however, everything enters a new climate of thought: the negative incomprehensibility of the ever-greater God, whose essence glimmers behind all the veils of manifestation, turns into the positive incomprehensibility, that one who is utterly without need *wills* to have need of me, although he in no way *has* to.

Augustine once described blessedness as *videntem videre*;[102] Nicolas sets out from one of those images, the sight of which follows the beholder from all sides, and even seems to change along with the traveller. God's being is the utterly simplest being-with-himself and therefore infinite eye and universal

[101] IS 1, 76r (text as in Baur).

[102] *Sermo* 69.3; PL 38.441.

vision, so that he seems to accompany the moving, spatio-temporal creature and therefore continually to gaze just at me. The thought is biblical, the expression Plotinian, again in the form of reduplication: God is 'the countenance of countenances'.[103] It is a biblical thought too that God's seeing is characterised not only as his being, but also as his loving,[104] indeed as his being merciful;[105] and biblically grounded is the strange new consideration, that the absolute contraction of the divine Spirit into the power-centre of his eternally being eye makes him the infinite idea and original of every finite 'contracted' mode of being: 'everything that is finitely contracted together has its place in the Absolute, because the infinite beholding is the contraction of all contractions (*contractio contractionum*), it is thus an uncontractable contraction (*contractio enim est incontrahibilis*).'[106] God as a spirit-person is not *only* the infinite, but therefore *also* the transfinite. But then it is no longer an empty, pointless question—how multiplicity can develop out of unity—but the more perspicacious question of how the transfinite subject can be opposed to finite subjects. One sees (and much better than with Eckhart) that the analogy of being must in any event be also an analogy of freedom, that God's pure givenness can only be received, if man too has decided for God in a freely personal way, in a choice both of God and of himself. 'To that extent you compel my freedom, because you cannot be my own possession, unless I possess myself no longer; *but because* you have placed this in my freedom, you do not compel me, but wait, that I myself should choose to belong to myself,' and precisely 'because you do not restrict your limitless goodness, but pour it out freely to all who are receptive of it.'[107]

Nicolas does not want to let go of the first, Plotinian schematism: man's seeing of God is hidden in God's own vision, is a finite, creaturely participation in it, and because

[103] VD 6, 101r.

[104] VD 4, 100r.

[105] VD 5, 100v.

[106] VD 2, 99v.

[107] VD 7, 102r.

God is the not-other, this can mean: 'each face that is able to look into yours sees therein nothing other, nothing different from itself, for it looks into its truth.'[108] But this truth is not man himself, but God; man's vision reaches that which lies unattainably above him, 'and so I am conscious that what I see is not known by me and could never be known'.[109] It is precisely here that Nicolas recalls the Pauline thought that perfection consists not primarily in seeing God, but in being seen by God.[110] 'If I saw, just as I am visible, I would not be a creature.'[111] Even the vision of the creature is, although it is a true vision, an analogical and enigmatic vision, as the beautiful formulation makes perfectly explicit: 'Lord, illuminator of hearts, my countenance is a true countenance, because you, the Truth, have given it to me. And it is an image, because it is not itself the truth, but a reflection of the unconditioned truth which in itself is. I therefore embrace with my concept the truth as what is mirrored in my face, and see therein such an agreement of the likeness with the truth beheld by it, that my countenance is true to the extent that it is an image.'[112] It is therefore consistent that precisely in this treatise the image of the 'wall' (of paradise) should appear, in order to express the shattering of all direct concepts of God in the *coincidentia oppositorum*, *behind* which the beholding God unattainably hides himself.[113] In consequence both the classical concepts appear again, that there can 'be nothing different or opposed to' God,[114] and that otherness remains without positive foundation and therefore without being.[115]

In *De Possest* the spiritual being of God takes on more relief. The ruling intention here is that no worldly being is its own capacity to be ('and this implies the knowledge of our creation'),[116] but that there must be a place where (beyond itself) its being and its capacity to be coincide: this place is God.[117] Here without any doubt there lies for Nicolas that experience of being which for Thomas is manifested as a 'real distinction' between being and essence,[118] only that now the image of God through the power of being which is identical with being as act (*cum esse sit actus*)[119] becomes simply obvious (as the power-centre of each *actio*), through that omnipotence by means of which alone does something become thinkable as nothing and as possibility and (based on that) as otherness.[120] But the thought is only rounded out in the final treatise, *De Apice theoriae*, because only here do the created essences appear not to be derivable by any process of diminution on the part of the Not-other, but are posited only by a positive 'intention'.[121] If in the *Not-other* it is asked, 'why the sun is sun, the moon moon, the earth earth and why anything is what it is', and thereupon the answer follows: 'if I knew that, then I would not be a creature and part of the universe, for my understanding would be the creative fashioner of all and therefore the creator of itself',[122] then the reason for the formation of essences is already imputed to the creator spirit. One may not undervalue the effort of this step for a thinker in the Plotinian tradition for whom it is a matter of saving the classical form of metaphysics and the *analogia*

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[108] VD 6, 101r.
[109] VD 13, 105r.
[110] Gal 4.9; 1 Cor 8.3; 2 Cor 5.11; Phil 3.12.
[111] VD 10, 103v.
[112] VD 15, 107r.
[113] VD cc. 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 20 (also Jesus inside the wall).
[114] VD 13, 105v.
[115] VD 14, 106r.

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[116] P 179r.

[117] P 175r.

[118] *Omnia autem quae post ipsum (Deum) sunt cum distinctione potentiae et actus. Ita quod solus Deus id sit quod esse potest*: P 175r. *Cf.* shortly before: God as *actualitas absoluta*.

[119] P. 180r. Cusa's critic, Gustav Siewerth (*Das Schicksal der Metaphysik von Thomas zu Heidegger*, 1959, 98–114) has paid too little attention to this transition when he says: 'In his thought there is no creation' (108). Of course, the mainlines of Nicolas' thought lie in the realm of 'essentialism'; a text like B 31–32 can convince one of that.

[120] P 182r. *Cf.* 177v: 'therefore because the not-being (of everything or of any particular thing) could exist through the Almighty, it is also thoroughly real, because in the Almighty unconditioned capacity is real.'

[121] As elsewhere already in *De Beryllo* (c. 23) it is said: 'So we see the whole creation as the intention (*intentio*) of the almighty will'; Baur 29. Similarly c. 9 and 31–32, and *De Ludo Globi* I, 154r–v; *mundus . . . perfectus est valde quia secundum Dei optimi liberrimam factus est voluntatem.*

[122] NA 9, Baur 19.

entis without loss in a biblical, Christian context. This effort forces us back to the thought-form of Aquinas: creation on the one hand as *emanatio* of God's fullness of being—*indiminute*, as Cusa says[123]—on the other, as *receptio* not by a nothing (something impossible), but by that which in the creature *corresponds* to the freely-apportioning *possest* of a possibility of receiving;[124] the first is the classical, the second is the Christian aspect of the analogy of being. *Possest* bespeaks much more than absolute simplicity of Being, even as the (easily misunderstood as 'neutral') not-otherness; it speaks of Being as an infinite *over*-mastering of itself and therein as the disclosure of the whole, infinite realm of Being in which God can be himself even outside himself. Without this dimension infinite Being would be restricted to itself. This intuition overwhelms the aging cardinal with renewed freshness: 'nothing is earlier, nothing stronger, nother surer, nothing more essential, nothing more glorious (*gloriosius*) than this capacity',[125] it is the ground of every ground, '*omnium quidditas et hypostasis*, by whose power necessarily what is and what is not is embraced', 'nothing is more luminous, nothing clearer, nothing more beautiful'.[126] As the light is revealed in the visible, so is capacity (*possest*) in Being. Cusa here draws on to a Christian plane the vision of Plato and Plotinus, who raised the Good above Being so as to understand this (Being) as a manifestation (of the Good); he draws in too Eckhart's vision that God is Being because he is Spirit and Freedom; it is the metaphysical dimension of glory which appears to him as *posse ipsum*: the beholding spirit perceives it without exercising power over it: *excellit posse comprehendere*. Again it is the formula of Anselm,[127] which expresses the final implications of analogy and is consciously experienced here as a new, extreme formula: 'this ability of mind to see beyond any comprehensible power and mightiness is the ultimate capacity of mind, in which Capacity itself (i.e., God) reveals itself in an ultimate measure, and, on this side of Capacity-itself, is unlimited. For this capacity for sight is so much ordered towards Capacity-itself, that the mind can foresee whither it is striving, and as the wanderer runs towards the goal of his wandering, . . . so [can the mind] towards Capacity-itself which it sees from afar, and is able to comprehend the incomprehensible in the best possible way. For it is Capacity-itself, when it is manifested in the glory of its majesty, that is alone powerful to still the longing of the mind.'[128]

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[123] DP 2, 194r.

[124] Certainly there is found in Cusa no explicit doctrine of a real distinction, yet his thought ever more strongly converges towards this.

[125] ATh 219v.

[126] 219v.

[127] *Cf.* vol. II, 233, 236.

While Nicolas in such a way raises the classical glory of God up to the glory of the almighty and sovereignly free[129] Christian God, and nevertheless causes the creature's intellectual capacity for sight to be transcendently established at the summit of his desire—beyond its capacity to comprehend—for this free glory, he necessarily finds himself in conflict with the positive theology. More consciously and more systematically than the Fathers of the Church he relates this creaturely longing and the free self-disclosure of the personal God to each other. Nicolas thinks within a sovereign and unbroken classical totality of philosophical theology in which the self-radiating light of the Good as it were automatically passes over to become the 'will to open up to each searcher on his quest and to reveal itself'.[130] On the one hand it remains, as far as man is concerned, within the classical dynamics of *eros*, for 'the dynamism (*vis*) of our reason is inexhaustible on this side of deification',[131] and with Nicolas this dynamism never for a moment yields to the 'indifference' which is at the heart of the 'metaphysics of the Saints'. On the other hand the dynamism of longing cannot attain its own inner target 'without the grace of the creator'[132] (just as a tree can flourish only in the warm light of the sun),[133] and

[128] ATh 220r.

[129] *Cf.* propositions 5 and 7 at the end of ATh, 221r.

[130] QD 199v.

[131] FD 65r.

[132] DP 1, 193r–v.

[133] *Ibid.* 193v.

for the created reason this grace is necessarily the personal self-disclosure of God, that is Jesus Christ as the word of revelation of the Father.[134] To this personal word there corresponds the attitude of faith which for Nicolas is likewise derived directly from the faith of classical philosophy, and, where God is manifest as free and personal, must necessarily so proceed.[135] The Plotinian ἐπιστροφή becomes just as immediately 'humility' in the reception of Christian doctrine,[136] just as the ontological doctrine of God over all things and in all things was already interpreted as God's majesty and humility.[137] So the revelation of creation passes over without a break into the biblical revelation: 'Plato had . . . with his mind conceived of the origin of things on the way of revelation in a way of which the apostle says to the Romans: God has revealed himself to them.'[138] Other than in this light the book of the world could hardly be deciphered or read, something that is however man's task, 'just as little as anyone could recognise a picture of Socrates, . . . if he did not know Socrates'.[139]

If in this way the relative separation between philosophy and theology characteristic of Thomism is again annulled for the sake of a total metaphysic (fashioned after the classical model), then if the believing Christian wants to draw dogmatics immediately into it, there looms up the immediate danger of a mystical rationalism. Under the Anselmian slogan of *intelligere*, indeed of *videre fidem*,[140] Christology especially must take up once again its Origenist form: Christ as the presence of absolute reason in the created reason, enkindling faith through the latter and leading to the understanding of the mystery of God, as the Sun of spirits. 'The word of God has it [the human reason] in itself, so that it does not need to search outside itself, for the mind will find the Word within itself and can approach it through faith';[141] a faith which Nicolas describes equally as choosing love (*dilectio*) and as prayer: but just as easily here will the transition be made to the transcendental reason of Hegel. God is already 'the Spirit of spirits',[142] rather like Leibniz's central monad, indeed he is already that one who is interpreted in the world by means of man: 'You, Lord, who work everything for your own sake alone, have created this whole world with a view to the rational, spiritual nature, as if you were like a painter, who mixes the different colours and blends them one with another in order finally to be able to paint himself.'[143]

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[134] VD 21, 110v.

[135] *Cf.* perhaps P 178v.

[136] P 178r.

[137] VD 13, 106r: 'How exalted you are, Lord over all, and equally how humble, because you are in all things!'

[138] NA 20, Baur 48.

[139] G 73r.

[140] VD 19, 109r.

d. Conjecture or Absolute Knowledge?

At one point Nicolas breaks through the Platonic schema: the human spirit does not appear as graded in an order hierarchically ascending towards the Absolute, it stands in a new proportion to the Absolute: as God (as originally simple unity) is related to the unfolded, real world, so the spirit (as reflected simply unity) is related to an unreal world, thought-out and sketched as a copy. The two relationships are related to reality as exact science and conjecture, because God has in himself the things he has created, while the spirit only looks up to them; but on the other hand, the spirit has its own exactness in so far as it develops the world of numbers out of its own unity, indeed beyond that unites complicatively the world of the senses in its world of spirit.

Here lies a momentous ambivalence. The created spirit, in so far as it is spirit, is *incontractus*; therefore it stands to God not in the relationship of subject and object, but—as *De quarendo Deum* shows—in that of the participation of a finite subject in the absolute subject that holds sway within it (in the *speculatio* or *intuitio* itself).[144] So Nicolas hesitates to class spirit (*mens*) with the rest of the finite (contracted) explications of the infinite God, rather the spirit is *imago complicationis*

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[141] VD 24, 113r.

[142] VD 25, 113v.

[143] *Ibid.*

[144] QD 197v–198r.

divinae prima, in so far as both God and the spirit are *complicatio complicationum*; the spirit too has on the basis of its derived likeness to God 'the power to assimilate itself to any possible explication',[145] i.e., to use itself to make an idea of anything without recourse to (limiting) innate ideas, but simply through its openness to everything in virtue of its capacity for judgment.[146] In that, Protagoras was right: man is the measure of all things;[147] the sensible world is there for his sake and to be measured by him; 'man knows from the knowledge of the perceptive powers of his nature that the sensible is there on account of perception; so he measures the things of sense in order to be able to grasp in sensible form the glory (*gloria*) of the divine reason.'[148] So *mens* comes from *mensura*,[149] as 'a living measure which, measuring something else, displays its own ability; for the spirit does everything in order to measure itself, and yet it does not find its measure which it seeks in everything, except where all is one.'[150] 'As an image of eternal spirit it strives in this, like an image in the truth, to hunt out the measure of itself.'[151] And yet it is itself reflected all-exemplarity,[152] in which the truth 'radiates forth', and to this extent it is a 'second God',[153] representative of the divine countenance in the creation,[154] which is not only an explication of God, but of itself. For if man is complicative as spirit, as soul and body he is explicative.[155] This now almost means that man as spirit prescribes its laws for the world—in particular through his power of numbers—and so at least is a co-origin of the world-harmony.[156] In *De Conjecturis* our spirit unravels its 'puzzle-world' out of itself, in order to look more clearly at itself in this world begotten from itself, so that more deeply stimulated by it it might understand itself more perfectly as an image of the eternal; for the more we deepen (*profundaverimus*) our spirit, the closer we come to attaining the vital centre, God.[157] It is the old way—prescribed particularly emphatically by Gregory of Nyssa[158]—of an ever-deepening, metaphysical self-knowledge in order to behold more clearly the archetype in the image which is actualised on all sides. Cusa only adds that this actualisation of the spirit through its explication of the world—whether it is prescriptive, or receptive—has to happen. If the human image (so the letter to Albergati puts it) 'recognises himself as a living image of his creator, then he beholds his creator while he looks at himself, for he is transported from the image to the original.'[159] But one wonders if such a method of coming to know God can be carried through practically in any other way than through human sketches of the world and therefore man's quests for self-knowledge ever again shattering and thus simply revealing their quality as unauthoritative and conjectural and so proving the proposition: *conjecturalis mundi humana mens forma existit, ut realis divina*?[160] What does it really mean to be the form of a conjectural world, to be a puzzle-world? To understand oneself as a bare 'image',[161] and 'to use a riddle to explain'?[162] It can indeed only mean that man in his self-questioning becomes himself the ultimate puzzle of all world-puzzles, that inexplicable archetypal cypher, which is the point from which all the rest of the world-cyphers derive. This thought is adumbrated but not carried through existentially in Cusa's expositions.

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[145] IM 4, 83v. K. H. Volkmann-Schluck (*Nicolaus Cusanus, Die Philosophie im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit*, 1957) places the *mens* at the centre of the speculative system, whence the opening up to the Renaissance and to Descartes becomes marked.

[146] *Ibid.*

[147] B 36, 192r.

[148] B 37, 192v.

[149] IM 1, 81v; 9, 88v.

[150] *Ibid.* 89v.

[151] IM 11, 90v.

[152] *imago exemplaris omnium.*

[153] So according to Trismegistus: B 6, 184v.

[154] IM 3, 83v.

[155] B 18, 186v.

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[156] *Cf.*, e.g., IM 7: *mens est ita numerus divinus . . . quod est unitas simplex ex sua vi numerum suum exercens*; 86v.

[157] C 1.2, 41v–42r.

[158] *Présence et Pensée* (1942): La Philosophie de l'image, 81–100.

[159] *Cusanus-Texte* IV/3, p. 28. *Cf. Compendium* 8, 172r.

[160] C 1.3, 41v. [The human mind is the form of the conjectural world, as the divine mind is of the real world.]

[161] VD 15, 107r.

[162] B 6, 184v.

Therefore finally the opposite way of thought gets the better of it: the philosophical longing—not simply Platonic as δαιμόνιον between God and the world, but quite really as a θεῖον—takes itself and its inner infinity as the vehicle for the knowlege of God, powerfully supported by the Christian revelation which seems to allow such an advance into the depths of the heart of God. The way in which Eckhart and in his own fashion too Ramon Lull (whom Cusa also had attentively followed) thought,[163] together with the impact of the renewed classical tradition, favoured the attempted construction of a total science fashioned out of philosophy and Christian theology together.[164]

What does the call to divine sonship mean, Nicolas was asked; the treatise *de Filiatione Dei* works this out in a way inspired by Origen and Eckhart: the sinking of the creature into the trinitarian process of begetting, the ascent of the yearning, conjectural knowledge into the mutual intuition of the Father and the eternal Son, through incorporation into Him, through actualisation of his potential presence (as *divinum*) in the finite reason.[165] So there takes place in all earnest a promotion through grace into the sphere of the eternal Logos, right to the participation in his omniscience,[166] a promotion from the dependence of the pupil to the maturity of the one who understands himself.[167] Because the beholding spirit promoted to the status of son is present in the Logos (where possibility and reality coincide), it lives the total life, 'as if only all that which is in it lives', indeed it is advanced to the place of the last coincidence, because in God every creature is God himself: 'and God will be for him not an other, not different and not distinct from precisely *his* spirit . . . Any otherness or any difference lies far behind the true childhood.' And in Plotinus' sense, in which Hegel must recognise himself: 'The whole pure reason brings everything intelligible (νόημα) to intellection (νόησις), for each object of knowledge is in the mind the mind itself.' But then the mind *is* the truth, which has become eternity, because outside the living intellect which is present to itself nothing else can exist. 'Therefore sonship is the annulling (*ablatio*) of all otherness and difference and the resolution (*resolutio*) of all things in the One, something that is at the same time the transfusion (*transfusio*) of the One into everything, and precisely this is deification (*theôsis*).' This 'coincidence of the being of one in which all is, and of the being of all in which one is' is the perfect echo at the end of the Middle Ages of the theology of John Erigena, but unquestioningly foreshadows the coming Idealism; sonship is absolute knowledge, which is effected philosophically through progressive synthesis (as simplification) and theologically through being born together with the Logos. That the *conceptus absolutus*[168] of God is attainable from below, is indeed denied, since analogy and *docta ignorantia* hinder it; but the means of faith, of grace, of the God-man acquire what is sufficient for this. It is already striking how in the third, Christological book of *Learned Ignorance* the *a priori* construction of the Incarnation as the union between the absolutely greatest (God) and that which is greatest in the world (the humanity of Christ) seems to be worked out quite unquestionably where before it was always inculcated that the concept of a greatest-in-the-world was an internal contradiction because something greater would always be thinkable. So then there is suddenly available an exact proportion between God and the world which had seemed to be excluded by the imprecise character not only of finite thinking in images but also by the finite being of images, and indeed available for a knowledge which understands itself neither simply as theology (which never finally passes beyond faith into knowledge) nor simply as philosophy (because it will never seriously attain a rational deduction of the mysteries of the faith). The bitter reproaches that Nicolas heaped against the theological efforts of the

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[163] *Eusebio Colomer: Nikolaus von Kues und Raimund Llull. Aus Handschriften der Kueser Bibliothek* (*Quellen und Studien zur Gesch. d. Philos.*), ed. by Paul Wilpert, II (1961).

[164] *Nihil ergo scitur, nisi omnia sciantur*; IM 10, 89v.

[165] FD 65r. On incorporation into Christ, already: DI 3.12, 33v, on adoption within the Trinity: VD 18, 109r.

[166] FD 65v–66r.

[167] FD 65v, 69r, also IM 14, 93v.

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[168] P 179r.

Schools are not quite spared Nicolas himself; and that goes especially for the ever-continuing formal trinitarian speculations which only have meaning if they play around a mystery declared elsewhere, from afar, but which go astray as soon as they in all earnest think themselves capable of leading up to it from below. Christ is, as the absolute knower, ever again the 'way' to knowledge,[169] and to follow him is above all imitation of the teacher,[170] 'whose understanding is both truth as well as copy', this latter in the highest measure beyond all reaching.[171] Correspondingly faith is (in the sense of the early Augustine) wholly a means.[172] Here too belongs the tendency, which becomes stronger towards the end of his life, to pass beyond the Areopagitical negative theology to something positive:[173] for in the event of the speculative process, there comes the moment when thought is changed into true seeing and out of the 'difficulty' of dialectic is shown as something 'easy' (*facilis*),[174] incontrovertibly evident[175]—*if* it is once seen. So he can even speak against an exaggerated transcendence; if the finite is the negation, then the infinite is the negation of the negation, and therefore the pure assertion, as Nicolas, with Eckhart, affirms.[176]

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[169] *Via ad Seipsum qui est veritas*: DI 3, 24r.

[170] *Excit.* 8, S. *Crucifixus resurrexit*, fol. 145, *cf.* also the whole, very intellectualist Christology in *De Videndo Deo*, c. 19–25.

[171] VD 20, 110r–v.

[172] DP 5, 196v; VD 24, 113r; similarly in the abruptly beginning theological intermezzo in *De Possest*, 178rv (where faith becomes 'seeing God', indeed 'seeing oneself'), and with a pedagogic turn in the letter to Albergati, no. 50f., *Cusanus-Texte* IV/7, 49f.

[173] Which at the beginning governed everything: DI 1.26; 12r.

[174] *Facilis via*: DP 1, 193v; *breviter atque facile, facili compendio*: G 69v, 70r; *certe ista facilitas est maxima et stupenda . . . quod Deus est ipsa infinita facilitas*: IS 2, 78v; *o miranda facilitas difficilium!*: *ibid.* 80v; *Ipso Posse nihil facilius*: ATh 219v; *Hanc nunc facilitatem tibi pandere propono*: *ibid.* 220v etc.

[175] So above all the overwhelmingly clear simplicity of the concept of *Posse* as also that of the *Non-aliud.*

[176] Texts in the note on p. 171 by P. Wilpert to the German tr. of *De Non-aliud* (1952). *Cf.* G 70r: *nec te moveat Platonicorum quamvis subtilis consideratio Primum imparticipabiliter superexaltatum*. And P 177v, speaking of a *humanum conceptum ducentem aenigmatice* to a *qualiscumque de Deo positiva assertio*. Indeed in P 182v it is shown that every negation (e.g. non-being) already presupposes affirmation (Being) and can only cancel the finite mode

Such vision, where it is systematically interpreted and ordered, is theologically an anticipation of the eschatological essential vision of the Father in the Son, in the philosophical context of an intuition of the Absolute which comes to transcend the negative theology. Because this contradicts the whole enterprise of a doctrine of *analogia entis* and an enigmatics, Cusa does not let himself be tied down to it; it can only be maintained that he has not sufficiently considered the danger of the paths he takes and has not assumed responsibility for their misuse. This aprioristically understood Christology (in the last book of *Learned Ignorance*) was certainly meant in an Anselmian way, but it opened the way for Hegel, because the exact proportion between God and the world in the God-man—philosophically completely unmaintainable—finally is made accessible to reason. So then too the manifold philosophical and theological attempts at harmonisation of all partial truths into a complete system remain in an ambiguous light. There are the philosophical concordances, as in the 'wonderful teaching' of the *idiota*, 'which undertakes to reconcile all philosophies one with another',[177] sketched in the characteristic propositions of *De Possest* and the *Hunt for Wisdom*.[178] Already the *Learned Ignorance* has sought to understand the many gods as explications of the one true God and thus secured for the partial religious systems their share in the truth: the mistake would lie rather in the tendency of 'popular religion' to absolutise, from which the wise remain relatively free.[179] *De Filiatione Dei*, in a way corresponding to its gnostic character, underlines the unity of all philosophies to the point that even contradictory utterances about the absolute—God is all, God is nothing, God is, God is not—are reconciled thanks to the

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of Being. 'In the way of negation you see indeed *simplici intuitu* that everything that is presupposed, which precedes non-being, is the *entitas* of each being to all eternity.' The *Compendium* too (169r) begins with the *intuitus* of Being above all conceptual knowledge, so as in this light to read every being as 'sign' and 'expression' (*expressio*): 171r.

[177] IM 3, 83r.

[178] P, after the Magdeburg Codex 166 tr. by E. Bohnenstädt (*Vom Können-Sein* 1947), p. 47f.; V 9, 204rv.

[179] DI 1.25, 11v.

coincidentia oppositorum and lead astray the wise not at all.[180] Even atheism—as a necessarily fragmentary utterance—is incorporated into the total system. The philosophical systematic passes over directly into the theological; begun ecclesiastically in Nicolas' great treatise for the Council of Basle (*De concordantia catholica*, 1433), it is continued in the heavenly council under the presidency of the Logos, which is to synthesise all world-religions without any loss to their own authentic features (*De pace fidei*, 1453–4).[181] It suffices to say about that, that the speculative background for both (as least as strongly as for Augustine's *City of God*) is Platonic: the earthly church as (ultimately, 'conjecturally')[182] a reflection of the heavenly Jerusalem must imitate it by concord (*concordantia*) as much as it can: both within and beyond the Church. There is one thing above all to be avoided: schism. But how the heavenly unity is represented within the Church—more in a conciliar or in a papal-monarchical way—is not from the Platonic perspective the main consideration. Jaspers has rightly pointed out that the concept of representation varies: between the universal-philosophical (everything transitory represents the eternal), the juridical-philosophical (the ordered forms of Church and State represent the abiding spirit of the community) and the constitutional (elected or appointed delegates represent the people).[183] Cusa endeavours as a Catholic to think universally and broadly within the Church; he wants to understand the Church, like the incarnate God in Christ, only against the cosmic background; even the ecclesiastically positive must be utterly transparent to the whole truth between God and man. The same thing is attempted on a higher plane by the treatise *On the Peace of Faith* which not only wants in all earnest to exhibit the share of truth each religion has in the whole Logos, but in the heavenly council of all religions requires and outlines the indispensably necessary reconciliation between the absoluteness and the relativity of the Catholic Church. The individual steps, which need not be convincing, will not be pursued here, only the undertaking as a whole is important now: because with the greatest courage it demands not only practical tolerance—to fight with the sword for the peace of Christ is pure contradiction and can convince no-one[184]—but theoretical agreement. It envisages the same point as the present book: to behold the glory of what is Christian without any reduction of its absoluteness in the context of the total glorification of God in his revelation in the world. Yet Cusa's attempt seems to be essentially hindered in its working-out by the fact that he projects the world-religions on to the background of the (Platonic-)philosophical and thus, as has been shown, sees in Christ above all the Logos, the perfect teacher of Wisdom who has appeared. Here lies that limit which will bring the next steps after Cusa (for instance Thomas More's *Utopia*) very close to liberalism. In the Logos as Wisdom the 'religious element in mankind' becomes available for this; thus the decisive glory of the God of Jesus Christ is emptied out. In order to discover it both embedded in and lifted from the background of myth, philosophy and religion, it must be depicted otherwise. That Cusa knew about this 'other Christianity' is not to be doubted and emerges clearly from the wealth of his sermon-outlines and notes.[185] That his will for universality is pure, is equally clear; but the synthesis betrays—more distinctly than with Aquinas—that the traditional structure of biblical revelation and of its glory in the Platonic-Plotinian context with its own conception of glory could not fully do justice to the biblical concept of glory. The modern age will unveil the consequences.

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[180] FD 68v: *Nihil itaque reperiet vere theologizans scholaris, quod ipsum perturbet in omne varietate conjecturarum. Nec minus apud ipsum hic dicit, qui ait nihil penitus esse* [*deum*], *quam ille qui ait omnia esse quae videntur. Nec verius hic dicit qui ait deum* omnia esse, *quam ille qui ait ipsum* nihil esse *aut* non esse.

[181] On the historical context of this treatise see the detailed introduction by Ludw. Mohler to the tr. (Meiner 1943).

[182] *Ecclesia conjecturalis: Epist. I ad Rodericum de Trevino* (in the second part of the second volume), fol. 3v.

[183] Jaspers, l.c. 173f.

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[184] Letter to John of Segovia, *Akademie-Ausgabe* VII (1959), 97.

[185] *Cf.* especially the 19 great sermons from the early period, tr. by Sikora and Bohnenstädt with an introduction by the latter (*Predigten 1430–1441*, Kerle 1952); and also the many extracts from the *Excitationes* in Scharpff, l.c.

5. CLASSICAL MEDIATION

a. Refuge with the Past

It is unnecessary to depict the relationship between metaphysics and glory in the modern period from the Renaissance to the present in detail: it is well enough known, and, in the goal towards which it strives, is manifest to the eyes of all. It is best understood from a bird's eye view which reveals to us why certain prominences, which from beneath seem to be great mountains, could not disturb the flow of an inexorably advancing stream. Even such sublime heights as Ficino or Leibniz or Spinoza, or Kant or Goethe or Hegel, must not now be wondered at in isolation, but must be seen as waves in the stream. It is one of the most glorious periods of human history—add to the thinkers and the poets, Italian and German music, French painting, English and Spanish theatre—but stirred up by the inner contradiction of entrusting itself to two mutually cancelling spiritual fields of force, beside the Christian, which have been already characterised at the beginning of the last chapter[1] and the opposition between which is already palpable in the work of Cusa. On the one hand, there is a cry for help to classical piety to be rooted afresh in the primordial tradition, when in the late Middle Ages the Assize Courts of Being are beginning to quake; and, on the other, a bold storming ahead on the ways of thought which Christianity had certainly opened up, but only to those who would tread them in faith and in love: something that amounts to a reduction of revelation through logic to a speculative doctrine of God. The same thinkers will be ground down between these two opposing tendencies—one could mention the tragedy of Spinoza, or of Schelling, or of Scheler—and in the end, as a matter of history, classical antiquity, fighting on foreign soil, has to lose the battle; but also speculation about God, decking itself out with foreign, that is Christian, feathers achieves its inner end, to reveal itself as that which it was in secret from the beginning: a Titanic, Promethean human construct.[2] Does that mean then that Western history from the Renaissance to the present has been a false trail that can be disposed of and forgotten with impunity or even with profit? By no means. But the history, the lesson of which is so comprehensible that the feeblest schoolboy must be able to follow it, has in this period led up to an unavoidable decision. As far as classical antiquity is concerned, Christianity, as its fulfilment, possesses the key to it, and anyone who tries to bypass Christianity and reach back behind it, necessarily misses its mysteriously radiating glory. Michangelo and Hölderlin understood that. And in what concerns the knowledge of the heart of God's mysteries: here too Christianity offers the only approach. Whoever violently breaks through the doors, finds the treasuries bare: the experience of Hegel and Feuerbach proves that. The development speaks neither against the re-rooting in the primordial tradition nor against a bold progress into the future of thought. The seventeenth century falsely located the fundamental decision in this Either-Or and unloosed an embittered 100-year war, 'la querelle des anciens et des modernes'. What for thought can be 'developed' (and therefore must be), avoids error only when it thinks within the horizon of the primordial tradition, where archetypally the depth of Being as a whole has been opened out. There Heidegger is right. But for the perception of the world it holds good that no Titanic over-powering of the forms of nature makes up for, and still less surpasses, the Goethean vision of things; this most ancient, Greek view of the world and mankind must remain a guide to all scientific and sociological-cybernetic advance; and even the ideologies of evolution (often in transcendentalist clothing), which seek finally to do away with the idea of a primordial tradition, could not disturb the vision of the 'primordial phenomena' in the Goethean sense. Did not the same Goethe, who perceived the uniqueness of forms, also know how to see the metamorphoses of plants and animals? Did not Aristotle, who here stands behind him, understand how to combine the finality of μορφή with the unforeseeable generation and decay of forms in matter, so that the idea of an evolution of forms, could it only have been scientifically proved, would not have shocked him at all? It becomes apparent from this that the 'battle between the ancients and the moderns' is a mock-battle, which obscures the real intellectual and historical points of engagement. The decision falls uniquely—and the history of the modern period has no clearer result—for or against the Glory of Being, and history has fashioned the Either—Or so simply that it has become a decision between Christianity and nihilism. The 'gods', the 'divine', hold sway still only where God's personal love in the Son of God is recognised and acknowledged, and the storming-ahead of metaphysical speculation is bridled only where thought—in the same epiphany—confronts the not-to-be-mastered majestic freedom of the God of love. That this simple result has always been obscured, both in the past and the present and certainly will be, too, in the future, by thousands of hypotheses, which are just so many attempts at evasion, needs no longer to be wondered at after this sketch of Christian history which proved itself to be just as full of such attempts. Over against all these stands the fact of the present's enormous loss of glory, which, itself played about by the most contrary hypotheses, of itself forms a quiet utterance not to be overheard, if there is anyone, like a Max Picard, with an ear for it.

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[1] B 42.

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[2] On this unmasking, *cf.* my account of German Idealism under the *Leitmotiv* of Prometheus (*Apokalypse des deutschen Seele*, vol. I (1939), newly reprinted under the title *Prometheus*, 1947).

The appeal of the humanist movement to classical antiquity for a renewed, more inward presence than had existed in the course of the Middle Ages was an event which perhaps first, on reflection, points to the depths of anxious need to which the Christian consciousness had fallen prey. The movement of these 'humanist' laymen, who, concerned for the *studia humanitatis*, for grammar, rhetoric, poetry, ethics, pursued a predominantly literary programme, stood neither in the service of ecclesiastical (clerical) theology nor in conflict with it (except where it had degenerated into a decadent scholasticism); it was, and understood itself to be, 'religious' precisely where, in the service of truth, the primordial sources of Western culture were, through the power of philology in its pure form and in the whole fulness which it had received, to be laid open as the living ground of all that was to come later. The Greek classics, and the no less studied Greek Church Fathers, both came, recovered in their original form, from Byzantium to Italy at the same period. How such access to the 'most ancient documents of the human race' was understood ideologically is indicated by the attempt of Gemistos Plethon (c.1355–1450) to follow Proclus' example in interpreting the Greek gods allegorically and to set beside Plato, as more ancient sources, Orpheus and Pythagoras, Hermes Trismegistus and Zoroaster (the 'Chaldean Oracles'), all witnesses to a universal-theistic revelation, the mainstream of which flowed into the Bible.

Long before, soon after Dante, Albertinus Mussato had in Latin epistles celebrated the value of mythic poetry, which in enigmatic form expressed the same thing as the Holy scriptures openly said: poetry is a second theology or an *ars divina*, and it should be linked to the tradition reaching from Lactantius and Augustine through Isidore to Thomas Aquinas: the most ancient 'theologians'—Orpheus, Musaeus, Linus—had been poets.[3] Among the many reasons Mussato brings forward for his comparison, he emphasises this original historical unity, but also that the poet is a *vates*, that poetry contains in itself an eternal fame and that Holy scripture itself often makes use of poetic forms.[4] It throws up again the problem of the veiling of the truth in images that had been a concern of scholasticism, and was now to be discussed in detail by Petrarch.[5] Against the scholastic ranking of poetry as the

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[3] E. R. Curtius, 'Theologische Poetik im italienischen Trecento' in ZRPH 60 (1940), 1–15; *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittlealter* (1948^2), 220–226 (Eng. tr. (1953), 215–221). Karl Vossler, *Poetische Theorien der italienischen Frührenaissance* (Literarhistor. Forschungen, Heft 12, Berlin, 1900).

[4] Mussato, *Opera* (Venice, 1636).

[5] *Invective contra medicum*, ed. P. G. Ricci (Ed. Storia e Letteratura, Rome, 1950).

'lowest science',[6] Petrarch raises it above the liberal arts (among which it is not mentioned); this sets it by itself in relationship with theology: 'I would almost say that theology is God's poetry.'[7] Salutati drops the hesitation in this utterance and openly explains: *nullum . . . dicendi genus majus habet cum divinis eloquiis et ipsa Divinitate commercium quam eloquium poetarum.*[8] *Maxime cum certum [sit], ipsam divinam Scripturam nihil aliud esse quam poeticam.*[9] Boccaccio has given in books 14 and 15 of his *de Genealogiis Deorum Gentilium* a justification for his wearisome compilation that comes to the same thing: the poetic myths of the ancients are true theology—*il nostro Dante* can interpret the ways of theological utterance in images, *la onde è da chiamare Theologo sacro.*[10] Earlier he had compared the 'fables' of the poet with that which 'our theologians have called *figura*'[11] and in the *Life of Dante* the formula of Salutati is already used: 'that theology is nothing more than a divine poetry. What is it if not poetry, when it is said in Holy Scripture that Christ is now a lion, now a lamb . . .? How else can the words of the Redeemer in the Gospel be heard than as a speech with a hidden meaning, which manner of speech we are accustomed to call allegory? So then it is clearly shown that poetry is not only theology, but also that theology is poetry.'[12] If the prophets speak in images and Jesus in parables, then for Boccaccio these forms of utterance fall univocally under the general concept of *favola*, which then lets itself shade off into different forms. The picture develops when the typical existence of the poets comes to be described as one of poverty and solitude—with examples from Homer and Euripides, Ennius, Plautus and Virgil up to Dante and Petrarch; unnoticed, the poet takes over the place of the *poverello* and becomes—one needs only to leaf through Walter Musch's *Tragische Literaturgeschichte*—the modern type of the saint.

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[6] Curtius, *Europ. Lit.*, l.c., 230, 473–476 (Eng. tr., 226f., 478–482).

[7] *Ep.fam.* X. 4.

[8] *Epistolario*, ed. Novati (1891–1905), III (XII.20), 540–542. [No way of speaking has more to do with divine utterances and the divinity itself than the speech of poets.]

[9] *Ibid.*, IV.I.233. [Since it is most certain that the divine Scripture itself is nothing else than poetical.]

[10] Ital. edition (Venice, 1588), 258. [Wherefore he is to be called a sacred Theologian.]

[11] Leben Dantes (deutsch von Otto Frh. v. Taub, 1909), 49. Eng. tr. by P. H. Wickseed, *The Early Lives of Dante* (London, 1907), pp. 1–11. *Cf.* Rolf Bachem, 'Dichtung als verborgene Theologie, ein dichtungstheoretischer Topos vom Barock bis zur Goethezeit und seine Vorbilder' in *Abh. zur Phil., Psychol. und Päd.* 5 (Bouvier, Bonn, 1956).

[12] 14th Book, 236. (Eng. tr. 1. 72).

Boccaccio in the end saves himself from becoming in the least injurious to Christianity with his allegories of the gods. But what he and the others mentioned here were striving for is a back-projection of the isolated biblical revelation on to a primarily general, historical revealedness of God: in other words, on to a total poetic-theological symbolism, which, eighty years later when learned humanism has achieved its philosophical amplification and deepening in Cusa, Ficino, Pico and Leone, broadens to form a general cosmic horizon.

MARSILIO FICINO's lofty and long-influential philosophical vision is disarming in that it is intended as both sincerely Christian and sincerely 'Platonic' (or rather Plotinian). Both the treatise *de Christiana religione* and the commentary on the Epistle to the Romans[13] bear witness to an attachment, taken for granted, to the Church's faith. Yet when he asserts that 'his intention in the re-awakening of the ancients has been above all to serve divine providence',[14] much more is meant by that than an apologetic or paedagogical service,[15] rather the projection of what is Christian into a theology of humanity (brought to its highest development by Plato). Both are equally true: Ficino reads Plato with Christian eyes, and the Bible with Platonic eyes. That both are coextensive without remainder, that all differences are dissolved in a final presupposed identity beyond all analogies, is for him not at all problematic.[16]

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[13] *Opera omnia* (Basle, 1576; repr. 1959), 1–77, 427–472.

[14] I 871, 3.

[15] As Raymond Marcel (*Marsile Ficin* (1958), 583–602) too onesidedly emphasises.

[16] P. O. Kristeller (*The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino* (Columbia University Press, 1943, p. 36) carefully notes that Ficino deals with Being

The already frequently-mentioned identification of Eros and Agape (with which belongs Platonic friendship) has here reached perfection, but certainly not in such a way (as from Nygren's[17] perspective one would like to conclude) that Eros has overpowered and annihilated Agape. Already with Plato and Plotinus it has been shown that in its highest manifestation eros is thought of as self-less, because it loves the Good for the sake of the Good, so that it can become a reflection of the highest Good, radiating like the sun freely and gratuitously. This vision overwhelms the Christian Ficino and makes him interpret all being as beauty, for he sees in it the gracious self-radiation of the Good, deepened in a Christian sense as eternal love.

God as the centre of all things is the Good; the four circles which radiate from this centre—*mens* (=*nous*), *anima*, *natura*, *materia*—are the beautiful.[18] In place of *pulchrum* there can also stand *splendor*, *claritas*, *fulgor*. In the biblical-personal enhancement of the Platonic, the world-being can therefore directly be seen as *splendor divini vultus*, which reflected and refracted in the mechanism of the world appears as *gratia*: attractiveness and grace in one.[19] It is to be noticed that in this view *glory and beauty are simply identical*: as the beautiful is the radiant manifestation of the Good, so is the world the manifestation and streaming-forth of God. The intellectual creature has been created to perceive the wonder and grace of the eternal Good in the wonder of the Beautiful. Thus the authentic intellectual act is contemplation and love in one. 'The avidity (*aviditatem*), which unceasingly cleaves to the countenance of God, that I call love. O that such would fall to our lot!' The world in its beauty is therefore God's bait, hooked (so Plato's *Symposium*) to each individual beautiful form, which at the same time fascinates and disappoints us, because it promises more than it can keep and points to more

in practice as the highest genus of all universals, and that he never mentions the analogy of being, although on the other hand he never excludes it either in his cautious formulation—as later a Giordano Bruno and Spinoza will do.

[17] *Agape and Eros* (tr. by P. S. Watson, rev. ed. 1953).

[18] *De Amore* (=commentary on Plato's *Symposium*), or. 2, c. 3; 1324.

[19] *Ibid.*, or. 5, c. 4; 1336.

than it has within itself: 'Men strive after God's form and their striving is implanted in them by God. Our longing for God too is enkindled by him when the bodily instinct is enticed by anything that encounters the senses. And so much the more, so much the most powerfully, can the highest God attract than the slightest good things. For in fact . . .: the luminous brightness of the highest Good flashes within each individual being, and where it shines with greater affinity, there above all it attracts the beholder to itself . . . and compels him to honour this radiating being as a higher nature (*numen*), indeed to strive towards nothing else than to lay aside its old nature and to be changed itself into the radiance. In this it becomes evident that he cannot be satisfied with the sight or touch of the Beloved, but often calls out: this person has something in himself that sets me on fire and I myself no longer understand what I am striving after. So, by the radiance that breaks forth from a beautiful human being, . . . the soul is drawn up by God, as with a bait, to become itself God. But God would be, as it were, a wicked tyrant, if he kindled in us a longing that remained eternally unquenchable.'[20] The longings of Plato and Plotinus are here provided, as it were, with a Christian stimulus: 'The lovers do not know what they want to thirst for, for they do not think of God himself who yet has mixed in with each creature a secret taste of himself like a sweet fragrance.'[21] Love is—as Franciscan mysticism had radicalised it—the drawing of the heart to God beyond all knowing and understanding, and this drawing in man (which at the same time constitutes his spiritual being) is his being ontically an answer to the creator's outpouring of love. Creation is first of all the discharging of chaos or matter from God, which secondly however is immediately called back by him to obtain God's form in return (ἐπιστροφή) and homecoming to the Light.[22] So the ancient poet-theologians said that eros came into being immediately after chaos and in its answering primordial movement has become cosmos.[23] Thus there rules the circular movement: 'Insofar as it rises in God and attracts to him, it is called beauty; insofar as it proceeds into the world and brings enchantment to it, love; insofar as, flowing back to the author, it unites his work with him, holy delight (*voluptas*).'[24] For Ficino there can be no other love than religious love, even love between human beings, whether sexual or between friends, if it is love at all and not egoistic impulse, has its realisation uniquely in God. Doubtless Dante and the poets of the *dolce stil nuovo* have powerfully prepared the way here, as has Petrarch; yet what Ficino for the first time calls 'Socratic' or 'Platonic' love has been a fresh discovery for him by means of the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. But Augustine's longing for God too and what Ficino made of *caritas* in the epistle to the Romans, makes its influence felt.

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[20] *Theologia Platonica*, 1.13, C. 1; 306.

[21] *De amore*, or. 2, c. 6; 1326.

[22] *Ibid.*, or. 1, c. 2; 1321.

If then the eros of the creature is always first of all an answer to the divine beckoning back of grace, so that, on account of the eternal prevenience of grace it can be called 'divine' or even '*daemonic*',[25] then this eros can, without further ado, be explained as agape, if only it is considered that the beckoning of grace to the chaotic sinner is accomplished in the incarnate love of Jesus Christ. The *caritas diffusa per Spiritum Sanctum in cordibus nostris* proceeds from the *bonum diffusivum sui*, which graciously provokes (*provocat*) us to an answering love.[26] God has died for us in Christ, but all true love essentially means such a death to oneself so as to live only in the beloved, it is 'bitter' as this 'voluntary death', and anyone is a murderer who will not love a lover in return and thus not give him the opportunity to rise again in the beloved.[27] Ficino has no difficulty, therefore, in elucidating God's act of love in Christ by Plotinus and Denys.

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[23] *Ibid.* Cf. Hesiod, Vol. IV of this work, p. 80 (Eng. tr.), and as a final form of this *philosophoumenon* its depicition by Soloviev, (Vol. III of this work, pp. 279ff.). It is the concept of creation in Teilhard de Chardin also.

[24] *Ibid.*, or. 2, c. 2; 1324.

[25] or. 6, c. 2; 1341–2: *quoniam a Deo descendit, deus, quoniam a daemonibus* [i.e., from the angels and the spirits of the cosmic spheres] *confirmatur, daemon est appellandus* (1343).

[26] *In Pauli Ep. Comm.* 471.

[27] *De Amore*, or. 2, c. 8; 1327.

Is he not here silently passing over whatever does not come into his identity system of *eros* and *caritas*? All true love is mediated by beauty, all real love is mutual gift of self, indeed 'return',[28] something that only holds when both lovers, at least implicitly, love God and each other in God and for God's sake. But how is Christ's love for the sinner in his ugliness and unlovingness to be brought under the rubric of this general mystical death in love? At least it belongs on the side of God who loves a world which is not yet; and as a human gesture it is that which expresses God's love as comparable with none other. Pico della Mirandola sensed something of this and sharply attacked to his teacher and friend: *quanti errori . . . commetta el nostro Marsilio confundendo in tutto* (that is, God's love for the world and the world's love for Him, then love as *desiderio di bellezza* and the love of friends, which is something else)[29]—but then again went on himself to define love as longing for beauty and leave Christian love quite on one side.

Ficino's teaching had given the courtly, troubadour cult of the late Middle Ages its theological and philosophical justification even more than Dante had. Ficino creates the literary form of the *epistola amatoria* (according to which love is understood in its Platonic sense and as the pinnacle of a cultivated style of life), he initiated the countless *trattati d'amore*[30] of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Among these the tightly-packed synthesis of LEONE EBREO in his *Dialoghi d'Amore*[31] had the widest success, even outstripping that of Ficino. This doctor (like Ficino), son of the last great biblical commentator of the Jewish Middle Ages, Yitshaq Abrabanel, like his father a restless wanderer, came with Pico into touch with with the Platonic Academy and created for the Renaissance that identification of a personal intensity of love characteristic of the Old Testament with a world-view, explained and fully fashioned after the pattern of antiquity, as had once already been accomplished by Philo, and in the Middle Ages by Ibn Gebirol and Maimonides, and would again emerge in the Baroque period with Spinoza, in Idealism with Cohen, and finally in Bergson and the Jewish disciples of George: always in such a way that the intensity, with which beauty was declared to be the ground of being of all things, was nourished, apart from the much more exposed and sober utterances of the ancients, by an unknown or unavowed loan from the glory of the biblical God.

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[28] Ep. to Ermalao Barbaro, 777–778.

[29] *Commento sopra una canzona de amore*, II.1, in *Scritti vari a cura di Eugenio Garin* (Ed.nat. dei Classici del pensiero italiano I, 1942), 488. [How many errors . . . our Marsilio commits by confounding everything.]

[30] L. Tonelli, *L'Amore nella poesia e nel pensiero del Rinascimento* (Florence, 1933). John C. Nelson shows in his *Renaissance Theory of Love* (NY, 1958) that Giordano Bruno too belongs here.

[31] Ed. with an account of the life and work of Leone (etc.) by Carl Gebhart, (curis societatis Spinozanae, 1929).

Again, therefore, it is a monism of religious love, for which in the act of *theoria* all is transparent to God: an erotic monism working with an analogy of God and the world, portrayed throughout in accordance with the ancient understanding, which however with Bruno and with Spinoza, who was deeply influenced by Leone, will become a theoretical and systematic monism. The erotic monism unites—as, fundamentally, do Plato in the *Phaedrus* and Ficino—spiritualism (as the dynamic transcendence of each individual form through longing) with symbolism (as a lasting gaze at the beauty of the individual form, in which the infinite beauty shines forth).[32] The spiritual and religious dynamic towards the highest beauty gives the moral measure to the relationship with individual beauty; it is itself one with the world-being, which, as with Ficino, is finally (as 'soul' of the world) *appetitus*, *desiderium*.[33] World-being is already chaos or matter turned back to the primordial love, which ascending from form to form and relinquishing the lower for the sake of the higher ('thus called by many a prostitute') pursues love of itself through to God.[34]

Now (in Plotinian fashion) God as *bello bellificante* is raised above the cosmos as *bello bellificato*, which stands in relation to him as a son to a father;[35] thus God can be designated as 'highest artist',[36] indeed as 'master builder'[37] of a perfect work; for Leone is not only an heir to the Old Testament, he is also the contemporary of Bramante and Leonardo. But then the relationship of God to the world is, as with Eriugena, Cusa and Ficino, one of centre to the periphery, of implication to explication, of the Good manifesting itself as the Beautiful, a relationship that for Plotinus possesses the highest exaltation (of the One over the many); the beauty is therefore understood, in opposition to the Renaissance artists' 'vulgar' aesthetics of proportion (especially, Leone Battista Alberti), in the Plotinian sense of the 'form' of the 'idea that shines through', which awakens the *eros* for the infinite.[38] As with Ficino, who in imitation of the classical and medieval metaphysics of light composed several treatises on light and the sun, light takes on with Leone a more than merely metaphorical meaning: it is the first manifestation—as simple beauty—of the primordial spiritual light, the single-formed mother of the differentiated beauty of colour and form:[39] already the way is clear for Goethe's doctrine of colour.

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[32] *Dialogue* III.113a, 129b–130a.

[33] Kristeller, *Ficino*, l.c., ch. 10 (*appetitus naturalis*), 171–199.

[34] *Dialogue* II. 10b–11a.

Of Leone's aesthetic metaphysics, Menendez y Pelayo[40] has said that nowhere before Hegel had such an idealist aesthetics been more comprehensively developed. It is important as mediating and inspiring the great subsequent systems. The Plotinian rungs of Being are rungs, objectively of beauty, subjectively of love: world-soul and the intellectual realm of ideas mediate to the glowing centre of Being, which streams forth into the many in order through longing 'to draw all things to itself'. In the homecoming to God the acts of *intellectio*, of *amor* and of *fruitio* (Ficino: *voluptas*) are one: as that *amore intellettuale*,[41] which, dying to individual being, surrenders itself to the One—Spinoza's highest philosophical act. The descent of God becomes ascent to God, and the cosmic *circolo amoroso* is closed:[42] descending, it is beauty enticing attraction; ascending, it is that *eros* which, a Platonic mixture of fullness and need, charm and want, presses towards eternity.[43]

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[35] III. 124b.

[36] III.100a.

[37] II.72b, III.106b.

[38] III.101a, b; III.37a.

[39] III.102b–104b.

[40] *Historia de las ideas estéticas en España*, III.60 (cit. in Gebhart, l.c., 63).

[41] III.99a; *amore intellettivo*: III.141b.

Here gapes that *aporia* which Pico discovered in Marsilio but had not been able to resolve. If creaturely love is essentially longing, how can it be quenched? How can it attain the form of divine love, which cannot be longing? Leone builds a bridge from both banks: God as infinite blessedness cannot grow through the blessedness of the creature, yet the communication of His love to the creature effects a glorification of God, as it were a super-fulfilling of his love, just as each lover is fulfilled in the beloved.[44] 'The upright man,' say the ancients [the Jews], *fa perfetto il splendore de la divinità*.[45] On the other hand, the lack of God in the creature burns the more fiercely, the more spiritual and loving it is; thus one sees that this 'need' cannot finally be something negative, but is a form of participation in the eternal love.[46] Here again we see the hidden biblical *a priori* of this theology. For while Plato and Plotinus view *eros* completely from the world's perspective, and depicit the One, as the sun of the Good, only as a self-radiance at rest in itself (even in Aristotle's 'thinking of thinking' there is no trace of eternal love), God now becomes the archetype of *eros*: 'the first lover is God, insofar as he knows and wills; the first beloved is the same God, insofar as he is beautiful. Thus the primordial love is God's love of Himself . . . this inner relatedness fashions His most perfect and most simple unity . . . Just as the one who understands, the thing understood and understanding itself are only divided, so far as they are in possibility, so too the beloved, the lover and love itself are three and divided insofar as they are in possibility, but insofar as they are one and the same, undivided thing, thus far are they in reality.'[47]

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[42] III.143b–146b.

[43] References collected in Gebhart, 85.

[44] III.43a, b.

[45] III.35b. [makes perfect the splendour of the divinity.]

[46] III. 68a, b.

[47] III.55b–57a.

Thus *eros* wells out of a love which is more than erotic and is again transcended in this love.

After the liberal Jew, the renegade Dominican: in GIORDANO BRUNO there occurs one of Fate's turning-points; he becomes secretly father of the modern religion of the cosmos, Spinoza and Leibniz are decisively indebted to him, on him Schelling will build further, and when Herder and Goethe say 'Spinoza', they really mean Bruno. His authority is Cusa in almost everything that he thought or sought to think, but if Bruno still takes along with him the form of Platonic-Cusan analogy—as a thin shell—the triumphant content is now plain identity. The theses on God's unsearchability and on negative theology that he expresses in the *Torch of the Thirty Statues* betray the ancient form: God as the infinite sphere with its centre everywhere (Alan of Lille; with a reference to Parmenides), as the identity of essence and existence (Thomas), as more inward than one's self (Augustine), as above, in and beneath all things (Gregory the Great), as 'essence of essence', 'nature of nature', 'centre of all things' (Erigena), as the identity of being, power and action (Cusa), as the unity by which everything is one (Plotinus), as transcendent over every contradiction, every agreement, every difference (Cusa), as the invisible whose sole visible reaction is the world (Ficino).[1] It is only necessary however to ascertain in what context these theses of the *Lampas* stand, to discern that the principal accent lies elsewhere. For the construction of the cosmos begins here—quite as in Hesiod—with the three 'unformable' entities: Chaos, arising from that Orcus or the Abyss, and its child, the Night: 'the begetting Chaos lacks all things, the granddaughter Night however seeks after all things, the son Orcus, in between, is avidity for all things.[2] 'Chaos means emptiness, Orcus passive potentiality, Night matter.'[3] Set over against this lower trinity of darkness is the higher one as *pater* (*pleroma*), *primus intellectus* (=*nous*) and light, the spirit of the universe. On the balance between the two trinities everything depends. 'For with evil it is thus: it is an evil, if there is not evil, for it contributes to the necessity of the good; if one takes evil away, then there is no longing for the good, the good is no longer that strived for, glorious and highly to be praised.' Therefore the three are necessary: 'the formless Chaos, the unformable Orcus, and Night which ever absorbs all forms and never itself takes shape.'[4] After the manner of Heraclitus, cosmology arises in the unfathomable mystery of the unity of opposites: a form of negative theology that is no longer 'Platonic' at all. The unfathomable ground of all things, which manifests itself in nature, the fathomable ground, corresponds, for Bruno, to nothing else than the intoxicating experience of the bottomless height, depth and glory of Being. Of this there is only one—but a penetrating—proof: for Bruno (in contrast to Cusa, Ficino, Leone) prayer exists no longer, it is radically excluded by what he says. In the place of prayer there steps the elevated feeling of the 'hero' who attains haughtily to union with the universe, even if the *coincidentia oppositorum* tears him apart. *Eros* as a trembling, unquenchable longing for God has turned into the titanic power of the hero in his ardour which flares up from absolute fire itself: *Eroici Furori*. He is himself the contradiction of God, which, insofar as it strives towards God, strains upwards not directly, in Platonic fashion, from the imperfect to the perfect, but 'in circular motion' strives towards the centre which is beyond every form.[5] This circling corresponds to the infinity of the world which is Bruno's great revelation: 'hundreds of thousands of stars and tides! . . . only *one* heaven, one infinite region of the aether, in which these glorious lights keep their determined distances from one another and share in the eternal life. These flaming bodies are the heralds, which celebrate the Sovereign majesty and glory of God! So we recognise the infinite influence of the infinite cause, the true and real reflection of infinite power, and need no longer seek divinity in the remote . . .'[6] Circling in the infinity of the cosmos, the spirit is at the heart of God's glory; there is no further ascent. That is the message of the mystery of Diana and Actaeon, twice given detailed exposition in *Eroici Furori*: by a transposition back of the Cusan *venatio sapientiae* into the realm of pagan mythology the human spirit (as a hero who is capable of the philosophical, enthusiastic ascent) becomes a hunter in the great forest, who perceives unawares (*exaiphnês*) the naked goddess bathing and, changed into a stag, himself becomes the prey, for at the command of the goddess his own dogs tear his heart to pieces 'with pitiless, mutinous bites'.[7] In both expositions it is a matter first of all of the transference: the hunter becomes the prey; he who hunted the divine and wanted to assimilate it to himself, is hunted by it and is defeated, in the 'ecstasy brought about by so great a beauty'.[8] It is true, Diana is the divine glory manifest, *splendor di specie intelligibili.*[9] 'For no-one can see the sun itself, the universal Apollo and the absolute light in its highest and most withdrawn form, but one can see his shadow, his Diana, the world, the universe, nature, which is in things, the Light which is reflected in the darkness of matter, that which shines in the darkness.'[10] But when the dogs have torn the hunter to pieces, he no longer needs to behold his goddess 'through lattice and window' (as Bruno says, recalling the Song of Songs), but can 'without a dividing wall, himself become wholly eye, see her immediately', her who 'is the true essence of the being of all things', the 'comprehensible nature, in which the sun and the radiant glory of the highest nature is refracted', for 'from the monad of the godhead there proceeds the monad of the universe'.[11]

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[1] Bruno, *Opera latine conscripta* I–IV, ed. Fiorentino and others (1880–91), *Dialoghi italiani*, ed. Gentile-Aquilecchia, in *Classici della Filosofia* VIII (Sansoni, 1958^3). German trans. by L. Kuhlenbeck, Giordano Bruno, *Gesammelte Werke*, 6 vols. (Diederichs, 1904–9). Op. lat. III. 38–43.

[2] *Ibid.*, III. 19.

[3] *Ibid.*, III. 9.

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[4] *Ibid.*, III. 21.

[5] *Eroici Furori* I. 4; 1012.

Diana is Beatrice transferred back into the myth. Since

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[6] *La Cena de le Ceneri* I; 34.

[7] Interpretation of poem 18, *Er. Fur. I. 4; 1005f.; of poem 54, ibid.*, II. 2; 1112f.

[8] 1008.

[9] 1113.

[10] 1123.

[11] 1125.

Dante and the *stil nuovo* the idea of the divine made manifest is feminine (with Plato it was masculine here below and in heaven sexless). But in truth Beatrice was the one who gave form, Dante the one who received it. Bruno-Actaeon however, the hunter torn to pieces, is utterly masculine, and the destruction of the *furioso* is in truth the ecstasy of sexual passion. In the speech for the Helmstadt Academy on the death of Prince Julius von Braunschweig he depicted himself complacently as belonging to the face of 'obscene fauns, gods of the forest and satyrs',[12] and in this consciousness the epilogue of his chief Latin work of natural philosophy *de Immenso et Innumerabilibus* mocks at the Ganymedes who are poured out like a shower in Platonic fashion, while he penetrates his object *durus*, villosus, rusticus, *asper*, *callosus*, *rigidus*, in short with an erect member—*memet ingero rigidum*, *membrisque viriliter acrem*, *infrenem*, *invictum*, *sementoseque sonantem*—and so the muses will have to love him.[13] Shortly before he had finally abandoned the Platonic ideas of things: God—or as one might call him: *mens*, *deus*, *eros*, *unum*, *verum*, *fatum*, *ratio*, *ordo*—is internal to all things, *motor ab interius*, and to be found nowhere else than in the cosmos, that is immediately in hearts overcome with enthusiasm.[14] Bruno cannot jeer enough at a Platonic *furor*, and just as much at a biblical *furor*—an inspiration that comes from above and catches one up into rapture. Such prophets are like the donkey who carries the sacrament. The true *furor* bursts forth from the innermost part of the heroic soul, it is not a 'neglecting of one's own self', but rather its elevation and realisation.[15] The dialectic of this *eros* will be dealt with below. But one can already see that attitude emerging here, which will be christened by the young Goethe under the name of Prometheus and of Faust, with an express and contemptuous refusal of prayer ('I to praise you: why?'): a masculine, creative attitude to Being and a conquering advance into the sphere of the 'macrocosmos' or the 'earth-spirit'. Diana will then be called Helen, and Faust will have to be content to be courteous and polite towards her, indeed he will not be able to do without the Ganymedean, just as throughout Bruno stands in need of the Platonic. The philosophical act again demonstrates its complete ambivalence, which had been manifest in it since Promenades, Heraclitus and Plato: extremely masculine, form-bestowing with Kant and Fichte, the natural philosopher, and with Jean Paul, and finally masculine with Hegel.

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[12] *Oratio consolatoria*, Op. lat. I/1, 36.

[13] Op. lat. I/2, 318.

[14] *Ibid.*, 313f.

[15] *Er. Fur. I. 3, 986*f.

Yet another conclusion remains to be drawn, and Bruno has towards the end even more shamelessly drawn it: his advance to the presocratics causes him to forget his Neoplatonic starting-point—Heraclitus and Parmenides step into the limelight (*de la causa*), but finally there emerges an atomism inspired by Democritus, Epicurus and Lucretius (*de minimo*, *de monade*).[16] It is an atomism that answers to the *Eroici furori*: yet it is, knowingly or not, the immediate expression of an infinite totality: in the 'Ganymedean' aspect the Eleatics are right, but in the 'Promethean' the atomists. It is basically, without the mediation of any analogy, Leibniz's system of monads; but both, Bruno and Leibniz (who knew him), seen as a whole, become steps towards a modern materialism. Why should the dark trinity, Chaos-Orcus-Night (as potency-laden matter), not in fact give birth out of itself as a superstructure to the trinity of light, which cannot exist without it, and thus contain within itself the whole mystery which the old metaphysics and negative theology vainly sought in imaginary heavens?

b. Eros: *The Glory of Melancholy*

The equation of Platonic *eros*—as the upward-attracting transparence of the beloved form to the divine—and biblical *caritas* was no arbitrary act of Ficino's: it only gave (as has been said) an expressly philosophical justification for the poets of the *dolce stilnuovo* and the Petrarcans. From the Middle Ages up to the present century there has held sway an image of *eros* which consciously or unconsciously was exalted, transfigured and divinized by the rays of *agape*. With Dante this Christianization of *eros* found expression for the first time and unsurpassably, yet with the imposition of a journey through hell, and a fully Christian penitence and confession before Beatrice. The step beyond classical antiquity is here taken with the utmost Christian conciousness. With Homer the highest love was the faithfulness of a couple; with Virgil religion and political duty inexorably limit and contain *eros*; with the tragedians exalted love is made manifest in austere sacrifice; Sappho alone can provide a faint anticipation of what in the Christian period would be made of *eros*. Yet even her cosmic feeling of love remained a matter of pious hope and painful supression. There is nothing in Plato to suggest that love for a boy accompanied the ascending *eros* of the *Symposium* through all the stages to the Godhead, still less (as with Beatrice) that it should illuminate the way ahead: the love of 'one beautiful body' is already extinguished on the next step of love of 'all beautiful bodies'. So the Platonism of the Middle Ages, of the Renaissance and of Idealism, where the beloved form as an incarnate Idea can attract upwards to reach God, is coloured and conditioned as a whole by Christianity: christologically, for only in Jesus Christ does a single human form make the Godhead present with complete validity and effectiveness (sacramentally); and in a trinitarian manner, because only the God of Jesus Christ is in himself freely and personally eternal love.

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[16] Felice Tocco, *Le opere latine di G. B. esposte e confrontate con le italiane* (Florence, 1889).

What then if this true infinity of *agape* meets the infinity of longing of *eros*? There was the possibility that *agape*, providing a limit and a measure of *eros*, would subjugate it to itself and take it into service: such would be aspired to and celebrated in the service of courtly love. There was no possibility of forgetting the being of *agape* and letting *eros* hold sway as formerly: *eros* was disturbed, challenged and judged by *agape*. So there was only left the last possibility that *eros* itself should attribute to itself the dimensions of *agape* and raise itself to the absolute in a new way, far surpassing Plato. A beginning had already been made in post-Christian paganism, for with Iamblichus, Porphyry and Proclus *eros* had been elevated as a cosmic principle, which—in opposition to the utterances of Diotima and Socrates—only within an all-embracing divinity *identity* was shaded off in analogical stages (God — gods — daemons — heroes — world-soul — individual soul). This hidden Christian *a priori*, which is naturally strengthened in the modern period and effectively gives form, can alone explain the unselfconsciousness with which the Christian cultures from the late Middle Ages to the nineteenth century deal with the gods of antiquity: not at all using them only as playful decoration and external allegory, yet without equating them with the genuinely confessed mediator, Jesus Christ. They exist and rule with a not-properly-established reality in the space granted them by *eros*, itself robbed of infinity by *agape*. One recalls too with what ease the otherwise so curt Augustine in exchange with Porphyry could equate the ('created') gods with the biblical angels,[1] angels which, after all, for a long time—*cf.* Dante—were held to be movers of the spheres and therefore spirits. Thus one can better grasp the equally easy exchange between gods, spirits and angels, between biblical and mythological figures, in the art of the Renaissance and the Baroque, for example in the figures which animate a landscape by Poussin or Claude Lorrain.

The direct equation of *eros* and *agape* lends to *eros* new colours and new properties. First there falls on it a ray of biblical glory: its *charis* receives traits of Christian grace, its charm (*pietà*) shimmers with the New Testament mercy of God, its transfiguring power becomes the power to forgive guilt and transform the world. But further, its being possessed, its rapture, its ecstasy and foolhardiness, that *mania* which Plato dealt with ironically in the *Ion*, which Socrates handled at least dialectically in the *Phaedrus* (for he delivers one speech against and one for the *mania* or *eros*), is now evaluated positively in the spirit of the New Testament decision of faith to the point of martyrdom and raised to a *furor* which from Petrarch through Ficino to Bruno, to Byron and beyond, will find its defenders. Finally (and this is the decisive point) the post-Christian *eros*, set up as an absolute, can only be melancholy. Its hidden Christological structure makes it an immediate unity of the finite and the infinite, of the beloved man and God; the dynamic symbolism of Platonic provenance certainly softens this immediacy, but it cannot cancel it. In the 'sacrament' of beauty of this worldly form—woman, boy, landscape or whatever—is the gracious presence of the totality of the divine beauty; the 'moment' has to last and then be exhausted. It is the starting-point for Faust, who only formulates what the whole Christian culture of *eros* from the Middle Ages to the modern period characterizes—in complete contrast to the classical and pre-Christian—as something melancholy. One can say with Kierkegaard that only in the post-Christian period could the 'aesthetic' emerge into such a mortal opposition to the 'ethical-religious', because only now has the latent melancholy and anxiety of Christian existence come to light in its irreducible contradiction. But in saying that, one is not to let out of one's sight the fact that marriage is in Christian terms a sacrament, that, with the whole man, his *eros* too is capable of redemption, that God's covenant with man in Christ (and the Church) bears a form inspired by *eros*, that the Platonic-Plotinian longing for God as the eternal beauty must and can, too, find a Christian justification. The relationship of *eros* and *agape* remains for the west a veritable place of decision, as Titian's picture of earthly and heavenly love recalls—though at the same time in a veiled way, because the two women hardly represent anything other than earthly (symbolic) and heavenly (symbolized) *eros*, or as Wagner's Tannhäuser recalls—though his Tristan at the same time says the opposite.

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[1] *De Civ. Dei* IX.23. The historical correctness of such a comparison, as far as the 'hosts' of Yahweh, the seraphs and cherubs, etc., are concerned, is known today. *Cf.* also Paul Vuillard, *De la Conception idéologique et esthétique des dieux à l'époque de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1907).

Tristan. Nothing shows more clearly that the *eros*-problematic only emerges apropos a Christian Platonism, than—in ultimate intensity—GOTTFRIED OF STRASSBURG's Tristan poem, which consciously undertakes to set the *eros* of man and woman absolutely face to face with St Bernard's Christ-mysticism based on the Song of Songs.[2] There had been earlier attempts to translate the 'drama' of the Song of Songs

[2] Julius Schwietering, 'Der Tristan Gottfrieds von Strassburg und die

into the courtly style,[3] but even in this context Gottfried's undertaking stands solitary and unique. *Eros* as the content of life, utterly self-purposed, without a goal outside itself, as both the highest suffering and the highest bliss, above all as utter exclusiveness: for any other human relationship, any other fidelity or honour or one-time virtue is transcended and denied in the closed-off interaction of Tristan and Isolde, and this as the highest, most difficult achievement, declaimed in esoteric doctrine for a small chosen circle of noble hearts—this had hitherto not been heard of. Final passion equated with absolute suffering; *passio* understood consciously in the instinctive and Christian double meaning—with which Claudel will delight in playing—and this suffering as self-glorification of love, as its 'resurrection' and its 'eternal life' in its own enjoyment of its absoluteness: all this, as Schwietering has rightly said and also demonstrated, can be represented only in counterpart to the mysticism of love and passion in the traditional interpretation of the Song of Songs, which attained its highpoint in Bernard's commentary on the Song and amongst his friends, continuators and imitators. As later Petrarch composed his spiritual-secular *Canzoniere* from the sources of Augustine's *Confessions*, as Hölderlin and German Idealism drew from the stores of Swabian mystical pietism, so Gottfried creates—but in what a mighty inversion!—from the treasures of cloistered contemplation. The wild forest and the cell, in which the lovers pass the time, are borrowed from the life of the hermit; the grotto of love with the crystal couch as the sacred centre is the *cubiculum* of the Song of Songs or also the transposition of Christian sacred space with the altar; the mutual nourishment of the lovers in their gazing at each other repeats the mystery and miracle of the Eucharist. Everything profane is sacred, for everything Christian has been taken up without remainder into the mystery of *eros*.

But it was not this work alone, but the 'Roman de la Rose' of Guillaume de Lorris, begun shortly afterwards (c. 1250), to

Bernhardische Mystik' (1943), printed in *Mysik und höfische Dichtung im Hochmittelalter* (Niemeyer, 1960), 1–35.

[3] *Ibid.*, 22–23.

which Jean de Meung contributed a long, unsuitable continuation, that determined the next three centuries. Begun in the purely courtly spirit of transfigured *Frauenminne*, it ended as something polyhistoric, or rather misogynist; in the first part, in many allegorical forms, the God *Amor* rules personally, but in the second, the goddess *Natura*, known from the Chartrians, rules, here too accompanied by a companion spirit. The early Renaissance will quarrel about the importance of this learned world of *eros*: Christiane of Pisa and Gerson reject it, while the first humanists defend it.

The future indeed belonged not to the gentle and learned allegory, but to the metaphysical symbolism of the heritage of Dante: Petrarch's book of songs coins the form of the modern lyric, in the whole tension between religious sublimation (for Laura does not return his love, and after her death floats up to the heavenly ideal) and self-consumption in a lonely fantasy, which the poet recognises as sinful and yet in which he wallows. What in Dante is purified into tall, pure flame, smoulders here dialectically in uncertainty: it is not the beloved who is the ultimate object of desire, but the gloriously melancholy state of the lover. It is the hour of birth of the erotic-poetic *furor*, which one can pursue from Petrarch to Leonardo Bruni, Ficino and Landino and which from there invades France with Ronsard and *la Pléiade*,[4] late to triumph in Bruno. The long, weighty tradition of the love treatise—from Dante's early works through Guido Cavalcanti's interpretations of the *Canzone d'amore* to the Neoplatonists whom we have already discussed, to Bembo's *Asolani*, to Castiglione and up to Tasso's love treatises[5]—does not teach as much as one glance at the struggles of the greatest: of Michelangelo and Shakespeare.

With MICHELANGELO,[6] the symbol-schema, taken over from

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[4] Raymond Marcel, 'La fureur poétique et l'humanisme florentin' in *Mélanges Jamati. Editions du Centre nationale de la Recherche Scientifique* (Paris, 1956), 178–193.

[5] John Charles Nelson, *Renaissance Theory of Love. The context of Giordano Bruno's* Eroici Furori (Columbia University Press, 1958), 15–162.

[6] *Die Dichtungen des Michelangelo Buonarotti*, ed. with a critical apparatus by Carl Frey (Berlin, 1897). *Complete Poems and Selected Letters of Michelangelo*, tr. by C. Gilbert, ed. by R. N. Linscott (NY, 1963).

Dante and Petrarch, stands as a kind of framework to which he clings, but out of which he also creates.[7] But the content overflows the form—both in his passion for Tommaso Cavalieri and in his humble devotion to Vittoria Colonna—the melancholy has Christian depths and is broken through by a purely Christian confession of guilt, a deeply moving prayer ('So near to death and so far from God!'),[8] the conviction that only grace can help him (*Ne proprie forze o, c'al bisognio sieno/Per cangiar vita, amor, costume o sorte,/Senza le tue divine e chiare scorte,/D'ogni fallace corso guida e freno*).[9] Platonism indeed in form, but in weary and deeply humbled letting-go of the beloved 'symbol' in order to surrender it, and himself with it, to God. In SHAKESPEARE's sonnets—love for a young man, with whom then the beloved woman (herself married) deceives him—all modish Petrarchism is shattered, till in the last collection (127–154) love is accused of wild, mad devastation (129). It is indissolubly tied up with hatred and with virtue:

Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving . . . (142)

until the Platonic thought[10] unwillingly breaks out from one completely worn down, and the 'poor soul', the 'centre of my sinful earth', 'fool'd by these rebel powers' that assail it, is called upon, not to die any more of hunger in its body, 'painting thy outward walls so costly gay', but to live 'upon thy servant's loss' and to let it starve, so that its—the soul's—treasure may increase in heaven:

So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men.
And Death once dead, there's no more dying then. (146)

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[7] Erwin Panofsky, *The Neoplatonic Movement and Michelangelo. Studies in Iconology* (New York, 1939).

[8] No. XLVIII, p. 36.

[9] No. CLV (Carico d'anni . . .), p. 242. [It is not one's own powers, however necessary these may be, that can change life, love, custom or fate, without your divine and clear assistance, to act as guide and restraint from every erroneous course.]

[10] On this theme *cf.* Vyvyan, *Shakespeare and Platonic Beauty* (London, 1961).

Where Michelangelo weeps, Shakespeare is 'as a fever', 'past cure' and 'frantic-mad', his love longing 'for that which longer nurseth the disease', and the black-eyed and dark-haired beloved shows herself to him finally 'as black as hell, as dark as night' (147). If we had the verse confessions of Botticelli, Tintoretto and so many others, who created the inconceivably beautiful, who knows whether they would not sound the same, and with what melancholy the glories were purchased that should bear witness to the power of bodies to utter the eternal and to shelter the divine! Beside the dangerous heroic feats of *eros* there walks along, making all things gentle, a veiled, forming, playful, allegedly and to a large extent genuinely Christian culture in society, passing without interruption from the time of the Troubadours and Minnesingers to the *cortegiano* of the Renaissance and the *gentilhomme* of Baroque and Rococo. Arthur and his courtly circle still celebrate resurrection in the gigantic plan of Spenser's 'Fairy Queen' after the model of Ariosto and Tasso, and Amadis' triumphal procession we have already looked at—through the window of Don Quixote.

With Ariosto likewise, the Platonic-heroic *furor* of love is rendered harmless as the occasion for a lively social conversation, while the ambitious plan of the sick TORQUATO TASSO finally to create a valid Christian epic—and one knows how much it was admired and imitated a hundred times over[11]—regarded from the height of a Western perspective must seem a tragi-comic misunderstanding. As with Aeneas, a 'commander', and his 'pious arms' (*arme pietose*)[12] are sung, which 'liberate the great grave of Christ'; the 'knight of

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[11] 'The influence of 'Liberated Jerusalem' on the [epic] poems published between 1582 and 1698—almost a hundred of them—will be all-powerful and unlimited': Wiese-Pèscopo, *Geschichte der italienischen Literatur* (2nd edn. 1910), 385. The whole of Christian history is gone through from the 'destruction of Jerusalem' under Titus to 'Constantine' and the 'discovery of the Cross' under Heraclius, to the 'converted Bulgaria', the Gothic wars, further episodes of the crusades, to the 'conquest of Granada', the French wars of religion, naturally Italian history, the discovery of America, but *Mondo creato*) and the 'Earthly Paradise' to 'Esther', to Marino's 'Massacre of the infants of Behlehem' and to various Marian epics . . .

[12] *Gerusalemme Liberata*, with notes by Pio Spagnotti and preface by

Jesus'[13] will 'in the Holy Land create a new kingdom', to make peaceful devotion possible for pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre.[14] The world-historical commission of Aeneas-Augustus has shrunk to this undertaking, which, although intended in a Christian spirit, and also justifiable in a political perspective, is not at all to be recommended in the perspective of the Gospel. And while with Virgil the transcending of the limiting passion of love for the sake of the religious and political mission remains an episode, with Tasso *eros* becomes the all-pervading atmosphere. As a youth Tasso had written in close dependence on Ficino a first compendium of Renaissance love, *Conclusioni amorose* (1570), where he defined 'beauty as the reflection of the Godhead throughout the universe', equated beauty and goodness, described beauty as goodness causing attraction to itself through longing, whence 'the miracles of love are true', although he also conceded that 'each joy of love is accompanied by pain'. In a later treatise on love (1580), Platonism yields the place to a more realistic definition: 'Direi che l'amor fosse desiderio d'abbracciamento', and in yet another (1583) love (under the influence of Aquinas) is graded, that directed to God is called *caritas*, and all virtue is only the order of love.[15] This uncertain wavering between Platonism, realism and Christianity, makes the lyrical, erotic aether, which is condensed in the principal episode of *Gerusalemme*, appear as an ultimately *univocal*, all-sustaining reality despite its division into a good and bad love-enchantment.

Certainly there stands behind the strategic events, answering to the 'apparatus of the gods' in Homer and Virgil, a Christian apparatus too. God the Father looks with pity on his heroes;[16] he calles them and sends them;[17] he communicates to them through angels in dreams;[18] instead

Michele Scherillo (Hoepli, Milan, 1923,[6] cited according to Canto and Stanze. I.1.

[13] VII.56.

[14] I.23.

[15] Nelson, l.c., 150–157.

[16] I.7.

[17] I.9f.

[18] XIV.1f.

of gods he has his heavenly hosts who (as in the Homeric battle of the gods) engage in the decisive fighting;[19] prayer is made to him often and piously, there are miraculous answers to prayer (as in Homer the wounds of the gods are quickly healed, so an angel heals the wounded Tancredi with a healing herb).[20] Still more: a decisive episode, the liberation by Rinaldo of the heroes who have been turned into beasts in Armida's Magic Castle owes its success completely to gracious heavenly guidance. The Devil's kingdom and its machinations are painted with a psychology so much more colourful and humanly sensitive than in Dante, that Milton found here his model and with him all later (and increasingly sympathetic) psychologists of the Devil. Despite that all these are only obligatory accessories (instead of which Camões unhesitatingly retained the ancient gods): the real moving force is the bewitching *eros*, and the *follia d'amore* of even the most magnanimous heroes,[21] since Tancredi loves the pagan Amazon, Clorinda, in the 'drunkenness and fury' of his accursed heart;[22] Erminia loves Tancredi without requital of her love; above all the wicked magic of Armida, who, sent out by the hellish forces of opposition to seduce the heroes, finally carries off Rinaldo, whom she really loves and who really loves her, to her Magic Castle at the Antipodes. These three pairs of lovers carry the action, or rather kindle its lyrical pathos; that Tancredi without knowing it in a decisive duel kills his beloved who, dying, demands of him baptism and later appears to him as a transfigured Platonic spirit to comfort him, when, in a frenzy of love, he tears the bandages from his wounds and almost dies[23]—that is the 'sublime'. That Erminia in love-stricken grief goes to lead the life of a shepherdess on the bank of the Jordan and finally discovers Tancredi whom she had believed dead—that is the 'pathetic'. But that Armida is changed from an evil enchantress into a helpless, abandoned woman who pursues Rinaldo with revenge, finally to perish of her own love, to be reconciled with him and humbly to speak to the hero a 'See, I am your maid, let it be according to your will',[24] is at the same time 'heroic' and 'human'. But when Rinaldo—and here the distance from Dante becomes clear—taking heart refuses the lovecharm of Armida, finds her love 'exaggerated' and obliterates his memory of her,[25] and when afterwards he, himself disenchanted, is able to banish the magic forest: this shows how much for Tasso love remains *eros*, its *mania*, the same as in Ariosto's 'Raving Roland'—a cosmic power, whose focal point lies not in God, but in the human heart.

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[19] XVIII.92.

[20] XI.72f.

[21] I.45

[22] XIX.104

[23] XII.70f., 83–86.

This *eros*, that Sappho was the first to call bitter-sweet, smoulders throughout the 'classical' literature of the modern period: always both redeeming, making one taste sweetness in bitterness, eternity in the moment, and at the same time unredeemed, because it gathers up the contradictions in its own glory, beyond which it knows nothing higher. If with Cusa God was beyond the *coincidentia oppositorum*, and the longing of love, enkindled by this, streams out beyond it, then with GIORDANO BRUNO *eros* itself is the divine *coincidentia oppositorum*, where self-glorification and self-destruction must coincide. 'Who does not see that the principle of decay and of begetting are the same? Is not the final point of dissolution the origin of the one begotten? If we consider aright . . . love is hatred and hatred is finally love. The hatred of what is opposed is the love of what is related, in love for the one lies hatred of the other. In essence and root hatred and love are the same thing, friendship and enmity are all the same. Where then will the doctor seek a better means of healing than in poison? . . . And why? Because the ground of being of the one as of the other is single, as is the ground of their knowing.'[26] This absolute unity of opposites (absolute in the sense of being established on the ground of the world itself) the hero is able to attain in erotic *furor*; the metaphysics of the *Eroici furori* engenders the modern *eros*-poem, which is based on uniting the 'heroic heart' with the life of the universal cosmos, so that mortality is united with immortality, defeat with victorious triumph, in a manner at once glorious and tragic. This hero has his muses and his Castalian spring within himself, he is 'through the grace of his own heart . . . no less favoured than others by the grace of kings'. But 'out of one and the same feeling of the heart there spring forth the two opposites: hatred and love',[27] as in the heroically heightened *eros* destiny (*sorte*) is nothing else than the *disposizion fatale* and the ordering of life's circumstances to which destiny subjects him.[28] 'For what are you, my destiny, other than my love, and you, jealousy, other than a part of my being? So then let love remain and consume my life . . . what it tears from me mortally, gives me wings, quickens me and lifts me up.'[29] For the beloved form 'and its power over me is indeed nothing else than the power of love, the norm of my love and my own norm.'[30] There is also the hatred of the 'cunning beasts of the priestly power of the Tiber', there are the 'slanders of hissing serpents, the network of frothing boars, for the highest necessity of fate encompassed me,'[31] which will soon still more horribly encompass Bruno in the dungeons of Venice and the Roman Inquisition, and carry him to the stake. But thus it is with the destiny of the *furioso eroico*. If all things consist of opposites, then the hero is marked out by the fact that he does not balance the opposites in himself feebly, but 'suffers under the excess of the opposites', he does not only endure the most extreme tensions, but he strives for them:[32] as he sinks down to hell and wings his way up to heaven, he has to oscillate 'eternally between the opposites', and thus is bound to Ixion's wheel.[33] And this on the basis of his own audacity: as he was Actaeon so now he is Icarus: very likely he senses in his ascent that he will crash down, 'but what life could be compared with such a death?'[34] One of Bruno's devices is the moth, which hurls itself into the flame; and to appreciate this interpretation, one has to keep before one's eyes, the fact that for him the consuming symbol of eternal beauty is always the erotic love for a woman: 'It delights him not less to perish in the flame of the ardour of love, than to be caught up in rapture in the rare vision of the beauty of her face; naturally drawn towards it, in a free decision and through the authority of fate, he submits and dies, joyful, resolved, serene.'[35] And because both, the necessity of fate as well as free virtue, are insolubly one in the heart of the hero, and this unity is participation in the divine all-unity, the great moment already, as with Goethe, conceals eternity, according to the device *amor instat ut instans* and its interpretation: *che l'instante sia tutto il tempo.*[36] The fullness of these emblems is truly baroque; but the baroque quality in them is precisely that in the mystery of an extreme contraction they permit one to grasp the whole, deep meaning of infinite truth: they are Reason's game with its own sacramental form. Everything constantly balances on a drawn-out reciprocity—*mutuo fulcimur*[37]—oscillating in a precarious balance between angel and beast: the level of being of 'daemons or heroes'.[38] But always this *eros* is exposed to the teeth of the hunting dogs which Diana sets on to him, and rightly Bruno draws on Lucretius' interpretation, which depicts the madness of lovers:

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[24] XX.136.

[25] XVI 53–55.

[26] Giordano Bruno, *De la Causa, Principio e Uno, dial.* 5, in *Dialoghi Italiani* (ed. Gentile-Aquilecchia, 1958³), 338–339.

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[27] *De gli Eroici Furori*, dial. I.1:962.

[28] *Ibid.* 965. *Cf.* 1003: *Necessità, fato, natura, consiglio, voluntà nelle cose giustamente . . . ordinate tutti concorrono in uno.*

[29] *Ibid.*, 971.

[30] 972.

[31] *Oratio Consolatoria, Op. lat.* I/1, 43.

[32] *Er. Fur.* I.2; 978

[33] *Ibid.*, 979.

> They press closely to themselves the object of their
> desire and cause pain
> to the body; with their lips they drive their teeth into
> each other.
> They afflict one another with kisses, because there is
> no pure pleasure.
> There lurk impulses that goad them on to wounding
> whatever

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[34] *Er. Fur.* I.3; 999.

[35] I.5; 1037–1038.

[36] I.5; 1066–1067. [that the instant be the whole time]

[37] I.5; 1034. [we support one another reciprocally]

[38] I.4; 1023.

> They touch, and a madness from which such urges
> arise.[39]

'Through such an attraction the art-ful mastery of nature is effective, that one is melted away in a delight which at the same time annihilates, and in the midst of every torture senses satisfaction, and remains tortured in the midst of every satisfaction.' There is only a unity of opposites and the continual preponderance of one or the other pole.[40]

Certainly KLEIST did not think of Bruno, when he wrote his *Penthesilea*; rather, it was classical tragedies that had their influence, like the tearing in pieces of Pentheus and Lycurgus, or the demonic love of Phaedra or Medea. Yet his drama is not at all classical, but precisely presupposes the post-Christian, absolutized *eros*, with its *coincidentia* of greatest tenderness and utter cruelty, of divinisation (in the *Rosenfest*) and annihilation; for the queen of the Amazons lets loose her hunting hound on the defenceless Achilles and herself buries her teeth in his flesh. Why does she do this? Because she wanted to surrender herself to him only out of the sublime heroic feeling of having vanquished him, but he has defeated her and has concealed this from her. *Eros* as a haughty feeling of triumph here has achieved its extreme opposite to Christian, serving *agape*. In the whole piece Penthesilea is called time and again 'the raving'; she is smitten 'by the most poisoned dart of *amor*';[41] she speaks the word of the Gospel: 'Ah, my soul is weak, even to death'.[42] When Achilles once more calls her out to battle to let himself be defeated by her, it is too late, she has, in her love, let frenzy get the upper hand:

> It is before the countenance of the gods—
> I call down the furies!—that he should strike me![43]

'Amazons with packs of hounds in pairs, following them elephants, firebrands, chariots with blades': these Kleist has follow her on to the stage. 'Half-Fury, half-grace, she loves me . . . she will do nothing to me,' says Achilles, and dares to meet her in battle. Finally she is simply 'the dreadful', 'the gruesome', the 'most monstrous'. But she says,

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[39] *De Rerum Natura* IV. 1079–1083.
[40] *Dial.* II.1; 1079–1080.
[41] *Penthesilea*, Scene 7.
[42] Scene 9.
[43] Scene 20.

> I am so blessed, Sister! More than blessed!
> I feel myself, O Diana, to be utterly ready for
>   death.[44]

And throughout it belongs to this *eros* and again corresponds exactly to the *Eroici Furori*, that Penthesilea, to kill herself, needs no outward weapon—she willingly surrenders it—but descends into her own heart and therein unearths an annihilating feeling, as cold as steel, with which she stabs herself.

Kleist's famous piece, rejected by GOETHE, with a half-hearted, mute voice, far outstripped the latter's planned *Achilleis*, in which Achilles, conscious of the approach of death, falls in love with Polyxena and during the wedding is killed by Zeus' lightning. Here Goethe wanted to transfer the ancient myth from the religious to the private, erotic sphere, just like the immense chain of courtly baroque operas from the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century, which never manage without such an eroticizing of the classical material: a witness to the poverty of this whole period of Christian culture! Goethe finally accepted honestly the remoteness of his sketch from the Iliad: '. . . further, the object holds a merely personal and private interest, whereas in contrast the *Iliad* embraces the interest of nations, of continents, of the earth and of heaven'.[45] To lend to *eros* this cosmic dimension was only allotted to Claudel in his *Satin Slipper*: a unique success. In *Faust* this cosmic form is not successful, for the real love of Faust for Gretchen is a 'merely private interest' and not even something ideal, whereas his love for Helen, with its universal and cultural overtones, remains unreal and therefore, too, cannot be ideal, but merely allegorical. To elevate Gretchen finally in Christian fashion into a kind of little Beatrice is romantically and humanly touching,[46] but poetically and from a cosmic perspective irrelevant.

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[44] Scene 24.

[45] To Schiller, 16 May, 1798.

To the genuine stock of Penthesilea belong Racine's *Phèdre* and Grillparzer's *Medea* and many of Byron's characters: for here *eros* is presented in its self-glory and autonomy, as with Gottfried, but with a keener Christian edge. It is *eros* that forms the intelligible mean between heaven and hell, God and demon, eternal life and death; Kleist struggles and pleads for the 'understanding' of this self-glorified mean, even when it is to be seen as 'raving, gruesome, most monstrous'.

In his mighty *Nibelungentrilogie* (1862),[47] crafted with iron weightiness and subdued power, HEBBEL can resurrect the German heroic song in no other way than by making it throughout also a double tragedy of *eros*: the *eros* of the Valkyrie Brunhild who will surrender herself only to the one who can master her in the mightiest struggle: that Siegfried does it in darkness in place of Gunther is such a humiliation for her that Siegfried must die at Hagen's hand. And the *eros* of the bride of Siegfried, Kriemhild, who vows her life to vengeance and does not rest till, as queen of the Huns, she had murdered the Nibelungs all together in the burning hall of Etzel. The figures and the sequence of events are of superhuman greatness, Aeschylean: against what metaphysical background will Hebbel set them? Just where they belong; at the turning-point between the old German myth and Christianity. The Valkyrie is baptized only with difficulty, and her Norn-like prophetic power, her feeling for the Father of the gods forces its way violently back into her consciousness from beneath.[48] In Worms it is not much better. For there too the cross is honoured by 'letting it stand beside an oak of Wodan, because no-one can know whether any magic indwells it.'[49] The heroes are in a Christian context: at Etzel's house they go to early mass, 'and we are good Christians, as you know,' says Hagen grimly.[50] Hebbel nowhere characterizes so truly and deeply what is Christian than in the chaplain's speech to Kriemhild who thinks only of revenge:

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[46] And recalls the way in which in Tasso the tragically-killed Clorinda appears to the grief-stricken hero in the dream, transfigured as the 'eternal-feminine', etc.

[47] Historical-critical ed. by R. M. Werner (I. Abt., Dramen IV).

[48] II.Act 1, Scene 2.

[49] II.2.5.

> You seek revenge, yet revenge has
> Been reserved for the Lord, he alone
> Sees what is hidden, he alone repays . . .
> Perhaps you bear it hard, and want to cry to heaven,
> Yet look on Him, who yet bore much more hardly!
> Having come down to us in the form of a servant,
> He took the guilt of the world on himself
> And having experienced thoroughly every anguish,
> made atonement . . .
> Even your anguish, and more deeply than you
> yourself! . . .
> He was obedient to death on the cross.
> This sacrifice he offered for you in his love,
> In his unfathomable mercy;
> Do you want now to refuse him yours?[51]

Still more: Hebbel frames the event with two mottos: 'Consider him who forgave on the cross' (spoken to Kriemhild)[52] and 'In the name of him who died on the cross' (Dietrich von Bern's final word to the whole tragedy), words which are spoken not out of the psychology of the heroes but out of the great historical vision of the poet. And yet *this* tragedy can take place only in the twilight and in the transition from myth to revelation, it shows what happens to the reality of myth when it stands in the sphere of revelation. But whence can Hebbel, in the middle of the nineteenth century, give back to the myth true power (something that neither Goethe nor Schiller nor Wagner could do)? Only from the elemental powers of *eros*, which here again is made into a titanic, cosmic power, but quite without that looking up to the divine typical of the devout classical texts, the divine which is always right, even in Aeschylus' *Prometheus*.

[50] III.4.11.

[51] II.5.9.

[52] II.5.9

Michelangelo had already raised the human form to this superhuman, titanic format; within it, Henry Fuseli gathered together all the great Western poetry from Homer, Aeschylus and Sophocles through Dante to Shakespeare and Milton (even Wieland's *Oberon* is included); Wagner will—alongside various ambiguities in his world-view from *The Flying Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser* to *Parsifal*—compose in Tristan the apotheosis of post-Christian *eros* set up as an absolute: *eroici furori* as the unity of erotic passion and death. What is here preserved in a disintegrating (decadent) harmony, is agonizingly broken in pieces by Strindberg—quite in the spirit of Bruno's law—for each new attempt at love infallibly conceals within itself the seed of deathly hatred and dissension, finally to crystallise in new forms of *eros*. As in Tristan, the West here passes over, cancelling itself, into Buddhism.

The absolute self-glory of *eros*, which grasps eternity in a moment, if taken seriously, eliminates any accompanying thought of an individual immortality after death. The Greeks stood, when they surrounded the hero with the prestige of mythical glory (κῦδος), *before* this thought and already in part advanced towards it (Pindar); the classicising modern period clings to it ever more onesidedly (with Ficino the whole 'Platonic philosophy' is absorbed into proofs of immortality), ever more uncertainly and anxiously (Pomponazzi, Descartes, Herder, Kant, Jean Paul, Tennyson's 'In Memoriam'), ever more contradicted by pantheisms and empiricisms. Heroic *eros* sucks the radiance of the idea into itself; here man is timelessly raised beyond death. He can, as in Goethe's *Faust*, project himself into what lies beyond death, and thus the classical idea of the 'eternal feminine' (in Helen) changes into the 'virgin, mother, queen, goddess', 'highest sovereign lady of the world' (Mary). But this projection can only be understood as a bare 'postulate', perhaps only as a mere fugitive ray of the tragic self-glory of *eros*. Then everything classical becomes, together with what is Christian, a 'myth' of the loving heart.

A final, solitary success and thus something like a synthesizing retrospective of the whole tradition is that world drama that its author PAUL CLAUDEL has characterised as an *opus mirandum*, *The Satin Slipper*.[53] What Goethe had been incapable of—giving a universal meaning to the *eros* of two lovers—Claudel has fashioned out of a personal experience of existence (love and, as calling, exile), which is aware of being mysteriously related to that of Dante.[54] The tragic glory of the absolute love between Rodrigue and Prouèze, at once hell and paradise,[55] complete impossibility of fulfilment, pure longing and nevertheless presence of eternal blessedness[56]—this tragic love is 'used' by the king of Spain (Charles V, sovereign of the Old and New World) as a monstrous potential by which he can give form to the newly-discovered, chaotic continent. A lover like Rodrigue can be seduced by no earthly *gloire*, and a lover like Prouèze will hold in Africa the royal attributes right to the most extreme humiliation. When they meet again after ten years, because it is in earthly terms finally 'too late', Rodrigue addresses that speech to his officers on the tragic *eros*, in which he places himself beside Caesar and Mark Antony, while the poet of these *Eroici Furori* puts himself beside Dante and Shakespeare: as if he understood his mission here to be to utter the word of farewell to Western Platonism, his wayward Muse takes it back once for all into the service of Christian grace. At night, by passing through a purgatory of flames, Prouèze is purified by the guardian angel from a longing *eros* to an *agape* of renunciation, which wills nothing more than what God wills. So she withdraws from clinging to her beloved, leads the way, now without any wishes, into death, and becomes for him the guiding star. His earthly path continues a little longer. The drama is, so to speak, geographically laid out: Europe spreads (in Columbus and then in the pair of lovers) to America and Africa, but it discovers too (as Renaissance) its classical origins; at the same time it is divided in itself (in the Reformation) and struggles for its reunion (in the episode with Doña Musique and Don Juan d'Austria); China is from the beginning given a part, Japan becomes the final goal of conquest from America. But while the globe of the earth is covered, the whole earthly imperial glory (under Philip II) becomes fantastic and unreal and is smashed (in the defeat of the Armada), while at the same time the hero's earthly glory of *eros* crumbles away and what becomes visible beneath it is a simple Christian sinner—untrue to his own love (with the 'actress'), parleying with Christian love (Doña Sept Epées), and failing before her, Rodrigue degenerates into an aesthete, who paints 'folk' art, and finally becomes a traitor out of sheer blind presumptuousness, and so, ending up on a dunghill, is ready for confession in the face of the stars, to be picked up by a rag-picking Carmelite nun to be a servant of the monastery. Claudel therefore manages to associate with the *Eroici Furori* an element which, historically, remained almost completely foreign to it (if we make the exception of Ariosto and his imitators): humour, in which the univocal glory of *eros* is again resolved in the all-embracing *analogia gloriae*, to which *agape* says the last encompassing word. This fading and decay of baroque splendour in the 'Fourth Day', when every form of kingdom and art is dissolved into the glory of the all-bearing sea, would be immanently pure tragedy, but the poet knows how to undergird it with humour and to make it reflect existentially that higher harmony that rules everything, the Platonic-Christian symbol of which is the character of Doña Musique. So the poet is at the level of love and yet simultaneously quite transcends it: be it with the sceptical humour of the Chinese servant in the face of his raving lord, or with the guardian angel's love, drawing close with understanding, for the madness of Prouèze and the love of the great patron saint (in the church of Prague), which can, quite Platonically, be heavenly constellations too (like Sant Jago). Claudel's final word stands, like all the greatest poetry, in an historical *kairos*, from which it cannot be displaced and out of which it streams forth effectively. It is a word which, once again and quite personally experienced, gathers together and sets its seal on a long Western tradition—and one knows what Aeschylus, Pindar, Virgil and Dante meant to Claudel. It shapes them into a secular, historical form, which the world that follows will perhaps no longer understand, or only from the outside, just as, on a smaller scale, Hofmannsthal's *Schwieriger* brought a cultural form to an end that twenty years later would no longer exist and that can no longer be reconstructed by any actor.

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[53] *Le Soulier de Satin*, in *Théatre II* (Pléiade, 1948), 563–849. (Eng. tr. by J. O'Connor; London, 1931).

[54] 'Ode jubilaire pour le six-centième anniversaire de la mort de Dante'(1921), in *Feuilles de Saints, Oeuvres Poétiques* (Pléiade, 1957), 667–681.

[55] 'Each of your kisses gives me a paradise, which I know is forbidden to me. Where you are, there will be for me the impossibility of escaping from this paradise of torture, which . . . penetrates me and from which I remain excluded . . . You open paradise to me and prevent me from staying there . . .': Second Day, Scene 14.

[56] Fourth Day, last scene.

What becomes of the 'heroic' *eros*, once this is no longer mediated in the post-Christian period, deserves no further notice, because self-consumption in absolute contradiction robs it of any glory: Penthesilea, Kriemhild and Isolde become a prey for psychiatry. And with Sartre the heart's most extreme contradictions grow cold as the pendulum-strokes of a lonely existence devoid of *eros*.

c. Retreat to the Human Person as Centre

The battle of the modern period about God's glory in the world was justified. It was no tactical error to call for help on intact powers of classical antiquity from humanism and the Renaissance onwards, for antiquity was intended and perceived as that which was valid for all human persons; but it proved to be strategically wrong. Seen as a whole, the battle has to be considered as lost. History brings a parenthesis to a close and distances it from the highest intellectual creations: Poussin and Watteau, Hölderlin and Goethe . . . So it is a matter of exercising the most attentive discretion of spirits over the next step of the tradition: if its concerns are now ours, why are its instruments not ours?

The mediation of antiquity for the sake of the salvation of a total Christian culture has been seen so far from two points of view: the embedding of the biblical revelation in a theophanous cosmos, and the embedding of *agape* in the basic human orientation interpreted as *eros* (*desiderio di bellezza*). Both movements broke down at the point of the overwhelming of 'supernature' by 'nature'. The decisive battle is however fought only where the two great inroads on the hitherto tolerably intact world-view are made:

1. With the Reformation, the visiblc unity of Western Christendom, the sacramental expression of its nature as the unity of the love of Christ, was torn to pieces: a fearful incursion into the credibility of its form, the inner unity of which should bear witness to the world of the truth of the Incarnation. It is open to misunderstanding, and finally futile, when the baroque period exalts the outward ecclesial forms, both in theology and in art, as the 'representation' of the Christian divine glory. The retreat from the smashed form of the revelation to the still sound piety of men and women becomes inevitable: under English leadership, which operated on a European scale in the Enlightenment, the new attitude is established.

2. From the advance of natural science from Copernicus to Galileo and then to Newton, which initially suggested to man a changed attitude only to matter, radical metaphysical consequences were precipitately drawn: atomism, materialism, atheism come into sight almost simultaneously. The natural religion of mankind, which gave itself out as 'progressive' as opposed to the fragmented Church, was 'traditional' in its reaction to these these radicalisms; it could certainly admit the altered attitude of mankind to the cosmos, but did not need to draw the atheistic consequences because man as the embodiment of the world was for it a religious being. In this second stance, what we earlier characterised as the 'anthropological reduction'[1] is still clearer than the first stance: for here the theophanous character of the cosmos *can* already be given up, while the religious phenomenon in man is allegedly still intact. But in the first (anti-Church) aspect too, an inner logic compels the displacement of the religious dimension from all heteronomy and its relocation in the spontaneity of the heart and the autonomy of reason, and therefore essentially in ethics. This will become the criterion of the relationship to God in Shaftesbury's *Moralists*.

[1] *Love Alone: the Way of Revelation* (1968: German original 1963), 25–42.

This anthropologising of metaphysics, too, is still accomplished in close dependence on antiquity, even though cosmology retreats into the background. Plato's Republic, in which man has a world-structure, Plotinus' plan, which sets the intellect between God and the world, but above all the Stoics, for whom man stands as the steward of cosmic reason and the master of destiny, orchestrate an accompaniment to this turning-point. It is on man that the flood-light concentrates from all directions ever more clearly: he becomes the *focus of glory*, where the cosmos lightens up to the mind and the darkness of God steps into openness.

Cusa had already granted to man the position of a reflected implication of the cosmos and, correspondingly, of a reflected creativeness (as *secundus deus*) and designated him with Protagoras—in spite of Plato—as the 'measure of all things'. He had moreover proclaimed in a heavenly council the unity of the religions of mankind in the One Logos. In his programmatic (even if much over-valued) treatise, Pico della Mirandola develops the dignity of man who in his free self-determination surpasses the laws of the cosmos, is 'sculptor and poet of himself', 'and if he, dissatisfied with the lot of a creature, withdraws into the centre of his totality, then he becomes one spirit with God and in the lonely darkness of the Father, transcendent over all things, will likewise have precedence over all things'.[2] Around the centre of this man, Pico gathers together all arts and sciences, philosophy, mysticism and magic, and finally also Christian theology. The ideal of the *uomo universale* seeks for a time to realise in life this great man who will be equal to every intellectual exercise, like Leonardo da Vinci or even Erasmus, Paracelsus, Milton, Goethe. In order to probe his metaphysical being and at the same time his fitness for achievement, he is—like a chemical—isolated in strange retorts; on the island Utopia (Thomas More), in the kingdom of the Sun (Campanella), in New Atlantis (Francis Bacon), he is to prove how far he can create a society out of his own powers. In the later innumerable Robinson-stories, the experiment is sharpened, for this experiment of abstraction is expected of the individual. From Hobbes to Rousseau, man—in a new abstraction—will be constructed out of his original, historical situation. In Rabelais, and more impressively still in Montaigne, he becomes the true point of reference for all classical (and especially Stoic-anthropological) and Christian 'benefits of culture': the scepticism of the *Essais* signifies nothing else than that man remains the measure of his historical and social constructions. The French moralists and tellers of fables (under the patronage of Theophrastus and Aesop) encircle him and pursue him with their aphorisms and parables, just as today the reporter pursues a star with his snap-shots: the surprise unmasks.

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[2] *De hominis dignitate*, ed. Garin (1942), 104–6.

These positions are very consciously marked out, and defended very firmly: the philosopher, withdrawing from cosmology and leaving the field free for the natural scientist, and the theologian, withdrawing from church dogmatics, meet one another in a single person: he is the advocate of the man of autonomous religion. In 1593 Jean Bodin writes his religious dialogue called *Heptaplomeres* between a Catholic, a Lutheran, a Calvinist, a Jew, a Muslim, an upholder of natural religion and an agnostic.[3] The climatic differences between the different peoples and races—noticed by Aristotle, taken up by Shaftesbury and developed on a grand scale by Herder in his *Ideen*—are held here to explain the religious differences too; the Jew already stands close to Lessing's Nathan; the basis for understanding is natural religion and the decalogue. Castellio transcends the individual Christian points of view and their narrow ecclesiastical dogmatisms and persecutions of heretics; Sebastian Franck distances himself by his *Paradoxa* from the Church denominations, by making in gnostic fashion the biblical texts a 'manifestation' of an event of universal history, beyond time: of an 'invisible Christ' in whom the world as a whole is given grace *a priori*. Origen's Logos, interior to man, Augustine's *magister interior*, is already interpreted here as the intelligible element in man, in a way that foreshadows Kant.

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[3] Ed. L. Noack (1857).

The sovereign autonomy of man is also the inner light that inspires the three great aggressive ideologies that are fought by the liberal theisms. *Niccolo Machiavelli's* leading idea in his *Discorsi* and *Il Principe* is—after his study of Livy and Polybius—the Roman state, in which man understood how to give himself firm boundaries imposed by an objective intelligence which could tame his subjective and ineradicable tendencies towards decadence. Man, as he is found in the idea of his own greatness and 'form', has here the power thoroughly to fashion the empirically always unstable man as 'matter'. Strangely enough, it is always a classical, purely anthropological blueprint that leads to the later scientific ideologies. The gloomy figure of *Francis Bacon*, the reckless, ambitious and faithless upstart who was accused of corruption and was soon once more ending his life in loneliness, transfers Machiavelli's political, manipulative harshness to man's relationship to nature. He must win back his lost paradisal sovereignty over it, something possible only by inexorably taming it: it is matter for the power of the mind, and this power increases with every partial victory. Knowledge is power: *scientia et potentia humana in idem coincidunt.* But considered like that, the whole of classical metaphysics – which was contemplation of the truth—is good for nothing; in place of its half-religious conceptual compositions the inductive methods must be introduced. 'The corruption of philosophy by . . . an admixture of theology is far more widely spread . . . from this unwholesome mixture of things human and divine there arises not only a fantastic philosophy but also an heretical religion'.[4] 'It were better to have no Opinion of *God* at all; than such an Opinion, as is unworthy of him'[5]—so in the *Essays*, behind which stands a Plutarch read through Montaigne's eyes. The third, *Thomas Hobbes*, fashions a strangely exact synthesis of them both. The classical author he started out from was, significantly, Thucydides[6] and his (sophistical) doctrine of the rightness of might; he first became known by translating Thucydides: a demythologised classicism of the pure conflict of power. The philosophy has two themes: the bodies and the state, but only one method: subjugation under one imposed form. Extreme nominalism and sensualism united with mathematical method—to think is to reckon, to add and subtract—leaves a space free where abstraction of the most general geometrical forms can be understood as structures produced *a priori* and can be cast over the sense perceptions to subdue them. Correspondingly the material substrate must be conceived of hypothetically as something purely mechanical and atomistic. From all this it is clear that this hypothesis is derived, not from experience, but from the methodical presupposition (that knowledge is power and therefore a matter of reckoning). The theory of the state cannot be understood without Protestant presuppositions. The primordial bases of man, according to his experience, are the egoistical *cupiditas* of the individual for power, and the natural instinct to avoid violent death: a personal 'chaos' (like the former atomic chaos), which is subdued only by an absolute social form of power from above, required by the universal necessity of escaping the war of everyone against everyone else. In this form lies every value: what it includes is good, what it excludes (forbids) is bad, and this holds, too, for the conscience of the subjects. This form of power—it is a matter of indifference whether it is realised in a monarchical or a democratic manner—is therefore humanity, collectively rising above the condition of instincts, structuring itself by its own rational power. There is left for religion, revelation, theology—outside any relationship with strict philosophy, which knows nothing of God—a place in an empty vacuum.

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[4] *Novum Organon* I § 65 (Eng. tr. by R. Ellis and J. Spedding, pp. 86f.).

[5] *Of Superstition*, in *Essays* XVII (ed. W. A. Wright, London, 1879; p. 68).

[6] But one should not be silent about the fact that in his old age Hobbes

In Holland and France, Hobbes was in intensive exchange with the circle of Descartes; the stark mind-matter dualism of the latter was one of his starting-points, as it will also be for mind-matter speculation. And remarkably enough it was from

translated the whole of Homer into rhyming verse. On the classical bases of Hobbes: F. Tönnies, *Thomas Hobbes, der Mann und der Denker* (1922); W. Dilthey, *Weltanschauung und Analyse des Menschen seit Renaissance und Reformation* in *Ges. Werke* II (1923^3), 292f.

Descartes that the great English opponent of Hobbes, the leader of the Cambridge Platonists[7] *Ralph Cudworth*, initiated his return to Plato, or better to that classical-Christian, ethical and aesthetic view of the world as a whole, which had nowhere in Europe been more deeply and more convincingly maintained, even up to the present, than in Anglican England.[8] Cudworth, who originally wanted his *True Intellectual System of the Universe* (1678) to oppose all forms of determinism—mechanistic atomism, Stoic-pantheist fatalism and Calvinist predestinarianism[9]—in fact covered only the first position in the form given it by Hobbes. Elementary propositions lay the foundation: truth is greater than man; the concept of God underlies all religions in such a way that man must mount up above himself to God; faith—which cannot be derived from the natural concept of God—is necessarily rooted in the fact that even the Divine Trinity, once revealed, shows itself, as with Cusa, to be present everywhere in vestigial form in natural religion. Christianity is here—and in an unbroken tradition from Cudworth and Butler (*The Analogy of Religion: Natural and Revealed*, 1736), through the Oxford Movement (and its recourse to the Platonism of the Church Fathers), to the present with Farrer and Mascall—essentially the revealedness of the Glory of God: archetypally in the heavenly, eternal world, in the earthly, mortal, sinful world in a veiled mirror and likeness, mediated by Christian death which therefore takes on a central significance (*cf.* the great English poetry of meditation).[10]

And yet it is not this tradition that is historically dominant, but the other, which will engage the anti-materialistic battle over God on a purely anthropological front. With Herbert of Cherbury, the principal contents of Christian thinking are entrusted to purely religious reason which is given responsibility for them. Later with John Locke (*The Reasonableness of Christianity*, 1695), John Toland (*Christianity not Mysterious*, 1696), and Matthew Tindal (*Christianity as Old as the Creation*, 1730), man is ethically obliged to measure any revelation that is revealed to him against his free, autonomous reason (Locke), to strip down the Christian religion, disguised in dogmas, to the simple, universal-human truth in the preaching of Jesus (Toland), to base Christian teaching simply on man's universal piety (Tindal), in a decided secularisation of the Augustinian *civitas Dei ab Abel*.[11] But this whole movement is important for the history of the concept of glory only as the presupposition of a new synthesis into which it leads, and which again is itself the fundamental presupposition for the next phase.

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[7] F. J. Powicke, *The Cambridge Platonists, a Study* (1926).

[8] J. H. Muirhead, *The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy* (1931). E. Cassirer, *Die platonische Renaissance in England und die Schule von Cambridge* (1932). K. Schmitz, *Cudworth und der Platonismus* (Diss. Giessen, 1919). *Cf. The Glory of the Lord*, vol. III, pp. 354–355 (Eng. tr.).

[9] Lydia Gysi, *Platonism and Cartesianism in the philosophy of Ralph Cudworth* (Diss, 1950; H. Lang, Bern, 1962), 1.

[10] Louis L. Martz, *The Poetry of Meditation, a Study in English Religious Literature of the Seventeenth Century* (Yale University Press, 1954).

ANTHONY, EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, creates this strange synthesis of Enlightenment (with its anthropological reduction) and antiquity (with its aesthetic, cosmological dimension), that was to be one of the starting-points for the classicising, humanist-cosmic religion of the period of Goethe.[12] Thus his creation must be briefly set out.

Shaftesbury[13] fought a battle on two fronts: with Cudworth against the materialism of Hobbes, and with the freethinkers against the dark, humourless dogmatism of the guild of theologians and, in the background, against the similarly humourless image of God in the Old Testament that is unworthy of a free man.[14] Our own black melancholy makes us fashion both: a mindless, materialistic universe and a God, on whom we project 'wrath, and fury, and revenge, and terrors'.[15] So it is a matter of finding a position, independent of atheism and revealed theology and invulnerable to attack by either, which contains sufficient absolute criteria on which to judge the two hostile standpoints: for Shaftesbury, this is ethics, modern and humanist, but understood with the breadth of classical cosmology. And within this ethic it is a matter of finding that subjective 'situation of mind'[16] which best answers to the dignity of man's freedom, and which therefore best brings him into contact with absolute reality, with divinity present in universal nature: Shaftesbury calls it 'good humour'[17] not only in the classical sense of ἁρμονία of the powers of the soul and the humours and their agreement with the universe, nor only with the Platonic supplement of the philosophical irony of the 'man of the world', but in a specific way characteristic of the Enlightenment as the inner, serenely superior self-possession of the free, self-determining spirit. The reduction of the two antinomian 'religious' positions to a religiously neutral ethics corresponds to Descartes' theoretical reduction to the *cogito*, yet with this difference—indicative of the passage of time—that ethics is seen as an irreducible minimum, based on freedom as autonomy, and at the same time as a self-sufficient maximum, because the fundamental moral phenomenon can generate from itself the whole world of ethics even as conduct in relation to the universe and to God (cosmology and theology) and can thus become the judge of any externally-announced doctrine of the world or of God.[18] It then becomes clear, for example, that atheism has a fairly neutral stance to the ethical phenomenon, neither

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[11] On the whole subject: Emmanuel Hirsch, *Geschichte der neueren evangelischen Theologie im Zusammenhang mit den allgemeinen Bewegungen des europäischen Denkens*, vol. 1 (1949), 244–344.

[12] C. F. Weiser, *Shaftesbury und das deutsche Geistesleben* (Teubner, 1916).

[13] Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* (his own collection of his most important works, especially: 'A Letter concerning Enthusiasm' (E), 'Soliloquy or Advice to an Author' (S), 'An Inquiry concerning Virtue or Merit' (M), 'The Moralists, a Philosophical Rhapsody' (R)), cited in the annotated ed. by John M. Robertson (2 vols. London, 1900). Newly discovered works collected as *Second Characters* by B. Rand (Cambridge University Press, 1914).

[14] There is polemic against the followers of 'some religions', who

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'expressly give no other idea of God than of than of a being arbitrary, violent, causing ill and ordaining to misery; which in effect is the same as to substitute a daemon or devil in his room': M I.242. On the Jews, their 'surliness' and consequent intolerance: E III.23.

[15] E IV.24.

[16] R II.31.

[17] E I.17, I.39. And the whole essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour: I.43–99.

[18] M 1, II.243, 255; M 1, III.260–1.

essentially furthering it nor essentially threatening it,[19] while positive religion, in accordance with its purposes,[20] *can* certainly inwardly exalt and perfect the ethical,[21] but in general tends to endanger it. This is because the free man essentially loves the good for its own sake and correspondingly does the good too, and only from this, his most sublime perspective, can see the true nature of absolute spirit: God is either pure selfless good and self-radiance[22]—and in this selflessness pure beatitude—or he is simply nothing. The act of looking to God takes place in an ethical, aesthetic intuition of the whole, which lets itself be split up for the ratiocinating reason, when the implications of the primordial ethical phenomenon are discovered:[23] Platonically, because the order in the self on the higher spiritual plane reflects the order of the universe, and the natural social disposition of the beasts must be realised spiritually through ethical self-renunciation for the sake of the common good.[24] The world-harmony is stamped with ascetic 'temperance',[25] 'decency',[26] and in so far as the universe is orientated to self-preservation, the individual too will strive for it and thereby also know the 'self-enjoyment'[27] of virtue, which all the same rests principally on triumph over self for the sake of the generality. If beauty and goodness are characterised as 'still one and the same',[28] if the ideal of εὐδαιμονία is realised already on earth[29] in a quite classical way through ethical renunciation, expressly through a preference of choice,[30] through the distinguishing of deep joy from superficial pleasure,[31] then here we find a link with Plato and Aristotle *via* Kant's separations to Herder, Schiller, Goethe, Hölderlin and Jean Paul. Yet even Kant will be included in the synthesis insofar as the moral good may be sought and posited solely for its own sake, and any thought of merit (which religion had a partiality for including) is to be excluded from it; for the moral good is primarily its own reward.[32] In order to elucidate this, Shaftesbury calls on the non-functional character of beauty, which the admirer must let be. The beautiful ocean: 'The bridegroom-Doge, who in his stately Bucentaur floats on the bosom of his Thetis, has less possession than the poor shepherd, who from a hanging rock . . . stretched at his ease, forgets his feeding flocks, while he admires her beauty.'[33] Not for nothing does Shaftesbury look across to 'the mystics of the ancient church, whom these of latter days have followed',[34] to the advocates of *amour pur* who wish to love the eternal Good for its own sake alone. Thus he clearly draws out the principal line of the Western metaphysics of glory: from Homer and Heraclitus, Plato and the Stoics to the Christian lovers of God, but also to Leone, Spinoza and their adherents. It is not personal immortality that stands in the foreground here, but that glory of the intrinsically-worthy good, which in Shaftesbury's opinion is the only legitimate starting-point for any hope of immortality on the part of the individual: 'if by the hope of reward be understood the love and desire of virtuous enjoyment, or of the very practice and exercise of virtue in another life, the expectation or hope of this kind is so far from being derogatory to virtue, that it is an evidence of our loving it the more sincerely and for its own sake.'[35] Shaftesbury, who

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[19] M 1, III.275.

[20] '... the end of religion is to render us more perfect and accomplished in all moral duties and performances': M 2, I.287.

[21] 'So ... nothing can more highly contribute to the fixing of right apprehension, and a sound judgment or sense of right and wrong, than to believe a God who is ever and on all accounts represented such as to be actually a true model and example of the most exact justice and highest goodness and worth': M 1, III.264–5.

[22] R III.110.

[23] R III.140–1.

[24] Virtue is largely defined by the notion of a public interest: M 1, II.252, III.258, 279; M 2, I.280.

[25] R II.41f.

[26] R III.137.

[27] M 2, I.292; 1, II.248.

[28] R III.128.

[29] R II.58, 67.

[30] R III.130–1.

[31] R II.29f.

[32] R II.37–8.

[33] R III.127.

[34] R II.55.

[35] M 1, III.273.

was so displeased with the Jewish religion because of its notion of reward, had not noticed that without any primary perspective of immortality it demanded the loyalty of faith and caused the (eschatological) reflection to shine forth from the divine covenant which was an end in itself.

But the ethical starting-point which methodically brackets off the religious, both against atheism and Christianity,[36] in order to be its measure, establishes a relationship to the Godhead immanent in the world, which in the end is necessarily one of identity. Negative theology completely vanishes. Prayer has assumed the form of 'enthusiasm' which sings those great hymns to the harmony of the universe which have had such a mighty impact on posterity. Sharply marked off from all its ethically rejected forms, the true enthusiasm means being filled by the spirit of the pure divine love,[37] which is simultaneously (as selflessness) our pure being-outside-ourselves and (as the essence of our morality) our pure self-realisation—or even the pure immanence of God in us. Here lies the knot: the glory of God, which, if we have eyes and heart, manifests itself to us everywhere in the cosmos, shines for us primarily in the glory of our own love. In it we feel that God is present and that we are inspired by him.[38] This is a God, who has decided to travel incognito, like a prince, through his world,[39] who even (in a deeper image) exists in his world-nature in a condition of pure unconscious self-distribution, although all the children of this nature consider this to be so obvious that it is not at all striking: 'Who then understands for ever [i.e., Nature], or is interested or concerned in her behalf? No-one; not a soul.'[40] The eternal God-nature kenotically among men: Hölderlin, Rilke and Heidegger will take this thought further.

[36] R II.52–3.

[37] R II.54: '. . . whether there be anything in divinity (= theology) which you think has more the air of enthusiasm than that notion of divine love such as separates from everything worldly, sensual, or meanly interested? A love which is simple, pure, and unmixed, which has no other object than merely the excellency of that being itself . . .'

[38] R II.97.

[39] R III.102.

[40] R III.104.

The all-embracing, unexpressed identity, the replacement of prayer by enthusiasm, indicate that Shaftesbury was deeply influenced by Giordano Bruno.[41] Even if his basic accent is quite other, much more measured and more gentlemanly, still it is Shaftesbury who, picking up from the titanic behaviour of Bruno and his *Eroici Furori*, places the *symbol of Prometheus* in the foreground of the creative artist.[42] One thinks back to Cusa, for whom the created mind as a *secundus deus* produces from itself an unreal world after the model of the creator; one can mention the famous *Poetica* of Julius Caesar Scaliger (1561), who seizes man's position of pre-eminence for the true poet: while the rest of the arts only imitate and, like an actor, bring to expression what has already been composed, the true poet is creative like a second God (*velut alter deus condere*).[43] But there is still need of Bruno's and Shaftesbury's new metaphysical presupposition, to raise man up to a true Titan who administers the divine fire: 'such a poet is indeed a second Maker', 'a just Prometheus under Jove': the one who from the inner apprehension and experience of the divine, creative, universal nature and from the fullness of his ethical personality becomes himself a creator—and now we hear the Plotinian word—from 'inward form'.[44] In the transition to the Germans, the use of the expression 'Schöpfer' (creator) for the poet at first causes offence.[45] It makes its way with Klopstock and the Swiss; in the Sturm-und-Drang circle the 'under Jove' is simply abandoned. With Herder all 'gods, heroes and goddesses' become the *disjecti membra poetae*,[46] that is, of man as inner meaning of the world, who is extended through and by means of nature, and whom the Promethean poet gathers together from his inner, divinatory power.[47] With Goethe (*Zum Schäkespears Tag*, 1771; *Von Deutscher Baukunst*, 1772), Shakespeare (and in him Goethe himself) is at first the rival of Prometheus: he 'copied his men from him stroke by stroke, only in colossal size . . . and then breathed life into them all by the breath of his spirit'; then Erwin von Steinbach becomes the 'godlike Genius': 'more than Prometheus he leads the blessedness of the gods on to the earth'. In the Prometheus Ode and the *Dramenfragment* (1773) the 'under Jove' (which governed Aeschylus' trilogy) is finally converted into its opposite; in the latter, the Titan becomes the absolute poet, beside whom Minerva stands as 'my goddess', as the inspiration of his own genius: 'And you are for my spirit, What it is itself; From the beginning your words have been to me the light of heaven! Always, as if my soul spoke to itself and opened itself to itself, And inborn harmonies echoed in it from out of itself. Those were your words. So I myself was not myself, And a divinity spoke, when I supposed I spoke; And if I supposed a divinity spoke, it was I myself who spoke. And thus with you and me so united, my love for you so inward, so eternal!' Minerva: 'And I am eternally present with you.'[48] The relationship to genius (again, as in Shaftesbury, called god) cannot be depicted more clearly: the absolute, divine 'I' inspires what is Titanic, already in the sense of the saying of Heraclitus/Hölderlin: ἓν διαφέρον ἑαυτῷ. So Minerva can give life to Prometheus' clay creatures; so she can accompany him upwards, too, to the 'source of life', whether this is called 'fate' or 'Zeus', with whom too Goethe finally wanted to reconcile his Titan. Even though the poet later in *Pandora* distances himself from the principle of Prometheus, it has nevertheless grown far beyond him into the realm of world-history: in Fichte's I-philosophy, Schelling's concept of freedom, Hegel's dialectic: The vigorous force at work in this growth is quite different from the process whereby Plato's philosophy of *daimonion* has grown beyond the relationship between Odysseus and his

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[41] This has been proved above all by Dilthey: *Werke*, vol. II, 335f., 342f., and the comments by G. Misch, p. 521. Frischeisen-Köhler follows him in his introduction to the *Moralists (Ein Brief über den Enthusiasmus, Die Moralisten*, trans. and introduced by Max Frischeisen-Köhler, *Phil. Bibl. 111*, 1909); according to him, it was Toland, not the Dutch philosophical circle, that was the decisive mediator: pp. XIIf.

[42] Oskar Walzel, 'Das Prometheussymbol von Shaftesbury zu Goethe', in *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum etc.* XIII (1910), 40–71, 133–65.

[43] *Poetica* (1561), 3a.

[44] S I.136.

[45] Walzel, l.c., 56–8.

[46] *Ibid.*, 52.

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[47] *Ibid.*, 52–3.

[48] *Artemis-Gedenkausgabe* IV.188–9.

(true) goddess, Athene. For the Greeks thought in terms of analogy, but Bruno and Shaftesbury in terms of identity.

This hidden identity makes the man-Titan, and also the harmless citizen of the Enlightenment, essentially good. Only with this presupposition can his enthusiasm, that is his god-inwardness, suffice as prayer. His transcendence into the divinely-animated universe is always God's immanence in himself as well: as a gesture of self-emptying love, it is always reconciliation too, or better, the seizing of the state of being reconciled. The young Goethe is not lacking in piety, but he sharply resists a God who could hear prayer (Lavater and Jung-Stilling present him with a caricature of such a God). The word 'Gefühl' (feeling) which the whole Goethe-period—from Shaftesbury and Rousseau's confession of faith in *Emile*, to F. H. Jacobi and Schleiermacher, and to Faust's confession of faith before Gretchen—reserved for the relationship to God, could well characterise the 'feeling after him and finding him' of the Areopagus speech (Acts 17.27) and thus legitimately continue the *sentire* of the *sensus spiratales*[49] (from Origen to Bernard and Bonaventure), if only it did not function with the hidden presupposition of a final, encompassing identity. This identity characterises even the most sublime attempt of the succeeding period once more to make Christian glory coterminous with classical beauty, against all the overshadowing nights of the present: the poetry of Friedrich Hölderlin.

d. Hölderlin

1. 'GLORIOUS, HOLY, DIVINE'

In modern times, none has championed the cause of 'glory' as urgently and tragically as did Friedrich Hölderlin.[1] His need to express his experience of reality in terms of a general validity led him to combine the three historically definitive intellectual forms—Christianity, the ancient world and German Idealism—by means of a two-fold reduction; subjectively the ancient world was to emerge as the predominant form, yet objectively Idealism properly became the higher centre. Hölderlin, after all, taking his lead from Schiller's progress (in his *Aesthetic Letters* and programmatic didactic poetry) beyond Kant, is certainly the inspiration behind 'German Idealism's oldest system in programmatic form',[2] a text formulated, presumably, by Schelling and preserved in Hegel's script; here the highest act performed by reason, that which embraces all ideas, is seen as 'an aesthetic act' postulating 'sisterhood of truth and goodness in beauty alone', and demanding 'a new mythology', a 'mythology of reason'. And yet, the further he went the more resolutely did Hölderlin turn his back on the Idealistic philosophy[3] and its destruction, through cold reflection and speculation, of the experience of theophanous reality; but while he took up his definitive philosophical stand-point beside Parmenides-Heraclitus and made this the basis for his interpretation of Homer, Pindar, Sophocles and Plato, the fundamental assumption remained identity (and not analogy), which implies at least essential agreement with Leibniz-Shaftesbury, Schelling-Hegel, Heidegger-W. F. Otto. At the same time, if the splendour of the ancient world and its gods was to enjoy such supremacy, all the forces and motifs that had belonged to Christian revelatory glory had to be transferred to the ancient glory, seen as a theophanous Nature-cosmos. This Hölderlin did yet more thoroughly and exhaustively than had the naiver Ficino, so exhaustively, indeed, that by the time

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[49] *Cf.* Vol. I of this work, pp. 368–371 (Eng. tr.).

[1] The text of the Complete Works follows the larger Stuttgart edition; the volumes are indicated by Roman numerals. Modern orthography is used. *Hyperion* = H, the 'Fragment of Hyperion' = FH, the metrical

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version = MH, 'Hyperion's Youth' = YH, the penultimate version = PH, and the order of reference is: Volume, Book, Letter; thus H 1/2, 4 = *Hyperion*, Volume 1, Book 2, fourth Letter. References to Empedocles give the version (1E, 2E or 3E), act, scene, and line. All other references are according to the volume (or half-volume) and page of the Beißner edition. The ***Hölderlin Yearbook*** for 1944 and 1947ff. = HYb.

[2] IV/1, 297–299.

[3] Thus the justified reaction of Johannes Hoffmeister (***Hölderlin und die Philosophie***, Meiner, 1942) against Wilhelm Böhm's one-sided philosophisation of Hölderlin.

Christ's prerogatives had all been made over to the priestess of love, Diotima, and to the true pantheistic mediator Empedocles, whose death reconciles the world, when at the last there came a more conscious return to Christ no more was left of him than a tree stripped bare of leaves, an empty treasure-chest, a brother to Heracles and Dionysus,[4] one who, even if called by the poet with the other gods to the 'Feast of Peace' at the evening of ages, nevertheless ultimately (in the final version) cannot suffice to perform in and through himself the eschatological *anakephalaiōsis* of heaven and earth (Eph. 1.10), and must leave this office to the 'First of the Feast',[5] the cosmic, world-historical, Germanic, spirit.[6]

It is with an amazement close to worship that Hölderlin contemplates the wonder of the ancient world, which succeeded in spiritualising, whole and unimpaired, in art a total experience of God in the cosmos; he contemplates this glory with Christian eyes, and a Christian heart which unquestionably sees and understands it as the glory of love. In an early apostrophe of the genius of Greece he says (1790): 'In the sight of the gods/ Thy mouth determined/ To found thy kingdom on love./ Then were amazed all the heavenly ones . . ./ On love dost thou found thy kingdom./ Thou comest, and Orpheus' love/ Soars up to the eye of the world/ And Orpheus' love/ Wells downwards to Acheron./ . . . Maeonides![7] like thou!/ None loved like thou;/ Thy heart did embrace/ The earth and ocean/ And giant spirits, the heroes of Earth!/ And the heavens and all the heavenly ones/ Thy heart did embrace!/ And the flowers too, the bee on the flower/ Loving thy heart did embrace!'[8] Five years later, in 'Hyperion's Youth', the strains of the Pauline hymn of praise (1 Cor 13) are transposed into a classical-Idealistic cosmos-hymn far outdoing the chords Shaftesbury had sounded: 'She [Love] bears with her the painful sense of lackingness, and fills heaven with her abundance, . . . unsuspecting that the holy half-light coming towards her proceeds from herself alone. In her is nothing, and outside, everything . . . She does but hope and trust; does but sorrow, that still she is there to feel her nothingness, for rather were she part of the holiness that hazily appears before her. The abundance of the Divine is too boundless, that in her insufficiency she should comprehend it. Marvellous! from her own glory doth she start back. Let the Invisible become visible to her! appear before her clothed as Spring! smile at her from a human visage!'[9] Here Hölderlin means nothing but that same love which in the early, Christian-Pietistic 'Hymn to Love' (1790), 'everywhere in lovely glory' fills the world: 'Love doth bring down rocks in ruins,/ Conjures paradises up,/ Anew creating Earth and Heaven—/ Godly, as in the beginning',[10] and which, shortly afterwards in a new version (1792), is already enlisting as an image of expression the *hieros gamos*: 'See! how with the Earth doth pair/ Itself Heaven's holy delight,/ How, o'ershadowed by the storms/ The Mother's breast enraptured quakes.'[11] And yet in the meantime, as, indeed, the most convincing expression of the loving All-and-One, the Idea of identity has come to the fore, as Heraclitus' 'divine Ἓν διαφέρον ἑαμτῷ',[12] the One that within itself parts itself, and sets itself opposite itself, called by Hyperion the 'essence of beauty' and *fons et origo* of all philosophy.[13] This means discovery too of the new god's new name: 'Know ye his name? the name of him who is One and All? His name is beauty.'[14]

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[4] 'The only One' (1st vers.), ll. 50f. (II, 154), (2nd vers.) ll. 50f. (II, 158), (3rd vers.) l. 54 (II, 162).

[5] 'The Feast of Peace', ll. 15 and 112 (III, 533, 536).

[6] It must be acknowledged that Beißner is right in this interpretation, despite the many Christian interpreters who would still like to identify the prince of the feast (in the final version) with Christ, on the basis of his role in the three preliminary poems (beginning 'O Peacemaker thou who beyond all hope . . .'). And that is a conclusion not derived merely from this isolated text, but wholly supported by its context, the late odes and prose texts. The Christian truth, to which Hölderlin remains faithful from beginning to end, has long since poured out over the entire garden of the ancient world, like a liquid, making everything bloom, while the old container ran dry.

[7] Homer.

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[8] ll. 28–51 (I, 126).

[9] III, 203, ll. 7–20.

[10] 2nd vers., ll. 16 and 37–40 (I, 112–113).

[11] 'Hymn to Love', ll. 29–32 (I, 167).

[12] Frag. 51 Diels = Plato, *Symposium*, 187a (Beißner, II, 427; III, 465).

[13] H 1/2, 19 (III, 81, 83).

[14] H 1/2, 3 (III, 52–53).

Nevertheless, only as διαφέρον is the divine One-and-All 'beautiful'; as Ἓν it is 'holy', and as the holy appearing 'in beauty' it is 'glorious'. For Hölderlin, glory is the unity of the holy and the beautiful. But because the classical difference between gods and men dissolves into the Idealistic difference between (absolute) spirit and (thereto opposed through itself) Nature, the glorious is equally holy and equally divine when it is Ἓν (spirit) as when it is διαφέρον (Nature), when 'a god' as when 'man'; indeed, as is essential to its innermost divinity, holiness and glory, in becoming Nature and Man it strips itself of itself, descends from plenitude into poverty, changes from self-sufficiency into love: and because with Hölderlin this *kenosis* of the One-and-All is *the* poetic theme, executed with the intensity of Christian prayer and the world-commitment of a Christian mission, the unheard-of takes place: the Christian depletion of God depletes itself, becoming God's cosmic-pantheistic depletion. In the process, however, it is left undecided whether the Greek-Idealistic categorical schematism is not all the time—and the more so the deeper the work grows—a language to express an elementary Christian experience of faith: the immanence and nearness, the glory, present in concealment (absence), through suffering of the divine love, as being the water-mark of the cosmos; or whether, in the end, the language does not overpower its object, the 'tragic as such' and its 'calculable law'[15] becoming the inner form of the Cross. What is, in 'Tears', that 'Heavenly Love, tender' which, on shores of 'nigh-distorted' Greek islands, 'for her idolatry doth penance': 'Thus must be overreached,/ Too-trusting yet overall must be love'?[16] When the other 'intransigent genius powers' are frigid with winter, what is the single one left to man: '. . . yet Love doth love'?[17] And when the Titans rage, the world-forces, God looks on smiling, so long as 'the bonds of love' be not spoiled.[18] What is that love which in the pouring of the rain and the split blood alike proclaims itself as the single, flowing, world-substance?

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[15] 'Notes on the *Antigone*', V, 265.

[16] 'Tears', l. 15 (II, 58); *cf.* 'The Poetic Calling', ll. 38f. (II, 47): 'The Spirit . . . the simple one/ Deniest, heartless'.

[17] 'Vulcan', l. 28 (II, 61).

[18] 'The Rhein', l. 97 (II, 145).

> Then should I sing 'With rain doth quench thy thirst
> The cloud, thou Mother-ground! but man with blood.
> Thus rests and cools itself that love which
> Findeth no equal above or below.'[19]

A glance at Hölderlin's use of the great words is instinctive, showing, however, less the demarcation of the semantic spheres than their mutual interpenetration.

'Glorious' is used extravagantly in the early and middle periods, but in the late period more sparingly, the words 'pure' and 'clear' (to make clear) coming to the fore instead. Above all, Nature is glorious, in so far as she reveals God: 'O, if a Father's daughter glorious Nature be, is not the daughter's heart his own? Her innermost being, isn't not he?'[20] The sun is glorious,[21] and the spring 'in all the splendour of youth',[22] the landscape of the Alps[23] (the 'hook of dreadful glory'),[24] the flames of Etna,[25] and, most of all, the 'genial powres of Nature',[26] among whom Hölderlin numbers aether (the sky), light and earth, often water too. The Teck is 'of royal glory', 'God's most glorious work',[27] and in the youthful poems heroes are addressed as men of glory[28]—the phrase is recognisably drawn from Klopstock—and later the 'goddess of harmony'[29] too is at once of 'unbounded majesty', 'stately', 'of divine beauty'; here and in the cycle of poems to the Ideals the formulations for sublimity swell like a flood. In the hymn to the Muse we read 'Worship what is fair and glorious!',[30] an anticipation of Hyperion's

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[19] 'To Edward' (1st vers.), ll. 13–16 (II, 39).

[20] H 1/1, 3 (III, 12).

[21] 'At Morn', l. 14 (I, 302); 'Go down, fair Sun . . .', l. 6 (I, 314).

[22] FH III, 166.

[23] 'The Canton of Switzerland', l. 7 (I, 143).

[24] *Ibid.*, l. 27 (I, 144).

[25] H 2/2, 10 (III, 151).

[26] 1E 1/4, l. 411 (IV, 18); 2E 1/3, l. 435 (IV, 107).

[27] L.27, l. 53 (I, 55, 56).

[28] 'Keppler', l. 19 (I, 81); 'Gustav Adolf', l. 54 (I, 86); Rousseau in 'To Quietude', l. 25 (I, 93).

[29] L1.12,26,50(I,130,131).

[30] L. 116(I,138).

'Religion is love of beauty'.[31] With the 'Genius of Courage',[32] greeted as 'Glorious one!', we turn our gaze to man, whose calling, as 'King of the finite realm', is 'wonderfully and gloriously to heal';[33] his body even is glorious,[34] but his spirit is 'devouring glory'.[35] While in the Hymn to Humanity this glorification is still primarily seen in Christian-eschatological terms—'E'en now in greater glory from our tombs/ The splendour of the finite realm goes forth'[36]—in 'Hyperion' this glory gains immediacy through events; after the 'glorious voyage to Chios' we read 'Thus did we receive glory from the powers of Earth and Heaven'.[37] The sunset flows about Diotima 'like a gloria, such as the saints have',[38] and in the poems too Diotima is the 'glorious one',[39] the 'too glorious one';[40] for her too Hyperion is 'the glorious one',[41] and the two share 'the endless faith with which we gave ourselves glory'.[42] The expression can explain the words from the ode to Princess Auguste of Homburg: 'But glory hath from thy name my song'.[43] The Greeks are glorious: 'We in our poverty are annihilated by such glory';[44] Homer is glorious,[45] and

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[31] H 1/2, 19 (III, 79). [32] L.3 (I, 176).

[33] L.67 (I, 159).

[34] 'Sömmering's "The Organ of the Soul" and the Public' (I, 227).

[35] H 1/1, 4 (III, 12).

[36] L1.45–46 (I, 147).

[37] H 1/1, 7 (III, 30).

[38] YH 5 (III, 218, l. 5); Melete has already said this in FH (III, 168).

[39] L.26 (I, 212); l. 18 (I, 216).

[40] L.59 (I, 221).

[41] H 2/1, 13 (III, 109).

[42] H 1/2, 18 (III, 75). There is an echo of this in Letter 123, to Neuffer: 'How could I have become as I now am . . . if this, this one and only being, had not come before me and with a light as of spring brought youth, strength, good cheer and glory to a life which I had come to think worthless?' (VI, 213).

[43] L.25 (I, 312).

[44] FH III, 169; YH 3 (III, 208–209): 'Who can endure that? whom doth not hurl down the dreadful glory of the past?' H 1/1, 5 (III, 18). Today, Hellas is clothed 'like a beggar-woman, with the rags of thy old glory': H 2/1, 11 (III, 107). Athens and its areopagus are glorious: 'The Archipelago', l. 196 (II, 109).

[45] FH III, 168; Sophocles: 1E 1/1, l. 114 (IV, 7).

Achilles is a 'glorious son of the gods,'[46] 'But nor is there aught more glorious on earth' than the proud pairs of Greek friendship.[47] Thus the friend Alabanda too, the young Titan, is glorious,[48] and as he goes to his death Hyperion calls after him: 'Die! Thy heart hath sufficient glory'.[49] Again, Empedocles is called 'the glorious one',[50] and as a thinker he is 'the glorious pilot'.[51] And in his spirit and Hyperion's alike the most comprehensive experience of glory is compressed into the words: 'That only in suffering do we first feel the true freedom of the soul—that is glorious'.[52] The use, often too extravagant, of the word glory becomes in the later period more sparing, for the sake of the thing itself. It disappears inside the language, which is made so compressed, so burdened, pregnant and costly as to become in each and every part a reliquary of glory. In familiar speech the word 'bright', which always for Hölderlin also means the holy quintessence, suffices: Father Αἰξθήρ = 'Father bright!'[53]

Things and beings are '*holy*'[54] in so far as they point to the presence of the eternal Spirit and intimate his infinite worth. Such, again, is Nature as a whole,[55] light,[56] aether,[57] and the sun, 'whom I never name without joy and thanks';[58] the stars are 'holy in their freedom',[59] the earth is holy,[60] the plant-world,[61] a mountain-valley,[62] the vine,[63] the wine of Bacchus.[64] The joy of living can be called holy,[65] as can suffering sent by the gods,[66] 'life's holy aberration',[67] and, since love came to it, the heart;[68] to Hyperion the names of the seasons have also become holy,[69] but the friends too become 'ever holier'[70] to one another in their suffering. Diotima is a 'Holy Being',[71] the poem, as it lies in the poet's heart, seeking form,[72] is holy, and the Muse is holy.[73] Empedocles is the holy man,[74] and his end is holy.[75] Nemesis too is holy,[76] as is the heretic Vanini, who dies for 'holy Nature'.[77] The poet begs his mother not to lose faith in the holy within him.[78] And then back—the holy spring,[79] the holy green[80]—but also forward to the end of times: pressing closer, the holy host of god-like men in the blue heavens;[81] and the 'holy, the universal Love'.[82]

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[46] 'Achilles', l. 1 (I, 271).

[47] H 1/2, 15 (III, 63).

[48] H 1/1, 7 (III, 24).

[49] H 2/2, 5 (III, 140).

[50] 1E 1/1, l. 49 (IV, 4); 1E 2/5, l. 1827 (IV, 76); 2E 1/3, l. 374 (IV, 105).

[51] 1E 1/1, l. 90 (IV, 6); 1E 2/4, l. 1738 (IV, 72): 'and glorious are thy thoughts'.

[52] Letter 162 (VI, 278, ll. 33–34).

[53] 'Bread and Wine', ll. 65 and 69 (II, 92).

[54] On the tradition, see Isabella Papmehl-Rüttenauer: *Das Wort 'heilig' in der deutschen Dichtersprache* (Weimar, 1937); August E. Hohler: *Das Heilige in der Dichtung. Klopstock / Der junge Goethe* (Zürcher Beiträge zur deutschen Literatur- und Geistesgeschichte, ed. Emil Staiger, Vol. 10 (1954)).

[55] 'Vanini', l. 10 (I, 262); 'Her Recovery', l. 13 (I, 253; II, 23). With emphasis, in Letter 229: 'To look upon holy Nature with true eyes' (VI, 416, l. 38).

[56] 'The Voice of the People' (2nd vers.), ll. 43–44 (II, 52).

[57] *Ibid.*, l. 67.

[58] H 2/1, 1 (III, 93).

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[59] 'Peace', l. 56 (II, 8).

[60] 'What I do own', l. 28 (I, 307), and often elsewhere.

[61] H 2/2, 3 (III, 126).

[62] H 2/2, 4 (III, 133).

[63] 'Man', l. 16 (I, 263); 'The Spirit of Time', l. 13 (I, 300).

[64] 'The Poetic Calling', ll. 3–4 (II, 46).

[65] 'Her Recovery', l. 9 (I, 253, II, 23).

[66] 'The Land of Home', l. 22 (II, 19); so Neuffer's dying bride Rosine is 'the suffering saint', Letter 87 (VI, 134), 'the saint', Letter 100 (VI, 171).

[67] 1E 1/4, l. 403 (IV, 18); the fatherland is 'holy in endurance': 'On Returning to his Homeland', ll. 11–12 (II, 29).

[68] 'The Applause of Men', ll. 1–2 (I, 250).

[69] H 2/1, 13 (III, 109).

[70] H 1/1, 7 (III, 29).

[71] 'An Apology', l. 1 (I, 244).

[72] 'To the Fates', ll. 7–8 (I, 241). The art of poetry is early called 'The holy Path' (I, 79).

[73] 'Peace', l. 41 (II, 7; the Greeks can quite generally be described as 'the holy ones' ('Tränen', l. 9 (II, 58)).

[74] 1E 1/9, l. 1039 (IV, 45); 1E 2/4, ll. 1808–1809 (IV, 75).

[75] 1E 2/4, l. 178a (IV, 74); said of the death of the towns that pine for death in 'The Voice of the People' (2nd vers., 1.22 (II, 51)).

[76] 'To the Genius of Courage', l. 64 (I, 178).

[77] 'Vanini', ll. 4 and 10 (I, 262).

[78] Letter 170 (VI, 297, l.65).

[79] 'To Spring', l. 9 (I, 202).

[80] 'The Wanderer', l. 4 (I, 207).

Under holiness comes *majesty*, since Klopstock a well-loved word, but now acquiring a new and special ring: there is 'the majesty of the undestined soul',[83] and Diotima's wide, inspired eye, 'enthroned with the majesty of a god',[84] and poetry, by which 'a veil is woven about the majesty of the Invisible';[85] and then there are the unusual and yet so characteristic combinations of words: 'sweet majesty',[86] 'serene majesty',[87] even 'light majesty'.[88] Other key words, each from a different sphere, point the way into the mystery in its totality: the bright and brightening, the silent, the pure, the devout, also the much-used words from spheres of magic and enchantment—love, poetry, reality itself—are among the most crucial expressions.

All is comprehended by the generously-used word of exaltation 'divine', which bears superficial resemblance to the Homeric usage;[89] this would mean that not only the sphere of the gods is divine, but also everything earthly and human, in so far as it rises above itself and into the light of the gods. However, the Homeric tradition (and therewith also that of Pindar and the tragedians) is here interpreted conceptually within the all-enclosing identity, Nature herself,[90] and in particular man, being in the innermost spiritual core divine: 'But man is a god, so soon as he is a man.'[91] 'The god that is in man' may not be 'denied'.[92] And yet this statement

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[81] 'Germania', ll. 31–32 (II, 150).

[82] Letter 231 (VI, 419, l. 26).

[83] H 2/1, 22 (III, 122).

[84] FH III, 166.

[85] 'To the Genius of Bravery', ll. 31–32 (I, 117).

[86] 'A Hymn to the Genius of Youth', l. 16 (I, 168).

[87] 'Diotima', later vers., l. 74 (I, 222).

[88] H 1/2, 5 (III, 55).

[89] above, p. 51.

[90] The limiting of the *Hen kai Pan* by opposition to the concept of identity (in 'Judgment and Being', IV, 216) is irrelevant in this context; both concepts are alien to Greco-Christian analogy.

[91] H 1/2, 19 (III, 79).

[92] Letter 171 (VI, 300, ll. 31f.).

(impossible in Greek literature) can be replaced and clarified by the Platonic θεῖον—Not to lose faith 'in ourselves, in our θεῖον, or however you wish to call it'[93]—providing a key to statements such as: 'In the Divine believe/ Those alone who themselves are',[94] 'Ah! little know we ourselves,/ For within us a god holds sway';[95] 'You shall remain among men and be a man, but a godly man'.[96] The word acquires a new density where the subject is the higher mystery at work between those who love one another ('So from time to time the deity that binds you and me must also receive an offering'),[97] but only in the conception of the holy (communal) spirit, which we shall deal with last, is it revealed in its entirety. But if we seek an indication with which to conclude for the time being, there is still that elucidation (it comes in the letter to Schütz, the editor of Aeschylus) according to which Greek tragedy 'was never permitted to make men into gods or gods into men, and commit impure idolatry, but only to bring gods and men alike nearer to one another', thus 'at the end leaving behind on the one side worship of the heavenly ones, and on the other, as the possession of man, a purified mind'.[98]

Time and history in human experience are therefore by no means divine as such. In particular, the present is a dreadful and godless time, 'brimming with cold unspeaking dissension'; 'as the instinct for slavery increases, so with it does a coarse sense of daring, as cares increase, so does intoxication, and hunger grows with luxury'; 'there is nothing holy that is not desecrated, denigrated into a miserable expedient',[99] so much so, indeed, 'that now the dead walk above on the earth and the living, the godly men, are below'.[100] Only to one looking back, with longing, and forward, with presentiment, can the divine, the holy and glorious, be present; it can also break in upon such longing with momentary fulfilment when, in its (child-like) naivety or elegiac brokenness, a soul is capable of the act and the mood which Hölderlin calls *intensity*, and which he values ever higher until, in the 'Basis to Empedocles', it becomes, as 'the deepest intensity', the all-supporting category[101]—in such a way, however, that 'through excess of intensity' there comes about 'a rift', and it must needs pass through a purifying night of division, thereupon 'returning, more stable, to the tone with which it began'. Now if 'intensity' is understood simply, and ignoring the late dialectic of the 'Basis', then it is that state of surrender to the wonder and mystery of Being which contains the experience of being touched by 'God'. 'Could I but restore to thee this silent feast, this holy peace within, when can be heard even the softest of sounds that cometh from the depths of the spirit, and the softest touch from without, from the heavens, from the branches and flowers—then is he, the Invisible, so near to us!'.[102] And, in yet more urgent tone and already at the stage of 'withdrawal from all living things': 'I heard a reproach from the heart of the grove, and a cry from the depths of Earth and Sea: where is thy love for *me*?'[103] Thus to be touched and called upon conceals in itself—beyond the reach of all thought—a promise without end, confronting one who knows it with that absolute demand which can be discharged only by payment of life itself. This demand is that, despite the detachment required by sober daily life, by action, by, above all, the attitude of speculative philosophy, that deeper intensity binding the single heart to the heart of the All should never be abandoned. 'Inspiration' is a state demanding critical limitation such as before him Shaftesbury had said should be accorded it. 'Where moderation has left you, there is the limit to your inspiration'.[104] But intensity, even if in its unrestraint it must learn measure through pain and self-denial, can never turn back, not even when, as in Empedocles' case, this means the sacrifice of life.

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[93] Letter 163 (VI, 278, l. 20).

[94] 'The Applause of Men', ll. 7–8 (I, 250).

[95] 'The Lovers', ll. 3–4 (I, 249); *cf.* the last lines of 'The Blind Singer' (II, 55).

[96] Letter 87 (VI, 133, ll. 14–15).

[97] Letter 169 (VI, 293, ll. 8f.; *cf.* Letter 231 (VI, 420, ll. 70f.).

[98] Letter 203 (VI, 382, ll. 34–37).

[99] H 2/2, 11 (III, 156, 154).

[100] H 2/2, 4 (III, 130).

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[101] IV, 149–162, esp. 150.

[102] FH III, 175.

[103] FH III, 183.

[104] 'Reflection', IV, 233, ll. 16–17.

This raises the question of *prayer*, which in Bruno and Shaftesbury, but also in Herder and Jean Paul, has run dry and passed into enthusiasm, and which is so grievously lacking in German Idealism generally from Kant to Hegel, in Schiller, Goethe, and Humboldt: for how could the 'I' adopt an attitude of prayer towards its own intelligible inner being, or towards a divine nature whose awareness depends upon man, a view maintained by Hölderlin too, even in his late period?[105] Surely in the end (as in Novalis's fairy-tales of love) this Eros in prayer will eventually be revealed in the light of identity: '. . . as t'were I could feel him, the Spirit of the World; but, awakening, I think t'was my own fingers I had held'.[106] Of love, we read: 'Marvellous! from her own glory doth she start back . . . Her whole being strives to bring forth, in all intensity, the divinity that is so near her, and, as her very own, fully to know it. All unsuspecting is she that, in the moment of her embrace, it will disappear'.[107] And yet all this remains theory, paling before what is truly Hölderlin's attitude of prayer—and which refines, as it grows beyond the enthusiasm of the youthful hymns and 'Hyperion', into ever more boundless reverence and worship. As for the theory, it can be interpreted equally well in terms of Plotinus (the One eternally impalpable beyond the conscious spirit in its longing), of the Christian theology of God's eschatological perception by God, or of Fichte's religion of the intelligible 'I'; it does not really matter.

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[105] Letter 231, to his brother (1801): 'All is infinite unity, but in this all there is that which is supremely unified and unifying, which is not, in itself, an I, and between us let this be God!' (VI, 419, ll. 41f.). The idea occurs in 'The Archipelago': 'Truly, as heroes need their wreaths, alone in the hearts of/ Feeling men do enjoy the sacred elements glory' (ll. 60–61), 'For in the feeling heart and heavenly ones do rest gladly' (l. 235, II, 104, 108), and, with the utmost clarity, in the hymn 'The Rhein': '. . . if gods in/ The heavens have any need/ Then 'tis the heroes and men and/ All mortal things. For because/ In bliss complete nought feel they alone,/ Must haply, if 'tis permitted/ To speak thus, of the gods' fate/ Partaking, feel another,/ In their name. Him they need . . .' (ll. 106–114 (II, 145)).

[106] H 1/1, 3 (III, 12).

[107] YH 1 (III, 203, ll. 17ff.).

But what Hölderlin experiences, what he risks his whole existence for, is the presence, indeed, the urgency of an infinite love in the mystery of the world's being. Instead of the preacher's office, he chooses the life of a poet, poor and futile in the eyes of the world, in order to have a profounder influence as a priest';[108] outwardly, and yet more so spiritually, the poet must make his way 'defencelessly through life',[109] step 'bare into life',[110] that he may 'in humility' preserve the 'inner purity'[111] he needs above all things,[112] if he is to pursue this 'most innocent of occupations',[113] 'unharming . . . like the peaceful swans',[114] in 'virginity of the spirit'.[115] To begin with, 'inspiration' is that youthful state through which the 'needy' landscape is transfigured, appearing now 'like a bride';[116] which becomes 'a grave of bliss'[117] for the lovers, for it is the 'omnipotence of undivided inspiration',[118] but which, according with Nature, also pales with the sun and with spring, fading away to leave behind the darkness of perplexity. 'In the Arm of the gods grew I';[119] that is already the past, and when such abundance has been lost it can only be awaited till the end of days;[120] meantime nothing is left to man but complete self-devotion to the departed being hovering, perhaps, about him, intangible as a ghost. It is here that the poet's great experience of aether, air and wind belongs. If heaven (light, aether) and earth and the air which joins them are the cosmic trinity—'ye three in Unity',[121], the great— And joyful forms of this our world',[122] 'Life's great genii'[123]—so the wind's breath is like the spirital 'murmuring descent' of the longed-for heavenly father,[124] soothing the heart. In the final version of 'Hyperion', after many preliminary attempts, Hölderlin achieves this extraordinary intimation of Diotima: 'The motherly Air came to all, even into their hearts, lifting and drawing them to herself. And the people went out of their doors, and felt the spirital Breath in wondrous wise, . . . and, loosening their garments in welcome, received it to their breasts'.[125] Here the 'holy air' is called 'sister of the Spirit', and the poet never tires of praising her touch,[126] of longing for the return of that pentecostal moment as 'the Soul of the world, the holy air everywhere surrounded him with her embrace'.[127] Thus Empedocles strives to reach the summit of Etna, where the gods are present: 'A! then will come to us the all-moving/ Spirit, the Aether with his tender touch'.[128] As the hour of death approaches, 'Now cometh, bearing tidings of my night,/ The evening Wind, true messenger of love. The time is nigh!'.[129]

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[108] *Cf.* e.g. Letter 193 (VI, 361); Letter 204 (VI, 384, ll. 50f.); Walter Rehm, Orpheus (1949).

[109] 'The Poet's Courage' (1st and 2nd vers.), ll. 3–4 (II, 62, 64).

[110] 'Foolishness', ll. 3–4 (II, 66).

[111] Letter 173 (VI, 308, ll. 22 and 29).

[112] Letter 235: 'Forgive me, that there may be purity between us' (VI, 425, l. 23).

[113] Letter 173 (VI, 311, l. 122); Letter 130 (VI, 225, 1.41) also speaks of poetry as 'these happy, at the least innocent, occupations'; they lift the poet into 'the innocent life of Nature' (Letter 141, VI, 245, ll. 25f.), as, in 'guiltless moments' (Letter 174, VI, 316, l. 67), he gives himself up to the landscape: 'to have felt the beauty of the earth with so pure a heart . . . is as good as having been in church' (ll. 69f.). Especially in Hauptwil he feels the 'innocence of life here beneath the silvery Alps' (Letter 231, VI, 420, ll. 74f.), a feeling which is preserved in 'A Song sung under the Alps' (II, 44), with its opening 'Innocence holy . . .'.

[114] 'Elegie', l. 41 (II, 72).

[115] Letter 144 (VI, 249, l. 7). Compare the early, naive, expression of this 'virginity' in Letter 4 (VI, 7, ll. 28f.), also Letter 193 (VI, 362, ll. 55–65).

[116] H 1/1, 6 (III, 21).

[117] 'Diotima' (second vers.), ll. 113–114 (I, 219).

[118] H 1/1, 4 (III, 14).

[119] 'When I was a boy . . .', l. 32 (I, 267).

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[120] 'But now, 'tis Day! . . . From the Aether aloft . . . / Anew the Creator of all/ Doth feel itself, Inspiration' ('As on a holiday . . .', ll. 19f., II, 118). But such inspiration is also man's achievement, bringing the parusia nearer: 'O Heaven's rain! o Inspiration! Thou wilt restore to us the spring of the peoples' (H 1/1, 7 (III, 32)).

[121] 'The Wanderer', l. 99 (II, 83).

[122] 3E 1/3, ll. 410–411 (IV, 137).

[123] 2E 1/3, l. 402 (IV, 106).

[124] 'To the Aether', l. 50 (I, 205).

[125] H 1/2, 2 (III, 50).

[126] 'When for the first time within/ Felt I godly stirrings, round me/ Whispering thy Spirit was', the poet says to 'Diotima' (fragments of an earlier version, ll. 37f., I, 213) (*cf.* the later version, ll. 22f., I, 220). Similarly in 'What I do own', ll. 13f. (I, 306), 'Palinode', l. 2 ('Why now, o Breezes, breathe ye on me as then?' (I, 308)), 'Encouragement' (1st vers.), ll. 10f. ('And Nature's breath doth, quietly forming, wash/ About us, as about bare fields,/ Cheer to all bringing, in soulfulness . . .', II, 33), 'The Blind Singer', ll. 7–8 (II, 54), 'Elegy', l. 100 (II, 74), 'Stuttgart', l. 31 (II, 87), 'Bread and Wine', l. 13 (II, 90), 'The Fettered Stream', ll. 5–6 ('The messengers of love that the Father sends,/ Canst know them not, the Zephyrs, their breath of life?' (II, 67), 'The Rhein', l. 190 (II, 148), 'Patmos', l. 129 (of the pentecostal spirit: 'the locks catching hold of, presently' (II, 169), and *cf.* 'Heimkunft', l. 35: 'The Spirit cometh in presence' (II, 97).

Yet the touch of divine breath is merely a particularly convincing and joyful experience which confirms all the other experiences of the world, but is not separate from them. Light, too, 'softly rouses' (that is, touches),[130] 'the spirit/ Of the Sun touches',[131] and 'dark Earth's flowers' breathe 'on us with love';[132] from evening and morning, from trees and mountains, from autumn[133] no less than from spring comes the breath, and even the night, in its 'sad and majestic ascent' (in 'Brot und Wein'), brings 'a breath', its incomprehensibility for all wise men being a message of love.[134] The further the poet goes and bares his heart, the more the dark forces in their intangibility become instruments and vessels, until finally storm and lightening become the very heart of revelation,[135] 'the storm not just in its highest manifestation, but . . . as might and form'.[136] The spirit in 'storms, those in the sky, and others,/ That in the depths of time were longer prepared,/ With meaning more pregnant . . .'.[137] But it behoves the poet 'To stand, bare-headed, beneath/ God's storms, and in his grasp the rays, ay of the Father, His own/ To clasp, and veiled, and of milder might,/ In Song to mortal men, that we do love, the heav-/ enly gift to give'.[138] All this finding highest expression in a single mythological image:

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[127] H 2/1, 15 (III, 112).

[128] 1E 2/3, l. 1207 (IV, 53). Empedocles is returning into the all, but in the whispering spirit he will draw near to those he is leaving behind: 'Then haply in the song will breathe my note,/ As, veiled in the fair world's choir of love,/ Once more your friend's word lovingly ye hear' (1E 2/4, ll. 1799–1800 (IV, 74)). We read of the godly powers ('As on a holiday . . .', ll. 36–37, II, 119) that '. . . in song doth their spirit breathe'.

[129] 1E 2/6, ll. 1912–1914 (IV, 80). *Cf.* 'The Fragment of Hyperion': 'My whole being falls silent, listening, when the soft and mysterious breath of evening blows upon me' (III, 184). In contrast, there is 'not a whisper of wind in the branches' on the occasion of the 'wake of my youth' (Waltershäusen paralipomenon, III, 577, ll. 10–11).

[130] 'The Journey', l. 15 (II, 138).

[131] 'For when from the grape a juice . . .', ll. 9–10 (II, 207).

[132] 'Go down, fair Sun . . .', ll. 13–14 (I, 314).

[133] [Autumn] 'lies closer to my hear than any other period in Nature's life' (Letter 145 (VI, 251, ll. 9–10)).

[134] 'Bread and Wine', ll. 18, 13 (II, 90).

[135] In an early form in 'Diotima' (I, 210), and wherever Hölderlin depicts the storm as a purification enabling Nature's brighter rays to follow.

> Thus on Semele's house, so poets say, as
> She wished the visible God to see, did his lightening
> fall
> And divinely-struck, she brought forth
> The fruit of the Storm, him, Bacchus the holy.[139]

In the lightning of the late poetry the entire cosmic theophany, which in the early and middle period has its centre in the whispering aethereal spirit, becomes compressed into the Platonic-apocalyptic moment of discharge (ἐξαίφνης). It is a road leading from the immediacy of an inspiration with its pulse in Nature's rhythm (with which it must therefore always die and be reborn),[140] passing through the endurance of divine distance 'when 'tis over, and the Day extinguished',[141] even to the experience of God in this selfsame darkness, as lightning. Certainly at first this road is made possible by Kant and Fichte, by the soaring flight (Hyper-ion!) over existence in servant form, Nature, by an 'I' that knows itself to be eternal, and even uncreated: 'I can feel in myself a life created by no god, begotten by no mortal. I believe 'tis through ourselves that we are, and only in the freedom of pleasure are we joined so intensely with the All';[142] soaring in flight as though 'to leave a city of plague and flee to the mountains, where there is purer air',[143] and looking out from 'the proud heights . . . the better to know . . . the lovely and glorious things we can see from up on high'.[144] But eventually this philosophical flight must deny the intensity which for Hölderlin was primary, and kill prayer; and so, even before hearing Fichte, he has soon left Kant, and Schiller, still the all too faithful disciple, behind again. For Plato too can teach him that the 'I', being elevated above Nature, is eternal'[145] and his great love for Susette Gontard serves as proof positive that the descent of the spirit into the 'servant-form' of defenceless need is the ultimate truth and glory of all being. 'When thou art most hapless, dost thou perceive it [thy glory]'.[146] And even when love has long since turned to renunciation[147] this is still the one place where he can be struck by 'lightning', wounded by Apollo.[148] Even if the unsolved philosophical conflict (Idealism against ancient philosophy) reaches to the very centre of the poetic tragedy and is a contributing cause of it,[149] the poet cannot abandon either of the two poles, because in secret it always has been and always will be the third, Christian position that determines the way he feels and lives, and can alone enable his work to be what it is: prayer.

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[136] Letter 240 (VI, 433, ll. 38–39); *cf.* also 'Homecoming', ll. 15f. (II, 96).

[137] 'As on a holiday . . .', ll. 39–41 (II, 119).

[138] *Ibid.*, variants, II, 669.

[139] *Ibid.*, ll. 50–54 (II, 119).

[140] The returning spring evokes these words: 'Mourn ye not, when your heart's melody doth fall silent! ere long a hand will there be to tune it' (H 1/2, 2 (III, 51)).

[141] 'Germania', l. 20 (II, 149).

[142] H 2/2, 5 (III, 141).

The young Hölderlin prays.[150] When a Spinozism (seen through Jacobi's eyes, and therefore taken to be atheistic) 'of reason, of the *cold* reason that has been deserted by the heart' seems unavoidable, he finds refuge with Christ, who 'shows through miracles that he is what he says he is, that he is God. He teaches us existence of the deity and love and wisdom and omnipotence of the deity so plainly. And he must know that God is, and what God is, for he is in closest union with the deity'.[151] Christ wished to lead us 'to the feeling of the living deity in which we live and are, to the feeling truest to Christ, that we and the Father are one';[152] Christian theologians and ritualists have committed an infamous betrayal of his intention, turning 'him, the Living, into an empty idol',[153] 'gone to waste all heavenly powers, used up the kindly ones'[154]—thus, in 'Empedocles', the tones of a Last Judgement pour down wrath upon the 'god-forsaken'[155] 'wretches'[156] who bind men, so that they know nothing of divine presence,[157] and who deal in 'holy things as though in trade'.[158] Only by leaving all these shameless ones behind and entering into the pre-Christian divine intimacy can Christianity too in its original meaning be saved for the eschatological 'Feast of Peace'.

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[143] Letter 170 (VI, 297, ll. 55–56).

[144] Letter 83 (VI, 124, ll. 22f.).

[145] Upon whom he is now planning to write a commentary (Letter 88, VI, 137, ll. 89–99).

[146] YH 1 (III, 204, l. 5).

[147] The Diotima letters 182, 198 (VI, 336, 370).

[148] Letter 240 (VI, 432, l. 10).

[149] *Cf.* the next two chapters.

[150] Letter 15 (VI, 24, ll. 110–112).

The poet assumes this holy office. 'Such are the cares that whether he will or not, in his soul doth/ Bear a Singer, and oft must, but unheeding the rest.'[159] His words are praise in the Pindaric sense,[160] celebration, calling to the feast,[161] but above all they are 'thanks', for through him man is to learn to give thanks for everything,[162] 'to give heartfelt thanks for that which is there'.[163] To do this, the poet's heart must rise to that utmost chievement and, even while being spiritual, also be worldly;[164] like the 'Blind Singer', he must follow through darkness the 'voice of the Thunderer/ At noonday',[165] 'so sure on his wand'ring path'.[166] If it is the poet's office both evermore to sing of 'the Highest' to whom he is devoted and also, inspired by the 'unlooked-for Genius', prophetically to proclaim the 'days of destiny' of history, he cannot perform this second office unless he stands, protected only by his innocence, unarmed and guileless, 'alone before God', 'till that God's lack helpeth'.[167] In such an exposure of the heart, facing death itself with unflinching readiness, even in night and absence there is 'worship', 'prayer', 'devotion',[168] and the poet is prepared for the hope he invokes to 'affright the heart'[169] with its unfamiliar form. In this posture he is an intercessor who through his word, his silence (where holy names are lacking),[170] through his very being calls down blessings upon the world: 'Ye bless so kindly over our mortal heads,/ Ye Powers of heaven! that which to each is his,/ O do but bless mine own . . .';[171] 'bless for me rather then/ My mortal work . . .'.[172] In 'Palinodie' the plea that the gods may spare him is taken back.[173]

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[151] Letter 41 (VI, 64, ll. 43–47).

[152] Letter 151 (VI, 261, ll. 14–16).

[153] Letter 173 (VI, 309, l. 65).

[154] 'The Poetic Calling', ll. 46–47 (II, 47).

[155] 1E 2/4, l. 1319 (IV, 57) and l. 1364 (IV, 59).

[156] *Ibid.*, l. 1295 (IV, 56).

[157] 2E 1/1, ll. 13–14 (IV, 91).

[158] 1E 1/5, l. 535 (IV, 23).

[159] 'Homecoming', ll. 107–108 (II, 99).

[160] For his early estimation of Pindar: 'A History of the Fine Arts . . .' (IV, 203, ll. 1f.).

[161] These two words *passim*. See Heinrich Knittermeyer, *Fest und Feier: Ein Beitrag zum Wortgebrauch Hölderlins*, HJb, 1950, 47–71.

[162] 'The Course of Life' (2nd vers.), l. 14 II, 22).

[163] Letter 228 (VI, 414, ll. 34–35); extensive discussion in Paul Böckmann, Hölderlin und seine Götter (1935), of which see index.

[164] 'The only One' (1st vers.), ll. 104–105 (II, 156).

True, this prayer may sometimes be threatened by the Fichtean 'I'-identity and in theory demoted to a preliminary stage—when we read that the oriental god hurls men 'to the ground with his might and brilliance, and even ere man has learned to walk must he kneel, ere he has learned to speak must he pray; ere his heart knoweth equilibrium must he bow down'[174]—but Péguy too will contrast the prayer of the free, upright-standing Christian before God with oriental prostrations.[175] And through love Hyperion learns again humility and devotion; Hölderlin once more demands that man 'in all his arts and activity bow down, humble and devout, before the Spirit of Nature whom he carries within him, whom he has around him, and who gives him material and powers'.[176] There is not one among Hölderlin's poems which could be described as prayer-less, that is, in which his faith does not say in advance[177] an all-embracing 'yes' to reality: 'Let whate'er there befall always a blessing be,/ Be it turned into joy!'[178] The rush and tumult of human life, the desire of the human mind for progress, always remains no more than 'service to Nature', and returns, borne by her embrace, back 'into the Grave of Nature', 'and ultimately all is good'.[179] That is also Hyperion's final thought. Fichte's eternal asymptotic progress never becomes as strong as the Greek 'circulation' that, here with Christian meaning, is the hope that the spirit may return, and that God may be 'all in all'. Thus even Menon too, at the end of his lament for Diotima, can give glad consent to the death that could scarcely be overcome: 'Now would I too, ye heavenly ones, give thanks, and at last is/ Lightened my breast, and once more praying the Singer doth breathe.'[180]

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[165] 'The Blind Singer', ll. 25–26 (II, 55).

[166] *Ibid.*, l. 36 (II, 55).

[167] 'The Poetic Calling' (II, 46–48).

[168] The Frankfurt 'Empedocles' plan (IV, 146, l. 2, l. 5, 147, l. 6).

[169] 'To Hope', ll. 17–20 (II, 59).

[170] 'Homecoming', l. 101 (II, 99).

[171] 'What I do own', ll. 49–51 (I, 307).

[172] 'At Morn', ll. 18–19 (I, 302); *cf* the plea for a blessing in 'The Return to his Homeland', l. 23 (II, 29), and the blessing brought by the inclining aether in 'Go down, fair Sun . . .' (l. 16, I, 314).

[173] 'Palinode' (I, 308).

[174] H 1/2, 19 (III, 82).

[175] 'The Mystery of the Holy Innocents' (ed. Pléiade, 354–358).

With Hölderlin, nothing is rhetorical dressing-up or tradition appropriated without existential content (unlike, for example, Schiller's constant talk of gods). It is homage that is being proclaimed 'in poesy of prayer',[181] homage which he, like Empedocles, is prepared to reinforce with the sacrifice of his life. It is by virtue of this very unity of word and death that, towards the end, the figure of Christ makes its powerful resurrection. His grandmother's birthday poem, filled with piety towards Christ ('His breast in its love all the World's suff'ring did bear./ E'en with Death did he friendship tie, in the name of the others/ Vanquishing pains and toil did to his Father return')[182] threw the poet into such turmoil, making him feel so acutely how far and near his youth was, that later he 'could find no sleep'.[183] At the same time he is working on 'Empedocles', whose situation becomes closer and closer to that of Christ, a probable reason why the drama is left uncompleted. Christ joins the line of cosmic deities as the last theophany, being the 'quiet genius' who leaves behind humble gifts, 'bread and wine', because 'greater' gifts 'became too great',[184] yet also 'fulfilling' and concluding the 'heavenly feast', being 'the most loving' envoy that the Father had, so burning that men will be capable only of misuse and each 'unto himself sufficed, o'erweening Heaven forgot . . .', but even thus, by his death, bringing apocalyptic 'fulfilment of the times'.[185] That the poet then, in the final version, restores Christ to the series of earlier theophanies,[186] that in the very song, 'The One and Only', written to the glory of Christ he declares himself hindered, when to 'thee I would liken/ Those men of the world . . .' (Heracles and Dionysus), by a kind of shame, yet still, and despite the outburst of prayer 'My Master and Lord! O thou, my Teacher!',[187] calls him their brother,[188] that he once again, in a variant of the Johannine hymn 'Patmos', describes him as a 'demi-god',[189] that he can speak of a 'clover-leaf' (of the three demi-gods),[190] all this is a sign of the deadly earnest in which the poet conceives the mission he has undertaken, to sacrifice nothing of the cosmic theophany for the sake of the Christ-revelation. And when but 'Since converse we do have/ And can from one another hear . . .',[191] since the peoples can show each other the divinity each has, and at the 'evening of time' the sum of history must be assembled, to form 'One Speech',[192] indeed, one song,[193] one spirit?[194]

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[176] Letter 179 (VI, 329, l. 128f.).

[177] 'Faith' is a fundamental word, not just in the letters to his mother (Letters 173, 175), in which he deliberately uses Christian language, but in general; thus in the letters to his brother (Letter 231), his relations (Letter 223), and Sinclair (Letter 171).

[178] 'The Poet's Courage' (1st vers., ll. 5–6 (II, 62)).

[179] Letter 179 (VI, 328, ll. 83–84).

[180] 'Menon's Laments for Diotima', 9, ll. 109–110 (II, 78).

[181] 3E 1/3, l. 417 (IV, 137).

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[182] 'To my revered Grandmother', ll. 16–18 (I, 272). The celebration was on 30 December, 1798. It had been at the beginning of the same year that Christ was mentioned in a letter (151, VI, 261, l. 15) for the first time since the beginning of 1791 (Letter 41).

[183] Letter 172 (VI, 306, ll. 151f.).

[184] 'Bread and Wine', 8, ll. 129–134 (II, 94); *cf.* 6, ll. 107–108; 9, ll. 155–156. The Christian title replaces the original 'The Wine-god' with its reference to Bacchus.

[185] 'The Feast of Peace' (1st draft), ll. 63–71 (II, 132).

[186] For a discussion of the newly-discovered final version, and bibliography, see *HJb*, 1955/6.

[187] 'The only One' (1st vers.), ll. 36f. (II, 154–155).

[188] *Ibid.*, ll. 48f.

[189] 'Patmos' (preliminary stage of a later version), l. 146 (II, 177).

[190] 'The only One' (3rd vers.), l. 76 (II, 163).

2. POOR LOVE

Hölderlin's Christology will not be found where those who squeeze the text look for it; perceivable only as a water-mark, it is dissolved throughout the existential statement as a whole, and can be most powerfully felt when directly contradicted by the framework inside which it is stretched. But the very frame-work itself holds contradictions: the absolute spirit is without consciousness, and so to be themselves the 'blessed gods' need 'destiny', the suffering heart of men: only if the One-and-All be thus drawn asunder ('Εν καὶ πᾶν as 'Εν διαφέρον ἑαυτῷ) can god be god and man be man. That, beyond intellect and reason, is both the central concept of philosophy[1] and the essence of beauty: Homer's 'analogy' (God-world) is interpreted in terms of Heraclitean and Parmenidean 'identity', and, equally, vice-versa; here, then, we have Hölderlin not just leaving Kant and Schiller behind and arriving at an objective idealism similar to Schelling's, but referring this idealism back to the Greek sphere as a whole. For even the spirit, however 'eternal' it may be—

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[191] 'The Feast of Peace' (3rd draft), ll. 50–51 (II, 137).

[192] *Ibid.* (final vers.), l. 84 (III, 535).

[193] *Ibid.*, l. 93 (III, 536).

[194] This 'sublime Spirit' (l. 77), with the active participation of mankind (ll. 85–86), brings about and is—in a Christian rather than Hegelian sense—the eschatological revelation of God (and, in him, of all the gods), and as such is the 'Prince of the Feast' (ll. 15 and 113). Certainly he is 'blessed Peace' (III, 224, l. 27), but peace as such is not the same as the spirit it is created by; the late Hölderlin does not glorify abstractions. The ultimate object of 'our homage name we not'; it is at once the brightness that bursts in from above (the concealed master stepping out of his work-shop) and, rounding off its sum, the inner history of the world.

[1] H 1/2, 19 (III, 83).

indeed, as the individual spirit, eternal in the Platonic and Leibnizian sense[2]—is one element in the whole inasmuch as it has to acknowledge the poverty of its descent into love; both in and free from poverty it is tragic,[3] and as well in this very descent into 'servant form' as in its ascent into divine form it is 'glorious'. But this means nothing other than a transformation of Christology into (classical-Idealistic) ontology, or in theological terms: an equation of the economic with the absolute doctine of the Trinity.

By virtue of this latent Christological element the kenotic element, the humility in all worldly love and form receives a divine radiance, but at the price that the shadow of transitoriness and melancholy falls upon the godly. If man can bloom divinely, so too the godly in human form can 'wither'; this nexus is indissoluble. 'Nothing can . . . in real life appear as it originally is . . . but only in its weakness, so that in true reality the light of life and appearance constitute the weakness of every whole.'[4] For the poet and his infinitely vulnerable soul this means: 'Purity can only express itself in impurity, and if you try to depict a nobility free of all baseness it will look utterly unnatural and foolish, and that is because nobility itself, when it comes to be expressed, carries the colour of the destiny under which it originated, and because beauty, when it takes shape in reality, necessarily receives, from the circumstances under which it comes forth, a form that is not natural to it. . . .'[5] Thus beauty, as transcendental category of being, emphatically becomes the synthesis of the beautiful and unbeautiful (within the world).[6] Now, according to the perspective, and with it the modality, chosen—tragic inolvement of the eternal in the transitory world, or heroic, ideal elevation of the transitory into eternity—within the all-comprehensive identity, there arises that 'alternation of tones'[7] which for Hölderlin is so decisively important; and the historical significance of which extends far beyond Hölderlin's own scale, for soon this same structure of identity will be met by the cold breath of atheism.[8] Nevertheless, all attempts to transpose Hölderlin forward and into *that* tone are unjust and absurd.[9] The focal point is 'the eternal heart': heart conceived as middle, between the loving man and suffering god:

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[2] H 2/2, 12 (III, 159, l. 14).

[3] Such thinking is characteristic of the entire period, as Walter Rehm has shown, in 'The Silence and the sorrow of the Gods' (1949).

[4] 'The Significance of the Tragedies' (IV, 274).

[5] Letter 167 (VI, 290, 11.75f.). *Cf.* Letter 183 (VI, 340, l. 67) on 'delicate forbearance from the accidental', also the sentence from Letter 185: '. . . thus, in poetry, truth and harmony emerge from falsehood, error and suffering all the more beautiful and delightful' (VI, 344, ll. 25f.).

[6] Thus there is no season nor time of life which is 'altogether beautiful' the truth is 'that beauty consists in all the times of life together, as they follow one another, rather than in any particular one' (Letter 188 (VI, 351, ll. 29–31)).

> Deep-shaken, with a god doth suffer too the Eternal
> heart, but still it remaineth firm.[10]

Whether it be described as divine (heavenly), as human (earthly), as half-godly (Titanic) or as divinely-human, the place of the heart, mediator of heaven and earth, is all-important. The heart is the source of the truth that 'the divine, when it goes forth, can never be without a certain sorrow and humility',[11] and that 'the greatest joy' speaks not in joy, but 'at the last . . . in sorrow'.[12] Hölderlin's interpretation of this middle is emphatically in terms of the classical Eros (albeit in the light of Fichte): love unites the will to infinity and the desire for limitation, 'for the father is Abundance, yet doth she not deny her mother, Poverty'.[13] Only, the loving heart must bear an infinitely greater burden than in Plato's day, for it is a sacrifice, consecrated in the middle of mutual hate:

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[7] 'On the various methods of Poetry' (IV, 228–232), 'The Alternation of the Tones' (IV, 238–240), 'On the Procedure of the poetic Spirit' (IV, 241–265), 'On the differences of the poetic genres' (IV, 266–273). See Meta Corssen, 'Der Wechsel der Töne in Hölderlins Lyrik', HJb, 1951, 19–49.

[8] Thus already in Jean Paul's 'The Alternation of the Tones', on which see Walter Rehm, *Experimentum suae medietatis: Eine Studie zur dichterischen Gestaltung des Unglaubens bei Jean Paul und Dostojewski*, Jb. des Freien Deutschen Hochstifts, 1940, 237–336.

[9] In particular by Beda Allemann, *Hölderlin und Heidegger* (1954). This interpretation needs intolerable force if it is to fit Hölderlin but proves itself to be correct as an interpretation of the subsequent development in historical logic.

[10] 'As on a holiday . . ' (Hellingrath, IV, 153; Beißner, II, 676). On the variant, see Herm. Pongs, 'Das ewige Herz in Hölderlins Dichtung', in *Worte und Werte, Markwardt-Festschrift* (19610, 292–314; and Ulrich Häussermann, 'Herz', HJb, 1958–60, 190–205.

[11] Letter 169 (VI, 294, 11.25–26).

[12] 'Sophocles' (I, 305).

Ay! I knew it ere this. Hatred hath taken root,
All hath sundered, and long parted the gods and men.
Now, with blood to appease them,
Now must perish the lovers' heart.[14]

With Hölderlin's progress from 'Hyperion' to 'Empedocles' and then to the last songs, this insight matures.

'Hyperion' comes about in stages. In the 'Waltershausen version' (published through the 'Thalia' fragment), heavily influenced by Schiller, Hölderlin describes a path from natural 'simplicity' to spiritual 'culture'[15] as necessary, but all the more dangerous,[16] an 'excentric course'[17] without which, however, there could be no centre. Thus an absolute love is demanded,[18] while at the same time the self-sufficiency of the beloved glory is feared.[19] The fragment will, then, have achieved its ultimate goal when its hero is content to leave the beloved object of beauty as it is; when the lover is so purified as to be absolutely free from self. Yet at the same time 'unfathomable Nature' is to appear (idealistically) as the 'veiled beloved';[20] and forthwith, under Fichte's influence, this now unfolds.

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[13] MH (prose outline), III, 194, ll. 13–15.

[14] 'The Parting' (1st vers.), ll. 13–16 (II, 24).

[15] FH III, 163, 180.

[16] FH III, 165.

[17] FH III, 163. The concept remains central. There is an underlying element of doubt (YH 4, III, 211, l.1), but: 'we must all travel an excentric path, and no other way is possible, from youth to fulfilment' (Hyperion (preliminary stage [henceforth pH]), III, 236, ll. 13f.). In the 'Oedipus' the rhythm develops the velocity of 'excentric rapidity', tearing with it, in the end, 'into the eccentric sphere of the dead' (V, 196–197). See W. Schadewaldt, 'Das Bild der exzentrischen Bahn bei Hölderlin', HJb, 1952, 3f.; and for a comprehensive examination in terms of the history of ideas, *cf.* Eudo C. Mason, 'Exzentrische Bahnen: Studien zum Dichterbewußtsein der Neuzeit' (1963).

[18] 'For me, that which is not All, and eternally All, is nothing' (FH III, 164, l. 8).

[19] 'This desperate sentiment—that the glorious object of my love was so glorious that it had no need of me' (FH III, 170). 'Why had I to demand that the glorious being should be mine, when it had no need of me?' (III, 577, ll. 27–28).

The author of the 'metrical version' knows of the elevation of the spirit above Nature, but in the very first sentence speaks of the guilt of one who has become tyrannical against Nature; a guilt that the sage (the old Hyperion who narrates his youth) is to help overcome. This he does by interpreting Fichte in the light of Plato, and the contradiction in Eros (the will to unlimitedness, the will to limitation) as 'beauty', and this in turn as 'appearance of the holy'.[21]

In 'Hyperion's Youth', with its highly compressed style, he is feeling his way beyond Plato and Fichte and into a third country. Only in the pain of poverty is the 'nobility' of the 'I' revealed; starting back before its own glory, it contemplates itself 'in the land of the senses . . . as in a mirror'; but when 'to thy lonely thought the forms of Nature would sisterly companionship afford, do thou rejoice, and love, but ne'er thyself forget'.[22] Such love must remain longing, for were the ideal attained, consciousness would end and 'the Divine would . . . be nothing'.[23] Thus man's glory is to endure the long wait[24] of 'unending progress',[25] eternally dissatisfied, hoping and striving, between self-sufficient poles, Nature and idea. When the hero encounters the 'superhuman' Diotima, round whom flows 'the gloria of the saints', and who venerates the 'Panagia' (Mary),[26] the tragic element comes to appear almost psychological: Hyperion drags his beloved down, we read of 'murder',[27] and the lover, torn by conflicting emotions, 'inwardly rages against the heavenly creature',[28] having 'cursed . . . her most divine possession, that peace, that heavenly sufficiency';[29] and the end of the fragment moves towards the same solution, to 'leave be'. But the predominance of the idealistic philosophy of the spirit in this fragment, written before Hölderlin met Susette, really leaves no room for love: 'abundance' is sufficiency, and 'poverty' self-preoccupation; the one is beyond love, the other falls short.

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[20] YH III, 184.

[21] MH III, 191–195.

[22] YH 1(III, 203–205).

[23] *Ibid.*, 203, ll. 23–26.

[24] *Ibid.*, 206.

[25] YH 4 (III, 214, l. 32).

[26] YH 5 (III, 218); veneration of Mary already occurs in MH l. 207f. (III, 197); the Christian and biblical echoes, which in the penultimate version are still strong, are in the final version eliminated.

[27] YH 6 (III, 230, 1.29). *Cf.* pH III, 249: 'Men killed, so the fable tells us, the living deity . . . The fable is true.'

In the prologue to the 'penultimate version', the whole question reverts to a presocratic context; 'Being' is the 'blissful unity' which has been lost and can 'only' be recovered through action 'in infinite approximation', but 'nonetheless' is always already present, in the sovereign form of 'beauty'.[30]

In the final version, all the metaphysical rocks and contradictions are smoothed, in order to express the marvellous paradoxes of love. That famous key sentence is truly at the centre: 'The Heart's wave, that foameth upward and becometh Spirit, ne'er would be so fair, did not the Rock of destiny stand, dumb and old, in its path.'[31] Radiant in the background, there is the 'consuming glory of the Spirit' that must conceal itself in Nature,[32] yet still retaining 'that monstrous striving to be All';[33] a spirit that burns up all resistance ('naught remaineth but ashes'),[34] returning as fire 'from straitened captivity . . . to the halls of the Sun, in triumph'.[35] But now the spirit has another, contrasting, image. She, Diotima, is, in the naturally spiritual simplicity of beautiful beings, an 'ideal', and becomes a 'Muse',[36] sending her lover into the world of events and political action,[37] which then being war, she turns pale and falls silent;

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[28] *Ibid.*, 232, ll. 33–34.
[29] *Ibid.*, 233, ll. 33–34.
[30] pH III, 236–237.
[31] H 1/1, 8 (III, 41).
[32] H 1/1, 4 (III, 12).
[33] H 1/1, 5 (III, 18).
[34] H 1/1, 8 (III, 41).
[35] H 1/2, 2 (III, 52).
[36] H 2/2, 4 (III, 130).
[37] H 1/2, 19 (III, 87f.).

Hyperion, following the realistic logic of action, tears her away and on to a path among things which turn her to a 'sorrowing divine image',[38] and she withers, is consumed; he implores her to leave him, for he 'is no longer aught',[39] has failed the ideal as which he had always wanted to leave her: 'Nay, nay, need shalt thou never know! Thou shalt not behold in thyself the poverty of love.'[40] But when he wishes to go and see her again, she passes from him into death. Thus the conclusion has the form of a contradiction in the nature of being, in that, though needing the suffering poverty of love to feel itself, in death it must yet find its way back to the 'spirit'; a contradiction that glorifies itself within the 'injured heart'[41] whose only 'solace' can be 'among gods'.[42] This experience of the glory of love lives on in spiritualised form, and that is the elegiac mode, which also characterises in its entirety the rebirth of the ancient world in the German present. 'Beauty fleeth out of the Life of men and up into the Spirit; what Nature was doth become Ideal, and if below the tree hath decayed and been worn down, yet hath he put forth on high fresh branches, verdant in the shining sun. . . .'[43] The revival in German Idealism of the ancient world must always be this biologically impossible phenomenon: the green crest of a decayed root. About this contradiction Hölderlin, for whom elegiac feeling can never become the last word, casts the great mantle of universal Nature: 'Men fall from thee like rotten fruit, o let them perish, for thus do they return to thy roots, and I, o Tree of Life, that I once more with thee grow green, about thy topmost branches there to breathe. . . .' [44] Death—not only of bodies, but also of hearts—is Nature's dung; 'palingenesis' becomes the reconciling idea: 'The veins in the heart do part and return and All is one eternal glowing Life.'[45] The idea that, in this merging-back into the universal heart, earthly sublimity might confer a right to personal immortality[46] is only a fleeting thought, designed to keep faith with, express the everlastingness in, love; the comprehensive conception is Nature's eternal return, the image of the tree being a clear reminder of Herder.[47]

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[38] H 2/1, 4 (III, 98).
[39] H 2/1, 21 (III, 119).
[40] H 1/2, 16 (III, 65).
[41] H 2/2, 4 (III, 131).
[42] *Ibid.*, III, 129.
[43] H 1/2, 15 (III, 63).
[44] H 2/2, 12 (III, 159).
[45] *Ibid., III, 160.*

In the course of the drafts to 'The Death of Empedocles', the author tunnels his way deeper and deeper into the cul-de-sac of the identity of the contradiction, and here it is from Christology that the interpretation of the world and of man draws its innermost core; the profound philosophical interpretation appended by the poet ('The basis to "Empedocles"') is always in a state of reconciliation with the contradiction, which, indeed, provides the basis for his argument. Here, rather than love for a woman, as in 'Hyperion', is love for the All; Empedocles is (as a philosopher) spirit, 'manly', self-sufficient, 'Nay! all his own is he, the Living one,/ Alone his spirit on him law doth impose',[48] 'He free from want doth wander/ Within a world his own',[49] 'Himself to be that is/ To live; and we, the dream thereof we others are';[50] he is 'born free',[51] 'proud in sufficiency'.[52] As such, he opens himself to the all in absolute intensity, a feminine role, and has surrendered himself in 'inspiration'[53] to the holy genial powers: aether, air, sun, earth. . . .[54] But, in a terrible fall, this 'harmony' has been lost, 'chastised with desolation boundless he', 'For all his strength the Gods have from him stripped'.[55]

[46] Thus, in 'Elegy' (II, 71), those whose lives have been unfulfilled on earth sink into the depths of Hades, and only lovers find salvation; in the final version, 'Menon's Laments for Diotima', this fall into Hades is replaced by 'the power of a miracle' (ll. 76f., II, 77) at which 'from deep in their grave/ Must they return'; but underlying the Christian image of resurrection is the idea of naturally-occurring palingenesis.

[47] Letter 83 (VI, 124–125, ll. 31–36).

[48] 2E 2, ll. 567–568 (IV, 112).

[49] 1E 1/1, ll. 73–74 (IV, 5).

[50] 1E 1/1, ll. 101–102 (IV, 6).

[51] 1E 1/3, 1.313 (IV, 15).

[52] 1E 2/8, 1.2015 (IV, 84). *Cf.* Hyperion 1/2, 10: 'Ne'er have I known aught so free of need, so self-sufficient' (III, 58).

[53] 1E 1/1, 1.78 (IV, 5).

[54] 1E 1/3, 1.280f. (IV, 14–15).

[55] 1E 1/2, ll. 185–186 (IV, 10).

Where does the guilt lie? In the first version, it has the twofold countenance of reflection—'when the genial spirits of this World/ From love themselves in thee forgot, thy thought did/ To thee turn, fancying, meagre fool, to thee/ Their kind had them sold . . .'[56]—and of self-deification, 'when of himself/ A god he made'.[57] If the second aspect of his Titanism causes strife between Empedocles and the priests, who curse and exile him from the *polis*—a situation in which he can beg, in the true classical tradition, for one request,[58] and become 'sacer'[59]—so too he for his part can curse the hypocrites, as Christ did the Pharisees. But that aspect is purely superficial; how to appease a deity profaned, injured, by the Fichtean elevation of the sprit above Nature, that is the question. Through death alone: which, transforming the initial inspiration (with its unreflected-upon reflection) into the resolution to surrender existence, regains – on a higher, ethical-ideal level where the reflection upon reflection dissolves into an intense immediacy—the grace of renewed union, the reconciliation of heaven and earth.

The author's groping uncertainty as to how to motivate the guilt must not be allowed to obscure the paradox that the 'guilt' of the spirit in distancing itself from Nature is at the same time its very nature, and therefore guiltless. Accordingly, in the second version a different motif appears: Empedocles has betrayed a mystery, the experience of oneness (of being a god), to the people, degradingly allowing it into the public sphere of state and church.[60] In his 'daring' he has tried to utter 'what uttered ne'er may be',[61] thereby revealing himself as god and causing himself to be worshipped. But in the course of the versions the antagonists too are taken increasingly seriously. Instead of the ruthless priests there appears Strato, lord of the city and Empedocles' brother; and the 'institutionalisation' of the mystical has (like the 'political' sphere in 'Hyperion') its own necessity, even to the extent that it is no longer merely profanation for the feeling to become language.[62] Is not the truth, as in the first version, simply that a vessel so filled with divine substance must needs be shattered, 'that it to other purpose may not serve'? 'Through whom/ The Spirit hath been heard, soon be he gone.'[63] For in the second version, which gives Promethean affirmation to Fichte's elevation of the spirit, seeing therein the task of man,[64] Empedocles wishes through his sacrifice to call out from Nature the spirit; such a path Hölderlin could not tread, and so the fragment breaks off.

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[56] 1E 1/3, l. 338 (IV, 15).

[57] 1E 1/2, ll. 251f. (IV, 12).

[58] qE 1/5, ll. 676f. (IV, 29).

[59] 1E 2/2, l. 1136 (IV, 49).

[60] 2E 1/1, ll. 29f. (IV, 92).

[61] 2E 1/1, ll. 175–176 (IV, 97).

In the attempt at a third version, the whole question is transferred from the natural to the historical sphere, and here the 'Basis' will carry the thought further. Expelled by his royal brother, the hero acknowledges as guilt his self-sufficiency: 'For, since my youth, my sins have many been,/ I loved men, but ne'er as a man . . .';[65] it is this exclusive devotion to 'Nature, all-enduring' that impels him to his death, leading him to repel his loving disciple Pausanias with determination, and even greater harshness than in the earlier versions; universal love ultimately demands that all other bonds be cut, every personal and individual love sacrificed, notwithstanding all assurances of eternal faithfulness.[66] Here an 'all-sacrificing heart' is met with relinquishment of existence as an 'I' ('I am not who I am, Pausanias').[67] Then there is the temptation of the encounter with the Egyptian, Manes, who asks him: 'Art thou the man?'; for in the passing of an age none but an 'only one' can be 'the new saviour', 'One only may thy sin so black ennoble', something, then, that would be black sin for anyone who happened not to be the only one.[68] Empedocles' answer is yes, and then follow his credentials; both the intensity of his relationship with Nature and the straying of the 'poor people'—'wearied with life, with life, with their own hands their own house they did break/ The temples too, displeasing now, forsaken'/have made clear to him his errand; he recognised the parting god of his people, 'and, to appease Him, went I forth'.[69] So the freely-chosen death of the 'only One', with its epochal significance, is now confirmed (as expounded in the 'Basis to Empedocles') and enabled to represent the age in which he lives, by resolving 'the problem of destiny' in it, thereby synthesising that age (of Greece) in a 'premature' model so that it can be handed down, as a promise, to the coming (German) aeon in which his sacrifice will bear fruit: 'and there remains behind a riper true pure universal intensity'.[70]

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[62] As he says in an earlier letter: 'Our silent bliss will always die if it is put into words' (Letter 136, VI, 236, ll. 48–49).

[63] 1E 2/4, ll. 1754–1755, ll. 1747–1748 (IV, 73).

[64] 2E 1/3, ll. 501f., 535f. (IV, 109–110). In the 'Basis' he writes: 'He had to strive for identity with her [Nature]' (IV, 159, ll. 5–6).

[65] 3E 1/1, ll. 35–36 (IV, 122).

[66] 3E, the entire second scene (IV, 101f.).

[67] 3E 1/2, 1.253 (IV, 130).

[68] 3E 1/3, ll. 369ff. (IV, 135–136).

Hölderlin has broached the innermost treasures of Christ, and is placing them at the disposal of a messiah of identity. Proceeding from an unconditional intensity of existence with the divine All, whence his divinity ('I and the Father are one'), Empedocles falls into kenosis and, after recognising this (in the third version) as mankind's errant alienation from itself, thereupon devotes himself resolutely to death for the sake of love and atonement, the death which achieves a representative reconciliation of time with eternity and opens the prospect of an eschatological promise. While in the first two versions the drama was still essentially concerned with enacting the dialectics of a personal experience within the metaphysics of identity, so that, despite many biblical echoes, the parallel with Christ was still looser, that parallel now, as the historical *kairos* of this death gains a social and eschatological dimension, finally becomes evident. Here is the Johannine Christianity emerging, as in the late Fichte, the old Schelling, and the young Hegel, as the alpha and omega of Idealistic thinking. The eternal Logos, in the world in the form of poverty and humility, glorifying himself through suffering and death, then to ascend back whence he came; declaring his mission and all-embracing love in great parting speeches, consoling even as he withdraws, promising the Spirit and a second coming—there is correspondence everywhere. That, furthermore, the redeemer is to be proclaimed king, that the priests form an opposition to him, that he withdraws, that he asks the disciples whom they take him for and forbids their taking revenge, that Pausanias follows him like a John, and Panthea like a Mary; but above all, that every single one of the master's words carries the weight of the death he has seen in advance and chosen, aims at it, recalls it, and is justified by it: that completes the circle. But what divides the two figures? That Christ comes, acts, speaks and dies not in his own name, but in his Father's. That therefore the ultimate testimony is not his religious experience, but his mission. That his kenosis, so great that even God forsakes him, was not dialectical guilt, not fate, nor yet usurpation, but, again, a mission accepted out of obedience. All this presupposes, not cosmic identity, but the relationship of analogy between God and the world, freedom in the divine sending, and, in God himself, the Trinity; this is the insuperable obstacle for any intellectual construction of a figure of redemption parallel to the Christ. Thus 'Empedocles' remains uncompleted, and the epithet 'only One' returns to Christ: 'There yet a shame is, and doth hinder/From likening the men of the world unto thee. . . .'[71]

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[69] 3E 1/3, ll. 410ff. (IV, 137).

[70] 'The Basis to Empedocles' (IV, 157, ll. 12–13).

While resisting all such crystallisation into an actual figure, the Christological is nevertheless a fluidly pervasive element. Stripped of a metaphysical formulation dependent upon Fichte and Parmenides, the ultimate horizon of experience is: that all being is born of the abundance of eternal love, but that this love, out of love, enters the realm of poverty. This is already a conviction in the early ode 'To Nature' (1794/5): 'E'er the dearest love must pauper be',[72] while the ode 'Destiny' turns it round: 'From Need hath every pleasure sprung,/ And pain alone doth make to thrive/ The Dearest . . .'.[73] This might have encouraged a classical interpretation:

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[71] 'The only One' (1st vers.), ll. 60–63 (II, 155).

[72] l. 57 (I, 192).

[73] ll. 25f. (I, 184f.).

that the 'undestined' 'unchanging Gods'[74] in their 'eternal youth'[75] 'o'erhead in Light'[76] gaze down on 'suffering' men as they are cast 'Through the years down Uncertainty's maw',[77] so that even to look up at them would be much, for who 'knoweth ye not is poor'. 'Thou, my Preserver fair/ Whene'er hath pain my soul', he says to the aether.[78] But for the riddle which in Euripides had no solution, how painful love can prevail over painless love, there is now a Christian clue: the divine itself penetrates suffering. So overpowering is the light of this truth that it is raised to become an overall necessity. 'Who then can say his feet are firm . . . if even the divine must humble itself, and share mortality with all mortal things!'[79] That 'must' could have remained tied to the world and its experience; instead it gains the profundity of a theological law/'O, well I know it . . . In her richness Love doth play a godly game; Need doth she fabricate for herself, that she may give of her abundance!'[80]—and, finally, a metaphysical expression: 'For it is an eternal law that the Whole, so rich in content, cannot, because of its unity, feel itself with the distinctiveness and vitality . . . of its parts, which also constitute a whole, albeit looser, so that it may be said, if the vitality, distinctiveness, singularity, of the parts, when their totality can feel itself, should exceed the limit set *for these*, and become suffering, and the *completest possible* separateness and isolation, then, and only then, can the Whole feel itself *in these parts* . . . vitally and distinctly.'[81] In that too much is asked of the parts, which are to become a vessel of the whole in order that in them the whole may feel itself, they too experience the 'arbitrary necessity of Zeus'.[82] But any such metaphysical expression of the law immediately implies its Titanic con-comitant, the spirit, which, knowing of its infinity, rages in the confines of its cell; and so long as the law of love is not harmed, Hölderlin grants him his roaring till the last (see the fragments 'The Titans'). On the other hand, the heart, sharing 'the wounds that they inflict on Nature the divine',[83] is so deeply 'wounded', 'insulted',[84] by the world and its coarseness that it becomes a part of which too much is asked, which breaks, and thus it too feels something of the suffering of the whole, and learns how deep is the eternal love.

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[74] 'Palinode', ll. 8, 20 (I, 308); cf. 'Hyperion's Song of Destiny', l. 7 (I, 265).

[75] 'The Gods', l. 9 (II. 16).

[76] 'Hyperion's Song of Destiny', l. 1 (I, 265).

[77] *Ibid.*, ll. 19, 24 (I, 265).

[78] 'The Gods', ll. 1–2 (II, 16).

[79] H 2/1, 1 (III, 94). [80] H 2/2, 5 (III, 136).

[81] 'On the differences of the poetic genres' (IV, 268, ll. 19–27).

[82] *Ibid.*, 269, l. 24.

Between these two forms of suffering is the apocalyptic post of the poet's heart; he who creates beauty even as he is passing, lonely, strange and astray, beyond beauty, ultimately beyond words themselves, and into the opacity of 'converse' with God.

Now cometh Spring. And each, in its own way, doth
Bloom. He though far is gone; no longer there.
Astray went he; for all too good are
Genii; heavenly converse hath he now.[85]

3. THE APOCALYPSE OF THE SPIRIT

In Christian belief, it is from the Spirit sent by him that the ascending Redeemer receives glory in the history of the world; and it is good that the earthly form vanishes, or else the Spirit could not come. So too Hölderlin, despite his monistic philosophy of Nature with its pre-Socratic cyclical foundation, is totally and increasingly prophetic-eschatological in thought and feeling; the kingdom of the spirit must and will come. We may let the harsh words in 'Patmos' stand: 'An excess yet/ Of love, where is adoration,/ Bringeth danger, striketh the hardest. They though to depart from/ The countenance of the Lord/ Wished not, and from their homeland. Deep implanted/ Like fire was it in iron then, and there at/ Their side, *as 'twere a plague*, went walking the shade of their dear one.'[86] 'And harming the countenance divine in verity/ Did walk as 'twere a plague beside them the shade of their dear one./ So them did send he/ The Spirit'.[87] Of the three Tübingen friends Hegel, Schelling and Hölderlin, who parted with the motto 'The Kingdom of God!', only the last kept a burning eschatological faith, with ringing utopian notes: 'It must change to its very foundations!'[88] 'All must rejuvenate itself, must change to its foundations!'[89] It is 'the holy glory of love' that must come in this way, before which 'egoism in all its shapes will bow';[90] for Hölderlin a hope concerning above all, and with ever more awareness, the fatherland. On the 'Day of the Fatherland', each casts his own into the festive flame of the offering, where, like pearls in wine, it dissolves.[91] Already in 'Hyperion's Youth' he is hoping for the 'harmony of our spirits'[92], a 'community in God',[93] and in 'Hyperion' this is called 'Time's fairest Daughter, the new church',[94] similarly, in a letter, 'the aesthetic church';[95] already it is time for it to assemble, 'so that out of this unification, this invisible, fighting church, may be born the great child of time, the day of days, which the man of my soul [Paul] . . . calls the coming of the Lord'.[96] In the late hymns, it is the 'holiday' at the end of time, the 'feast of peace'. The poet constantly rejects any conception of the parusia (as of the Christian faith in general) according to which 'the giver of a revelation does everything by himself, and the one who receives the revaluation may not even rise up to take it';[97] rather, with the help of the spirit humanity will in the course of history come to own the gift from within, even if at first its excess leads yet further astray.

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[83] H 2/2, 11 (III, 156).

[84] H 2/2, 4 (III, 129).

[85] 'Ganymede', ll. 21–24 (II, 68).

[86] 'Patmos' (fragments of the later version), ll. 185–191 (II, 182–183).

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[87] 'Patmos' (drafts for the final version), ll. 190–193 (II, 187).

[88] H 1/2, 19 (III, 89).

[89] H 2/1, 14 (III, 111).

[90] Letter 222 (VI, 407, ll. 27–28).

[91] 'Stuttgart', ll. 29–32 (II, 87).

[92] YH 5 (III, 224, l. 31).

[93] *Ibid.* (III, 224, ll. 3–4).

[94] H 1/1, 7 (III, 32).

[95] Letter 179 (VI, 330, l. 150).

[96] Letter 106 (VI, 185, ll. 51–54), and Beißner's commentary, citing contemporary parallels (VI, 761–763).

[97] Letter 171 (VI, 301, ll. 58–60).

> The kindness of men is followed by thanks,
> But not so a godly gift, and for years
> Come toils first and straying,
> Till truly owned it hath become and well-earned
> And his so too a man may call,
> Divine and human, the gift now.[98]

In the next lines, the poet is aware of 'a danger vict'ry holds, when drunken and o'erweaning', for at first the sense of power induced by the gift of the spirit will lead to the mastering of Nature, the technologisation of the world, while the 'humble' prize, the 'nearest' [that which lies closest] and 'dearest' [love], will not be won till the end. So strong is the emphasis on the immanence of the eternal in the human spirit that there is a genuinely naive conception of the gods and their numerous forms as 'children' of man in his union with the divine;[99] he imparts to them the special 'qualities of his nation', makes them 'descend to earth, for the sake of beauty', 'in this way the myths were born'.[100] 'Since converse we do have' the spirit has been collecting up these images, drawing 'together the beauties of Earth', from 'abroad', from 'colonies',[101] from the 'sea' (where 'beginneth the wealth');[102] and the 'holy powers' have 'To love's true token a witness', for they still have their place in the assembly at the end of days, and are represented in the 'number holy', which is the sum of the world, the 'Feast of Peace'.[103] From early days, Hölderlin's life is devoted towards the end of time,[104] and it is this that finally becomes the object of 'the high and pure delighting of songs of the Fatherland';[105] hence also his expectation of 'the peace of peace, that is higher than all reason'.[106] If 'our joy' is already 'well-nigh too small' to grasp a god,[107] if for now we are being spared by the heavenly ones, 'for not always the strength hath them to contain a weak vessel',[108] because they come with 'too bright', 'too dazzling', a happiness,[109] 'even that oft/ The light of the eye by the gifts of the gods was extinguished';[110] thus does that which the poets 'e'er divine',[111] the fulfilment of the *Hen kai Pan*, remain ineffable.

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[98] 'The Feast of Peace' (2nd draft), ll. 63–68 (II, 135); cf. the final version, ll. 85–86: 'But where the Spirit worketh, we too are, disputing/ What might the best thing be' (III, 535).

[99] H 1/2, 19 (III, 80).

[100] 'A History of the Fine Arts . . .', IV, 190, ll. 13, 16f.

[101] Variant to 'Bread and Wine', II, 608; Beißner's comment, 621.

[102] 'Remembrance', ll. 40–41 (II, 189).

[103] 'The Feast of Peace', ll. 100–108 (III, 536).

[104] 'Courage proud the son of Earth imbibeth/ From the Future's cup, of magic full' ('Hymn to Immortality', ll. 83–84 (I, 118)); 'While torches ye funereal yet hold. . . ./ E'en now doth dawn the newer better world' ('To the wise advisers', ll. 54, 56 (I, 224)).

The darker his path and the firmer the grip of night, the more resolutely does Hölderlin maintain his attitude of prayer and total affirmation, even in the face of the abysses, the objects of dread, the chaos. Already in 'The Books of the Ages', a quite early hymn in Klopstockian tones, the poet, confronted by the books of the world's history thrown apocalyptically open with their merciless record of the most terrible miseries, nevertheless wins through to 'celebrating, trembling adoration/ About the shrine of the Unnameable'.[112] The metaphysics of beauty, at once classical and Idealistic, prove a sleep-walker's path back to this apocalyptic vision of the end; thus the plunge, 'the shortest path back into the All',[113] the delight in death with which Empedocles seeks life—'there doth well and flash/ A godly fire up from the depths to thee', and down he casts himself 'in shuddering desire'[114]—increasingly (in the tragedy) turns to an affirmation of the 'wild discord' that strives up 'from below'[115] and in which yet 'mindful of/ The Unity of old the Mother dark [Earth]/ Doth stretch her arms of fire out to the Aether';[116]'; it is 'the old forming chaos',[117] the 'ancient confusion',[118] celebrated (in the first strophe of 'Heimkunft') as the awful and holy landscape where all things originated, ('The joyfully shuddering Chaos')[119] while in 'The Archipelagus' it is a subterranean quaking by which even the glorious islands are threatened, as when

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[105] Letter 243 (1804), VI, 436, l. 19.
[106] pH III, 236, ll. 25–26.
[107] 'Homecoming', l. 100 (II, 99).
[108] 'Bread and Wine', 7, ll. 112–113 (II, 93).
[109] *ib.*, 5, l. 74 (II, 92).
[110] 'At the Danube's Source', ll. 62–63 (II, 127).
[111] 'As on a holiday . . .', l. 17 (II, 118).
[112] 'The Books of the Ages', I, 69–74.
[113] 'The Voice of the People' (1st vers.), l. 13 (II, 49).
[114] 'Empedocles', ll. 1f. (I, 240).
[115] 3E 1/3, l. 382 (IV, 136).

> from the abyss set
> Free, at times did the flame of Night, the underground
> tempest
> Seize upon one of the angels, and dying she sank in
> thy bosom,[120]

and by which, equally, the life that has dissolved into chaos is cast up anew in resurrection, as by a volcano

> When there is rumbling below, for Night with her
> treasures doth toll pay,
> And, in the beds of the streams, gold, for long
> buried, doth glean.[121]

Thus do almost all the late poems[122] strive to return from the formed land of Greece to the chaotic mother Asia, the origin of love and of great prayers;[123] the Rhein flows towards her at first and the Danube till the end, while as the 'Ister' the latter seems to the poet 'almost backwards to go', that is, to flow from the East to the West.[124] The West is by its origins an open land, and perhaps it and the East might be joined in a marriage that would, as it were, pass over Hellas.[125]

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[116] 3E 1/3, ll. 476–477 (IV, 139).

[117] Letter 229 (VI, 416, ll. 26–27).

[118] 'The Rhein', l. 221 (II, 148).

[119] 'Homecoming', l. 5 (II, 96).

[120] 'The Archipelago', ll. 20–22 (II, 103).

[121] 'Menon's Laments for Diotima', 6, ll. 81–82 (II, 77).

[122] 'At the Danube's Source', 'The Journey', 'The Rhein', 'Germania', 'The only One', 'Patmos', 'Remembrance', 'The Ister'.

[123] There 'the Strong' have their place, they who 'Did fearless face the signs of the world/ And the sky and all fate on their shoulders laden/ For days on mountains implanted/ Had none done as they did/ Alone when spake they/ With God' ('At the Danube's Source', ll. 80f., II, 128); whether here he means the Indian worshippers, Moses on Mount Sinai, or the Christian monks and stylites.

[124] 'The Ister', ll. 41–42 (II, 191).

Yet this ardent reaching-out far and ever further into the distance also signifies a twilight that is fading into an implacably destructive spiritual darkness; the tremendous intensity with which he thought to do justice to the glory of all being was, despite all the humility of its thanksgiving and praise, objectively hubristic; it reduced the freedom that is God's in his mystery of suffering to a law defining the nature of the One-and-All, a law open to be experienced. The Christ, having been dissolved into the cosmos, can therefore ultimately never be brought back. And immediately after Hölderlin the cold winds of nothingness come bursting into his glory, as already in Jean Paul; a nothingness whose approach Hyperion too can already sense: 'O ye poor people, ye who . . . are so utterly possessed by the nothingness that rules over us, who perceive so clearly that we are born for nothing, that we love a nothing, believe in a nothing, wear ourselves away for nothing, thus slowly to pass into nothingness—if your knees give way when ye contemplate that, how am I to help you?' And the next words could have been Zarathustra's: 'Remain below, ye children of the moment! strive ye not to scale these heights; nought is there up here'.[126] This darkest of shadows is inseparable from any kind of thinking based on identity; to interpret it as an 'absence of God' that will in the end be helpful is therefore over-confident.[127] But when, amid this aberration, the post 'would gladly beg a drop of oil, to shine yet a while through the night'[128]—as he writes to Diotima—then he has been absorbed into a movement which transcends his own moment, leaving him, as he remains, without weapons or guile, 'alone before God',[129] with shelter only in the utmost exposure. 'And mightily light doth flicker in/ The wildness of the Abyss'.[130]

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[125] 'The Journey', ll. 40ff. (II, 139).
[126] H 1/2, 11 (III, 46).
[127] 'The Poetic Calling', l. 64 (II, 48).
[128] Letter 182 (VI, 337, ll. 6–7).
[129] 'The Poetic Calling', ll. 62–64 (II, 48).
[130] 'The Titans', ll. 72–73 (II, 219).

e. Goethe

1. THE MEAN AS A FORM OF RESISTANCE

THE CURVE

Such a dominant influence not only on the 'Age of Goethe' but also on the nineteenth century, Goethe[1] lived in the calm but often fearful awareness that, like a rock, he stood against a mighty racing current. All his religious experiences and their manifold expressions, despite their ring of affirmation, sprang from, were carved out by, a primal No. When he set out, the young man left behind two companions, a feeble Pietistic Protestantism and the flat materialism offered by France and the European Enlightenment: 'How hollow and empty the world had become in that gloomy atheistic twilight.'[2] And now, in powerful contrast, there arises a cosmic experience of Being which brings to our minds the names of Bruno, Spinoza, Shaftesbury, Herder. After Strasburg and Frankfurt came Weimar; was the pantheistic 'I' to fit comfortably into court life? to accept limitations which seemed at once an unbearable distortion and a beneficial necessity? This conflict (played out in *Torquato Tasso*) was not resolved until Goethe fled to Italy and found refuge in the classical world, where Nature and form are always in harmony. His next encounter was with the 'philosophy of the spirit' which Schiller and Fichte had developed from the *Critiques*. The resulting intense dialogue was highly productive, but drew from Goethe that primal No, indeed, only made him the more aware that something he had found in his cosmic experience was missing in the Idealistic version represented by Kant and Fichte, by Schiller, finally by Hegel. 'Schiller showed too little gratitude to our great Mother'.[3] 'All Schiller's works are pervaded by the idea of freedom . . . What use to us is an excuse of a freedom we cannot use! . . . Freedom lies not in refusing to acknowledge anything above us, but, on the contrary, in revering something that is above us.'[4] Even as he reacted against Idealism, Goethe's God-Nature religion became more profound, a religion of awe (in programmatic form in *Years of Wandering*). So too the primal No to the French Revolution can explain the greater profundity of the ethos typified by Eugenia and Ottilia, a noble heart with its renunciation; so too his determination to stand by the western tradition and its classical roots became, thanks to his rejection of Romanticism and the ensuing painful isolation, firm and unshakeable; finally, when from his essentially pious theory of Nature Goethe developed, and obstinately defended, an organic morphology and (Plotinian) theory of colours, the impetus is really his No to an increasingly technological natural science and its catastrophic consequences, man's (atheistic) departure from Nature.

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[1] We shall quote from the Artemis Gedenkausgabe (24 vols. + 2 supplementary vols.). Abbreviations: P = *Poems*; D = *West-eastern Divan*: F = *Faust*; MA = *William Master's Apprenticeship*; MW = *William Master's Years of Wandering*; MV = *William Master's Theatrical Vocation*; EA = *Electoral Affinities*; IPH = *Iphigenia*; T = *Tasso*; IJ = *The Italian Journey*; TF = *Truth and Fancy*; A = *The Annals*; TC = *The Theory of Colours*; C = *Conversations with Eckermann*; L = *Letters*. The volume number is indicated in Roman numerals; e.g. MA 4, 16 (VII, 279) = *Apprenticeship*, Book 4, Chapter 16, in Volume VII, page 279. Sometimes fragmentary writings on natural science are quoted from the Insel *Dünndruckausgabe* (ed. G. Ipsen = Ipsen).

[2] TF 3, 11 (X, 538).

Hölderlin we might compare to a fine and tapering flame; Goethe too, whose life and work have such a mighty compass, unquestionably represents a last secular manifestation of the heritage of 'glory' which the history of western metaphysics has bequeathed to us. His adherence to the tradition of Bruno and Shaftesbury (and their antecedents Cusa, Plotinus, Homer) was far from leading him into the temptations of Idealism; for out of his youthful religion of the One-and-All there arose an adoration of the mystery of Being characterised by distance and awe. And a paradoxical situation comes about; this 'child of the world' who never prays, unlike Hölderlin, who does, can truly be said to live within the *analogia entis*, rather than the mysticism of identity.

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[3] 'My first acquaintance with Schiller' (XII, 621).

[4] C 18.1.1827 (XXIV, 216).

Never, not even in his youth, did Goethe feel any compulsion 'to take refuge in the doctrine of absolute unity; for therein gain but equals loss, and what is left at the end? the consolation of a disconsolate zero'.[5] Meanwhile, God's presence in the world, in every element and form, is a fundamental experience that only an ultimately irreligious Christian or Enlightenment deism can deny. The Ancient Persians became Goethe's friends because they based their worship 'on contemplation of Nature', turning, 'when they prayed to the Creator, towards the rising sun, since that was by far the most glorious thing they knew'. But 'nor was fire the only representative' of the deity, for 'their religion was intrinsically based on reverence for all the elements, inasmuch as these proclaimed the presence and power of God', reverence 'for God's universal presence in the works of his sensual world'.[6] Such a 'faculty of vision', that 'penetrates life in all its manifold forms', occurs, of course, 'only in a few divinely-favoured men'; for most, religious experience emerges 'only as a fiery feeling of inspiration which lasts a moment and departs, whereupon the subject, restored to himself, dissatisfied, unoccupied, at once relapses into a most endless emptiness', which the national religions with their pious ceremonies are then an attempt to fill.[7]

Goethe was never prey to doubts of an atheistic nature; and if he preferred to 'observe a profound silence' where 'God and things divine' were concerned,[8] nevertheless he could not but hear the Universal Being and his 'open secret,'[9] his 'holy public secret'[10]: that 'Nature doth in all her forms/But a single

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[5] 5. D III, 452.

[6] D III, 423–425.

[7] D III, 424.

[8] A 1794 (XI, 637).

[9] D III, 304.

[10] P I, 519; playfully echoed in a conversation with Ulrike von Lewetzow (no. 1635, XXIII, 290), when Goethe tried in vain to keep his birthday a secret, and then called it 'the day of the open secret'. *Cf.* also *Years of Wandering* 2, 8: the 'happy rose of life' 'from secret life awaketh/ A meaning plain' (VIII, 277). The truths of the *Theory of Colours* are entrusted to the future as an 'ingenuous mystery' (Ipsen, Vol. 2, 680).

God reveal'.[11] And this God, far from being a mere unknown X, is the unattainable source of all ordered beauty. 'I do not ask', Goethe said, 'whether this highest Being is able to think and reason, for I feel that it itself is none other than thought and reason. All creatures are pervaded by it, and as for man, he has so much thereof as to recognise even some parts of the Highest.'[12] Such a religion 'really needs no faith . . . some such conviction imposes itself on everyone.'[13]

Yet God is so much the universal essence that, like Plotinus, Erigena and Ficino before him, Goethe is not prepared to attribute to him a private will, to burden him with prayers as such. We find prayers proper only in the early Weimar period, two poems reviving the strict ancient distinction between gods and men: 'The Limitations of Man' ('For with gods/ No man soever/ Should seek to vie . . ./ What is it divides/ Gods, and men? . . .'), 'The Divine' (which has man fulfilling his existence 'by brazen/ Great Laws bound', yet still playing a positive role, exercising choice, conferring perpetuity on the individual moment).[14] Then we have, with a conscious return to Homer and the tragedians, the prayers of *Iphigenia*; the rebellious, titanic 'Song of the Fates' is not the heroine's—for her it only represents a burgeoning temptation—but her nurse's.[15] To understand her own prayer we must remember how she was miraculously transported away from death by Diana;[16] she is a 'miraculée', and therefore a virgin and priestess:

> Sole right unto my consecrated life
> Hath not the goddess, who my life did save?[17]

In this mind she prays to the goddess to whom she owes her existence, and has towards her an intense relationship, listening, with an inner ear, for the divine voice:

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[11] MW 2, 8 (VIII, 277).

[12] C 23.2.1831 (XXIV, 462–463).

[13] TF 1, 4 (X, 154), where the structure of the natural order is distinguished from revealed religion.

[14] P I, 323–325.

[15] Iph 4, 5 (VI, 198–199).

[16] Iph 3, 1 (VI, 183); 5, 3 (VI, 202).

[17] Iph 1, 3 (VI, 160).

> This is no god that speaks, but thine own heart.
> 'Tis only through our hearts they speak to us.
> And have I then no rights, myself to hear.
> The storm doth overwhelm the frail voice.[18]

Later we read:

> Thoas: Rough Scythians,
> Barbarians, hear not that voice, you think?
> Iphigenia: All may hear it,
> Born under any heaven, if
> Through the bosom unhindered and pure
> The Spring of Life doth flow.[19]

Pylades too knows this:

> Upon the will of those above must heedfully wait
> All human wisdom, or 'tis nought.[20]

Thus Iphigenia's are true prayers, founded on that ancient cornerstone, the 'limitations of man' and the miraculous grace of the gods.[21] The first great step from enthusiasm to a distant reverence we may safely relate to Goethe's love for Frau von Stein, to whom he wrote in March 1781: 'The Jews have laces for wrapping around their arms when they pray: in the same way I wrap your beloved ribbon round my arm when I send my prayer to you, and wish to partake of your goodness, wisdom, moderation and patience.'[22] Later this dialogic element pales into a mere gesture of awe which, in the *Years of Wandering*, is elevated to become the very essence of the religious act. Thus *Iphigenia*, from the religious point of view, is like an exposed gash between the early and late periods; perhaps the breach of the mean goes deeper than the conventional picture of Goethe, for which the poet bears not a little responsibility, allows us to see. For could Goethe, that devotee of finished classical form, be asked what single essential image he planted in the history of the human spirit during the sixty years of his life's work, then would be revealed his tragic uncertainty.

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[18] Iph 1, 3 (VI, 162).

[19] Iph 5, 3 (VI, 205).

[20] Iph 2, 1 (VI, 169).

[21] Esp. Iph 1, 4 (VI, 163–164), 3, 3 (VI, 186–187), and the prayer of thanksgiving and entreaty for 'fulfilment' in Iph 3, 1 (VI, 179–180): the 'abundance' of the gift identifies the gods as the givers.

[22] L 510 (XVIII, 578).

A BREAK THROUGH THE MIDDLE

For the young Goethe, poetic creation was the act that joins heaven and earth, God and the world; the ecstatic discovery that creativity in Nature and in the heart of the genius has a single common source. 'Who, if you will, has formed gods, raised us up to them, brought them down to us, other than the poet?' 'If others dream . . . why, he waking lives the dream of life . . . Destiny has elevated him, god-like, above all such things.'[23] But in Weimar the titanic visions, confronted by the hard, limited and objective reality of things, lose conviction, as Jarno's words show: 'Man is only happy when his uncompromising aspirations put a limit on themselves.'[24] In 'Ilmenau' (1783) we find a first, implacable, self-judgment:

The fire I lit hath not a flame so pure.
The glow, the danger, are by storm increased,
I falter not as I condemn myself.[25]

In *Theatrical Vocation*, two feminine figures—the muse of tragic poetry and the personification of commerce—compete for the young poet; William tears up his note-books and is about to throw them into the fire; Werner stops him, and he collapses in tears on the table, all covered with jumbled papers.[26] When he fled to Italy, Goethe won through to the positive side of the crisis: for this was in every respect the supreme and happy time, the heart of Goethe's existence. But the healing of the person meant the laming of his work. Shortly before leaving Italy, Goethe wrote: 'In Rome, for the first time, I have found myself; at last I have found an inner harmony, I am happy and reasonable.'[27] But that was not his initial emotion: 'I am like an architect who, having in mind to build a tower, has laid a poor foundation; at least he sees soon enough his mistake, and brings down without ado what he has brought up from the earth, seeking to broaden, to ennoble, his plan . . .'[28] He is now sure of 'two of my prime errors': 'If I wanted or needed to throw myself into something, I was never prepared to learn the appropriate craft, which is why, despite great natural potential, I have done and achieved so little. My second is a closely related error: I have never been prepared to devote to a task or matter as much time as it needed.'[29] A dilettante, then, an unwitting one at that; and nearing forty. 'It seems, I fear, that I have wasted the best time of one's life.'[30] 'My titanic ideas were just phantoms of air.'[31] And, reflecting on the shamefully meagre harvest of his collected works: 'How can an existence leave so little trace?'[32] Thus, again, his William speaks for him when he says: 'Supremely happy is he . . . who needs not to cast away all the life he has lived, to be in accord with destiny!'[33]

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[23] MV 2, 3 (VIII, 598–599), reappearing in MA 2, 2 (VII, 88).
[24] MA 8, 5 (VII, 593).
[25] P I, 362.
[26] MV 2, 3 (VIII, 604).

The significance of this break emerges from consideration of those three life-works which, in surviving the crisis of the middle years, bind youth and old age together: the *Faust* poem (begun in 1772, completed in 1831), the *Master* novel (in its three parts, *Theatrical Vocation*, *The Apprenticeship* and *The Years of Wandering*; begun in 1777 and though not completed, broken off in 1829), and, finally—if one goes by size—the major work: Goethe's autobiography, in which *The Italian Journey* (edited between 1815 and 1829) and *Truth and Fancy* (1808–1829), supplemented by an abundance of travel reports, annals, diaries, letters and conversation, constitute the central parts. All three life-works were completed by the eighty-year-old. An individual work, *Tasso*, is the document proper of the break; it was begun shortly before leaving Germany, then towed around Italy ('I shall have to revise Tasso; as it is, it is useless'),[34] and not finished until the poet was back in Weimar.

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[27] IJ 3, March 1788 (XI, 583).
[28] IJ 1, 20.12.1786 (XI, 163).
[29] IJ 3, 20.7.1787 (XI, 407).
[30] IJ 3, 2.10.1787 (XI, 453).
[31] IJ 3, 10.1.1788 (VI, 526).
[32] IJ 3, 1.2.1788 (XI, 568).
[33] MA 7, 6 (VII 494).

Tasso embodies the poet's completeness, an ideal of the young Goethe seen, quite correctly, as continuing the spiritual tradition of the Florentine Academy; Ficino, Ariosto, the historical Tasso himself. And if for the young Goethe Eros was the clear and dominant medium of inspiration, in this too there is an unmistakable continuity with the classical-Platonic metaphysics of the Renaissance; indeed, we are inevitably reminded of the historical Tasso: fanciful ideas floating around *à la* Petrarch, and, in tense but unified contrast, a realistic sexuality.[35] *Tasso* portrays the poet's completeness; but the cost is an absolute exposure of the defenceless heart. The poet possesses

> That which only Nature can confer,
> And ever lies beyond the will of man,
> Beyond his every effort, and which gold
> Cannot force forth, nor sword, nor wit, nor long
> Endeavour.[36]

And if Iphigenia listens to the voice of the god in her heart, of Tasso we read:

> His ear discerns the harmony of Nature.[37]

But, to soar aloft in this harmony, his cosmic Aeolian harp needs the touch of Eros' breath, both as a longing for the unattainable ('for that unto this goal/ My life a wandering eternal is')[38] and as a passion for an exalted lady; the Princess, however, will always be beyond Tasso's reach (she is always herself a 'disciple of Plato')[39] and thus the two forms merge, like the figures in 'Jerusalem Freed'.[40] Just as Iphigenia cannot, even to save herself, besmear her lips with a lie, Tasso's exposed heart senses every tarnishing of the moral order, every impurity, betrayal. Right to the end his penetrating insight never fails him. Antonio, the courtier and man of the world, insults him, the Duke punishes him; like Hyperion's, his 'wounded heart but slowly heals',[41] yet remains unswerving. Were the conflict that of the poet Goethe, confronted by the court and business world of Weimar, it would not in itself be so totally and tragically insoluble. But the web of lies spun by Leonore San Vitale—her 'love', a guise for selfishness, is exposed by Tasso in a magnificent scene (4.2)—snaps his wings, while the Princess' feeble and evasive Platonism (giving the light of 'scanty moonshine', but no warmth)[42] completely disrupts his precarious balance; bodily he embraces one who is bodiless, and, more tragic than the Faust who will clasp the garments of the withdrawing Helen, collapses in utter failure. The drama is by no means a pathological study of a single unfortunate person, but an ontology of poetic existence. In the foreground we have the tension between the ideal and real worlds (Tasso and Antonio); but in the background is the incurable tension between the pre-Italy Charlotte and the Charlotte who greeted the returning lover, the man who had fled from her without a word of farewell, with a coldness hardened into hatred; and yet further in the background, the whole problem of Eros classical and modern, a problem concentrated, for Goethe-Tasso, in the question of 'the moment' which gives that timeless (and therefore *unreal*) glimpse of the Absolute without which the poet could never create anything *real*.[43] Herein lies the true reason why Goethe, who even in the penultimate act champions his hero undauntedly against all the other characters, goes over to the side of the opposition in the fifth act; now, and only now, do the scales sink. The crack running through *Tasso* betrays the hidden rift in Goethe's own heart.—The three life-works, once broken down, are easier to grasp.

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[34] IJ 3, 1.2.1788 (XI, 568).
[35] Above, p. 272.
[36] T 4, 2 (VI, 281).
[37] T 1, 1 (VI, 218).
[38] T 1, 3 (VI, 228), also T 4, 4 (VI, 289).
[39] T 1, 1 (VI, 219).

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[40] T 2, 1 (VI, 245).

[41] T 4, 4 (VI, 288).

[42] T 3, 3 (VI, 270).

[43] Strikingly, the word 'moment' recurs five times in lines 2129–2147, likewise in ll. 2674–2708.

Faust, determined to win the whole, rejects the piece-meal knowledge of the four Faculties and resorts to magic (not unfamiliar; we recall the magical path, in their case theological, of Porphyry and Iamblichus). He finds in his book two 'signs' for the All-and-One. The first is that of the 'Macrocosm'; of 'living Nature' wherein 'all things interwoven are,/ Each in another doing, being!/ Heavenly powers mounting and descending/ The golden buckets one to other passing!'[44] It is the hierarchical, dynamic, analogical universe envisioned by Plotinus or Denys the Areopagite; a magnificent 'show, but ah! a show and nothing more' for Faust. He wants, not classification, but immediate identification. So he decides he will not invoke this universal spirit: instead, turning the page over 'resentfully', he catches sight of the sign of 'the Earth Spirit': quite 'different', 'nearer' to him, and enticing him 'the woe and the delight of Earth to bear'. Rays of red light flash and a breath of chill air wafts down from the ceiling, as Faust invokes the spirit, who appears before him (according to the original version) 'in hideous shape'. Describing itself as 'A sea eternal/ A ceaseless weaving/ A glowing Living', billowing up and down 'in floods of life, in storm of deeds', it points Faust away from itself to the spirit he understands—Mephisto, as we shall see. Henceforth the cosmos is the realm of the earth-spirit, viewed, that is, from Bruno's chthonic perspective, with Heraclitus in the background: the billowing *coincidentia oppositorum*, not analogy but an identity, which man soars up into, a cosmos not 'divine' but 'daemonic'. Here is not that contemplation which, in its sublime longing for the One, sees the laws of the universe soften (a motif which runs from Plato and Plotinus via Boethius and Bonaventura to Cusa); here is action ('In the beginning was the Deed'; 'He who acts has no conscience; only the observer has a conscience').[45] Action, however, consists in single steps, and therefore always needs an opposing complement and creative negation. This constant companion is Mephistopheles, and together, in their ceaseless striving and endeavour to be, or rather seem to be, the whole. Thus everything, even the highest deeds, performed through and with Mephistopheles retains a sense of illusion and deception. Properly, the absolute act should have been suicide ('The time is come, that deeds should finish proof/ A man may worthy be to scale the heights divine'),[46] the way of Werther, more precisely of Ippolit (in *the Idiot*) and of Existentialism. But a half-Christian, half-pagan Easter changes Faust's mood, and provides a transition to the 'pact' that, being a contract with contradiction, can itself only be contradictory: Faust *wants* the moment of divine-daemonic identity and, at the same time, curses it in advance. His path, seen from its starting-point, cannot be that of Eros, of the desired object, the 'restless heart' (Goethe's later insertions try to create that impression);[47] it is, rather, a path whose traces are never free of deceptiveness. All is appearance trickery—the eroticism of the Witches' Kitchen (leading to the Gretchen tragedy), the devilish goings-on of the first Walpurgis Night, the paper money at the Emperor's court, the phantasmagoric Helen and Euphorion—and the final trick is the great cultural achievement by the sea-shore, compromised by murder. In the end Faust, as he faces death, understands how ruinous was his initial decision in favour of the sphere of the earth-spirit and its concomitant spirit of negation:

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[44] F, ll. 441, 446ff. (V, 157–158).

[45] *Maxims*, IX, 522. On the whole subject, see the decisively important essay by Eudo C. Mason, 'Goethes Erdgeist und das Pathos des Irdischen',

> Could I but free from magic now my path,
> Put spells behind me once and for all,
> Before thee, Nature, stand a man alone,
> Then, 'twere not labour lost, to be alive![48]

This thread is clearly visible; it originates precisely in the

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in *Exzentrische Bahnen: Studien zum Ditcherbewußtsein der Neuzeit* (1963), pp. 24–59.

[46] F, ll. 712f. (V, 165).

[47] In the glorious lines of Easter-eve (1064–1099), with the setting sun pursued by the yearning crane.

[48] F, ll. 11404–11407 (V, 503).

Bruno-like pathos of contradiction we found in Faust's opening programme:

> You giddy whirling world, excruciating pleasure,
> Love's hate and ennui's thrill, yours shall I be . . .
> That lot accorded the whole race of men
> I mean to feast on in my inner Self . . .
> My Self enlarge to be the equal of mankind
> And, like mankind, I'll shatter in the end![49]

The style, even the vocabulary, recall *Eroici Furori*. But this is the very style the classical Goethe sickened of; the Faustian in Faust therefore had to be dismantled in mid-stream. Faust's prayer, in which the 'Earth Spirit' is elevated and identified with the spirit of the macrocosm, with the Plotinian-Christian God in-and-above Nature, was composed in Italy:

> Spirit Sublime, thou gavest, gavest everything to me
> For which I prayed. And not in vain didst thou
> In fire turn thy countenance to me . . .[50]

This is a classical execution of the same apostrophe in a very early scene that was never used: 'Great and glorious Spirit, that hast designed to appear to me, that knowest me heart and soul, why chain me to this shameful companion? . . .'.[51] And really this elevation of Faust's is, within the context of the western tradition, not so difficult. The unity of opposites (Heraclitus, Bruno) is ultimately no more than the immanent variation upon the theme of the transcendent Platonic cosmos; if in the former case the poles are set out independently so that the pendulum swings *within* the conflict, here, brought together in a single perspective, they are the object of contemplation. The 'Prologue in Heaven' (1797), with its 'Song of the Three Archangels', now determines the new perspective from the beginning; the angels contemplate from above the wildly-foaming world of the earth-spirit, in which the brightness of Paradise alternates with a deep and dreadful darkness, storms roar in a raging chain, and ravaging lightning flickers before the thunder. The sight 'gives the Angels strength', for they perceive in all this not only the ancient 'singing-match of the brother spheres', but God's ***kabod***:

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[49] F, ll. 1766–1775 (V, 196).

[50] F, ll. 3217–3219 (V, 244).

[51] F, 'A gloomy day. Field' (V, 281).

And all thy works sublime
Still know the first day's glory.[52]

This permits eros, the motif of desire, to come to the fore ('A good man, 'midst the darkness of his urge,/ Yet knows full well which is the righter way').[53] The pact can be passed over and finally treated simply as superseded (dirty work, on which Mephisto puts a bright face); the dreadful murders in the first part and the conclusion of the second are forgotten; and, lastly, the instrument of transcendence, eros, is transfigured, to become the Marian agape of Dante as descending grace. As we surface from the magical intoxication of the giant poem, we may ask which of the spheres is its true home, whence it derives the principle of its form; but the only answer lies in the movement itself—from the one to the other sphere—ultimately the movement of Goethe's existence. For Faust is Goethe, in him he has his justification, his living figure.

William Master begins with the belief in a theatrical 'vocation'; what follows is a retraction, this supposed vocation turning out a mistake. If Faust renounced his world-spirit because it remained 'a show, no more', for the young Master the theatre is to become an image, indeed a kind of symbol, for the world. After the successes of *Clavigo* and *Götz*, Goethe's sense of vocation and vision—not just of a national literature but of an actual German culture based on the stage—were of a grandeur that can scarcely be overestimated.[54] The artist builds the ecclesiastical and spiritual house in which the nation is to dwell.[55] His is a self-sacrifice seen as a vocation, in that he projects the best he has on to the stage, which becomes like a secular pulpit; and this slow, progressive objectivising of his own existence for the benefit of the public was the 'theatrical vocation' of William-Goethe. As Goethe made clear to himself in the splendidly acrimonious essay 'Literary Sans-culottism', the beginnings had to be basic, indeed, almost from nothing.[56] From puppet-plays at fairs and in garrets, passing through all the stages of an actor's career with its misery and self-doubt, to the popular and amateur theatre, the court, and finally the regular town-theatre; such is the rise of Master, as writer and player. *Hamlet* provides the training-ground, an exercise in the meaning of real poetry, true theatre; all the accidents of Fortune's coat-of-many-colours prove to be linked by the inner necessity of the vocation[57] with its 'presentiment of the whole world',[58] so that the only question is whether the hero's inner core is strong enough for chance to crystallise into destiny. This is the question *Hamlet* raises, for here 'a soul is burdened with a deed too great for it';[59] at this point the focus shifts from the subjective to the objective sphere. 'Here, the hero does not have a plan, but the play does . . . All the circumstances unite and seek vengeance, but in vain! neither on earth nor below has any the power to execute what Destiny has reserved for itself.'[60] Shakespeare, not

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[52] F, ll. 243–266 (V, 149–150).

[53] F, ll. 328–329 (V, 151).

[54] He states that he 'thought unceasingly on the German theatre' (TF, 3, 13 (X, 619)): a national poetry would have to be based on the great events in the destinies of nations and kings, for these 'become much more interesting than the gods themselves; the gods have no sooner determined a destiny than they withdraw from it' (TF 2, 7 (X, 308)). After *Götz*, he continues, he became secretly preoccupied with the idea, using the Thirty

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Years War as a basis, of 'moving forwards and backwards, and treating the principal events in the same vein' (TF 3, 13 (X, 629)).

[55] It is the young architect of *Electoral Affinities* who puts this most beautifully: An artist's 'works leave him as do birds the nest in which they have hatched and grown . . . To him the royal halls owe their splendour, a splendour whose greatest effect he cannot share in. In the temples, he sets a boundary between himself and the Holy of Holies . . . just as a goldsmith will worship from afar the monstrance he has created with its glaze and pearls . . . Truly, since it was assigned to her to care above all for public works, for things that belong to everyone and so to the artist as well. Art has perforce become her own only strength' (EA 2, 3 IX, 151–152)).

[56] XIV, 179–185.

[57] MV 6, 14 (VIII, 877).

[58] MV 6, 11 (VIII, 859).

[59] MV 6, 8 (VIII, 846).

[60] MV 6, 10 (VIII, 856).

Hamlet, controls the course of the drama; so too Master's inner vocation is not the highest instance, for he too has a role, in a destiny greater than himself.

At this point the novel of vocation was broken off, in anticipation of the rupture again to come in Italy. Goethe 'abandoned the venture; and when he returned to it the "vocation" was no more. Into its place came a *Bildungsroman* (story of a young man's progress to maturity) called *The Apprenticeship*; those theatrical aspirations had now become a mistake, hardly even a "fruitful" mistake, of Master's youth . . . Disillusioned with the idea of a German national theatre, Goethe now felt that the stage was not after all able to create a "people", in the truest sense of the word.'[61] Thus he who had a vocation now becomes, like Faust, a searcher: 'The story of his life is an eternal searching and never finding.'[62] Destiny has its core no longer in him, nor in a personal providence, but in the Masonic secret society in the background, which, in pulling the strings of a 'destiny' seen as pure 'chance' by William, turns the hero's wayward existence to good.[63] Here, once again, Goethe is condemning the first half of his life: '"I have, I fear, nothing to relate but mistake upon mistake, aberration upon aberration," William replied';[64] but the Masonic abbé takes the view that 'error can only be cured through errancy'.[65] Thus such error and the failed vocation became, as with Faust, integrated into a meaningful process, to be called *Bildung* (formative education); 'Alas . . . what endless operations Nature and Art must do, before there stands before them a fully-formed human being.'[66] Later still, in *The Years of Wandering*, Goethe imitates Plato as he bans the theatre altogether from the sphere of education: 'It has an ambiguous origin which it will never, neither as art nor craft nor simple pleasure, be able to shake off.' Goethe steps on to the platform and, as the 'editor of these papers', speaks to the reading public: 'Has not he too, in many ways, expended more life and strength on the theatre than was right?'[67] It is pardonable because it has found a place in the unified whole of his striving existence. In *Vocation* and *Apprenticeship*, the idea of the 'role' provides the transition from the actor playing a part to the man who is the plaything of a universal 'world theatre'; Goethe praises the nobility, so favoured from the start in worldly goods, and at the same time criticises: to make up for his disadvantages, the humbler citizen has to 'sacrifice his entire self'. Unable to live by 'representation', he has to draw on 'loyalty', the 'prime resource of all our wealth'.[68] 'If through the portrayal of his person the nobleman gives his all, the ordinary citizen through his personality gives nothing, nor should he. The former can, indeed should, seem to be; the latter should only be, and what he tries to seem is absurd and tasteless. The former should do and act; the latter should achieve and create . . ., and it is an initial premise that in his being there is and can be no harmony, for in order to serve a useful purpose he has to neglect everything else.' Nor does Master-Goethe stop there: 'Now it so happens that I have an irresistible inclination towards that harmonious development of my nature my birth has denied me.' He would like to be both a 'public person' and a poet; and here too the theatre provides the bridge: 'On the boards, the cultivated man can appear in all his personal distinction, no less than in the upper classes.'[69] A profound dialectic; while the nobleman represents rather than really is, the ordinary citizen actually is, but cannot represent; in the theatre, however, he could do both at once, and in this way catch up and overtake the nobleman. This is undoubtedly a dream of Goethe's own, in that it envisages a middle way that neither Tasso nor Faust is able to achieve. Both Master and Goethe see their dream collapse; but if we ask what Master has learnt, *The Apprenticeship* provides no further answer, and we must look, paradoxically enough, to *The Years of Wandering*, or, *Paths of Renunciation*.

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[61] Emil Staiger, *Goethe I*, (1952), 472–474.
[62] MA 8, 4 (VII, 571).
[63] MA 7, 9 (VII, 531–532).
[64] MA 7, 6 (VII, 480).
[65] MA 8, 5 (VII, 590).
[66] MA 7, 2 (VII, 459).

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[67] MW 2, 9 (VIII, 278–280).

[68] MV 5, 13 (VIII, 811–812).

[69] MA 5, 3 (VII, 312–314).

But no structural cohesion shall we find here; for once again a painful fracture runs through the middle, distorting the original idea out of all recognition. Master has scarcely brought Natalia home—the transfigured Amazon of *Vocation*[70] who reappeared 'in a radiant halo' in *Apprenticeship*, where she was named the 'Saint'[71]—than he leaves her for a life of wandering, a way of renunciation which does no more than skirt human spheres and destines. In such detachment the world becomes objective and a true sympathy possible; but William strives afresh to escape from this distance. He becomes a surgeon. However, the problem of 'wandering' (in the 1821 version) is transformed into that of emigration to America (in the final, 1829 version). With the novel now disintegrating into a collection of loose bundles, the centre-stage is taken over by the question of education, that is, of character formation' once again, now on a comprehensive and systematic basis, extending from the religious sphere to art and craft. Even where Christianity appears as the third, highest and ultimate religion,[72] the ideal is really the classical *paideia*; for 'awe' (before the impenetrable), rather than love (for Him who has revealed himself), has the final word. The second element is a classical-stoic renunciation in favour of citizenship of the world; this is the inspiration behind Leonardo's speech on the endless fluidity of all human callings, classes and persons. A 'world-wide bond', so that 'everywhere is home',[73] that is the ideal, crowned quite logically by the figure of Macaria, in whom the mysticism of ancient astrology makes an unexpected resurrection of profound significance. This 'oldest of sibyls'[74] has the preternatural gift of clairvoyance: 'it was as though she could see through the mask that each of us wears to the inner nature behind'.[75] She lives in mysterious communion with the solar system, which she knows, by heart and intuitively, according to its constellations; in Plotinian-Leibnizian terms[76] a cosmic entelechy or potency, and a soul whose consciousness is not separate from the material system indwelt by her. In a dream, William sees her transformed into a star (here the poet uses the words 'glorious' and 'glory' five times),[77] and the Astronomer has calculated that she, who since her childhood wandered always around our sun, in so doing 'departing, in a spiral, even further from the centre', is circling towards the outer regions; this represents, no doubt, a Dantesque progress towards the hyper-cosmic and truly divine spheres, such as Pater Seraphicus, in Christian language, commands the blessed boys at the end of *Faust*:

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[70] MV 6, 14 (VIII, 879).

[71] MA 4, 6 (VII, 244); MA 8, 7 (VII, 609).

[72] MW 2, 2 (VIII, 179).

[73] MW 3, 9 (VIII, 412–420).

[74] MW 1, 6 (VIII, 74).

[75] MW 1, 10 (VIII, 127).

Onward mount to higher circles,
Ne'er perceived your constant growth,
Thus, in pure eternal wise,
Strength God through his presence grants.
For such is the spirits' nurture
Copious in freest aether;
Love eternal's revelation,
Unto bliss itself unfolding.[78]

Macaria lives 'like an angel of God on earth, for her spiritual entity, though orbiting around the sun, was moving outwards, in ever-increasing circles, towards the ultramundane'.[79] Such is the wide arc bringing Goethe back to Faust's starting-point, to the macrocosm; yet it is no magician who returns, but a human being wholly devoted to renunciation, indeed, free of self: ''Tis not the spirit-world is locked . . .'[80] Nevertheless, Macaria merely represents an already extrapolated, extreme piece of the world of William Master; as a whole, there is simply no centre, unless it were purely the movement of a life. For Master too is a shadow of Goethe's existence, a part of his *autobiography*, which, then, holds the true key to all his work.

[76] 'What we designate with the term 'entelechy' he [Leibniz] called monads.' C 7.3.1830 (XXIX, 399).

[77] MW 1, 10 (VIII, 134–155).

[78] F, ll. 11918–11925 (V, 520).

[79] MW 3, 15 (VIII, 482).

[80] F, l. 443 (V, 157).

Everything that delighted or tormented him Goethe felt the need 'to change into an image, a poem . . . whatever came to be known of me in this way represents mere fragments of a greater confession, and this book [*Truth and Fancy*] is the bold attempt to execute that task.'[81] Goethe indicates the nature of his annals in the heading 'Completing all I have told of myself'. All the myths he used or invented ultimately refer to himself; he himself is the 'Prometheus', his 'Mohammed' and his 'Ganymede', he drives in the coach of 'Postillion Chronos' (that is, Time), he is 'Faust' and 'Master', 'Werther', 'Clavigo', 'Tasso', Edward and the Major, the 'Man of fifty years' and 'Hatem', and it is he who, in the loneliness of the last years, sings the 'Elegy' of Marienbad. He had to construct a national literature out of practically nothing; *Truth and Fancy* describes the sparse material available. Beyond Klopstock, Lavater and Herder there was almost nothing worth while, and certainly there was no myth, so that one course only remained for Goethe: to give the essence of his own self as the point of crystallisation for an entire age; to make of himself a kind of substitute myth, in hand, at times unjust *résistance* (*Xenien*), and with one-sided aye and no, nevertheless of such universal breadth as to shelter an age which, after all, is not called the Age of Kant, or of Schiller, or of Hegel, since it can only be Age of Goethe. That is why at the beginning, and again at the end, Goethe identified himself so closely with Nature; we must consider 'with reverence a personality in which the seed of a great destiny has been shown, and which must now await the development of this conception and may not, cannot, accelerate either the good or the bad, either the happy or the unhappy times to come'.[82] And the further this destiny unfolds, the more does its bearer deem worthy to be borne, everything, even the most stray products of chance, becoming as Goethe would say mysteriously 'significant'. Unlike William Master, there is above him no 'society of the tower', and in chance he can see destiny, but in destiny the appearing glory of the guiding god himself. 'What men in their undertakings do not and cannot take into account, and whose power is most strikingly revealed just when their greatness should most appear in glory—afterwards they call it "chance"—that is none other than God, appearing directly in his omnipotence and glorifying himself through some utterly insignificant thing.'[83]

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[81] TF 2, 7 (X, 312).

[82] EA 2, 3 (IX, 148).

In *Master* and elsewhere, character-formation is admittedly seen primarily as a bringing-out of innate capacities;[84] 'every capacity is important and must be developed'.[85] Indeed, 'Our wishes are presentiments of abilities latent within us, signs of what we will some time be able to do'.[86] True, this view is contradicted by Natalia;[87] but while she allows her actions to be governed by the situation rather than by disposition and inclination, still the two possibilities unite perpetually in Goethe's conception that his destiny (being that of a 'great entelechy'), is determined at once from within and from above, at once in a micro- and in a macrocosmic context.

Determined 'from within', in the sense that the fundamental experience of his youth was the ever-flowing miracle of his creative powers, which he saw well up from the same centre as the springs of Nature themselves. 'Thou dwellst with me, thou source of Nature' the Artist says in 'The Artists spring wells up from Earth',[88] while the Poet of 'The Eternal Jew' says 'For 'tis an urge, and so a duty';[89] looking back on these two, Goethe said: 'I have become accustomed to regard my innate poetic talent entirely as Nature'.[90] In Italy the same statement, now reflecting his new-found classical objectivity, is applied to all great art: the 'great works of art were at the same time sublime works of Nature, produced by men in accordance with true and natural laws. Everything arbitrary and fanciful collapses; but here necessity, God, is at work'.[91] Such is the *raison d'être* of Prometheus; dispensing with individual gods, even Zeus, he works in harmony with his divine Muse and destiny, creating his figures: 'The mythological point where Prometheus steps on to the stage was something I was always aware of; it had become a living *idée fixe*.'[92] Hence also that vital concept 'the moment' (expressing consummated time and intimated eternity), at first much less a philosophical theory than a direct experience, the spring ever welling up afresh in the innermost centre. It runs through all the youthful poems, through *Master*, *Faust* and the *Divan*; and even in the later years there are lines such as:

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[83] To Riemer, 25.11.1807 (XXII, 478).

[84] 'Nothing is possible without an innate gift' is the view of the Abbé in particular (MA 8, 3 (VII, 558)).

[85] MA 8, 5 (VII, 592).

[86] TF 2, 9 (X, 424).

[87] MA 8, 3 (VII, 566).

[88] IV, 227.

[89] IV, 233.

[90] TF 4, 16 (X, 735).

look . . .
The moment in the eye! And no postponement!
Go swift and meet him, eager and warm-hearted,
Be it in action, joy unto your friend.
E'er childlike, let where thou art be all,
Thus art thou all, and shalt not be o'ercome.[93]

We should not forget Goethe's inherent ability to forget and begin again, his power of constant regeneration ('Ilmenau', the beginning of *Faust* II after the Gretchen tragedy, etc.). He rejects the very concept of memory; 'when we have encountered something great, beautiful or momentous, it must not wait to be re-called, re-collected, so to speak, from outside; rather it must from the outset weave itself in with, become one with, our inmost being . . . in this way it will live on in us, ever forming and creating. The past we long to bring back does not exist; there is only an eternal newness'.[94] We have here the *actus purus* in the origin of existence, the same that inspired Faust's translation 'In the beginning was the Act', and his creator to derive the immortality of the 'entelechian monad' from a 'restless activity.[95] This act is purely procreative, in the *coincidentia oppositorum*, beyond good and evil ('what we call evil is but the other side of good',[96] a saying repeated many times in a watered-down form); it became for Goethe a constantly new and overpowering reality, in Eros.

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[91] IJ 3, 6.9.1787 (XI, 434).

[92] A 1807 (XI, 821).

[93] P I, 478. And in a last addition to *Years of Wandering*: 'Now that they had accepted renunciation' it was among 'their strange duties . . . that when they met they might speak neither of the past nor of the future; only the present might concern them' (MW 1, 4 (VIII, 44)).

[94] To Chancellor v. Müller, 4.11.1823 (XXIII, 315).

[95] To Zelter, 19.3.1827 (XXI, 728).

Goethe's poetry draws from the quintessential vigour of Eros, and his 'May Song' testifies to his archetypal procreation. ('How splendidly doth/ Nature shine to me!/ The gleaming sun,/ The laughing meadows! . . ./ O Love, o Love!/ So golden fair,/ Like morning clouds/ On yonder heights!/ Thy blessing crowns/ The fields fresh,/ In blossom mist/ The world so rich./ O maiden, maiden/ My love for thee!/ Thy glance, thy eye!/ Thy love for me!')[97] There is, in *Years of Wandering*, a magical recreation of an earliest boyhood memory: William and a friend, a fisherman's son, are tumbling about by the river on a fine Pentecost day; the boys undress, bathe, and then stand there, 'dazzled by a triple sun': the sun in the sky and in the water, and the sun of the glorious human shape, 'of which I had had no conception'; 'amid fiery kisses, we swore an eternal friendship.' William-Goethe adds: 'In later life that first blossoming of the outside world came to represent pristine Nature as she truly is; thereafter, everything our senses apprehend seems no more than so many copies, lacking, however close the resemblance, the original spirit and meaning.' Without a pause he continues: 'What despair ours would be, to see the outer world so cold, so lifeless, were it not that something evolves within us to render Nature glorious in quite a different way, a creative power by virtue of which it is we who become beautiful in her'.[98] In their origin Nature and creative-transfiguring love arise inseparably: 'Amor, the landscape-painter'.[99] For Goethe, a word transfigured by love is 'glorious':

> Today, all's glorious to me; if 'twould but last!
> Today I see through Love's eye-glass.[100]

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[96] 'On Shakespeare's day' (IV, 125).

[97] I, 52.

[98] MW 2, 11 (VIII, 292–297). Soon afterwards the beloved boy drowns.

[99] P I, 387–389.

[100] 'The Book of Suleika', D III, 369.

Out of love comes the art of poetry; rhyme, which Faust teaches Helen, is love's dialogic game,[101] invented by Behramgur for Dilaram: 'For sure 'tis Love's resplendent All.'[102] The quintessence of love the *Divan* calls 'spirit', and love itself is the quintessence of life:

> For Life is Love,
> And Life's life, Spirit.[103]

In the *Roman Elegies* the poet prays the god to grant him and everyone this alpha and omega of all the world's goods.[104] Eros is not just enjoyment; after every amorous disappointment love is still the same vital medium for experiencing the *kalon* and *agathon* of existence. Reflecting on Gretchen, on his love in Frankfurt, Goethe says: 'It seems to be Nature's will that each sex should find a tangible form of goodness and beauty in the other. Thus did the sight of this girl and my feeling for her open up a new world of beauty and excellence.'[105] The unbroken continuity between *eros* and *agape* appears in the deliberately shocking 'The God and the Dancing-girl',[106] while a letter looking back on the experience at Marienbad says: 'Meantime I have . . . enjoyed much; and according to Holy Scripture much must be forgiven me, for I have loved much'.[107] And just as Dante peopled his Venus' Heaven with women doing homage to *eros* while purifying themselves for *agape*, Goethe's Faustian heaven is filled with Magdalenes in the biblical and early Christian tradition, joined now by the Gretchen who once killed a child. It is they who lay before Mary the plea on Faust's behalf. Goethe knows and accepts that there is a price, that passion 'also means suffering' and imposes upon the coerced lover an experience of renunciation: 'To love is to suffer. Only under constraint can one enter upon it, that is, one must, one does not want to'.[108] We shall return to the question of renuncation later.

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[101] F, ll. 9377ff. (V, 437–481).

[102] D III, 360. Not only rhyme but all poetry springs from eros. 'The words are like fans! Between the slats/ A pair of lovely eyes peeps out' (D III, 305).

[103] D III, 356; see the notes in *Divan* III, 456.

[104] P I, 178.

[105] TF 1, 5 (X, 189).

[106] P I, 158.

[107] To L. F. Schultz, 8.9.1828 (XXI, 563).

If the great figures we have here encountered bear but fragmentary witness to the continuity governing the Goethean 'formation' of the genius—whose essence is, since *eros* blossoms ever anew, a gaining and a generation of form—nevertheless this idea of formation is not just exposed to the winds; it remains embedded in an all-embracing Nature whence 'stream floods of heightened figures'.[109] 'Heightened' does not mean 'random' or 'arbitrary'; it refers to a process which constitutes the second fundamental law, as Goethe saw it, of Nature's activity. '*Tuchê*, Chance', may 'dally' her way through life, '*Eros*', Love from heaven, cascade down on the 'graven form', '*Anankê*, Necessity', '*Elpis*, Hope' stretch it; the 'law by which thou entered first' remains intact. In 'Utterances. Orphic' are most profound statements on both man and Nature;[110] Goethe, heedless of all Idealists and Romantics, draws back into their all-embracing framework; only by virtue of God's revelation in Nature can he be a human being, and only by virtue of the formed figure, he, as a human being, has received through God-Nature can he be lord of creation and, in his own way, pious. For Goethe, Nature is the proper site of glory; glory to him consists precisely in the truth that the 'graven form' displays from *within* itself the infinitely mysterious Idea, which idea—being the one and only[111]—always, however, remains the divine *beyond* all appearing phenomena. His research into Nature produced what Goethe saw as his most important work, the *Theory of Colours*; but there is all his other research as well—mineralogical, botanical, zoological, anatomical, meteorological—all fragments of a monstrous morphology the outlines of which he worked so stubbornly to draw. It is here that he once again stands alone, and never more lonely, against his age, experiencing not without bitterness their lack of understanding. His aim was to combine the cool precision of scientific research with a constant awareness of the totality apparent only to the eye of reverence, the poetic-religious eye, the ancient sense for the cosmos. But the scientists had gone over to his arch-enemy Newton, the Idealists preferred to deduce Nature as an *a priori* system, or, if they were Romantics, to feel a vague irrational feeling of the whole. Goethe was just as much a lone fighter in his age as Thomas Aquinas had been when he sought to combine exact research and intellectual work with a reverentially pious perception of the divine presence in the cosmos. For without uniting the two, there can be no attitude objective enough to do justice to existence.

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[108] To Riemer, 11.7.1810 (XXI, 563).

[109] P I, 522.

[110] P I, 523.

[111] 'The Idea is eternal and unique; to use the plural is inappropriate' (XVII, 701).

2. THE FORM OF NATURE AND GLORY

GOD AND NATURE

Like the ancients, Goethe neither could nor would separate God's immanence from his transcendence, not least because—with the exception of poetic licence—he refused to explain the convergence of all Nature's individual entelechies in terms of a universal soul distinct from and subordinated to God. At the same time he rejected a flat pantheistic interpretation of the mystery, and so was left with the hyphenated formula 'God-Nature',[1] which, however, he expanded in careful periphrases; he could speak of the 'purity and beauty of the universe in which God reveals himself',[2] could describe Nature as an 'organ of the Divine',[3] and warn against dividing 'what God in his Nature brought forth united'.[4] Thus none can afford to reject the conception that 'at the root of the entire structure that is the world' 'there lies an Idea, whereby God may work and create in Nature, and Nature in God, in all eternity'. To this he added his lines on

[1] P I, 522, and often.

[2] 'Aphorisms on Light and Colour' (Ipsen 2, 649).

[3] XVII, 708: *cf.* P I, 521.

[4] XVI, 884.

'the eternal Weaver and her masterpiece'; how busily she lays the warf, 'That the eternal Master can/ So carefreely his weft cast in'.[5] Goethe, like Plato, could not be content with a plethora of ideas, no more than his Mohammed (in the first fragment of the planned drama) with a polytheistic heaven. The stars ascend in glory, and each time the glowing heart would gladly consecrate itself to the glowing object of its longing. To the sun: 'Be my lord thou my God! Allseeing, lead me. Thou too o glorious one descendest'; the heart lifts itself up to the 'Creator', the 'all-loving Thou' present in all things as love: 'Seest thou Him not? By each quiet spring, each blossoming tree, he cometh to find me in the warmth of his love. How I do thank him, for that he hath opened my breast, and taken away the hard shell that did encase my heart; now can I know of his approach.'[6] This Mohammed of his youth looks forward to the aged Goethe's *Divan*, in which Islam and, with yet greater sincerity, the ancient Persian creed are evoked; the religious form represented by the individual myth is superseded, for the poet, borne by the wings of Eros, looks beyond the marvel of the appearing phenomenon to the single mystery within.

It is here that Goethe likes to speak of *glory*; although without the ecstatic mystical ring, the sense of apotheosis, we found in Hölderlin, his lofty and solemn utterances often attain to the same sphere. In the *Italian Journey* the word, at least in its isolated sentence, makes a superficial if not pallid impression on the lower and middle levels; however, the dense overall usage conveys a general state of mind which the phenomena somehow through their heightened theophanous potential satisfy. So many things are 'glorious' in Italy: the climate,[7] the weather,[8] the morning,[9] the sunset,[10] the night of the full moon,[11] the clear sky,[12] a great stream in the gloaming,[13] an oak forest,[14] the sight of spring,[15] the sea,[16] the area of Campagna;[17] and Rome,[18] especially the historical city,[19] St Peter's[20] and its liturgy,[21] St Paul-outside-the-Walls,[22] Caserta,[23] Naples (time and again),[24] Capri,[25] (with great feeling) Paestum,[26] Pompeii,[27] Girgenti,[28] the view from Etna,[29] one of Raphael's pictures,[30] Michelangelo[31]—and much besides. Later, Goethe spoke of Italy as the 'glorious element of art',[32] and described how he lived there 'amid the most glorious phenomena'.[33] Often the word by itself seems not enough; while walking in Girgenti, for example, he reaches a vantage-point 'where the view . . . was still more glorious';[34] or the full moon 'lends to the evening an indescribable glory'.[35] Goethe is 'comfortably at ease in all this glory'.[36] In the difficult time that followed Italy, the word fossilised somewhat into an ornamental epithet, with the role, for example, of investing the petty-bourgeois world of *Hermann and Dorothea* with a

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[5] XVI, 872–873; 'To cherish and be cherished by Nature' (P I, 509).

[6] 'Mohammed,' IV, 181–182.

[7] IJ XI, 121.

[8] *Ibid.* 185, 464.

[9] 126, 303, 404.

[10] 237, 345.

[11] 209, 251.

[12] 390.

[13] 492.

[14] 205.

[15] 298.

[16] 215.

[17] 200.

[18] 141.

[19] 167.

[20] 389.

[21] 170.

[22] 498.

[23] 225.

[24] 207, 241–242, 350, 385.

[25] 246.

[26] 238, later: 'Paestum is the last and, dare I say, most glorious Idea I now take north with me, intact' (352).

[27] 223.

[28] 298–299, 303.

[29] 321.

[30] 500.

[31] 158.

[32] XVI, 932.

[33] XI, 168.

[34] 299.

[35] 251.

[36] 167.

little mild shimmer. Here we find the German soil 'glorious',[37] and the wide landscape,[38] the rich acres,[39] the fields,[40] the rococo grotto where coffee is served,[41] the horses,[42] the men,[43] the maiden Dorothea,[44] Hermann's weighty words,[45] the naming of Paris as capital of the world,[46] the early days of the Revolution,[47] the two lovers,[48] their future together[49] and their hopes.[50] As for the *Achilleis*, in which the word occurs some twenty times, only the generally elevated tone makes it sound so sublime; it is a mechanical epithet used to lift the proceedings on to an heroic level.

How different, how much more from the heart, is its glow when it is used in the writings on natural science, or in the summary of these theories in the two programmatic poems on metamorphosis. In 'The Metamorphosis of Plants' it gains a new density through juxtaposition with the word 'holy'. His beloved need not be confused by the multitude of shapes among garden plants, behind which there lies 'a secret Law,/ A holy Riddle'. Let her consider how a plant unfolds its seed and breaks through the earth:

> Thus to delectable Light, holy and ever unresting,
> Straightway entrusting the frame so frail of
> burgeoning leaves.

The principle of height induces growth, such that often it 'arouses astonishment'; but then Nature slows the seed, thus to unfold 'the wonder' of the flowering on its rejuvenated stalk. 'Thus doth Nature display her finery noble and rich . . ./ Ever a marvel new . . . Yet the glory becomes the Herald of new creation,/ Aye, the colourful leaf feeleth the hand divine.' Goethe is referring to the mystery of fructification; first the necessary organs evolve, then the pairs take their places about the consecrated altar, 'and glorious scents stream forth/ Mightily fragrances sweet, and up life springs all around'. 'The letters the goddess doth print today' are everywhere there for the beloved to decipher; then she will understand the poet's invitation: 'upward doth holy Love/ Strive to the highest fruit: two that are of one mind.'[51]

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[37] 4, l. 100 (III, 192).
[38] 4, l. 77 (III, 191).
[39] 4, l. 186 (III, 195).
[40] 4, l. 195 (III, 195).
[41] 3, l. 90 (III, 187).
[42] 4, l. 5 (III, 188).
[43] 5, l. 99 (III, 201).
[44] 5, l. 192 (III, 205); 8, l. 96 (III, 231).
[45] 5, l. 222 (III, 206).
[46] 6, l. 16 (III, 208).
[47] 6, l. 36 (III, 208).
[48] 9, l. 55 (III, 233).
[49] 6, l. 156 (III, 213).
[50] 9, l. 293 (III, 242).

In contrast, 'The Metamorphosis of Animals' is completely dedicated to the immanent natural order; it is concerned not with the εἶδος but with the μορφή, with how life takes shape under necessary and wonderful limitations. Thus we read of 'harmony', of the 'beautiful concept of power and its limits, of arbitrariness and law, freedom and restraint, and flowing order'; of 'the beauty of form' and the 'holy circle of living formulation' whose boundaries no god can extend. All these are classical concepts explicitly embracing sub-human Nature and human moral nature alike:

> No higher concept will e'er be found in the realm of
> ethics,
> Nor by the man of action, the artist, or the great
> ruler.

And it is man's prerogative to scale the heights of this 'highest thought' of universal Nature.[52] Here the word 'glorious' is absent, but it returns all the more insistently in the same collection 'God and the World'; in the appended verses containing the poet's reflections on Schiller's skull. With great emotion Goethe considers the law dictating that the spirit be introduced into this 'arid shell' that nobody could love, 'however glorious the essence it preserved'; but Goethe, so adept at reading the forms of life, can decipher the writing of this skull. 'The holy meaning did not speak to all'; he, however, was able to pick out among the common crowd of skulls 'a figure priceless, glorious'.[53] But this 'noble essence' and 'holy meaning' can never seek to exist outside the circle of 'Nature', as Goethe understands this; 'Is not Nature's essence/ In the hearts of men?'[54] Haller is called a philistine for maintaining that 'no created spirit/ In Nature's heart can see';[55] for who would be interested in the mere shell if the essence remained beyond all reach? For it is Goethe's 'ancient belief' 'that Nature has no secret she does not somewhere bring naked before the eyes of the alert observer'.[56] This is the truth without which one will never reach 'that glorious period' of life in which 'everything within our understanding comes to seem unworthy and foolish'; 'glorious' because it represents 'a point half-way between desperation and deification', as Montan says in *Years of Wandering*.[57] His explanation: 'Letters are no doubt a fine thing, but in vain do we seek in them the notes; notes we need, but from them we shall never hear the true meaning . . . Nature has but one script, and all the scrawl we meet is so much useless lumber.'[58] Plotinus would agree; the mystery is plain and open because it is a true mystery.

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[51] P I, 203–206.

[52] P I, 519–521.

A COSMIC ALPHABET

Schiller, when he first met Goethe, made a comment that left him perplexed and also annoyed; his 'original plant' was 'not real but ideal'. To which Goethe replied: 'That is what I like to hear; I not only have ideal forms in my head without knowing it, I can actually see them.'[59] He had to struggle hard to win this power of seeing, through unremitting observation, experimentation, induction, and provisional 'empirical laws' serving as hypotheses; and if a case contradicted the law, the whole perspective would have to be shifted on to a higher level.[60] Goethe saw clearly that such a method took him into a sphere beyond empiricism and Kantian idealism, and Heinroth's comment that his thinking was 'totally engaged in the realm of objects' found a grateful ear ('A single intelligent sentence can be so much help').[61] Tongue slightly in cheek, he enlisted the authority of Kant's *intellectus archetypus*: 'We, through the observation of an ever creating Nature, made ourselves worthy of spiritual participation in her products'.[62] Goethe cannot be seen as a naive objectivist; 'Nature' is implicitly understood as the mutual reciprocity and indwelling of subject and object: 'All that is in the subject is in the object, and something more besides; all that is in the object is in the subject, and something more besides.'[63] That holds particularly true in the aesthetic theory: 'The Law that comes before our eyes, in complete freedom, under its own unique conditions, brings forth the beauty of objects; there must then be found worthy subjects, able to apprehend it'.[64] A similar structure of identity-in-tension is postulated for the relationship between the sensual and the spiritual spheres; Goethe had no time for 'lower and higher powers of the soul'. 'In the human spirit as in the cosmos nothing is higher or lower, for everything demands equal rights from a common mid-point that itself can only manifest its secret existence through the harmony existing between the parts and itself.'[65] Both dualisms are already implied for him in the concept of (appearing) reality (the appearance of God in his world), in the essential Pythagorean-Plotinian tradition; and here we meet a whole list of dualities with echoes in the history of ideas: 'We and the objects [Aristotle], light and darkness [Mani], body and soul [Plato], two souls [Paul, Faust], spirit and matter [Descartes], God and the world [Plotinus, Goethe], thought and extension [Spinoza], ideal and real [Schelling], sense and reason [Kant], imagination and intellect [Jean Paul], existence and yearning [Fichte]'.[66] To sum up: 'Reality and division are synonymous.'[67] This fundamental structure, which Goethe terms 'polarity', for once permits him to venture into the Idealistic camp; he was able, much to the philosopher's astonishment, to make a precise summary of Fichte's system[68] and to translate his own ideas on to that plane (after all, Fichte's 'I' with its various destinies is not far removed from Faust).

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[53] P I, 522.
[54] P I, 529.
[55] P I, 529.
[56] A XI, 626.
[57] M W 1, 3 (VIII, 38–39).
[58] *Ibid.* 40.
[59] XII, 622.

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[60] 'Experience and Science', XVI, 859–871.

[61] XVI, 879f.

[62] 'Perception and the faculty of Judgment', XVI, 877–879.

[63] XVII, 774.

[64] XVII, 703–704.

[65] XVI, 884.

The theory of colours is absolutely within the Plotinian tradition. The premise here is the identity-in-tension of objective and subjective light (the receiving organ is the 'sun-like' eye). 'Thus the eye evolves by virtue and on behalf of light, that the inner light may meet the outer.' In support he quotes the Ancient Greek saying: 'Like is known only by like.'[69] Thus colour is 'an elementary natural phenomenon' that, operating within the analogical area of tension holding object and subject, is characterised by continual transitions; in the three fields—subjective, subjective-objective and objective—it behaves respectively as 'physiological', 'physical' and 'chemical' colour. Here it is decisive, firstly that this analogical context provides the arena for everything that happens in the world around us (any sweeping statement that the senses are deceptive is therefore nonsense: 'So in the senses put your trust,/ And never shalt thou see awry,/ If awake thy mind thee keep').[70] Secondly, this complete openness is due as much to the highest objective natural phenomenon, light, as to the eye, and Goethe even accords priority to the objective phenomenon. (Admonishing Schopenhauer: 'What! Light is only there inasmuch as you see it? No! You would not be there if the light did not see you!')[71] Light, being thus identified with the manifestness of existence, represents the highest thing in Nature; this implies, in its proper sphere beside horizontal polarity, the dimensionally complementary second principle of all reality: the principle of height. Colour as such arises out of the primary polarity of light and darkness; light on a dark background (the sun-lit air before the darkness of space) produces blue, and darkness before light produces yellow (the sunset). Yellow and blue in horizontal polarity produce green, but when each is in its heightened form (as orange and violet respectively) they converge into the highest phenomenon in the spectrum, 'which, on account of its high worth, we have often called purple.[72] The resulting closed ring of colours is a most welcome confirmation of the classical theory of the world and of art, that finitude and perfection belong together; it is, in fact, three-dimensional, being at once qualitatively structured, horizontal and vertical. And this upward progression (to red) is in itself highly mysterious, for 'in its light state the colour is also a dark one [because it only originates through the 'sombre' medium]; if it is made denser it will become darker, at the same time acquiring a shimmer we designate with the word "reddish"'.[73] Thus to darken is to intensify and must, in a new sense, become illuminating.

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[66] 'Polarity', XVI, 863.

[67] XVII, 700.

[68] *Cf.* also the scheme XVI, 917f., and comment by A. Speiser, *ibid.* 937–938.

[69] TC, Introduction, XVI, 20.

[70] P I, 515.

[71] XXII, 741.

The Newtonian theory of colours, whose bitter adversary Goethe was, cannot cope with such ideas. Instead, colour is treated as a random 'phenomenon' scientifically demonstrable in, i.e. reducible to, numbers. But 'measurements, numbers and signs do not constitute a phenomenon'.[74] 'Mechanical formulae . . . have an element of crudeness. They transform the living into the dead', even if 'in many cases they can be conveniently and successfully applied'.[75] They cannot express the qualitative distinction between the whole and its parts, in a word, the 'shape' (which is the key factor). Mechanistic thinkers are consequently also quite blind to the fact that the eye, in contemplating a secondary or tertiary colour, never loses the totality of the relevant colour, itself supplying the complementary components; this explains, makes possible, the art of painting in its own realm beyond Nature.[76] Goethe appreciates and indeed shows great interest in the methodical exactness of physiology;[77] he can see, and think of, an organism in terms of its functions as well as its shape, precisely in the unfolding of the original plant, that 'ideal form'. A function cannot, however, be isolated from its totality, and an awareness of the whole, the overall unity—that is, a philosophical or artistic awareness—is needed for the ('exact') comprehension of the object as it really is. Only by using such integration can so-called scientific exactitude really be anything like exact. Complete exactitude is impossible, since no original phenomenon can as such be explained; why is yellow yellow, or blue blue? whence this original 'decision' ('The evolution of a colour is its original decision')?[78] Hence Goethe's consistent liking for the word 'decisive' (colours, for example, in combination 'produce a partially harmonious, partially characteristic, often discordant, but always decisive and powerful effect').[79] Natural beings and objective forms are always taking objective decisions. And even accepting the plant kingdom as an unforeseeable series of variations upon an original ideal form, this would never ultimately be mechanical. Instead, it would consist of monitored 'dictums' to all of which, by virtue of analogy, the 'Utterances. Orphic' correspond.

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[72] TC 703 (XVI, 189).

[73] TC 699 (XVI, 189).

[74] Ipsen II, 678.

[75] TC 732 (XVI, 203–204).

Consequently all language, not least the conceptual language of philosophy, remains 'in fact purely symbolic'.[80]

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[76] TC Intro., XVI, 20.

[77] 'It is absorbing to speculate whether one might gain insight into that organic-chemical operation in life whereby the metamorphosis of plants takes place subject to a single law, but in all kinds of ways', Goethe wrote, shortly before his death, to the chemist W. F. Wakkenroder, 21.1.1832 (XXI, 1029). Astonishment at the wonders of life and acknowledgment of the 'Unfathomable' are marvellously balanced with the necessity of scientific research throughout this letter; for 'if he is truly determined man cannot desist from his attempts to corner the Unfathomable, not until he is finally satisfied and admits defeat'.

[78] TC 695 (XVI, 188).

[79] *Ibid.* 758 (XVI, 206).

[80] TC 751 (XVI, 203).

And even philosophy is a secondary phenomenon in comparison with poetry (for poetry is the original language of mankind, 'until finally that one and only true poetry, of the very beginning, disappears almost completely. At the beginning the philosopher is always a kind of poet').[81] He who seeks to understand the world should begin not by constructing, but by observing.[82] In so far as science adopts a mathematical exactitude, however, it becomes 'dependent upon quantitative factors . . . and so, to a certain extent, upon the external features of the world. But if we consider the world with all the spirit and powers at our command, we see that the two poles of reality as we know it must be quantity and quality. This fact leads the mathematician to drive his formulaic language to its extremest limits, to see if he can grasp the unmeasurable element in his measureable and calculable world. He can now see everything as tangible, comprehensible and mechanical, and in this he comes under the suspicion of a secret atheism. For he now believes he can also understand that most unmeasurable of all things, which we call God, and whose particular or pre-eminent nature he appears willing to abandon.'[83] Such a position thus involves not only a complete reduction of the principle (equivalent to 'height' or 'analogy') of quality within the world; the relationship between the world and God, the analogical foundation of all being, is also reduced to nothing. In this fight-back against the despotic tendencies of scientific method, Goethe was also fighting for the true cosmos and for God; for these stand or fall together.

Such is the quantitive-qualitative nature of the world of colour. But there is a further, or rather higher,[84] realm of a similar structure, that of music. While the two cannot directly be compared, they can 'be seen in terms of a higher formula'.[85] If it were not for the highly formalised and subjectivised nature of modern music,[86] Goethe's conception of a subjective-objective musical totality would not be far removed from the ancient and mediaeval conception: a cosmic harmony of human dimensions uniting spirit and senses. In the story *Novelle* the myth of Orpheus is in the background: one of the characters, Honorio, is passionately in love. When there is a fire at the local circus and a tiger escapes, he can only think of shooting it; meanwhile the showman's boy is leading the lion home, entranced as it is by his flute. 'In the Lion's Den Daniel had no fear; he remained firm and undismayed, and the wild roaring could not interrupt his pious singing.'[87] The 'child in its transfiguration' was 'like a mighty conqueror in the hour of his victory'; but Honorio is told 'First overcome yourself'. But in the peace of the song that follows the discord, the strains of Orpheus pass into Christian tones:

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[81] 'The Epochs of the Sciences' (draft for TC), XVII, 762.

[82] XVI, 878.

[83] XVII, 769.

[84] 'The effects of sound must almost be placed above all else. Were not language indisputably the highest form we have, I would place . . . music even higher.' He goes on to justify the priority of notes over colours (XVI, 862).

> The Eternal rules on earth . . .
> Faith and hope, they are fulfilled;
> Wondrous power hath the love
> That in prayer is unveiled.[88]

CLASSICISM

If in his natural philosophy proper the forms of nature have been freely associated with the religious mystery, we find that the humanistic approach of Goethe's theory of art tends rather to confine all such elements within a definite compartment; this is especially so in the middle, high classical period. In formal structure, this theory of art remains completely within the context familiar since the Renaissance, but with an unmistakable tendency to stress man's independence; he is the middle and apex to which Nature relates. 'The highest purpose of art is to show the human form in all the sensual grandeur and beauty it can.'[89] 'We know of no world save in relation to man; we want no art save that which reproduces this relation.'[90] As far as their depiction of the gods is concerned, Goethe treats the Greeks, normally so canonical in respect to art, as though their religion itself were merely aesthetic, its setting purely immanent.[91] In the essay 'Elementary Imitation of Nature, Manner, Style' these three artistic forms are presented as a hierarchy: 'elementary imitation' presupposes an initial insight into the essence of the object to be reproduced, 'manner' (as the personal 'handwriting') requires a deeper insight, while 'style' is based on 'the deepest fundaments of perception, indeed, on the very essence of things, in so far as we may perceive it in visible and tangible shapes'.[92] This 'essence' is clearly the entelechy, in other words, the Aristotelian *morphê* at the world's heart.

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[85] TC 748 (XVI, 202).
[86] TC 750 (XVI, 203).
[87] IX, 451.
[88] IX, 452.

When Goethe occasionally speaks of the 'ideal form', partly identifying and partly contrasting it with Nature, he is assuming the linguistic garb of the Renaissance, Baroque and Enlightenment as well as Idealism; but what he means is simply the entelechy, invisible as such, but present in shapes and movements. Beginning with the Renaissance, a struggle had raged over the 'Idea'; there had been the Aristotelian interpretation, in favour of an activity of the artist's mind, a process of selection seeking out the most beautiful features (so Leonardo, Alberti); and the Platonic interpretation: sparks of inspiration from the divinity irradiating the artist's spirit. This was the view of Ficino,[93] whom within the space of a hundred years the Manneristic era had elevated into the leading theoretician, indeed the metaphysician, of art, and we find similar variations in Zuccari, Lomazzo, Ripa, Scannelli and Bellori, some of whom feature in *Italian Journey*.[94] There have been (in ancient thought as well) many positions compromising between the objective and subjective Idea. We have seen how Goethe locates the colours in the area of tension between the poles. Similarly, the subjective Idea can be innate or a god-given inspiration, or it can be won from the intuitively grasped 'true' intention of Nature. The formulation we may call classical, or at least canonical for Classicism, is that of GIAN PIETRO BELLORI, from his programmatic speech to the Academy (1664), 'The Idea of the Painter . . . a refinement of natural beauties superior to Nature'. In the starry world God's ideas find a pure realisation; in the earthly world—and especially in mankind—often, because the material is not sufficiently well ordered, the reflection is turbid. The artist must seek to imitate the highest Artist; he must always bear in himself an image of the highest beauty, which will guide him in his search to restore to Nature her true and pure essence, her Idea.[95] Thus Nature and art were conceived of as mutually dependent in the recreation of the Idea; never have Aristotle and Plato co-operated better. Also, the religious, almost priestly and prophetic, status adhering to the artist since the times of Petrarch and Boccaccio was reaffirmed; his role, according to Zuccari, was to bring to light man's true likeness to God and unveil the paradisiac nature of the world. No doubt Rubens, Poussin, Claude Lorrain and the other great artists Goethe loved had just such a programme.

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[89] *Writings on Art*, XIII, 71.

[90] XIII, 332.

[91] 'Winckelmann and his century': While the moderns went vainly off at tangents into the infinite, 'the Ancients had an intuitive sense for, felt uniquely at ease in, the physical limitations of their fair world' (on the ancient world). They had an 'admiration for the gods merely as works of art, as it were' (on the pagans), XIII, 417, 419.

[92] XIII, 66–71.

[93] Ficino had spoken of 'innate *formulae idearum*' that flash suddenly like sparks in the spirit, awakening the memory of when the gods were visible; this conception gained ground in the aesthetic philosophy of the Baroque, with its Platonic influences. The Renaissance artists thought primarily in psychological-empirical terms; the Idea preceding creative activity, or plan (*disegno interno*), being related to the role of the eye, its search for an object's

Poussin had very close contact with Bellori and adopted the latter's theory of beauty, but added a strong neo-Platonic

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essence (the Idea is therefore present in the object). This is Raphael's view in the letter to Castiglione (1516), and also that of Vasari (who identifies the Idea with the artist's power of visualisation). The later classical-baroque aesthetic philosophy unites the two directions. Erwin Panofsky, *Idea: Ein Beitrag zur Begriffsgeschichte der ältern Kunsttheorie* (Teubner, 1924).

[94] IJ 3, Nov. 1787; Lomazzo and Bellori (*admiranda Romae*) are mentioned (XI, 483).

[95] Panofsky 59; text of Bellori's speech, 130–138.

accent. Bellori, the antiquarian and art theorist, became the decisive influence on Winckelmann, who enlists his authority; but the German too is more exposed to the light of neo-Platonism.[96]

On a theoretical level WINCKELMANN, that canonical figure of the Age of Goethe, was responsible for very little that was new, even 'Noble Simplicity and Quiet Greatness' being an old topic.[97] He speaks freely of imitation of Nature ('naturalism') as distinct from the higher stage of 'ideal beauty', but envisaging a perfect synthesis, such as the Greeks were able to achieve partly through a unique natural gift, but partly by their own efforts. Greece represents the very marriage of ideal and reality, and the swiftest way to true imitation of Nature is by imitation of the Greeks. 'The sensual beauty provided the fairness of Nature, and the ideal beauty those sublime features; from the former the artist took the human, and from the latter the divine, aspect of his depiction.'[98] When this synthesis is called a 'noble simplicity', 'simplicity' means, in the Plotinian sense, uni-formity (the 'state of unity'),[99] indicating 'the soul's true [namely, metaphysical] character', which is expressed physically in the 'state of rest'; while 'noble' means that the soul's natural-ethical state corresponds to its 'uni-form' essence, 'quiet' (like 'rest') expresing the external correspondence to this nobility. Consequently Winckelmann, like Plotinus, insisted that 'beauty, properly speaking, is not a matter of numbers and measurements'; you might know these, but if Heaven has given you no feeling for it you will never perceive the beauty in them. For 'beauty consists in multiplicity within simplicity; this is the wise men's stone which the artists must seek, and which few find.'[100] Winckelmann, however, went on to find the signs of this 'simplicity' in constant new examples of significant posture, gestures and situations (as Goethe later put it), and demanded an ultimate catalogue of *sujets*, spoke of 'allegories' and 'independent thinking'. The Weimar art-lovers did indeed expend much effort in finding such *sujets*, some of which became subjects for essay competitions. All labour lost, of course; in fact, it was not long before all Goethe's plans in this regard collapsed into complete failure. But the pure humanism of his programme did come from Winckelmann; for the latter had already been convinced that 'the highest object of art for thinking men is man'.[101]

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[96] References, *ibid.* 117f.

[97] Wolfgang Stammler, *Edle Einfalt: Zur Geschichte eines kunsttheoretischen Topos*. In *Worte und Werte: Festschrift für Bruno Markwardt* (Berlin, 1961).

[98] *Joh. Winckelmanns sämtliche Werke*, ed. J. Eiselein (1825), I, 19.

[99] I, 33.

[100] I, 207.

And yet, in his conversations with KARL PHILIPP MORITZ in Rome, Goethe had envisaged a broader metaphysical horizon for art; the subsequent piece by Moritz, 'On the formative Imitation of beauty' (1788), is discussed by Goethe,[102] and large extracts appear at the end of *Italian Journey*. The essay begins with a grand principle: 'the horizon of creative power in the forming genius must be as wide as Nature herself; that is, the organisation must be so finely woven, must offer the copious floods of Nature so infinitely many points of contact, that the uttermost ends, as it were, of all the elements of Nature find space within this miniature vessel, and need not jostle one another'.[103] In other words, the microcosm of the genius must, so far as possible, be co-extensive with the macrocosm; that is potentially Plotinian, but also accords with Bruno, Shaftesbury, Herder and the young Goethe himself (*Faust*, 'Prometheus'). Such an horizon is beyond the reach of thought, imagination, the senses; the genius depends on 'creative power' to capture the totality in a single focal point, to choose an object 'to which he may impart a reflection of that highest Beauty whose mirror his powers are', 'and for which this smaller scale is rejuvenation'.[104] Then comes the strict Plotinian doctrine also, however, prevalent in the cult of the genius: 'The living concept of the formative imitation of Beauty can only be found in the feeling of creative power as the work is being produced, in the first moment of its genesis'. Only in the moment of birth, when the chaos *becomes* shape, is beauty genuinely there; the process over, only a shadow remains. Thought, imagination (taste) and the senses by their nature seek always the beauty above them, but can never capture it; hence it appears as the abysmal, glorious and sublime. 'Confronted by Beauty, the power of thought can no longer ask why it is so; but that is the sign of beauty . . . There are no terms in which to speak of true Beauty, save as the very essence of all the harmonious elements comprising Nature's great Whole, which no power of thought can capture. Each of the myriad fragments of beauty we find in Nature is only beautiful in so far as it partakes, to whatever extent, of this essence of all the elements comprising that great Whole.' Thus beauty is something not to be understood, but to be produced. There is also the possibility of an empathy, taste, for the original totality by virtue of which the pleasure of creation can be compensated for by that of contemplation. However, Moritz and Goethe sound a double warning. Taste is not the same as creative power, so let there be no confusion or deception over this; and the genius who works with pleasure in mind will surely fail, for 'the slightest trace of self-interest must be erased'.[105] Beauty has no purpose; 'its sure reward is in itself'. Beyond this, the creative microcosm is not identical with the macrocosm; the greater whole is only interwoven with our being, and constantly searching 'to spread back out in all directions', as it must, by a law that governs the entire natural hierarchy. Thus plants, being amid matter, seek to draw it up into themselves, and so do animals; as for man, he 'develops, grows, enjoys, in the process transforming flora and fauna alike into his inner being. In fact, everything subordinate to his own organisation he absorbs . . . into his existence . . . and then returns it, but with a new beauty, to the outside world'.[106] Such transcendental aesthetic conceptions, despite their impression of modernity, are thoroughly classical. Two sentences form the climax: 'The organisation of Nature in her entirety would be our highest Beauty, could we for one moment (ἐξαίφνης) comprehend it. Each fair work of art is in its unity a miniature copy of that highest Beauty in the entirety of Nature.'[107]

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[101] I, 207; *cf. Italian Journey*: 'The Alpha and Omega of all the things we know: the human figure' (IJ 3 (XI, 425)).

[102] XIII, 71–75.

[103] IJ 3 (XI, 588).

[104] XIII, 73 (XI, 589).

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[105] XI, 590–593.
[106] XI, 596.

This synthesis, never in fact attained, was to be the summit, the *non plus ultra*, of Goethe's speculation; and towards the end of his life he became decidedly antipathetic towards such intellectual paths: 'I find nothing more hollow and fatal than aesthetic theories.'[108] Yet the synthesis represents a daring combination of the classical with the modern-Promethean outlook, of Plotinus with Bruno, of true transcendental glory with immanent sublimity (or, to use Moritz's word, 'majesty'). We cannot quite see how it is stitched together: how macro- and microcosm relate to one another. The genius is not the totality, yet creates from within it. Their relationship is like a brotherly intimacy; there is no place in it for an act of worship. Thus Goethe's aesthetic philosophy, even after the Italian rupture, is still clearly anthropocentric, in contrast to that of Hölderlin and indeed to the much less inhibited piety of the writings on natural science. An important reason for his dislike of Romanticism was the Romantic Belief that artistic ability could be replaced or at least invigorated, by religious feeling.[109] According to Bellori's theory, the glory of art resided in its power to assemble the supreme but transitory moments of existence, and confer upon them a kind of eternity. Winckelmann's essay has a similar conception: 'The ultimate product of the ascent of Nature is the beauty of man. Now it is indeed a rare achievement of hers; too many conditions obstruct her Ideas [!], and even she, omnipotent [!] as she is, cannot remain long on this level of perfection, nor bestow lastingness on the Beauty she has brought forth. For, to be truthful, human beauty has but a moment's life. But here Art makes her entrance; for even as man finds himself on the summit of

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[107] XIII, 73.

[108] To v. Müller, 1.5.1826 (XXIII, 429).

[109] 'Final Exhibition of Art', 1805: 'Such an artist relies on moral value, which is supposed to compensate for artistic weakness. They seek to express an intuition of the highest moral value through art, ignoring that such a value has only one possible incarnation: in the highest form of sensuality' (XIII, 456).

Nature, he sees that he has now become himself an entirety of Nature, bound to bring forth just such a summit within itself.' Thereupon bringing 'selection, order, harmony and meaning' into the cosmos, he 'finally rises to the production of a work of art' into which 'passes all that is glorious, admirable, and delightful; such that, as life is breathed into the human form, man is lifted above himself, the circle of his life and deeds is sealed off [!], and he is deified for a present that contains past and future . . . The god [i.e. Pheidias's Zeus] had become man that man might be raised to his godhead'.[110] In the face of this Weimar gospel, any questions as to the nature of the Idea become secondary. It may be said that his contemplation of ancient sculpture led Winckelmann to a perception of 'glory in fulfilment, the Idea';[111] thus, in the essay 'Myron's Cow', it is demanded that the highest truth be sought not through slavish imitation, but through a constant awareness of the Idea.[112] We are left with a dialectical conception of experience that embraces elements ranging from empiricism through Aristotle to Plato. 'When artists speak of Nature they always, without fully knowing it, mean the Idea. It is the same with all who extol experience alone, not reflecting that experience is but the half of experience.'[113] 'Nature and Idea may not be divided without destroying both art and life.'[114]

3. GLORY AS REFLECTION
BEING AND CELEBRATION

Thus far we have considered Goethe's view of the world in terms of its 'essence', and as a manifesto addressed to his own age in favour of the classical age, in its post-Christian resurrected form. Let us finally attempt to describe its inner dimensions, its private character; for here our historical account may find its most conclusive and revealing material.

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[110] XIII, 421–422. *Cf.* 'Myron's Cow': 'The Greek conception and endeavour is to deify man, not to humanise the deity. Here is no theomorphism, no anthropomorphism!'

[111] XIII, 441.

[112] XIII, 645.

[113] XIII, 332.

[114] XIII, 331.

Even the vitality that characterised the ancient world is not to be compared with the Renaissance and Baroque experience. Existence then was a celebration, and this uplifted mood found expression in the *trionfo*;[1] indeed, in every great work a triumphal element was sought and celebrated.[2] Admittedly, in the Baroque culture this emotive potential was channelled into specific forms, partly mythological or mystical, partly appertaining to court life. In Goethe, however, it does not so much reappear as erupt, with a new and stark power. In later years we find him absorbed in study of 'The Triumph of Julius Caesar', a painting by Mantegna known to many through Andreani's sequence of wood-cuts. A fascinating account of his reactions begins like this: 'Trumpets and horns, a declaration of war, musicians with puffed-out cheeks. Next, throngs of soldiers, their legionary ensigns, standards, lucky signs held aloft on poles. The busts of Roma in the van; then Juno, bestower of victory, her peacock in relief, goddesses of plenty with cornucopia and baskets of flowers, swaying over streaming pennants and floating banners. In their midst, torch-pans, flaming and smoking in the air, in honour of the elements, to stir all the senses . . . .'[3] Thus begins the 'extravagant triumphal procession'; then follow the captured gods, the booty, elephants, arms, captive women and children, mockers, musicians, Caesar himself in the tumult, and last of all, the academics, among whom Goethe is amused to discover Gottsched, and, he thinks, a certain professor of dialectical philosophy. He is impressed above all by the all-but impossible unification of classical greatness and realistic characterisation achieved by Mantegna's art; on the one hand, the 'noble spirit', but informed by 'Nature in all her primal force'. It is true Goethean festivity.

Such *trionfi* are high-points in Goethe's life and work. It all began with the jolly, crazy hubbub of the humble fairs at

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[1] W. Weisbach, *Trionfi* (Berlin, 1969).

[2] André Chastel, Art et Humanisme à Florence (1959), 485–521.

[3] XIII, 924.

Frankfurt; here were born both *Faust* (out of the puppet-play) and the Master's *Theatrical Vocation*, in initial sketches rough as wood-carvings. 'A Fair at Plundersweilern',[4] 'Shrove-tide Carnival, also to be acted after Easter',[5] 'Merry Andrew's Marriage, or, The Way of the World';[6] here, everything is much and yet nothing; just so the 'eternal Jew' would see the history of mankind. In another plan of 1801, for a 'far-reaching project' provisionally entitled 'A Stay in Pyrmont' (a spa),[7] the revels were not to obscure the essential idea; set in the sixteenth century, the novel was to present 'the hustle and bustle' of throngs of people ravaged by infirmities of body and soul; 'the Inscrutable and Holy' would 'contrast attractively' with the atmosphere of the fair. 'Thus arises, amid the tumult of the world, a City of God, about whose invisible walls the rabble, as rabbles must, roars and rages'; a strange fresco which, though never executed, tells us, even from its outlines, much about Goethe.

But now let us move on to the great festivals of real life. After the 'unbelievable chaos'[8] of the busy market-days, we come to the grand celebration marking the coronation, in Frankfurt in 1765, of Emperor Joseph II. For the youthful Goethe it was a grand delight, and later, how the old gentleman enjoyed conjuring up that scene again; 'a never-ending procession of glory'[9] (but ending on an uncanny note, with the youth overtaken by a disastrous episode). What is unusual for Goethe is that this festival becomes a metaphysical experience, of which he provides an exact account: 'Ceremonies of political and religious import exercise an infinite fascination. We see before our eyes the earthly majesty, surrounded by all the symbols of its might; but then it bows before the might of Heaven, and we realise that the two exist together. For the individual too can sense his closeness to the Divine only in abject worship.'[10]

[4] IV, 160f.
[5] IV, 171f.
[6] IV, 247f.
[7] XII, 627–629.
[8] TF I, 1 (X, 28).
[9] TF I, 5 (X, 220).
[10] TF I, 5 (X, 222).

The elevating contributions Goethe made to court occasions received something akin to this religious gleam, if rather paler. There were presentation speeches to dignitaries (often highly rhetorical, in the Baroque style),[11] pageants for the stage,[12] and masked processions[13] (a genre which then passes directly into *Faust*). In contrast to the court occasion, the monstrous parade of the 'Roman Carnival' seemed like a kind of cosmic 'saturnalia'; and rarely did Goethe's heart beat so in time as to this mighty piece of prose.[14] The Carnival is a festival 'the people gives itself': hectic, ecstatic, breathless, dangerous, proceeding only along the long, narrow, overcrowded Corso, which 'reminds us of the roads of Life itself, where everyone, actor or onlooker, masked or unmasked, from balcony or platform, can see but little space before and beside him, and in coach or on foot advances only little by little, not so much walking as being pushed, and held up rather than stopping'. And thus 'the intensest and highest pleasures, like fleeting horses, are there for a moment, touch us, and are gone, leaving scarce a trace in the soul; thus freedom and equality can be enjoyed only in the giddy swirl of madness; and the highest pleasure becomes its most alluring only when it draws very close to danger, and gives itself up lasciviously to sweetly-fearful feelings.'[15]

In the summer of 1814, Goethe, now sixty-five, witnessed a Catholic festival, the Feast of St Roch[16] in the church above Bingen, a pilgrimage laid waste in the war and recently rebuilt. We share in the joyful anticipation at Rüdesheim; the cannonades resound, and the night is clear under a 'heaven burning with stars' as they start the ascent. 'And now the tumult seizes us!'—a confusion of spiritual and worldly, a divine service and stalls selling rolls, muffins, ginger-nuts; and onward draw the faithful holding their statues, standards, canopies, all of a sudden a brief and cruel fox-hunt shoots through the middle, then there is the welcome smell of freshly-fried sausages, and more than ten thousand people are there feasting and drinking, and quarrelling about which is the village with the best wine; between times there is the pretty legend of St Roch, and a beautiful sermon on him to conclude. In this last the words tremor with the emotion and and agreement of the aged Goethe; they speak of a limitless surrender to God's will, easing a neighbour's burden, even when this is dangerous, without looking for earthly reward, for 'the span of Time is too short for boundless reward'.[17] All is embedded in a wonderful, radiant landscape, with ample time to look around during te sermon in the open; he already had the geologist's hammer out as they all went up the hill. A communal celebration in a Christian landscape.

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[11] Thus 'To a noble Lady on a journey', (P I, 367), and the poems to Empress Maria Ludowika of Austria (in Carlsbad, 1810): P II, 257, 259, 260, 263.

[12] III, 569f. The open-air 'Celebrations in honour of Louisa' should also be mentioned; Goethe's description, XII, 610–617.

[13] III, 681f.

[14] XI, 533–567 (from 1789 onwards, often published separately, but later added to *Italian Journey*).

[15] XI, 566–567.

[16] 'By the Rhine, Main and Neckar', XII, 469–497.

All these festivals find their climax in *Faust*, in which the hero is led through three grand celebrations (or four, counting his marriage with Helen), each very different. First come the demonic revels of the 'First Walpurgis Night', then the celebrations at the Imperial Court, and last the classical-cosmic universal feast, 'The Classical Walpurgis Night'. The devils' revelry (written in 1800–1801) is built on the massive foundations of a grandiose landscape, rugged, chaotic. On they go up the Blocksberg, and the looming mountain plays host to the witches and their grotesque goings-on. But just as we see the bloody phantom of Gretchen, and a climax seems imminent, the action breaks off, and we finish with something quite out of place: the elf-play 'The Golden Wedding of Oberon and Titania' (explicitly called an 'intermezzo'). In contrast, the 'Emperor's Masked Ball', which closely resembles a blown-up Weimar masquerade, dallies and trifles its way through over nine hundred lines[18] of masked allegory. Faust's 'Boy Guide', symbolising poetry, only has to snap his fingers, and little flames dart all over the place; but suddenly the Emperor's false beard catches fire, and his disguise—Great Pan—goes up in flames. But the Emperor is fascinated by this harmless show, while the more serious magic involving the paper-money fails to satisfy him. He now wants to see Helen and Paris. Faust, having duly conjured them up, falls in love with the ghost: 'liking, love, worship, madness'.[19] Thereupon, in the next act, he is led into the vast phantasmagoria of 'The Classical Walpurgis Night', throughout which he seeks for Helen. We lose him from sight in the illusive twists and turns that become increasingly independent, reaching a climax in a universal feast of the elements, and issuing forth into a song of praise to cosmic Eros, a kind of symphonic orchestration of Pausanias's speech in the *Symposium*: 'And everywhere Fire doth overrun,/ So let Eros reign, by whom all was begun!'[20] It is as though the conclusions of the second, third and fifth acts of *Faust* II were in competition to see which can enact the highest celebration of Being. It we may call the solutions of the second and fifth acts Eros and Agape respectively, that of the third act is Dionysus. For after Faust's marriage with Helen and Euphorion's death fall, followed by his mother's return to the depths whence she came, the classical Chorus, singing a bacchic hymn, dissolves back into the elements; fluttering away into the breezes, running away into the streams, passing into the vines, where they too will be plundered when the wine-harvest comes, and offered up to the drunken, riotous god.

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[17] XII, 495.

[18] Over 900 lines (5065–5986), V, 304–331.

SEMI-REALITY

These three conclusions from *Faust* show with particular force that whenever Goethe most elevates the value of beauty, a shading of reality becomes necessary. Now Goethe was none the less convinced that the world's highest truth is its revealed beauty; indeed, in Italy the contemplation of beauty became the path to personal truth. 'I am now living here in a peace and clarity which I had forgotten were possible. My attempt

[19] F, l. 6500 (V, 347).

[20] F, ll. 8478f. (V, 409).

to train myself in seeing and understanding things just as they are, my determination to keep a lucid eye, my complete rejection of all pretention . . .; I am quietly becoming extremely happy.'[21] In the Sistine: 'I could only look and marvel.'[22] So sublime is his experience that it seems even to demand theological language: 'The gleam of the greatest works of art no longer dazzles me; now I can wander in contemplation, in true critical understanding . . . I have no words to express the quiet and wakeful bliss with which I am now beginning to look at works of art.'[23] It is a 'rebirth',[24] a 'self-construction from within':[25] 'I am growing from within.'[26] And this is also an encounter with God, and therefore certain truth. The 'great works of art were at the same time sublime works of Nature, produced by men in accordance with true and natural laws. Everything arbitrary and fanciful collapses; but here Necessity, God, is at work'.[27] Nor is this power something to be comprehended, for it is an 'infinite, inscrutable Presence'; however we may 'separate, distinguish, order', 'in the end we return to contemplation, enjoyment, admiration'.[28] 'How infinite the world can become; we need only abide by finite things.'[29] It is, once again, the 'holy-open mystery', that of the form which 'ultimately comprehends all'.[30] Nevertheless, what Goethe so admires is only an immanent transcendence which has been alienated from its true transcendent origin and use. Long before, Goethe had entered the 'sanctuary' of the Dresden Art Gallery, as one 'enters the house of God'; but 'the ornaments of the entire temple, objects of so much worship . . . seemed only set out for holy artistic purposes'.[31] But that is why the truest beauty gives the dreamy impression of a semi-reality, an impression so perfectly conveyed by the Helen act.

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[21] IJ, 1, 10.11.1786 (XI, 146).
[22] IJ, 1, 22.11.1786 (XI, 152).
[23] IJ 3, 25.12.1787 (XI, 492–493).
[24] IJ 1, 20.12.1786 (XI, 163).
[25] IJ 2, 15.3.1787 (XI, 226).
[26] IJ 3, 16.6.1787 (XI, 386).
[27] IJ 3, 6.9.1787 (XI, 436).
[28] IJ 3, entry for April (XI, 600–601); *cf.* XIII, 180.
[29] IJ 3, 22.9.1787 (XI, 440).
[30] IJ 3, 11.4.1787 (XI, 598).
[31] TF 2, 8 (X, 352).

Faust receives the magic key to admit him to the realm of the 'Mothers'; there he will find Helen and bring her back up. The 'Mothers' can be reached only 'through wilderness and desert ways', through 'ever empty distance' beyond all forms; by fleeing the entire sphere of existence and disappearing into the 'unfettered realms of images'. The Mothers 'see thee not; designs alone they see'.[32] And these germs of reality are neither wholly ideal nor wholly real; they live, not in the eternal Mind, but in the undefined potentiality of Nature or matter. There, past and future manifestations can communicate outside time, Faust can enter into communication with Helen, and a marriage between Germania and Hellas can be born. The aura of ghostly unreality surrounding Helen and her attendants, as they enter the Palace of Menelaus, is an achievement unprecedented in the poetic imagination. Even Hölderlin's 'holy islands' are more real.

The same semi-reality occupies the central position in Goethe's theory of colours; it produces a half-light which, in weaving to and fro between light and darkness, is solely responsible for the phenomenon of colour, the only medium suitable for human sight and existence. But because the colours produced by this half-light have an objective-subjective validity, their appearance is not less a reality, even though they derive only from a screening of actual light itself. Goethe returns to this theme so often that it must have deep-seated existential roots. The most powerful expression of all comes in *Faust*; a tremendous roaring sound intimates the approach of the sun; and then it rises, and the human being is dazzled:

A sea of Fire devours us, and what fire!
The glow of this embrace, 'tis love or hate?
Delight and pain in alternation dire,
We look perforce to Earth, before too late . . .

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[32] F, ll. 338–341.

Then he catches sight of the water-fall and the rainbow:

> Ah, but what glory, springing from the storm,
> O'erarching bow of many hues, so fixed in change . . .
> By colourful reflection know we life.[33]

Thus the sun—God—is a devouring *coincidentia oppositorum*; only the 'colourful reflection' is called glorious. This shrouding factor Goethe even projected back into the characteristic Italian clarity he had loved so much. 'The most beautiful aspect is that even at a short distance the vivid colours are softened by the tone of the air . . . It is a lustre, and at the same time an overall harmony, a scaling, such as we in the north have no conception of . . . It is the same as with happiness and wisdom; their archetypal images hover before us, and we scarcely touch the hem of their dress.'[34] We are all familiar with Goethe's favourite Nature-symbols: the mist (especially in the youthful lyric poetry) and the cloud, depicted in its insubstantial changefulness in 'Howard's Revered Memory';[35] the poet 'from airy worlds doth receive/ O'erpassing matter mild/ That he may clasp it, feel and form it'.[36] In 'Entoptical Colours', optical experiments generating a 'most lovely play of colours' are applied to man's intermediate existence, and here too, in the weight of the final line, the word 'glorious' occurs:

> Mirror here and mirror there
> Double setting, finely chosen;
> In between and in the twilight
> Crystalline the earth-dweller . . .
> Let the Macrocosm in his
> Eerie habitants rejoice!
> 'Tis the little worlds so dear
> Hold the really glorious things.[37]

We find the same idea in the *Divan* ('The Reunion'): God's creation divides initially into the pure duality of Light and Darkness, and then dawn 'unfolds from the gloom a ringing scale of colours', here symbolising the unifying power of eros.[38] Another variation (in 'A lofty Image') has the rainbow as a connecting bridge between Helios and Iris (the weeping rain-cloud); Iris brightens, but the god still cannot reach her.[39] The flight of the human spirit cannot bear the glare of the absolute; man 'Hath in likeness and image enough'.[40] He should 'perceive Life's colours bountiful/ As through fine crape, in pale yet pleasing guise', as the worldly-wise Princess puts it in *Tasso*.[41]

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[33] F V, 294.
[34] IJ 2, 24.11.1787 (XI, 478–479).
[35] P I, 524f.
[36] 'Nota bene', P I, 526.
[37] P I, 527.

Within the context of 'The Gospel of Beauty'[42] this modifying process becomes particulary important in dealing with 'every sort of ugliness', which, since it 'cannot simply be driven from the world, has in the realm of art to be banished to the lowly sphere of the ridiculous'.[43] Significantly, the Nibelungen, which both fascinated and exasperated Goethe, represented, in a pejorative sense, something 'truly heathen', 'even if they did conform with church ritual; for Homer was always in contact with the Divine, but in these people there is not the slightest reflection of Heaven'.[44] This is confirmed in the Diaries: 'What is so terrible about the *Song of the Nibelungen* is that it does not reflect a further dimension; the heroes just exist through and for themselves, like so many beings of bronze.'[45] The profound words in the letter to Riemer have the same meaning: 'The Idea is closely connected with illusion; this is its image, so to speak, its painter. It is, indeed, none other than the Idea itself, clothed in a minimum of concrete form.'[46] Such radiant illusion both provides a transition to the finite world and invests finite things with their religious aura. Clearly glory is no more for Goethe than a facet of beauty itself, namely its power to illuminate, and is therefore less independent than in ancient thought, to say nothing of Christianity. Glory attends the visible form while it lasts, and attends eros likewise. For both have their twilight, as Goethe knew too well.

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[38] D III, 364–365.

[39] D III, 362–363.

[40] P I, 509.

[41] T 2, 1 (VI, 238).

[42] TF 2, 8 (X, 346).

[43] *Ibid.* 348.

[44] Conversation 837 (XXII, 521).

[45] Supplementary Vol. 2, 293.

[46] 20.2.1809 (XXII, 538).

FRAGMENT AND RENUNCIATION

But the boundary we have fixed is in fact crossed by all the great works and figures of the old poet. According to the experience and philosophy of the young Goethe, 'the moment' represents contact with, attainment of, eternity, whereas in the middle period the fulfilment given by beauty is a semi-reality. With the passage of time, with the fading of beauty, the nothingness and fragmentary nature of existence come to the fore, and so too the need for renunciation. We recall, at the very beginning, the violent crisis of *Werther*, the hero's 'disgust at life'.[47] 'The principal reason, however, for this nausea is the return of love'; the diasappointment that something which ought, by virtue of its inner meaning, to be unique can really be repeated. Add to this 'that our only prospect is to prolong our lives in a sluggish bourgeois existence devoid of spirituality',[48] and why not simply put an end to it all? Among the reminiscences of Strassburg we read: 'Real life often becomes so lack-lustre that it takes the varnish of fiction to restore its shine'.[49] But varnish cannot deceive for ever; Goethe had a mordant sense for the transitoriness and eventual disappointment of even the greatest experiences. At the end of his tour of Sicily comes a surprising retrospect: 'We had really seen nothing but utterly futile attempts by the human race to preserve itself against the violence of Nature, the spiteful malice of Time, and the wrath of her own internecine conflicts.'[50] In Girgenti he stood before 'ruins wearing away inexorably to nothing.'[51] In

[47] TF 3, 17 (X, 631).

[48] *Ibid.* 632, 637.

[49] TF 2, 9 (X, 402).

[50] IJ 2 (XI, 343).

[51] *Ibid.* 304.

Rome, even quite recent apartment buildings were disintegrating, like the families living in them; 'indeed, even that which had been kept fresh and alive seemed to be sickening, as though gnawed at in secret by some worm. For how could any earthly thing hope to remain standing without actual physical strength, relying only on moral and religious props?'[52] In *Electoral Affinities* the author considers whether human memory can provide a kind of perpetuity, but concludes that 'even this image, this second existence, sooner or later flickers and goes out'.[53] In the same novel, the lord has maintained his estates on behalf of a son 'who takes no interest . . . Who is there now to enjoy my buildings, my park, my gardens?' Ottilie, reflecting on what she herself has done, is aghast; it seems as though everything 'is really quite useless'.[54] The poet of the Marienbad 'Elegy' knows that even the memory of love fades; that the beloved keeps an eternal place in the heart is an idea now forgotten.[55] In such moments we sense all the conviction of Goethe's experience of life, and a change for the better, any progress, seems absurd. 'The more I see of the world, the less I can hope that mankind will ever become a wise, sensible and happy conglomeration.'[56] Witness the teaching of *Hermann and Dorothea*:

> Yet then too set thou but lightly thy fleeting foot on
> the ground,
> For double the pain that doth lurk awaiting misfortune
> new.
> The Day be holy to thee; but life shouldst thou not
> esteem higher
> Than any other good, and all goods treacherous are.[57]

So too Wilhelm Meister finds that ill fortune and sickness 'have robbed him of the pure feeling of youth, and given him in return a sense for the transitoriness, the fragmentariness of our existence'.[58] The logical ending to his life will be the way of 'renunciation'; so too for the Major in *Electorial Affinities*, Eugenia in *The Natural Daughter*, Nausicäa in the planned tragedy,[59] Epimetheus in *Pandora*; already in *Tasso* the hero is told that many things 'but through restraint/ And through renunciation may be ours',[60] and compare Faust's 'Thou must forego! Forego must thou!'[61] It is a lesson Goethe sought to inculcate into himself when still young, in 'Ilmenau': 'He who would truly lead others must be able to forego much.'[62] In his old age, he summed up his life in the same terms: 'Our physical and social life alike, our customs, habits, worldly wisdom, philosophy, religion, and indeed so many chance events, all cry out to us: we should renounce. So much of our most intimate nature we are unwilling to develop for the sake of the outside world; what we need from outside, to complete our inner selves, we are denied, while we have imposed on us so much that is alien and irksome.' We 'find ourselves forced gradually and then totally to abandon our personality. And . . . the more bitter the cup, the sweeter our face must be, for the slightest grimace on our part might offend the casual observer . . . We try everything out, and in the end we cry that all is useless . . . Few indeed are those who, seeing the inevitability of this unbearable feeling, and seeking to avoid any partial resignation, resign themselves once and for all, for ever'[63]—or who, like St Roch, are capable of a 'limitless surrender to God's holy will', a 'complete submission'.[64] While the word 'resignation' has a classical-Stoic ring, 'surrender' recalls a Christian theme; between the two comes Spinoza's *amor dei*, so important to Goethe presumably precisely because of this mediating role. In the end, neither the Stoic nor the Christian solution could suffice by itself, and thus the last images of this search all cluster round that middle Goethe designated symbolically with the name of Spinoza, representing, like Leone Ebreo and Philo, a pre-Christian Jewish tradition in a classical context. Let us look at three such final images—*Pandora*, *Electoral Affinities* and *Years of Wandering*—and conclude with a few words on Goethe and the Bible.

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[52] IJ 3, entry for Dec. (XI, 505).
[53] EA 2, 2 (IX, 146).
[54] EA 2, 10 (IX, 212–213).
[55] P I, 478.
[56] IJ 2, 17.5.1787 (XI, 352).
[57] III, 242.

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[58] MA 4, 17 (VII, 286).

[59] IJ 2, 8.5.1787 (XI, 325–328).

[60] T 2, 1 (VI, 245).

[61] F, l.1549 (V, 189).

[62] P I, 364.

[63] TF 4, 16 (X, 731–732).

[64] XII, 493.

Pandora, a fragment of a festival drama whose full title—certainly intended as a parallel to 'The Return of Christ'—was to have been 'The Return of Pandora', is a draft, of eschatological (and thereby unclassical) conception, whose theme is the possible integration of man. Pan-dora ('All-Gifts' of the gods), who should have brought healing to a humanity sunk in dichotomy and polarity, has, at least on her first visit, brought nothing but airy illusions, 'ideals' of integration: 'Shapes godly flitting to and fro, a charming company'.[65] Here Prometheus is no longer the youthful ideal; demoted to that half of the human person interested only in action and technological acheivements, he has no use for Pandora's eschatological ideas. It is Epimetheus, the 'Spirit of deep reflection' and his brother's counterpole, who adopts and indeed marries the 'god-sent image of bliss'; and the wonderful fullness of love grants him 'the moment that eternally life's fable sweet will be'.[66] There are twin daughters; and when Pandora departs she takes with her to heaven Elpore, Hope, who appears only in dreams, promising not earthly goods (they are for everyone to seize for himself), but the eternal aspect of love; meanwhile Epimeleia—'she who needs love'—her anxious and remorseful sister, remains behind with her father Epimetheus. Prometheus's son Phileros, who represents Passion (in every form: as Eros, as the sting of longing, as jealousy, wrath, revenge, desperation), falls in love with Epimeleia, then pursues her for what he thinks is infidelity; like Werther, he hurls himself to his death in the water, and Epimeleia ends herself in fire. The four Titans symbolise the four parts of man's divided soul, and the fathers represent the rent between action and contemplation, while the earthly children are the dichotomy of passion and longing (in analogy to the horses in the *Phaedrus*). While these latter are overtaken by wild tragedy, Pandora—the possibility of integration—remains tragically unattainable, in a distant realm beyond the fathers. Prometheus and Epimetheus join in a hymn of praise to her which forms the centre-piece and includes those famous elegiac verses 'The fullness of bliss I have known!' and 'He who to part from his beauty condemned'. Here Epimetheus-Goethe has become the spokesman for the whole of unwhole mankind, expressing eros as longing for the once physically present and now unattainable ideal. We may compare Faust's love for the ultimately remote and ghostly figure of Helen; this more unappeasable eros is of tragic dimensions far exceeding its platonic-classical counterpart. Pandora cannot be Beatrice, for she lacks every Christian trait; she is the personified absence of the wholeness sought with such erotic desperation. This is not far from the tragic pathos of the Michelangelo and Shakespeare sonnets, but more hopeless still. While Goethe could not seriously attempt to bring Pandora back to the world, he does offer the glimpse of a solution in Eos, goddess of the 'dawn' and the iridiscent half-light. For she

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[65] VI, 410.

[66] VI, 411.

> Strong doth gently make the eyes infirm of mortal
>   men,
> That by the shaft of Helios my race be blinded not,
> For it was born illuminated things to see, not Light.[67]

Through her miracles she brings back Phileros and Epimeleia to the world, but she herself represents a mere promise, and at the end does no more than open a prospect, full of signs of miraculous grace from above. Here, unusually, the name of the gods is given its due weight:

> Ye nether dwellers feel what should be wished;
> But what might given be know they above.
> Ye Titans, mighty are your deeds; yet
> Beauty and eternal Goodness can be reached
> By guidance of the gods alone; this let them grant.[68]

[67] VI, 439.

[68] VI, 443.

Pandora is followed immediately by *Electoral Affinities* (1808); in the one case we have a metaphysical and in the other an ethical anthropology. Thus the novel is concerned with a rule for life, essentially based on renunciation in love, by which man may be purified and achieve the degree of integration possible on earth. There are two pairs—Edward and Ottilia, and Charlotte and the Major—but three stages of development. The lowest is that of Edward, who in his heart cannot renounce and is forced to do so, in a tragic and brutal fashion, by destiny; in the middle come the figures of renunciation, the Major and Charlotte; and the highest stage is represented by Ottilia, who does not need to think in terms of renunciation at all. Renunciation is already present in the selflessness of her nature and her love.

The marriage between Edward and Charlotte is characterised by the ethical attitudes we are shown at the beginning. 'Edward was not wont to deny himself anything',[69] whereas Charlotte 'was always anxious to be aware of herself, to rule herself';[70] when both are exposed to a violent temptation their reactions are, accordingly, in complete contrast. Edward, an 'extreme version of Werther' who in the end kills not himself but the woman he loves, cannot 'overcome himself'.[71] He simply 'cannot completely renounce [happiness with Ottilia]',[72] and soon 'knows no measure. The awareness of being in love, of being loved, drives him into the Infinite'.[73] 'He did not resist, for he could not.'[74] He does leave the house and seek his death in war; but is still accompanied wherever he goes by his unconquerable passion, and remains 'self-centered', just as 'pre-occupied with himself' as ever.[75] He proposes to his friend that they exchange women: 'I know you love Charlotte, and she deserves it . . . take her from my hand!

[69] 1, 2 (IX, 16).
[70] 1, 12 (IX, 9).
[71] 1, 16 (IX, 117).
[72] 2, 12 (IX, 228).
[73] 1, 13 (IX, 101).
[74] 2, 16 (IX, 254).
[75] 1, 14 (IX, 106); 2, 6 (IX, 177).

bring me Ottilia!'[76] But there is an insuperable obstacle, the institution of marriage, seen as the 'foundation of any moral society', the 'alpha and omega of all culture'. 'This bond may never be dissolved, for it brings so much happiness that all individual unhappiness counts for nothing beside it . . . But from time to time people are assailed by impatience, and fancy themselves unhappy. This moment once safely past, they will be grateful for their happiness again . . . Are we not also wedded to our conscience?'[77] Let the *moment* of eros go past—here Goethe is admonishing himself, renouncing his own nature; this injunction is in fact put in the mouth of Middler, but the course of events shows that he meant it seriously. And that applies also to the Sermon on the Mount, with its insistence that adultery takes place primarily in the heart; Charlotte's child, conceived while both husband and wife bore within them the image of their pasion, has to die.[78] By virtue of the self-denial she and the Major have accepted, the selflessness she has achieved, Charlotte feels she can agree to the divorce Edward desires;[79] however, it is not for these three to unravel destiny, but for Ottilia, 'the glorious child'.[80]

Her love for Edward is as human and total as his; after his departure 'she felt an infinite emptiness',[81] and she 'had not renounced Edward'.[82] She does not need to; nevertheless, she feels 'that to become complete her love must become completely selfless . . . She wished only for the welfare of her friend, believing herself capable of renouncing him, even of never seeing him again, if she only knew that he was happy. Yet she was quite resolved in her mind never to belong to another'.[83] As Edward sees the entire meaning of love in the passion and direct experience of the moment, which cannot bring such fulfilment, Ottilia, because she is the one who does

[76] 2, 12 (IX, 231).
[77] 1, 9 (IX, 78).
[78] 1, 11 (IX, 94); 2, 13 (IX, 239).
[79] 2, 14 (IX, 243).
[80] 2, 14 (IX, 244).
[81] 1, 17 (IX, 126).
[82] 1, 17 (IX, 126).
[83] 2, 9 (IX, 205).

not renounce, is forced to sacrifice herself. She becomes, in the original sense, *sacer*, 'a consecrated person who, with a terrible evil threatening herself and others, has only one recourse: to devote herself to the Holy Presence that with its invisible arms can alone protect us against the dreadful and relentless powers'.[84] 'I am resolved . . . I will atone for it.'[85] She vows complete silence and almost unbroken fasting.[86] Thus, like Beatrice, she transcends, and eros is integrated into a perspective which incorporates death as a necessary but superseded element. This leads to the graveyard, and how it may accord with the deeper meaning implicit in the transcendence of death. The point is not a 'self-willed obstinate perpetuation of our personality, attachments and circumstances',[87] a narrow attitude Charlotte too had refused to accept; it is rather the mystery of yielding the self to an all-embracing and incomprehensible grace, and finding, in and through this abandonment of the self, total refuge in eternity. Here, for Goethe, is the meeting-point of Spinoza and Christianity, in all their true power; and the pagan element—Homer and the pre-Platonic philosophers, the search for goodness for its own sake and without selfish concern for the 'I'—is also satisfied.

From this, and not from a flat pantheistic interpretation, derives Goethe's fascination for Spinoza, as is made very clear by his own statements.[88] We find the same, in light-hearted vein, at the end of *The West-Eastern Divan*, in the image of the paradisiac harem; one member resembles Suleika 'to a hair', but 'Our self-love disappeared'.[89] In 'Higher and

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[84] 2, 15 (IX, 251).

[85] 2, 14 (IX, 246).

[86] 2, 17 (IX, 259–261).

[87] 2, 1 (IX, 239).

[88] TF, 4, 16; after the great passage on renunciation, the need to relinquish our personality and embrace a permanent and total resignation, he goes on to speak of Spinoza, and adds: 'But one must not think that I could have subscribed altogether to his writings or been a blind disciple' (X, 731–733). *Cf.* TF 3, 14: 'What particularly fascinated me about him [Spinoza] was the boundless selflessness which shines out in every sentence' (X, 684).

[89] D III, 394.

Highest', 'man in his complacency/ His self would gladly rescued see/ Up above as here below'; instead, his scattered five senses are brought together, in Plotinian fashion, to exist as one (ἑνιαίως), and thus enabled to penetrate 'more easily the eternal circles' themselves interpenetrated 'by Word of God in pure and vital wise'; until, finally, 'Mid contemplation of eternal love/ We float away, we pass away'.[90] This 'selflessness' is one of the essential elements of Goethe's religion (the other is reverence), and can result in a refined version of the Christian tradition, as when the young architect's painting depicts Ottilia as a saint,[91] with a 'trace of life in heaven',[92] and when in the living picture of the Christmas crib she 'becomes like the very Mother of God',[93] her 'form, gestures, manner and expression surpassing anything a painter has ever depicted'. The scene appears first in nocturnal illumination, the only light being that from the child, a 'picture of night and lowliness'; and then in full illumination, a 'picture of day and splendour'.[94] In Ottilia's final destiny the two pictures merge; after the accident with the boat, her earthly light diminishes constantly, for suffering love has become her life; but once she is dead, miracles occur at her coffin,[95] and soon Edward, the man who has failed, is called to come through purifying fire and share her death and transfiguration. We are reminded of '*una poenitentium*, once called Gretchen', and her Faust. Edward's last words express humility: 'To imitate the inimitable is a fearful task. Well I feel, dear friend, how everything, even martyrdom, requires genius.'[96]

Years of Wandering never reached a final form, and instead there are isolated peaks: the idea of wandering and renunciation, the cosmic mysticism of Aunt Macaria, but above all the religious climax of the doctrine of *paideia*: the idea of threefold reverence. 'My temperament inclined by nature to reverence', the author says at the beginning of his autobiography.[97] The concluding fresco describing the threefold reverence reflects great artistic ability. Reverence is in the first place not something innate: 'It is with reluctance that man adopts reverence, or rather he never in fact adopts it; it is a higher faculty that has to be implanted in his nature, and which evolves only in particularly favoured people, who have for this reason always been considered saints, indeed, gods'[98] (saints, indeed, but not gods; it is gods one has reverence for). Religion begins where fear ends, in reverence: 1. reverence for that which is above us, which is 'ethnic religion' ('pagan', and 'one such is the Israelite religion as well');[99] 2. reverence 'for that which is like us', which is 'philosophical' religion ('for the philosopher whose position is in the middle has to bring down to himself everything higher, and bring up everything lower; only in this middle situation does he earn the name of a sage' and 'live, in the cosmic sense, in pure truth');[100] 3. reverence for that which is below us, in 'the Christian religion', which is 'an ultimate achievement in human potential and destiny. It would have been possible simply to abandon the earth below on the grounds of a higher birth-place; instead to accept lowliness and humility, scorn and contempt, disgrace and misery, suffering and death, as divine, learning to respect even sin and crime, to love them, because they do not hinder but help the Holy—here was an achievement beyond our imagination. True, traces thereof appear throughout history, but a trace is not a destination; and once such a destination is reached mankind can never return to its previous state, and we may well think that, having once appeared, the Christian religion can never disappear'. Every word of this statement merits deep consideration: the unity of all religions and the exceptional status of Christianity, in that its essential movement is downwards, out of reverence for suffering and by virtue of the selflessness of *agape*; the definitiveness, supreme significance, of this movement, in which the first two religions become subordinated elements. The final fruit of all three is 'reverence before oneself', an idea which goes beyond Pascal's 'self-hatred' and even Spinozistic self-forgetting; it expresses a new, reverential attitude towards oneself 'without being dragged down to an unworthy state by arrogance and self-centredness'. The three religions are ordered in terms of the Creed and the Trinity: 'The first Article (Father) is ethnic', 'the second (Son) is Christian', and the third (Spirit) teaches the community of the saints, 'of those who are in the highest degree good and wise', thus completing the philosophical religion.[101]

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[90] D III, 397–398.
[91] EA 2, 3 (IX, 148–149).
[92] EA 2, 2 (IX, 144).
[93] EA 2, 6 (IX, 181).
[94] EA 2, 6 (IX, 181–182).
[95] EA 2, 18 (IX, 270).
[96] EA 2, 18 (IX, 274).

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[97] TF 1, 2 (X, 56).

[98] MW 2, 1 (VIII, 170–171).

[99] *Ibid.* 174.

[100] *Ibid.* 171.

Here Varro's three religions provide no more than the spring-board for a far richer conception.[102] The first (mythical) and third (political) merge to form Goethe's ethnic religion; the second, philosophical ('physical') religion—the one Varro clearly favoured, according to Augustine—is, with great insight, criticised for its levelling tendency; while Goethe's third religion, which has no place in Varro's work, represents a height of achievement that must be maintained, an 'ultimate religion'.[103] Nevertheless, Goethe did in the end reject the deification of the earthly Jesus; he is numbered among the wise men and prophets, no more than 'a true philosopher',[104] and only in this (classical) sense a 'godly man'. His Passion is revered too highly to permit images of crucifixion, which, so Goethe, are a 'degrading and tasteless insult to the Sublime'; the 'shrine of pain' remains veiled. That is a specious idea, but leaves the human dimensions of the cross equally obscured; in this light it counts for little that Goethe excludes the Jews from his 'sphere of education', for having opposed the founder of the highest religion.[105]

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[101] *Ibid.* 171 172.

[102] See Vol. IV, pp. 216–219 (Eng. tr.).

[103] MW 2, 1 (VIII, 179).

[104] *Ibid.* 176–178.

[105] MW 3, 11 (VIII, 434).

Goethe's attitude to the *Bible* displays all the advantages and disadvantages of liberalism. God resolved to become man; 'we must therefore at all costs avoid making him into God again'.[106] Through his descent God showed himself as love, proved his glory; what need then for a reascent? 'In this knowledge I look to die, that I possess no happiness and may hope for no bliss, save that vouchsafed to me by God's eternal love, which shared in the misery of the world and itself became miserable, that the misery of the world might share in its glory.'[107] All the sayings of the Bible, and especially all the dogmas later made from them by the various Christian sects, the Pastor of *** measures against this descending love. Love is the eternal content, and human symbols (such as the sacraments) are its vessels and means of communication, but only so long as they continue to speak to human 'feelings' and thus remain effective; for 'to require someone to feel what he cannot feel is tyrannical nonsense'.[108] 'We believe that the eternal Love became man that we might be granted our heart's desire':[109] the freedom of love, proclaimed, by the 'beloved John', as the essence of all.

These early utterances (1773) contain the seeds of almost all the later statements. First there is a tendency to interpret the 'positive' elements of the revelation of Scripture in 'natural' terms,[110] rejecting more and more sharply orthodox Protestant supernaturalism[111] and legalistic moralism.[112]

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[106] 'The Pastor's Letter', etc., IV, 129.

[107] *Ibid.* 128.

[108] *Ibid.* 135.

[109] *Ibid.* 137.

[110] TF 2, 8 (X, 367).

[111] Thus he rejects a doctrine of original sin, since thereby man may no longer try to achieve (or contribute to) his own salvation; hence Goethe's leanings towards 'Pelagianism' (TF 3, 15 (X, 694–695, 698)); *cf.* the 'key words' of Faust: 'The man who strives in right endeavour,/ Him can we redeem!/ And if the Love that dwells above/ Hath entered into him . . .' (V, 520), and the observation to Eckermann, 21.12.1831 (XXIV, 504). Similarly, he condemns any education that seeks to instil Christian suffering without encouraging the child to learn a healthy self-defence (TF 1, 2 (X, 76–79)); and disapproves of the numerous motifs involving suffering to be found in Christian art (IJ 1, 19.10.1786; XI, 113f.).

[112] TF 1, 1 (X, 50).

Goethe would like a restoration of the sacramental cosmos in the Catholic sense, and explains why at length;[113] he regrets the demise of the monasteries under the Protestants,[114] and dislikes the churches' naked interiors.[115] And after all, the Reformation was soon back where it started:

> The Reformation had its feast,
> The priests they lost their grand estates,
> And priests became the new inmates.[116]

When, in 1817, there was a plan to celebrate the Reformation, Goethe thought it a very bad idea; he would have preferred a commemoration of the great Battle of Leipzig, to be celebrated by all the Germans together, and not again each other. It would be 'a pure celebration of humanity'; everyone, 'not just Christians, but Mohammedans and pagans' 'would come to church in unity' and share their spiritual experience' 'at the same divine service'.[117]

But the Catholicism he found in Italy proved equally far from the ideal. Rome—even if her liturgies have some merit[118]—is a Babel;[119] all that business has nothing to do with Christ. Christ would be as certain to be crucified in the Christian world of today as he was in Israel; that is a view Goethe persistently maintains.[120] For 'With Cross and Christ there's such a fuss/ They've got no time for him and his cross'.[121]

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[113] TF 2, 7 (X, 318–24): 'The sacraments are the highest features of religion, the tangible symbol of an extraordinary divine favour and grace.' Goethe would not part with any of the seven, not even the Confession, which had been so spoiled for him as a boy.

[114] EA 2, 15 (IX, 249).

[115] EA 2, 2 (IX, 142).

[116] 'The Eternal Jew', IV, 240–241.

[117] XIV, 263.

[118] 'I enjoyed . . . everything enjoyable about the ritual [in St Peter's], and the rest I have quietly reflected on. Nothing made what people call an "impact" on me or really impressed me, but I did admire everything', for it all unfolds 'with great taste and perfect dignity' (IJ 3, 22.3.1788 (XI, 584)).

[119] XI, 427.

[120] When Marie Antoinette rode through Strassburg, all the sick and lame were kept well out of view; and Goethe composed 'a little French poem, comparing the coming of Christ, who seemed to walk the earth especially for the sick and lame, with the arrival of the Queen, who shunned these unfortunates' (TF 2, 9 (X, 400–401)). And in 'The Eternal Jew' he

As a boy, Goethe already loved the Bible and would never part with it; he paraphrased large portions of the Old Testament according to his ideas, making many shrewd and open-minded observations.[122] The Bible was and remained for him a mighty testimony to human belief; and only from such belief could any culturally fruitful and edifying experience spring. A much-quoted Goethean saying is that 'the real, single and profoundest issue in the history of the world and mankind, overriding all others, is and will always be the conflict between unbelief and belief'. Less often do we find the vital sequel: 'All epochs in which belief in whatever form reigns shine forth, uplift the heart, and bear fruit for their own and later times. All those, however, in which unbelief in whatever form claims its wretched victory may swagger in a

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depicts Christ wandering through the modern Germany, both Catholic and Protestant, and 'recognised by no one'; in a planned sequel to the epic there was to have been a second crucifixion, an idea that came to Goethe in Italy, for 'my soul was overcome by the feeling that every trace of the original Christianity has vanished', leaving merely 'a distorted baroque paganism' (IJ 1, XI, 133–134). And when Goethe saw the Pope celebrating mass and 'gesticulating and mumbling like a common priest', he was struck by the thought: 'What would he [Christ] say . . . if he walked in and found his image on earth humming and swaying to and fro?' (139). In Sicily: 'For eighteen hundred years now Christianity has based its possessions, splendour and solemn festivities on the misery of its initial founders and most fervent believers' (IJ 2 (XI, 260)). 'If he came, they would crucify him a second time', the old man still says, to Eckermann (12.3.1828 (XXIV, 690)), for, as the Pastor's early letter says: 'Nowhere was Christ's teaching more suppressed than in the Christian Church' (IV, 136).

[121] IV, 238.

[122] TF 1, 4 (X, 143–158: the earliest history of mankind, the original polytheism of the Patriarchal age with its wealth of material available for fiction, the conflict between natural and revealed religion, his wish to turn the Joseph story into a novel). TF 2, 7 (X, 303–304, on the struggles between orthodox and liberal exegetes at the University of Leipzig: 'I was in the enlightened camp . . . although I could not conceal to myself that this admirably rational way of interpreting those scriptures would in the end mean the loss of their poetic as well as prophetic content'). In the 'Notes' on the *Divan* there is a lengthy essay on Israel in the desert (III, 504–523).

brief illusion of brilliance, but vanish from posterity. For who cares to toil away investigating something unfruitful?'[123] This is expressed with particular force in the *Theory of Colours*, even superstition being preferred to unbelief: 'Superstition occurs in energetic, great-hearted and positive natures; it is part of their inheritance. Unbelief, on the other hand, characterises weak, small-minded and unadventurous races that seem closed in on themselves. The former delight in marvels . . . but the sublime only destroys a generation that is important.'[124]

Goethe's best endeavours went into achieving a 'universal piety' (in contrast to the limitations of a domestic piety);[125] what this would mean for a Christian is made clear in the charming sketches devoted to St Philip Neri. Here the essence is that during the days of Luther someone in Rome conceived a great ideal: 'That the spiritual, indeed, the holy domain be united with the worldly; that the heavenly be brought into the secular, and in this way a different reformation become possible. For here and nowhere else is the key that will open the cells of Papacy, and restore to a free world its god.'[126] This idea, taken up again in an extended draft,[127] is accompanied by another: that Neri sought 'to conquer' the imperious traits of a natural leader, 'to disguise the shining brilliance of his being through self-denial, abstention, philanthropy, humility and abasement. The thought that by appearing a fool in the eyes of the world he might truly gain insight into God and things divine, and train himself in this knowledge, this became the inspiration of all his endeavours . . . St. Bernard's maxim *spernere mundum, spernere . . . se sperni* seems quite to have taken hold of him'.[128] It is the same motif that later becomes associated with Ottilia: the veiling of the image of glory in that of lowliness. Such selflessness represents a considerable advance upon the opaque mysticism

[123] D III, 504–505.

[124] TC XVI, 362.

[125] MW 2, 8 (VIII, 264).

[126] IJ 2, 26.5.1787 (XI, 357).

[127] XI, 509–523.

[128] XI, 513–514.

of 'The Thoughts of a Fair Soul', with its neo-Platonic conception (also important in Bruno and Shaftesbury) that the soul must purify itself, and then it will see 'the eternal sun reflected' in its pure mirror.[129] Such thinking distorts the simple and direct relationship to God.

To conclude: what does *glory* mean to Goethe? In 1805 he translated extracts from Plotinus and embodied them in Macaria's archive,[130] their theme being the beauty of the Spirit and the Idea in sensual form, the search for the One above through the ideal realm. But Goethe goes on to warn against escapism into a world of ideas, if this means losing touch with the true sense of the outer and inner experience. Only in the form of polarity can the mystery of the world appear. Thus eros is not primarily a soaring-up to God; its impulse is to seek the opposite pole, within the world and between the sexes. We are close to Feuerbach, and the vision of divine light in human relationships. We should also remember that in the theory of colours, for example, 'polarity' and limitation are related to the concept of 'decision', and thus have a positive meaning we do not find in Plotinus. In an ethical context, a decision in favour of one thing can certainly mean the rejection of another; indeed, this is for Goethe a condition of any total affirmation.

> In the end there is no choice,
> A poet many things must hate;
> All that's ugly, all that's gross,
> May not of its beauty prate.[131]

Yet such hatred is always—in Goethe's cosmos as in Bruno's—balanced within an overall polarity:

> Within the confines of his narrow being
> Man needeth twofold feeling, love and hate;
> Doth need not day alone, but also night.[132]

And so the end does end thus: 'Be it as it may, life is good';[133] 'Howe'er it may be,/ It was so fair!'.[134]

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[129] MA 6 (VII, 388).

[130] VIII, 495–497 (marked by inverted commas).

[131] 'Elements', D III, 292.

[132] T 4, 2 (VI, 281).

[133] P II, 50.

[134] F V, 500.

Since its author is Goethe, this statement cannot be purely contemplative; it presupposes action, involvement, and is, indeed, an act of decision and choice. 'One can tell who really loves the truth: he who will always find and value what is good.'[135] Reflecting on Plato's maxim that beauty is hardest, he writes: 'Art is concerned with what is hard and good. When something difficult appears easy, we catch a glimpse of the impossible.'[136] Thus the ethical dimension affords a bridge to a philosophy summed up in the *Divan*: 'For all is glorious before God; is he not the Best?'[137] Such glory founded on goodness is reflected in Nature, man's universal home; here Goethe's experience of Being is that of the ancients and Hölderlin. The famous poem describing the 'event' of the rose contrasts a miracle of Nature with the prosaic restlessness of science:

They say thou art the fairest thing of all,
The flower-realm hath named thee as its queen;
Should aught gainsay, in confidence serene
The miracle of thy event to witness call.
For seeing and believing meet in thee,
No fancy art thou, but art wholly true;
Yet tirelessly men toil for knowledge new,
The law and cause, the why and how to see.[138]

Thus the antecedent Presence of highest excellence is a condition of human activity, determining the paths it will take. Man's role is to enact the lot that befalls him; otherwise he will bring neither himself nor the world to fruition:

Whate'er thou dost in her, the world's already made,
The Lord of Creation his plan hath laid.
Thy die is cast, thou must follow the strains,
The way is begun, but the journey remains.
For cares and grief will change it no whit,
From the saddle they'll shake thee where thou dost
sit.[139]

[135] MW VIII, 315.

[136] EA 2, 5 (IX, 176).

[137] D III, 379.

[138] P II, 54.

[139] MW VIII, 8. They become caught up in the 'velociferous' force (MW VIII, 312).

You Goethe's communication with the 'Lord of Creation' is not through prayer,[140] but only through reverence and the consciousness that the All is ultimately good. In this way the name 'Nature' (behind which is God) can be replaced by the word 'Being', expressing an all-embracing totality: 'In Being let thee rest rejoiced! Eternal is Being . . . .'[141] Thus prayer, all-pervasive in Hölderlin's Christian vision of the ancient world, gives way to Goethean reverence; to a sense of existence in which dependence is not the unquestioned experience of a created being, but the function of a cosmic polarity. The yearning of eros and *ephesis* is not for the *hen*, but for the derivative *physis* (Plotinus's *Nous-Psyche*); the shining images of the world remain ciphers whose meaning ends in themselves. The great conclusions to *Faust* are successive final hieroglyphs. Glory passes from God to the cosmos, to what Heidegger will call Being.

f. The Final Period

1. THE LEGACY OF GOETHE

To the extent that the overweening character of the Hegelian *Geist* (spirit) and its left-wing off-shoots fail to determine the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these latter are influenced by the classical and the Goethean view of nature. These two paths remain clearly distinct even today. In the philosophy of spirit, the spirit comprehends nature as the object which serves it and which stands over against it, which it commands with exact scientific and technical means, applying it to its own ends. In the philosophy of Nature, on the other hand, the universe, in whatever way it is understood, is wholly comprehensive and is the landscape in which the Absolute encounters the spirit, and which makes it high-spirited, reverent and creative, setting a limit to its lust for technological supremacy. But in accordance with Goethe's final lack of certainty, this universe retains its ambiguity even after him. It does not point to a transcendent unity beyond itself, as we find in Plotinus, for Christianity now occupies this space, which metaphysics accordingly avoids. It possesses its own unity, and thus its own glory, in itself, and the eros, which does not seek to penetrate beyond it, remains an anti-Christian 'cosmogonic eros'. But while man's gaze, stripped of its transfiguring longing, turns realistically to 'the world as it is', he is greeted by the fearful 'ruminating horror' into whose abysmal depths the young Goethe, following Bruno and Böhme, had peered. It is to this world that, if he can summon the strength, he must sing his *Song of Yes and Amen* with Zarathustra. Whatever he later feels in his 'old heart' of the 'seafarer's desire' for 'new shores' must be bent back into the 'nuptial ring of rings—the ring of (eternal) recurrence'.[1]

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[140] *Cf.* the poem prefacing *Years of Wandering, ibid.*

[141] 'Legacy', P I, 514.

Because the classical substance increasingly recedes, both metaphysical projects—the philosophies of Nature and of spirit—must increasingly live from Christian material, despite their contradiction and rejection of it. Thus the concealed theological *a priori* element, which was characteristic of the late-classical and early medieval metaphysics of glory, now becomes manifestly Christian. In the philosophy of spirit, this takes the form of an adapted Augustinianism in Descartes, Malebranche, Rosmini; an adapted Paulinism in Kant; an adapted Johanninism in Hegel, Schelling and the later Fichte. In this way Christianity is positively reabsorbed. In the philosophy of Nature, on the other hand, there now occurs a *spoliato Aegyptiorum* in reverse: in the clear denial of Christian transcendence, the raiment of glory, which it reserves for the God of love and of the Cross, is removed from these and cast upon the members of the universe, or of that *physis* which Heidegger calls Being. But a universal philosophy which, precisely because it is anti-Christian, cannot and will not eschew religious pathos, must necessarily return via the path of 'metaphysics' to the mythic origins. The young Nietzsche in his *Birth of Tragedy* quite consciously completes a process begun by Creuzer, Görres and Lasaulx, and Heidegger will bracket off the whole 'metaphysical' tradition from Hegel to Aristotle and Plato in order to arrive at the Presocratics: 'Heraclitus and Parmenides were not yet "philosophers"'.[2]

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[1] Nietzsche: *Zarathustra* 3, *Die sieben Siegel*, ed. Schlechta 2, 475.

In the wake of this renewal of myth we first find the broad, dense seam which is the innerworldly humanism of *Bildung* (educational development), almost wholly devoid of religion, for which Goethe in his *Wilhelm Meister* and in many of his short stories, even partly in *Faust*, provides the model. This begins to celebrate its 'scientific' triumphs in the incipient study of psychology, of sociology and evolutionary history, while it overruns the field of art with its novel of bourgeois realism: from Scott to Dickens, Thackeray, Galsworthy, Freytag and Keller to Fontane and Thomas Mann, from Balzac *via* Stendhal and Flaubert to Zola, from Pushkin to Tolstoy and Hamsun, in all of whom we see man within a milieu, an environment, nature, world, and how he grows into or out of these, both involving and extricating himself. Neither that heaven-directed gaze of foolishness prevails here, nor the thrust of a transcendent eros. The former is submerged in a kind of human wisdom, the wisdom of *Bildung*, while the latter becomes an interpersonal problem of love. Even the demonic and heroic grandeur of the metaphysical eros (from Shakespeare's sonnets and Kleist's *Penthesilea*) is taken captive by psycho-(patho)logical analysis, as it develops from Kierkegaard *via* Dostoievsky to Freud. What is initiated by Stendhal in his *Tentation de Saint Antoine*, continued by Rimbaud and Lautréamont and taken to excess by Thomas Mann and more recent writers, is the dissolution of an immanent anthropology which in its enclosed dialectic must increasingly have recourse to forms of perversity in order to awaken any kind of tension.

Beyond this level there comes a more ambitious one, viz. the attempt to resuscitate authentic myth through a power that is analogous to the prophetic inspiration of Classicism or of the Bible. Schelling and Görres yield to myth as such a newly secure place within the domain of speculative thought. In *Faust*, Goethe retrieved a certain mythic dimension for 'modern man', as did Mozart and Byron in *Don Juan* and

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[2] 'Was ist das—die Philosophie?', 1955, p. 24.

Nietzsche in *Thus spoke Zarathustra*. By employing the resources of all the arts, Wagner creates a phantasmagoria which (in *The Twilight of the Gods*) occupies the existential position where myth, although still exercising a certain fascination, has by now degenerated to the extent of being merely symbolic of the human. This was the lesson Wagner learnt from Berlioz, and which Richard Strauss and Hoffmansthal (himself deeply influenced by Freud), not to mention Thomas Mann, were in their turn to learn from him. The entire Homeric world of the gods is resurrected in Spitteler's marvellous *Olympian Spring*, which however is in truth an Olympian Autumn, because all the glory of the gods is played out against the sombre backdrop of a heartless, materialistic *anankê* as the ultimate authority of the world. Despite all the distance that pathos lends, it is the same attempt to heighten the glory of beauty of form against a barren background that we find in Schopenhauer, who coloured so decisively the universal feeling of his century, particularly among the bourgeois levels of society, and who has influenced even the heroic pessimism of the twentieth century via E. von Hartmann and Wagner. Wagner provides the stage scenery for the brief myth of the Third Reich, while Hartmann celebrates his resurrection first in the early and then in the later Scheler. But nowhere does the material of the classical myths attain more than a purely psychological penetration (Giraudoux, Hofmannsthal, Anouilh). Rilke's 'angel' and his 'Orpheus' (to which we shall later return) evoke something of the mythic, whereas George's new God, incarnate in Maximin, had a merely comic effect upon the majority of his contemporaries. And what should one say about Mombert's attempt to raise humanity as a whole to the level of a mythic figure in a comprehensive universe whose divine powers become man? Or what of Klage's contradictory attempt to proclaim simultaneously the kingdom of myth ('soul') and its refutation ('spirit')? Challenging cries resound on all sides (Ernst Michel: *Der Weg zum Mythos. Zur Wiedergeburt der Kunst aus dem Geiste der Religion*, 1919),[3] but in exterior terms the closed culture is lacking that which is essential for its realisation, and inwardly the pre-Christian religion is irretrievable. Of course, many classical myths retain symbolic expressivity, indeed take on a greater expressivity where the fate of modern mankind takes on a more tragic form—the myths of Prometheus and Dionysius,[4] for instance—but the titanic or divine figures themselves are not thereby reanimated. They remain at best 'names' with which we designate our universal fate, well aware all the while that this in its occurrence transcends all names. But we remain unsure how far such names are mere labels for that which proclaims itself, or how far we ourselves are responsible for falsifying by our defective mode of reception what presents itself. It is on account of this uncertainty (unknown to the Ancients) that the myths are rendered ambiguous by their transformation into 'cyphers'. Jasper's 'cyphers' correspond exactly to the place at which Goethe drew an invisible dividing line between Nature and God, which denies entrance to the eros.

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[3] Michel's book, which repays attention even today, situates the modern

The final stage of the metaphysics of the 'classical tradition', which began with Nicolas of Cusa and Ficino and reached its apogee with Bruno, Hölderlin and Goethe, can be resolved into three distinct strands. The comprehensive universe can, according to Goethe in his writings on natural science, appear to be wholly a 'biological universe'. This seems to erect a bridge between the classical theophanous world-view and the modern scientific world-view. Or the comprehensive universe succumbs to the universal experience and creative power of the artist in the manner of Prometheus or Ganymede as *Weltinnenraum* ('world-inner-space') by virtue of the identity between the microcosm and the macrocosm. Or, finally, the comprehensive principle is no longer conceived as universe (since this classical concept is no longer possible after the advent of Christianity and of the philosophy of spirit), nor is it seen as absolute inwardness and subjectivity (since this loses

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period from the middle ages onwards in its relationship to myth. Mombert appears to him as a promise of the return of myth's creative power.

[4] I have used these as the guidelines to explain the modern course of history in my *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele* (1937–39).

its location within the comprehensive principle), but becomes in Heidegger the phenomenon of Being, which, only masked by the *logos* metaphysics of subjectivity, always was contained in the classical notion of *physis*. Thus Heidegger becomes the executor of that epoch-making enterprise which we have dubbed here 'the classical tradition'.

2. THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AND *WELTINNENRAUM*

The first two ways of grasping the comprehensive principle, which are interrelated, transport one 'to that sea whose flood engenders intensified forms', but which however gives them shape only as sea, that is to say causes them to solidify from flux, only to dissolve them into movement again. These forms were 'intensified' for Goethe in the double sense that, being of a spiritual nature, they were themselves an intensification of life and second that each form, the mental and the submental, possessed not only a horizontal but also a vertical polarity—such as colour, for example—as their formal principle. This principle of intensification will have a parallel effect in extreme Idealism too, but will find unexpected confirmation in the philosophy of Nature through the evolution theory of empirical biology. When this appeared, there already existed a well-established, religious view of nature, such as we find in Goethean form in the work of Oken and Carus, according to which the Macrocosm of 'Divine Being'[5] divides 'harmoniously' into a dimension of rationality and one of nature, and man as Microcosm strives on the basis both of empiricism and of speculation towards a participation in the act of the Divine World-Thought within nature through ideas, types and homologies. Even as Evolutionism took on an all-dominating aspect in the second half of the century, it left its mark on the existing model of the world, which in Fechner's work (*Zend-Avesta*, 1851: *Die Tagesansicht gegenüber der Nachtansicht*, 1879) is a mystical

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[5] C. G. Carus, 'Welches sind die Anforderungen an eine künftige Bearbeitung der Naturwissenschaften?', 1822, in: *Biologie der Goethezeit*, ed. Ad. Meyer-Abich, 1949, p. 209; *cf.* p. 210; 'Nature and one's own ego, as equal emanations of the highest essence'.

God-Nature organism of Christian inspiration, closer to the stoic-neoplatonic kind than to that of Leibniz and Spinoza, and which in the anti-Christian monist melée of the close of the century still offered the basis of a naive, enthusiastic and religious aesthetics of the world (Bruno Wille, Wilhelm Bölsche).

With Bergson, universal Biologism first seriously enters the field of metaphysics: the tension between living being in its actual duration (*durée réelle*) and intellectual conceptual thinking becomes central. From the directly aesthetic, marvelling and participatory beholding of the leaping fountain of life (*Évolution Créatrice*), thought deepens to that reflexion which runs counter to the stream of life (again we sense the proximity of Plotinus' ἐπιστροφή), to that exertion of thought which precisely guarantees its own authenticity and which was to influence so deeply Péguy[6] and finally take the form of the mysticism of the *Deux Sources* with its Christian emphasis.

For Georg Simmel, the religious philosopher of life and theoretician of art, Being is likewise life which in an inner transcendence overflows its own boundaries and confronts that which is objective and form-like, significant and of valid worth, whereby however, it encounters its own limits. The retreating sea leaves the rejected images stranded on the beach, that which was objectified loses its vitality and validity, and a new educational process begins. Objectification originally signifies, as in Bergson, the stream of life in reflex upon itself, that 'first miracle of the spirit' which, 'while remaining in its own unity, opposes itself to itself'.[7] But in Simmel we find buoyant hope: 'Perhaps the next step for philosophy will be the conquest of a new concept of life, with which the latter is removed from those contraries, raised to a perspective from which the flow of the real and of the ideal, and the constancy of both, extinguish the absolute character of their opposition and are glimpsed as the revelatory modes of an as yet inexpressible unity of metaphysical life.'[8]

[6] *Cf.* Vol. III of this work, pp. 415ff., 465ff. (Eng. tr.).

[7] 'Philosophische Kultur', 1911, p. 211.

[8] 'Zur Philosophie der Kunst', 1922, p. 145.

But how sad such promises sound, how forced the Monists' fever of inspiration, how thin even the young Bergson's harmonious voice, and how defenceless all this is against the ever-possible, indeed already actual, transformation of this 'day-side' (*Tagseite*) into the 'night-side' (*Nachtseite*) of unadulterated mechanism and materialism! Their inspirations are no less illusory and forced; this merely proves that mankind needs some kind of Absolute, no matter which, which he can worship and in the service of which he can expend himself. NIETZSCHE shows this most clearly when he dissolves all objective truth in favour of the 'lies' of which life has need, and then proceeds to sing the praises of this annihilated Being as the 'eternal affirmation of Being . . ., untarnished by any negation', consecrating himself to its 'voiceless beauty': 'I shall be your affirmation for all eternity, for I love you, O Eternity!'[9] This 'Eternity' is the 'eternal recurrence of the identical'; it is the sea 'whose flood engenders intensified forms' in a sense which goes far beyond that intended by Goethe. It becomes the intensification of life beyond man to the 'superman', to the new, untrodden shores.[10] In his earliest work, Nietzsche drew attention to the insuperable and fatal contradiction by pointing to Dionysian music, which in concrete terms is that of the Schopenhauerian-Wagnerian kind: for Dionysian Greek tragedy too had proscribed 'the myths of the Homeric world which dance ahead of us' for the sake of its 'deeper scrutiny of the world' and laid an embargo on them: Zeus now trembles at the threatening rebellion of the Titan, and the latter himself is now pressed by the Dionysian artist into the service of the new deity. 'The Dionysian truth appropriates the whole realm of myth as the symbolism of its own occurrences'. When they are bathed in music, the myths, which were near to extinction, blossom once again in all their colour.[11] Nietzsche later had no more need of the pessimistic music of intoxication, and the mercilessly Mediterranean *Carmen* sufficed. The principle of Dionysius, as Zagreus torn to pieces, even as 'the crucified one' ('against the crucified one') was music enough for him to harmonise out every contradiction. It was finally the contradiction of a man who wants to break out of the suffocating atmosphere of Platonic-Christian metaphysics into what is greater than that which has ever been thought,[12] and who thus finds himself in the circles of Being from which there is no escape: 'The eternal recurrence even of the very least detail! That was my weariness and disgust at all existence!'[13] But where are the most extreme happiness and the most extreme disgust held together, if not in that 'ego' of Nietzsche-Zarathustra, which has become his *fatum*? He portrays himself as the 'man of fate' in the manic *Ecce Homo*, whose true form has finally been presented to us by Erich F. Podach.[14] 'God or a buffoon—that is what I cannot choose, that is what I am'.[15]

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[9] 'Ruhm und Ewigkeit', Schlechta, II, pp. 1262–1263; *cf. Zarathustra* 3, 'Der Genesende': 'The ring of Being remains eternally true to itself' (II, p. 463).

[10] Conclusion of the 'Morgenröte', I, p. 1279.

[11] 'Die Geburt der Tragödie', I, pp. 62–63.

Goethe's polarity was erotic—almost still in the great classical sense. The glory of the world became visible to him in the beloved ('Is it possible? Star of stars, do I press you again to my heart!') Nietzsche's polarity between God and the buffoon is wholly solipsistic; women are worth nothing and men only in so far as they are potential disciples. In Goethe the Plotinian *Hen* remains untouched, but Nietzsche replaces it with his monstrous Subject which extends from the universe in its entirety to nothingness. It is wholly self-sufficient; Zarathustra knows of no possible fidelity other than that to himself, to his own highest idea. If he shudders, then it is at the sight of his own abysmal depths.

RILKE's experience of the world is not so different from that of Nietzsche. He knows the same early, life-long and passionate rejection of Christianity, this time of Catholicism, the same time-conditioned, biologistic-evolutionistic foundation (later strengthened for Rilke by his involvement with psychoanalysis), the same fundamental imperative to remain faithful to the earth, the same searching (nevertheless) for an overcoming of the current world condition along utopian, eschatologically productive lines—in Rilke's case to the extent of demanding of God (who does not as yet exist) the attempt to create productively 'Him who will finally hear us'[16]—the same comprehensive unity of all contradictions on the basis of a prophetic soul's creative powers of transformation. Orpheus stands beside Zarathustra. The successive attachments of Lou Andreas-Salomé, who was first Nietzsche's lover and then, from 1897, partner to the twenty-two-year-old Rilke, and who was later also to be the friend of Freud, form a highly significant garland that weaves its way through time. Innumerable women will follow Lou and his wife Clara, but they are no more than occasions for awakening anew that 'intransitive' love which has no 'Thou', for which Rilke strives, which he demands from others and which in all his works is the object of his teaching. This is no longer the eros of Goethe, who grasped the glory of the world each time in a real Thou, nor is it Nietzsche's 'love at a distance' which lacks virtually all eros. This is, rather, a Platonic Love, transcendent in its inner structure, which comes alight at a Thou who is physically present, but immediately transcends this and expends itself in the Infinite (and therefore comes most easily to those who suffer abandonment, compelling them to infidelity). And yet it does not reach towards a Platonic Sun of the Good, and still less towards a Christian God, but aims into the emptiness of space which perhaps ultimately, in the last days, warmed and animated by this love, will give birth to a deity. In the early *Tuscan Diary*, a vision of the convergence of the absolute artist with the new God is hinted at in an almost speculative manner.[17] But what is rigorously excluded, both in the human domain and in the relationship with God, is the element of dialogue, the sense of community which takes lovers captive, the fidelity. It is from within a monological love that Rilke enquires into the human capacity for being whole.

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[12] On this, *cf.* the excellent analyses of Eugen Biser, *'Gott ist tot', Nietzsches Destruktion des christlichen Bewusstseins*, 1962, esp. pp. 49ff., where he speaks of the Anselmian 'concept' of God (as the 'boundary value of all conceivable contents of thought') with reference to Nietzsche.

[13] II, p. 465.

[14] *Friedrich Nietzsches Werke des Zusammenbruchs*, Rothe 1961, p. 321.

[15] *Ibid.*

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[16] R. M. Rilke, Sämtliche Werke (Insel Verlag, 1955f.), I, p. 767. More detailed analyses in: *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele*, Vol. 3 (1939), pp. 193–315.

The first reply is harmony: the harmonisation of the world with the poet's soul. His work begins with a flood of highly atmospheric poems among which, after the journeys to Russia with Lou, the *Book of Hours* appears as the first genuine fruit. These prayers are inspired by the Russia of an instinctive, mystical piety, though one which can turn instantly into atheism (*The Letter of the Young Worker*); they are a monologue in dialogical form, and they cover a post-Christian core with classical and Christian clothing. The God who is addressed in prayer is the God of the future who inherits the world and above all the great tradition of art, and who yet already has a covert presence in the form of poverty, in the extraordinary final poems on poverty. 'For poverty is a great radiance from within': this line focuses the full meaning that 'glory' can possess for Rilke in the *Book of Hours*. The poor man, the man without resources, the cast-out leper is the place where kenotically the divine dwells, in irreconcilable opposition to the 'great cities' which parade and 'glitter like whores', to the kingdom of wealth, of technology and of progress ('and call their snail's tracks progress'). But the poor, who are 'laden with all the dirt and abused like things going rotten in the sun',[18] are not in Rilke's view something that can be bypassed, but are the painful, real indication of that 'poverty in spirit' which the poet needs in order to achieve his cosmic work. Thus the book closes with the praise of Saint Francis, who was poor in body and in spirit. But although Rilke brushes very closely against the mystery that lies at the heart of Christianity, his attempt at poverty does not set him free for his fellow man, but invariably only for himself in his work, which surrounds his narcissistic centre like a hall of mirrors and to which he sacrifices all his amorous relationships when they have outlived their use. It is in his work that the intransitive and objectless eros for which Rilke strives and which he forever glorifies, finds its purpose and its limit. What Rilke really intends and can conceive and achieve, though not without contradiction, could be solved only in Christianity's Trinitarian love, though this can no longer be viewed as a variant of eros.

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[17] 'Tagebücher der Frühzeit' (Insel 1942). 'Nothing will exist apart from him [the artist-God] . . . When he makes a gesture, he will create and hurl into infinity many millions of worlds . . . I do not know how other distant worlds will mature to become gods. But for us, art is the way . . . Thus I feel that we are the ancestors of a god' (pp. 139–140).

[18] I, p. 364.

The poet transforms the crude world into a permanent, eternal form, and it is Rilke's middle period, culminating in the *New Poems*, which delivers this transformation. It is a Platonism from below, as by the power of the human heart the poet distils the idea from the most sensuous forms of experience. The idea is both the substance and the poet himself. It becomes visible where the emotional content and resonances coincide fully with the form. It is striking to what extent Rilke, the atheist and anti-Christian, persistently transforms Christian themes in this way, incorporating them into his artistic universe. They are a decisive part of the experience of mankind, and as a reality which people experience in depth, they are material that he must use. He feels them, examines them, from within: precisely where faith is demanded of the Christian, Rilke applies feeling and through feeling experiences the entire, transcendent, otherworldly dimension of mystery: the Cross, Death and Resurrection. The early *Visions of Christ*[19] claims to participate in the whole transcendent existence of Christ through sharing Christ's feelings (revealing, of course, his despairing failure), the *Life of Mary* and numerous other Marian poems express empathy—through the medium of a tender human eroticism—with her mysterious radiance, and even the most mature cycles make use of themes from the Old and New Testaments and from church history.[20] Almost everywhere it is a question of gingerly exploring the Christian mystery, which pervades life and death, in its entirety, but not in a manner substantially different from the exploration of the transcendent myths of antiquity, those three great myths, for instance, at the end of *New Poems*: 'Orpheus, Euridice, Hermes', 'Alcestes' and the 'Birth of Venus'. The many 'kenotic' poems of the middle period also attain a mythic force; these derive from experiences of poverty of every kind: infancy, madness, loneliness, autumn, the poverty of beggers, of the blind, drunkards, suicides, widows, orphans, idiots, dwarves, lepers (all these in the cycle *The Voices* and *Going Blind*, *The Blind Man*, *The Leper King*), the poverty of corpses in the *Morgue* and in the *Washing of Corpses*. These and other images form a fluid motif that runs through all else, even the radiant and blissful pieces. Even here praise and lament are everywhere inseparable, more than in the highest achievements of antiquity (because there the plain and ordinary was not the object of praise), and in a manner which, albeit concealed, is thoroughly Christian.

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[19] III, pp. 129–169; also 'Glaubensbekenntnis' and 'Christus am Kreuz', III, pp. 489–493.

[20] Especially emphatic: in the 'Buch der Bilder': 'Das Abendmahl'

Rilke's work ends with the two mythical cycles of the *Duino Elegies* (1912–22), which embrace the angel myth, and *Sonnets to Orpheus* (1922). In the former it is the note of lament, in the latter that of praise, which predominates. Both explore the potential for wholeness of temporal, finite existence. The *Elegies* envisage a domain of angels as totalities enclosed within themselves and as containing a world. These are the ὅλα of Neoplatonism, the intelligences of Dionysius and Dante, and angels as Thomas Aquinas understood them

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(p. 388), in the 'Neue Gedichte': 'Der Ölbaum-Garten' (I, p. 492), the erotic poem about Magdalen, 'pietà' (I, p. 494), 'Gott im Mittelalter' (I, p. 502), in a grotesque manner the 'Auferstehung' (I, p. 524; also, in the 'Buch der Bilder', 'Das jüngste Gericht', which appears to the monk at prayer as an extreme disaster that must be warded off at all costs: I, pp. 415f.; and the later 'Jüngste Gericht', I, p. 575); in 'Der neuen Gedichte anderer Teil' once again a number of Old Testament themes (I, pp. 562–571) and a crude 'Kreuzigung' (I, p. 581), while 'Der Auferstandene' (I, p. 582) carries through the theme of the intransitive eros. Further Christian scenes are to be found in the 'Späte Gedichte': 'Himmelfahrt Mariä' (II, p. 46), 'Auferweckung des Lazarus' (II, p. 49), 'Emmaus' (II, p. 55), 'Christi Höllenfahrt' (II, p. 57), 'Worte des Herrn an Johannes auf Patmos' (II, p. 108), etc.

to be, that is beings endowed by God with such intuition that they have no need of external experience and only figuratively hold converse among themselves and with men, and finally they are the windowless monads of Leibniz. The 'narcissism' of Rilke's angels therefore can be exactly located in the Western tradition but, in contrast to that tradition, we do not find here the golden chain of emanations, hierarchies, and sendings-forth which, despite all, their domain discloses to the world of men, allowing them to partake in the heavenly totality.

> Who, if I cried, would hear me among the angelic
> orders? And even if one of them suddenly
> pressed me against his heart, I should fade in the
>   strength of his
> stronger existence. For Beauty's nothing
> but beginning of Terror we're still just able to bear,
> and why we admire it so, is because it serenely
> disdains to destroy us. Each single angel is terrible.
> And so I keep down my heart, and swallow the
>   callnote
> of depth-dark sobbing . . .[21]

Because the descending chain is broken, longing as eros can no longer reach upwards. Therefore there is no longer any continuity between the beautiful and the glorious, which can now appear only as the terrifying. Man's sobbing heart possesses the measure of the beautiful, which is that which the heart in its own transcendence can attain by feeling; the 'terrifying' dwells in a place beyond beauty which is not to be mastered. This is the same divide which already Goethe draws, softly but surely, between God and Nature. The angels represent God and, being unattainable, they are also unreal. They are only an X which in the appearance of dialogue serve to delimit the other innerworldly totality which remains. The summoning call of the First Elegy has become a warding-off gesture in the Seventh:

>   Don't think that I'm wooing!
> Angel, even if I were, you'd never come! For my call

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[21] 1. Elegie, I, p. 685.

> is always full of 'Away'! Against such a powerful
> current you cannot advance.[22]

The *eros* from below has won a decisive advantage over the *agape* from above: *it* now becomes the Absolute against which a revelation from beyond the divide cannot prevail. So there only remains the innerworldly information: 'the flowing', 'the night filled with world-space', 'the uninterrupted message which forms itself from the silence', which also sounds forth from 'the youthful dead' and contains the 'task' to be 'accomplished'.[23] When with regard to this 'accomplishment' the poet immediately points to the lovers, whose 'framed feeling' is far from being 'immortal enough', then he thinks at once of those who have been forsaken, who 'lovingly free themselves from the beloved', because otherwise the lovers merely conceal 'with each other their fate'. The Second Elegy therefore urges upon them the 'circumspection of human gestures', because the experience of 'pure duration' in mutual love happens only once and in the case of its repetition obeys the universal law of 'evanescence' ('like the heat from hot food . . . that which is ours rises from us'). But the end of the Elegy fixes our gaze on the 'strip of fruit-land between river and stone' for, although our heart outstrips us as with the Greeks, we can no longer form from our transcendence 'calming images', 'divine bodies' in which 'it achieves a greater moderation'. Our self-transcendence is open-ended, and we must cling to 'our contained human reality'. The Third Elegy shows how questionable even this is in view of the (biological-psychoanalytical) depths and complexities of the blood: the youth sinks, not to be protected by a woman's love, 'into the crevasses . . . where the terror lay', and if he cannot love the 'terrifying' angels, then he loves this deeper 'horror', which 'smiles' at him.[24] With such an underground the performance on the earth's stage—in the Fourth Elegy—can only become semi-radiant, semi-annulled. Once again our gaze is led beyond what is offered in the present, and 'angels and puppets' (Kleist's puppet play), the superhuman, must appear on the scene to pull the strings of its unresistant toy and thus to create a whole. A dying child who *prior* to life contained within itself death's entirety, yet without being 'angry', would be an image of the same kind of unity. The Fifth Elegy (the last to be written), 'Les Saltimbanques', introduces a second image: the skilled gymnastic figures of voyagers, which now even point to an eschatological image of hope, in which not only the forsaken ones, those estranged from interpersonal love, 'correspond' to the summoning call, but human love—contrary to Rilke's general thesis—could also find its fulfilment:

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[22] 7. Elegie, I, p. 713.

[23] I, pp. 686–687.

[24] I, p. 695.

> Angel!: suppose there's a place we know nothing
>   about, and there,
> on some indescribable carpet, lovers showed all that
>   here
> they're for ever unable to manage—their daring
> lofty figures of heart-flight,
> their towers of pleasure, their ladders,
> long since, where ground never was, just quiveringly
> propped by each other,—suppose they *could* manage it
>   there,
> before the spectators ringed round, the countless
>   unmurmuring dead.[25]

And—in the Sixth Elegy—the hero similarly 'can'; for him, the mystery of his provenance, previously so threatening, displays itself as his election from afar to the company of the saved on the grounds that he avoids the seductive temptation towards reflexion, towards self-reflected achievement, and is 'in advance of his own smile',[26] 'a raging flood' (like Hölderlin's Titan river, the Rhine). And now, in the Seventh Elegy, there is the poet who, following the child, the voyagers, the lovers and the hero, 'launches himself' like the lark 'into the serene sky', who is 'the nature of his cry' and is the 'summons-steps up to the dreamed temple of the future':[27] he in the power of his assent dares to praise the world as glorious: 'Being here is glorious'. In this act of praise he gathers also 'the nights', all the shameful, indeed all the terribly 'suppurative' forms of love, and gathers them by transforming them into an 'inner' reality. At this point of culmination the poet dares even to thrown down the gauntlet to the technological world and to analyse in his own way its destruction of the valid and 'prayed' images of the past and its transformation into 'imageless activity' and mere 'tensive propulsion':

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[25] I, p. 705.
[26] I, p. 706.
[27] I, p. 709.

> Though this
> shall not confuse *us*, shall rather confirm us in keeping
> still recognisable form . . .
> Angel,
> I'll show it to *you* as well—*there!* Angel, in your gaze
> it shall stand redeemed at last,[28]

Here Rilke is praising human achievement—'pillars, pylons, the Sphinx', the cathedrals—in the same way that Hölderlin praised Hellas, salvaging it in his poetry. Indeed, Rilke wants to know that these achievements are preserved in the angel's vision, although he is uncertain as to whether this vision actually exists. He flees for a moment to the angels from the menacing, iconoclastic, modern world. But what an inner menace there is in the seemingly insignificant 'not yet': 'the form not yet known'! The Ninth Elegy fleshes out the achievement of the Seventh in an almost prescriptive manner: 'being here is a great deal' and yet it is only that which is eternally unique, evanescent. And yet, the transient, if it is to endure, has need of 'us who are most transient', in the trusting belief that 'we, the most fleeting of beings, possess something salvific' and this once again in the face of the rise of a technology which suppresses 'things that can be experienced', substituting for them 'an imageless activity'. 'Familiar death' as 'the secret stratagem of this silent earth' heightens to an infinite degree the intensity of the moment: for the lovers, but even more for the poet, who can 'transform' the intensified moment 'in the invisible heart'.[29] Between these two, the Eighth Elegy, written in the spirit of Bergson and of the philosophy of life, casts again a shadow over the human manner of existence which, instead of going with the stream of life and existence unreflectingly and open 'to the Open' as do animals and embryos, turns in upon itself and thus becomes spirit at the price of its own alienation. What Thomas describes as *reflexio* in *conversio ad phantasma* in a way that both limits and sets free, becomes for Rilke the tragedy of existence, and yet is not thought through deeply enough, for being distinct from something is the prerequisite for proximity to it. Secretly, however, he does not intend something philosophical here, but something that is of a theological nature: even the animals have 'remembrance, as if that for which one strives, was once closer to hand',[30] as if the creature had sunk from some primal state, forced into a place of hopelessness, and now, in its futility, trustingly believes in some salvific force in the possession of man. This is the great hope of Creation as we find it in Romans 8. The Orpheus Sonnets also note the discordance of the cries of children within the harmony of the whole ('order the cries, singing god!'). They will ask in gnostic language when the 'Demiurge' will 'ravish' the heart 'that belongs eternally to the gods'; they will lament that we are 'blades' that continually wound the 'serene and divided' God, that we 'have a grievance' and are 'parasitical teachers' for those uncertain beings who 'achieve eternal childhood'. The Tenth Elegy completes the whole by raising the lament first to the ontic level and then to the mythic; it is only in suffering that man and the world attain their glory:

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[28] I, p. 712.
[29] I, pp. 718–719.

May a new-found splendour appear
in my streaming face! May inconspicuous Weeping
flower![31]

when the lover 'gave himself more freely' into the 'loosened hair' of the night, for his sufferings are 'place, habitation, encampment, ground, dwelling'. Bypassing the mendacious marketplace of the modern world, we can, by following a lament 'of glorious origin', attain to the mythic landscape of lament of actual being in which indeed 'the spring of joy' flows. Finally there is a moonlike landscape beyond life and death, static and soundless, in some way comparable to the mothers' landscape in *Faust* and, as backdrop to the world, infinitely disenchanting.

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[30] I, p. 715.
[31] I, p. 721.

Rilke conceived the plan for the Elegies in 1912 and moulded the fragments later (until 1922) in keeping with the initial project. Even by the year 1918 he had grown beyond their world and had begun to devote himself to his last poems of Orphic vision and form,[32] in which existence, with all its depths, becomes glory for him through the power of his art. The words of the dying man are intended as a testament: 'Do not forget, my love: life is glory'.[33] But in the last instance it becomes glory only for the one who possesses the creative power to make it such: 'When I was inspired, then it was by the glorious spirit which does not permit itself to be summoned, not even to be pleaded with. My art possesses a glory which is beyond that of David's house . . . How must God had been with me that I can say such a thing!'[34]

In the *Sonnets to Orpheus*, the lament can move only 'in the sphere of praise',[35] but this space, which is the 'world-inner-space',[36] the 'double domain' between life and death, between soul and world—as that wonderful poem of breath in the spirit of Goethe's systole and diastole[37] expresses it[38]—now receives a mythic definition which is prior to all that occurs within it:

> For this is Orpheus. His metamorphosis
> in this one and in that. We should not take
> thought about other names. Once and for all,

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[32] Eudo C. Masson, *R. M. Rilke. Sein Leben und sein Werk* (1946), pp. 96f., 100–103.

[33] J. R. von Salis, *Rilkes Schweizer Jahre* (1936), p. 202.

[34] Letter to Magda von Hattingberg, 18.2.1914: *Briefwechsel mit Benvenuta* (1954), p. 105.

[35] 1st part. 8th sonnet, I, p. 735.

[36] 'Es winkt zu Fühlung', II, p. 93.

[37] 'Im Atemholen sind zweierlei Gnaden: / Die Luft einziehen, sich ihrer entladen . . .', III, p. 290.

[38] 2,1.

it's Orpheus when there's song.[39]

'Song is existence', 'a floating in God',[40] but in a God scattered and poured out through all the world who, divided among lions and cliffs, trees and birds, sings on, and whose transcendental harmony precisely in this state of fragmentation drowns out the hatred of destruction:

You that could sound until the end, though, immortal
  accorder,
seized by the scorn-maddened Maenads' intemperate
  throng,
wholly outsounded their cries when in musical order
soared from the swarm of deformers your formative
  song.

Indeed, man hears the harmony of the world and gives utterance to it poetically only because of the prior mystery of the fragmented God.

O you god that has vanished! You infinite track!
Only because dismembering hatred dispersed you
are we hearers today and a mouth which else Nature
  would lack.[41]

It is Heidegger who will soon explain how this *a priori* element, this comprehensive principle is to be conceived. Rilke asks in his own way 'What surges up from grounds, serene and sacred?'[42] The Christ-mystery—as the *a priori* of Creation precisely in its kenotic aspect—will have lent him colour, without his wishing it, as it does in the *Book of Hours*,[43] but he will experience it only as an innerworldly secret in the diametrical mirror relationship of world and soul, which is fulfilled when 'clear, easeful Narcissus penetrated'[44] the mirrors. In Heidegger's language this is the bifurcation of Being (*Sein*) and (human) existence (*Dasein*). The first ten pieces of the second series develop this interdependence almost didactically, using both real and mythic images: the breathing in and out of world-space, the mirror and the losses of the earth captured in it, mirrors as vessels which select and dissipate, the imaginary unicorn, realised in the actuality of being loved, the muscle of a flower's calyx as successful pure openness to the light, the rose 'enfolding with layer upon layer a body that is nothing but radiance', i.e. an essential form which reveals only the 'glory' of Being which is beyond all form, the cut flowers in their 'relation' to the girl's hands which broke them off, the children in play who together become real beneath the 'glorious arcs' of the balls' flight, and finally (in 2,9 and 2,10) the contrast between modern tolerance and the God of 'real clemency' whose coming is wholly different, the contrast of the all-threatening machine which is everywhere manifest 'so that the more beautiful hesitation of the glorious hand is no longer resplendent' and which yet cannot destroy the true glory of Being:

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[39] 1,5.
[40] 1,3.
[41] 1,26.
[42] II, p. 162.
[43] Mason, op. cit., p. 126.
[44] 2,3.

> Even today, though, existence is magical, pouring
> freshly from hundreds of well-springs,—a playing of
> purest
> forces, which none can surprise unless he humbly
> adores.[45]

Everywhere where single forms are portrayed with the art of the *New Poems*, in the flowers and fruit, fountains and sarcophagi, the horse-rider, the dancer, the beggar, the gardens, the fallow earth in early Spring, in all these their clear contours are wholly transparent to the singing secret of Being whose fullness, wholly permeated by nothingness, is present in them and reveals itself there. This is the reason for the didactic sonnet which praises metamorphosis, though not as a general dissolution, but which interprets the form from the point of its transformation:

> Choose to be changed. With the flame, with the flame
> be enraptured,
> where from within you a thing changefully-splendid
> escapes:
> nothing whereby that earth-mastering artist is captured

[45] 2,10.

> more than the turning-point touched by his soaring
> shapes.[46]

This is the reason also for the advice to remain aware of abundance in the midst of renunciation, and to anticipate all departure:

> For through some winter you feel such wintriness bind
> you,
> your then out-wintering heart will always outlast.[47]

The instruction of the *Book of Hours* on poverty,[48] the allusion in the *Book of Images* to the blind and to beggars with their 'hand eternally open',[49] even the teaching on renouncing the present God in order to help engender and to build the God of the future,[50] are drawn together into the final synthesis. That which is ours is precisely that which we let go and do not wish to hold on to: this convinces us of the 'mistaken idea that there is privation'; provided that we are woven into the whole as 'silk threads . . . into the fabric' and, with whichever of the single images we are united, still feel 'that the whole, the glorious carpet is intended'.[51] 'We, who are only just when we praise'.[52] 'Praise: that's it!'.[53]

3. HEIDEGGER

THE WAY BACK

Heidegger[1] brings the period of the 'classical tradition' to a close. Like all the poets and thinkers of this intellectual family, he seeks salvation—from the fate of the world which is the product both of Christianity and of modern technology—by a return to the classicism of antiquity which need only be pursued more thoroughly than it was by the German classical

[46] 2,12.
[47] 2,13.
[48] 2,17.
[49] 2,19.
[50] 2,24.
[51] 2,21.
[52] 2,23.
[53] 1,7.

[1] We quote from Heidegger's work: *Sein und Zeit*, 1927 (SZ), *Vom Wesen des Grundes*, 1929 (WG), *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, 1929 (K, 2nd. edn. 1951), *Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität*, 1933 (U), *Was ist Metaphysik?*, 5th edn. 1949 (M), *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit*, 4th edn. 1949

movement and even by Hölderlin and Nietzsche. What was falsely construed by these as 'Nature' is in fact the φύσις of the Presocratics and has to be seen simply as all-comprehending Being. This philosophy of Being of Heidegger, a Catholic and briefly a Jesuit, is permeated with Christian theological motifs in changed form, just as is the case with Nietzsche, who was a pastor's son, and with Rilke, who came from a narrow Catholic background. In virtue of the fact simply that Heidegger endeavours with all his strength to leave behind the western metaphysical tradition in its entirety (from Plato to Hegel), he is brought face to face of necessity with the Presocratic myth, which however has been historically subsumed into the Christian revelation.[2] The return to primordial Greekness[3] is not historical, intended as a 'renaissance of presocratic thought', for 'such a purpose would be futile and contradictory', but as a 'retrieval of the origins of our historico-spiritual being'.[4] Thus even the 'destruction' of the Western ontological tradition in *Being and Time*[5] serves only the 'disclosure of a yet more fundamental, more universal horizon which could yield the answer to the question: what is Being?'.[6] The 'overcoming of metaphysics' means 'neither an elimination nor even only a repudiation of metaphysics' but its 'fundamental appropriation'.[7] And this is achieved by the disintegration of all forms of unconscious

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(WW), *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, 2nd edn. 1951 (H), *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit, mit einem Brief über den Humanismus*, 1947 (P, 2nd edn. 1954), *Holzwege*, 1950 (HW), *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, 1953 (E), *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 1954 (V), *Identität und Differenz*, 1957 (Id), *Gelassenheit*. 1959 (G), *Unterwegs zur Sprache*, 1959 (S), *Was ist das—die Philosophie?*, 1956 (Ph), *Hebel—der Hausfreund* (HH, 2nd edn. 1958), *Der Satz vom Grund*, 1957 (SG), *Nietzsche*, I/II, 1961 (N).

[2] *Cf.* above, p. 000.

[3] M, p. 10; the same rejection at pp. 133–135: that which is thought in Greek terms ought to be thought 'in still more Greek terms'.

[4] E, p. 29.

[5] SZ, pp. 19–27.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

[7] S, p. 109. 'As that which is greatest, the beginning has already advanced proleptically beyond everything that is to come and thus beyond us too': U, p. 11.

dogmatism by 'rethinking' the tradition 'in the form of a dialogue.'[8] Metaphysics, which is concerned with the very question of Being, can be neither one academic 'subject'[9] among others nor even a science, something it first became in the hands of Plato.[10] Being, which has been reduced to the status of a concept, must be 'experienced fundamentally anew'.[11] In the many forms of Idealism (Greek, Christian, modern), thought itself has 'ascended improperly into subjectivism', and the descent to 'the proximity of the closest reality' is 'more difficult and dangerous than the ascent' away from it.[12] This explains Heidegger's rejection of Kant and of all that derives from him (a rejection which is particularly fierce in the case of the philosophy of values: to proclaim God as 'the highest value' is 'the greatest blasphemy'),[13] of Hegel (for whom Being is no more than the content of thought,[14] though 'reason, glorified for centuries, is the most obstinate adversay of thought'),[15] of Phenomenology, which has bracketed out the very thing which for Heidegger is of sole interest,[16] of Descartes' *cogito*, of Scholasticism and its thinking on being distorted by the theology of the schools, and, together with Nietzsche, of Plato for whom the *logos* of Being 'has already been covered over and lost'[17]: 'the ἀλήθειά is subservient to the ἰδέα'[18] and 'the original reality of the world, the φύσις, has been reduced to the status of a blueprint for reproductions and imitations'.[19] The entire philosophy of Spirit from Plato to Kant, Fichte and Hegel is made responsible for the decline into materialism and technicism: 'The essence of materialism does not consist in the assertion that everything is only matter, but rather in a metaphysical resolution according to which all that is serves as material for work', and this is so because of the 'objectification of the real by man in his self-experience as subjectivity.'[20]

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[8] S, p. 124.

[9] M, p. 37.

[10] P, pp. 55–56; E, p. 33. Where philosophy becomes ἐπιστήμη, and this in turn is made into a matter of schools, 'thought is abandoned': P, p. 106.

[11] E, p. 155.

[12] P, p. 103.

[13] P, p. 99. Heidegger's only attempt to come further than idealism by using categories of idealism ('synthesis') was his book on Kant, but he disavowed this as 'mistaken' and incorrigible in the preface to the second edition.

[14] Id, pp. 38–39.

[15] HW, p. 247. This does not prevent Heidegger from following and explaining Hegel's thinking with the utmost reverence and competence: HW, pp. 105–192; on the onto-theo-logical constitution of metaphysics: Id, pp. 35–73.

[16] P, p. 87; S, p. 95.

[17] P, p. 98

The elemental experience of the mystery of reality is expressed by the Greek 'wonder' (θαυμάξειν),[21] in the face of the form of existent things, their order and radiant beauty. Behind the question concerning their appearance (εἶδος), there is the much more bewildering one as to why anything should exist rather than simply nothing at all.[22] His first work, *Being and Time* (Sein und Zeit), begins by locating the *Da-Sein* ('Being-there', 'existence': man conscious of his own existence) in the extreme perplexity, the anxiety in which all existence slips away, in order to open up access to the question of Being. It is certain that, since in this early period it is the truth of *Dasein* which is the central issue for Heidegger and which he interprets as finitude structured towards death and as temporality, he does not as yet fix his gaze on Being and that his later interpretations of this period (as a methodical laying-bare that permits him to address the question of Being) are not wholly convincing; although this is relatively unimportant.[23] For very soon his gaze seeks out the decisive issue: the emergence of Being. Let us say beforehand that this emergent existence is not adequately expressed in the distinction between essence and existence of Thomist scholasticism (which Heidegger opposes),[24] since as this scholasticism understands essence (in the Greek manner) in terms of a being that is intelligible in itself, to which existence can ally itself or not, at will (or at God's will). But we will still have to ask whether Heidegger's way, which is to remove the φύσις of the Greeks from the realm of essence to a more comprehensive realm, is adequate. Φύσις means for him Being which emerges into phenomenal existence from its primal ground (*Urgrund*) or depths (*Abgrund*) and which is prior to all subjectivity.[25] This emergence lends phenomenal existence (φυ is cognate with φα[ίνεσθαι]) its ontological dignity.[26] It removes time and history, which were previously rooted in human existence, to the domain of Being itself, which emerges 'cosmically' (*weltend*) as world and, in a primal and critical struggle (the πόλεμος of Heraclitus would then be identical to the *logos* which is realized in this emergence),[27] as that 'dominating and undominated becoming-present (*An-wesen*) to thought'. Resting within this primordial event and remaining radically open to it (in ecstasy: standing 'outside' himself), man possesses true (co-creating) history.

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[18] P, p. 41.

[19] E, p. 48.

[20] P, pp. 87–88.

[21] Heidegger does not deny this, but intends rather that 'astonishment' as ἀρχή should govern 'every step of philosophy': Ph, p. 39.

[22] M, p. 38.

[23] Karl Löwith, in *Heidegger, Denker in dürftiger Zeit* (1953), has clearly set out the contradictions and incompatibilities of the two periods and thus also the essence of the 'turning' from 'Dasein' to 'Sein', esp. pp. 21–42.

If one asks which figures in the western metaphysical tradition Heidegger can spare in his all-destroying return to the primal question, then besides Nietzsche and his own radically destructive enquiry[28] we should mention the ontological poetry of Rilke[29] and 'of Trakl[30] and, more significant than either of these, Hölderlin. In his work the cognate origins of poetic creativity and thinking (*Dichten* and

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[24] P, pp. 68f.

[25] Interpretation of Hölderlin's 'nature' in the direction of φύσις: H, pp. 54f.; systematically in E, pp. 11f.; *cf.* SG, p. 102.

[26] E, p. 47.

[27] E, p. 47.

[28] But Löwith has correctly shown that Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche is questionable and, if one looks to the final form taken by Nietzsche as a whole, mistaken: *op. cit.*, pp. 73–110.

[29] 'Wozu Dichter', H, pp. 248–295.

[30] 'Die Sprache', S, pp. 11–33, 'Die Sprache im Gedicht', S, pp. 37–82.

Denken) are highlighted; this is always of central concern for Heidegger,[31] as is the connection between primal language and prophecy, the essence of 'in-sistence' ('standing-in') as the penetration of Being into man and of man into Being,[32] the idea of man's 'home-coming' to Being and of his essential 'recollection' of Being,[33] the interconnection, equally significant for both, between thinking and thanking (*Denken* and *Danken*),[34] the existence of man as a self-offering to Being (as in Hölderlin's *Empedocles*),[35] and finally a christology and a theory of *kenosis* which in both are fully exploited in the service of an all-comprehending metaphysics. Goethe, too, is in harmony with Heidegger when the radical openness of man to the reality which is comprehensive and self-revealing is at issue,[36] or the mistrust of any form of Idealism, or the attitude of awe[37]—which in Heidegger too is eliminated as the condition of 'Angst'—or the knowledge of the 'meaning' of all essential forms in their orientation towards Being. But more than anyone else, Thomas Aquinas is in harmony with Heidegger, with whom he shares the insight into the transcendence of Being[38] and into the fundamental distinction between Being and existent,[39] which is fundamental for all thought, even though their respective understandings of the nature of this distinction diverge from the first point on. For both, the act of Being, which comprehends within it all that is, is illumination (and thus the original locus of truth),[40] is origin, the greatest proximity (*intimum*) in the greatest distance ('more existent than all that exists'),[41] and at the same time it is nothingness (the non-subsisting),[42] the unity beyond all number.[43] Behind Heidegger, and behind Thomas, there stands not Aristotle, but that Plotinus for whom Being remains a superconceptual mystery (beyond 'metaphysics', which is 'located' in the *Nous*).[44] This family tree shows to what extent Heidegger's thought is and seeks to be fundamentally western. Even his dialogue with the Far East is that of a Westerner rooted in the ontology of German mysticism and the 'metaphysics of the saints'. So the question arises: how far can Heidegger's philosophy give a place to the fundamental principles of classical-mythic and Christian-theological thought, together with its 'glory', which appeared to him to be so under threat in all the various metaphysics of spirit (we shall discuss this first), and how far does his thought fail to do justice to precisely the object which is the orientation of his thinking; Being itself (we shall discuss this later)?

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[31] 'The poet's act of giving names comes from the same provenance' as 'the utterance of the thinker . . . the thinker utters Being. The poet names that which is holy': M, p. 46, *Cf.* Ph, p. 45; E, p. 20; P, pp. 112, 117.

[32] M, p. 42.

[33] P, p. 86, H, pp. 75–143.

[34] M, p. 44; G, pp. 66–67.

[35] M, pp. 44–45.

[36] This is the quintessence of the 'Letter on Humanism': truth is in Being, not primarily in man.

[37] M, p. 45.

[38] SZ, p. 38.

[39] WW, p. 11.

[40] WW, pp. 6–7; WG, p. 6

[41] P, p. 113.

THE MYSTERY OF BEING

Heidegger eschews metaphysics and ontology in the traditional sense in order to penetrate beyond them to the 'recollection of Being itself'.[45] And he permits the everyday Greek *ousia* of Being as *par-ousia*, as being-present, to be radically shaken and held up to question in the state of anxiety in order that the 'ground for the decision for the existent rather than for nothingness' may emerge 'as the ground for the vacillation of the existent that bears us and releases us, half being, half non-being, from which it follows that we can never wholly belong to any thing . . .'.[46] 'The participation of human existence in nothingness on the grounds of concealed anxiety is the transcending of the existent in its entirety: it is transcendence'.[47] In the evanescence of the existent, in its loss of essence the wholly Otherness of Being is intimated, which locates all existents in Being, 'mysteriously', as the 'simple proximity of an unassuming power',[48] as the 'inviolable',[49] 'the most singular reality that there is' and which 'cannot bear comparison with anything else at all'.[50] It is dominant in all forms of essence, making them possible, and yet goes far beyond them. Only by the presence and indwelling of Being is there such a thing as existence or essence. In his celebrated analysis of the essence of a jug, Heidegger shows what is meant by the 'jugness of a jug': 'The receiving of inpouring and the containing of what is poured in', 'the pouring out' (*Aus-schenken*), which in its turn presupposes the act of giving (*Schenken*) and the gift (*das Ge-schenk*). In the water which has been given, there remains the spring which is nourished by Heaven and Earth, which is to be drunk by mortals and yet which also, as libation (χέειν = to sacrifice), is a gift for immortals. Thus 'in the gift which is a drink poured out, the divine beings are present in their own way, and to them the gift of donation is returned as the gift of offering'. Taken together, Earth and Heaven, mortal and immortal, form 'a single quadrilateral' which, as the openness of Being and as a 'multifold yet unified consort', makes possible the 'essence of the jug'.[51] And so *ousia* is comprehensible only in the presence of Being (*parousia*) which, however, as an open space, is always an absence, an un-presence and a distance. Since Being is that which is non-essential in its distinction from the existent (essence), it attracts the kind of definitions which negative theology reserves for God. 'Being is not an existing quality of the existent . . . This, which is wholly Other to all Being, is Non-Being'.[52] We cannot say that 'there is' Being, but only that Being 'is', in the sense that all that is, is.[53] This is the case, because the existent is an indication of and towards Being,[54] a kind of 'word' or 'legend', which breaks forth from the silence.[55] The giving of Being is the 'productive appropriation . . . the event', and this is 'more creative than all functioning, acting and grounding. That which happens is the event itself—and nothing other than that.' It is not the result of something else (*Ergebnis*), but the self-giving (*Er-gebnis*) whose generous giving alone guarantees the possibility of a 'there is'.[56] Thus words appear such as the 'graciousness' or *Huld* ('kindness' in Hölderlin's translation of χάρις) of Being,[57] the 'favour of Being'[58] which 'preserves things in the radiance of the world', 'the world offers its favour to things'.[59] They have their origin in the place of the dispensing abundance, which 'reveals' itself in things and 'has always offered itself'[60] prior to all thought and comprehension and thus permanently enjoys the value of a 'homeland'[61] for all that exists. Language possesses the same primordial character as the emergence of φύσις, which derives directly from Being and from its history,[62] which speaks from out of Being itself and is prior to all human utterance, which speaks authentically only when it 'speaks-in-accordance-with' (*ent-spricht*),[63] responds (*ant-wortet*), echoes (*nach-spricht*).[64] 'This speech-in-accordance-with (*Ent-sprechen*) is a form of speech. It stands in the service of *language*'.[65] This is the 'house of Being',[66] in which it dwells, as man for Hölderlin lives 'poetically on this earth', i.e. when he co-responds.[67] The difference therefore between Being and existent (whose essence will be explicated later) is the locus and the possibility of language,[68] which can truly speak and bear weight only as a word that comes from silence and returns to silence, as the 'sound of silence',[69] and can therefore hardly take itself as its own object.[70] It is evocation.[71]

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[42] SG, p. 93: 'Only *Seiendes* "is" the "is" itself, the "*Sein*" "is" not.'

[43] M, p. 44.

[44] Because Plotinus is usually assigned a place within the Platonic tradition, and this counts as 'forgetful of Being' for Heidegger—something that is in reality not the case for Plotinus—Heidegger prefers to begin first with the Pre-Socratics.

[45] M, pp. 8–9; P, pp. 65, 76; E, p. 31; S, pp. 109, 116; G, p. 39.

[46] E, p. 22.

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[47] M, p. 33.

[48] P, p. 78.

[49] S, p. 148.

[50] E, p. 60.

[51] VA, pp. 170–172, with reference here to G, p. 54, S, pp. 22–23, HH, p. 18.

[52] M, p. 41.

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[53] P, p. 80.

[54] S, pp. 114–117.

[55] S, p. 255.

[56] S, p. 258.

[57] VA, p. 204.

[58] M, p. 44.

[59] S, p. 24.

[60] S, p. 135.

[61] P, p. 84.

[62] P, p. 79; E, pp. 62–63.

[63] 'In reality it is speech that speaks, not man. Man speaks only to the extent that he corresponds (*ent-spricht*) to speech (*Sprache*) on each occasion': HH, p. 34; S, pp. 12f. and 20.

[64] S, p. 70.

[65] Ph, p. 44.

[66] P, p. 79.

The greatest effect of such a delineation of all-comprehending Being is upon the way in which we interpret *Da-Sein* (human kind). This is no way follows the leitmotif of eros (as it otherwise does in the whole regeneration of classical culture since the Renaissance, and still in Goethe), but follows that of serenity (*Gelassenheit*: indifference, impassiveness, detachment), which is the title of one of Heidegger's works, which is to say as that 'essence' which can allow Being to be itself, as a 'stepping back from the existent so that this can reveal itself in what it is and in the way that it is, and the assimilative representation can take its measure from it'.[72] This stepping back creates the possibility of unconcealedness as 'truth' (ἀ-λήθεια); this standing-out (ex-istence) is human freedom as harmonisation with the comprehensive whole.[73] Will is rooted in 'determination', and the latter is rooted in 'the disclosure of human existence with a view to the illumination of Being, and not at all in the gathering of strength which is associated with "action". But the link with Being is letting be. That all willing should be grounded in the act of letting be is the cause of bewilderment for the rational mind'[74]—but not for the mind which knows the intellectual inheritance of Christianity. For

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[67] HH, p. 32; VA, pp. 187f.

[68] Heidegger relates that his first questioning concerned speech: S, pp. 92–93.

[69] S, p. 262.

[70] S, p. 149.

[71] 'The act of naming does not distribute titles, nor does it employ words, but calls to the word': S, p. 21.

[72] WW, pp. 14–15.

[73] WW, pp. 16–18.

[74] E, p. 16.

Origen and for Scholasticism, the essence of freedom was *indifferentia*, which in the period from Eckhart and Tauler to Ignatius appeared as 'submissiveness',[75] as 'indifference',[76] as 'serenity'[77] and in this as 'attentiveness to the voice of Being',[78] and as 'obedience to the voice of Being'.[79] Thus a 'solitude'[80] is demanded of us or, as the medieval mystics called it, a 'detachment'[81] which first makes possible that 'insistence' (in the sense of 'standing in') towards Being,[82] and is attuned to the gifts of Being. Heidegger, who avoids the word 'spiritual' (*geistig*: 'of the mind, intellect or spirit') in one sense, does however make use of 'spiritual' in another sense (*geistlich*: here in the sense of the Spirit which breathes forth from Being as a fearful flame,[83] and which 'drives the soul to journeying . . . and to remote places'). He speaks of 'poverty',[84] of 'the nobility of poverty',[85] viz. of the 'essential poverty of the shepherd',[86] for man is the 'shepherd of Being',[87] to him is entrusted the 'custodianship of Being'[88] which he must exercise with 'care'[89] and 'patience'.[90] His thinking must be a thanking which 'does not first offer thanks for something but is only grateful that it may give thanks'.[91] It is an 'act of praise'.[92]

The relationship of self-revealing Being to the passive

[75] S, p. 70, will render 'pious' as 'submissive'.

[76] M, p. 45.

[77] G, p. 34 (with a reference to Eckhart, 'from whom however much good can be learned'), p. 51.

[78] M, p. 42.

[79] M, p. 46.

[80] M, p. 265.

[81] S, pp. 52, 58.

[82] G, p. 62.

[83] S, pp. 58f.

[84] S, p. 66.

[85] M, p. 45.

[86] P, p. 90.

[87] P, p. 75.

[88] M, p. 44.

[89] M, p. 46.

[90] S, p. 73.

[91] G, pp. 66–67.

[92] S, p. 69.

human creature who receives it is seen here in primal biblical categories, so much so in fact that the Old and New Testament category of 'glory' is also present. Thus man, as the locus and 'organ' of the reception of this revelation, becomes fundamentally the 'one who can hear',[93] whose responsibility it is to listen to the language[94] or the word or the 'silent voice'[95] of Being in order himself to master the language.[96] He is the one for whom Being is present, and present in its individual occurrence, as God is present to Moses as the 'I am present on each occasion as the one that I am'.[97] Being and man are 'bound over one to the other'[98] as in the biblical covenant, and this 'belonging in hearing' (*das hörende Ge-hören*) is very close to biblical faith. 'Truth' (*Wahrheit*) can be not only the Greek 'un-hiddenness' but also (as Löwith justifiably notes) the English 'truth' (cognate with the German *Trauen* and *Treue*, which mean 'trust' and 'fidelity'); wherever Being 'entrusts' itself, we are 'betrothed' to it.[99] This is that biblical cycle of fidelity as a precondition of truth and of revelation, which is reflected systematically in the inescapable but fruitful 'hermeneutical cycle'.[100] In the cycle of grace and homage to grace, everything is structured towards a dominant, if discreetly reserved, love (*Möglichkeit* [possibility] derives ultimately from *mögen* meaning 'to like', just as the neutral 'there is' conceals a 'there is on offer', or the neutral 'principle of sufficient reason' [*Satz vom Grund*] presupposes a principle which proceeds as a leap [*Satz*] from the ground of one thing to the ground of another). This dominant love is groundless self-giving, self-expending: 'Thought . . . exhausts itself in Being for the truth of being in so far as man entrusts his historical being to the simplicity of the one thing necessary, which . . . creates the need that is fulfilled in the freedom of sacrifice . . . Sacrifice is the pouring forth of human essence in maintenance of the truth of Being for the existent and is raised above all compulsion because it emerges from the depths of freedom. In sacrifice there occurs a concealed act of giving thanks.’[101] ‘Therefore sacrifice can tolerate no calculation, by which it can be judged only in terms of usefulness or uselessness, whether its aims are noble or base.’[102] In contrast to the usefulness of all the sciences, philosophy therefore remains essentially useless,[103] without result or effect,[104] just as the self-giving of Being unquestionably has no justification but that alone which it derives from itself. Eckhart, too, said this of God, as Being, and of all that derives from Him, and Angelus Silesius, quoted by Heidegger with regard to the ‘principle of sufficient reason’, repeats it:

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[93] S, p. 241.
[94] S, pp. 254–255.
[95] M, pp. 42, 44.
[96] G, p. 49.
[97] On the time of Being; M, p. 16.
[98] Id, p. 23.
[99] S, p. 127.
[100] SZ §63f., 310f.; S, pp. 150f.

> The rose has no why and wherefore:
> it blooms because it blooms,
> And has no regard for itself, and does not ask
> if it is being looked at.[105]

The ‘because’ here does not contradict the ‘without why or wherefore’; its blooming is self-justifying. The death of philosophy is critical transcendentalism and the nuclear age, which have obscured the ‘why-lessness’ of Being by turning it in every case into an object and subordinating it to an end, although this ‘why-lessness’ still persists in the background throughout all ends.[106] But this would mean the extinguishing of all forms of transcendental aesthetics in the classical and medieval sense, for ‘What is beautiful appears sacred in itself’ (Mörike).[107] Thus Heidegger demands a renewal of aesthetics by the philosophy of the Ontological Difference between Being (*Sein*) and being-there (*Dasein*: human existence), which is the emergent manifestation (φαίνεσθαι) of Being (φύσις from φύω) in the ecstatic space of

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[101] M, p. 44.
[102] M, p. 45.
[103] E, p. 7.
[104] P, p. 111.
[105] SG, p. 68.
[106] SG, pp. 100–101.
[107] ‘An eine Lampe’, quoted SG, p. 102.

Dasein, and he comments on this distinction in his dialogue with the Japanese, a dialogue which ultimately in the encounter between Western and Eastern discourse and thought allows the occurrence of Being and its expression to draw near only in 'aesthetic' categories: as 'that which takes gracious form' (*das Anmutende*, though not in the sense of Schiller's *Anmut*, grace, but) as 'the breath of the stillness of radiant rapture' and 'luminous veiling'. 'Thus all presence has its origin in grace in the sense of the pure rapture of a summoning silence' in which 'however that which causes rapture itself . . . is always manifested in the unrepeatable moment with the plenitude of its grace'.[108] In this definition the Greek 'χάρις' and the German *Huld* ('grace' as 'favour') are married. The *Huld* of Being itself 'is poetic, that which truly makes reality poetic', and the poet (and thinker) merely correspond again to the language of Being, which 'addresses' us and 'is radiant for us'.[109] The mystery of Being, unrevealable even in its revelation, as the open space in which all things are gathered and exist, is 'like a region by whose magic all that belongs to it returns to the place where it rests'. Such a 'return' to the 'free expanses' of this region causes the transformation of 'objective reality' (*das Gegenständliche*) into an easeful resting beside the 'hearth': all these expressions recall Plotinus and Eckhart, as does man's 'waiting' which 'has no object', and which thus gives itself access to the 'open spaces' and awaits the 'arrival' which derives from the metaphysics of detachment.[110]

Here the biblical concept of δόξα is retrieved and taken into the service of Being, together with the inner tension which comes to it from its Greek usage. 'Δόξα means regard, namely the regard in which one stands. In the event that that regard is an excellent one in accordance with what it reveals, then δόξα means fame and renown. In Hellenistic theology and in the New Testament δόξα Θεου, *gloria Dei*, is the glory of the Lord. The act of extolling, of bestowing esteem on and showing esteem towards, has in Greek the meaning of putting in the light, and thus creating duration and Being. Renown for the Greeks is not something additional which one might or might not attain: it is the manner of the highest being'. There is a reference to Pindar here in support of this. But the concept undergoes an inner development. Δόξα is regarded in a broader sense too as 'that which every existent conceals and reveals in its appearance (εἶδος, ἰδέα). A town is a wonderful sight ... Depending on the different standpoints, the view will change'. Thus there is a shift from the objective sight to the subjective view, opinion, mere supposition, and correspondingly from manifestation to seeming appearance. 'Where there is the unconcealedness of Being, there is also the possibility of seeming appearance'.[111] The enchantment and the glory of Being in its revelation always contain seeming appearance and concealment as their counterpart; the 'essence' of truth always brings with it its own inessentiality as 'non-unconcealedness'. 'The concealment of the existent within the whole, as actual 'untruth', is prior to the openness of this or that existent. It is prior even to the "letting be" itself'. Beneath all thing there lies the abyss, the 'mystery',[112] the irredeemably mysterious character of Being. But the openness of Being in its emergence into manifestation casts so great a light that this overwhelms its nature as mystery, and concealment is itself concealed. The recognising individual rests content with what is manifest, though 'his rootedness in the transient is in itself the failure to allow the concealment to prevail of the concealed'. 'The forgotten mystery of human existence' (in the section entitled 'Man' from *Being and Time*) effects however its 'own presence'; it causes man to err and to make misjudgements when he takes 'the measure' of himself in accordance with his new intents and plans,[113] not just as the practical *homo faber* but no less so as the theoretical *homo sapiens*. Thus 'evil and 'ire' (Böhme, Goethe, Schelling)[114] are rooted in the ontic-ontological (non-)essence of truth as freedom so that 'error is the essential counter-essence to the initial essence of truth' and it 'thoroughly dominates man'[115] from the point of the primal historical occurrence of Being, without the necessity of postulating an historical 'Fall'.[116] Being, as something imposed, is not only graciousness but also fate. In its own nature, in its concealed unconcealedness which is eternally occurrent in the now, it is something which is self-directional (*epochê*), which is selfgiving and fate-forming, as destiny.[117]

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[108] S, pp. 140–142.
[109] S, pp. 152–153.
[110] G, pp. 40–46.

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[111] E, pp. 78–79.
[112] WW, p. 19.
[113] WW, pp. 20–21.
[114] P, p. 112.

Theologumena, which prevail throughout the entire Western tradition of thought but have been forgotten, emerge here:[118] the idea that God conceals Himself precisely when he reveals Himself is not only Presocratic but also Plotinian and patristic. Maximus the Confessor extensively glosses Gregory of Nazianzen's φαινόμενος κρύπτεται,[119] and this also constitutes the pathos of both the Pseudo-Areopagite and Scotus Erigena (*dum silet clamat, et dum clamat silet, et dum videtur invisibilis est* . . .,)[120] as it does in the work of Nicolas of Cusa and Ficino. But together with this there also arises the doctrine of kenosis, familiar to us from Pascal and Hamann,[121] from Tauler, Condren and Hölderlin. The openness of Being in the duality[122] of the Ontological Difference is in itself 'pain',[123] and as ec-static sense (*Sinn*) is 'madness' (*Wahnsinn*, which does not mean lunacy or *Irrsinn*),[124] 'downfall' and 'death'.[125] In the loss of selfgiving Being which holds to itself and withdraws, we discover its preciousness: because 'it is only in the most extreme withdrawal of Being that we glimpse the essence of Being', because 'we only recognise what belongs to us in the loss of what has been lost'.[126] In the alienness (*Unheimlichkeit*) of angst, we understand what home (*Heimat*) is; in alienation and estrangement, we know intimacy.[127] This all belongs indissolubly to the comprehensive glory of Being: the Δόξα of 'the undominated dominating coming-into-presence'[128] and of mere 'opinion' in irretrievable absence. The Greeks did not know this second aspect, only the Christians. But did Heidegger really succeed in incorporating the Christian dimension into his ontology?

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[115] WW, p. 22.

[116] P, p. 78.

[117] Ph, p. 65.

[118] P, p. 81; G, p. 59; Ph, p. 18.

[119] See my *Kosmische Liturgie* (2nd edn. 1961), pp. 292f., 523, 530, Migne, Patr. Gr. 91, 1048–1049A.

[120] See above, p. 000.

[121] See Vol. III of this work, pp. 247–273 (Eng. tr.).

[122] S, pp. 118, 126.

[123] s, pp. 62f.

[124] S, p. 71.

[125] S, pp. 42. 46.

THE LOSS OF GAIN

The attempt to incorporate all aspects of the Christian inheritance within an ontology stands or falls with the interpretation of the Ontological Difference between the existent and Being. For Heidegger there can be only one distinction, which displays many aspects: first the dual aspect of the ('objective') 'illumination' ('*Lichtung*') of Being in existent beings and its ('subjective') 'illumination' ('*Lichtung*') in the ec-static locus of freedom which is *Dasein* (i.e. human existence); these two aspects constitute in a complementary manner a single event. A further dual aspect is best illustrated by historical delimitation. In regard to this distinction classical, Greek metaphysics remains bound to the 'existent' and thus to a thinking in terms of essences (which is 'oblivious of Being'): ὄν ᾗ ὄν, the object of metaphysics, is for Aristotle existence *qua* existence (and not *qua* Being). Although the individual existent is construed here within the context of 'existence as such', and thus with an orientation towards Being, nevertheless Being itself remains occluded,[129] and appears only as 'the general', which it cannot be because, co-differentiated, it predominates in all distinctions. And yet if we construe Being as 'God' (which marks the beginnings of the early Middle Ages and which will lead *via* Eckhart and

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[126] SG, p. 101.
[127] M, pp. 29–30.
[128] E, p. 47.
[129] M, p. 11.

Nicolas of Cusa to Spinoza and the modern forms of Monism), then we get the true mystery wrong and leap over it, this time by shooting too high, for this mystery inhabits the opposition between the existent and Being, the latter of which is both the abundance of all existence and yet non-substance—in such a way that existents assist Being towards its illumination objectively while man does so subjectively, although it is from Being that they receive the light in the first place. This is a mystery which cannot prevail between God and the world. There remains therefore for the genuine difference between them only that space which to some extent opens up in Plotinus (and Dionysius) and is uniquely grasped by Thomas Aquinas: the *actus essendi* as non-subsiting abundance which attains a state of rest and self-realisation from and within finite essences, and *essentiae*, which attain to reality by act, without however reducing or subdividing the infinite act. This mode of thought does not, as Heidegger says, reduce the difference 'to a mere distinction, to the potency of our intellects'[130]—that only happens when a pedantic scholasticism turns the mystery into a 'real distinction' etc. But for Thomas this structure remains *the* sign of the indeterminate non-absoluteness, speaking in Christian terms, of creatureliness: for how can a non-subsisting act of Being generate subsisting Beings from itself alone, and how are the essences to acquire a closed and meaningful form? Both these questions therefore point to a subsisting and absolute Being, God, who both offers a share in His abundance of Being (in the *actus essendi illimitatus*) and also from His absolute power and freedom (which as such presupposes nothingness as the locus of the ability to create) devises the forms of essences as the recipients of this participation in Being. Plotinus, working from a pre-Christian viewpoint, went some way towards this understanding of the difference when he construed the One, which transcends everything (even the Nous), as the mystery of Being which, for him, was transparent to the Divine-Absolute, to the extent of identification. The non-subsisting character of the act of Being fused for him with the transcendence of the One beyond ontological comprehension. Heidegger, on the other hand, who belongs to the post-Christian age, revokes the Christian distinction between limitless non-subsisting and limitless subsisting Being. He creates the notion of a superconceptual *actus essendi* which renders itself temporal within essences, by attributing to it the properties of the subsisting (divine) act. And because the former must be radically annihilated in order to attain temporal expression, this nothingness, which makes the subjective-objective 'illumination' (*Lichtung*) possible, becomes an attribute of absolute Being. In other words: *Heidegger identifies the negations of the classical, Christian doctrine of God (as 'Negative Theology') with the nothingness of the act of Being which constitutes world.* The consequence of this is that once again (as with Erigena, Eckhart and Nicolas of Cusa) God has need of the world if He wishes to make explicit His own implications, so that no *analogia entis* prevails in the distinction between Being and existent, but rather an *identitas* which both generates the distinction and embraces it at the same time.

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[130] Id, p. 60.

Heidegger initially denied that Being stands in 'need' of the existent in order to become itself, although later he affirmed it in ever clearer terms.[131] 'Human essence is given over to truth, because truth needs man'.[132] It is the 'message which needs us as messengers'.[133] If world is to come into being historically, then man as agent of choice and as legislator is indispensable.[134] The ultimate reality therefore becomes 'the event' as the 'independent region through which man and Being attain to each other in their essence', a 'self-supporting construct'.[135] The difference between Being and the existent, which is the primary characteristic of createdness, in thereby raised to the status of the absolute, of God. Accordingly man cannot perform the classical act of wonder

[131] On a silent alteration of the text in this sense between the fourth and the fifth editions of *Was ist Metaphysik?*, *cf.* Löwith, *op. cit.*, pp. 39–40.

[132] G, p. 65, *cf.* p. 66.

[133] S, p. 155; *cf.* S, p. 256: 'Speech needs human speaking'.

[134] E, pp. 47–48.

[135] Id, p. 30.

in the face of the miraculous ordering of the world, nor the Christian act of a yet deeper wonder at the incomprehensibility of his own and of all earthly existence. Now he is himself a co-essential part of the mystery of Being which prevails necessarily as such. Within this identical framework, it makes no sense to distinguish men from gods; where the comprehensive principle remains impersonal (because non-subsisting), personal beings cannot be distinguished by any thoroughgoing analogy. For this reason, the borrowing of biblical categories for the purposes of a transcendental aesthetic also fails to convince; for *Kabôd-Doxa* in the Old and New Testaments refers to the sovereign and majestic freedom of the God of gracious covenant and absolute love. But Heidegger wishes to banish all that has to do with the will (which decides, elects, judges) from the realm of being.[136] Thus the primal act of man, despite all ec-stasy, remains a pure act of 'thinking',[137] which is to be the primal ground of existence on this side of theory and practice.

In the work of Heidegger, the true wonder at the fact that something exists rather than nothing does not run its full course, for it points to a freedom which he does not wish to perceive. However strange this may seem, his emergent and fate-like φύσις remains within the horizon of Greek, essentialist, even naturalistic, thinking. Although he grasps, beyond Aristotle, the Thomist distinction between Being and the existent as a mystery impenetrable to reason, and can from this position accuse both the Greek and the moderns of forgetting Being itself, yet he does not construe this difference in Thomist terms, viz. in the Christian way as a sign of creatureliness, and therefore he falls back from this distinction into a (non-Greek, only apparently Presocratic) identity. The two points of departure of the Christian *analogia entis* are divided in Heidegger's thought between the early texts (*Being and Time* and its dependent works) and the later texts, which are separated from the earlier ones by the 'turning-point'; and yet these two halves do not form a whole. In the one we find the 'thrownness' (*Geworfenheit*) of human existence, but without a throwing agent, and in such a way that the temporal structure of man leads to a finitude of Being and truth; the illumining *ec-stasis* generates itself into nothingness. But in the other, Being appears as the origin of the 'throw',[138] though 'thrownness' has now vanished and there remains only the principle of sufficient reason (*Satz* ['principle' and 'leap'] *vom Grund*) as the leap (*Sprung*) from and into the origin (*Ursprung*). The 'turn' merely displays the same thing from the other side.[139] Where the immanent analogy of Being which pertains between the *actus essendi* and *essentia* does not deepen to a transcendental analogy of Being between God and the world, it annuls itself by becoming identity and pays the price that it now needs to reconcile within itself the most contradictory elements—as is the case with Giordano Bruno. Here too Hölderlin's Ἓν διαφέρον ἑαυτῷ is the final word.

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[136] G, p. 60.

[137] M, p. 12.

This does not change the fact that in the modern period Heidegger's project is the most fertile one from the point of view of a potential philosophy of glory. In the face of all unmediated forms of theism, he keeps the process of his thought firmly fixed on the main issue, which is the mystery of the immanent distinction between Being and the existent, with his question ('How does God enter philosophy?').[140] Christian theology as a science loses its entire basis if it thinks that it can develop the revelation of the living God while bypassing the mystery of this distinction, and it sinks accordingly to the status of being a science of existent things amongst others, and will properly be subject to the jurisdiction of philosophical thought. This is more true today than ever before, where theology thinks that without a pholsophical mediation, indeed renouncing even the medium of the human sciences, it can enter into dialogue with the exact and technological (natural) sciences, a dialogue in which it is clearly fated to draw the shorter straw. Heidegger's powerful warnings against technocracy and the ever more terrible philosophical nihilism which is emergent within it are justified, even if no one heeds them any more. They are heeded all the less, of course, because Heidegger has no adequate answer to the question of existence which he raises. A philosophy which will not firmly answer the question of God one way or the other[141] lacks intellectual courage, and a pragmatic and realistic humanity will pass it by and get on with daily living.

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[138] P, pp. 71, 84.

[139] As 'Sein *des Seienden*' or as 'Seiendes *des Seins*': Id, p. 59.

[140] Id, pp. 52f. The decisive answer to the question is given by Gustav Siewerth, *Das Schicksal der Metaphysik von Thomas zu Heidegger* (1959), ch. 21: 'Wie kommt Gott in die Philosophie', pp. 463–508.

If Christianity, failing to preserve a theology of glory, does not itself wish to fall victim to the new naturalism (of which there are terrible signs in the triumph of Teilhard de Chardin), then it must make Heidegger's inheritance its own and thus apprehend the true intent of the whole period which we have outlined here as 'the classical tradition' and which, as Heidegger has always correctly stressed, makes the past present, not for the reason that it has historical value, but because it is essential for the philosophical task of modernity.

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[141] P, p. 101; WG, p. 28: 'Questioning itself becomes the highest form of knowledge', U, p. 12.

6. THE METAPHYSICS OF SPIRIT

a. The Other Possibility

The return to classical antiquity, in order to find a way out of the confusion of the late Middle Ages, would have been successful in the long run only if antiquity had been understood as an Advent-like openness looking to Christianity, not as a comprehensive ('cosmic-religious') form in which Christianity was embedded as a potentiality (perhaps the greatest one of all), nor indeed as a base for an anti-Christian reaction. It also proved impossible to invest fundamentally pre-Christian forms with Christian substance in order thus to salvage them. Eckhart was the first (in a radicalisation of Augustine) to point to a second way: that of making everything dependent on the personal relationship (which the biblical revelation had opened up) between the infinite and the finite spirit, and to interpret the spirit, free and self-possessing Being, as the quintessence, the meaning and the reason for all forms of non- or sub-spiritual Being. Now it was the Christian 'stage of consciousness' which produced its own metaphysics from within itself, but without holding any longer to the pre-Christian metaphysics of Nature as a prior and grounding stage. We have already made the acquaintance of this kind of metaphysics of the spirit, still wholly within the Christian theological sphere, as 'the metaphysics of the saints', which however dwelt so much on the highest religious act of *indifferentia* (of the finite spirit in orientation towards the infinite one) that the philosophically grounding substructure remained largely undeveloped, thus causing their 'mysticism', which lacked a metaphysical foundation, to perish on account of its unreality. Nicolas of Cusa was the first to take Eckhart's project further by erecting a (classically construed) analogy between the primary Creator-spontaneity of God and the secondary creativity of man, both being an essential exposition of the respective unities of spirit. This seed would soon germinate, but not without absorbing into itself one further late medieval motif.

The shift of emphasis to the spiritual and personal relationship between man and God was, from the point of view of the history of ideas, not only a step forward (from 'Nature' to 'Spirit'), but also a step back. During the Nominalist period the universe lost its theophanic radiance—the devout no longer encounter God outside but only within themselves. At the same time, the universe loses its hierarchic gradation and collapses into 'matter' which, itself without essence, becomes that which is merely mathematically calculable and which is present only to be exploited by man. This is where the source of the materialist mentality lies, which was and still is both the effect and again the cause of the retreat of the (devout) spirit from the world. Thus the philosophy of spirit—in which the immediacy of relationship between the divine and the human spirit is no longer mediated by the universe—is on the one hand the fruit of Christianity and, on the other, its greatest threat, because the material conception of the world tends, of itself, towards materialism. The exact natural sciences are the progeny of positivistic Nominalism and are the dialectical counterpoint to the *Devotio Moderna*; they will strengthen the philosophy of the spirit with their technical triumphs and, since the latter lacks any mediating understanding of Being, will drive it of necessity into a Monism of spirit. The stages reached and the paths taken can be drawn up virtually *a priori*.

1. Descartes picks up the gauntlet of the natural sciences: he leaves the external world as mere matter ('extension' and thus 'automation') to the exact sciences and removes the focus of metaphysics to the 'I think', from which he extracts the existence of both finite and infinite spirit. Augustine and Christianity, even religious interiority (including that of Luther), are salvaged, and at the same time the way forward is prepared for modern research. The universe is retrieved again—in a classical universalism—by the analogy of spirit: if we are raised with Spinoza and Leibniz to God's point of view, then we can now restore the interrupted communication between God and matter occasionalistically

(*via* God), or read matter as a mode of spirit (Leibniz) or drop it as mere appearance (Berkeley).

2. Metaphysics gains by the fact that the natural sciences are given a free hand; just as, with Nicolas of Cusa, man is established as the analogous and 'enigmatic' co-creator with God, even if only in the unreal domain of numbers. But if the external world is nothing other than extension (i.e. matter *as* infinite divisibility), where does the distinction lie in the long run between God's exemplary creation and man's technical calculation? The confinement of philosophy to the domain of spirit is particularly inclined to lead to an inescapable identity: 'I think—I am' is not a 'conclusion' but an immediate intuition, if not in a psychological sense, then certainly in a speculative one. The Eckhartian position of the 'spark of the soul' as a point of identity beyond all analogy is reached in Descartes by a fundamentally philosophical method and is developed in Kant's 'original and synthetic unity of apperception', in Fichte's *Ich*, in Schelling's point of indifference and in Hegel's process of the spirit. On account of the diversity of its forms, it is difficult to discern any possibility of halting this process. If it is to be understood, all thought-content must be incorporated into the form of 'I think—I am', which is formally unsurpassable and thus absolute (divine). Accordingly, the question must be asked: what can 'glory' possibly still mean within the philosophy of spirit? From the point of view of the unity of apperception or of the logical subject, there can be only *one* spirit, only *one* Lord; in the event that 'glory' is fitting for it, over against the material world which it 'glorifies', then this can only be a 'self-glory'.

3. The second alternative, which is that of Eckhart and Nicholas of Cusa, comes to the fore. This is the co-creative aspect of the finite subject, not only in the sense of a *causa secunda*, but of an immediate involvement in the *Causa Prima*, whose inner form it already possesses. The point at issue here can only be the distinction between the absolute character of the spirit in terms of its form and its content, a distinction which the 'world-process' must serve to eliminate, interpreted in such a way that in its 'real' aspect it is construed as the

'evolution' of Nature into 'spirit' and in its comprehensive 'ideal' aspect as that which is projected *a priori* from the (formal) absolute spirit itself and that through which the spirit attains its totality of content and existence. A fully-developed philosophy of spirit, whether Christian, non-Christian or anti-Christian, will always have to accept this circle as inevitable, and it does so all the more willingly when the old cosmology too seems thereby to be surpassed and to be assumed into the final synthesis: 'Nature' (which somehow comprehends the finite spirit) is not intelligible without the prior projection of an (absolute) spirit, but the source of that projection is now at the same time the human spirit, which thus also grasps its own process of becoming within the universe (in the evolutionary sciences) and thus possesses the latter definitively as its own 'material' 'beneath itself'.

There are of course many different variations of a philosophy of this kind, although it does have an ultimate destination in historical terms, viz. the ever more consistent representation of the identity which is concealed within it. In the initial period, the influence of the classical, Christian analogy is still so strong that the renewal of the philosophy of spirit has the appearance precisely of a revaluation of the most magnificent visions of the past, and this without doubt in the best faith, in subjective terms, of the philosophising Christian (or Jew). These are the great systems of the Baroque, which understands itself to be the highest dynamicisation of the Western tradition, and thus to be a 'glory as never before'. Meanwhile the primary shock of the analogy diminishes, and this alone can distinguish in absolute terms the glory of representation from represented glory. There is no possibility of coming to a halt on the path from Leibniz to Hegel. The world is philosophically constituted from the divine grounds, and the Christian thinker feels himself empowered to achieve this, indeed challenged to do so, by the biblical self-revelation of those same divine grounds. In essence this is a titanism of piety which perceives only later what it has conjured forth and which, as Heidegger remarks, will find climbing out of its pit of error more difficult than falling into it.

b. The Immediacy of the Man-God Relation

I. DESCARTES

Descartes' spare speculative system,[1] which must be viewed as the beginning of the modern philosophy of spirit, appears as a retreat from all that is subject to doubt to the last rampart of the indubitable. All that presents itself as external world might be as unreal as our dreams; all that we have are mental representations ('ideas'), which include the involuntary sense-impressions. This retreat in doubt is on the one hand the declaration of our freedom and ascetic power: 'detachment from the senses' (*se détacher*[2]), 'turning away' (*se détourner*[3]), and is portrayed as a unique and grave conversion of life (*entreprendre sérieusement une fois en ma vie de me défaire . . ., commencer tout de nouveau dès les fondements*[4]). We should 'pull everything down and start again',[5] and 'close our eyes and ears, turn away from all the senses and banish all the images of corporal things from the spirit'[6] in order to become free for the 'contemplation of truth'.[7] The process requires not only a period of training of 'several months or at least several weeks,'[8] but also each time afresh *particulière attention*,[9] *grande application d'esprit*,[10] *soigneusement recherché*,[11] *circonspection*[12] and 'seriousness of mind'.[13] 'Intuition' does not take place by itself, but requires *un esprit pur et attentif.*[14] This endeavour displays the other side: our truth is not something which is fundamentally certain; that we *can* doubt is not only an advantage of our freedom,[15] but proves the uncertainty of our entire existential situation. What the senses offer us as external world, even as human community, may be sufficient for a practical form of knowledge, for biological conservation, self-advancement and self-defence,[16] but the reality which corresponds to this in terms of theory remains uncertain. Disillusionment when we thought we were certain makes us extremely suspicious,[17] and even the intuitions of mathematical regularity lack ultimate inner clarity and transparence:[18] when they are before our eyes, they appear indubitable, but when we look away, we are not so sure. While proximity to intuition is a criterion of truth,[19] for the most part Descartes speaks prudently here in nuanced terms of 'sufficiently clear and distinct' and so forth, which does not wholly exclude the possibility of subjective delusion. Behind this there is only the apparently indivisible point where consciousness (*pensée* embraces for Descartes all the acts of consciousness, including will, endeavour, mood, imagination etc.)[20] and being coincide.[21] Of course this is possible only so long as I think,[22] but since thinking is the form of my self-possession, in which I do not perceive myself to be dependent upon any any mediating thing, therefore I think continuously, as light is always radiant.[23] In comparison with this kind of evidence for self-possession, the outer world, even one's own body, emerges only as a likelihood, and, in the event that it has extra-mental existence, it could only be the 'Wholly Other' of the spirit (Non-Self), viz. instead of pure indivisibility pure divisibility, pure materiality, pure automatism, which is true also for our own body and for the animal kingdom.[24] The classical and scholastic 'famed *arbor Porphyriana*' (of the degrees of Being: Existence, Life, Feeling, Consciousness) is thus 'disdained' and dropped in favour of a bald opposition.[25]

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[1] Descartes, *Oeuvres et Lettres*, ed. André Bridoux (Pléïade, Gallimard 1952). *Règles pour la direction de l'esprit* = RE; *Discours de la Méthode* = D; *Méditations* = M; the appended *Résponses* = 1 Rp, 2Rp, etc.; *Principes de la philosophie* = P; *Traité de l'homme* = T; *Recherche de la Vérité* (fragment) = RV; *Lettres* = L.

[2] M, Abrégé 262.

[3] 2 Rp 370.

[4] 1 M 267; *cf.* P 1, 571.

[5] RV 888.

[6] 3 M 284.

[7] P 571.

[8] 2 Rp 367.

[9] *Ibid.* The concept recurs immediately.

[10] 5 M 315.

[11] 1 Rp 355, 357.

[12] P 576.

[13] 2 Rp 371 and frequently.

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[14] RE 43.

[15] P 1, 6; 573.

[16] 6 M 328.

[17] 4 D 142.

[18] P 1, 5; 572.

[19] 'Ideas that are clear and distinct cannot be other than true': D 152 and very often.

[20] 2 M 278.

[21] 4 D 147; 2 M 275.

[22] 2 M 277.

[23] L (19.1.1642) 1142; 4 M 148: 'une substance dont toute l'essence ou la nature n'est que de penser' (a substance the whole essence or nature of which consists only in thinking).

And yet Descartes retrieves in another form what has been discarded. Self-possessing consciousness has the truth directly: in the *intuitus*,[26] which is prior to every logical conclusion,[27] 'I have never doubted truth, it always seemed to me *une notion si transcendentalement claire* that it is unmistakable',[38] it is *expérience*, *témoignage intérieur*.[29] Here for Descartes there presides that original *clarté*, which inherits and develops the classical and scholastic *claritas*. Nevertheless, this luminous quasi-Absolute of the unity of being and consciousness cannot ground itself. Why not? On the one hand, because I had to call everything into question in order to reach this point, and was able to do so: 'Consequently my being was not perfect, for I clearly saw that knowing is a higher perfection than doubting, and so I came upon the idea of investigating where I had learned to conceive of something more perfect than myself'.[30] Here it becomes evident that doubt is not only capacity but also incapacity (to ground the being-in-itself of the phenomenal world), that it is in no way merely a trick of method in order to isolate a phenomenon by blacking it out, but is an existential intermediate position between God and nothingness.[31] This experience necessarily contributes to the manner in which I know myself to be identical with being-

[24] L (3.1638) 1003–1004; RV 896.

[25] RV 892.

[26] RE 43f.; *intuitus mentis*: L 1060.

[27] 'Aucun syllogisme': 2 Rp 375 and frequently.

[28] L (16.10.1639) 1059.

[29] RV 899.

[30] 4 D 148.

[31] 'Je suis comme un être entre Dieu et le néant' (I am like a being between God and nothingness): 4 M 302.

consciousness, so that time enters this circle and I cannot vouch for my subsequent being, nor, therefore, can I create myself.[32] Now these deficiences are known to me and thus the idea exists in me 'of certain perfections which I do not myself possess'. I therefore recognise myself to be 'dependent' upon an absolute consciousness of Being the idea (*idée*) of which is 'inborn' within me, both in my being (existentially) and in my consciousness ('objectively'), which at their root are one. The way in which we explicate Descartes' 'proof for the existence of God', whether we see it as an apparently 'ontological' proof or as a proof based upon the contingency of Being, is therefore of little consequence, for both are for him two sides of the same coin.[33] The notion that 'the concept of a most perfect being implies its existence' is always deduced from the fact that this 'concept' is present in a being whose existence is imperfect and which can draw this conclusion only because it experiences within itself through its own existence the distinction between *Dasein* and perfect (or necessary) Being. Only on these grounds can Descartes express the 'different degrees of reality or entity', not only of the existing substances but also of ideas and their objective content.[34] He calls for 'serious attention and consideration' in order to understand just this point: 'It is an [intuitive] *première notion* that all reality or perfection, which only exists objectively in ideas, must exist formally and eminently in their causes' so that if we possess the concept of a being which grounds both itself and us, then this being must also exist.[35] This idea is greater than I am[36]—it is evidently greater even than what I could ever become (for it is contradictory to suggest that I could ever be a God in the state of becoming),[37] and it is greater than my fellow men. But I know too that ideas can be merely the products of a consciousness, and thus the idea of God in me is like 'the artist's personal mark in his work'.[38] For Descartes this is wholly central in the identity of being and consciousness in so far as the occurrence of the latter is the last refuge from the unreality and dream-reality of earthly existence which presses in on all sides, which fact however recalls the quality of this being-consciousness: in the ideas of things there is much that is 'confused and obscure, since they participate in nothingness, that is, they are so confused in us only because we ourselves are imperfect'.[39] Therefore I not only know my striving for something more, but also the fact of my being radically and incontrovertibly surpassed by something that is absolutely More, something that is eternally greater than I can ever be.[40]

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[32] 3 M 297–298. 'Were I alone and independent of everyone else, i.e. in such a way that I would have been able out of my own power to possess the little measure of perfect Being that I might have possessed, then should I also have been to give myself everything else that I was aware of lacking, and I should thus myself have been infinite, eternal, immovable, all-knowing and all-powerful.' 4 D 149; in a similar manner, 3 M 296.

[33] *Cf.* for example, 2 Rp 372, P 1, 13–18.

[34] 'There is more objective reality in the idea of the substance than in the idea of the accident, and more in the idea of the infinite substance than in the finite substance.' 2 Rp 394–395; *cf.* 3 M 290.

[35] 2 Rp 371.

[36] 3 M 290–291, 294.

Henceforth the absolute ascendency can be given to God in the *cogito-sum* precisely because He makes Himself present within it only through His 'personal mark' ('which does not need to differ from the work itself'), the mark, that is, of createdness. He 'created me in a sense in His own image and likeness, and I understand this likeness (which contains the idea of God) with the same faculty with which I understand myself. For when I reflect upon myself, then I not only recognise that I am imperfect, incomplete and dependent upon Another, always striving and yearning as I press on towards something which is better and greater than myself, but I understand at the same time that the One upon Whom I depend possesses within Himself all these great things for which I yearn and the ideas of which I find within myself, not only in an indeterminate way or only potentially, but in such a way that He enjoys them in reality now and eternally, and thus is God'.[41] From this emphasis upon the *cogito*, light falls on all the darkness in the surrounding world: from God there flows the light of its being too, and thus of its truth, for in God truth and truthfulness are of necessity one: 'Thus it is plain enough that God cannot deceive' as could perhaps an *esprit malin*. The *cogito* does not reveal a gnostic demiurge, but directly reveals the highest radiance of the Being of the Good (of Plato and Plotinus), under the Christian sign of a free and good Creator who also grounds the practical, biological interrelationship of man and his surrounding world in his own ultimate truth and truthfulness of Being. At the end of the third Meditation, the thinker Descartes worships this God, who is not however Pascal's *Dieu des philosophes*, in the act of philosophical adoration: before passing on to other themes 'it seems to me proper to pause for a moment in the contemplation of this all-perfect God, to take time to consider His wonderful properties, to reflect upon, to wonder at and to adore *the incomparable beauty of this immense light*, at least in so far as the strength of my spirit permits me, for it is struck blind before it'. Descartes speaks here of the 'divine majesty'[42]; the light falls upon him by virtue of an original counterblow, and not at all on account of any continuity or peaceful speculative transition from a likeness to its original.

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[37] 3 M 295–296, where he takes up a position in advance against the later idealism: 'Je comprends fort bien que l'être objectif d'une idée ne peut être produit par un être qui existe seulement en puissance' (I understand perfectly well that the objective being of an idea cannot be produced by a being that exists only potentially).

[38] 3 M 299.

[39] 4 D 152.

[40] 2 Rp 374–375: 'cette puissance que j'ai de comprendre qu'il y a toujours quelque chose de plus à concevoir' (this power which I have to understand that there is always something more to conceive of): this is Anselm's formula, which we have already encountered in various adaptations in the course of our path through history.

Thus the book of *Meditations* is composed 'for the glory of God',[43] although Descartes is everywhere careful not to cross the border dividing pure philosophy from theology.[44] He is concerned, as was Augustine, with 'God and the soul' (the external world, the less certain reality, is deciphered only after the dissolution of this dual unity).[45] Descartes does not dare to face up to the third Kantian idea of 'immortality' because God in His freedom could still destroy the soul, although of itself it outlives the body.[46] God 'in whom all the treasures of wisdom and science are hidden' emerges from the *cogito* as that which is 'most intimately known',[47] and the *cogito*, in order to see it, requires the *grande application d'esprit* mentioned at the beginning, which frees itself by ascetic means from the *divertissement* of the persistently impinging images.[48] This endeavour causes the occurrence of that 'counterblow', by which the *cogitor* becomes visible in man's *cogito* (as Baader felicitously expresses Descartes' idea), and thereby also and for the first time (and not for instance as the inner form of the *cogito*!) the absolute all-grounding *cogito* of God.

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[41] 3 M 299–300.

[42] *Ibid.* 300.

[43] 'Ce traité qui regarde la Gloire de Dieu' (this treatise which is concerned with the glory of God): L (7.1640) 1074; *cf.* 2 Rp 366; 'La Gloire de Dieu à laquelle tout ceci se rapporte' (the glory of God with which all of this is related): accompanying letter to M 259.

[44] L (27.4.1637?) 963–964.

The absolute primacy of the Augustinian (and Newmanian) 'God and soul' means however that for me Being, goodness and the *Thou* emerge only in relation to God as the 'Other', and thus there is no way that leads to God *via* the *being* of the world and the human *thou*. The destructive consequences of this exclusion can be felt throughout the whole of the philosophy of spirit which now begins. One reason for this is that the *sum* is not resolved in the *cogito* because all the thought-contents (*idée*, νόημα) which inhabit the thought process (*idée*, νόησις) are never more than objectified 'reality', and never present existence, and the criterion of truth is no longer situated in Being but only in the 'clarity and distinctness' of the idea, which comes to be the entire representation of the thing in itself (*das Ding an sich*).[49] The road to Leibniz, Kant and Hegel is open, and also to Husserl's reading of Descartes in which doubt (ἐποχή) methodically serves the purpose of bringing into light the liberation into existence of the νόημα from the νόησις. Already in Descartes, the idea of truth has become dialectical, for if the

[45] 4 D 151; 3 M 286.

[46] L (24.12.1640?) 1105.

[47] 4 M 301, and already 4 D 151; *cf.* L (3.1637) 962.

[48] 5 M 315.

[49] *Cf.* what was said above about Suarez, pp. 000.

soul is really 'nothing other than thought', then we cannot see why it should not be 'pure thought' and thus contain the criterion for truth immanently within itself, as the relation between the νόησις and the 'clarity and distinctness' of its νοήματα. Nevertheless, Descartes wishes to locate the guarantee of truth in God, where essence (*idée*) and existence are one and thus the creaturely distinction between spirit (subject) and world (object) can be grounded and preserved.[50] The forgetfulness of Being in the thought of the *cogito* should cause the extinguishing of existence (*sum*) within the *cogito*, but now the latter calls the classical hierarchy of Being (the *quarta via* of Augustine and Thomas) to its aid in order to ground thought and being not in the ego but in God. The Ontological Distinction (between finite and infinite existence) is most clearly held by Descartes in his theory that man's reason is finite while his will (striving, eros) is infinite: a Platonic idea, mediated by the Franciscan school, which finds expression in Kant in the distinction between pure and practical reason and in the modern Christian Kantian school (including the superseding of Kant: Blondel, Maréchal, Marc, Rahner *inter al.*) as the distinction between conceptual knowledge and the infinite dynamism of the spirit, *représentation* and *affirmation*.[51]

But there is one other line which must be drawn from this Cartesian thought which is forgetful of Being to the various forms of spiritual metaphysics of his century (Francis de Sales, Lallement, Bérulle, Fénelon), which in a similarly devout immediacy of God to consciousness which was likewise forgetful of Being, was inclined to ignore the world and our fellow men. Because the Thou, which is the hard criterion for truth and for Being, is missing here on both sides,[52] this philosophy and spirituality of divine glory lacks the antibodies against pantheism, and hot on its heels logical atheism, in which every kind of classical and Christian glory collapses in favour of a solipsistic universal subject in which freedom and necessity must coincide. The path from Descartes to Spinoza and to Leibniz is a logical one.

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[50] 4 D 148, 151.

[51] 4 M 305: 'Il n'y a que la seule volonté que j'expérimente en moi être si grande, que je ne conçois point l'idée d'aucune autre plus ample et plus étendue: en sorte que c'est elle principalement qui me fait connaître que je porte l'image et la ressemblance de Dieu' (There is only the one will which I experience in myself as so strong that I do not at all conceive the idea of another ampler and wider will: so that it is principally this that makes me know that I bear the image and the resemblance of God). *Cf.* 306, 307: all error comes from the fact that the will is broader than the understanding, so that I 'posit' things that I do not know with sufficient clarity.

2. SPINOZA

Descartes handed the external world over to 'exact' materialistic science as its 'material' in order to preserve the inner world for philosophy and religion as the site of the analogy of Being between God and the soul. This dualism cries out to be superseded all the more in view of the fact that the external world has shrunk to mere extension (which can be dealt with just as easily as 'the form of external intuition' [*Anschauung*]) and truth is reduced to the inner relation between the soul and its ideas ('concept' and 'intuition' [*Anschauung*]). Under such preconditions, it was the task of the two great Baroque philosophers to rethink the classical and traditional Christian metaphysics: Spinoza and Leibniz, of whom Leibniz is by far the stronger and more comprehensive thinker.

Spinoza[1] anchors thought and extension (spirit and body), as the two attributes of God (the only ones known to us), in His unique and absolute substance; all finite essences and their variations are the *modi* (or states) of these attributes. In this way, all Cartesian distinctions are assumed into an ultimate point of identity: (1) The distinction between God and the world is levelled out by becoming that between substance and the *modi* (accidents) which inhere within it. (2) The distinction between divine and human knowledge is reduced to that which obtains between precise (i.e. clear and distinct, spiritual) and imprecise (obscure, confused, sensual) concepts, from which the Cartesian distinction between finite intellect and infinite will (eros, dynamism) is expressly deduced.[2] (3) Finally, the distinction between essence and existence, which in God are naturally identical, is reduced to the dependence of the finite upon God directly (existence) and upon the conceptual whole (essence). Since God is spirit as well as extension,[3] He is the unity of *logos* and *physis* for which the Stoa, which dominates in seventeenth-century ethics,[4] provides the model. The contributions of Neoplatonists, such as Leone Ebreo, have to conform to this 'Stoic' identity, i.e. the eros must adapt itself to the dominant form of *apatheia*, all the more so since the Stoic clarity of thought (even in the philosophical and divine realm: as κατάληψις) has now taken on the modern 'exact'-scientific form. Spinoza understands a concept to be an inner conception and spawning of the spirit (*per ideam intelligo Mentis conceptum quem Mens format*);[5] therefore, it can wholly correspond to the object (*adaequata*),[6] even in so far as God is concerned as thought-content, and thus be 'real' (*per realitatem et perfectionem idem intelligo*).[7] In a formal sense (by the affirmation of the infinite attributes of the substance) Spinoza retains the superiority of God over the world, but since God as absolute thought necessarily knows all his *modi* and, on account of the absolute identity of knowledge and will in Him, just as necessarily determines them, everything possible becomes actual, and does so by necessity: God's freedom is only the fact of His not being determined by anything other than Himself.[8] 'Things could not have been created by God in any other way or in any other sequence than they were'.[9] It makes sense to speak of 'contingence', therefore, only with respect to 'our deficient cognitive faculty',[10] for 'things have been created by God in the highest perfection and proceed by necessity from the most perfect existing nature'.[11] Spinoza thus returns to Scotus Erigena's *Natura naturata*.[12] Philosophical *hauteur* has rarely expressed itself in more absolute terms than here; once again there is a preference for speaking of the *vulgus*, the common herd who are incapable of thought and for whom the freedom of God seems despotism; 'what I have to say will not be properly understood by anyone who does not greatly beware confusing the power of God with the power or rights of earthly kings'.[13] Actual power is only the precise knowledge which God (and the man who is a philosopher in God) possesses; no opposition to or assault upon the *demonstratio ordine geometrico* of metaphysical ethics is possible.

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[52] The 'Thou' of one's fellow-man falls likewise under the category of the things in the external world that could be a dream, 4 D 151: all the 'ideas' that are not more perfect in Being than my 'ego' could have been produced by myself; this category includes not only the ideas of the things of nature, but also those of my fellow-men: 3 M 291–292. The problem of intersubjectivity is not posed, but is presupposed as a fact: 'car tous les hommes ayant une même lumière naturelle, ils semblement devoir tous avoir les mêmes notions . . .' (for since all men have one and the same natural light, it seems that they must all have the same notions), L (16.10.1639) 1059.

[1] Spinoza, *Opera. Im Auftrag der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften* ed. Carl Gebhardt, 4 vols. (Heidelberg, C. Winter, no date). The *Ethica* (in Vol. II) quoted by *Pars* and *Propositio* (e.g., III, 2); *Definitio* = df, *Axioma* = ax; *Demonstratio* = d; *Scholium* = sch; *Corollarium* = c.

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[2] II 49 sch.

[3] The last point is justified in detail at I 15 sch.

[4] *Cf.* Vol. III of this work, p. 189 (Eng. tr.).

[5] II df 3.

[6] II df 4.

[7] I df 7.

Human thinking in constant association with extension or corporality, which is just as absolute and which plays a major role for Spinoza as dietetics,[14] must participate in the absolute thought of the *Natura naturans* within the *Natura naturata*. In the same way that God himself is all his *modi*, and is so in the freedom of his own being, man must raise himself above all the forms of his addictions to his 'attacks' (affections) as passions (παθήματα, *Leiden-schaften*) and must transform them by the clarification of their confusion and imprecision into the spiritual precision of self-possessed actions.[15] The overcoming of this distinction between *passio* and *actio* (corresponding to the Stoic path towards *apatheia*) is necessarily at the same time rightly ordered love of self (which is the basis of all virtue)[16] *and* love of God (since God is the self of my self, the achieved universal perspective of thought). The virtuous man obeys only himself,[17] and is with good conscience the perfect utilitarian,[18] precisely when he loves God for God's own sake. Altruistic love follows (in a truly Stoic or Buddhist way) only on the basis of identity of generic nature and the closest relationship in individuality.[19] In man, *amor* is identical with *cupiditas*[20] (as is being human itself) in so far as the latter (as 'eros') strives for the totality, preferring it to everything that is only partial. It is precisely for this reason that there is no *amor* in God, any more than there is hatred or joy or sadness, because God Himself is the totality which is complete in itself.[21] The one who loves God cannot, therefore, strive for or expect God to love him in return.[22] In so far, however, as the spiritual love of man for the absolute (*amor Dei intellectualis*)[23] is itself absolute and eternal (and thus also unoriginate), it is 'a part of God's infinite love for Himself',[24] and (only!) to that extent does God love men.[25] But this love remains a limiting concept, adjoining that of cupidity, which in the critical moment eliminates itself on the grounds that in absolute knowledge which is attained and contemplated *ordine geometrico*, it is at most only the absolute and contented assent (*acquiescentia*)[26] to the intuition of truth which can prevail, but not love. This is the pathos which predominates in Hegel's absolute knowledge and in Nietzsche's Song of Yes and Amen, and which can just as easily be the pathos of a ('modern'), absolutely emotionless realism that is impervious to all love, all enthusiasm and all wonder.

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[8] I df 7.

[9] I 33.

[10] *Ibid.* sch. 1.

[11] *Ibid.* sch. 2; *cf.* II 3.

[12] Addition to II ax 5 (Gebhardt II 86).

[13] II 3 sch.

[14] 39 and sch.

[15] III df 3: *si . . . harum affectionum adaequata possimus esse causa, tum per affectum actionem intelligo, alias passionem. Cf. Generalis Definitio* at the end of III. On the form of the active taking-possession: III 1 d.

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[16] *Conatus sese conservandi primum et unicum est virtutis fundamentum*, IV 22 c.

[17] *Sibi parere*. V 41 sch.

[18] IV appendix 8.

[19] *Ibid.* appendix 9f.

[20] IV 41 d.

[21] V 17 d, c.

[22] V 19.

[23] V 32 c, V 33.

[24] V 36.

[25] *Ibid.* c. When Spinoza says, *Mentis amor intellectualis erga Deum est ipse Dei Amor quo Deus seipsum amat*, this is (in philosophical pantheism) the same doctrine as that of Karl Barth in theological theopanism, because in each case the only possible mediatory position of the *analogia entis* is rejected. Once again, however, we must draw attention to the dangerous closeness to Fénelon. Leibniz will be aware of this, and will seek to avoid the danger.

For the Spinozian 'spirit', the world exists in an extra-human sense only as 'material': it contains 'nothing in which the spirit could find joy', 'the consideration of our interests does not require that we should be concerned to conserve it', rather, we can 'destroy it or turn it to our advantage in every possible way'.[27] The absolute technicisation of our world is demanded on the basis of this mystical form of realism; in the axiom that knowledge is power, the proximity to Hobbes (whom Spinoza has studied exactly) is established. Ethics is both at once: knowledge (as clarification of obscure sentiments) and power as self-mastery and as mastery of the world, in an equitable state of mind which forbids feelings such as compassion,[28] humility[29] and contrition,[30] judging these to be inimical to man's strength. Here, too, the path to Nietzsche lies open.

The geometric armour surrounding Being—not only in terms of method but also of content—eradicates all 'glory': everything is radically comprehended in the 'precise idea'. Unknown attributes of God possess no radiance. Spinoza knows and tolerates *gloria*, but only as justified renown that pertains to God and the saints.[31] When he refers to the biblical *kabôd*, he equates it with the *acquiescentia*.[32] But because ethical achievement, the ascent to God's vantage point, is difficult, Spinoza can conclude his ethics with an adaptation of Plato's χαλεπὸν τὸ καλόν, *Omnia praeclara tam difficilia quam rara sunt.*

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[26] IV appendix and frequently.

[27] IV appendix 26.

[28] IV 50.

[29] IV 53, *cf.* IV appendix 22.

[30] IV 54.

[31] III 30 sch.; IV 58.

[32] V 36 sch.

3. LEIBNIZ

There has surely never been a Christian philosophy with such a triumphalistic claim to totality as that system which knows all things, considers all things and reconciles all things and which is the work of the Baroque *uomo universale*, Leibniz.[1] He is the advocate of God and of his world, who fights tooth and nail for the *causa Dei* (the 'summing-up' in defence of God). In the certainty of victory, the splendour of his intellectual penetration and eloquence irradiates the *gloria Dei*, for which he fights in every area of philosophy and theology, of traditional classical metaphysics, of the Church Fathers and scholasticism, down to the Baroque neoscholastics, as also (and more fiercely) in all fields of modern natural science, in the researches of mathematics, physics and biology, in technology, law and historical science, European politics and, of course, corresponding to his universalistic thinking, in the field of ecclesiastical ecumenism. Only Hegel will make such similar universal claims, but it is Leibniz, before him, who possesses the greater skills as scientific researcher and explorer. The ethos of his creativity is the boundless affirmation of every (partial) truth, the courage and the will for its seamless integration. In the manner of a general, he plans the most comprehensive strategies for the conquest of the whole of reality, like an architect (an image he loves), he orders the measures, the weights and the proportions. For him truth lies in the disposition of things, which dovetail together; it is in the harmony (ἁρμόττω to connect, fit together, order) of the world that its goodness and its victorious beauty lie: *beauté* is time and again the key word beside *gloire*, as the final proof of identity of the discovered truth. It is Leibniz, not Spinoza, who gave German Idealism its aesthetic ethos and, though it drew upon him, the intervening Enlightenment never acknowledged his greatness.

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[1] Leibniz' works are quoted from the facsimile edition (1959) of the *Opera philosophica omnia* by J. E. Erdmann (1840), which now includes *inter alia* the *Discours de Métaphysique*. (References to page numbers and columns a, b.) We use in addition the edition by Gerhardt (=G), *Die Philosophischen Schriften von G. W. Leibniz*, 7 Vols., 1875–1890.

Some abbreviations: *Discours de Métaphysique* = DM (with paragraph); *Essai de Théodicée* = Th (with paragraph); *Principes de la Nature et de la Grâce, fondés en Raison* = NG (with paragraph).

Leibniz decisively shoulders the burden of Cartesian dualism, which is the burden of modern natural science for the philosopher. At the age of fifteen, he believes himself to have come out against the 'substantial forms' in favour of atomism, but soon he recognises 'que la source de la mécanique est dans la métaphysique',[2] that even the unity of the atom is not conceivable without interiority or 'energy' and the quality of corporality is in no way to be identified with pure extension, that all things, even including the highest spiritual beings, possess two sides, one mechanical and the other of a total and definitive kind, so that both methods, those of the 'natural' and those of the 'human' sciences (as we would say today) must be applied side by side and without mutual antagonism.[3] This is why he immediately applies himself (in 1669) to reconciling Desartes (and indeed Democritus) with Aristotle,[4] and one year later attacks Nizolius for his nominalism and for his misconception of general concepts, since there are also 'distributive totalities',[5] and no science can be based on pure induction.[6] Now everything takes on a dual aspect, which runs like a vertical intersection through everything to the very threshold of divinity and, because of its verticality, permits an astonishing degree of continuity from the highest angel to the last material atom, embracing human, animal and vegetable life. For the highest spirit is indivisible (ἄτομον) as is the lowest material particle (the atom), but so too is every form of reality lying between them, which are only gradated according to the increasing preponderance of consciousness (spirituality) over unconsciousness (materiality), of clarity and distinction (up to the precise and finally the intuitive) over the merely symbolic and the imprecise (ultimately, the confused and the obscure).[7] Spirit retains its base in Nature (and thus an element of 'inertia' as non-absolute spontaneity or *materia prima*), matter retains its spiritual spark: it is 'energy', which is embryonic, dormant consciousness.[8] This Pan-Atomism of the Spirit is paid for by the 'windowlessness'[9] and 'autarchy'[10] of all monads or 'entelechies', since each one is an eternally unique embodiment of Being at its own level, which is possible only on the assumption of the creation by God of a 'prestabilised harmony', as it were through the actualisation in the monads of the order of relations, which is anterior to the world, of all the individual, interrelated world-thoughts of God.

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[2] Letter to Remond de Montfort (10.1.1714) 702a.

[3] DM 21 (826). Thus, the mechanicists 'qui s'attachent à expliquer la beauté de la divine Anatomie' (who insist on explaining the beauty of the divine Anatomy) should not mock the finalists, just as the latter should not despise the mechanicists. While 'the path of the effective causes is direct, but . . . rather difficult, when it is a matter of the individual entities', so that the philosopher recoils from it; 'the path of the final causes is easier and more frequently permits one to see important and useful truths which one would have had to seek for a long time on the other path; anatomy can offer significant examples of this'.

[4] In the letter to Jakob Thomasius 48–54.

[5] 70 a.

[6] 70 b.

The thorough-going parallelism of quantity (for every monad is univocally *one*) and quality (for none can bear comparison with another) is Pythagorean; as indeed the unity of mathematics and philosophy is primally Greek. To this extent Leibniz is the unsurpassed mediator of tradition to modernity, which can scarcely perceive any more the interrelationship between these two things. It is to this identity also that his attempts belong to create beside the special case of numerical mathematics a kind of spiritual universal language or science of expression (*characteristica* or *mathesis universalis*) in which all that can be the object of thought is ordered and fixed in signs and combinations of signs. Leibniz applied himself to this early on (*De Arte combinatoria*, 1666), worked further upon it all his life and promised himself great things from it for the progress of man's life in the spirit. But the idea of progress already finds its foundation in the dynamic chain of the universe, which is based upon an increasing drawing-out of the dormant unconscious into the light of ever deepening consciousness. In metaphysical terms everything is prepared here for a total evolutionism; even the step from animal to human life is included by careful and exact thought.[11] Thus Leibniz sees (and thus anticipates Hegel) the history of philosophy as unambiguous progress (including reverses) from its origins in the East and among the Greeks via scholasticism to Descartes (who is the 'antechamber' of truth),[12] and to Leibniz himself (in the 'audience hall' between *l'antichambre et le cabinet*).[13] Every systematic endeavour is thus made in order to forge ahead in the sciences and in philosophy and to smooth out all differences of opinion which serve to hinder that progress,[14] and thus,it is not a static apprehension of God which emerges as the highest bliss in an eschatological vision of eternal felicity but, as for Gregory of Nyssa, an eternal progress of the spirit: for 'of course the highest bliss, whatever enrapturing vision or knowledge of God accompanies it, can never be perfect because God is infinite and cannot be known in His entirety. Therefore our joy can never and will never consist in a full enjoyment of God in which nothing is lacking, for such a thing would dull our spirit, but in a perpetual progression towards new joys and new perfections'.[15] Leibniz already senses an unparalleled degree of progress which is soon to be, when the treasures and blessings of Nature and spirit given by God will be exploited in a much more rational manner.[16] The future of the earth, the perfect kingdom of spirits which is to be founded, fuses with the traits of the eschatological kingdom of God.[17]

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[7] *Meditationes de Cognitione, Veritate et Ideis* (1648), 79–81.

[8] *De ipsa Natura sive de Vi insita actionibusque creaturarum* (1698), 154–160.

[9] M §7.

[10] M §18.

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[11] In the 'theory of preformation', with reference to A. van Leeuwenhoek, e.g. Th §91, M §74.

[12] To Remond 702 a, b.

[13] To a friend on Cartesianism (1695) 123 b.

[14] *Cf.*, *e.g. Préceptes pour avancer les Sciences*, 165–171. *Discours touchant la Méthode et la Certitude et l'Art d'inventer, pour finir les disputes et pour faire en peu de temps de grands progrès*, 172–176.

[15] NG §18 (718 b).

[16] *Schreiben an Gabriel Wagner vom Nutzen der Vernunftkunst oder Logik*, 421 b.

Of God: for Leibniz opposes every form of pantheism,[18] whether of the Stoic or Averroistic, Cabbalistic, Spinozean or Quietist kind, and neither Weigel nor Angelus Silesius escapes criticism. The experience of contingency *vis-à-vis* wordly being is fundamental. It is true that there exists in the first stage of his thought, as revealed in the seventeen-year-old's first work on the principle of individuation (1663), a form of nominalism which is never fundamentally recanted (*omne individuum sua tota entitate individuatur*),[19] which is blind towards the Thomist distinction between *essentia* and *esse*, which it presents in a way that gets it wholly wrong;[20] and in later works too the monads are described as (Scotist) *haecceitas*.[21] But the absolute question of Being nevertheless breaks through with vehemence. In *De rerum originatione radicali* (1697) it appears somehow prior to all well-ordered philosophical principles (of 'sufficient reason', as Leibniz himself formulates it): *cur aliquis sit potius mundus, et cur talis?, (cur) aliquid potius existit quam nihil?* [22] Simply rendering this entire world-content eternal would in no way solve the problem. It cannot even be solved by finding reasons for the ways things are, why one potentiality rather than another 'forces' its way into reality, 'demanding' existence (*in ipsa possibilitate vel essentia esse exigentiam existentiae*), which is the higher perfection invested in existent things. For it is impossible that pure potentiality should create its own existence: *ratio existentis non est nisi ab existente*. The experience of the non-absolute, merely 'hypothetical' necessity of all worldly being is primordial and cannot be referred to a prior cause; it lies deeper than Leibniz's attempt to support the form of the ontological proof for the existence of God, which Descartes in his eyes had inadequately presented, by seeking to show the conceptual possibility of a wholly perfect essence from which alone its existence can be deduced.[23] For Leibniz, the gulf between absolute (divine) to hypothetical (worldly) necessity can only be bridged by absolute, divine freedom, before which there lies open to its choice—and contrary to the identification of God's knowledge and will which we find in Spinoza—an infinite abundance of possible forms of imitation of the divine essence where the *best* possibility presents itself for realisation, which freedom however is in no way reduced by the choice and realisation of the best. In the *Causa Dei*, Leibniz depicts the 'becoming' of the divine willing of the world (with a brilliant reworking of the late scholastic distinctions between *voluntas antecedens* and *consequens*, *inclinatoria* and *decretoria*) as the integration[24] of single acts of volition orientated towards partial goals into an ultimate, supreme will (partly accepting, partly excluding), which as such is subject to a single law worthy of God, indeed is identical with this: to create in freedom the best of all possible worlds. The world, that is, which can most reveal God's absolute *grandeur* (i.e. His power and wisdom) and His absolute *goodness* (as love for all creation, desiring the happiness of all).

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[17] Leibniz becomes intoxicated with the thought of the eternal progress of culture, and finds the highest beauty therein: 'In cumulum etiam *pulchritudinis* perfectionisque operum divinorum progressus quidam perpetuus liberrimusque totius universi est agnoscendus, ita ut ad majorem semper cultum procedat. Quemadmodum nunc magna pars terrae nostrae *culturam* recepit, et recipiet magis magisque' (the perpetual and utterly free progress of the whole universe is to be recognised also into the highest peak of the *beauty* and perfection of the divine works. In the same way, the great part of our world now receives *cultivation*, and will receive this more and more). If one were to object that the world would thus become paradise, then Leibniz replies that there remains ever more slumbering Being 'in the abyss of things' that 'is to be awakened', 'nec perinde unquam ad terminum pergressus perveniri' (and hence one would never reach the end of the progress), 150 b.

[18] *Considérations sur la Doctrine d'un Espirit Universal* (1702), 178–182.

[19] §4 (1).

[20] §13f. (3).

[21] DM §9 (819–820).

[22] 147 a, b.

Thus on the one hand the Christian idea of God is applied here as the idea which is philosophically true, because it is the greatest one possible: 'important truths, of which the ancient philosophers had insufficient knowledge, were divinely well expressed by Jesus Christ'.[25] Christianity is included in the philosophical process of the knowledge of God, as is the case in Hegel. In the Definitions Ethicae we find sentences such as this: *Justitia est caritas sapientis. Deus omnia creavit secundum maximam harmoniam sive pulchritudinem possibilem. Deus amat omnes. Deus amat amari. Qui non quaerit Dei Gloriam, Deo non oboedit. Qui putat Deum agere optimo modo possibili, iste Deum agnoscit perfectum. Qui Deum amat, amat omnes,* etc. [26] It is metaphysical (Spinozean) and Christian ethics in one. On the other hand, metaphysics predominates in so far as the deduction of God's willing of the best of all possible worlds is considered as *Mathesis quaedam Divina seu mechanismus metaphysicus,*[27] as an intuitively evident law in God's absoluteness which permits the competence of reason to extend to the sphere of revelation in a stricter sense than we find in Anselm or Thomas [28] The transition from Platonic absolute goodness to the Christian love of God appears so simple that the latter has the effect of an 'enlightenment of reason' and of an invitation now to deduce the relationship of God to the world metaphysically on the basis of this principle. A great light is thereby cast, quite unexpectedly, upon the constructions of the theologians, which are often groping, text-centred and fraught with controversy. This is the light which shines forth victoriously in the *Causa Dei*, fades again in the Enlightment, increases in Schleiermacher and Hegel and their schools, and totally triumphs in theological terms in Karl Barth's dogmatic teaching about election. A light in which Leibniz not only perceives all evil in the world to be comprehended by God's always greater love,[29] but also discerns the grace of God, won by Christ, as offered to all people, nations and religions, [30] even to unbaptised children, [31] a fact that obliges us to cultivate an open, non-exclusive trust in God [32] that radically negates the idea of an arbitrary and despotic God to whom it might occur to predestine certain of His creations to Hell for the sake of the glory of His justice,[33] or even 'to create poor wretches in cruel pity in order that there might be beings to whom He could show mercy: all that is tyrannical and remote from true glory and true perfection, whose worth is to be found not so much in majesty as in an abundance of goodness'.[34] 'Therefore, besides the belief in a despotic God, I would most like to refute the doctrine of [double] predestination',[35] for 'Christ is the grounds for the choice', and is so as Saviour,[36] as 'the head of the created world, through whom the whole of creation will be set free from the slavery of sin into the glorious freedom of the children of God'.[37] In this light, which illumines and shines forth from the depths of God, the philosophically-recognisable primal law, according to which God chooses the absolutely best thing possible, merges with the Pauline exclamation of wonder at the utter profundity of God's wisdom in the working out of salvation history; all this incomprehensible power is in any case contained within this comprehensive primal law, which follows from the philosophical-theological concept of God.[38]

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[23] *Cf.* the scholion to the sketch *Quod Ens Perfecissium existit* (G VIII, 261–262), which Leibniz read before Spinoza in The Hague.

[24] CD § 24–27, ending in §42 (654 b–655 a, 656 a).

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[25] DM §37 (833 b).

[26] 670 a, b.

[27] *De Rerum Originatione redicali*, 148 a. The law can be formulated thus: *ut maximus praestetur effectus minimo sumptu* (that the greatest effect may be furnished at the least cost), 147 b. One may question whether these 'economies' in the divine housekeeping do not in fact express precisely the Christian dimension of God's love, i.e. the 'costs' of the passion of Jesus.

[28] *Discours sur la Conformité de la Foi avec la Raison* (as introduction to the *Theodicy*): 'La Raison est l'enchaînement des Vérités, mais *particulièrment* . . . sans être aidée des lumières de la Foi' (reason is the linking of the truths, but *particularly* . . . without the helps given by the lights of the Faith), 479 a.

This triumphalism in the defence of God against all possible objections by His creatures entirely corresponds to the philosophical apriorism, which—supposedly without threatening human and divine freedom—assists in the construction of the world in the Divine Spirit itself (between God's intellect and His will) from what is externally necessary. Although Neoscholasticism had long tolerated, permitted and practised such a penetration of human thought into absolute thought, it takes on a new aspect in Leibniz on account of his vertical parallelism in method of mechanism and finalism. This parallelism, which extends from the lowest atom to the highest spiritual monad, should as such be limited to the dimension of created reality; but because this innerworldly space is not dominated by the concept of analogy (from spirit to matter) but by that of identity (in the univocal *unum* of the monad), it is impossible for the law of *analogia entis* to prevail effectively between the absolute monad of God and the created monads. It is impossible, in other words, for the activity of the finite spirit, precisely when it is concerned with numbers, to have a merely enigmatic character in Nicolas of Cusa's sense. The question of destiny which is raised there in conclusion (knowledge as *conjectura* or as 'absolute knowing'?) is decisively answered in favour of the latter term. And from the point of view of logic, this happens not only through permitting the thinking of the natural sciences to enter the province of metaphysics, but also because this realm has already fallen a defenceless victim to a form of mechanistic thought on account of its nominalistic point of departure (which alone makes the monad concept possible) and the neglect of the Ontological Difference of the Thomist school. Herein lies a paradox: the apparent 'turn towards the world' of the natural sciences can only catalogue 'phenomena' which are devoid of Being and for which an aprioristic phenomenism is ready to hand as a saving context.

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[29] CD §33–39 (655), 2nd and 3rd part of the *Théodicée*.

[30] CD §110–112.

[31] CD §87.

[32] CD §48, 133; *cf.* NG §18 (718 a).

[33] §74ff.

[34] CD §76–78, *cf.* §117. On God's justice, which includes equity and mercy: §50.

[35] CD §131.

[36] CD §134.

[37] CD §49.

[38] DM §31 (830 b–831 a).

The windowless monads communicate with the other monads only in God; they do not view Being and their fellow existents from their own standpoint, but rather intuit them from above, in artificial isolation, as an essential totality within themselves: 'Just as if we were stars which see earthly things far beneath'.[39] We meet once again this classical and

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[39] *Von der Glückseligkeit*, 673 a.

Dantesque image!

Thus it is the worldly existence of man without the real existence of world, i.e. without the vulnerability of his 'defenceless' being to other beings, primarily his fellow-men. The boundless need to communicate which Leibniz feels is that of a scholar who wishes to gather, order and define the entire culture of spirit in itself. *L'âme doit . . . penser comme s'il n'y avait que Dieu et elle au monde.* This *la met* absolument à couvert *de toutes les choses exterieures, puisqu'elle seule fait tout son monde, et se suffit avec Dieu.*[40] This 'autarchic' 'protectedness', 'non-vulnerability' of human existence lends to Leibniz' 'consciousness of glory' a character untouched by, and beyond the reach of, every kind of tragedy. The finite spirit knows itself to be the *expressio*[41] of God and the primal light shines in its knowledge, so that between (the light of) Nature and (the light of) Grace once again only *harmonia* can prevail, which was already the fundamental innerworldly law between the material and the spiritual side of Being.[42] Indeed, the tension between Nature and spirit coincides precisely with that between 'the realm of Nature and that of the spirits': the 'perfect *civitas* Dei under the best monarch', who inclines towards his subjects and is essentially open to them in love, who shows himself to be humane and gracious (*en cela qu'il s'humaine, qu'il veut bien souffrir des anthropologies*),[43] is no longer the Augustinian *civitas Dei* but has already become the universal, human and divine 'realm of spirits' of Hegel.

Nowhere in the classical Baroque does the thought arise that God might have need of the world or of man in order to attain the full abundance of His own being[44] (Böhme is an outsider, and certain utterances of Angelus Silesius are clearly taken from Eckhart), and even the greatest 'thrusting' into reality of the best of all possible worlds does not eliminate for

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[40] DM §32 (831 a).

[41] DM §35 (832 b).

[42] NG §15 (717 b); M §87 (712), 'harmonie entre le règne physique et le monde *moral* de la *grâce*' (harmony between the physical kingdom and the *moral* world of *grace*).

[43] DM §36 (833 a).

[44] DM §35 (832 b): 'sa gloire [externe] et notre culte ne saurait rien

Leibniz the freedom of God, and therefore never permits the coincidence of absolute and hypothetical necessity. On the other hand, man is initiated into the thought of God to such a degree and is able to express it with such strength of spirit that with the progress of his discoveries and inventions he can contribute things 'for the benefit of the human race and to the glory of God' which directly further the cause of true religion.[45] Leibniz wishes to see the direct application to theology too of the *mira theoremata* which he commands, and whose *claritas* and *pulchritudo* fill him with the greatest delight (*voluptas*);[46] and if some thinkers have fallen away from God on account of rigorous science, then it is precisely scientific rigour, taken to its ultimate conclusion, which must lead them back to Him.[47] Here, something of the brilliance of the spirit of great Baroque art is discernible: a certainty in faith, which views the radiance of world harmony as one with the radiance of love of the self-revealing God, which therefore expresses itself in a language which is indistinguishably both of the world and above the world, imposing itself indeed triumphantly, understanding itself to be God's representative, party to all His secrets, and to which it never occurs that the Christian can know not only too little but also too much, thereby forgetting two things: in philosophy Being and in theology the Cross. As in the sacralism of the early Middle Ages, Leibniz constructs an enormous monstrance, but one from which the central *monstratum*, the night of the Passion, is absent.

4. MALEBRANCHE

Malebranche,[1] a disciple of Augustine like Descartes and like Bérulle, whose Oratory he enters in 1660, is seduced by the

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ajouter à sa satisfaction, la connaissance des créatures n'étant qu'une *suite* de sa souveraine et parfaite félicité' (his [external] glory and our worship could add nothing to his satisfaction, since the knowledge of creatures is only a *consequence* of his sovereign and perfect happiness).

[45] On the general characteristics: 164 b.

[46] *De vera methodo Philosophiae et Theologiae*, 109 a.

[47] 110 b.

[1] Malebranche, *Oeuvres Complètes*, Vols. 1–20 (Vrin 1858f.), as far as these have been published; otherwise, older editions are used.

play of forces between these two into adopting that extreme form of pre-Kantian philosophy of spirit which turns it into a pious, worldless realm of ghosts which cannot but expose the fundamental flaws of the 'metaphysics of the saints' in the *Grand Siècle*, and which falls foul of the court of the French revolution as necessarily as Hegel's realm of ghosts will fall victim to Feuerbach and Marx.

From Bérulle he has thoroughly learned the pathos of creaturely nothingness before God and the pure adoration of glory, which he experiences and performs in the interior dialogue of contemplation. Descartes on the other hand persuades him of the importance of retreat from the exterior world to the pure ego with its *cogitata*, and of the only possible guarantee of truth through the retreat from ego to God. But now the differences begin. While for Descartes the *idée* is only a (psychological) fact of consciousness, provisionally secured in the *cogito-sum*, for Malebranche it is originally a self-evident form of (Platonic-Augustinian) objectivity which cannot be derived from the ego, something beyond the ego's powers of invention, and objectification already 'given' with respect to the ego, so that even a provisional guarantee in the thinking subject collapses and behind it there at once arises the form of an absolute 'thinker', which gives the self-evident its clarity, or which reveals itself there—as in its *own* ideas. Ideas are that which is objectively revealed by the *intellectus archetypus* to human reason; they are the 'real' in the sense which this word possesses for Descartes and Leibniz: as that which offers itself to the spirit's perception clearly, distinctly and without contradiction. But Malebranche sees more: individual ideas for him are the delimitations of the unlimited divine Being which, as the background to all ideas, is reality itself.[2] But because unlimited, infinite and universal Being cannot be glimpsed by any idea, i.e. by any individual being that is distinct from universal and infinite Being,[3] then it must present itself directly to the cognising spirit: the latter therefore *perceives a priori* (that is, from God's point of view and not from that of worldly experience) *the Ontological Difference* (*Realdistinktion*) and sees thereby truth, which exits primarily in the relation (*rapport*) between Being (God) and essence (the ideas of God) and secondarily in the relation between the ideas themselves.[4]

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[2] God is absolute Being who knows himself and everything in himself that is imitable. Vol. 15, 21–22. 'The idea of God or of Being as such, of infinite Being, is no mere construction of thought' . . . since it is evident 'that Being (I do not say, one particular existing being) has its existence through itself, and that Being cannot be without reality, since it is impossible and contradictory to assert the true Being is without existence'. *Recherche de la Vérité*, IV/II §2 (Vol. 2, 95).

Whether this idea in God is also 'real', viz. created outside God, need not be a matter of concern for man, first because his cognition is in any case far more immediate in this *cognitio matutina* than it is in any *a posteriori* form of knowledge; second, because the knowledge of ideas is not only intellectual but also imaginative and sensory (since *all* perception of ideas is pure 'receptivity' towards the self-revealing absolute Being and its delimitations and the Divine Being can touch the perceiving spirit both through the mind and through the senses); and third, because according to Malebranche and Descartes alike, existing bodies are pure extension (with their various delimitations), so that the ideas of bodies are also 'pure intelligible extension': but now it is inexplicable, or at any rate insignificant, how a 'thought' pure extension is to be distinguished from a 'real' one. Besides, Malebranche wants God Himself, as the origin of all His body-ideas, to be 'infinite intelligible extension', the (spiritual) archetype of all extension therefore. In this he approaches Spinoza but without going the whole way, since by the notion of divine extension he means only that which is the primal idea in God of all worldly extension, as Baader and Schelling would have it, that in God which (in contrast to the created 'spirit') corresponds to created Nature.[5]

Leibniz will criticise this doctrine above all on account of its passive understanding of spirit; it is the same criticism, though with some justification, which Aquinas made of Augustine.[6] Nevertheless, Leibniz cites both Aristotle and Augustine in support of his argument when he speaks of how through the 'light' of insight truth addresses us as with a voice:[7] and it is this experience of the Divine Being, which reveals itself immediately to us, speaking to and touching us, which is Malebranche's chief concern, as it will also be for Heidegger. Leibniz' criticism may well hold true, for without spontaneity there can be no openness of the spirit to the reception of Being. But even worse is the fact that such a pious theologisation of metaphysics—ultimately it is Jesus, God's Word and Son, who comes to meet us *immediately* in all sensible and intellectual knowledge—is forgetful of every worldly encounter of actual Being and springs over this, if all spirits communicate *only* in God as their common sun. Thus this philosophy of spirit also lacks the decisive experience of reality: the shock of a head-on encounter with *another* ego, a dialogue between an I and a Thou which is radically open to its own vulnerable depths of being. This shock was missing also in Bérulle, Condren and Fénelon, which is why their elevated spirituality retains something spectrally unreal, journeying in a world of ideas without a basis in Nature, crudely stated: something élitist for spiritual aristocrats for which, not without reason, the merciless guillotine of the real 'comrades' stands waiting.

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[3] *Recherche* III/2, 7 §2 (Vol. 1, 449).

[4] *Médit. Chrét.* IV, 7–8 (Vol. 10, 38–39); *Traité de l'Amour de Dieu* [Vol. 14, 7–8].

[5] *Entretiens sur la Métaphysique* I and II.

c. Kant

I. GLORY 'UNCRITICALLY'

The solitary figure of Kant stands between the epochs.[1] Prior to the publication of his critical masterpiece in 1781 at the age of fifty-seven, the paths of his thinking followed those of Leibniz, Newton and Wolff, in terms not only of morality but also of metaphysics. Thus he fundamentally shared—though under attack by Hume—the Enlightenment's vision of glory: adoration of the absolute divine Ego (Descartes), the beauty of the world order in its progression from matter to spirit as the radiance of God's love (Leibniz), together with the pride of the spiritual autarch, who believes himself to be the representative of the absoluteness of God in the world (Leibniz and Spinoza), matter as 'energy', simultaneously objective and 'phenomenal', the cosmic goal of an eternal progression and the emergence of a world which eternally becomes in an asymptotic relation to God (Leibniz and Lessing). Baumgarten creates for it in addition the first 'Aesthetics' as science: a delimited field of the human καλόν (the confused perception of truth through the senses), which is however progressively 'enlightened', as it emerges into an area of clear and distinct truth, which is still experienced, as with Leibniz, entirely by analogy with the transcendent καλό ν of the classical world. And what Kant takes in with his philosophical mother's milk, he passes on to the generation of Schiller and Fichte, Hegel and Schelling, whose views of the world culminate always in a form of aestheticism in one way or another, in a radiant, eschatological 'world of spirits'. Indeed, Kant himself, who at first acts as a critical interruption in this, constructs the overarching vault of his own work with the *Critique of Judgement* (and with the *Philosophical Theory of Religion*), in which he makes himself at the highest level the link between the Enlightenment and Idealism.

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[6] *Discours de Métaphysique* (Erdmann 829a) and other works about Malebranche.

[7] 'Deus est enim lumen illud quod illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum. Et veritas quae intus nobis loquitur, cum aeternae certitudinis theoremata intelligimus ipsa Dei vox est, quod etiam [alongside Aristotle] notavit D. Augustinus' (For God is that light which illuminates every man who comes into this world. And the truth that speaks within us when we understand the theorems of eternal certainty, is the very choice of God, as St Augustine noted) (Erdmann 82b).

[1] Immanuel Kant's complete works in six vols., Grossherzog Wilhelm

Nevertheless, the critical rupture goes deep; most evidently for us in the fact that together with the fundamental self-

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Ernst edition (ed. Felix Gross), Insel, Leipzig, 1921. Some abbreviations: *Kritik der reinen, der praktischen Vernunft, der Urteilskraft* = KrV, KpV, KU; *Anthropologie* = A; *Streit der Fakultäten* = StF; *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels etc.* = ThH; *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* = GMS; *Die Metaphysik der Sitten* = MS; *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft* = RGV.

limitation of pure theoretical intellect we now see the restriction to the human world of the sphere in which aesthetic utterances are possible: 'Beauty is only for man, i.e. for an existence which though animal is also rational', and not for animals who know only 'gratification', nor 'only for . . . spirits'.[2] The definition of the field of the beautiful, and correspondingly of the material realm of the science of beauty, which begins with Baumgarten (*Aesthetica*, 1750–1758), is radicalised by Kant's quite different critical delimitation of reason: it is in him that we first find aesthetics as a specific science in the modern sense.

Whatever the nature of Kant's concluding emphases, 'critical Idealism' no longer permits space for an experience of worldly Being as an epiphany of God's glory. But when the theoretical horizons of the rational faculty are narrowed, then there is yet more cause for amazement at the unlimited breadth of its practical outreach: 'glory' is replaced by moral *sublimity* (*Erhabenheit*), which finds expression in aesthetic sublimity, and in which the intense experience of glory of the younger Kant is preserved in a wholly positive way. The celebrated sentence in the 'Conclusion' to the 'Critique of Practical Reason' ('Two things fill the mind with a sense of admiration and awe which is ever fresh and ever deepening, the more frequently and persistently it is concerned with them: the star-filled sky above me and the moral law within me . . .; I see them before me and I associate them directly with the consciousness of my existence',[3] can be understood only if we know Kant's growing admiration for the star-filled sky in the *Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* (1755), a work, full of pathos, which was dedicated to the King of Prussia, where we similarly read in the 'Conclusion': '. . . the view of a star-filled sky on a clear night [gives] a kind of pleasure which only noble souls can know. In the universal stillness of Nature and of the senses, the hidden cognitive faculty of the imperishable spirit speaks an ineffable language and conveys inarticulate concepts which cannot be described but only experienced'.[4] Prior to this, he writes: 'The structure of the world inspires in us a state of silent wonder on account of its immeasurable grandeur and the infinite variety and beauty which radiates from it on all sides. When the idea of all this perfection touches the imagination, then the intellect is seized by another kind of ravishment as it reflects on how so much splendour, so much grandeur flows from a single universal rule in an eternal and precise order'.[5] Until the very end, the 'contemplation of the star-filled sky is sublime';[6] it is the example of the 'splendour in which there is something sublime which is at the same time beautiful'.[7] But the young Kant[8] sees in the infinity of the stellar world the process of creation which is never concluded in time or space and which occurs in each present moment; whereas Newton still saw the movement of the constellations as a primal phenomenon which pointed back directly to the guiding hand of the Creator, Kant (and soon after him Lambert and Laplace) takes a step back to the idea of atomistic primal matter, which, however, is understood as energy and is thus of itself the author of its own space.[9] This primal matter is organised

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[2] KU §5 (Vol. 6, 61). *Cf.* §29: The expression 'intellectual beauty or sublimity' is 'not quite correct because these are aesthetic forms of representation, which, if we were mere intelligences . . . would not be found in us at all' (6, 136).

[3] KpV, conclusion (5, 302).

[4] ThH III, conclusion (2, 421–422).

[5] ThH II, 7 (2, 353).

[6] KU (6, 135).

[7] A I, 2 §71 (1, 435).

[8] Since the later Kant reduces the aesthetically sublime sight of the sky to what is truly seen by the sense, excluding that which the understanding presumes to read into this sight: KU (6, 135).

[9] Kant had begun in his first work from this Leibnizian concept of power: 'Thoughts concerning the true estimation of the living powers and the evaluation of the proofs which Herr von Leibniz and other mechanicists have used in the controversy' (1746). The powers bring about their own space: §9 and 10 (2, 30–32); thus 'the dimension of the extension will derive from the laws in accordance with the substances, thanks to their essential powers, seek to unite themselves'. Thus still in ThH II, 7 (2, 355): '. . . the coexistence which makes the space by binding the substances through mutual dependencies', and in the *Monadologia physica* (1756), Proposition 6: 'Monas spatiolum praesentiae suae definit non pluralitate partium suarum substantialium, sed sphaera activitatis . . .' (the monad defines the little space of its presence, not by the plurality of its substantial parts, but by the sphere of activity) (4, 63).

within the universe purely by the natural laws of attraction and repulsion, forming a central body together with the spheres which orbit around it, and in an unending process (because the extension of matter and of space is infinite) gradually draws sphere after sphere into its ordering movement. This step beyond Newton,[10] whereby matter has been given the power to bring itself progressively from chaos into order, seems to Kant to be far more worthy of God, especially when the general qualities of Nature, which is 'fruitful with fruits both perfect and beautiful', do not form a system enclosed within themselves, but 'harmonise well with the interests of men and the glorification of the qualities of God' in such a way that the worlds of Nature and of spirit 'must have their common origin in a single intellect as the ground and the source of all beings'.[11] 'But in a mechanical form of explanation the beauty of the world is glorified no less than the revelation of omnipotence'.[12]

The particular perspective which characterises Kant and which links him to Leibniz (although Kant goes beyond him) is the thought that matter at its (fiery) central point is at its most dense,[13] and then, as it moves from one orbiting sphere to the next, becomes looser and finer so that life-forms which inhabit the (now habitable) spheres,[14] from Mercury and Venus to the Earth and Mars, Jupiter and Uranus, must have ever finer bodies and thus a higher state of intellectual life.[15] A further consequence is that 'sensuality' and 'confused ideas' submerged in matter come to predominate on those spheres which are closest to the sun, while a precarious balance exists between senses and spirit on Earth and Mars and, on the bigger planets, it is spirit which gains the upper hand, for which reason the cause of sin appears to diminish or even to be destroyed.[16] Because the creative process is progressively unending,[17] and because life moves on stage by stage by virtue of the infinite 'fertility' of Nature[18] and approaches the Godhead asymptotically[19] so that the kingdom of God is progressively revealed within Creation and 'the Godhead Itself appears . . . gloriously . . . in all creatures',[20] the human spirit can look with confidence, 'even with a kind of pleasure' into 'these terrible convulsions', cosmic peaks and troughs;[21] indeed, it can endure the fact that the worlds which are involved in the process of becoming also grow old progressively and fall back into their suns, because in this way Nature rises like a phoenix from the deaths of the worlds, as the suns gain new regenerative strength.[22]

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[10] ThH II, 8 (2, 390). [11] *Ibid.* 384, *cf.* III (417).

[12] *Ibid.* 389.

[13] *Ibid.* III (411).

[14] *Ibid.* (411).

[15] *Ibid.* (412). So that 'the perfection of the world of spirits . . . should grow and develop in a correct sequence of stages according to the proportion of their distances from the sun' (413).

[16] *Ibid.* (419–420).

'The fully developed world is consequently hemmed in between the ruins of Nature [once again destroyed] and the chaos of nature [as yet] unformed'.[23] This is of course a feeling for the world which leads far away from Leibniz and the Enlightenment and which even anticipates extreme experiences of insecurity manifest in the 19th and 20th centuries. In a truly Enlightenment manner, Kant wishes to view the 'inadequacies' and threats, which he sees in the fertility of Nature, from the divine point of view, as 'total security',[24] for 'the inadequacies themselves are a sign of superabundances'.[25] It is the Platonic-Augustinian vision of that universe 'which is perfect even with its left-hand side': 'It is the same unlimited fertility . . . which has produced the inhabited heavenly spheres, as well as the comets, the serviceable mountains and dangerous cliffs, the habitable landscapes and the bare deserts, the virtues and the vices'.[26]

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[17] *Ibid.* II, 7 (356f.). 'Creation is never accomplished. It has indeed once begun, but it will never cease' (362).

[18] The word returns again and again (361, 365, where he speaks also of the 'unexhausted capacity of generation').

[19] Conclusion of II (381).

[20] *Ibid.* III (413).

[21] *Ibid.* II, 7 (367).

[22] *Ibid.* (370).

[23] *Ibid.* (368).

[24] *Ibid.* (371).

[25] *Ibid.* (390).

[26] *Ibid.* II, 8 (400).

But it is Nature which needs death as the increase of life and as the fertiliser for life, which in its sun-kernel must be an immense combustion which cannot be approached by any living thing, as Kant depicts it for us in a description which is more than a masterpiece of visionary, Dantesque poetry, but is rather a piece of *Welt-Anschauung* in the manner of Giordano Bruno's *universo*, Goethe's Earth-Spirit (*Erdgeist*) or Nietzsche's all-generating, all-destroying universe:

'With a single glance broad seas of fire can be seen, which send their flames up towards the heavens, raging storms whose violence redoubles that of the flames, storms which, while causing the flames to break their banks, at one moment cover the raised regions of this cosmic body and, in the next, force them back within their boundaries; burnt-out cliffs whose soaring peaks emerge from the flaming gorges and which cause the alternating appearance and disappearance of the sun-spots as they are submerged or exposed by the flooding element of fire; thick clouds of steam, which smother the fire and which, fanned by the violence of the winds, form dark rain clouds, which then disgorge fiery squalls pouring from the heights of the fixed terrain of the sun into the flaming valleys as showers of burning rain; the crashing of the elements, the rubble of burnt-out matter and Nature in mortal combat with is own destruction, Nature which with the most horrendous condition of its own devastation effects the beauty of the world and the profit of creatures.'[27]

Kant does not want us to see the Godhead in this cosmic centre, or even merely 'a God-like Being';[28] he wants to sing the praises of the fortunate soul 'which, seated upon a height amongst all the tumult of the elements and the ruins of Nature, can see the devastations . . . roar past at all times as if beneath its feet'.[29] But it is only by chance that he takes so great an interest in earthquakes, in the empty space beneath our feet, and the 'maze of multifarious passages' through all of which 'a blazing fire' passes,[30] and interest too in a theory according to which yet more volcanic craters should be artificially created in order to give air to the fire that presses against the earth's thin crust from within,[31] since the fire 'is perhaps increasingly gaining the upper hand beneath the uppermost layer of crust . . . and is already nibbling away at the foundations of the highest vault'?[32] In addition, the enthusiastic analogies drawn with regard to the infinity of other worlds and their similarly infinite evolutions are close to what Kant will condemn ten years later (1766) in Swedenborg as the *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, summoning metaphysics back to the small land with many boundaries which it can oversee and (with 'honest Candide') cultivate in a responsible manner.[33]

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[27] *Ibid.* II, 7 (377–378).

[28] *Ibid.* (379).

[29] *Ibid.* (370–371).

[30] Second *Erdbebenschrift* (1756) (2, 484–485).

Leibniz had solved the difficulty which metaphysics experiences in coming to terms with modern natural science by the master stroke of his vertical intersection which lends all monadic worldly being a quantitative (exact scientific) and a qualitative (metaphysical) dimension. This was possible, apart from other questionable matters (such as phenomenism and prestabilized harmony), only on condition of an essentialistic understanding of Being as 'essence' or, in other terms, as a concept which is either distinct or confused. In the *Inquiry into the Distinctions of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morals* (1764), Kant relinquishes this parallelism between science and philosophy in so far as he demands for the latter its own ideal of clarity which can no longer be imitated by exact science (mathematics): while exact science can proceed synthetically with self-constructed definitions, metaphysics can only analyse our given experiences of reality by resolving confused knowledge analytically (or 'phenomenologically' as we would say today).[34] In spite of such modesty of method, Kant does not at first hesitate to portray the possibility of the step from this analysis of experience to the positing of an

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[31] Third *Erdbebenschrift* (2, 530–531).

[32] The question whether the earth grows older, consider from a physical point of view (2, 467–468).

[33] 1, 156, 160.

[34] 4, 282f.

'absolutely necessary Being', although it is of the kind which he had outlined shortly before in his work, *The Sole Possible Proof for the Demonstration of the Existence of God* (1763): i.e. not from the contingency of human existence (for what does human existence mean in this context?—it is not the predicate of a thing but only its absolute position, which the scholastic essentialists described as *extra causas*), but *a priori* from the concept of possibility: is it not impossible that nothing should exist, for otherwise there would not be any possibility, which however does exist, even if I think away all worldly being. But that, the elimination of which would also eliminate all possibility, possesses necessary existence.[35] This idea implies an experience of Being, of course, which permits existence to be eliminated, even if only theoretically, while 'possibility' still remains, with the result that the superiority of possibility then points to an absolute existence and, at the same time, to a form of thought which conceives only of 'what is possible', whether it exists or not. This late-scholastic, Descartian, Leibnizian essentialism pervades Kant's thought all the more because the phenomenism which follows from it becomes for Kant the most pressing philosophical problem on account of the English empiricists and sceptics; neither Leibniz nor Hume nor even Kant is primarily interested in the reality of the 'external world': everything turns on the importance of mental knowledge and of the 'objectivity' or 'reality' of the concept. The reason why there remains an unknowable thing *an sich* in Kant's critical solution, despite the guarantee of this objectivity, has less to do with a conceptually unresolved remnant in Being itself than with the subjective experience of receptivity, which for the time being remains as the irreducible primal phenomenon of knowledge, until the absolute idealists take the necessary steps for the reduction even of this.

2. THE CRITICAL RECALL AND NEGATIVE THEOLOGY

Could the philosopher not have contented himself with the point of view of the *Inquiry into the Distinctness of the Principles*? Could he not have allowed mathematics its formal triumph, and withdrawn as philosopher to the other, his own, kind of certainty and developed a phenomenology of finitude, with an *a priori* proof of God in the background and, at its side, the foundation of morality in 'feeling' (of value and obligation) in the manner of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson?[36] But that was not enough for Kant; for how would the modest empiricist and analytical work of reason relate to the grandiose *a priori* synthesis of mathematics? And how was a reason of this kind capable of entertaining an *a priori* proof for the existence of God? And how does this (very problematical) proof of God relate finally to the moral sentiment of absolute obligation? All this demanded a far more consistent architectonics, which Kant is determined to provide for the very first time in the consciousness that while the history of philosophy 'offers edifices', they are 'only in ruins'.[37]

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[35] 4, 129f.

'Mathematics is the outstanding example of a form of pure reason which develops happily of itself without the aid of experience. Examples are infectious . . . with regard to the same capacity', which is reason itself.[38] But if mathematics possesses in space a medium of *a priori* sense experience in which it demonstrates, though solely by means of quantitative elements, 'the self-generation, so to speak, of our intellect (together with reason), without first being impregnated by experience',[39] then the philosopher, who possesses true knowledge of qualitative reality only when he works upon the *a posteriori* experience of the senses (*omnis cognitio incipit a sensu*),[40] may not allow himself to be dislodged from this. The manner of human knowing, the site of human truth, is the interrelationship between the 'chance' experience of the senses (mediated by the cognitive forms of space and time) and the 'necessary' related processes of ordering within the cognitive faculty. This is an interrelationship which can be graded in a number of synthesis—simple perception and productive imagination, the phenomenal form of sense and category, the total objective unity of experience and the total unity of consciousness which grounds and connects it; but these can never supersede this reciprocity,[41] only deepen it. Experience becomes human only within the illumining intellect; but the 'reason' of this intellect recognises the inner finitude of this light, without being able to broaden it into an infinity of true knowing. It is 'burdened with questions which it cannot reject, for they are posed to it from the very nature of reason itself, and which it cannot answer either, for they exceed all the powers of human reason'.[42] Kant now dares to clarify this paradoxical situation by recourse to an even more paradoxical analogy which of necessity provokes contradiction: 'If I imagine the surface of the earth (as it appears to the senses) to be like a plate, then I cannot know how far it extends'. But if (with Columbus) I have got as far as establishing by experience that it is a sphere, 'then I can also determine from even one small section . . . the diameter and, on the strength of this, calculate according to *a priori* principles and know the entire limits of the earth, i.e. of its surface area'.[43] In the same way, 'our reason is not a plain of indeterminable dimensions . . ., but must rather be compared with a sphere, whose radius can be deduced from the curve of the arc of its surface (*a priori* to the nature of synthetic principles), but from which one can also state with certainty the content and the delimitation of the same'.[44] A form of reason, therefore, which experiences and even calculates its own finitude, an experience which is far less 'Copernican' than 'Columbian'. Or which is also a version of that experience of Being mentioned above which is located 'between the ruins of Nature which has been destroyed and the chaos of Nature not yet formed'. Although there are *a priori* synthetic judgments of understanding (a fact that wards off scepticism), there are no *a priori* synthetic judgments of reason (so that every form of theoretical metaphysics becomes impossible); although reason erects 'secure principles', it does so 'never more than indirectly' by relating the intellectual concepts 'to something quite accidental, namely potential experience'.[45] It is a world of reason which is enclosed within itself but which is also aware of its own indeterminate situation: 'Here we do indeed see philosophy in a precarious position which is supposed to be secure, although it is supported neither by anything in Heaven nor by anything on Earth'.[46]

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[36] Kant mentions the latter explicitly at the end of the text: 4, 312.

[37] KrV II, 4 (3, 639). Already in 1763, Kant had spoken of metaphysics as a 'bottomless abyss' and a 'dark ocean without shore and without lighthouses' (4, 115).

[38] KrV II, 1, 1 (3, 543).

[39] *Ibid.* II, 1, 2 (579).

[40] First sentence of the introduction to KrV (3, 35).

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[41] The principle is expressed clearly for the first time in the last pre-critical text, *De mundi sensibilis atque intelligibilis forma et principiis* (1770) (4, 327–368).

[42] First sentence of the preface to the first edition of KrV (6, 690).

[43] KrV II, 1, 2 (3, 575).

[44] *Ibid.* 3, 577.

If reason did not understand the finite nature of its cognitive faculty, and if there were not in this an act of 'peaceful self-gratification' with a 'limited but indisputable possession',[47] 'the sole value of all philosophy: Not to discover truth . . . so much as to protect against error', in spite of its 'irrepressible desire to find solid ground somewhere beyond the limits of its experience',[48] then it would not truly be reason, it would not be, in Thomist terms, a *reflexio completa*. But the fact that in this process of taking the measure of itself it no longer knows itself as the faculty of absolutely transcendent Being (as is always the case in the classical period, in the Middle Ages and still somehow in Descartes), but also not as the faculty which causes the generation from itself of all that exists (as later in Fichte and Hegel), because the indispensable half of perception in it is receptive: all this gives the whole dimension of 'transcendentality' in Kant a hybrid character which at no point offers itself unambiguously to interpretation. On the one hand reason, in order to be reason, must perceive the finitude of its theoretical knowledge in

[45] KrV II, 1, 1 (3, 560).

[46] This principle, uttered by the practical reason, holds good first and especially of the theoretical reason. GMS 2 (5, 55).

[47] KrV II, 1, 2 (3, 581).

[48] *Ibid.* II, 2 (3, 600–601).

order to pass beyond it; on the other hand it cannot achieve this as 'pure reason', for it has no experience of that which is beyond the senses and thus no means of objectifying it, but has only unverifiable 'ideas'.

Now according to Kant, this antinomic structure of reason should compel man to leave the field of theory for that of praxis in order to win ontically and by action, in venture and in self-commitment, what he cannot achieve by conceptual and contemplative means—and yet what the nature of reason demands that he must achieve. Herein lies the value, still viewed entirely in Enlightenment terms, of an enforced self-limitation. 'Everything which Nature orders, is good for some purpose. Even poisons serve the purpose of eradicating other forms of poison which are produced by our own fluids, and these should therefore not fail to be included in a complete collection of medicines'.[49] Metaphysics, an area barred to theoretical reason, is not only permitted to practical reason but is even forcefully implied by it, on account of the fact that practical reason can only reach an understanding of itself when transcendent (not transcendental!) presuppositions apply.[50] But the fact that it was not permitted to theoretical reason to be a faculty for the apprehension of Being in general (in whatever way we define the delimitation of the precise object of a 'finite reason'), means for practical reasons that it can only 'postulate' its transcendent presuppositions (because it cannot prove them theoretically), and indeed can do so only on the basis of its own dimensions, as these reveal themselves in its self-apprehension as absolute obligation. But this now means that it is the inner *sublimity* of reason which, despite all its finitude, has penetrated to the Infinite, which reveals God to it, and not for instance God's own sublime glory, which reason in its pure form cannot perceive.

This form of thought points back without doubt to negative theology both classical and Christian. God (together with those human qualities which belong to His realm: eternal decision-making in freedom, eternal existence in immortality) is beyond all superficial familiarity the more profoundly Unknown; in all His revealedness, He remains more profoundly concealed. Since this was the expression of the *analogia entis*, it was not put in question or superseded by the Christian revelation, but rather comes to perfection in it. After all the rationalistic forms of scholasticism and neoclassicism, but also after the metaphysics of spirit in the wake of Leibniz, Kant's critical summoning back brings with it a cleansing and a liberation. But it occurs at a late point in history. Leibniz' vertical intersection through all existing things (quantity—exact science, and quality—metaphysics) has the consequences that setting the limits of natural science automatically means setting the limits also of theoretical metaphysics. The marrying of these two (in the philosophy of spirit) led to phenomenism: even metaphysics 'receives' (in its receptivity) only phenomena, not Being. This is why the practical faculty, when it opens up the way to the Absolute, cannot mediate any objective ('external') knowledge, and if religion exists at all, it can do so only '*within* the limits of pure reason'. The intersection, which in Leibniz was aimed at the highest synthesis (of exact and religious knowledge), now cuts man in half: since he can no longer recognise God objectively as the 'Wholly Other' (and thereby indeed as the 'Non-Other'), the positing of God in the ethical law with its categorical imperative does not lead to a making-present which corresponds (even non-objectively) to the human cognitive faculty. Once again the lateness of the project becomes evident: on the one hand the echo of Ockham's and Luther's mistrust towards the excesses of the whole Reason; but even more clearly the philosopher appears, against his will, to be bound to the form of knowledge which is that of the natural sciences, as being normative for all forms of rational knowledge: the categorical ordering of phenomenal world-matter, knowledge therefore as domination, without any consideration of what it is that 'appears' (since this is in itself unrecognisable) or *why* anything should appear at all. For the category of the 'Why' (causality) merely serves to impose order upon what has already become manifest and is thus not competent to explore beyond this level (the third and fourth antinomies of pure reason).[51] When to know means to dominate, then of course God remains that which is definitively indomitable, and thus unknowable. Under this condition, which however introduces a significant distinction, Kant takes his place among the great representatives of negative theology, echoing in fact Anselm's precise formulation (*rationabiliter comprehendit incomprehensibile esse*)[52] when he says that reason 'cannot render comprehensible' the freedom from contingency of its practical law 'in its absolute necessity ... and so we do not comprehend the practical absolute necessity of the moral imperative, *but we comprehend its incomprehensibility* [and thus the sign of God], which is all that can fairly be demanded of a philosophy which presses on in its principles to the very limits of human reason'.[53]

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[49] *Ibid.* II, 1, 2 (3, 564).

[50] GMS 2 (5, 56).

When Kant says that we can still speak with justification in the 'tone of a firm faith', even if we have been 'obliged to give up' the language of knowledge,[54] then this faith as 'the pure faith of reason'[55] is again to be compared with Neoplatonic πίστις as the highest form (beyond knowledge) of devotion to the Deity. This 'pure faith of reason' or 'religious faith' (Jaspers: philosophical faith) is the highest interpreter of the faith of the Church: it posits that which stands over and against itself and which is essential to it in the ethical self-apprehension of man. But Kant is always concerned that the postulates of practical reason (God, freedom, immortality) should not appear as ('psychological', 'empirical') needs on the basis of inner (religious) 'experiences'—such things are merely forms of enthusiasm. In order to make this distinction clear, he calls them 'transcendental':[56] the pure conditions of the possibility of the ethical act, where the latter is understood in its totality. To the same end, Kant distinguishes time and again between the pure and the empirical ego: the former is nothing other than the unity of perception, the subject of thought, pure spontaneity, while the latter is the experience of self, and thereby the object of empirical perception by the inner senses:[57] and Kant warns against self-encounter of this kind. But this distinction, which has its own good reasons, suffers from a systematic handicap, for what man as a natural being experiences, in his experience of the external world for instance, in his contact with his fellows, is, as such, not the object of metaphysics, which begins only when the transcendental standpoint is taken.[58] This 'purification' of philosophy from all empirical experience turns transcendentalism into an unadulterated formalism.

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[51] KrV I, Dialektik II, 2, 2, 2 (3, 354f., 418f.).

[52] *Cf.* Vol. II, p. 228 (Eng. tr.).

[53] GMS 3 (5, 101).

[54] KrV II, 1, 2 (3, 565).

[55] RGV 3, 5 (6, 516).

[56] KrV II, 2, 1 (3, 605).

3. THE ETHICAL-AESTHETIC SUBLIME

THE ETHICAL SUBLIME. No one, with the exception of Eckhart, has conceived with such clarity of the essence of moral freedom as the self-apprehension of the spirit-person and has held to this idea with such persistence as did Kant.[59] And it was by this act, which he though to align with religion, even with Christianity (and against everything that belongs to the ethical eudaemonism of the Enlightenment), that he released the pantheistic speculation of Fichte and Schelling. The central point of morality cannot in its purity be approached 'by any example',[60] nor can it be superseded by anything, even by religion (rather religion can originate only from this central, innermost point):[61] this is where that 'synthetic *a priori* judgment' occurs (of which at a theoretical level not pure reason but only understanding, in opposition to sense experience, was capable); first in so far as this free self-apprehension removes (inner-ethically) the distinction between obligation (*Sollen*) and desire (*Wollen*),[62] and second because the existence of God emerges *a priori* (in the ethical-religious sense) in the absolute character of the moral imperative.[63] Just as in Plato and Plotinus the eros must raise and purify itself until it loves and strives for the good only for the sake of the good, and as in the 'metaphysics of the saints' from Eckhart and Tauler to Ignatius and Fénelon the detachment and indifference of *amour pur* becomes perfect as love solely for the Beloved, in the same way Kant demands the performance of good for the sake of the good, without a primary consideration of happiness or goal or reward. It is not the material coincidence of commandment and deed ('legality') which serves as the measure here, but only the formal acting from duty ('morality'). Man's understanding of the freedom from ends which is characteristic of the good brings him to an understanding of himself as his own end: in this moment he is 'released from the womb of Nature' (which can be a paradise in its own way: Rousseau is right only thus far) in order then to 'fall' into freedom, the freedom, that is, to apprehend himself—in the choice of the good, and in submission to its law.[64] The fact that the good appears as an imperative for many shows that obligation does not from the outset coincide with desire: 'Thus there are no imperatives for a *divine*, or indeed for a *sanctified* will; "having to" is out of place here because "wanting to" is necessarily of itself in harmony with the law'.[65] But man in history must first actualise himself as his own end (and thus himself as person) by apprehending that which is truly its own end (the good) and identifying himself with it in an act of obedience; though this, since it is a matter of a human deed within the world, happens in such a way that in his action he presupposes in his fellow-man this identity of obligation as the measure of his action: 'Act in such a way that the humanity both in your own person and in the person of everyone else serves as an end for you and never as a means'.[66]

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[57] A I 1 §4 (1, 305 n., 303f.); §7 (314).

[58] 'The question whether I as a thinking being have cause to accept, apart from my own existence, the existence of a totality of other beings (called "world") which stand in fellowship with me . . . is not anthropological, but merely (!) metaphysical': (A I, 1 §2 (1, 300). Or: 'Ultimately all moral philosophy rests on its pure part, and when it is applied to man, it borrows nothing at all from the knowledge of man (anthropology)': GMS, preface (5, 11).

[59] Kant speaks of this as a 'disgusting hodge-podge': GMS 2 (5, 36).

[60] *Ibid.* 2 (5, 47).

[61] KU, Allg. Anm. (6, 395).

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[62] Therefore the categorical imperative is 'a synthetic-practical principle *a priori*': GMS 2 (5, 49 and note: the obligation cannot be deduced analytically from the act of willing, 'for we do not have such a perfect will').

[63] RGV, preface (6, 406, note).

[64] *Presumed beginning of the history of mankind* (1786) (1, 277f.).

[65] GMS 2 (5, 41).

This is curious: from the distinction between the ego which knows obligation and the good which is obligatory there springs in an elemental way the reality of the 'other' (whose self-intention is just as radical as my own); while the eudaemonists are all 'practical egoists'; 'pluralism', the way of thinking 'which is not to see oneself as being the whole world, but to see oneself and to behave as a citizen of the world', is opposed here to egoism.[67] The same event whereby I determine upon being myself makes of me a fellow-man in the ethical and altruistic sense. By apprehending myself through respect for the good,[68] and by making myself an object of this *respect*,[69] on account of my own possession of *value*, I base my action on respect for the value of my fellow-man. The logical generality of this postulate is at the same time of internal necessity a sociological one. Kant puts it nicely: '*Doing good* is duty . . . If it is said: You should *love* your neighbour as yourself, then this does not mean: You should (first of all) love and (then) on account of this love you should do good. What it means is this: Do good to your fellow-man, and this doing good will effect an altruistic love (as practical fulfilment of the inclination towards doing good in general) in you!'[70]

But now, as we have already shown, religion springs from the synthetic element in ethics; only in so far as I *obey* the law, do I become ethically autonomous. The law will exist *within* me if, and as long as, I acknowledge it to exist *above* me. The attribution of identity of the *sacred will* to himself or to man in his historical occurrence, occurs so little to Kant that he postulates rather an unbridgeable gulf at the outset:

[66] *Ibid.* 2 (5, 59).

[67] A I 1 §2 (1, 300).

[68] 'The feeling for the inappropriateness of our capacity to attain an idea which is a law for us, is respect': KU §27 (6, 119).

[69] MS II, *Anfangsgründe der Tugendlehre*, introduction d (5, 539).

[70] *Ibid.* 5, 538–539.

that 'radical form of evil' which does not exist in man by natural derivation (since it is a matter of freedom) and which is enigmatic and inexplicable. Neither the life of the senses as such is evil, nor is reason, nor is the combination of both which is natural in man a fateful one (as if the natural love of the self were bound to oppose the ethical principle), and yet in practice there exists in him an inexplicable disorder as far as the orientation and subordination of the senses to the spirit is concerned. Kant agrees with St Paul: 'There is no difference here; they are all sinners. There is no one who does good (following the spirit of the law), not even one'.[71] Thus morality and religion will represent a continuous struggle for the victory of the good (or the kingdom of God) over the bad in man and in mankind, in an eternal approximation[72] to the idea of the saint whereby an 'ideal image' 'descends' from God and works as grace (embodied in Christ) together with the permanent and struggling principle of the good in man. Although there is an 'imputation by grace', a 'justification' ('as consolation and hope, not as certainty') which derives from that very ideal image to which we contract ourselves in our actions, and which can thereby gain a final predominancy over our 'disordered heart',[73] the very fact that the idea of a 'representation' for the sinner intervenes here in a mediating role, shows clearly enough that a simple identification of obligation and desire has no place in Kant's religious ethics.

Rather, Kant desires at all times to *humble* the human spirit in order to raise it up again in a pure way. In *The Natural History of the Sky* men are 'humbled by the knowledge of their own baseness'[74] at the sight of more highly developed spiritual beings on the higher planets. They are also 'humbled' by great natural catastrophes, such as earthquakes,[75] and man's impotence in the face of nature's superior power despite all his technical resources 'leads him finally to the humbling memory, from which he should begin, that he remains only a man'.[76] But the true 'humiliation' for man is the critique of pure reason, which requires a constant 'discipline', which needs 'as it were a system of caution and self-examination' in order not to exceed its own limits in an excess of enthusiasm.[77] For it is 'humbling for human reason that it can accomplish nothing in its pure application'.[78] Therefore spontaneous 'humiliation' also belongs to the 'purest moral attitude', linked with 'gratitude' and 'obedience';[79] the optimism of moral autonomy, as Kant understands it, altogether retains this perpetual premise and, precisely in so far as it is the consciousness of duty, is not in contradiction to it.

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[71] RGV 1, 1–4 (6, 419–448).

[72] '. . . that which in us in our life upon earth, and perhaps in all coming ages and in all worlds, is never more than merely in the process of *becoming*, viz. being a man pleasing to God . . .': RGV 2, 1 (6, 484–485).

[73] *Ibid.* 470f., 483f.

[74] 2, 412.

[75] 2, 483.

Contrary to the widespread view, Kant greatly esteems the incarnation of morality within social custom, the Platonic-Aristotelian ἐθίζεσθαι (the moralisation of the senses) and not only in the cultural but also in the moral sense, as his considered response to Schiller shows, who believed that he had produced something new in his ideal of an aesthetic harmony between duty and inclination, dignity (*Würde*) and grace (*Anmut*: charm). The question, according to Kant, is only whether the highest ideal can lie in such an aesthetic harmony (which as it were yokes together duty and inclination in order to create a third principle common to both), or whether the absolute character of duty and thus its sublimity, might not in this way be forgotten: 'I am happy to confess that I cannot allow the *concept of duty* any *grace* on account of its dignity. For it contains unconditional necessity, to which grace stands in direct opposition. The majesty of the law (like that on Sinai) fills us with awe (not with shyness, which repels, nor with allurement, which invites intimacy), which awakes the *respect* of the underling for his lord but which, in our case, since the latter lies within us ourselves awakens *a sense of the sublimity* of our own nature, which ravishes us more than any thing of beauty. But virtue, that is the determination to perform one's duty exactly, is also beneficial in its effects, which are greater than those which nature or art can achieve in the world, and the glorious image of humanity, erected in this its form, permits the companionship of the graces . . . But when we consider the gracious effects which virtue would have in the world, if it found access everywhere, then reason which is morally oriented immediately involves the senses (through the powers of the imagination)'. And when we enquire concerning the 'aesthetic constitution', the state of mind in which man is supposed to perform his duty, then, according to Kant, 'an answer is hardly necessary': 'the joyful heart' in the performance of duty is a 'sign of the authenticity of a virtuous spirit'.[80] The mention of Sinai is not without significance: the appearance of the absolute nature of the commandment is 'sublimity' in the moral sphere while, in the religious sphere, it is glory, *kabod*. 'When morality recognises an object of the highest esteem in the sanctity of its law, then at the level of religion, in its highest cause which is the fulfilment of those laws, it sets up (!) an object of *adoration* and thus appears in its own majesty'.[81]

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[76] 2, 531.

[77] KrV II, 1 (3, 541–542).

[78] *Ibid.* II, 2 (3, 600).

[79] KU §86 note (6, 351).

Kant speaks in all seriousness of this 'adoration'. If he is full of mistrust of those practices of prayer which are useful in religions, 'thought to be the means of grace', and calls them 'superstitious illusion', because God has no need of formal declarations of the desires and feelings of the one who prays and prayer does not 'serve' him, and further because man believes that he has achieved something with his prayers while in reality it is a question of realising the good in practical living, then Kant demands in place of this the 'spirit of prayer, which can and should take place in us "without ceasing"', and which 'through the *contemplation* of the deep wisdom of the divine creation in the smallest of things and of its majesty in the greatest' effects in us the mood both of 'adoration' and of 'a power which lifts the soul', 'so that in the face of this words must vanish like empty noise'.[82] In Kant this 'contemplation' bypasses all that is 'statutory' in the positive religions and is transfixed by the mystery of *Da-Sein* (existence), which he sought to defend from the attacks of pure reason by his critique and, by his ethics, to expose to the bold enterprises of practical reason. He makes the decisive statement concerning his intent when he says, 'Enquiry into the inner nature of all forms of belief which refer to religion necessarily comes up against a *mystery*, that is against something *sacred*, which, though it is familiar (*gekannt*) to each individual, cannot be publicly recognised (*bekannt*), which is to say generally proclaimed. As something which is *sacred* it must be a (moral) object of reason and must also be capable of being privately counted adequate for its practical application, and yet, as something which is *mysterious*, not so for its theoretical application: because it would then have to be communicable to everyone and would have to be capable of being recognised outwardly and publicly'.[83] But Kant also knows of the urge in man to make concrete for himself the absolute and thus divine mystery of Being in a 'carved image', through and beyond which he may also glimpse that which hovers before him in its mystery: here there is the justice and the limitation, the necessity and detestability of natural religion: 'It sounds questionable, but it is in no way reprehensible to say that everyone *makes his own God*, indeed, . . . must make one in order to honour in him *the God who made him*. For in whatever way one being is proclaimed and portrayed as a *god* by another, or when even such a being manifests to another in this way (if this is possible), then the latter must first of all hold it up against his ideal in order to ascertain whether he is justified in regarding it and honouring it as a god. There cannot therefore be a religion based on pure revelation, which in its purity lacks for its foundation any *prior* concept as a criterion of judgment, for then all divine worship would be the worship of idols'.[84] Thus we may sum up in conclusion: the absolute Good is manifest within the sphere of practical reason in me (autonomy) and above me (sublimity, which can only be approached and never attained); at the 'religious level' of morality, this absolute Good in and above me appears as mystery (beyond all the carved images of theoretical reason), which in its glory (Sinai) demands adoration, but of which I carry within myself such a consciousness (autonomy) that I can measure all that is statutory-religious against it. But this means that there can be nothing 'supernatural' for Kant (despite all his genuine consciousness of mystery) in the sense that it could be located fundamentally beyond the human spirit in its opening as practical reason. Thus it is man who (in his freedom, which touches and contains the Absolute) finally measures out the space between himself and God: 'There is something in us which we can never cease to wonder at . . . that which raises *mankind* in its concept to a value which one would not suppose to exist on the basis of the *individual* as the object of our experience . . . That we possess the *capacity* to make the great sacrifice of our sensual nature to morality, that we are *capable* of doing what we easily and clearly see that we *ought* to do, this predominance of the *supersensual man* in us over the *sensual man*, the predominance of that man face to face with whom the other is *nothing* (when it comes to conflict), even when the latter in his own eyes is *everything*, this moral structure in us, which is indivisible from our humanity, is the object of the highest *admiration*, which only increases the longer we contemplate this true (and unimagined) ideal: so much so that they are to be forgiven who construe this *supersensual* element in us, on account of its incomprehensibility and its practical nature, to be *supernatural*, that is to be something which neither stands in our power nor is our own possession, but is rather the influence of another and higher spirit; though they are grievously mistaken in this . . .'.[85]

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[80] RGV I, note (6, 423–424). Kant's underlinings. Schiller's reaction to this in the letter to Körner, 18 May 1794.

[81] RGV I, preface (6, 407). Kant's underlining.

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[82] RGV IV, 2 (6, 625–629).

[83] *Ibid.* III, 2 (6, 558–559).

[84] *Ibid.* IV, 2 §1 (6, 594).

It has already been pointed out that Kant is thus renewing in a much profounder way (and in the general context of the

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[85] StF I, 2 (1, 609).

Enlightenment) the concern of Shaftesbury and his school: morality as the criterion of religion. But he adds to this the manner of questioning which belongs to late antiquity, and which was introduced in the image of the 'unfinishable bridge': a human religious project with an orientation towards revelation (since the 'supersensual' element in man opens towards a Divine Absolute), but which serves as the criticism of all revelation on the basis of man's ethico-religious capacity, whereby the whole of positive Christianity (as the highest 'mythical' religion) falls victim to this criticism. With this problem Kant initiates the whole tradition of German Idealist religious philosophy and does so in such a way that *a priori* all theology will be dragged before the judgment seat of philosophy.

THE BEAUTIFUL. If for Kant the core of the person, that which constitutes the 'human' in him or her, is the point where the autonomic-moral opens into the mystery of the relationship of God and man, then it is true also that his aesthetics, as developed in the concluding third critique, which is that of judgment, balances on the concept of the (aesthetically) sublime. But the 'sublime' in its true character becomes comprehensible only in connection with and in contrast to the 'beautiful'. It is the *beautiful* therefore which we must first address.

If theoretical knowledge consisted in the reciprocity of perception and concept in relation to an object, then aesthetic knowledge is that same reciprocity but in relation to the subject. 'We have accordingly two forms of perfection: one that is logical and one that is aesthetic. The first form of perfection obtains when my knowledge coincides with the object, and the second when my knowledge coincides with the subject'.[86] This means in *negative* terms that aesthetic judgment has no 'interest' in the objective existence of the object, and relates to its manifest form 'in a purely contemplative manner'.[87] Yet when this beholding 'pleases' the subject disinterestedly, then 'we *linger* in the contemplation of the beautiful because this contemplation is self-enhancing and self-propagating'.[88] The experience of the beautiful thereby differs from the merely 'pleasant', which arouses a predilection with vested interest for that which gives pleasure; it differs also from the 'true', which is interest in the existence of the object, and from the 'good', which is interest in the *Dasein* of an object or an action. In *positive* terms this means that the judgment of taste makes a secret claim to universal validity, despite its relation to the subject, and thus does not remain purely empirical and subjective as does the judgment of what is appealing to the senses (here, 'Everyone to their own taste' holds true). It touches rather on something in the transcendental structure of the subject, that is, it triggers the 'free play' of the cognitive powers—sensual imagination and intellectual concept—and, affecting them in their inner objective 'harmony', it sets them resonating, the beautiful pleasingly and the ugly displeasingly. This is what accounts for the 'claim to subjective universality'.[89] But it is only the cognitive powers as such which resonate, the understanding only as unity of the concept, without a particular concept being formed (which would immediately lead to 'interest' in the object), and the imagination not found as when receiving a given reality but in its free creative play with it. Therefore this resonating harmony of the cognitive faculty,[90] its 'mood' or 'proportion',[91] also stands in opposition to all forms of the 'schematism' of pure reason,[92] but it derives from a 'deeply hidden ground of illumination in the judgment of forms, which is common to all men'.[93] Thus the aesthetic judgment of taste of the individual is 'suggested' to all, without being able or wishing to be 'imposed' upon all (as is the case with moral judgments).[94] This communicability of feeling for the beautiful implies a 'common sense', and it does so without recourse 'to psychological observations', 'but as the necessary condition of the universal communicability of our knowledge, which must be presupposed . . . in every form of logic'.[95]

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[86] This short formulation stands in the posthumous *Vorlesungen über die Metaphysik*, Erfurt 1821, p. 169. One should note the expression in this of the equilibrium between both forms of knowledge, which for Kant stand *de facto* (in their critical, although quite different limitations) to the left and the right of the practical reason.

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[87] KU 1 §5 (6, 60).

[88] *Ibid.* §12 (6, 76).

[89] *Ibid.* §6 (6, 63).

[90] *Ibid.* §9 (6, 71).

[91] *Ibid.* §21 (6, 96).

[92] KrV, Analytik 2, 1 (3, 152f.).

[93] KU §17 (6, 88).

But now every relation of interest with regard to the object must be set aside in order to isolate the phenomenon fully, that is both *what* the phenomenal thing is in itself (truth) and *what* it is good for (goodness), or whether it corresponds in itself to its own concept (perfection). In thus linking the beautiful with the true and the good, Kant speaks of a beauty which is 'bound' or which 'merely adheres' (*pulchritudo adhaerens*), from which however the distinguishing formal character of 'beauty' does not yet clearly emerge. This occurs only with 'free beauty' (*pulchritudo vaga*), with which a 'consonance of taste with reason, that is of the beautiful with the good' is not presupposed— a consonance however in which 'perfection gains nothing through beauty nor beauty through perfection', despite a reciprocal and accidental 'heightening' of each other,[96] but only the 'form of purposiveness' is presupposed without the concept of a purpose.[97] Pure beauty is *formal* in a double sense here: in so far as it ignores the link between the true and the good (which is unheard-of with respect to the classical, Christian tradition), in order to distil in 'pure' form the concept of the beautiful, and in so far as it correspondingly 'abstracts' (this word is Kant's own)[98] from every object and every ethical interest, in order to enjoy the form, as unrelated and possessing meaning only within itself, with the pure formal harmony of our cognitive powers. In this Kant is without doubt the first theoretician of *abstract art*. Although the scholastics also attempted to expose the distinguishing *ratio* of each transcendental (*unum*, *verum*, *bonum*, *pulchrum*), even when they viewed the *pulchrum* as being *realiter* one with the *bonum*, its distinguishing aspect nevertheless emerged. But there all the transcendentals shared in the common being of which they are the transcendent and universal modalities, which fact served also to distinguish them one from another. This objective communication demands within the field of artistic activity the principle of unification rather than of separation. In Kant the 'transcendentals' relate to the transcendental constitution of reason in its critical self-understanding, and the individual aspect emerges clearly only when we disregard the others. This is so because reason, taken in its purity, *hovers indeterminately* in its finitude (as interrelationship of finite perception and finite concept) and loses every anchorage in in-finite *esse*. Therefore beauty, whose essence is the pure interrelationship of the powers of the subject (an interrelationship which prescinds from the true and the good), possesses exactly the same indefinite character of the finite in itself which, when the rigour of the ethical imperative wanes and is no longer seen, can at some point lead to the pure play of finite existence in nothingness with itself, a play which is not only disinterested and without purpose (*l'art pour l'art*) but also ultimately lacking in meaning.

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[94] *Ibid.* §8 (6, 65f.).

[95] *Ibid.* §21 (6, 97).

[96] §16 (6, 84–86).

[97] *Ibid.* §10–11 (6, 73–75).

[98] *Ibid.* §16 (6, 87).

Because it is the freedom from a specific concept which is the precondition for the beautiful, its universal validity can only be 'by example', the representation not of a knowable content but merely of an 'idea', so that 'the highest pattern, the archetype of taste, is only an idea'.[99] Everything beautiful is only 'the example of a general rule, which cannot be stated'.[100] Thus although regularity, symmetry and so forth can be the 'necessary condition' for the beautiful, they can never be its essence, as Plotinus knew best of all.[101] The true centre of the soul's powers is here the creative play of the imagination, which remains incalculable in concept and which, in theoretical thought, stands at the service of the regulating reason, while 'reason serves the imagination . . . in the free and indeterminately purposive converse of the mind's powers with that which we call beautiful'.[102] Therefore Kant develops his astounding theory of genius, which alone can be the rule of art—despite all demands for technical skills: it is 'Nature' which is the creative agent in genius 'and through the harmonising of its powers', so that 'originality must be its first quality', whose 'products must be models, that is they must have an exemplary character, though not one that functions through imitation', and yet the author 'does not himself know the origin of his ideas, and does not have the power to have these ideas at will or according to his own plan . . . Thus presumably the word "genius" (*Genie*) derives from *genius*, the particular spirit which is given to man at birth and which defends him and guides him and which is the inspiration of those original ideas'.[103] Thus the poet's images *signify* the truth, but they do not permit themselves to be elucidated as concepts; and for the philosopher Kant 'there has perhaps never been anything said which is more sublime' than 'the inscription above the Temple of Isis (of Mother Nature): "I am all that there is, that there has been and that there will be, and no mortal has uncovered my veil"'.[104] Schiller, who makes his youth lift the veil from Saïs and thus become infected with melancholy, and Novalis, who must also raise the veil in order to discover behind it an erotic mystery of identity, possess for Kant too great a knowledge.

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[99] *Ibid.* §17 (6, 88).

[100] *Ibid.* §18 (6, 94).

[101] *Ibid.*, general note to the Analytik (6, 100).

It needs to be stressed concerning the 'adhering beauty' however that its freedom from ends enjoys a particular affinity with man, who alone in Nature possesses himself in moral terms as his own end. But two kinds of idea or ideal can be formed of man: a 'normal idea', which in practice presents his average measure (as of an animal species, in the particularity of the various races, etc.), and for this Kant adduces the aesthetic canons of the Greek sculptors and of the Renaissance (though with their variations on normal expression for the characterisation of psychological personality etc.); and then a 'rational idea', which lies within the moral sphere: 'the visible expression of moral ideas' puts new questions to the artist which have not previously been glimpsed in the understanding of beauty,[105] for here the beautiful must be drawn beyond itself into the form of 'sublimity'.

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[102] *Ibid.* (6, 101).

[103] *Ibid.* §46 (6, 181–182).

[104] *Ibid.* §49 (6, 192–193).

THE AESTHETIC SUBLIME. A glance backwards is called for here. At the beginning of the Christian era, an anonymous treatise. *On the Sublime*, was written with reference to rhetoric which also served to sum up the classical philosophical inheritance. Then the concept disappears. In 1756, the young Edmund Burke published his *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*; the work, in Garve's translation, immediately attracted the, albeit critical, notice of Lessing, Mendelssohn and Herder, and was a stimulus to Kant: already in his early *Observations on the sense of the Beautiful and the Sublime* (1764), and even more in his mature reflections in the *Critique of Judgement*.

The late classical work *Peri Hupsous*[106] also deserves mention in this connection for it too views the aesthetically sublime as being substantially determined by the ethically sublime of the 'elevated attitude of mind' and 'magnanimity'. Truly elevated speech lifts the soul, filling it with such pride and joy as if it had itself invented what it has heard,[107] and this is so because the soul thus becomes aware of its own nature (πρὸς ἃ γεγόναμεν): man is not only introduced into the entire universe (as citizen of the world) as into a great festive gathering in order to participate eagerly in the sporting competitions, 'but in his soul there is an invincible love (ἄμαχος ἔρως) for all that is eternally great and all that is more divine than we are. So not even the universe can satisfy the flights of human vision and thought, but his mind often soars beyond the limits of the world which houses him'. He inclines by nature to the contemplation not of small rivers, but of the Nile, the Danube and the Rhine; the contemplation not of the small lamp, but of the star-filled firmament or of Mount Etna spewing forth rocks and fire.[108] All great men have raised themselves above mortality; all other qualities belong only to the human, while the sublime draws near to divine majesty.[109] But the beautiful and the sublime are not explained on the basis of a polarity but rather of a process of heightening, and so 'a mutal relationship' is striven for,[110] and '*harmonia*' is praised as being 'a wonderful *organon*' of the sublime and the pathetic.[111] Finally, the writer complains that life has become bourgeois and constricted and the world has turned decadent: there is no more room in the world for human greatness and thus for artistic sublimity. At the end of his idealist aesthetic, Hegel too will consign sublimity completely to the (archaic Greek) past.

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[105] *Ibid.* §17 (6, 87–93).

[106] Text and trans. by H. Lebèque: *'Du Sublime'*, Belles Lettres, 2nd edn. 1952; quoted by chapter and paragraph.

[107] VII, 2.

Burke[112] therefore starts something new in so far as he grasps the sensations of the beautiful and the sublime as pure polarities: in the one 'pleasure' (*cf.* Kant's *Lust*) and in the other initially 'pain' (Kant's *Unlust*) on account of something threatening (and thus terrifying), which then in a second phase, when it becomes evident that no direct danger threatens, finds release in 'delight'. Burke removes the ethical from these fundamental aesthetic experiences, as he does sensual desire and utilitarian interest, in so far as pure consciousness is concerned. Meanwhile he interprets the phenomena against the background of a theory of instinctive drives (self-preservation and sociability, Freud's Ego and sexual drive)[113] and interprets them ultimately in a mechanical and physiological way: the slackening of the fibres (love, pleasure)[114] or their tensing (fear, pain).[115] But this materialism is accompanied by a notion of God; if all that is sublime 'is a certain modification of power', which seems to us superior, then we find in the idea of God the greatest heightening of such a power and thus on the part of the creature an insuperable fear of absolute majesty. In the presence of the thought that the universe lies in the hand of the almighty and 'is everywhere filled with His presence', 'we shrink to the diminutive dimensions of our own nature and are as it were destroyed before God'. And when we are heartened by the thought of God's wisdom and mercy and our elemental terror is dissipated by the awareness that God does not threaten us, 'then we rejoice, but with trembling'. Burke quotes not only Horace and Lucretius but also many passages from the Old Testament. It is only with Christianity that talk of the love of God really begins, as the Platonists had only intimations of it, and the other heathens not even that.[116]

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[108] XXXV, 2–4.

[109] XXXVI, 1.

[110] XXXVI, 4.

[111] XXXIX, 1.

[112] Edmund Burke, *Vom Erhabenen und Schönen*, trans. and ed. Friedrich Bassenge, Berlin 1956.

[113] 1, 9 (74f.).

[114] Although the desire in love introduces an element of pain into the pleasure.

[115] 4, 6 (174f.).

Kant's analysis of the beautiful and the sublime owes much to Burke, above all the principle of opposition (instead of mere heightening), which in his transcendental contemplation becomes a polarity between 'proportion' or 'harmony' (between the cognitive faculties: imagination and reason) and a primary 'disproportion' (now between sensuality and rational idea), which is resolved secondarily in a consideration of the nature of man into a higher harmony which has need of inner contrast. The sublime cannot lie in Nature as such, for the mathematical sublime is so only for the imagination, which when it takes a fundamental measure and imagines what will always be greater than it, can no longer find a place for this latter. But the intellect can consider every solar system as an atom in further systems, and here the sublime is transferred to the subject: 'the sublime is that which, in being able to be thought, proves a capacity of the mind which transcends every measure of the senses'.[117] But it is the fact that this 'being able to be thought' also refers to the unknowable ideas, which arise with the nature of man, that first truly throws light on the 'dynamic sublimity' of Nature, since it appears to physical man as an awesome preponderance of power: this terror is countered in some degree by the consciousness of not being directly threatened, and space is created for wonder at the 'sublime' drama of Nature; but ultimately and more profoundly man meets this superior power only in reflection on his own moral nature. The failure of the imagination when it encounters the idea is 'displeasure', but it is precisely this 'displeasure' 'which awakens in us the feeling of our supra-sensual nature, according to which it is purposeful, even the source of delight, to find every norm of sensuality inadequate with regard to the ideas of reason'.[118] Thus 'the subjective play of the powers of the mind . . . is itself shown to be harmonious' through their contrast.[119] Now it is no still, contemplative delight, as was the case with the beautiful, but a 'movement' of the spirit: that which is sublime (*das Erhabene*) is at the same time, as Schiller will say, that which uplifts us (*das Erhebende*).[120]

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[116] 2, 5 (99–107).

[117] KU §25 (6, 111).

And yet this expression of Schiller's goes one step further than Kant. For it is true for the latter that the dynamic sublimity of Nature raises man up to himself by allowing his ethical nature to emerge; and thus that the sublime is located more in man than in Nature.[121] But Schiller does not speak of God any more, whereas Kant at least takes up Burke's idea of God as absolute power as an objection: do we not imagine 'God in His wrath and, at the same time, in His sublimity too, when we imagine Him in the tempest, in the storm, in the earthquake and the like'? 'Here it is not a feeling of the sublimity of our own nature, rather our subjection, our abandonment and the feeling of our own impotence' which appears to be the proper frame of mind. Kant responds to this in accordance with his notion of the religious as the ultimate dimension of the ethical. Against Burke it needs to be said that the response of the creature, which consists entirely of terror at the total superiority of God's power, is by no means a religious one as yet: 'The person who experiences genuine fear . . . is not in the right frame of mind to wonder at the greatness of God . . . Even humility as the unsparing condemnation of his faults . . . is an elevated state of mind'.[122] But against Schiller Kant would still hold to his 'sense of awe at the sublime' which belongs not only to human nature but also to God, with whose sanctity the human will, which is bound to eternal struggle, can never conceive itself to be one. Thus Kant demands that 'the Good, aesthetically judged, must not only be represented as being beautiful but also as being sublime, so that it evokes the feeling of respect (which spurns charm) more than of love and intimate inclination, because human nature does not accord of itself with the Good, but only through the violence which reason inflicts upon our sensual nature'.[123] Despite all the 'Enlightenment within him', Kant does not cross the threshold of German Idealism with its aesthetics of identity, since he refuses to interpret the 'violence' which must be inflicted upon man as a yet higher form of beauty. He retains a Christian sensorium which, however concealed, still has knowledge of the Cross.

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[118] *Ibid.* §27 (6, 120).

[119] *Ibid.* (121).

[120] *Zerstreute Betrachtungen über verschiedene ästhetische Gegenstände* (1793).

[121] KU §28 (6, 125).

d. The Self-Glorification Of The Spirit

1. SCHILLER

With Schiller, that form of Idealism continues which fundamentally transcends the open-ended non-identity of Kant—between phenomenon and the *Ding an sich*, between finite and infinite intellect, and in particular between ethical duty and desire—in Spirit's ultimate conquest of Being, so that all glory of Being now becomes a self-glorification of the Spirit. This marks the end of that philosophical flight which began with Parmenides: the divine standpoint is taken up for the sake of the truth of Spirit, which must ultimately coincide with the absolute freedom of the Spirit. It is Schiller who clearly signals this, although others took the field at the same time. By discovering antiquity for himself as a thinker and poet, though in such a way as to incorporate it into his own philosophy of Spirit, he takes up a position in the stream of modern thought which is opposed to that of Goethe: fruitful complementarity within a common fate. Only Goethe remains ultimately more peacefully contained within that classical principle of comprehensiveness which is *physis*, while Schiller must place man beyond it as the Absolute Spirit in a process of becoming, in that he can live only with reference to an end which he himself constructs.

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[122] *Ibid.* (6, 127).

[123] KU, general note, after §29 (6, 137).

THE FORM OF HIS WORK AND HIS POINT OF DEPARTURE. As a thinker Schiller begins, as did Kant, with Leibniz, whom he understands in terms of pietism and enthusiasm.[1] But the vertical section of the world (devised in order to overcome Descartes and the English and French materialists), which Leibniz extended through all things in order to grasp the world quantitively and materially as well as qualitatively and spiritually, is resolved in the young Schiller's hands (as it will be in those of Jean Paul and the Romantics) into two starkly opposed world-views: on the one hand the day and on the other the night side of the universe, on the one hand Idealism (corresponding to the phenomenism which extends from Descartes to Malebranche), and on the other materialism and radical transience. The abrupt shift from one perspective to the other determines his early lyrics, in particular the odes to Laura.

Since the poetic influence of Klopstock is immense, the pathos of the admiring, moving, adulatory praise of the glory and majesty of God who reigns in the infinite universe initially remains: *The Evening* (1766)[2] multiplies the addresses to God, and Nature is called upon to be silent, thus permitting God to sound through its harp. *The Glory of Creation*[3] leads the poet away like Ganymede into a universe which is alive with God's presence; he often sees laid out before him 'the whole splendour of Creation, the glory,/ which the All-Highest conceived in the solitude of dark eternity' and listens to 'the great song of praise' of Nature which rings forth from the universe 'lost in harmonies/ like a sweet death'. *The Grandeur of the World*[4] is a poetical counterpoint to the young Kant's enthusiasm for infinity in his *Theory of the Heavens*, while *To the Sun*[5] (first draft in 1773) praises the creative light and 'worships its work'. But this mood of worship was enthusiasm in the spirit of Shaftesbury,[6] behind which, unrecognised but of like kind, the greater figure of Giordano Bruno appears. If it is the case that the *Theosophy of Julius*, which is the subject of discussion in the *Philosophical Letters* (1786) between Julius, the idealist, and Raphael, the sceptical thinker, refers back to Schiller's early life and that thus Leibniz and Shaftesbury, in an enthusiastic combination, set the tone, then the existential consequences set out in his youthful dramas must also be taken into consideration in order to balance the ensuing image. In the *Theosophy* we read: 'All the perfections of the universe are unified in God. God and Nature are two forms of greatness which are perfectly alike to each other.'[7] This is the scheme of Plotinus, Erigena and Nicolas of Cusa: the world as the self-manifestation of God is interpreted here unashamedly in terms of identity. There is equally bold talk of both the division of God into the (Leibnizean) universe of spirits and the synthesis of the latter into deity: prismatically 'the Divine Self has divided itself into innumerable sentient substances', whereby 'a Divine Being emerges from the unification of all these substances . . . If it ever pleased the Almighty to destroy the prism, then the dam between itself and the world would collapse and all spirits would . . . bring forth God.'[8] Significantly, Hegel concludes his *Phenomenology of the Spirit* with a quotation from the poem which follows this. Love is the name which the young Schiller gives to this unitive force: 'it is only the reflection of the unique primal power . . . founded on a momentary exchange of personality, an exchange of essences'. The category of the Platonic 'moment' (ἐξαίφνης)[9] causes the universe to appear through the 'cyphers' and 'hieroglyphs' of the cosmos, eros anticipates identity and thus demands total selflessness (*amour pur*), the renunciation of reward and the dedication of one's entire life to the point even of losing it.[10] Is that all only a dream 'perhaps real only in the brain of your Julius'? But then can reality be less than the idea? 'Are my ideas then to be more beautiful than those of the eternal Creator?'[11] It is not the finite, conceptual clothing which is important here, for the vision which is darkly expressed therein is divine, indeed unsurpassable (*id quo majus cogitari non potest*): as ideal-idea in us (as the analytical breakdown of God) it is necessarily 'real-idea' therefore within the 'active omnipotence',[12] and therefore merits 'veneration'.[13]

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[1] Schiller's works quoted from the edition by Fricke-Göpfert-Stubenrauch, Hanser-Verlag, 5 Vols., 3rd edn 1962. The letters according to the critical general edition (F. Jonas, 7 Vols.). Some abbreviations: WL = *Wallensteins Lager*; Picc = *Die Piccolomini*; WT = *Wallensteins Tod*; AW = *Über Anmut und Würde*; EM = *Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*; NSD = *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*. The verse dramas are quoted by the number of verses, the prose dramas by act and scene.

[2] 1, 9.

[3] 1, 43; *cf.* 'Hymne an den Unendlichen': 1, 83.

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[4] 1, 84.

[5] 1, 40.

[6] Schiller came to know him through the mediation of Garve in the school of his first philosophy teacher, Abel.

[7] 5, 352.

[8] *Ibid.*, 353.

But in existential terms the man who wants to see himself and to move within the scheme of identity enters the dialectic of the *Eroici Furori*: eros becomes the gaining of the self as God, and thus self-destruction; but the prismatic analysis of God can be lived and experienced (in the Christian and the Idealist way) as the spontaneous decline of Primal Being and innocence into alienation, revolt and hell. Thus, and especially in a temperament such as Schiller's, the philosophical contradiction (which inheres in all philosophies of identity) necessarily becomes an existential one: it becomes flaming revolt against all that is non-divine, non-autonomous, alien to the Spirit, untrue and unfree in the world order (*The Robbers*), but also the absolutisation of the same contradiction within man himself (the non-identity of ethical imperative and desire which is heightened to a Promethean No to God: in *The Spiritual Libertarianism of Passion*, where God stands accused as a 'Wüterich' and a 'Nero', who feeds Himself on human suffering, because He does not permit the coincidence of duty and inclination).[14]

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[9] The word is everywhere in the section 'Idee': 5, 346f.

[10] 'Aufopferung' 351.

[11] *Ibid.*, 355.

[12] *Ibid.*, 348.

[13] *Ibid.*, 355.

It is exactly here that the primary orientation of the whole form of his work lies. For here two possibilities emerge from a single root. Either man is measured by his 'heroic' greatness, with which he lives out the tension or the split between God's Being and the being of the world (or the ego), which means that the ideal is given the name 'Prometheus'; then the formal, purely dynamic greatness of the hero, of the (original) genius is determinative, and it is virtually of no consequence whether this greatness is represented as rebellious strength or the strength to effect reconciliation and unity. Or the present fact of his 'no longer' or 'not yet' being God prescribes a 'law' for man, the law which is of course that only of his own freedom and liberation, the prescription of his (individual or social) self-realisation, to which he must subordinate himself in order to win the laurels of true spiritual existence. If it was a question in the former case of a static *dynamis* of formal greatness, then in the latter it is a matter of a final dynamism, which forces a 'process' upon man: that of gaining himself through transcending himself. It can be seen here that this second possibility, which will later lead Schiller to Kant, by virtue of its connection with the former possibility constantly serves to distinguish Schiller greatly from Kant, who as a Christian could never genuinely take the Promethean, Brunoesque attitude into consideration, never seriously having thought in terms of a scheme of identity.

If we consider the form of Schiller's work in general from this point of view, then we see that this dialectic causes a rupture at its heart, in a similar fashion to Goethe but for different reasons. The early period (around 1780–1787, with the fading cry of *The Gods of Greece*, 1788, and *The Artist*, 1789) ends with the long-worked-over *Don Carlos*. Then historical and philosophical studies dominate the poetical interregnum until the late period (around 1797–1805) which begins with the similarly long-worked-over *Wallenstein*, and which was then to be followed by plays and poems to the very end. Schiller called these two great cornerpieces of his work 'infelicitous', and the wrestling with their meaning always seemed to him a 'deep crisis'. If we substitute for human greatness the Kantian notion of the sublime, then two forms of the sublime wrestle one with the other: the greatness of the soaring flight (Prometheus) and the greatness of humility, obedience and subjection. In the poem *The Knights of Malta* (1795), the uniting of what appears irreconcilable is the preserve only of Christianity:

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[14] I, 127–129.

> Religion of the Cross, you alone unite in *one*
> Wreath the double palm of humility and strength.[15]

Looking back from *Don Carlos* to the early works, we see without doubt that the ideal of formal Promethean absoluteness predominates, which is recognisable in the fact that genius remains identical with itself, whether it takes the form of the complete rebel or of the free hero who subjects himself to the law (Karl Moor, Fiesco). Looking ahead from *Wallenstein*, it is the second version of the human ideal which predominates, but with an increasing artistic formalisation and a consequent loss in the existential force of the scintillating *Wallenstein*. The ambiguous, fragmentary character of *Don Carlos* and *Wallenstein* remains the centre of the work, which casts uncertainty also upon the clarity of the early and late periods. We can now offer an outline of the different periods in their chronological sequence.

The Robbers presents the 'majestic sinner' who plays with 'the dangerous aether ray of genius', the 'bold Phaeton' whose 'shame' is erased in order to make place for 'admiration'.[16] Both brothers are 'honourable villains, majestic monsters: spirits who are attracted by terrible vice for the sake of the greatness which attaches to it, for the sake of the strength which it demands, for the sake of the perils which accompany it'. Schiller wants us 'to learn, even to love, my robber's majesty'.[17] In remembrance of the aesthetic rule 'that the

[15] 1, 248.

[16] *Monument Moors des Räubers* 1, 98–100.

[17] Suppressed preface to the *Räuber* 1, 481–484.

good are thrown into sharp profile by the wicked and virtue is at its most life-like when contrasted with vice', he wants to depict vice 'in its colossal grandeur', and its representatives are to be 'detested and loved, admired and pitied'; they are to be like Milton's and Klopstock's Satan, like the classical Medea and Shakespeare's Richard.[18] 'We are more inclined to read the mark of the divine from the grimaces of vice' than we are from a 'harmonious portrait'.[19] In Franz Moor it is the Titanism of a direct struggle against God, the devising and the practice of an evil *quo majus non cogitari potest*, which only has meaning when the deeds are performed at every stage in the face of eternal damnation, which is simultaneously challenged, denied and accepted; the fact that the warrior against God must finally pay for his protest by his succumbing to a whining fear of death is part of his paradoxical greatness. On the other hand, it is Karl's Titanism that makes him wish to impose order, through judging and avenging, on God's hopeless corrupt world. He is the 'arm of higher rulers'[20] and he carries within himself the memory of the lost child's paradise of innocence, which is for him 'Elysium', a 'holy temple' and 'unclouded joy'.[21] He feels the infinite distance that separates him from this lost world: 'And I so unlovely in this beautiful world—and I a monster on this glorious earth'.[22] With a Hölderlin-like pathos he asks whether the 'inspiring green valleys' will ever return to him, the childhood scenes 'ever cool my burning bosom again with sweet sighings'?[23] But the way back is closed, which is why Karl can only crown his Promethean rebellion with a yet more astonishing final act in the purest Promethean style: 'But still there remains for me something with which I (!) can once again reconcile the offended laws and mend the abused order. A sacrifice is needed—a sacrifice which will reveal its inviolable majesty before the whole of humanity (!)—I myself am this sacrifice . . . I go to place myself in the hands of the law.'[24] The Moors are the 'giants and peaks' of 'liberty';[25] they achieve nothing less and feel themselves to be majestic beings who, both in rebellion and in penitence, can act as a counterbalance to the majesty of the world order.

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[18] Preface to first edition 1, 484–488.

[19] Self-criticism with reference to the *Räuber* 1, 623.

[20] *Die Räuber* IV, 5.

[21] *Ibid.*, IV, 1.

[22] *Ibid.*, III, 2.

[23] *Ibid.*, III, 2.

In *Fiesco's Conspiracy at Genoa*, the amphiboly of genius becomes yet more evident as through adaptation of the final scenes the poet chooses first to give the formal 'greatness' of the hero the face of a titanic tyrant and then of a cringing republican. 'The noble head knows temptations not of the common order';[26] 'To win a diadem by struggle is a great thing, but to cast it away is divine.'[27] But also the other way around: 'It is unspeakably great to steal a crown. Shame lessens with an increase in sin.' The greatness of the 'moment', which measures in one leap the abyss between 'obeying and ruling', is the decisive thing, which lends existence its meaning and its form: 'A princely moment has swallowed the whole domain of being . . . (*he walks heroically up and down*)'.[28] All the other major characters are affected by Fiesco's contradiction: Julia, Leonore, even Verrina: at some point the Promethean measure is applied to them all.

In *Intrigue and Love*, the poet himself becomes accuser and avenger on behalf of Moor; the inextinguishable impressions of childhood—the terrible distortions of the world order by the presumptuous majesty of the absolutism of Baroque princes, the obedience to absolute law profaned and reduced to the religiously flavoured drill of Karl Eugen of Wüttemberg's military academy—explain the revolutionary pathos of liberty, which endures from this point to *Carlos* and even to *Wallenstein* and to *William Tell*. Even the *Conquerer* (1777) curses with 'the curse of a burning thirst for revenge',[29] which will one day in the Last Judgment cast the tyrants into Hell. The 'evil monarchs' prowl as 'gods of the earth', as 'the giant puppets of God', and are 'faded royalty', who cover 'high shame with the night clothes of the right of majesty'.[30] Thus in the play the mendacious world of the court is 'abhorrent glory';[31] Luise wishes 'to scream without mercy into the ears [of the rascals who destroyed her love for Ferdinand] that even the lungs of the gods of the earth will rattle in the hour of their death and the Last Judgment will shake both kings and beggars through the same sieve.'[32] Once again Hell must serve to deepen the darkness: the intrigue drives the lovers into the despair of suicide and reveals there their own abysmal depths. The Lady, still of course Promethean, saves herself by simultaneously renouncing intrigue (life at court) and love (for Ferdinand): 'My glory dies with my love.'[33]

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[24] *Ibid.*, V, 2.

[25] *Ibid.*, I, 2.

[26] *Fiesco* III, 2.

[27] *Ibid.* II, 19. In the Mannheim stage version, this word becomes the expression of the definitive victory over self on Fiesco's part: herewith he breaks the sceptre and throws the pieces among the people. 1, 951–952.

[28] *Ibid.*, III, 2.

[29] 1, 14.

This leads to *Don Carlos*, which stands in close spiritual proximity to the former drama: a family tragedy between inflexible absolutism and freedom, the latter for the moment as the 'free love' of a son for his step-mother. Then it expands into a great historical tragedy of the transition between two epochs. The king and the queen are ennobled, Posa appears as 'a delegate of the whole of humanity', and finally (in Schiller's friendship with Körner) the accent shifts completely to Posa's eschatological proclamation of a 'new state' which is worthy of man and to the expiatory and provocative sacrifice of his own life for his friend the Prince, who is thereby to be healed from his love-sickness and made capable of realising his social vision. But the plans do not cohere, the old forms of motivation underlie the new and the whole is played to the last in the context of the court milieu and remains confused intrigue. Posa's death for love lacks motive, the Prince's passion drags meaninglessly and destructively on, the conceptual world of Philip II oscillates between authentic and distorted representation and the religious background too takes on a corresponding form: the Inquisition, which pulls the strings, is a hellish abomination, while Posa is a noble Knight of Malta. The accent shifts from the formal Prometheus ideal to obedience to that ideal, but this is still the result of an enthusiastic self-esteem. Since Posa wishes to die, Carlos, mindful of the king, calls out: 'No, no! He will not . . . resist so noble a deed . . . It will move him.'[34] And the words 'God' (for the king),[35] 'divine',[36] are always close at hand.

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[30] I, 104–108.

[31] *Kabale und Liebe* II, 1.

[32] *Ibid.*, III, 6.

[33] *Ibid.*, IV, 8.

Don Carlos reaches across the long gap in Schiller's creativity to *Wallenstein*; after long hesitation Schiller gave it preference over *the Knights of Malta*, a drama on the Order which stresses obedience and love of sacrifice and thus, once again, favoured the Promethean theme. Why? On the one hand, the poet wished to create a modern counterpart to classical tragedy: the revealing of a tragic situation which is already in existence, of hybris and nemesis; and to this extent it is a play concerning the blindness (*atê*) of the clear-sighted:

He went his evil way with soft steps,
And vengeance followed him as softly;
It stands, unseen and dark, behind him.[37]

Further, it was to become a central episode in German national history: the destiny of mankind changes in the Reformation 'and this is indivisibly associated with the Thirty Years' War'.[38] But finally it was the Promethean theme which drew the poet, even if it presented him, now that he was steeped in the thought of Kant, with an impossible tangle of questions. Prometheus represented the sublime: 'Great is he who overcomes the terrible. Sublime is he who, even when succumbing to it, does not fear it. Hercules was great, when he undertook and completed his twelve tasks. Prometheus was sublime when, though in chains in the Caucasus, he did not rue his deed nor confess transgression.'[39] And still more strongly: 'Tragedy does not make gods of us, for gods cannot suffer; it makes heroes of us, that is divine men, or, if you like, suffering gods, Titans. Prometheus, the hero of one of the most beautiful tragedies, is as it were a symbol of tragedy itself.'[40] And so Wallenstein is depicted thus even in his 'camp':

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[34] *Don Carlos* (last version) 4720.

[35] 'Feel . . . the desire to be God', 790. 'And today God is what man was only yesterday', 950. 'His divinity lasts as long as his dream', 961. Philipp is 'a god' (2932); he presents himself to men as God (3114); he is a god at the price of his uniqueness (3123); Posa challenges him to give up 'the unnatural deification' (3205).

[36] 'The divine Mathilde', 560. Carlos' heart is a 'divine gift' 1833. The Marquis dreams of 'the divine birth of friendship', 4279. The poet can also speak of the 'divine appearance of virtue', 1937.

[37] Picc 2477–2479. 'Oh, you are blind with your seeing eyes!', WT 890. Buttler in *Eger*: 'He is within, led by doom', WT 2428.

[38] To Körner, 28.11.1791 (III 170).

> He wanted to found a kingdom of soldiers,
> To set the world on fire,
> To dare and to attempt everything . . .[41]
>
> He has a ruler's soul
> And sits on a ruler's throne.[42]

Thus speaks Max. And Wallenstein himself, as he finally includes his guilt in the uncommon character of his life's form:

> Who calls fortune false? For me it was true
> And raised me from the ranks of men
> With love, bore me with a god's
> Strong arms through life's stages.
> There is nothing common in the ways of my fate,
> Nor in the furrows of my hand. Who could
> Read my life according to the ways of men?[43]

Who is speaking here? The deluded man directly before his death—or the poet? If in the first draft (September 1790–January 1791, concurrent with the develop of the historical work on the Thirty Years' War)[44] Wallenstein was only the ambitious strong man who seeks to avenge himself against the emperor for his demotion to Regensburg, later (1796), under the influence of Goethe, he will emerge at the psychological level as the realist to balance the idealist, Max, and will finally be idealised (in the 'greatest crisis' of the following winter)[45] as the symbol of humanity as such:[46] who bears within himself his lost paradise (like Karl Moor) as his permanent measure of things. In this sense Max was a part of himself: 'for he stood beside me like my youth,/ he made reality into a dream for me'[47]—for whom of course the way back was open, but who stormed ahead, trusting to his 'star', acquiring guilt, but who, like Goethe's harpist and his Faust, can yet be saved, on the grounds of his dark longing, as *Thekla, a Spirit Voice* (1802) proclaims from the beyond:

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[39] *Vom Erhabenen*. 5, 502.

[40] *Tragödie und Komödie* (sketch from the posthumous works), 5, 502.

[41] WL 332–334.

[42] Picc 412–413.

[43] WT 3566f.

[44] 4, 365ff.

> There too is the father, free of sin,
> Beyond the reach now of the bloody murder
> And he feels that he was deceived by no illusion
> When he gazed up at the stars . . .
> Dare to be wrong and to dream:
> Nobility of mind often lies in children's play.[48]

In a seemingly classical manner the blindness of Wallenstein, the consequence of his terrible traitor's guilt, is interpreted in a conciliatory way as 'madness'.[49] The astral world is also seemingly classical (as the epiphany of divinity), as is the destiny which it governs and which for Wallenstein is decisive. The stars are his *daimon*, and he sees the origins of the whole disorder of his betrayal in their macrocosmic order, and places himself on 'The spiritual ladders which rise up out of this world of dust/ To the world of stars with a thousand rungs/ and along which the heavenly/ Powers wander up and down'[50]— not as clever as Faust, who keeps well clear of the macrocosmic world. And so Wallenstein justifies himself by the coincidence of his empirical person with his universal *daimon* and thus proves Terzky right, who wants to instil in him a good conscience:

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[45] To Goethe, 24.1.1797 (V 146).

[46] Thus in the *Prolog*, where art is to 'bring' Wallenstein's controversial figure 'nearer to your hearts in a human manner': 'Denn jedes Äusserste führt *sie*, die alles/ Begrenzt und bindet, zur Natur zurück,/ Sie sieht den Menschen in des Lebens Drang/ Und wälzt die grössre Hälfte seiner Schuld/ Den unglückseligen Gestirnen zu' (For all that is most extreme leads *her*, who limits and binds everything, back to nature; she sees man in the pressure of life and attributes the larger half of his guilt to the unhappy constellations); thus art elevates itself in a general manner above the ethical decision: 'nature' and 'constellations' (WL 106), cosmic harmony, is given the last word. We shall return to this theme immediately.

[47] WT 3445–3446.

[48] I, 460–461.

[49] WT 2559 and 2564, and in such a way that even in the case of the boy it was not certain 'whether madness or a god had spoken out of him'.

> For every character is right who
> Is at one with themselves; there is
> No other wrong but self-contradiction.[51]

Wallenstein submits to this philosophy of the identity of guilt and innocence:

> What must be, must be.
> Destiny still possesses the right, for the heart
> In us is its imperious executor.[52]

He pretends to 'seek peace',[53] and to this end to strive for the 'whole', for the synthesis of Emperor and Swede and with this synthesis to embody the objective world-spirit.[54] It is for this reason that the philosophy of Max Piccolomini, which rests upon the 'tug of the heart' as truth,[55] finally fails with Wallenstein.[56] And the poet wants us to believe that the latter is a great power in the world:

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[50] Picc 978f.

[51] WT 600–602.

[52] WT 654–656.

[53] WT 1950.

[54] 1976, Picc 1180f.

[55] 'Der Zug des Herzens ist des Schicksals Stimme' (the tug of the heart is the voice of destiny), Picc 1840. 'Dein Urteil kann sich irren, nicht mein Herz' (your judgment can err, but not my heart), 2547, *cf.* WT 1247. Against this, Octavio says: 'Hier gilts, mein Sohn, dem Kaiser wohl zu dienen,/ Das Herz mag dazu sprechen, was es will' (Here, my son, the important thing is to serve the emperor, no matter what the heart says about it), Picc 2460.

[56] WT 717–718: Max must 'make a decision . . . between you and my heart'. Ultimately he admits that his father is right: 'You have indeed spoken the truth, father,/ I trusted my own heart too much' (2283), and Thekla teaches him one final time to let his heart decide, to follow his 'first feeling', to do his duty' (2342): this makes the separation from the beloved, and from the house of Friedland irrevocable.

For this royal man, when he falls,
Will drag a world down with him.[57]

His evil deed must give birth to yet more evil,[58] and he treads the happiness of his own people into the dust without concern, as Max points out to him,[59] but this does not prove the status of Wallenstein as world-spirit. And so it is not clear what must finally happen and be proven, and what would justify such a poetic venture. The lines crisscross and confuse each other. We must put these questions to the philosophy which Schiller at the same time pursues and with which he struggles to ascertain the meaning of existence.

THE NEW INTERPRETATION OF THE SUBLIME. In a laborious, essentially autodidactic struggle, the young Schiller achieves an aesthetic credo which he expounds programmatically in his great didactic poem *The Artists* (1789) and to which in essence he still holds six years later in the *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*. Between these two points there occurs his study of Kant with all its fruits, which extend from the lecture on aesthetics (1790) to its further elaboration under the growing influence of Kant (1791), to the *Callias Letters* (1792), *On the Sublime* and *On the Pathetic*, and to his masterpiece *On Grace and Dignity* (1793). The important supplement *On Naive and Sentimental Poetry*, which first began to mature through his relationship with Goethe, draws out more clearly the historical and philosophical aspect which could already be seen in *The Artists*. Kant, who with his aesthetic teaching is received in his entirety, finds a place in a scheme of things which is already present in the earlier sketches (1789): in these the early enthusiastic and sceptical philosophies, the core of the medical and the fruit of the historical studies, and finally the encounter with antiquity had all coalesced into a unity. Artistic beauty is reserved for man in a vertical universe: he shares his labour with the animals and his knowledge with the spirits.[60] But it is also the median point in the horizontal development of history: between the crude condition of nature and the epoch of theory with its scientific analysis of nature. One year previously, *The Gods of Greece* had lamented the 'loss of gods' in the modern image of the world; divine beauty survives only in immortal song, but must perish in life.[61] In *The Artists*, on the other hand, the realm of the beautiful and the poet's office are presented as the comprehensive form even in the face of modernity. What is true historically, above all in relation to Greece:

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[57] Picc 2638–2639.

[58] Picc 2451–2452.

[59] WT 2088–2090.

[60] *Die Künstler*, verses 30–34 (I, 174).

> Only by passing through the morning gate of the
>   beautiful
> Shall you enter the land of knowledge—[62]

is true also today: man has his centre in the harmony between the elements. The medical writings had sought the same centre between Nature (body) and spirit, but now it is entrusted to the creativity of artists, who alone can incorporate into the material dimension the law of harmonious proportions: only when presented with a perfected form does the Spirit abstract from ends and desires. Through the beautiful it sees and contemplates truth disinterestedly and learns to love. *Only through art does the spirit become religious*, for artists are the first to project the values which are palpable to man into a divine image; they represent for him an ethical world-order in narrative and drama, and by the 'immortality' of their creations they even scale the 'prison wall' of mortal existence, discovering thereby immortality. Finally, human beauty must serve to express that of the gods.[63] The historical *kairos* of the beautiful (*The Gateway of Morning*) remains from now on the ontological centre, which is affected by every spiritual step forward:

> Advancing man bears art aloft
> Thankfully on raised pinions,
> And new worlds of beauty
> Spring forth from enriched Nature.[64]

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[61] *Die Götter Griechenlands* 127–128 (1, 173).
[62] *Die Künstler* 34–35 (1, 174).
[63] *Ibid.*, 210–265 (1, 179–181).
[64] *Ibid.*, 270–284 (1, 181).

The laws of Nature which the scientist discovers are those of the aesthetic harmony which he already bears within himself; and so 'he lends the spheres his harmony': the latter hovers before him and lights his way in his search as the idea and ideal of a sacred fulfilment. He projects it to the end and bends his path towards it as explorer.[65] This is already that vision which will lead Schelling's early philosophy just a few years later to its final form: art as the inner fulfilment of science and philosophy, beauty as the eschatological ideal of the history of the world and of mankind:

When his science, matured into beauty,
Shall be ennobled as a world of art.[66]

The artists are told: 'The dignity of mankind has been put into your hands'; here everything, even moral value, is firstly embraced by 'beauty': as is religion itself. And this is so in Schiller in an emphatically anthropological sense. It is mortal man who 'with endearing deceit paints Elysium on the walls of his prison',[67] and 'brightens wretched life with the cheerful shadow-world of poetry'.[68] In the artistic act, man creates himself as man, leaving pure Nature behind, and thus establishes the harmony of the world which, with his incorporation of the universe into the world of spirits and of men, goes before him as an ideal.

The further Schiller goes, the clearer the premise for such an experience of the world becomes. Man is alone in the universe, and all myths and religions were his own projections.[69] Schiller likes to depict man in his finite condition: beleaguered and under attack, as in the *Knights of Malta*,[70] lonely and exposed to the threat of death as in the

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[65] *Ibid.*, 292–293 (1, 182); 383–392 (1, 184).

[66] *Ibid.*, 404–405 (1, 185).

[67] *Ibid.*, 76–77 (1, 175).

[68] *Ibid.*, 339–340 (1, 183).

[69] Love 'likes to believe in gods, because love is divine. The beings of the ancient fables exist no more', and so the heart invents new names, new beings, which it projects into heaven: thus Max to Thekla, Picc 1634f. (2, 368).

[70] 3, 155–189.

Knight's Song,[71] risking all vaingloriously as in *The Diver* ('and plunges down to life or to death'),[72] also as an isolated community left to its own resources, as the sea dramas (*The Ship*, *The Pirates*, *Sea Drama*) were to depict,[73] doubly endangered in their passage through history which leads them slowly out of the protection of Nature, as in *The Walk*, leaving them to themselves and leading them into a place from which there is no escape:

> But where am I? The path is hidden. Precipitous
>   depths
> Yawn behind me, and I must go on.
> I have left behind me the familiar accompaniment of
>   the gardens and hedges,
> And every trace of human hands. . .
> It is wild here and fearfully barren. In the solitary sky
> There hangs only an eagle, linking the world and the
>   clouds.[74]

The conciliatory ending with its reference to the comprehensiveness of Nature is both weak and false. Schiller's beauties and ideals flash in the middle of the night, and it is only the projections of the heart that light up and overwhelm this dark. *Tartarus* and *Elysium*, as eschatological possibilities, are just such projections.[75] But in *The Pilgrim*, who wanders in the hope that earthly beings 'would be divinely immortal there', it is finally understood that Heaven has no point of contact with the earth and 'There is never here'.[76] So everything hangs on the 'favour of the moment': 'all that is divine on earth/ is only a dream',

> So every beautiful gift
> Fades like the lightning flash,
> And is quickly enclosed again
> In night's dark grave.[77]

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[71] WL conclusion (2, 309–311).

[72] 1, 373.

[73] Fragments: 3, 259–266.

[74] 1, 233.

[75] 1, 90; 1, 103.

[76] 1, 412–413.

[77] 1, 428–429.

Thus the moment is for Schiller not only what it was for Plato, or even for Goethe, which is to say the gracious confluence of the forces of Nature, but is the flash as beauty and Spirit—and in Spirit also as God—of that which remains night beyond man. Therefore there is the repeated statement that truth is terrible and is only endurable when it is clothed in beauty. This is the case in *The Words of Madness*,[78] in *Cassandra*,[79] in *The veiled Statue of Saïs*[80] and in *The Sayings of Confucius* ('The depths are bottomless . . . and truth dwells in the abyss').[81] In addition, there is the insight into the radical impermanence precisely of that which is the basis of all our hope for eternity: in *Nania* ('Even what is beautiful must die . . .')[82] and, in the form of a question, in *To Emma*.[83] The idea of the radical demythologisation and dedivinisation of the world endures to the last—and very clearly so in the poem *The Four Ages of the World*.[84] The ideal becomes real according to the measure of the strength of the human heart (*The Words of Madness*: 'It is *in* you, you bring it eternally out').[85] Significantly we find the symbol of 'Columbus', which anticipates Nietzsche: the coast *must* appear, because it is a projection of the spirit and is its goal.[86]

Before Schiller came into contact with Kant, therefore, he had already grasped the idea of the radical finitude of reason, the unknowability of things *an sich*, the unverifiability of ideas and ideals and also the aesthetic 'median force' between the animal and the spiritual parts of man. Even more, he had understood the vulnerability of man within the universe, and the absolute anthropocentrism of the world is for him the basis of the idea of the sublime: the human heart, that is, which, cast into the void, transcends itself as it ventures forth into an unfathomable reality. This heart is the sole glory. All that Schiller learns from Kant, he assimilates into what he already possesses. His introduction through the *Critique of Judgment*, which depicts a third, mediating force between perception and intellect, will assist him in this. Initially Schiller is concerned—while preserving Kant's tension between beauty and sublimity—with emphasising the role of the aesthetic as the (higher) centre of man and of humanity: firstly in the Kantian sense as 'harmony' between Spirit and the senses (grace: *Anmut*), but then, going beyond Kant, as the harmony between the harmony of 'beauty' and the disharmony of 'sublimity' (dignity: *Würde*), and finally as the balance between the historically anticipated totality (of the Greeks) and the totality which is to be retrieved as a higher harmony by passing through the modern disharmony (in the 'aesthetic education'), or as the balance between the naive (Goethe) and the sentimental (Schiller). All four forms of balance are only variants of a single basic rule, which is made possible by the fact that the (Christian) rigour and 'sublimity' of the Kantian categorical imperative which, compelled by the 'radical evil' within man, always orientates the will beyond itself to a transcendent sense of duty (*Sollen*), is rejected in favour of a fundamentally achievable identity, a complete harmonisation of ethical man with himself, whereby in a radical anthropological reduction every apprehension of the theological dimension is made redundant. Here the spirit of Fichte is already present: between the absolute and the empirical subject there is no longer any analogical relationship (of God and creature), but identity in a state of tension. It is now possible to speak as a matter of course of 'our divine nature' as the site of freedom and of 'God in us' as the 'law-giver';[87] 'man bears incontrovertibly within himself in his personality the makings of divinity', while he possesses in his senses 'the path to divinity' within himself in infinite approximation:[88] the absolute point, where the Spirit and the senses bifurcate lies within man himself. The 'predisposition' in man to synthesis is God as Nature ('everything that wholesome nature does is divine');[89] but it is not the will of man alone (*voluntas ut natura*), but his 'moral will which makes him divine'.[90] Where moral freedom can attain harmony with sensible nature, it can at times even 'unfold an unlovely and oppressed form with divine glory'.[91]

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[78] I, 213–216.

[79] Verses 57–64 (I, 358).

[80] I, 224–226.

[81] I, 226–227.

[82] I, 242.

[83] I, 406.

[84] I, 417–419.

[85] I, 215–216.

[86] I, 247.

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[87] AW 5, 483.

[88] EM 11; 5, 603.

The essay *On Grace and Dignity* attempts to shed some light precisely on this mystery of a harmony between the senses and reason (with its non-sensible ideas and imperatives). The body (in man and beast) has a technical perfection of nature for the purposes of life and spirit: this concerns the intellect and hence, for Kant, not the disinterested enjoyment of aesthetic taste. Being disinterested, the form can be of sensual beauty only when it is viewed as an architectonic structure. And it is only when moral freedom employs this naturally beautiful structure as its means of expression that *Anmut* (grace; harmony) results. But what is the form of the schematism between the two realms if man as a moral person must be capable of renouncing the whole of the sensual realm, and thus no overarching law (which would be natural) can embrace them both—and yet 'where moral sentiment finds satisfaction . . . the aesthetic sense will not be curtailed'?[92] The answer is: 'that the representation of interests and aims in man has turned out to be more beautiful than in other organic formations, is to be seen as an act of *grace* (*Gunst*), which reason, as legislator of the human structure, has shown to Nature as executor of its laws,'[93] a kind of grace or favour, that is, which Nature repays by allowing the Spirit to express itself harmoniously even in herself where, being moral, Spirit is bound to contradict sensuality. What is possible as *Grace*—the representation of the free person through a sense medium by playing with architectonic beauty—bridges even the potential 'contradiction' of the two spheres. And so it is true that 'grace is a form of favour which morality shows to the senses just as architectonic beauty can be considered the consent of nature to its technical form'.[94] In this sense beauty is the 'citizen of two worlds'.[95] Schiller speaks at this critical point, which of course he believes to be governed by a 'law which we cannot fathom',[96] of 'liberality',[97] of 'indulgence'[98] and, naturally, time and again of 'play', where 'freedom governs beauty'[99] without abusing it, where the person takes the place of Nature, and assumes 'together with its rights a portion of its obligations'. It is here without doubt that the deepest mystery of Being for Schiller lies, for it now emerges as *charis*: at once grace, favour, beauty, elegance, felicity, mutual gratitude and enrichment: Pindar seems to be present again. One of Schiller's most beautiful poems, *Fortune*, takes *charis* as its theme: the gift of the beneficent gods, granted to their favourite 'before he has emerged victorious from his labours':

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[89] ND 5, 704.
[90] AW 5, 471.
[91] AW 5, 447.
[92] AW 5, 458.
[93] AW 5, 443–444.

I call that man great who, his own fashioner and
   creator,
Commands the Fates with force of virtue
But cannot command fortune and, what Charis
jealously denies him, labouring courage can never
   win.
A serious will can protect you from the unworthy,
The all-highest, a gracious gift from the gods,
As your beloved loves you, the heavenly gifts
   descend,
Grace reigns in Jupiter's realm above as it does in the
   realm of Amor.

The gods, it continues, love youth but 'only the blind man has seen their glory'. And *charis* is raised above the gods themselves: 'felicity alone has crowned the god'. Grace and beauty are the highest things of all, and so

Do not begrudge the beautiful its beauty or that,
   undeserving,
It is as replendent as the lily's calyx by Venus' gift,

[94] AW 5, 459.
[95] AW 5, 442.
[96] AW 5, 459.
[97] AW 5, 477.
[98] AW 5, 477.
[99] AW 5, 446.

> Let that be blessed which, as you gaze upon it, blesses
> you,
> And transports you by its unearned splendour.

So no one should envy the poet his art:

> Because he is blessed, you can be happy . . .
> Where there is no miracle, there can be no
> happiness.[100]

This highpoint in his understanding of the world is quite different from that of Kant. Schiller stands by the absolute character of the moral imperative; but why 'the imperative form', which 'accuses and humiliates mankind' and 'transforms the most potent expression of moral freedom into a more glorious kind of servility', and which imposes 'the appearance of an alien and positivistic law'?[101] The free person belongs to himself and to no one else. And further: Why the desire to view the ethical only in specific cases as a single absolute deed; is it not better on balance and in the long term to establish the ethical, if possible, rather within the context of the whole man (the Aristotelian *ethizesthai*) and to achieve the *habitus* of the good, the *virtus*: 'Virtue is nothing other than an inclination to duty'?[102] 'For the excellence of man does not at all consist in the greater sum of individual rigoristic and moral actions, but in the greater congruence of the whole of the natural structure with the moral law.'[103] Reconciliation is more than conquering the foe.[104] If the situation of 'sublimity' must reveal the 'great soul' and this situation is precisely the 'infallible touch stone' of the 'beautiful soul',[105] in which it is not 'grace' (*Anmut*) any more, but must prove its 'dignity', and we must show it 'respect' and not only the 'love' of 'benevolence',[106] then the shades and degrees which Schiller erects between grace (*Anmut*) and dignity (*Würde*) show that he regards both as being the forms of play of the one single indivisible sensual-ethical human nature, in which (and nowhere else) the divine appears: both as the enchantment of *charis* and as majesty. Schiller reinterprets this too in anthropological terms: 'The highest degree of grace is the power to enchant; the highest degree of dignity is majesty'. This 'presents a law to us which obliges us to look within ourselves. In the presence of the god we cast our eyes to the floor, become oblivious of everything beyond ourselves and experience nothing but the heavy burden of our own existence. Only the holy possesses majesty. And if a man can represent this to us, then he possesses majesty; and our spirit will fall to the ground before him, even if our knees do not follow'.[107] A portrayal of this kind is quite alien to the spirit of antiquity and to that of Christianity.

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[100] 1, 240–241; *cf.* also *Das Geheimnis* 1, 404, *Die Gunst des Augenblicks* 1, 428–429.

[101] AW 5, 467.

[102] AW 5, 464.

[103] *Über den moralischen Nutzen ästhetischer Sitten* 5, 787. The entire essay is concerned with *ethizesthai*.

[104] AW 5, 465.

[105] AW 5, 474.

[106] AW 5, 482.

In essence, the letters *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* add only the historical dimension to these insights, as this was already revealed in *The Artists* and as it remained normative for Idealist philosophy. It is a paradoxical work because it places a major objection at its centre, which it is scarcely possible to rebut. If the historical division into periods shows the passage of three epochs, which emerge clearly with the Greeks for instance: the archaic and mythic period in which the divine appears primarily as fearsome and 'sublime', followed by a classical and aesthetic age in which the world becomes familiar and is the object of a fearless contemplation (*theôria*) and the gods and their images are characterised by beauty, and finally by a post-classical, philosophical and abstract age in which the gods diminish,[108] then is it not the case that the age of beauty is merely a brief period of transition and in actuality the herald of the end of a truly strong and elevated culture? And can this law not be proven almost without exception: in Athens and Sparta, with the

[107] AW 5, 485–486; *cf. Über die notwendigen Grenzen beim Gebrauch schöner Formen* 5, 670.

[108] EM Letters 9 and 20f.; the division into periods is sketched out more clearly in NSD 5, 708f.

Romans, the Arabs, in Medici Florence and into the present? 'Indeed, it must be a cause for concern that in virtually every historical period in which the arts flourish and taste prevails, mankind is debased, and that there is scarcely a single example of a high degree and great profusion of aesthetic culture existing in a people which possesses both political freedom and bourgeois virtue, where *mores* are both beautiful and good and behaviour is both refined and honest'.[109]

This is an almost fatal objection for Schiller, who has to refrain from going back beyond the classical period of beauty to the world of living myth (when the gods were not only the serene projections of human ideals, but were also truly believed to be divine epiphanies), in order to find there, in authentic myth, to which the authentic Christian revelation in the later West corresponds, the provable source of the aesthetic. Schiller will nevertheless oppose the law which he himself as historian discovered and which as philosopher he must also acknowledge to be an empirical law ('perhaps experience is not the judgment seat before which a question such as this can be solved') and will pledge himself to prove by an *a priori* deduction of the essence of beauty (as the synthesis of man and thus of the world), that it *must*—despite history—be the central concept of all culture.[110] Man is and remains spirit-body, and a culture, which—be it religious, scientific or technological—strives away from the body and towards spirit must be his destruction. The interrelationship of these, anticipated by the Greeks in a way that has become paradigmatic, remains a guiding idea for every potential culture, according to which and in orientation to which mankind must be educated, if we are to be true to ourselves. The names of the poles vary: (the drive to) form and (the drive to) matter, structure (*Gestalt*) and life, state and action, state (*Zustand*) and object (*Gegenstand*), relaxation and tension; but we are concerned always with the same mystery of human wholeness, which remains ultimately the mystery of beauty, in the highest tension between grace (*Anmut*) and dignity (*Würde*). The artist projects this highest synthesis, as idea and ideal, into his concept of the god: form that is so dominant as to permeate matter utterly, matter that is so transformed that all sensual desire is banished and everything has become a representation of the Spirit which is the object of a pure and disinterested contemplation. The god is the exuberant and perfected form of man of which Schiller—with 'the glorious countenance' of the goddess in Goethe's reception room before his eyes—speaks with evident passion: 'It is neither grace nor dignity that speaks to us from the glorious countenance of a Juno Ludovisi; it is neither the one nor the other, because it is both at the same time. While the female deity demands our devotion, the god-like woman arouses our love; but even while we yield ourselves utterly to the divine loveliness, the divine self-sufficiency thrusts us back. The whole figure rests and remains within itself, an entirely closed creation, and it does so as if it were quite beyond space, neither yielding nor resisting: here there is no strength which ever fought with others' strength, no vulnerability where temporality could gain entrance. Irresistibly seized and drawn by the one, yet held at a distance by the other, we find ourselves both in a state of the highest stillness and in a state of the greatest movement, and that wonderful sensation is born for which the understanding can find no concept and language find no name.'[111] That which comes closest to this ideal in the human world is the *agôn*, the idea of which Schiller (anticipating Nietzsche) traces through different cultures as 'the ideal of the play instinct', which has assimilated gravity into itself.[112] When he depicts the aesthetic synthesis as *indifferentia*, as 'zero', but precisely thus as the prefigurement of the highest reality, he anticipates Schelling; but this formula gives him the possibility of seeing the human ideal as being both the youth of an individual person and as the historical past of human kind (Greek culture) in so far as this aesthetic *indifferentia* is the true point of departure for the realisation of the True and the Good,[113] and yet also to see it as the eschatological goal for the integration of all distinctions in the comprehensive *indifferentia*.[114] Since the latter leading idea imposes law upon all endeavour, art also demands at first the ethical self-realisation of the artist: 'Nothing but that which is already a living deed within us, can become so outside us, and it is the same with creations of the spirit as it is with organic structures; the fruit proceeds only from the blossom.'[115] In his review of Bürger's poems, Schiller, who is clinical to the point of cruelty, highlights this lack of an ethical standpoint as the reason for their aesthetic deficiencies.[116]

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[109] EM Letter 10; 5, 598f.

[110] EM Letter 10; 5, 600.

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[111] EM Letter 15; 5, 618–619.

[112] EM Letter 15; 617 and note.

[113] EM Letter 23; 5, 641–643.

On Naive and Sentimental Poetry wrestles with the same anxious question addressed to historical development: does the latter not move hopelessly away from an aesthetic culture to one that is abstract and technical, and does the orientation to antiquity or even our nostalgic love of Nature not remain pure and lifeless romanticism?[117] The reply can point to the miracle of Goethe and, next to him, to the endeavours, almost equal in status, of Schiller. In the one there is the naive attainment of a human totality, a creation from the gift of balance, from the *charis* of abundance; in the other there is a lively integration into the totality which serves as a leading idea. From the point of view of the historian, Schiller can favour the latter form. 'Nature makes him [man] one with himself, while art [i.e., culture] divides him so that he returns to unity through the ideal. But because the ideal is infinite, eternally beyond his reach, the cultivated man can never become perfect in *his* way . . . And if we compare the different types with each other, then it appears that the goal which man through culture *strives for* is infinitely preferable to that which he *achieves* through nature',[118] because in infinite 'progress' the real integration of the True and the

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[114] In this aspect, it will then be quite possible for Schiller—as in his polemical Horen essay against Fichte *Über die notwendigen Grenzen beim Gebrauch schöner Formen* (1795)—to characterise the sober, strictly material truth as the 'source of all true beauty' (5, 686) and thus to remove all playful dilettantism from his idea.

[115] *Über die notwendigen Grenzen*, etc., 5, 682.

[116] 5, 970f.

[117] NSD 5, 708f.

[118] NSD 5, 718.

Good of the total person occurs. Within the naive sphere there is 'the art of limitation' while in the sentimental we have 'the art of the Infinite'.[119] But since the latter too must speak in concrete images, Schiller planned an eschatological idyll,[120] in which the final deification of man was to be portrayed: 'The marriage of Hercules and Hebe would be the content of my idyll. The poet has no material beyond this, for he is not permitted to abandon human nature, and the idyll would deal precisely with this transformation of man into god. The chief figures would themselves be gods, but through Hercules I can bind them to humanity and introduce a sense of movement into the picture. If I succeeded with this undertaking, then I would hope to celebrate thereby the triumph of sentimental over naive poetry'.[121]

Hegel will raise man to the level of absolute spirit, whereby all aestheticism which depends upon the senses remains before the door of the Holy of Holies. But Schiller sees the aesthetic counterpart to the Christian eschatology of the resurrection of the flesh into God: not, however, as the miracle of the grace of the personal God, but as the miracle of the divine *charis* of man (who always has been divine). The sentimental poet leads us 'not backwards to our childhood . . . but . . . forwards to our coming-of-age' since he 'guides man, who can no longer return to Arcadia, as far as Elysium'.[122] Schiller's Titanic nature comes to the fore again here: man is to become God, not by the eradication of his finitude, but by retaining and transfiguring it. And if we ask what in all seriousness finitude means here, then its ultimately questionable character will emerge, as with Kant. Does this finitude (as beauty's small pool of light) contrast with an 'infinite' dark abyss (of 'truth')? Or is finitude itself the True, since the finite human figure has eschatologically integrated within itself all that is true and good?[123] The answer to this

[119] NSD 5, 719.

[120] The three forms of sentimental poetry as satire (distance from the ideal), elegy (alternation of attaining and distance) and idyll (attainment), and their deduction from the human capacity: see the note, 5, 744–46.

[121] To W. von Humboldt, 29.11.1795 (IV 338).

[122] NSD 5, 750.

[123] This must then be the meaning of the well-known verses (429–432)

question will determine whether Schiller's *kalon* is a transcendental property of Being or not. Kant restricted the latter to a harmony of the subjective powers; Schiller follows him in this by making the beautiful the primal measure of the human (for even the sublime does not vacate the sphere of human proportions). Now is this primal measure also the ultimate measure of Being? The origin of Schiller's thought in Leibniz argues for this, as does the reduction of the infinite process of the becoming of the world towards God to the progress of mankind towards its highest (perhaps unattainable, only approachable) idea,[124] and finally the provenance of the ideal from the Greeks. Against this, on the other hand, is Schiller's determined halt at Kant's *ignorabimus*, his refusal to go the way of absolute Idealism, because he would thereby be obliged to relativise the beloved finitude of spiritual-sensual man and finally to abandon it altogether. Thus the inquiry into Being and God is lost to sight, and the spotlight falls on man actively involved in the *agôn* and in tragedy: on a being who possesses ideals but not gods, on a being who possesses its majesty and its glory within itself. Man has no need of myth; he is his own myth. And as such, face to face with the Greek hero, Schiller now leads him on to the stage.

THE REMAINDER OF THE SUM. If beauty is supremely *charis*, favour and grace, then Schiller is honest enough to pose the question whom man must thank for this grace which comes to him unhoped-for and undeserved. The answer is an incomprehensible universalising principle which, despite the whole philosophy of Spirit, the philosophical texts unashamedly call 'Nature' and which, in the action of the dramas, receives the name 'Fate'. What is the source of this category which forces its way into an Idealism of freedom? What are the stars to which Wallenstein entrusts himself? Above all, what is the inherited curse, unstoppable in its effects, which forms the tragedy *The Bride of Messina*?

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in the *Künstler*, that man 'at last, at the mature goal of the ages' will creep 'poor in the truth', 1, 186.

[124] 'Through ever purer forms, purer tones,/ through ever higher heights and ever more beauteous beauties': *Die Künstler*, verses 426–427; 1, 185.

'Nature' as sensation obeys the Spirit, although it does not include this (as it does in Goethe or Heidegger, for whom Nature as *physis* represents something quite different). Fate in Schiller can be interpreted only in one way: it is the *form of degeneration*[125] of the mythical and theological reality which determines the existential drama of antiquity. But while the fearsomeness of fate in the classical period together with the obscure guilt which went with it led ultimately to praise of the god, whose glory is affirmed even in what is terrible (and hideous), in Schiller it is man who, in suffering the terrible, makes of it something which is both beautiful and sublime. 'We call an object sublime, the idea of which makes our sensual nature perceive its own limits and our rational nature its superiority, its freedom from limits'.[126] But then man owes the transformation of the fearsome into something sublime not to the glory of the gods but to the glory which he himself possesses. In the *Bride of Messina* oracles become necessary, as in the *Oedipus*,[127] prophecies are made, and the Euripidean curse against the gods and their utterances is spoken by the mouth of the unfortunate princess.[128] And further: the world of the divine is addressed as a person, and is so either in a Christian way—Maria is the 'high Queen of Heaven',[129] she is 'divine',[130] the action takes place between 'monasteries', 'churches', 'high masses', 'requiems', 'pilgrimages'[131]—or in a classical manner as 'gods',[132] a suspect *indifferentia*. What is more important is that the mother, who steps before her temporarily reconciled sons, can describe the picture set up for all to see as 'beautiful', 'glorious', 'divine'; that her dead sons can be described as 'gods';[133] that Don Cesar understands his necessary expiation for fratricide to be an act which he alone can perform and which necessarily demands his life.

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[125] This becomes completely clearly in the follies of the so-called 'dramas of fate' which imitate *Die Braut von Messina*.

[126] *Von Erhabenen* 5, 489; 'All that is sublime comes *only* from the reason' (*Über das Pathetische*, 5, 517). Schiller knows no other concept, in all the variations of the conceptual breadth, than this purely anthropological concept. On the theme: Karl Viëtor, 'Die Idee des Erhabenen in der deutschen Literatur' in: *Geist und Form*, Berne 1952. E. Cassirer, 'Die Methodik des Idealismus in Schillers philosophischen Schriften', in: *Idee und Gestalt*, Berlin 1921.

[127] 'The oracle has a share in the tragedy that is quite incapable of being replaced by anything else': to Goethe, 2.10.1797 (V 271).

[128] *Die Braut von Messina*, 2327–2397 (2, 896–898).

[129] *Ibid.*, 294.

[130] *Ibid.*, 1077.

[131] *Ibid.*, 721, 2618f., 2709f., etc.

[132] *Ibid.*, 2386, 2396, 2508, etc.

> Bloody murder is expiated only by blood . . .
> Only free death breaks destiny's chains . . .
> I pay for my guilt first to the gods of death,
> Let another god care for the living . . .
> Honour the head of the luckless one,
> Which is sacred even to the gods . . .[134]

We cannot guess at the meaning of the words 'God', 'gods' and 'divine' here, since there is no longer any distinction between man and God; nor indeed what that Fate is which distinct from men reigns obscurely for itself alone. We may presume that, as in *Wallenstein*, it is first and foremost a projection into the universe of human grandeur and guilt.

The anthropocentrism of *Mary Stuart* and *The Maid of Orléans* is more evident. Although the Christian atmosphere is even more pervasive here, it remains throughout no more than that, an atmosphere which surrounds a Kantian, even a super-Kantian problem. Mary acknowledges her previous guilt,[135] though she denies the ostensible grounds for her being held in captivity,[136] and by rising above herself, after her meeting with Elizabeth and her condemnation, she becomes united within herself and finds that she is able to accept the unjust as a higher form of justice and that 'she will die as a queen and a heroine'.[137] In her death she forgives Elizabeth,[138] as Ferdinand in his death had offered his murderous father his hand. The Catholic sacramental decor with confession, Eucharist ('blood'), and crucifix remains metaphor in the realm of the senses for 'sublimity', and all the more so in that Mortimer had allowed himself to be converted to Catholicism in Rome through this decor and had been initiated into Jesuitical sophistry in France. The maid of Orléans remains a purely Kantian saint, who can be God's emissary and the one favoured by Him for as long as she remains united with herself, or can live in her pure ideality; she loses her Platonic identity with herself through a single sensual glance, although she can return to her original 'sanctity' by a process of self-purification through penance and renunciation.[139] This time there is much talk of 'glory': Johanna has seen 'the glory of Heaven';[140] 'The king himself with his crown/ Is no more radiant than you',[141] she has 'perfected all this glory',[142] on coronation day her sisters see her 'in glory',[143] and Margot says to her: 'We come to see your glory',[144] and the king asks her: 'Show yourself in your form of light,/ As Heaven sees you and we in dust/ Honour you devoutly'.[145] But Schiller calls the play 'a romantic tragedy', and the religious clothing together with the miraculous element is again nothing but a folkloristic form of symbolism for the inner action, to which chivalry, sheep-rearing,[146] and the Amazons also belong, as well as speeches about the gods.[147] What is essential is that Johanna is permitted to wear without guilt the avenging sword of God which Karl Moor bore, as long as she 'casts all around the glory of Heaven',[148] as long as she performs His task 'as a blind tool of God' and 'with blind eyes',[149] and remains the pure transmitter of divine revelation and action. The Amazonian virginity which is essential for this lacks all the humanity which characterises the Christian and Marian element—as the precondition of motherhood. The frosty air of the Kantian-Fichtean absolute formal Self surrounds her. Thus, unassailed by the 'sinful flames of vain earthly delight',[150] as 'a goddess of war'[151] and 'a woman warrior of the highest God',[152] she can wield the 'avenging sword of my God'.[153] By renouncing earthly love, which tempts her for only a moment, she, who 'has seen the immortal one with her own eyes',[154] can retreat through the experience of divine abandonment into her own ideality,[55] thus becoming united with herself and, like Samson when he was blind and bound, break her fetters[156] and, through her own destruction, conquer for herself and for France, with the result that she is proclaimed a saint already by the king.[157] Rarely has there been a greater distortion of Christian sanctity than here, where the word, which in Christian terms expresses our participation in God's own sanctity, becomes the expression of moral self-sanctification.

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[133] Don Cesar to his mother: 'Flee to our grave/ and cry to the divinity of your son,/ for then we are gods and hear you', 2759–2761.

[134] *ibid.*, 2637f.

[135] *Maria Stuart*, 271f.

[136] *Ibid.*, 863f.

[137] *Ibid.*, 3380.

[138] *Ibid.* 3781f.

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[139] The poem *Das Mädchen von Orléans* gives the key to the drama: 1, 460–468.

[140] *Die Jungfrau von Orléans*, 2633.

[141] *Ibid.*, 2666–2667.

[142] *Ibid.*, 2534.

[143] *Ibid.*, 2804.

[144] *Ibid.*, 2880.

[145] *Ibid.*, 1967–2969.

[146] *Ibid.* I, 2nd scene.

[147] 'Child of the gods', 'voice of the gods', 'gods of death', 'without the gods there falls no hair from man's head', the comparison of Johanna with the 'severe Pallas' etc.

[148] *Ibid.*, 2252.

Meanwhile, there is a counter-motif which is palpable through the whole of his literary work and which draws Schiller into a close proximity to Christianity. This is the motif of *obedience* which, at least in its dramatic representation, must appear not as obedience to self (of the empirical to the intelligible self), but as interpersonal, truly committed obedience, and which thus contains within itself secretly or openly a point of unconditional love. This motif must have taken root deep in the poet's soul, if even the drill of the hated military academy could not assail it. It is, corresponding to the amphiboly in the notion of the 'great personality', either a blind devotion to the strong, or the unconditional offering of self to the ideal commandment. Thus its sources lie just as much in the enthusiasm of love and friendship (in the Enlightenment 'Theosophy') as they do in Kant's Prussian categorical concept of duty. Karl Moor demands absolute obedience; 'Who hesitates when I issue a command?'[158] This is even more true of Franz Moor: 'With your blind obedience!'[159] And also Wallenstein:

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[149] *Ibid.*, 2578–2579.

[150] *Ibid.*, 412.

[151] *Ibid.*, 956.

[152] *Ibid.*, 2203.

[153] *Ibid.*, 2257.

[154] *Ibid.*, 3191.

[155] *Ibid.*, V, 6th scene.

[156] *Ibid.*, 3470f.

[157] *Ibid.*, 3523.

'The deed is mute, obedience is blind,
These are his very words'.[160]

And his words to Illo: 'They must give me words, in an oath, written down/ that they will devote themselves to my service, unconditionally'.[161] And to Max:

'Duty to whom? Who are you?
If *I* do the emperor a wrong, then it is
My wrong and not yours. Are you
Your own possession? . . .
You are rooted in *me*, I am your emperor'.[162]

Gordon says to Buttler: 'We subalterns have no will', to which Buttler replies: 'But the narrow way of duty is sure'.[163] Formal ethics can cover both elements in these cases: the demonically evil and the objectively justified. Johanna's 'blind obedience' to the 'God' who wishes to work through her also remains formal. The pseudo-Catholic obedience of Mortimer and Philip to the Grand Inquisitor is formal and demonic, not to mention the secret order in *The Man who saw Ghosts*. The situation is different concerning the motifs of *The Knights of Malta*, where Christian themes predominate over the Kantian ideology. Two motifs interprenetrate each

[158] *Die Räuber* II, 3.
[159] *Ibid.*, IV, 2.
[160] WL 340–341.
[161] Picc 897f.
[162] WT 2178–2183.
[163] WT 2507, 2515.

other: the commitment to a religious idea which extends as far as the total obedience of the professed religious—a self-offering of which an ideal love is an essential part—and the devotion of a friend for a friend, as real love and at the same time as ideal imitation. This unconditioned love between friends may take on homoerotic traits in the *The Knights of Malta* (Schiller consciously wanted to introduce a Greek motif, including in this drama the Greek choir), characteristics which are absent from *Don Carlos* or from *The Pledge*, where we find only a pure representative death for love ('Now he will be nailed to the cross').[164] And that obedience which is mediated through that incomparable fatherliness of a spiritual superior, which is glorified in the 'battle with the dragon', can be truly understood only in a Christian way, as Schiller expresses it in the final lines, and almost solemnly confirms in the poem *The Knights of Malta* quoted above. Yet it is not the *Knights of Malta* drama which was performed, but *Wallenstein*, and then the series of dramas in which formalism penetrates the artistic element like mildew. The *Mary Stuart* is good though coldly calculated theatre; the *Maid of Orléans* borders on kitsch, the *Bride of Messina* is hollow and unconvincing; *William Tell* is shallow despite all its pure inspiration and *Demetrius* is only another variant on the *Maid* (like the planned *Perkin Warbeck*): that is to say, only man united within himself can act 'divinely'.

Schiller, the educator of the people, driven by his own dialectic and in contradiction to all his traditional drapery (be it classical or Christian), places man on his own without remainder: as a finite spark of beauty without a containing shelter. In this he is ahead of his time, which however will not hesitate to grasp the premisses of his vision and to draw the consequences from it.

2. FICHTE

While Kant and Schiller stop short at the finiteness of the human spirit in a way that might be judged to be more

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[164] *Die Bürgschaft* 98 (1, 355).

'modern', the three Titans Fichte, Schelling and Hegel want to conceive of man within the wholeness of the Absolute, as its centre. This expressly demands that all philosophy, above all that of antiquity, should be fulfilled and transcended through the philosophical appropriation of the Christian revelation. If the starting point for Fichte is the principle of the self, as perfect free self-possession in action, this is a demonstrably Christian point of departure. It is in the Bible that for the first time God becomes 'I' and man His 'Thou', and a πρᾶξις πράξεως is opposed to the Aristotelian νόησις νοήσεως. But since it is a question of philosophy and knowledge and not of theology and faith, there can be no distinction between 'Nature' and 'Grace' (in the theological sense): the historical (biblical) revelation of God coincides with the revelation of Being, and so the finite becomes the revelation of the infinite, God and world together construct—once again—the totality of simple and complex Being, which in aesthetic terms is that total work of art in which God is the 'light' and the world the 'form', in which God is the life and the world the structure. The categories of artistic (secular) aesthetics is also the prime source, especially in Schelling and Hegel, for the language of metaphysics. The world is the 'expression' of God. But Idealism remains a reading of Kant: it is not objective world-systems which are the focus of attention (as in Erigena or Spinoza), rather, the totality needs to be developed from the transcendental art-structure of the thinking and acting subject. In terms of method this act must remain the principle and the fulcrum; in so far as it is the Absolute in its depths, or in so far as it implies and envisages it, the Absolute is relevant; and this remains true even when it opens itself to thought in revelation. The 'retreat to the man as the centre' is in no way retracted; for the first time it is 'Titanically' pressed home, and is so with an appeal to Christianity as the point of the turning of the world to subjectivity. But this means that even when the idealist systems are at their closest to Plotinus (as the final figure of the classical age), the situation with regard to the open and Advent-like decision, which predominates in Plotinus, does not return; rather, everything is finally decided through the determination to conceive Christianity (in a post-Christian manner) as pure philosophy and ultimately as the potentiality of man, history and culture. Even the (much weaker) opportunity for decision in Nicolas of Cusa (conjecture or absolute knowledge?) is now clearly decided in favour of the latter. The die is cast. It is true that Schleiermacher, who in the spring of 1802 heard Fichte lecture on his philosophy of the absolute sense of dependency, will similarly attempt to interpret this teaching in Christian terms, as Augustine aimed to deepen the teaching of Plotinus by christianising it; but the point of departure for both remains quite distinct, for in Plotinus the decision has not been made (or not clearly so) for the 'living God' of the Bible, while Fichte passionately rejects precisely this form of aliveness. No Christian school of thought, be it Protestant or Catholic (Maréchal, for instance, and his followers), will in the long run be able to resist the strength and the pull of the fundamental acts of decision in the three idealist systems when they 'engage' with the latter in order to effect a dialogue with them. Neither can we be deceived by the fact that, compared with the philosophy of Spirit of the Enlightenment, we find in all the Idealists a feeling for the dimensions of negative theology: God cannot be reduced to an object and yet is precisely as such (*pace* Kant) the One who manifests Himself in the world: does not this draw very close to Plotinus, Erigena and Nicolas of Cusa? But philosophical necessity binds God and his revelation, man, one to the other. Man is himself the manifest God, and therefore these titanic cathedrals must always lack what is decisive in Christianity, although they have absorbed all else from it: viz., that which is called in the Bible 'glory'. Being, God, is ultimately overcome. The Old Testament, which is the site of emergent glory, is rejected in favour of the Johannine final form of the New Testament, disassociated from Paul and the synoptics, in order to be able to reinterpret *agape* directly and freely in the direction of *gnosis*. 'Glory' stands and falls with the unsurpassability of the *analogia entis*, the ever greater dissimilarity to God no matter how great the similarity to Him (Denz.-Schönm. 806). In so far as German Idealism begins with the *identitas entis*, the way back to Christianity is blocked; it cannot produce an aesthetics of 'glory' but only one of 'beauty': and the 'aesthetics as science', which was rampant in the nineteenth century, is its fruit.

Fichte's[1] point of departure is the self which, in the appropriation of its freedom (in its sense of duty) is self-possession (autonomy) and self-contemplation. Thus Fichte radicalises the point of perception and the autonomy which we find in Kant, beyond that the *cogito* of Descartes and beyond that still, though unknown to him, the speculative project of Eckhart.[2] This project, as we stated above, would have been impossible in the classical period, since it presupposes Christianity, not only because the Absolute appears as a self (*ego*) but also because it is not eros (longing) but duty (the will of the Absolute) which determines the autonomous point of freedom. This is a descendant of the 'metaphysics of the saints' and it concentrates the classical ethic of Being (which is distributed through the hierarchical universe, as its immanent order) in an indivisible personhood: man is he who knows and can perform the very will of God.

But if we enquire who that self is which is identical with itself and which serves as Fichte's point of departure, then we shall have to reply: it is neither God nor man. It is not God because it stands beyond every form of reflection which presupposes a non-self and every form of self-appropriation of freedom which presupposes an obligation, and thus cannot ever be conceived of under the motif of self-consciousness or personality. But neither is it man, for he is always finite consciousness of self, never pure itself, to which the philosopher only attains 'by drawing a conclusion',[3] as to 'the basis of all experience'.[4] 'The form of selfhood, reflexive action, lies solely in the self as intellectual perception . . . The self exists in this form only for the philosopher':[5] a point necessarily constructed in such a way that a progression is possible from it as pre-supposition to a real consciousness of self. In order to possess reality, it requires the world as that opposing (through the creative powers of the imagination) non-self, which permits it to achieve self-consciousness through reflection on itself and freedom through action. And in so far as this process must always continue in order that consciousness and freedom should emerge through what is opposite, the scheme of the pure self remains only at the level of the 'idea'.

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[1] Collected works, ed. J. H. Fichte, Berlin 1845f., 8 Vols. (textual form following the edition by Medikus, Leipzig 1908, 8 Vols.). *Cf.* my *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele*, I (1937), pp. 158–203.

[2] *Cf.* above, pp. 000, and note 117.

[3] 2nd introduction to the *Wissenschaftslehre*, I 464.

[4] 1st introduction to the *Wissenschaftslehre*, I 423.

This accounts for the simple *aporia*: how can something which is not real make the real world a prior premise of consciousness in order that it should attain self-realisation in its process? There is no possibility of an appeal here to God as primal reality, since He is neither a person (and cannot therefore be Creator), nor—for the young Fichte—does He attain reality other than through the eschatological 'synthesis of the world of spirits'. In order to attempt a solution to this aporia one could say that the world in Idealism is not real in the sense of a reality which is independent of the Spirit, but that it is pure appearance from the Spirit and for the Spirit. Then the difference between unreal and real is reduced to the inner vitalisation and filling out of an initially hollow idea, and our manner of thought will then be utterly oblivious of Being as mere 'essences' or 'concepts' turn into a single totalising concept. This kind of thinking has predominated since Descartes, Leibniz and Malebranche: for at least the (external) world was reduced to mere 'appearance' in the presence of the Spirit, just as it was for the Empiricists, and became mere 'material' whereby the Spirit, through projecting itself and conceiving of itself and acting in a practical and a technical way, raised itself above the world. This way of overcoming materialism (*cf.* Hobbes), whereby matter is either ignored or denied and the 'manifestations' are then handled as the material of the Spirit, profoundly influences Fichte and makes him a father of the modern technical work ethos and of 'domination over the world'. For such an external world is no longer one that God created and thus is *in no way theophanous any longer*, but is only the inner dimension of the self (as it were its entrails) and consequently stands utterly at its disposal: in order to be dominated and subjected. This does not stop Fichte from somehow interpreting the world (as genesis of consciousness) in organic and teleological terms, thus approaching Goethe. But still it is oppositions which predominate: if for Goethe *physis* (with the mystery of God in its depths) remains the comprehensive principle of finite consciousness, then for Fichte it is solely the Spirit (with the mystery of God in its depths) which comprehends all *physis*. It should be noted however that that ethos of the domination of Nature—with which Fichte's entire cultural ethics is linked—remains bound to the presupposition that it is the (absolute) self which imagines Nature for the sake of man (for it is not God who does this) and thus grants him complete power over Nature, so that in this respect Idealism and materialism lead to the same ethos. But it is precisely this presupposition which is problematical.[6]

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[5] 2nd introduction, I 516. 'In the act thus described, the ego is . . . transposed into the possibility of self-awareness': I 459.

The young Fichte, who begins with the absolute point of the self, cannot conceive of God above this point (because there can be nothing beyond identity), nor beneath it, because God certainly cannot be placed beneath the concrete, and so he can be conceived only within it, as the convergence point of man's infinite approximation, or rather that of the spirit world together with its necessary morality, for which in Kant and Schiller the individual has to commit his or her entire existence even, if necessary, to the point of the ultimate sacrifice: 'That living and effective moral order is itself God'.[7] When Fichte said by way of explanation that this order is 'absolutely the first kind of objective knowledge', and beyond this that to capture the Absolute in a single concept (such as 'personality' or 'consciousness') is contradictory ('and how could the finite grasp and comprehend the infinite?'),[8] then it was this statement which sparked off the 'atheism conflict', on account of which Fichte lost his chair in Jena and which forced him to revise his fundamental position, although without abandoning it entirely. The result was that the form of seity, which was the basis of all consciousness of self and of the world, found itself dependent for its completion on a base which Fichte now calls 'Being', 'Life' and 'Light', and whose (supra-)reality is again understood best in practical terms: when man takes hold freely of his eternal determination (both personally and in the community of selves) and becomes himself, then that supra-reality is that whereby he is determined in his own determination and is called to his own vocation.

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[6] On this problema, see my review of Karl Rahner's *Geist in Welt* (*Z. kath. Theol.* 63, 1939, pp. 371–379); Rahner, with Fichte and Maréchal, thinks from the standpoint of the same problem, naturally with the presupposition of a creating God. But even so, one must ask who is ultimately the creator of nature.

[7] *Über den Grund unseres Glaubens an eine göttliche Weltregierung*, V 186.

How are we to understand such an idea? The 'metaphysics of the saints' had interpreted the act of reason precisely as this correspondence to the call of God and demanded detachment (*indifferentia*) as its transcendental premise. But who in Fichte's world can call out in such a way that the finite person can know himself to be determined by this call and to be able to take hold of it in total obedience? How can that which is beyond language and beyond all seity possess within itself the ground for the differentiation of the calls? For the differentiations of personal vocations in the 'world of spirits' may not and cannot be determined from below, from the concrete world (*individuum ratione materiae*). Thus the Christian expression 'vocation' and 'summons' are to be taken metaphorically, and their relation shifts definitively towards Plotinus: God as the super-spiritual, super-vital and pure mystery (called 'Being'), and Spirit as the act-perception which emerges from this ground, which strives in eternal movement (longing) from into this ground and, for the sake of this movement, releases the concrete world from itself. The sole essential difference with regard to Plotinus is the fact that the ancient thinker does not go beyond the contemplative description of the powers—albeit in a kind of deduction and reduction—while the modern thinker conceives of the process—in a way that corresponds to Christian historicity—as evolution (of the self from the universe, which in turn presupposes the principle of self) and as revolution without end: the ever fuller awareness of God in the world and the ever greater self-giving of the world in God.

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[8] *Ibid.*, 187.

The view that God is the Unknown, who defies reduction to any concept and who is mysterious even and above all in His creation and revelation, has been the substance of all significant forms of Western metaphysics; and it is unworthy of a Fichte to fancy that he can refute this idea of God through the wholly shallow (really objectified) deistic concept of God which we find in the Enlightenment. The choice of two possibilities characteristic of Western thought did not, as Fichte thought, mean Spinozean fatalism or the Kantian doctrine of freedom, for Augustine and Dionysius implanted by way of explanation the more profound idea of the God of the Bible into the classical notion of God in all above all. Nicolas of Cusa too held firmly to the non-polarity of God and thus to His non-objectification even in the context of the biblical God-world relation; and thus the elevation of the living God of the Scripture with his elevated freedom of love over the God of Plato and Plotinus could in no way threaten His absolute, His all-transcending and all-comprehending nature, but could only enhance it. For only now was every kind of divine dependency upon his appearances both in the world and in the realm of spirits definitively denied, and the sublime light of mystery of the ineffable One becomes the glory of the unapproachably holy God who reaches down to us out of love. If we choose to have nothing to do with this elevation through Christianity (which implies the freedom of the creation), then the *nous*, which is now called the form of the self, or reason or freedom, again becomes the 'necessary' revelation of the One, so that the One forms the Absolute in its greatest possible revelation only in cooperation with the self—in their original identity. In other words: christology becomes the inner form of the philosophical theory of 'creation' (and will necessarily remain so even with Schelling and Hegel). Thus what began with Eckhart has become definitive: the assimilation of the God-man relation back into the inner-divine generation process, which as such is called upon to give formal expression to the God-world relation, or to the schematism of philosophy. Christ is only our elder brother, and we are all capable by virtue of our human nature of standing in his place. But it is Jesus who has the merit of first illustrating this principle within the historical process and of bringing it to the point of breakthrough, which is why 'all intelligent people bow deep before him, and everyone, the more they are themselves, will acknowledge all the more humbly the exceeding glory of this great phenomenon'.[9] The truly glorious aspect of what Christ has shown is the place of human freedom as the expression of the ineffable mystery of Being as love. Love, that is, because the form of the self experiences itself as pure grace in so far as it perceives itself as 'freedom' which has emerged from Being and stands as *Dasein* (existence) before Being, and thus can pay back its debt only by the return of its freedom to Being. Thus Fichte becomes a link between Ignatius and Heidegger. Reflection (Spirit) is accompanied by the sense of indebtedness, 'and since it is a bond', it is 'love', 'and since it is the bond of pure Being and of reflection, it is the love of God. In this love Being and *Dasein*, God and man, are one, wholly fused'. 'Thus alternating love, which is neither his nor ours, but which first divides us into two and binds us into one' is the origin of a concept of God. 'What is it then that leads us beyond all recognisable and specific existence, and beyond the whole world of absolute reflection? It is our love which no specific existence can satisfy.' It does not desire God as object, and leaves Him nothing 'but pure negation of all comprehensibility, side by side with the eternal condition of being loved'.[10] But this statement, since it is not analogy but identity which is the point of departure, necessarily becomes dialectical: first of all God was absorbed into the pure self (first phase, which lasts to around the year 1800), then the self (*Dasein*) is reduced to a pure and empty space in God, even to the extent of sacrificing personal immortality.

[9] *Die Anweisung zum seligen Leben*, 6th lecture, V 485.

[10] *Ibid.*, 10th lecture, V 540.

Quite clearly the veil lifts from you,
It is your Self; let die what can be destroyed
And then only God will live in your striving.
Penetrate with your gaze what survives this struggle,
Then you will see the veil as a veil,
And unveiled you will see the life that is divine.[11]

There can be no doubt about it: where Fichte's teaching is pantheistic, because 'God and man act as vital life' and 'form',[12] we can, as with Hölderlin, suddenly discern—in the middle of the lecture—an authentic note of Christian love and prayer within the existential realm through the dialectic between the finite and the infinite. 'Simplicity, which is child-like and devoted to you, seizes you best . . . You are a father to her, who always means her well . . . Do with me what you will, she says, I know that it will be good, as long as it is certain that you are the one who does it. Brooding reason, which has only heard of you and never seen you, wishes to teach us of your essence in itself . . . I veil my face before you and place my hand on my mouth . . . You differ from the finite not in degree but in kind . . . But your relations with me, the finite, are open to my eyes: let me become what I should be!—and they surround me in a clarity that is brighter than the consciousness of my duty . . . You *know* and recognise the substance of my thought and desire . . . You *desire*, for you desire that my free obedience should have consequences in all eternity . . . But *you* are not a being which I shall be able to conceive throughout all eternity.'[13] And if this dialectic ought really to destroy man, since on the one hand he is, as freedom and act, the necessary 'form' of God and, on the other, he transcends himself in orientation towards God as knowledge of the unknowable, then this dialectic between titanic act and devout contemplation finally undergoes a Christian transfiguration in the thought of a stilled, almost unconscious activity which arises from the ecstatic gazing of the one who has been sent upon the source of his calling. It is in this paradox that for Fichte the heart of the ethical lies, and here too, although he speaks of it rarely, is the aesthetic dimension, which has a distinctly Plotinian tone:

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[11] Sonnet VIII 642.

[12] *Anweisung*, 4th lecture, V 454.

[13] *Die Bestimmung des Menschen*, 3rd Book, II 304–305.

'Think, for instance, of a holy woman, who, raised up to the clouds, borne aloft by heavenly hosts, who gaze at her enraptured, surrounded by all the radiance of Heaven, whose highest ornament and bliss she herself is, who, alone of all, can observe nothing of what happens about her, being wholly taken up and dissolved in a Single Thought: I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be to me always according to His will; and if you form this Single Thought in these surroundings into a human body, then without doubt you possess beauty in a specific form. Now what is it that makes this form beautiful? Is it its members and parts? Or is it not rather the Single Thought which is diffused throughout all these members?'[14] The ultimate pathos of Fichte is not so much to be the 'possessor of the idea'[15] as 'being seized by the idea';[16] this too is why he sees the 'vocation of the scholar' for the contemporary scientific age as descending from the vocation of the prophets and great artists of an earlier, mythological period.[17] the affinity with the enthusiasm of Shaftesbury is evident, even if it is wholly transposed into the Kantian mode: firstly, because here the ethical becomes the yardstick of man and of his religion, and secondly, because, in consequence of this, the ethical lies absolutely and indivisibly in the love of the good for its own sake. It is a form of Plotinian thought enlightened in the direction of John (or of Augustine too at his purest). This deep piety of Fichte is classical and Christian, and it shines victoriously through his whole idealist form of thought.

But the logic of this form of thought thrusts further: if the self is absolute act and absolute knowledge, and yet possesses an indomitable Being as its 'base', then does not God Himself, in so far as He is conceived of as Spirit, possess an obscure base from which He emerges? And would this obscure base of all beings and all forms of sensory life not perhaps be the Void, the unconscious Nirvana, and would the things which emerge from it constitute the beautiful, but only as the tragic, which must eliminate and transcend itself (*aufheben*)? How easy a task it is to interpret Fichte in terms of Schopenhauer, for whom there is no longer any glory and for whom in the last instance beauty can lie only in contradiction and in self-elimination!

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[14] *Anweisung*, 9th lecture, V 527.

[15] *Über das Wesen des Gelehrten*, VI 353.

[16] *Ibid.*, 355, 382, 423.

[17] *Berliner Vorlesungen über die Bestimmung des Gelehrten* (1811), Vol. III of the posthumous works (1835), pp. 167f.

It was Schelling who bore Fichte's idea of the irrational base through all the transformations of his own thought. The philosophical perspective thus changes from a 'prophetic' one into one that is 'sibylline': it becomes a gazing into the abyss.

3. SCHELLING

The point of identity as point of departure determines everything in Schelling even up to his late period: the point at which the self (as subject) posits itself in the primal act and thus comes to know itself (as object). Here it is 'established that the essence of man consists only in absolute freedom, that man is not a thing nor, in his own being, an object'.[1] He is (as the title of his first book has it) *unbe-dingt* (unreified, unconditioned) which means to say that which 'cannot be turned into a thing . . . certainly cannot be thought of as a thing'.[2] Consciousness coincides with being: 'The self is not conceivable without at the same time conceiving of its being'.[3] The predicates of the Absolute as we find them in ancient metaphysics are attributed to it: freedom, total unity, the embodiment of reality, substance, omnipotence, immortality.[4] It is evident that by this Absolute Schelling centrally means God (*The Absolute or God*).[5] This explains his

[1] Collected works, ed. K. F. A. Schelling, 1st section Vols. 1–10, 2nd section Vols. 1–4 (in what follows, the second section is numbered as Vols. XI–XIV). I 157.

[2] I 166.

[3] I 168.

[4] I 179–202.

[5] V 373.

emphatic riposte to Jacobi, the ineffective advocate of the classical and Christian formulation *si comprehendis non est Deus* ('a God who could be known could not be God'),[6] when he states that an assertion of this kind is unworthy of philosophy, which can have no other object or perspective than that of the knowledge of the Absolute, and that it offers a free passage to atheism. It is not that Schelling lacked a sense of the 'wonderful' and the 'mysterious' aspects of Being; for him philosophy is insight into the 'true mysteries',[7] 'which though celebrated in the brightest light of day still remain mysteries',[8] and whose first act is altogether that of *thaumazein*.[9] He counters the fears of Jacobi 'that science and understanding will destroy what is worthy of wonder' with the words: 'The feeling of the philosopher can be called wonder only in so far as he strives passionately to find what is the ultimate, the absolutely wonderful, which is the point at which science draws to a halt and the unknowing, which clearly you do not *understand*, begins'.[10] Only an 'unknowing' which is understood, a *docta* ignorantia (Nicolas of Cusa), a *comprehendere* incomprehensible (Anselm) is worthy of the philosopher. In his final metamorphosis Schelling appears to want to go beyond this thought when he says that philosophy experiences the drive 'to advance from what it can judge to be necessary and which therefore does not inspire wonder, to what lies beyond and above all necessary understanding and knowledge. In fact it will not rest until it has advanced to that which calls forth absolute wonder . . . to that which by its nature eliminates all further thinking because it transcends all thought . . . God is greater than we think, and has nothing to fear'.[11] And yet this 'positive philosophy' will no more escape the framework of the idealist point of departure than does Fichte's primal life (*Ur-Leben*). What could in principle lie beyond an absolute point of identity? Who could call the self into question in this, its own point of origin, object-ify or otherwise threaten it?

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[6] VIII 79.

[7] *Philosophie und Religion*, VI 17.

[8] VIII 111.

[9] 'Existence by itself, without taking into consideration the manner and form of the same, must seem a miracle to whomever looks upon it, and must fill the mind with astonishment: just as it cannot be denied that it was the observation of pure existence that, in the earliest presentiments, struck the minds with terror and a kind of holy fear': *Aphorismen über die Naturphilosophie*, VII 198.

[10] VIII 124–125.

It was Schelling's first intention to introduce the old 'objective' metaphysics, which he believed had found its final form in Spinoza, into the new Idealism and thus to eliminate (*aufheben*) it (*Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism*: 1795). If Spinoza's final position was that he conceived himself to be 'identical to the Absolute Object and to be lost in its infinity' (in that *amor intellectualis* in which the self transcends its own limits in order to allow the Absolute, God, to enjoy an absolute predominance), then this contained an element of self-deception: 'By viewing himself as being *annihilated* within the absolute object, he still views *himself*. He could not view himself as being annihilated without conceiving of himself at the same time as existing'.[12] Absolute self-sacrifice to the object (love which is its own reward) is at the same time the highest and freest self-possession; Schelling envisages the point of coincidence of subject and object which is everywhere implied as being also existential: as the blending of two ultimate attitudes in both of which, of course, the self has the final word (for the self is the identity of S and O). 'This step is difficult, difficult: setting forth from the final shore',[13] In mystical and Eckhartian terms: 'Where the creature disappears to itself and becomes transparent to the Creator, there is reason'.[14] Or in Fichte's terms: 'Only in the highest science does the mortal eye close, and it is no longer man who sees but the Eternal Sight which has acquired vision in him'.[15] It can be stated with reference to Fénelon and to his *entière indifférence même pour le salut* (as Schelling quotes it),[16] so that the highest detachment in orientation to God is then experienced at the same time as the highest victory after the highest active struggle. Finally we can express it in biblical terms: 'Here all which is finite, which is still an existent, must be left behind, and the final dependence must disappear. Here *everything* must be left behind—not only, as it is said, wife and child, but whatever is, even *God*, for God too at this point is only an existent . . . Here we say: Whoever wishes to keep something, will lose it, and whoever gives it up, will find it. Only he who has left all, and has been left by all, has attained his own ground and has known the full depth of life'.[17] But as we are urged to give up all that exists, be it world, or God, it at once becomes clear that the idea of Being as we find it in Avicenna, Scotus and Suarez (as the univocal and neutral principle which is beyond both God and world) has been transposed to the transcendental mode: the *indifferentia* (of subject and object), wich was essentially Schelling's point of departure, beyond the biblical and Ignatian, Alexandrian (*apatheia*) and Fénelonian form, is now that univocity which is 'oblivious of Being' and on the basis of which it is possible to 'construct' both absolute Being and the Being of the world. The old metaphysics was also oblivious of Being, in so far as it believed that it could establish an abstract concept beyond essence and the act of Being, beyond the real distinction of creaturely being and God's identical Being; and this old obliviousness of Being surfaces in Schelling in a logical progression as idealism which, because it gains an intellectual apprehension of God Himself and can construct Him exactly from His specifications, becomes 'a kind of ideal atheism'.[18]

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[11] *Phil. der Offenbarung*, VIX 12–14.

[12] I 319–320.

[13] *Erlanger Vorträge*, IX 218.

[14] *Kritische Fragmente*, VII 247.

[15] *Ibid.* VII 248.

[16] *Phil. der Mythologie*, XI 557.

The irredeemable obliviousness of Being is apparent in the fact that the opposition between the ideal and the real which is fundamental to Schelling's thought (in the dissolving of the original identity of subject and object) cannot be fixed according to its sense content, at least not at a point beyond what is meant by Kant's opposition between concept and perception (or in Husserl's *noesis* and *noema*). The ideal is the

[17] *Über die Natur der Philosophie als Wissenschaft*, IX 217–218.

[18] Emanuel Hirsch, *Geschichte der neuern evangelischen Theologie*, 4 Vols. (1952), p. 414.

universal, 'while contraction is the beginning of all reality'; by contracting Himself from the 'universal' (or from 'Being') to an 'existent', God becomes real, which contraction however is also His 'condescension'[19] from the level of an ideal 'existent' to that of a mere premise or ground or basis for it, namely to 'being', and thus the possibility appears of a 'created' world, to which the possibility of a 'participation' in God's Being is granted, without its thus becoming identical with the 'authentic God'.[20] It follows therefore that God, as the Absolute within identity, is the 'non-real', while 'reality exists in the non-identity of the general and the specific',[21] and that consequently God, in order to be existent, has need of the world as His basis of reality, so that 'the entire process of the creation of the world . . . is actually nothing other than the process of a fully developing awareness, the complete personalisation of God'.[22] But the fact that the 'Creation' can be God's 'free' condescension, remains the mystery of this thought which is oblivious of Being, in which everything (ideal and real) ultimately goes its way only in the context of a comprehensive ideality or conceptuality in which that which in the realm of the authentically real would be simply contradictory, appears to be 'constructable' in consequence of the loss of the decisive dimension of Being.

We can make the situation clearer by making a comparison with Nicolas of Cusa. The central problem for him, who thereby only sums up the whole of the classical metaphysics, was how God can be 'everything' when there is also a 'world' (consisting of innumerable finite things); or again: how God can be all in all without being in the formal sense the Being of things. Following Nicolas, Schelling poses the same question in the terms that God cannot be a 'discrete and individual' being—that would be dogmatism, and God would not be the *Non Aliud*—nor yet can God, according to the 'general pantheistic view', have 'no discrete, individual and self-sufficient existence', such that he would be only 'a general substance', only a 'bearer of things'. Schelling's solution is as follows: 'God, however, is both; He is first and foremost the essence of all essences, but as such He must also exist, that is . . . he must have a basis for himself. This God in his sublime dignity is the universal essence of all things, but this universal essence does not hang in the air but is grounded and is as if borne by God as individual being—the individual element in God is thus the basis or substratum of the Universal'.[24] Clearly the perspective here has changed: the 'highest dignity' is the 'universal essence of things', and the 'individual element', the 'for itself' is only the prerequisite for this. But can God as an 'individual' being still fulfil the requirements of the '*Non Aliud*'? In Nicolas, God is the *Non Aliud* in so far as he *Possest*, the One in so far as He is the Unique One, the Universal in so far as He is the Omnipotent, to whose identity of subject and object, *posse* and *esse*, there belongs power over all that is possible (for Him and through Him). Now if God and the world, each for themselves and according to their own nature, are 'constructed' from the point of an identical point of indifference on reason's part, then God is necessarily projected according to the scheme of the universe, or that of man: 'If we desire a God whom we can see as a wholly vital, personal being, then we must also see him in a completely human way. We must assume that His life has *the greatest analogy* with human life, that there exists in Him not only an eternal Being but also an eternal Becoming, that He . . . has everything in common with man but for dependency.'[25] This 'greatest analogy' contradicts the fundamental law of the classical metaphysics concerning the

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[19] *Stuttgarter Privatvorlesungen*, VII 429.

[20] *Ibid.*, 429–430.

[21] *Philosophie der Kunst*, V 370–371.

[22] VII 433. We remember from Fichte that personality is possible only in the Infinite. Schelling too says: 'In that which is without ground, or indifference, there is of course no personality'. *Philos. Unters. über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit*, VII 412.

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[24] *Ibid.*, 438.

[25] *Ibid.*, 432. *Cf. ibid.*: '*All* living being begins from unconsciousness . . . Just so does the divine life too begin'. 433: 'God has the same two principles in himself that we have in us . . .' 'The whole life is . . . a process of coming into consciousness at ever higher levels . . .the same is true of God also'. In the Jacobi text (VIII 71–72), the parallel is set out very clearly: while God makes himself the ground of the creature, he also makes himself the ground

'ever greater unlikeness' in the God-world analogy. But this, for Schelling, is the only way it is possible to avoid the decline of our world into an 'unnatural God and godless Nature',[26] in favour of which not only Böhme and Baader, but also 'the great Hamann' is called as witness.[27] But the 'intimacy' (Hölderlin) between God and the world in a common all-embracing Being which is apparently achieved thereby is purchased only at the cost of a duplication or even a triplication of God: God as all-embracing identity ('the undeveloped God'), then 'God *sensu eminenti*'[28] (or 'God in the strict sense'),[29] and finally Nature as a 'divine phenomenon of a lower order'.[30] It is evident that the 'eminent God' who lies enclosed in the universal must give way to the universal in the same way, for instance, that the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* gives way to the universal good. But the clock of history cannot be put back: today it is only the 'irrational abyss', the 'horrendous depths', the Void which can enclose God.

Schelling lets God and man evolve (each in his own way, God above time and man within time) out of their common depths into the light of their ideality; thus, not only does he allow the light and the night to coincide, as does Bruno, but he also allows the night to be the primal womb of the light. This is quite different from the idea of the Christian Romantics that night for the creature is a containing and maternal womb, a darkness which in a mysterious unity is unconscious Nature and the incomprehensible God (the 'brilliant darkness'). In Schelling, God Himself rises as Spirit from His pre-divine dark, which as such He offers at the same time to the 'creature' as the ground of becoming. This ground

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of his own self, 'since he lives *above* the world only to the extent that he subordinates this part of his essence (the non-intelligent part) to the higher part, and lives with this part free from the world . . . just as man transfigures himself truly to intelligence, to the ethical life, only by subordinating the irrational part of his essence to the higher part'.

[26] VIII 70.

[27] VIII 114.

[28] VIII 81.

[29] VII 436.

[30] VII 441.

'is *matter* (not of course matter which is already formed) and matter is nothing other than the unconscious part of God'.[31] So the ideal is thus ultimately the 'superstructure' above matter: materialism resurfaces here too (as already with Descartes and his followers) as the logical consequence of the conceptual thinking of a univocity which is devoid of Being.[32] The final stance of the philosopher is thus for Schelling that of a heroic defiance in the face of the sibylline vision of the abyss, which even here (as later in Freud and Scheler) is called 'the anarchic', 'primal instinct', 'hunger', 'dependency', 'dark will' (='drive'), and which pours out a form of melancholy over all that is.[33] One must hold out against the 'truly terrible thing', one must 'descend into the horrendous depths',[34] which is why Dante has such importance for Schelling:[35]

> The heart wavered at the fearful word:
> 'Give up all hope, ye who enter here'.
> But still you passed on through the terrible gate . . .
> Through the earth's very heart to the eternal light.[36]

But the ethos remains wholly distinct from that of Dante, who wanders through Hell not as an absolute philosopher but as a Christian pentitent and for whom therefore Hell is anything but the 'base of Heaven'. But Schelling's thought contains the seed of complete materialism as unequivocally as that of Fichte contains the seed of an irrational philosophy of life, as this was called above, with reference to Simmel. And both fall victim to this dialectic in that they seek to render univocal the mystery of the Thomist *actus essendi* in its distinction from the existent and in its mediation between

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[31] VII 435.

[32] This is just as true as the closeness, often noted, between Schelling and Schopenhauer. *Cf.* Eduard von Hartmann, *Schellings positive Philosophie als Einheit von Hegel und Schopenhauer*, 1869.

[33] VII 359f., 399.

[34] VIII 124.

[35] *Über Dante in philosophischer Beziehung*, V 152–163 (originally as part of the *Philosophie der Kunst*: V 687, note). Schelling's translations from the *Divine Comedy*: X 441–446.

[36] *An Dante*, X 441.

God and the world by substituting at this point a conceptual identity, while in truth the *actus essendi* is neither God nor the neutral concept beyond both God and world, nor is it the potency of matter, but rather—and here Schelling is right—it is that first mystery in which God gives a share in Himself and which therefore appeared to the ancients as the θεῖον of the world (he names it in a way that serves to make it univocal: 'the divinity of the universe').[37] And it is only from within Being and with reference to Being that can we speak of the existent, which is transposed in Schelling into the principle that it is only possible to conduct philosophy from within the Absolute.[38]

But in so far as the highest point of identity between subject and object, the ideal and the real can be realised only through the process whereby the real becomes idealised step by step and *vice versa*, the whole of philosophy becomes the dialectic of an evolutionary philosophy of Nature (in which the Spirit rises through the realms of the organic until it becomes conscious within man) and a philosophy of Spirit (in which the Spirit becomes ever more actively incarnate in the real world through mores and culture and thus rises above Nature in realisation of itself, thus 'transfiguring' it in itself). Thus within absolute identity distinction is nevertheless postulated and, being transcended (*aufgehoben*) in its very postulation, is 'transfigured': the Infinite appears in the 'form', while the latter is interpreted and understood with reference to the Infinite. But that is the form of the beautiful. More so than any other modern philosophy, the philosophy of Schelling, as a philosophy of the balance between the Infinite and the finite, is an aesthetic one. Though it is not a philosophy of glory (for that is what a philosophy of identity can never be), but emphatically a *philosophy of art*.[39] It can unite the classical and Goethean perspectives (organic Nature which embraces the Spirit) with those of Schiller and in part those of Hölderlin (Spirit which submerges itself in Nature), and it can harmonise both in that highest identity of consciousness and unconsciousness which, for both schools, constitutes the essence of the genius, whose features now necessarily fuse with those of God.[40] Nothing is more characteristic here than the way in which the Kantian subjective 'sublime' (itself a relic of the objective 'glory') in its distinction from the 'beautiful' is first brought by Schiller to an uncertain state of balance with regard to the beautiful, only to be submerged in Schelling entirely within universalising 'beauty', for within the system of identity there can no longer exist any 'true and objective polarity between beauty and sublimity': 'that which is truly and absolutely beautiful is always also sublime, and the sublime (when it is authentic) is also beautiful'.[41] Thus the vital problem which arose with Kant is extinguished; for Hegel the 'sublime' is only the past. Certainly the *kalon* appears again here—in contrast to its anthropologisation by Schiller—as an absolutely transcendental property of being; following the *Timaeus*, the universe (here including God) is seen 'as a divine work of art', in which once again the chief aspects are total forms of beauty, and Nature is the 'eternal organ and document of philosophy'. 'But in the true work of art there is no single beauty, but rather beauty belongs only to the whole'.[42] Thus Schelling constructs first 'the universe in the form of art, and the philosophy of art as the science of the universe in the form or potency of art'[43] in order to understand the individual instance of beauty as such from this absolute perspective. And thus the mutual interpenetration of

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[37] VII 140.

[38] 'The unconditional is the element in which alone demonstration is possible . . . Only in the absolute can everything be set forth': *Stuttg. Privatvorlesungen*, VII 423.

[39] The principal documents: 1., 'System des transzendentalen Idealismus' (1800, with a concluding section on the 'Deduktion eines allgemeinen

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Organs der Philosophie oder Hauptsätze der Philosophie der Kunst': III 612–669), 2., the dialogue 'Bruno' (1802, IV 213–332), 3. the great unfinished 'Philosophie der Kunst' (1802–1805, from the posthumous works, V 353–736).

[40] III 616f.; V 460.

[41] III 621, likewise V 468f.: 'only a quantitative antithesis'. On the whole theme, *cf.* Karl Viëtor, 'Die Idee des Erhabenen in der deutschen Literatur', in: *Geist und Form* (1952), pp. 234–266; on Schelling, p. 264.

[42] V 359.

[43] V 368.

the Transcendentals is again achieved: 'truth and beauty [are] merely two different ways of contemplating the Absolute One',[44] and in *Philosophy and Religion* (1804) in particular the identity of the True-Beautiful and the Good-Holy is highlighted.[45] And it is precisely the aesthetic identity between the Infinite and the finite, between God who is manifest in the world and the world itself which is transparent to God, which becomes for Schelling the true key to the religious dimension, for distinction (*Differenz*) *within* identity (*Indifferenz*) allows the construction of historical religion: aesthetics as the manifestation of the Infinite within finite form (or Nature) is 'mythology', pre-Christian religion, while aesthetics as the assimilation of the finite into the Infinite is 'revelation', Christian religion (and religious philosophy).[46]

This *kairos* of an 'aesthetic theology' in Schelling is decisive for our theme, because it appears (more fundamentally than even in Hegel) as the recapitulation of that which was developed in our first volume (*Seeing the Form*), and also as the idealistic representation of the primary matter of the present volume. 'Mythology' is characteristically the first concern of the young Schelling, with which his first work,[47] 'On Myths, Historical Sagas and Philosophemes of the Ancient World' (1793), is concerned.[48] It is a theme which evolves throughout the complete work[49] until the final 'Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation' (Vols. 11–14). And because God's timeless becoming takes temporal form within world consciousness, therefore the religious principle must initially appear in the finite (Nature) form of mythic beauty, from which Schelling correctly derives the art of the pre-Christian period, before it becomes transfigured within the infinite (Spirit) form of revelatory beauty in which God first becomes man, authentically suffers in his finiteness, only to return by resurrection to the eternal world of ideas where he assimilates the real man into this new reality. Thus Christ is the end of mythology, 'the summit and the end of the old world of the gods'.[50] For the gods themselves were nothing other than the powers of the Godhead: 'The same unified forms of the general and the specific, which viewed in themselves are ideas, that is the images of divinity, are gods, when viewed in real terms'[51] (when these taken over from the sphere of Nature into the Christian sphere of Spirit, they will appear as 'angels').[52] But in so far as there was a change of direction in Christ, when the 'true Infinite entered the finite, not in order to deify the latter but to offer it in sacrifice to God in his own person and thus to effect reconciliation', religion becomes historical for the first time, the esoteric spiritual kernel of the event becomes decisive while, on the other hand, the mythological, symbolic and sacramental side of the new religion remains 'exoteric'.[53] 'Mysticism is the innermost dimension of Christianity'.[54] It appears here that Schelling's understanding of myth, which was initially wholly influenced by the Enlightenment (myth as an imaginative form of envisaging the divine at a child's level of consciousness), remains rationalistic in his mature period too and that his conception of revelation and faith correspondingly remains a preliminary form contained within philosophical understanding and knowledge. Where the Infinite predominates over the finite (revelation), the finite (which as myth once functioned as the valid vessel of the Infinite) can only serve for its aesthetic contemplation: as 'the outer forms under which religion exists',[55] and as the aesthetic necessity 'to make exoteric what is esoteric within Christianity',[56] in short: the mythic dimension has been wholly absorbed into the philosophy of art. The ultimate reason for this, as with Fichte and Hölderlin, is the fact that the situation of Christ as the revealing God-Man coincides with the philosophical relationship between God and man, indeed between the Infinite and the finite, which, from the perspective of an ultimate point of identity, from an ultimate common root even of this differentiation, is open to an aesthetic overview. Other 'truly divine men' can also stand where Christ stands, including for example that universal German, whose coming is awaited by Schelling, as it is by Hölderlin, Fichte and Schiller:[57] 'Had he appeared, he would have filled the whole people with reverence as a radiant light and an emissary from Heaven, and he would have suddenly, wonderfully and divinely united those who have been divided.'[58] The distinction between God and the world from their original root is the necessary 'self-duplication of God' in His enduring unity. This can thus be understood both in a trinitarian way and, at the same time, within God as a trinitarian economy. And this is so again both within Nature (as the Son of God who succumbs to finitude and death) and within history, where Christ as the recapitulating man displays the self-stripping of God. The synthesis of all contradictions 'lies only in the idea of a God who endures suffering of His own free will' in contrast to the gods of mythology, for the latter 'do not suffer, but are blessed in their finitude'.[59] Thus all the mysteries of faith have become philosophy, and Hegel is prefigured in his entirety. But this apparent subordination of theology to philosophy was possible only because of the failure to elevate theology above philosophy: in aesthetic terms, because the graciousness and freedom which the divine revelation shows towards man, the creature, has always been included within the necessary process of God's emergence as God and man's emergence as man, which also means that God becomes man and man becomes God. All this talk of 'freedom of will' cannot mean anything more here than the 'fundamental character' of the beautiful, under the systematic primacy of which the truth and the goodness of Being are interpreted.

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[44] V 370.

[45] But this is already so in the last *Vorlesung über das Akademische Studium*, V 344f. Schelling has therefore every reason (beyond Plotinus) to demonstrate that Plato's struggle against the aesthetic culture of the poets is merely the rejection of a lower form of the beautiful at the service of a higher form which appears in Plato's last works and points ahead to the future Christian 'art of the infinite': V 346–347.

[46] V 430.

[47] After the Latin dissertation for the degree of Magister on the likewise mythical character of the narrative of the fall in Genesis: I 1–40.

[48] I 41–83.

[49] Adolf Allwohn, 'Der Mythos bei Schelling', *Kant-Studien* 61 (1927).

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[50] V 292.

[51] V 390.

[52] V 436f.

[53] V 293–294.

[54] V 443.

[55] *Philosophie und Religion*, appendix, VI 65f.

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[56] V 294.

[57] 'Deutsche Grösse': 'Every people has its day in history, but the day of the Germans is the harvest of the whole of time': *Werke*, I 477.

[58] Über das Wesen deutscher Wissenschaft, VIII 15.

[59] V 432–433.

It is entirely integral to the monistic point of departure that finitude and the division of the earliest distinction which conditions it can also be read as a fall (of the existent from the idea), and thus also as guilt, and the emergence of the ego in the concentration of freedom appears not as pure creatureliness but as the Promethean principle. This is first postulated in *Philosophy and Religion* (1804), and developed in the *Enquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom* (1809). This kind of emphasis inheres within the nature of every system of identity: it can be seen to derive from Plato, is present in Plotinus (although with counterbalancing elements) and emerges sharply and titanically in the work of Bruno. Distinguishing philosophical 'mediation' into identity from Christian 'reconciliation', before synthesising these to form a complete metaphysics, remains the principal requirement of Christian discernment.

The dispute as to whether Schelling—in reaction to Hegelian panlogism—really adopted a new point of departure in the philosophy of his old age, which he describes as the transition from a negative philosophy to a positive one, can hardly be resolved; but the balance (following the researches of Walter Schulz)[60] tips towards a negative answer. For philosophy in Schelling's eyes coincides in its concept with the univocity of reason. It is only at a second stage that reason recognises that it can construct God only as an idea and not as a living reality and, reduced to 'ultimate despair', generates God from itself. For the rational self does not want its idea, but 'God Himself': 'It wants Him, Him, the God who acts, the God of providence . . . in short, He who is the LORD of Being . . . God must *draw nearer* with his help, but it can *desire* Him, and hope to attain a state of blessedness through Him which . . . cannot be a blessedness which is *deserved*, which is proportionate, as Kant wants, but only undeserved, and therefore incalculable and immeasurable'.[61] Who can fail to hear the cry here with which thought asks itself questions it cannot answer and, acknowledging its own limits, posits something beyond itself that alone, by drawing near, can bring it to completion. Of itself, it grasps eternally only the 'How' (the 'existing'), but the 'That' of Being, the 'wholly transcendental Being',[62] the reality beyond all ideas, transports reason 'absolutely ecstatically' out of itself,[63] so that here it must absolutely 'surrender', die to itself and allow Being precedence. But we must listen carefully to how this process is described. 'According to its mere nature, it (reason) posits only what has infinite existence and, inversely, in the positing of the same it is motionless, as if stunned, *quasi attonita*, but it is rendered numb by all-conquering Being only in order to attain by this act of surrender to its true and eternal content, which it cannot find in the world of the senses, and to attain to it as to something which is truly known and which it will now therefore possess in all eternity'.[64] The 'in order to'[65] shows that this *ecstasis*, this 'taking leave of everything' and 'allowing its approach' is still ultimately understood to be an enterprise of reason. In Hegel, Schelling tells us, reason takes itself as object, to which act there corresponds as 'content only the infinite potency of Being', although if Being is taken entirely seriously, then it itself becomes the act, 'of which no thought can find the ground or beginning', and to which therefore reason can relate only as a potency. If it is in its own essentiality, 'then only the infinite act can correspond to its infinite potency of knowledge'.[66] Not only Heidegger could agre slumbering view, but also Thomas, and here Maréchal has no difficulty in transposing both the ontological and the transcendental mode of metaphysics one into the other. But this is so only under the condition that the 'negative philosophy', which extends as far as the construction of the idea of God, is established as the realm of the 'natural doctrine of God' (or fundamental theology), and the historical deeds of the living God who draws near of his own free will are valid as the object of theology and not once again as that of a 'philosophy of revelation'. To proclaim seriously the possibility of a philosophy of this kind—as do the Enlightenment and the entire German Idealist tradition—presupposes that the univocity (identity) of reason also survives the *salto mortale* of 'positive philosophy', making use of it as a form of its own *self-mediation* which is necessary purely in methodological terms. But then this extreme and unique *salto* of Schelling would be nothing other than Hegel's constantly-repeated (with the erection of every serious antithesis) mini-death of reason: the 'speculative Good Friday'.[67]

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[60] *Die Vollendung des deutschen Idealismus in der Spätphilosophie Schellings*, Kohlhammer 1955.

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[61] XI 566–567.

[62] XIII 127.

[63] XIII 163; the word *Ekstasis* for absolute transcendence had already appeared: IX 229–230.

[64] XIII 165.

[65] Which recurs repeatedly on the following pages (*cf.* XIII 170).

[66] XIII 165.

4. HEGEL

Schelling had made a contribution to the building of the 'uncompletable bridge' by understanding revelation to be a higher form of myth; but where it was necessary to lay the final stone, he became unsure of himself and the measure of the distances eluded him. But Hegel's hand did not waver; he calmly completed the arch, strode across it and dedicated it to the future. Hegel knows that he is commissioned by the World Spirit to open up the future. 'Ours is an important age, a time of fermentation in which the Spirit has jolted forward and outgrown its old form, and acquires a new one. The whole mass of former ideas, concepts, the bonds of the world are loosened and collapse like a dream. A new emergence of the Spirit is underway.'[1] The determined transformation of the entire Christian πίστις into a definitive γνῶσις is thus in Hegel's consciousness not only a long-overdue synthesis of the entire past religious history of the world, but also certainly the laying-bare of the path into the future. His way of thought runs in an opposite direction to that of Fichte and Schelling: if they began with the principle of identity, and, slowly considering their point of departure, struggled back to a Christianity of the Johannine type, Hegel in his early period struggled to make sense of Christ, and the meaning of Christ's life and of the institution he founded, in order then, with clear decision, to absorb that which is of philosophical value within it into his own system and to reject the indigestible remains.[2] He long believed that he could interpret divine life and its evolution in the world under the leading idea of love; but finally this notion disappears modestly into the interior of absolute knowledge, to rule now only as the rhythm and brilliance of its 'bacchantine' movement with which 'there is no limb which is not inebriated'.[3] Hölderlin, his friend from early days in Tübingen, comes close to this change in Hegel around 1800 in the teaching of his fictional character Hyperion: *hen kai pan* is the call. Instead of remaining as if paralysed at the point of identity as do Fichte and Schelling, the 'One' is dissolved into the 'Whole' and emerges thereby simultaneously as abundance of love (πλήρωμα) and exiguous poverty (πενία, κένωσις)[4]—in order finally to return home victorious with its whole full-grown truth and glory into the undivided One. In Hegel as in Hölderlin, Christianity is now absorbed into the element of the omnipresent kenosis of Being in which, for both, the unsurpassable 'glory' of reality occurs. For Hegel therefore glory is nowhere to be found more than in the

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[67] Hegel, *Glauben und Wissen* (Werke I, 1832), p. 157.

[1] *G. W. F.* Hegels Werke, complete edition in 18 Vols., 1832–1840. Herm. Nohl, *Hegels theologische Jugendschriften* (= N). Hegel, *Jeneser Logik, Metaphysik und Naturphilosophie* (= *Hegels sämtliche Werke*, ed. G. Lasson

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Vol. 18a, 1923 = J). *Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung*, ed. Joh. Hoffmeister, 1936 (= D).–D 352.

[2] 'In Swabia one says about something that happened a very long time ago: it is so long ago now, that it will soon be no longer true. Thus Christ died for our sins such a long time ago now, that it will soon be longer true', D 358.

[3] II 37.

[4] See above on Hölderlin, pp. 000.

totality of the Absolute Spirit itself; absolute thought radiates it in a triumph which can be compared only with that of Leibniz, though it is now no longer theodicy but noödicy.

Viewed retrospectively, therefore, Hegel represents the final conclusion to that interpretation of the world which understands the universe to be the self-manifestation of God: the Stoa, Plotinus, Dionysius, Scotus Erigena, Nicolas of Cusa, Ficino, Spinoza, Herder, Goethe. 'The object of religion as well as that of philosophy is . . . God and the explication of God.'[5] 'Philosophy has the aim of knowing truth, of knowing God, for He is absolute truth and therefore nothing else is worth the effort in comparison with God and the explication of God.'[6]. But if we wish to find the particular intuition of Hegel, since all this is still too general, then this can best be understood on the basis of Nicolas of Cusa's *non-aliud* as the name of God. All that is finite is the *aliud* of an 'other' and demands this other in order to be itself, thus it transforms itself, if it is itself to be the object of thought, into the other and, when it is itself the thinking subject, retrieves itself (together with the other) into itself. This movement permeates the universe of finitude and only ceases when the last possible other becomes integrated into the Absolute, which can have no opposition since it comprehends all opposition within itself. The *pan* itself as the fullness of integration can no longer be opposed to the *hen* as its other; rather the *kai* is indicative of their identity. But in so far as the movement which in each case embraces the One together with its Other in a single comprehensive unity is one of truth and knowledge, all knowledge of truth must be rooted in the *non-aliud*, that is in absolute knowledge. That is its point of origin and it is there that it must return. But *non-aliud* means as negation that every *aliud* must be posited in the Absolute in order to be integrated (*aufgehoben*: transcended while Being preserved): positing and transcending (*Aufhebung*) are one and the same process—'appearance is a process of being born and passing away which itself is neither born nor passes away, but which exists *an sich* and constitutes the reality and the movement of the life of truth'.[7] 'Faith' (or 'representation': religion) and 'perception' (i.e. art) belong to the manifest dimension of God; both see through the finite to the Infinite which appears and is concealed within it. Philosophy as 'knowledge' embraces and supersedes both, without destroying either, and while they look up towards glory, philosophy or the knowledge of God is itself glory. Hegel reaches this conclusion by virtue of the fact, first that his point of departure is the biblical revelation, second that he removes the biblical glory from this in three stages, and third that he equates the surviving doctrine of the 'Holy' Spirit with the 'Absolute' (God-world) Spirit.

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[5] XI 5.

[6] XII 287.

1. The *Early Theological Writings* were influenced on the one hand by Lessing (that 'the contingent truths of history' cannot satisfactorily ground the 'necessary truths of reason') and, on the other, by Fichte (that the divinity neither can nor may be conceived of 'objectively'); so that 'everything which is expressed in the form of reflection concerning the divine is meaningless'.[8] God is—as Jesus experienced and taught, and as John understood—pure and eternal love, light, life. He is therefore the absolute unifying principle which transcends (*aufhebt*) the duality (which it presupposes): 'In love man has found himself again in another; because it is a bond of life, it presupposed a separation, an evolution, and the developed multifaceted character of the same. And the more forms in which life becomes vital, the more points there are at which it can unify itself and be sentient, and can be love all the more intensely.'[9] Finitude as such is 'pain',[10] opposition between beings is 'death'; but only when placed within a comprehensive and living whole, which posits the contradiction in order to transcend it. Hegel says in his exegesis of the Prologue of St John's gospel, which begins with the first setting up of an opposition between God and the Logos: 'The infinity of the real is infinite division as the

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[7] II 36.

[8] N 306.

[9] N 322.

[10] 'The pain is the course taken by finitude': XII 77.

real, everything is through the Logos. The world is not an emanation of the divinity, for then all reality would be divine; but, as reality it is emanation, a part of the infinite division, but also, in the part . . . life. What is specific, limited, in opposition or dead is at the same time a branch of the infinite tree of life.'[11] '*That which is contradiction in the realm of the dead, is not so in the realm of life* . . . It is true only of objects, of dead things, that the whole is different from its parts; but for the living, a part of the same is just as much One as is the whole.'[12] In the parable of the true vine Jesus extends this mystery of the integration of the members to the level of the whole of life.[13] The polarity of the members has meaning only from the point of view of that which unites them, which is the perspective from which they are understood; whereas for the members as such their unification is the object of belief: 'The unification is the activity; this activity, reflected as object, is the object of belief . . . That which opposes can be recognised as such only by virtue of the fact that it has already been united; unification is the measure by which comparison occurs . . . Unification itself . . . is the object of belief; though it cannot be proven, for those things which stand in opposition are dependent, and unification in respect to them is independence.'[14] If we further postulated that 'unification and Being are identical in meaning', then it would follow that 'Being can be only the object of belief'.[15] That means, in his later language: the synthesis, which as truth is the real, surpasses mere (discriminating) reason. Living reason contains the element of love within it and is one with it. Now, in proximity to Hyperion, we can say: 'In love, that which is separated still exists, but no longer as what has been separated—as something standing alone by itself, and the living feels the living . . . Thus lovers can distinguish themselves one from the other only in so far as they are mortal . . . The separable causes the lovers embarrassment. It is a kind of conflict between total devotion, between the only possible annihilation, the annihilation of opposites within unification—and the self-sufficiency which is still present; each feels itself to be hampered by this—love resents what is still separated, what is still a private possession; this indignation of love at individuality is shame.' The promise of inseparability is the child, who testifies to unity as something eternal.[16]

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[11] N 307.
[12] N 308–309.
[13] N 314.
[14] N 382–383.
[15] N 383.

If we raise ourselves in this eros to the absolute standpoint, then 'the vision of God as Himself is . . . the eternal creation of the universe', the 'separation of the real, this grounding of diversity is the goodness of God', the self-transcendence (*Selbstaufhebung*) in love of what has been individualised, 'the absolute turning-point'; it is 'the justice of God, which as absolute power over the real shows its negative side', the reintegration into God's consciousness 'is the eternal wisdom and blessedness' of God, which of course, as the transcendence of the real, is 'the judgment'; but this 'cannot judge abstractly, precisely because the individual is limited: God's heart, as judge of the world, must be brought to breaking point, because He is the absolutely universal totality. He cannot judge the world; He can only have pity upon it.'[17] A comparison between this 'pantheistic' Christianity and that of Origen and Evagrius is instructive and shows the distance of the ages: in the latter, the division of the original divine *monas* into the multiplicity of the world was '*krisis*, judgment', and its reunification through Christ in love is called '*pronoia*, loving providence'. But in Hegel, the self-unfolding of God's 'goodness' and the return, which must break and destroy the particular, is 'judgment': though this judgment too ends by becoming mercy in the mystery of universal integration. The judge's heart breaks, in sympathetic suffering with the limitation of the individual. The new *hen kai pan* has passed far more deeply than the patristic one through the mystery of the Cross.

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[16] N 379–381.

[17] D 349; *cf.* in the *Religionsphilosophie*: 'The righteousness is the element of negation, i.e. that the nothingness may be revealed; this righteousness is a determination like the coming into being and passing away of Shiva . . .': XII 48.

But Hegel is no timid thinker. From Schelling he inherits the sibylline glance into the abysmal depths (the only thing which Schlesinger's portrait of the aged Hegel still shows); as in Bruno and the young Goethe, enthusiasm can show its dark side: 'God, who has become Nature, who has extended Himself into the glory and the silent circulation of the formations, becomes aware of His expansion and of His lost precision and becomes enraged at that. He finds . . . his essence is poured out in restless Infinity, where there is no present but only a barren thrusting beyond the limit, which always comes into being where it is transcended. This wrath . . . is the destruction of Nature . . . and is likewise an absolute going into the self, a process of becoming the mid-point. In this, the wrath devours its formations into itself . . . Its limbs are thereby crushed and its flesh pressed into this liquid.' Hegel names the 'wrath of God at Himself in His otherness' the 'fallen Lucifer', who rises up against God and whose beauty makes him arrogant. But finally, as with Hölderlin, 'disfigured Nature rises up in a new ideal form as a realm of shadows', and its new form is 'having endured the fire of pain at the mid-point where, now purified, it has left all the flakes in the pot'.[18] Such sweeping formulations are later moderated; the issue remains the same, even when it is expressed in Christian terms: if God takes finitude upon Himself in Christ, 'this finitude which at its most extreme point is evil', then it is 'infinite love, that God has made Himself identical to what is foreign to Him in order to destroy it. This is the meaning of the death of Christ.' But because it is God who dies, death, the negative, conveys for us that 'the original sublimity is postulated as having been attained', and it is understood 'that the human, the finite, the debilitated, the weak, the negative are all an element within the divine; they are all contained within God Himself'.[19]

In the *Spirit of Christianity* and in the so-called *Fragment of a System* written in Frankfurt in 1800, which is close to Hölderlin and also to Schiller and which forms the transition to the system of the Jena period, the classical and Christian dimensions are magnificently combined. Infinite life (God) and finite life (world) now appear as 'Spirit' (already in the elevated sense of the 'vital unity of multiplicity') and 'as its form', which is not 'just dead variety separated off from it', but in which, rather, 'individual lives' become the 'organs' of infinite life. If someone can look at the universe in this way, then he 'prays to God'.[20] But because the individual form as such must nevertheless die, the whole appears to it as 'fate', which it must suffer willingly, and through which it can reconcile itself to God in the spirit of love.[21] Here we have Schiller's unillumined fate whereby the fragmenting human form matures into its ultimate beauty; even more, Hölderlin's 'dumb cliff' against which the heart's wave breaks and becomes Spirit; and for Hegel too the final word at this point is beauty: 'beautiful unification'.[22] It is into this fundamental aesthetic law that Hegel now interprets what is distinctively Christian: the unconditioned openness to reconciliation, the love of our enemy, which can glimpse the life of love through the apparently irreconcilable forms of life and fate and can carry it through. Although the otherness of fate can be construed as 'punishment' for the alienation of the finite consciousness from God, it is precisely this otherness that transforms love, which yields and offers itself, and by suffering and dying makes its peace with fate. That is perfect freedom, and at the same time it is beauty: 'the highest freedom is the negative attribute of the beauty of the soul'.[23]

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[18] D 365.

[19] XII 250–253.

2. But this reconciliation of the Greek spirit with the Gospel has one precondition: the complete elimination of the Jewish dimension. In his insatiable and hateful polemic against the Old Testament, Hegel pursues the one element for which he has no use in his otherwise all-reconciling system: the sovereign and lordly elevation of God above the world, who acts, elects and rejects in complete freedom of will; and thus he has no use either for the distinctively Old Testament form

[20] N 347.
[21] N 348.
[22] N 351.
[23] N 286.

of the divine glory: the *Kabôd*. It was precisely this kind of anti-semitism which necessarily had to appear at the end of our history of the Spirit in which the elevation of God above the world—first in terms of classical antiquity and then of Christianity—is reduced step by step until it becomes a structure of implication and explication. Even in his maturity, when he no longer engages in polemics, Hegel will tear the Bible down the middle and insert the whole of antiquity between Judaism and Christianity. 'The Jewish principle of opposition' pulls God and the world apart:[24] and thus the idea of God becomes abstract, 'empty and without content', 'lifeless, not even dead, a nothingness' which nevertheless as 'infinite object' claims for itself all truth, freedom and justice so that man is reduced to a 'mere possession of his God', who jealously demands veneration and worship, who hates all other cults and commands then as far as possible to be destroyed, while allowing his own servants to live in a 'sad, unfelt unity' before Him and to serve him, but without beauty and without participating in 'anything eternal'.[25] He stokes up within them the 'demon of hatred'; 'a people who despise all foreign Gods must bear the hatred of the whole of the human race in their hearts'.[26] Accordingly, Israel as a people 'have descended to Hell in the infamy of their hatred', and what remains of this today as a sign among the Gentiles is the 'ideal of the one who is most rejected', like Thersites among the Greek heroes.[27] They are the 'hapless people',[28] as later in the *Phenomenology* the disjunction between God and the world is designated as the 'hapless consciousness'. Israel's religion is pure 'positivity', since it constantly exists in servile dependence upon the tyranny of its abstract God, and that is 'immorality'.[29] Hegel's total rejection is to some degree relativised by his placing of the Jewish tradition within that of the Orient in general with its abstract and empty idea of

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[24] N 308.
[25] N 251–253.
[26] N 377.
[27] D 265.
[28] N 350.
[29] N 276.

God (India, Islam) and its multiple compensations for this by 'an acquired and alien splendor' (*Kabôd*): it is from this sphere that the dialectic arises between 'sovereignty over all and the willing surrender to every form of slavery',[30] which was the source later for the greatly influential chapter of the *Phenomenology* on the master and the servant. Here too a place could be found finally for the Jewish tradition, as a wholly relative phenomenon, in the interpretations of the 'philosophy of religion', of 'aesthetics' and the 'history of philosophy'. But this does not change the fact that we find in essence a fundamental rejection of the biblical and theological reality: of the elevation of the God of Israel above every harmonising reciprocity of complication and explication.

Thus the concept of sublimity within classical German aesthetics is definitively allocated to the past. It occupies a place in the great 'aesthetics' after the 'unconscious symbolism' of the Persians, the Indians and the Egyptians, as well as the Islamic 'pantheism of art': in the 'symbolism of sublimity', 'external existence, in which the substance is brought into view, is degraded *vis-à-vis* the substance, since this reduction and manipulation is the sole way in which the one God who is in Himself formless and who resists expression by anything wordly and finite according to His positive nature, can be rendered visible through art.' The external dimension is so subordinated that the internal one 'does not appear within it, but passes beyond it in such a way that nothing can attain expression but an act of being beyond and a proceeding beyond'.[31]

Against the Jewish abstractness, which fosters a loveless and 'godless' legalism and ceremonialism, the Jesus of the *Early Theological Writings* sets up the principle of love: as the inner against the outer, the moral against the legal, the reconciling against the dividing, beauty against sublimity. Whoever believes in Him, whoever grasps the principle which He brings, enters the light; and whoever rejects Him, pronounces his own judgment in that he remains within the zone of contradiction and division.[32]

[30] D 257–261.

[31] X/1 479.

[32] N 261f., 285f., 311.

But Hegel must advance to the point of a second denial: the denial of the Church, which through the tragic dialectic of history is led to the point of objectifying by the divinisation of Jesus the wholly abstract element which shines forth in Him,[33] of introducing a permanent contradiction into Jesus Himself and into devotion to him by the belief in the Resurrection,[34] and from there gradually to fall back into the outdated legalism of the Old Covenant:[35] into canon law which soon necessarily mingles with secular law[36] and thus leads to all the forms of medieval abuses.[37] Hegel thus (N 214–231) strikes a note of invective which is fully equal to that of Nietzsche against Christianity.

But does that not demand yet a third denial, that is, of Jesus Christ himself, who, on closer inspection, sought only to overcome the abstract positivity of the Jewish religion by opposing it with a new form of positivism: the link of faith to his own person? 'This constant, uniform thrusting forward of the self in John is a point of distinction from the Jewish character' and, in Jesus' intention, only a transitional stage on the way to complete unity in love and in the Eucharist with his friends; but then the abandoned group of disciples (as in Hölderlin's late hymns)[38] become attached to this too insistently isolated ego with its unique (and thus historical and positive) experience of God. The Graeco-Roman world of myth is shattered for the sake of this one man, without however creating in its place a satisfactory replacement in keeping with the world,[39] for the ancient Jewish legends are alien to the Western world, and Jesus' attitude to suffering, which in his disciples becomes a flight from the world,[40] lacks force of action and world-form.[41] The sacraments do not become an authentic form of life (as were the Gods of the Greeks):[42] everything points to an initial deficiency in Jesus himself, which had fateful historical consequences and which today points imperiously beyond itself. In his final judgment of historical Christianity, Hegel shows how the latter has failed in all its forms (Catholic, Protestant, Enlightenment) to create a calm and fulfilled form of beauty between God and the world, since it has not been able 'to find peace in an impersonal and vital beauty', but has hovered restlessly between the 'extremes . . . of friendship, of hatred or of indifference towards the world' and thus turned in a circle.[43] The God-world 'opposition' is nowhere 'transcended in a beautiful unity',[44] and the 'imagination can never synthesise it in beauty'.[45] That which should have effected this unity, the divine consciousness of Jesus Christ, becomes destructive and eternally divisive in the theory of the two natures and in the doctrine of the Resurrection. Instead of vanishing in transparency to God and yielding place solely to the sanctifying and unifying Spirit, the transient historical form of Jesus is made eternal, and thus absolute reason is prevented from ever dealing with the positivity of Christ. From this point on, Hegel is determined to throw away the husk in order to preserve the kernel. In the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* (1807) the 'husk' (the historical Jesus and the historical Church) is dispensed with under the title of the 'hapless consciousness' even prior to its entrance into the realm of 'reason',[46] while the philosophically serviceable kernel, the unity and mutual openness of God and man, is reserved for the highest realms of reason ('manifest religion').[47]

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[33] N 156f., 175f.

[34] N 384.

[35] N 208.

[36] N 183.

[37] N 315.

[38] See above, pp. 333f.

[39] N 215.

[40] N 328f.

[41] 'The Christian religion has produced many martyrs, heroes in endurance, but not heroes in action': N 357.

And so it is not the historical and positive element which is philosophically assimilable, but the dogmatic one: christology as the general final formula of the relationship between God and the world; and thus what in the third book of Nicolas of Cusa's work (*Docta Ignorantia*) is represented as unification of the supreme divine principle and the supreme divine-world principle, but linked to the person of Christ. The uncertainty evident there (in the relationship between Christ and 'spirit', between 'conjecture' and 'knowledge' as the fullness of faith) is clarified in Hegel. What was historically 'revealed' (*offenbart*), is forever 'manifest' (*offenbar*). 'Revealed religion is manifest religion, because God has become wholly manifest in it. Here everything accords with the concept; there is nothing mysterious any more about God.'[48] 'God is absolutely manifest'.[49] One can therefore also say: 'Religion is the Spirit's knowledge of itself as Spirit'[50]—in Christian terms: as identity of the Holy Spirit in God and in the person who has been saved, of that Spirit which 'searches the depths of God' and which 'we have', in which 'we judge all things and are judged by no one' (1 Cor 2.9–16), and 'know everything' (1 John 2.21,27). This is the justification for the 'transition of faith into knowledge . . . the transfiguration of faith into philosophy'.[51] 'For faith is also knowledge, only in a particular form',[52] which begins with a sense-representation (in an historical phenomenon, a sacramental symbol, a dogmatic formula) but which yet already substantially contains the spiritual knowledge within itself. In this it is distinguished from myth, where the divine is viewed and attained only in a finite form. For Christianity the statement is true: 'The form, the determination, is not only finiteness . . . it is itself the concept as totality of form, and these forms are necessary and essential'.[53] This position allows Hegel to be generous and tolerant in his response to the still remaining forms of ecclesiastical and positive Christianity. At the same time he can illuminate them all in his final *Philosophy of Religion* with the light of absolute knowledge. That God

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[42] *Cf.* the fine but also dismissive reflections on the Last Supper in: N 299–300.

[43] N 342.

[44] N 351.

[45] N 300.

[46] II 159–173.

[47] II 561–593.

[48] XI 44.
[49] XII 152.
[50] XII 156.
[51] XII 258.
[52] XII 262.
[53] XII286.

becomes man—and man always means *a* particular, individual person who as such reveals the 'subjectivity', indeed the 'uniqueness' of God;[54] that God dies and 'is dead' (this 'most terrible idea that everything eternal, everything true does not exist, that negation itself is within God, the greatest suffering'[55]: that too is true and must be considered) and that this finally is only the means whereby God gives us His own eternal Spirit,[56] that God shows Himself to be the Three in One in this movement:[57] all this is absorbed into philosophy so that 'it only stands above the form of faith, while the content is the same'.[58]

If God is wholly manifest to man, without any mystery remaining unrevealed, then precisely the thinking of the totality of Being is a form of glory into which all that was previously 'sublime' is submerged. Previously, glory was the fact that 'God is at the same time *above* this manifestation, both *within* it and distinct from it',[59] that God in His 'manifestation *in* the world . . . shows Himself at the same time to be raised *above* this manifestation';[60] this 'in' and 'above' is reduced to a total 'in'. With that, the concept of 'miracle' has also changed: 'The true miracle is the Spirit itself. Even animal life is a miracle beside vegetable Nature, and Spirit even more so beside life, and purely sensate Nature'.[61] But when Spirit is present, there is no further need for any external miracle in order to validate its absoluteness: it is itself sufficient to this end. Its own totality, in which it comprehends itself step by step, is the *id quo majus cogitari non potest*, which has already been proven and attained.[62]

3. Hegel's thought always takes the achieved totality as its point of departure; for him, this is no longer only the formal

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[54] XII 236–237.
[55] XII 249.
[56] XII 257–288.
[57] XII 283.
[58] XII 288.
[59] XII 51.
[60] XII 50.
[61] XII 256.
[62] Hegel's loyalty to Anselm: XV 162–169.

point of identity we find in Fichte and Schelling, but something that has integrated within itself all the tragic world-distinctions in the world of Nature and of Spirit. A characteristic of this consciousness of unsurpassable abundance is that it can be approached from all sides and can be developed in all directions: in one instance as a total metaphysics (as in the Jena lectures and in the *Encyclopaedia*), and in another as the genesis of total consciousness (or reason) from the implications of simple consciousness and of the consciousness of self (as in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*), or again from the inner rhythm of the conceptual laws and structures themselves (as in the great *Logic*), or as the evolution of unconscious into conscious Spirit (as in the *Philosophy of Nature*), or as the increasing development and self-integration of the conscious Spirit (in the *Philosophy of History*), as the self-apprehension of absolute reason through its different stages (as the *History of Philosophy*), and finally as the completed self-contemplation of the absolute and infinite Spirit within the finite worldly-human Spirit: as *Aesthetics*. These are the final forms, whereas the *Philosophy of Religion* has in comparison with these only a provisional character, in so far as the transformation of the religious principle into absolute knowledge contains something more radical than the self-contemplation of thought in the *Aesthetics* or the recapitulation of all the premisses of its abundance in the other forms of philosophy. Precisely the *Aesthetics*—one of the richest and most successful of Hegel's works—is virtually no more than the portrayal of an awareness of the radiant blessedness of absolute knowledge itself, which can comprehend all things (even the most difficult and the most painful), justify all things and approve all things.

The fact that the beauty of Nature occupies within this work a minor and quite provisional place is understandable, since it is only in man's struggle for the fullness of spiritual insight that the spiritual gleam of the Absolute breaks forth from finitude: aesthetics becomes—since Schiller and Schelling ever more strongly, and now definitively—the theory of *artistic beauty*. Art is representation of the idea, which means to say 'of the concept which is concrete and absolute to itself',[63] of the spiritual (divine) truth which in its own freedom comprehends itself in the fullness of its finite and natural explication. As with Kant and Fichte, the universe is no longer theophanous, but actually anthropophanous; and man is theophanous not in his natural being but in his creative self-idealisation. He produces himself in art not only as the 'image and likeness of God' but also, as we find fundamentally in Fichte and Schelling too, himself as the God-Man, the unitive centre of God and the world. And yet the aesthetic contemplation of the idea (as the full embodiment of the Infinite in the finite) is for reason not the ultimate thing (as it was for a while for Schelling), but philosophy dissolves this contemplation too by comprehending its true meaning; and so the aesthetic principle has already had its *kairos* in the world history of the Spirit: with the Greeks, when consciousness did not yet strive beyond the contemplation of the beautiful divine form. The very fact that there is a science of art today (from Baumgarten, Kant, Schiller and Schelling onwards) is for Hegel the certain indication that the high point of *art* has been passed: firstly by the (Christian) era of *religion*, then by the (present) era of absolute *science*. We have 'passed that stage at which art is the most sublime way in which we become aware of the Absolute ... Ideas and reflection have outstripped the beauty of art'. Thus 'art in the sense of its highest calling remains for us a thing of the past'.[64] 'One can indeed hope that art will rise ever higher and will perfect itself, but its form has ceased to be the highest necessity of the spirit'.[65] It is at this point, if anywhere, that for Hegel the saying concerning Minerva's owl is true, which begins its flight only in the dusk—and invents aesthetics. And so the happy insouciance of his untroubled three volumes of aesthetics is something like a game of relaxation.

But then where does his seriousness lie? In the idea that when absolute thought occurs in man, the axis of Being runs through him, and his concept comprehends absolute totality within itself. Therefore he can construct 'the realm of pure thought', and 'this realm is truth, unveiled, as it exists in and for itself without concealment', and thus is 'the representation of God, as He exists in His eternal essence before the creation of Nature and of a finite spirit'.[66] The question as to whether this God is real or merely a creation of the mind is just as insoluble in Hegel as it is in Schelling, since for both the concept of 'Being' (or of actuality and reality) can emerge only as a counter and complementary concept to that of Spirit, and thus the question is utterly submerged within forgetfulness of Being. The Being, with which logic begins, and which is unmasked in its absolute emptiness as the void, in order finally to mediate itself into becoming is, like all subsequent mediations, precisely as such a concept. The whole of the metaphysics of Spirit and Being is developed within the framework of the Kantian opposition between concept and intuition, and thus ultimately between the general and the particular, which are—within an unsurpassable univocity—matter and form to each other. It is for good reason therefore that the Jena Logic has an explicitly aesthetic foundation which rises from 'simple association' to 'relationship' (in Being as in thought) and to 'proportion'. And even the primary law of the simultaneity of a posited and a transcended distinction, of stasis and movement, which prevails within it is in its balanced equilibrium (in imitation of true eternity) thoroughly aesthetic. 'Polarity', it is said here, 'is altogether the qualitative element, and since there is nothing other than the Absolute, then it itself exists absolutely and only by virtue of the fact that it is absolute does it transcend itself within itself, and the absolute is in its still state of *being* transcended just as absolutely the movement of Being or the transcending of absolute polarity'.[67] But this self-mediating identity is reason: 'Recognition itself is the universal'.[68] It is inevitable therefore that where reason begins to evolve as Nature, it offers itself as universal matter, also called 'aether', for all the forms which realise themselves from within it, corresponding to the way in which, for Spinoza (and later for Malebranche) pure space (extension) was an attribute of God. 'The aether is the absolute Spirit in its dimension of absolute self-identity . . . not the living God, for it is only the idea of God . . . It is Nature, and the self-identity of this Spirit, this Other of the living God, is absolute matter which, as the absolute universality of Nature, is the essence of life itself . . . it is nothing other than this absolute process of fermentation or absolute turbulence which is that both of being and of not being'.[69] Sentences of this kind show, more than with Schelling, and in the clearest possible manner, that the progression from logical univocity (the 'universal') or from logical materialism to the materialism of the natural sciences is itself both logical and unstoppable. And since man in his own thinking possesses the total concept of reality, there is no reason not to draw the atheistic consequences of the Hegelian Left.

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[63] X/1 120.

[64] X/1 14–16.

[65] X/1 135.

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[66] III 35–36.

[67] J 13; *cf. ibid.* 31 on the *duplex negatio* (as *affirmatio*): the positing of what is other and, since this is a positing, simultaneously its removal (*Aufhebung*), lead to a reciprocal proportion the members of which are what they are only through the *Aufhebung*.

[68] J 128.

Where in addition the divine has become the 'universal' (and no longer enjoys any primacy over it), it becomes inevitable that the individual thing, which has been posited for the benefit of the self-consciousness of the Spirit, is transcended (*aufgehoben*) as an individual thing in favour of the whole: physically by its death, and aesthetically by its death, aesthetically by its self-sacrifice to the whole. What lies beneath this act is treated as 'the mental realm of creatures' in the *Phenomenology*, that is as natural forms of individuation which believe they have a claim to absolute value (as 'person'). But the Jena metaphysics already knows: 'For the monad its Beyond is the highest essence, and as individuality it is transcended. But the highest essence is in fact the species in which individuality exists as something transcended, not destroyed, but which has gone through the zero of infinity, although, for the monad itself, it is something which has been destroyed; the self-preservation of the monad is only a longing which seeks to save individuality through that zero'.[70] If one considers that Hegel's earliest concern was the concrete (i.e. national) Spirit of the People (*Volksgeist*) which mediates between total Spirit and the monad,[71] and that this indeterminate Spirit of the People appeared to him later as the formed Spirit of the State, then it is clear that Hegel had to become the intellectual point of departure for the later socialism of the Left and of the Right, both of which in their own way have gathered the glory of absolute Being into the absolutist claims of their own 'party'.

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[69] J 197–198.

5. KARL MARX

While the unnatural combination of the 'Spirit of the People' (*Blut und Boden*: blood and earth) with the abstract Hegelian idea of the State, together with artificially warmed-up myths, could only engender an obstructive form of madness which was contrary to all the authentic tendencies of the age, Karl Marx performed an historically necessary act by turning the Hegelian philosophy 'on its head'.[1] And yet, as is always the case with violent negations, the 'No' remained closely bound to that which was rejected, a fact that decisively influenced the world-wide movement which he began and essentially formed.

Initially linked to the group of Hegelians of the Left, following and furthering 'the decomposition of the absolute Spirit'[2] in the 'break-down of the Hegelian system', he soon pursues his own, solitary path. It is precisely the imposing and impenetrable closeness and perfection of the Philosophy of Spirit which is most suspect; could the 'reality' which the Spirit posits and then transcends be only a phantasmagoria, the striking proof of how alien this whole thinking about Spirit was to actual reality? The absolute philosopher contains the World-Spirit in his head, but he no longer sees the man who stands beside him. But the latter emits the cry of need which sunders all the webs of Idealism. '*Need* which can no longer be waved away, which can no longer be glossed over and which is *absolutely imperative*'[3] infinitely outweighs every purely cerebral system. It is not our task to depict the world or to 'construct' it in thought, but to 'change' it.[4] Certainly it was Feuerbach who earlier made the first breakthrough: rational man first really comes into being in his encounter with his fellow-man, where absolute reality appears, and the synthesis is created which engenders the Eternal, the Divine. But according to Marx, Feuerbach is not yet free from the Kantian categories of concept and intuition (object and reality); he 'remains with the abstract "man" and can only acknowledge the "actual, individual, physical man" within his experience . . . as love and friendship, and thus in an idealised form'.[5] He has not heard the cry of need, the need of the proletarian who has become wraith-like in his material and mental deprivation and who represents the physical self-alienation of man in such a way that only the unconditional act, as the active negation of this kind of negation, can be an adequate answer to it. None of the philosophers of Spirit ever encountered Spirit in order for it to reproach him for his own spectral character. Marx is little concerned with unmindfulness of Being as a philosophical problem; but he has encountered the forgotten dimension of reality fundamentally, in the form of need. This is the primal Christian situation, and beyond that the primal Israelite, Old Testament and prophetic situation which Marx, a Jew, rediscovers on behalf of the Christian community and which forms the theological *a priori* of his entire thought, and thus also of his aesthetics. But the need of man who is alienated from himself is again the only point at which he advances to the horizon of Being; for he borrows all his conceptual material again from the Hegelian Philosophy of Spirit, which is 'oblivious of Being', in order to find an answer to that

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[70] J 177.

[71] *Volksreligion und Christentum*: N 3–71.

[1] Karl Marx, *Die Frühschriften*, ed. Siegfried Landshut, Kröner 1953. *Cf.* M. Lifschitz, *Marx und Engels über Kunst und Literatur*, Henschel, Berlin, 1948; Georg Lukács, 'Einführung in die äesthetischen Schriften von Marx und Engels', in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Ästhetik*, Berlin 1956, pp. 191–216.

[2] 343.

[3] 318.

[4] 341.

[5] 353.

need. This means in practical terms: his thought takes its point of departure from human need and proceeds forwards (to the remedying of the problem) and backwards (to the reasons for its existence); the question as to why we exist, or the world, or Being is entirely submerged behind this. The problem of (total, material and mental) deprivation keeps his gaze firmly fixed on the sphere of 'material' production.

Man becomes distinct from the animal at the point at which he 'begins to produce his own food, a step which is determined by his bodily organisation'. By doing this, man also 'produces indirectly his own material life itself'.[6] He forms Nature in such a way that it returns to him in a human form and thus furthers man in his own humanity. 'Man as subject [is] both the result and the point of origin of this movement':[7] by divesting himself of himself in his work, he humanises Nature and integrates it again as such into himself. Fichte was thus right to understand man to be the self-positing act which can succeed only by passing through a process of objectification, and 'the great thing in the Hegelian "Phenomenology" together with its end results . . . is . . . that Hegel grasps the self-generation of man as a process, objectification as de-objectification, as expropriation and as the transcending of this expropriation, that he therefore comprehends the essence of *labour* and sees objectified man, who is true because he is real, as the result of his own labour'.[8] Man is expropriated in his work firstly through the giving of himself to the business at hand and secondly, and far more radically, through the law of the division of labour, which make of some masters and exploiters and of others serfs and the exploited. In his *Master and Serf*, Hegel had presented a fundamental delineation of how this second process too leads to self-elimination (*Selbstaufhebung*). Marx's life work consisted in the detailed exploration of this in the material process of the self-actualisation of man as a social being. 'Material' in this context means fundamentally that it is objects which (moved by men!) make history and that these

[6] 347.

[7] 237.

[8] 269.

objects in their man-made reality are more than just 'intuitions' but rather stand in a relation to man of existential effect and counter-effect. It is this, and not a metaphysical materialism, in the sense of the Atomists, which interests Marx. The horizon of his thought is the principle that man produces himself by working himself into Nature and thus working Nature into himself. This interrelationship of man and world is both the Absolute dimension and the *eschaton* of the historical process in which the polarities cancel each other out: 'We observe how it is only in the state of society that subjectivism and objectivism, spiritualism and materialism, activity and passivity lose their mutual opposition and thus their existence as polarities of this kind', and do so through 'the practical energy of man', through the completion of his true life-task, 'which philosophy could not solve'.[9] Marx here calls the 'state of society' that state in which man has fully realised his social being in so far as 'a particular individual (and it is precisely his particularity which makes him an individual and a genuine individual social being)' gives expression at the same time subjectively within himself to 'the ideal totality' of the species,[10] and thus where 'society' is no longer abstractly fixed in contradistinction to the individual.[11] Marx is—hardly surprisingly—held fast by Hegel's horizon of essentialistic thinking between the 'general' and the 'particular' and, at the same time, in an anthropological reduction, through the scheme of expression of the general (the 'idea' as something which has been concretely fulfilled) within the particular (which integrates itself into it), which represents within this unity the Absolute, the Divine.[12] His eschatological ideal is therefore not that of vulgar Marxism. The idea of 'the elimination of private property' is as such 'only a generalisation and completion of the same', as also the idea of a 'community of women' as 'universal prostitution' would be only the completion of the prostitution of the human person by capitalism, 'only the concealed form in which greed is produced and is satisfied only in another way', only an 'abstract negation of the whole world of education and civilisation, the return to the unnatural simplicity of the poor man unencumbered by needs who, far from going beyond private property, has not even arrived yet at that point'.[13] The ideal lies rather in such a total humanisation of Nature that the latter, as the 'concretely developed wealth of human nature' wholly discloses to him, in its return, his five senses in the fully human sense, beyond 'immediate gratification', and 'not only in the sense of possession, in the sense of having'. Here in a grandiose vision Marx glimpses the ultimate meaning of the painful process which has led humanity out into the 'absolute poverty' of self-expropriation: through this poverty, humanity had to learn an attitude to existence as a whole, which leaves mere 'having' behind. 'The simple alienation of all our physical and mental senses, the sense of *possession*, has therefore (through private property) taken the place of all these senses. The being of man had to be reduced to this condition of absolute poverty in order that it should give birth, of itself, to its own inner wealth.'[14] For it is through the labour process that the world is humanised, while man is liberated from the subjective constraint upon him of 'wanting to have and to enjoy': 'The eye has become a *human* eye, as its object has become a *human* and social one . . . The senses have therefore immediately become theoreticians in their praxis. They relate to the object for its own sake, but the object itself is a concrete and human form of relation to itself and to man and *vice versa* . . . In the same way, the senses and the spirit of other men have become *my own* appropriation.'[15] And so Marx can say: 'The education of the five senses is the work of the

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[9] 243.

[10] 239.

[11] 238.

[12] True 'communism is, as perfected naturalism, humanism; as perfected humanism, it is naturalism; it is the *truthful* resolution of the struggle between man and nature and between men; it is the true resolution of the dispute between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between the individual and the genus': 235.

[13] 233–234.

[14] 240.

[15] 240–241.

whole of the world's history to this day'.[16] But this fulfilling encounter between man and world is completed in the archetypal encounter between man and woman; for Marx, for whom his deep, life-long love for his wife Jenny von Westphalen was virtually the one bright area in his terrible existence, it is the exact opposite of the happiness we find depicted in the *Politeia*. 'In this relationship, therefore, there appears at the level of the senses, reduced to a visible fact, the extent to which, for man, human essence has become Nature or Nature has become the human essence of man.' The as yet unveiled, eschatological 'mystery of this relationship' has its 'unambiguous, decisive, manifest and revealed expression' here.[17] In his own way, therefore, Marx has the 'disinterestedness' of the highest Platonic eros and that of Kant's ethical and aesthetic dimension in view, when he wishes to see 'having' and 'enjoying' transcended in interpersonal love.

Of course, man cannot be spared the passage through class division and class conflict, which necessarily becomes ever harsher; for this is the only way in which man can interpret himself to himself. Even the age of the 'universal whore', viz. of money, the power which inverts all things—'it turns fidelity into infidelity, love into hatred, hatred into love, virtue into vice, vice into virtue, the serf into the master, the master into the serf, stupidity into intelligence, intelligence into stupidity'[18]—this too cannot be avoided, any more than the 'universal prostitution of the worker'[19] can. It is through his debasement and humiliation that man attains his true worth.

This is the thrust of the early work, especially the essay on *National Economy and Philosophy* which first became known in 1932, and which represents the high central point between the Hegelian philosophy of the first years and the later economic work on *Capital*. But the question cannot be surpressed: who is ultimately the subject of this real, material process? No unconscious-conscious Spirit as with Hegel (as the relic of a classical-Christian divinity). But neither is it man, since it is only out of necessity that he initiates the labour process, which only leads him into yet greater need before finally releasing him from it. Who then? Marx ceased to philosophise when he renounced Hegel, and so the question of meaning in its entirety is no longer asked. The fact that man *is*, suffices. No light falls upon this fact. And so ultimately, this is a process which only absolute necessity can guide. It is neither God nor man but the logic of the matter, of capital, which directs history, which concentrates the titanic energies of material power and causes them finally to collapse. Nor does the material dimension govern because it has at its base a philosophical Atomism, but because the reduction of reality to the material dimension of the Spirit (within the philosophical tradition from Descartes on) is accepted as a fact and is not corrected by any philosophy of Being. The two main protagonists in the drama, the capitalist and the proletarian, play the utterly passive role of persons who are driven, in their relationship to the sole active power, which is capital. Thus the hour of a world-historical advance is missed: by the Christians, who did not see the presence of need, and by those who wished to teach the Christians a necessary lesson. That it should have been a Jew, Marx, who taught that lesson, is a just riposte to antisemitism of Hegel and—despite Lessing's Nathan—of most of the great figures of the age of Goethe. The very thing which was alone excluded from the Hegelian synthesis, the people that resists integration into any world-historical synthesis, toppled him from his throne. Marx, however, did not enthrone the glory of God, but once again absolute man as the centre of the world and of Being. And so once more the 'beautiful' Jewish synthesis hangs unsupported within the void.[20]

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[16] 242.

[17] 234.

[18] 299, 301.

[19] 237–238, note.

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[20] *Cf.* the very informative essay 'Zur Judenfrage', 171–207.

7. AESTHETICS AS SCIENCE

That which deserved the name of glory in the sphere of metaphysics has been lost to view. Being no longer possesses any radiance, and beauty, banished from the transcendental dimension, is confined to a purely worldly reality where tensions and contradictions, encompassed only by univocity, still remain to be overcome. It is only under this premiss that aesthetics as a strict science becomes possible. This no longer belongs to the object of our enquiry, which took the 'glorious' as its concern and not the dimensions of an innerwordly beauty (which can extend in one direction to the 'sublime' and in the other perhaps to the ugly'). German academic research has mapped out this area with great precision, from Rosenkranz. Solger and Weisse to Carrière and Schasler and Eduard von Hartmann, from Lotze and Vischer, Zimmermann and Fechner to Häberlin and Nicolai Hartmann. Major contributions by other peoples are rarer; even as his opponent. Chernishevski remains under the influence of Hegel and Croce also radicalises German Idealism, while John Ruskin once again strives to establish the wholly transcendental character of beauty.

While German aesthetic science concerned itself deeply with the criteria of good taste, German and virtually all European art—with the exception of French painting—sank into an unimaginable lack of taste, which can only be explained on the basis of the depths of the metaphysical confusion: as the deluded belief in the secure illumination of the cosy 'room of existence' while it had long since grown dark 'outside'. It was Hegel who lent a good conscience to the awareness of this supposed absolute light—'the spirit has overcome every opposition in its self-consciousness', and it 'has ceased to be a seeking form of knowledge'.[1] And yet Schopenhauer, his dark shadow, soon gains the upper hand:

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[1] *Documents, p. 350.*

the whole light-filled and beautiful world of the 'ideas' is only the manifestation of a dark and blind will, and thus the paradoxical and perverse site of the self-denial of Being and its disintegration as a return into nothingness. Schopenhauer's perfumed nihilism of the salon, which was further propagated by Wagner, Eduard von Hartmann and Thomas Mann, gives off an ever greater stench of putrefaction and thus requires the more pungent essences which Nietzsche, the late Scheler, the early Heidegger, Sartre and his disciples provide. It is in fact only against this background that 'Aesthetics as a strict science' can evolve.

For when Being in its classical and Christian sense is understood analogically, together with that elevation of the Infinite and the Divine above the finite and the worldly which remains unsurpassable for all forms of finite being and thinking, when therefore the worldly dimension hovers in an incalculable distinction between Being and entity, there the transcendental properties of Being—the One, the True, the Good and the Beautiful—are so affected by this analogy and by this distinction that any reduction of metaphysics and of the metaphysical doctrine of truth, goodness and beauty to an 'exact science' is rendered impossible. Although, in the domain of aesthetics, the transcendentalising analogy causes worldly beauty gradually to become metaphysical, mythical and revelatory splendour, nevertheless this hovering within the world between Being and entity, as determined by the metaphysics of Thomas and to some extent again by those of Heidegger, again prevents any fixing of beauty to a particular concept or to a readily-grasped system of concepts. It is sufficient to state this negatively, since the concluding section will have to develop this distinction again positively. The deduction for our theme is that every 'exact aesthetics' which treats of the beauty which is to be encountered within the world, still sees only a fragment and an aspect of the total object for which worldly beauty is only a 'part', and can thus necessarily offer only 'fragments' and 'aspects' that cannot become a whole. This incapacity is no objection to the authentic albeit fragmentary, truth which it contains; partial perspectives do yield genuine glimpses of the comprehensive whole, and aesthetic rules can gradually be raised to the level of metaphysics, of myth and ultimately of revelation because, seen from the other perspective, metaphysics, myth and ultimately revelation can in their descent make use of the worldly and the fragmentary in order to become manifest at that level and indeed to achieve self-expression. In this sense, it is also possible to extract benefit from 'exact aesthetics' for the purposes of a theory of glory, but this, of course, does not go significantly beyond those aspects which have been previously developed. Three areas of motif can be distinguished from each other, if not marked off 'exactly'; it is these which will provide the perspectives for the analysis of the theological dimension in Vols. VI and VII of this work.

1. The beautiful is without doubt *appearance* (*Erscheinung*), ἐπιφάνεια. It was viewed from this perspective by the Greeks, Plato, the Stoa, Plotinus and, after them, the great aesthetic theologies of the Middle Ages which understood the world's 'beauty' to be the appearance of the One who does not appear, and who shows His transcendence in the unitive ordering of the Multifold. This idea is developed by the German Idealists, but in such a way that the absolute (God-) Spirit which remains concealed in its appearance coincides more and more clearly with the human spirit, so that the axis of the epiphany runs through man as its centre: man as Spirit appears as body, as thc universal (idea) he appears as the particular, as God he appears as man. Corresponding to this anthropologisation of the epiphany, exact aesthetics will go back from Hegel's standpoint to that of Kant and Schiller, that is, to a subjective and psychological idealism whose dimensions extend on the one hand from the 'idea' which is still visible to man to the 'embodiment' of the idea which is made possible by man's sense structure, on the other. It is this path from Hegel to Schiller, from the absolute to the psychological idea, which is followed by Friedrich Theodor Visher, who is the most important German aesthetician of the last century.[2] For him the aesthetic synthesis of idea and

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[2] *Ästhetik oder Wissenschaft des Schönen*, 3 vols., 1846–57, and many later writings.

appearance, the infinite and the finite, clearly runs through the man as centre and of course, since man is himself microcosm, he secondarily reveals the macrocosm too. From this central axis, exact aesthetics in the most various forms copes with the extremes which require synthesis, since for Solger the beautiful is fundamentally 'constituted by component parts which are self-eliminating and which must be grasped in the 'act of transition':[3] idea and appearance, spirit and body, freedom and necessity, subjective and objective, divine and earthly, sublime and beautiful, tragic and comic, and, in the extreme case the ugly. Precisely this borderline case, which was drawn into the discussion by Rosenkranz's *Asthetik des Hässlichen* (1853), reveals the problems of 'exact aesthetics' more deeply than it would itself like and realises: can beauty which appears, or that which appears in beauty, make of its own opposite (ugliness) one of the poles of its expressivity? And if not, is then its idea limited, and it itself seriously threatened by the unloveliness of the real or by the dark backdrop of the world? The threads become confused, and this line of questioning points clearly beyond itself to a region where aesthetics must assume a theological form. If the lines point back historically to Schiller (and his universal dark fate), synchronically to Marx and his exposure of (Vische's) aesthetics as bourgeois ideology,[4] and forwards to the attempts of our own time to draw attention to the limits of beauty within the world through the 'ugly' and thus to allow something more profound to come into view, whereby it still remains unclear what that more profound element may be: God, or nothingness.

Nevertheless, the central concept of idealist aesthetics, 'appearance' (*Erscheinung*), is still only the half of itself, as long as it is not explained why that which appears in its *form* is experienced as beauty: And so the aesthetic scene of appearances necessarily gives birth to a complementary aesthetic science of form. We find it present among the Greeks from Pythagoras onwards: it must be possible to enquire into the aesthetic qualities of formal structure (*harmonia*) in space and in time (*rhythmos*). Thus Schiller knows 'architectonic beauty', to mention only this last figure in the Western theory of harmony (from Boethius to Alberti and Dürer). Herbart and his school endeavoured to interpret this element with exact scientific method. Herbart, whose starting point was the Kantian unknowability of *das Ding an sich* and who chooses to define philosophy as the 'elaboration of concepts', accepts by way of complementarity simple aesthetic judgments which are formed on the basis of an irreducible pleasingness or otherwise in perception (aesthetics in the broader sense) of relations of the will (ethics) or in original forms (aesthetics in the narrower sense). Here, there is born the theory of 'values' which are free both of Being and of concepts, and which have played a mostly fateful role down to our own day: they are in fact nothing but the emergency substitute for Being, together with its transcendental modalities, which has been hollowed out and suppressed by Rationalism and Idealism alike. And so however useful the researchers of the Herbart school have been (above all the contribution of Robert Zimmermann in his *Geschichte der Ästhetik als philosophischer Wissenschaft*,[5] Gustav Theodor Fechner in his *Vorschule der Ästhetik*,[6] Karl Stumpf in his *Tonpsychologie*,[7] as well as the work of Hanslick and others), in that they have sought to expose the primal elements of the beautiful and to describe at least their initial combinations, they have necessarily not advanced beyond a pure science of experience, or 'phenomenology', of the beautiful, since the values are simply 'given' to the forms and their relations without their being in any sense derivable.

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[3] Karl Wilh. Ferd. Solger: *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik*, 1829 (repr. 1962), pp. 108–109.

[4] G. Lukács: 'Karl Marx und Friedrich Theodar Vischer', in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Ästhetik* (1956), pp. 217–285.

Unless, that is, we follow the Pythagorean path of an original identity between the law of quantity (the measurable intervals of the monochord strings) and the psychic law of quality (the hearing of the pitch), whereby the identity of both would lie in the objective-subjective 'tension'. This is the point of origin for many different possible paths: some lead to Gestalt psychology (which Stumpf was already approaching) and further to a pure functionalism,[8] while others lead to an aesthetic-religious Pythagoreanism, such as was developed by A. von Thimus in the last century[9] and magnificently so by Hans Kayser in our own.[10] The limits of these paths are evident as soon as they are made absolute: the Pythagorean identity of the physical and psychic harmony of the world does not permit in principle anything which is superior to it, and thus no form of epiphany, but rather turns in pantheistic and atheistic circles within itself. Plato, who endeavoured to approach this identity in his old age by equating the Ideas with numbers, and again Kepler (*Harmonices Mundi*, 1619), who depicted the mystery of the world in numbers and attributed to them 'powers' (rather than to the moving intelligences), or Leibniz with his pre-established harmony cannot escape the inner logic of the Pythagorean system: the imprisoning of the freedom of the act of appearing within the ordered structures (*Gesetzlichkeiten*) of the appearance.

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[5] Vienna, 1858.

[6] Two parts, Leipzig, 1876.

[7] Two vols., Leipzig, 1883–1890.

The direct, i.e. unmediated, parallelisation of Spirit and matter in Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza prevents the emergence of that distance by virtue of which the Spirit could create a genuine expressive form of itself within the sphere of the material. Its superiority is expressed at most now in the fact that it groups matter into 'pleasing' configurations. Therein the Kantian ideal of the non-signifying and abstract beauty is foreshadowed with which, as we have said before, the ideal of modern 'abstract art' first consciously appears. In so far as this emerges as a demanding and perhaps exclusive programme, it is without doubt a product of modern thinking which is oblivious of Being and in whose train Spirit has become functionalised and can achieve expression only within the counter-image of material functions. Significantly the median point between Spirit and the senses which is touched by beauty does not bear the concrete name of 'heart' in Kant, but the abstract name of a 'harmony of the powers of the mind.' This abstract relation already begins to waver in his work in the face of the forms of abstract art, and thus clearly betrays its deficient and fragmentary character.

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[8] *Cf.* Vol. IV of this work, pp. 28–32 (Eng. trans.)

[9] *Die harmonikale Symobolik des Altertums*, 2 vols., Cologne, 1868–1876. *Cf.* above, Vol. I of this work, p. 108 (Eng. trans.)

[10] *Lehrbuch der Harmonik* (1950), *Harmonia Plantarum* (Basel, 1943), *Akroasis, Die Lehre von der Harmonik der Welt* (Stuttgart, 1947).

The entire aesthetics of form and value remains a fragment within what is a greater, though no less fragmentary, aethestics of epiphany. For this too would have to depart as a whole from its own essential sphere for that of total Being, and answer the question, not what the human spirit on its own can conceive and embody in terms of ideas (before what horizon?), but what Being as a whole epiphanically heralds and brings into view. But precisely in so far as these two questions cannot be made to coincide, the mystery of a total ontology and aesthetics opens up in such a way that it makes impossible any systematic analysis of appearance.

2 If 'appearance' (the appearance of that which does not appear) remains enigmatic—for example: *what* becomes known in a perfectly beautiful person?—then a further principle seems to be of help. We know of the *production* of the beautiful by someone who is capable of achieving this, namely the artist (ποίησις, ποιητής). There exists this primal act of generation and of genesis within the spirit, as an act which is above the rational and discursive faculties of thought, since the form is suddenly present in an original intuition and inaccessible unity (a good deal of testing the way can be involved by way of preparation, but the work never crystallises from below) within a single moment which is experienced as being 'given', in a 'μανία', as Plato has it, in which the Plotinian ἔνδον εἶδος is at once 'found' (*gefunden*) and 'devised' (*erfunden*), 'seen' (Ficino), 'stolen' (Shaftesbury and Goethe), 'posited' (Fichte and Schelling) in the unconcious or super-conscious mind of the 'genius', which Herder, Kant and Schiller described or in the phenomenon of 'inspiration' as described by Nietzsche and Dostoievsky. Chr. H. Weisse developed in his *System der Ästhetik* (1830) a theory

of 'genius' which can be taken as an idealist counterpart to the classical *daimon*. In his *Aesthetics* (1902),[11] Benedetto Croce by idealist means raised this act of aesthetic and creative intuition to the level of the fundamental act of the spirit and thereby again proclaimed the identity of contemplation (*Schau*) and expression (*Ausdruck*): 'Intuitive knowledge is expressive knowledge',[12] 'intuitive activity possesses intuitions to the extent that it expresses them,'[13] 'When we have achieved the world within us, conceived definitely and vividly a figure or statue, or found a musical motif, expression is born and is complete'.[14] Expression is free inspiration.'[15] *Actus purus* and *forma pura* coincide. It is evident that no more space is left here for religion, i.e. for the analogy between the original (*urbildlich*) Creative Spirit (God) and the copy *abbildich*) in creative spirit (man), as Nicolas of Cusa envisaged this. And yet only this analogy contains the true problem which weaves its way through the history of Aesthetics as the question concerning the artist's 'imitation of Nature', the problem that stands in the tension between the artist's gazing upon the 'works of God' in the *Natura naturata*—and the assimilation of the artist's genius into the activity of God in the *Natura naturans*. The instinctive genius we have described above will always incline towards the second, even if no serious artist will lack the first element—that of observation and practice. Goethe shows both of these within himself in a good balance, and transposes both elements (as a 'chain' and 'flash of lightning') on to the twofold unity of 'Nature' and 'God'. But in the Prometheus fragment it was the twofold unity of the poet (as self-discoverer) and of his goddess (as inspiration): the motif which will become central for Spitteler. The analogy with the prophet (*poeta vates*) was drawn even in classical times.[16] Hamann[17] and Karl Philipp Moritz[18] saw the connection between artistic and sexual generation. And thus it becomes clear that whoever grasps the beautiful in an original manner is directed to a point of the origin of Being, and is caught up close to it. From this perspective, existence as a whole appears justified, whatever terrible things it may perhaps bear in its womb. The eternal striving in the moral sphere, the ceaseless dynamism of reason in search of truth are embraced and mysteriously superseded by the aesthetic gaze which approves and justifies the whole, entirely as it is.

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[11] *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic* (London 2nd edn, 1953²) trans. D. Ainslie.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 11. [13] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 50. [15] *Ibid.*, p. 51.

[16] E. Fascher: *Prophetes* (1927); *ThWNT* VI, 781–782.

[17] *Cf.* Vol. III of this work, pp. 239ff.

[18] *Schriften zur Ästhetik and Poetik*, ed. H. J. Schrimpf (Tübingen, 1962), pp. 46f.

This is the main idea of Paul Häberlin's *Allgemeine Ästhetik*,[19] in which he renews the insight of Schelling's middle period and links the aesthetic affirmation of Being closely to that of religion. But in Schelling the emphasis lay emphatically on the identity of subject and object, and Schiller in his *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man* underlined the formal and historical instability of such felicitous *indifferentia* and understood this explicitly to be a pre-ethical stage. Thus the path to Kierkegaard already lay fundamentally open: he views the pre-existent aesthetic totality, where this pronounces itself absolute, as the rejection of the ethical dimension, which is authentic existence. It will therefore be necessary to see the *indifferentia* of creative genius in its inner polarity, as described earlier by Goethe and Spitteler, which is that ambivalence which Plato as philosopher lays at the door of prophetic and poetic enthusiasm. Here Moritz again becomes relevant: the vacillation which he describes between the proximity and the distance of the artist to the macrocosm; and Jean Paul is even more relevant with his theory of genius in the *Vorschule der Ästhetik* (1804), which distinguishes the receptive and passive genius, which apprehends the inner life of the universe in a holy and open soul as a 'mute of Heaven', from that active and divinatory genius which in its apprehension of totality creates an inner form with potential for the future, which, in a state of calm reflection, it brings to concrete expression in an external form.[20] It is Jean Paul too who, while leaving open the tension between self-giving (to the objective) and generation (in the subjective), refrains from constraining the ethical into the aesthetic (in any way whatever) and thus is the first theoretician able to analyse in depth the phenomena of the comic and the ridiculous, of humour and of wit. Long before Kierkegaard and Marx, he sees the impossibility of resolving the tension between the idea and the (individual) existence, and when in Hegel the idea enriches itself through the elimination of existences, then *e contra* the infinite weight of existence can call the idea into question and thus, on the grounds of its own particular incomprehension, show the entire wisdom of the world of ideas to be folly, to be 'infinite incongruity'.[21] This is more than that 'romantic irony' which can be derived from the Fichtean elevation above the world as Non-self (something which never produces true harmony), but implies rather the ultimately Christian dialectic of a 'finitude applied to infinity',[22] which in its whole limitation nevertheless possesses enough weight to unmask the relativity of the 'infinite reason'. 'Humour as the inverted sublime does not destroy the finite . . . there exists for it no single insistence of folly, no fools but only . . . a mad world. It topples the great . . . and raises the small on high, but, contrary to irony, it does so in order to set the great at its side and thus to destroy both, since in the face of the infinite all is one and all is nothingness.'[23] In this sense, Cervantes set his 'twin star of folly over the whole of mankind',[24] not in order to turn his back on the world as a whole but as a 'seriousness which descends' from Heaven to Earth. In contrast to the arrogant claims of the philosophy of Spirit, humour becomes the existential testimony of the unbridgeable nature of the relationship between idea and existence, it is the reason why the true and warm light of Being is preserved and the cold and false light of an absolutist speculation and its consequent destructive irony is held at bay. Jean Paul himself depicted

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[19] Basel and Leipzing, 1929, especially pp. 288–322.

[20] *Vorschule* (1804) I, para. 10–14

[21] *Ibid.*, I, 155.
[22] *Ibid.*, I, 174.
[23] *Ibid.*, I, 175–176.
[24] *Ibid.*, I, 178.

the ultimate unbridgeable polarity of genius, indeed of man as such, through his heroes, all of whom are ordered in pairs (Siebenkäs—Leitgeber, Albano—Schoppe, Walt—Vult, etc.). As a theoretican of folly, he also assimilated (more clearly than Erasmus or Hamann) the intuition of Christian artists from Wolfram to Grimmelshausen and Dostoievsky into theoretical aesthetics and thus showed once again the openness of this science to what ultimately belongs to the sphere of religion and theology.

The whole nexus of problems of the 'exact aesthetics' with references to the subjective premisses for an apprehension of beauty must be accordingly transposed into this openness. First comes everything which is described by the concept of 'empathy' (*Einfühlung*: Theodor Lipps) as that prerequisite of powers, dispositions and expectations of the subject, whereby it draws the object into its own sphere, clasping and permeating it with its sentient organs which bestow both light and warmth in order thus to enjoy it as its own possession. This point of view, although not false, is so evidently limited that it virtually transcends itself by its own nature, since the open and unresisting self-giving of the subject increasingly guarantees space to the object and allows it to appear in its own aesthetic structure. And so the psychology of empathy becomes virtually of itself so a phenomenology of the self-'giving' object (Moritz Geiger), which in turn can itself receive a stress that is more subjectivistic or more objectivistic and the more profound question occurs here as to in what way and to what extent the subject wishes and is able to be open and to give itself, in order to experience 'strata' of life and of Being as a whole (as Nicolai Hartmann carefully distinguishes them) as beautiful, although these appear uninteresting or ugly to the spectator who is only superficially receptive. The quotation from Rilke which stands at the beginning of this work clarifies once more precisely what is meant here, not only because a progressive aesthetic empathy into the whole of existence is prescribed as possible and feasible, but also by virtue of the fact that this attitude is understood to be a precondition for the capacity of the objective value of Being to become manifest.

This is where there lies the full aesthetic significance of the metaphysical eros which is treated in so many ways in this book. As erotic eros, it is the magical transfigurer of lovers and of the whole surrounding world: 'Everything is glorious for me today—if only it would remain like this! I see the world today through the lens of love.' But all those to whom this lens has been offered and then withdrawn, know its subjective character. But the lover has the freedom to purify the natural love into one which is spiritual and to make it universal: Plato performed this metamorphosis in the *Symposium* and raised eros up to become the contemplation of the absolutely Good and Beautiful, which can be glimpsed through no other lens. In this ascent, he purified it of all forms of egotism—up to the threshold of what we have called 'detachment', which is that positive self-giving of the subject to Being in its entirety (and to all its possible revelatory forms), which has to be interpreted as an *a priori* state of assent, as 'Yes and Amen' to eternity. At the precise point at which the *a priori* 'Yes' mutates from one which is categorical to one which is transcendental, the beauty which encounters us in the world becomes (metaphysical) glory. It is also the point at which, for the religious person, Being becomes theophanous, whether the divine appears in the form of a mythic image (with all the provisional character of such images), or whether his 'mental (*geistige*) senses' (as Marx also called them) as 'spiritual (*geistliche*) senses' make him capable of hearing and of seeing the mystery of Being as a whole. It is only this background of the metaphysical eros which prevents the particular eros from misapprehending itself as a bitter illusion and a scurrilous trick of Nature, on which the individual who has been informed and made a fool of avenges himself through his *a priori* 'frigidity and insolence'.

3. The third element within the beautiful explicitly highlights that characteristic for which the unresisting eros creates a space: *charis*. This word has always processed a certain polyvalence which makes it appropriate for a transcendent application, and which emerges particularly clearly in Pindar. It begins as the victorious loveliness of

youth, before becoming the radiant *aretê* (virtue) of the whole person, in which the grace of the gods once again appears, and then finally the grateful exchange between the gift of victory and the return gift of recognition, especially through the poet. It is loveliness, dignity, brilliance, favour, grace, gratitude all in one. And so *charis* is allegorically open to the more earnest, world-historical *agôn* of *pius Aeneas* and open again to the wholly different *agôn* of the crucified Christ, which is comprehensible only on the grounds of the living God of love. In biblical terms too, *charis* will extend from the eroticism of the Song of Songs and the nuptial psalms—*diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis*—to the justification of the sinner through pure *charis*, which is no longer comprehensible to the understanding of the world.

Charis as the miracle of grace which encounters us remains to such an extent a mystery that the 'exact science' can scarcely dare approach it. The ancient Stoic, Augustinian and scholastic definition sought to take account of this miracle when it added to the mathematical and rational element (*partium convenientia*) one which is intentionally vague (*cum quadam coloris suavitate*). This sweetness of colour, of the *teint*, as indeed the simple qualities of sight and sound, remain an enigma for the aestheticians of form. But this incomprehensible element is only a pointer, and remains so precisely in its fragility (Solger), since if we take hold of it too roughly, it escapes our grasp; it exists only as a breath of wind that has passed by; it does not remain long with the one who thus receives its favour; it is more remembrance and promise than actual presence, more a spur to memory than a gift, offered to Tantalus and yet at once withdrawn from his grasp and, being thus inaccessible to 'exact scientific method', it can only be interpreted from the point of view of the Being which embraces it. If one element within beauty is a fragment, then this is certainly *charis* which shines forth only from within the unbridgeable Ontological Difference and is most properly that which primordially blazes forth through this opening. When it is not remembrance of the mystery of Being itself, it causes the person who views it to sink into the helpless melancholy of eros. It is, as Claudel says, the hook with which the angel draws the bleeding heart towards eternity. And so the 'exact science' of the beautiful would be more a science of the guardian angels than a science of men.

The three elements we have discussed—*epiphaneia*, *poiêsis*, *charis*—offer the perspectives from which to discuss a biblical and theological aesthetics.

3. OUR INHERITANCE AND THE CHRISTIAN TASK

A. THE SITE OF GLORY IN METAPHYSICS

1. THE MIRACLE OF BEING AND THE FOURFOLD DISTINCTION

The direction of the meandering historical paths of Western Metaphysics becomes straightforward and simple if we centre the chaotic fragments around the authentic metaphysical question: 'Why is there anything at all and not simply nothing?'. This question is not posed seriously by any 'science' because science always presupposes its subject matter as objectively given thus. But it is also only rarely examined thematically by philosophy or, when thus examined, is not pursued in depth, in that philosophy either begins with description rather than wonder or, if it does begin with wonder, then also with the impulse to answer the astonishing question as to why things should exist at all, from the fact of their existing in such and such a way.

Without doubt the phenomenal world contains on all sides an objective order which is not imposed by man, and thus a beauty; the legitimacy of the premise is repeatedly confirmed for him that there is within Nature a greater objective ordering of things than he had previously recognised. Every theoretical science with a practical application, such as medicine or physics, lives from this perennial assumption which forever proves itself anew. So much is this so, that on this basis philosophy dares to make an ultimate forward leap by projecting a totality of sense upon the totality of the actuality of Being in such a way that now necessity is predicated of the latter. Then Being becomes identical with the necessity to be, and when this identity has been taken up by reason, then there is no longer any space for wonder at the fact that there is something rather than nothing, but at most only for admiration that everything appears so wonderfully and 'beautifully' ordered within the necessity of

Being. This is the beauty of the *theios kosmos* in the late Plato, as earlier in Parmenides and Heraclitus, and again the beauty of the world contained in the Aristotelian *noêsis noêseôs*, and further still it is the beauty of the world order of Boethius and the School of Chartres and of most of what is conveyed in modern times under the titles 'the classical tradition' and 'philosophy of Spirit'. We can also give this 'beauty' the name 'glory' in so far as the total order of phenomena always remains a boundless limiting concept (as for instance K. Ph. Moritz and Goethe put it) for the lived experience of the finite spirit—which strives towards it as 'eros' and proceeds from it as 'intuition'. But 'glory' which is understood in this way is nothing other than the totality of beauty; its 'superiority' over the individual instances of beauty which we encounter derives only from the fact that the categories of rhythm, polarity, the harmonisation (ἁρμονία) of what is apparently lacking in harmony and misshapen, can as yet only be applied to the totality by way of conjecture (in the devout vision of Erigena and Nicolas of Cusa, or in the titanic vision of Heraclitus and Bruno), where they can be monitored in their individual parts by sight and sound (as in a symphony).

A leap forward like this remains in a tension between piety and titanism: a piety which believes that all in essence is good, even when the rhythm of the world and of existence overwhelms that of man, and a titanism because man imposes his own rhythm upon the totality. And if the leap forward in antiquity remained predominantly 'pious', since man experienced above all the superabundance of the universal καλόν and yielded himself to it, in the modern period it becomes visibly more titanic, because man enforces his own καλόν and its rhythm ever more energetically upon the (material) universe.

But such a forward leap towards apprehension of the identity (of Being and meaning), in the very first step of thought, gets the phenomenon wrong. Wonder at Being is not only the beginning of thought, but—as Heidegger sees—also the permanent element (ἀρχή) in which it moves. But this means—contrary to Heidegger—that it is not only astonishing that an existent being can wonder at Being in its own distinction from Being, but also that Being as such by itself to the very end 'causes wonder', behaving as something to be wondered at, something striking and worthy of wonder. Reflection, while holding fast to this primal wonder, must be the fundamental aim of metaphysics; here we are attempting to approach it in four stages, which witness to a fourfold distinction and which together reveal for the first time that which in the realm of metaphysics deserves the authentic name 'Glory'.

1. The fact that I find myself within the realm of a world and in the boundless community of other existent beings is astonishing beyond measure and cannot be exhaustively explained by any cause which derives from within the world. In surveying Western metaphysics in its entirety, we must be amazed at how little the enigma of reproduction—not only of organic natural creatures but above all of man, who is Spirit—has concerned philosophers. From the infinite prodigality of an act of generation—prodigality in the male as well as the female organism resulting in a 'chance hit'—a 'new' being is created which, reflecting upon its personal ego, cannot interpret itself in any way as a product of chance; for it possesses in fact the capacity to view the world as a whole, indeed Being as a whole, from its unrepeatable perspective and thus to effect a unification of what it sees (Leibniz). Nothing within (world-)Being indicates that this had the 'personal' intention of producing precisely this unique and as such irreplaceable person through that game of chance; there is nothing to prove that this unique person receives a kind of necessary place through his incorporation into a (wholly hypothetical) series of monads, as a number receives its necessity within a totality of a series of numbers. I could imagine (and there is nothing to conflict with this idea) that an infinite number of 'others' could have occupied this 'same' place in the universe instead of me. Why it should have been me, I do not know.

Of course, the child does not awaken into consciousness with this question in its mind. And yet it lies, unacknowledged but alive, in the first opening of its mind's eyes. Its 'I' awakens in the experience of a 'Thou': in its mother's smile through which it learns that it is contained, affirmed and loved in a relationship which is incomprehensively encompassing, already actual, sheltering and nourishing. The body which it snuggles into, a soft, warm and nourishing kiss, is a kiss of love in which it can take shelter because it has been sheltered there *a priori*. The awakening of its consciousness is a late occurrence, in comparison with this basic mystery of unfathomable depth. It finally sees only what always has been, and can therefore only confirm it. A light which has been perpetually asleep awakens at some point in to an alert and self-knowing light. But it awakens at the love of the Thou, as it has always slept in the womb and on the bosom of the Thou. The experience of being granted entrance into a sheltering and encompassing world is one which for all incipient, developing and mature consciousness cannot be superseded. Therefore it is right that the child should glimpse the Absolute, 'God' (Parzifal, Simplicius), first in its mother, its parents, and that only in a second and a third stage does it have to learn to distinguish the love of God from the love which it has experienced in this way. It can awake only in Paradise or in what Plato depicts as that Heaven which is the contemplation of the Ideas. The fact that it experiences Being (*Sein*) and human existence (*Dasein*) (why should it make a distinction between the two?) as the incomprehensible light of grace, is the reason why it engages in play. It could not play if—like a beggar at a marriage feast—it had been allowed to come out of a cold and dark outside by the 'grace' of a condescending mercy into a place to which it had no 'right' (these are later experiences, for those who have become guilty, which remain only parentheses within the totality of human experience). It gives itself to play because the experience of being admitted is the very first thing which it knows in the realm of Being. It *is*, in so far as it is allowed to take part as an object of love. Existence is both glorious and a matter of course. Everything, without exception, which is to follow later and will inevitably be added to this experience must remain an unfolding of it. There is no 'gravity of life' which would fundamentally surpass this beginning. There is no 'taking over control' of existence which might go further than this first experience of miracle and play. There is no encounter—with a friend or an enemy or with a myriad passers-by—which could add anything to the encounter with the first-comprehended smile of the mother. 'Unless you become as a child, you cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven': this statement is a tautology. The first experience contains what cannot be surpassed, *id quo majus cogitari non potest*. It is an experience in which distinction slumbers in the unopened unity of the grace of love—at once *before* and *after* the tragedy of its dissolution. However it prevails even there, because that which is 'a matter of course' is not the '*de facto*' with its constraining and finite narrowness, but the graciously-opened whole in which every space is granted to tumble around as much as one wills: existence as play.

Certainly, the distinction will soon become apparent. There is the compulsion of duty, which leads to a divided will, and there is, definitively in puberty, the tragic opposition of a world which goes its own way and in whose constraints I shall have to find my own place if I desire to exist at all, together with my dream of love and of being 'a child of God', which in the face of this world seems the illusion of a fool; and, for my part, I shall despise and reject the world for the sake of my dream and for the sake of the dream I have of the world. But nevertheless, that first mystery prevails even here; it has only unfolded. Neither my parents nor the whole of the surrounding world are substantially that love to which on the grounds of my being and my consciousness I owe the fact of my being in the world, which is to say both myself and the world. That *Angst* which Heidegger depicted, in which Being as such disappears for me and with it my sense of self, becomes the methodical way in which to pose the question as to why Being should exist at all.

In any case, for the thinker nothing would be altered in the first metaphysical distinction, even if the generative act were to be performed in a way which is technically more closely guided and planned: determining the 'character' and the 'conduct' does not reach the point of selfhood where the person knows that he is more than the creation of a genus consciousness which is either accidental or which can be regulated in its contingency. And yet I can never conceive of myself as part of the organism of the world in such a way that this organism could not exist and properly function without me. I cannot attribute to myself the dignity of Being and the degree of necessity which the world as a whole possesses. And thus there occurs an opening within me as Spirit to the light-space of Being, which is in no way directed to the Being of the world as a whole: if in the first aspect my spirit 'nihilates' with respect to the Being of the world into which I find myself to be thrown and constrained, then in the second aspect the Being of the world 'nihilates' within the opening of my spirit, which can attribute to the Being of the world no necessity within itself which would excel our wonder at its existence: both are related to each other, but they do not coincide.

2. But in so far as I am one existent among others, in so far as I am Spirit, I now understand that all other existents stand in the same relation to Being as I do myself. It evidently follows from this that, although all existents partake in Being, yet—to whatever extent we were to multiply them—they never exhaust it nor even, as it were, 'broach' it. In their individual finitude as fragments they can indeed form a greater, perhaps somehow even the greatest whole, which however hangs as much in the air (of Being) as a total configuration as do its constituent parts. I can imagine this total configuration to be quantitatively and qualitatively as extended and as perfect as I will, but still it cannot match my most primitive experience of Being, if indeed I were to see in it the unsurpassable abundance of Being: *id quo majus cogitari non potest*. The nothingness through which all its parts pass does not dissolve within the whole; and on the other hand Being, in which a world totality participates, possesses its own mode of 'nihilating', that is an indissoluble identity with respect to every participation within it (Proclus: *amethektôs metekhetai*). The Neoplatonists are therefore right when they refuse to identify the 'beauty' of the totality of that which is

with the 'glory' of Being itself which prevails beyond it, and who glimpse within the former only a 'reflection' of the latter. And in the same way Thomas Aquinas is right when he attributes to the *actus essendi* its own *bonum-pulchrum* in which the individual *essentiae* and the world which is constituted by them only participate. But if my spirit is conformed to this act of Being in which it participates and also performs the act of thinking (*intellectus agens*) in the light of this superessential (and thus incomprehensible, or as Rosmini has it, 'idea-like') act of Being in order to grasp what is essential, then it understands at the same time that it is not the act of Being which has the responsibility of bringing essences into existence from itself, just as it is not my *intellectus agens* (without the *conversio ad phantasma*) which constructs the real world; not only 'concepts without intuition are empty', but the 'idea' or the 'light' or the 'abundance' of Being remain so too. What this means, once again, is that I cannot appease my primal and overpowering wonder at the fact that 'something is' through gazing at Being, in which those things participate and thus exist. Rather, my wonder is directed at both sides of the Ontological Difference, whether this is construed in Thomist or Heideggerian terms, for the fact that an existent can only become actual through participation in the act of Being points to the complementary antithesis that the fullness of Being attains actuality only in the existent; but the fact that (Heideggerian) Being can only be interpreted within existence (Spirit) points to the complementary antithesis that existence (Spirit) grasps the dependence of Being upon beings and thus its non-substantiality.

3. Precisely by virtue of this dependence (which Thomas, Hegel and Heidegger equally see) of Being upon its explication in the existent (or in the human existent, which is to say man), it is impossible to attribute to Being the responsibility for the essential forms of entities in the world. The *indifferentia* of the abundance which is characteristic of the Being of the existent fundamentally contradicts any form of planning, located within Being, in order to actualise itself

in substance through a specific ascending sequence of stages of essential forms, which contain it first as 'vessels' and then (as Heidegger says) finally shepherd it. For the 'plans' lie in the entity, not in Being, however true it may be that there are no entities which do not participate in Being. Thus all those forms of interpretation must be rejected as 'oblivious of Being' which conceive of the totality of the world-entity-reality as the (self-)explication of Being: whether Being (God) explicates itself statically in a world as the unitive implication of all entities (Plotinus, Nicolas of Cusa, Böhme), or whether Being (God) as the non-subsisting epitome of all entities actualises itself dynamically through a world (Fichte, Hölderlin as philosopher, Schelling, Hegel, the early Soloviev). And correspondingly, the category of 'expression' must be rejected as a precise statement of the relationship between Being which prevails without substance as abundance, and the participating entity; for 'expression' presupposes a responsible decision to express oneself, which Being as such does not make, because it attains such decisiveness only within the existent Spirit. Only in an analogical sense (which however is not considered in the systems mentioned above) can it be said that every form of actuality—whether as individual existent or world totality—expresses something of the fullness of reality (but precisely *without* the latter's expressing 'itself').

A biological and evolutionary sequence of stages—if there ever could be such a thing as a self-sufficient system—would at best be able to allow the ascent of the individual essential form, say that of a bird, from its preformations in an earlier form, say that of the fish, but it would never be able to derive the inherent necessity of a single perfected essential form in which—in a wholly anti-Kantian manner—*pulchritudo* and *perfectio* evidently coincide, from the ends of a total evolution of the whole of life or the whole of Being in movement towards itself. The entities, precisely the sub-intellectual art works of the *prakriti*, of creative Nature, bear the mark of an unconditionedly original imaginative power to which one must be blind if one—I do not say classifies their forms within the evolutionary process, but explains them entirely on the grounds of their position within this process. To this degree the realm of forms of sub-human Nature remains a singularly illuminating touchstone for the value of a metaphysics: anyone like Descartes and the Materialists, who explains animals in a purely mechanical way has already lost, but so too have those who, like Schelling and Hegel, interpret the forms of Nature as the ways and stages of the Absolute Spirit in search of Itself—or in the more ancient version of Erigena and Nicolas of Cusa—as the Absolute Spirit which explicates Itself. The first approach cannot interpret the *glorious* freedom of the essential forms, indeed not even the necessity of such forms, while the second does not explain how the Spirit which is still only in search of Itself achieves such perfection which presupposes, not only a luminous intelligence (and not mere unconscious powers of imagination), but a superior and playful freedom beyond all the constraints of Nature; and the third approach again fails to explain why a divine abundance of Being should explicate itself precisely in beetles and butterflies and not also in entirely different, unpredictably various, forms and figures.

Heidegger also offers us no information regarding the underivability of the interrelation between essential form and Being; in his work, sub-human Nature receives as little metaphysical interpretation as it does with the other thinkers named above. Rather, the 'pivot' of Being and of the existent (*Sein-Seiendes*) receives the whole of its meaning from the pivot of Being and human being (*Sein-Dasein*: man as shepherd of Being). And this interrelation is then so loaded with meaning that the original question as to why there should be something rather than nothing is finally submerged, and metaphysics must yield its place to a *phenomenology* of Being in the realm of its distinction. But this priority of Being over human existence does not mean that responsibility for the essential forms (as 'presuppositions' for the 'essence-less' character of human existence) can be attributed to Being. If we close the circle, no matter how, between Being and essence (the existent), then 'glory' as a metaphysical category is lost: it dissolves on the one hand into the beauty of order that prevails within the world (the totality of which then becomes 'explicated' Being), and on the other it is submerged in the necessity of an ineluctable self-explication of Being, governed by no ultimate form of freedom, in order simply to be itself. In both cases, the primal phenomenon is not treated appropriately, and not even the most soaring metaphysical towers can conceal this; and it is something of this failure which is understood by those Materialists who reject such speculative systems as conceptual dreams. But the Materialists themselves fail even more fundamentally to do justice to the primal experience, since they do not in the least want to enquire into why matter should exist at all in the first place.

Within the world, 'expression' remains a category of the 'beautiful' whose radiance and charm easily brings the word 'glorious' (*herrlich*) to our lips, but which can only inauthentically lay claim to the sense of 'lordship' (*herrschaftlich*) and 'majesty' (*hehr*) which inhere within it: in as much, that is, as the 'ground' of a living entity—be it a plant, animal or person—is always 'more' than what is projected on to the phenomenal surface, and this mysterious More can also be read in a mysterious manner from that surface,[1] most supremely in the free spiritual being which, in expressing itself, remains the sovereign capacity (mendaciously) to conceal itself all the while. And yet this is not at all sufficient to characterise the incomprehensible 'freedom' of Being itself, which plays indifferently over all things and is bound to nothing, and on the grounds of which the elevated, sublime (transcendental) radiance of glory is justified, that radiance which streams intangibly through everything which is. Just as Being does not mould everything which is to itself, but lets it be, in the same way all that is must correspondingly allow Being to dwell in its imperturbability, in order that its light should rise over all. To press oneself too closely against Being, as Hölderlin did, is to conceal it further and to confuse it with God Himself. In the space of the distinction which opens up when Being allows us to be and we Being, two things can happen: first, the elevation of Being above us can cause it to appear to us as something which is alien, indifferent and even fearful, and we can be tempted to view it as neutral, value-less, meaningless, and thus to give precedence to non-Being, when the darkening of our human existence in guilt, illness and death, and the horrifying aspects of the existent world as a whole seem to authorise us to pronounce such a curse against Being itself. This fearfulness is no less when we become shudderingly aware of the nameless waste of individual and personal life through the whole, when not only Nature appears as the Calvary of life, but also History as a Golgotha of the Spirit (Hegel), and when man must trample down his own heart in order to justify, against his own self, the World-Spirit which lacerates him. And yet: in the same distance of letting be, Being can appear to us in its glory, for which the relation of expression is now only an image (although the most important one), in a glory which excels in mysterious elevation all the beauty and order of the actual world, although the latter is equally a reflection and an indication of it; possessing a value so infinite and so fundamentally unsurpassable (capable at most of being unfolded) that all lordly 'power' (in the victory over the impotence of what is only-possible), all light (in the victory over the darkness of nothingness), all 'grace' (in the infinite gift of participation) are gathered in it.

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[1] *Cf. Wahrheit* I (1942), pp. 233–255.

The Western metaphysical systems of light ultimately opt for the second possibility, a homage to Being which lets Being in its totality be. Virtually the whole of Greek myth and philosophy is bathed in this enfolding light: Homer's gods and men stand in it together, Pindar's victories, Sappho's devotion, high sculpture is bathed in it, Plato's allegory of the cave expresses it, Aristotle's quintessence, the Stoic primal fire, the Plotinian stream of Being. Throughout Greek patristics, throughout Boethius and Erigena, and again the natural philosophies of Grosseteste, Albert, Ulrich, Nicolas of Cusa, Ficino, Descartes, Patrizzi, the Enlightenment (*siècle des lumières*), Goethe.

But the other, the first possibility of the deepest alienation from Being and darkening of Being can overtake whole epochs; it does so extensively in the period of late antiquity, more tragically in the late Middle Ages, and more fatally still in our own late modernity. It is like a fateful loss of sight which befalls whole generations: the extreme questionability of the existent world distorts our view of encompassing Being, and the primal metaphysical question is no longer asked with regard to the latter, so that the light of Being no longer shines over the world. Too much is demanded of the latter in this case when its own essential light is supposed to suffice for Being as a whole and, since this excessive demand lies clear to view, the forced optimism of the forced worldliness turns perpetually into nihilistic tragedy. The injustice of the world is directly transferred to Being as a whole, which thus itself appears unjust. The scholastic metaphysics which derive from the late Middle Ages and which have achieved only a neutral concept of Being, of which of course the καλόν cannot any more be asserted, no longer form a bulwark against this nihilism.

4. The preceding dimensions of distinction necessarily diverge. I find myself in a world in whose necessity my accidental existence cannot find a place as *pars integralis*. But all existents are in an analogous situation, since they too—either as fragments or as world-wholes—do not fit into Being as *partes integrales*. Here a third point comes into view: namely, that Being as a whole or the actuality of all that is actual does not generate from itself the actual entities, for the responsible generation of forms would presuppose a conscious and free spirit. It is therefore impossible to allow, as Heidegger does, the distinction between Being and the existent to be suspended as an ultimate mystery, resting within itself. It is precisely this which points inexorably beyond itself to the fourth and final distinction, which alone provides an answer to the opening question. One's gaze must seek to penetrate beyond the Ontological Difference (which is not far removed from the Thomist *distinctio realis* in its systematic significance) to the distinction between God and world, in which God is the sole sufficient ground for both Being and the existent in its possession of form. The primal question of the *Da-Sein* (human existence: 'being-there') which finds itself present proceeds from its own non-necessity, and its counterpart,

which is the greater necessity firstly of the world and then that of encompassing Being, does not prove to be strong enough to provide an ultimate foundation for Being, which is thus left suspended, or to overwhelm it by means of integrations (Hegel). It appears rather that the third distinction leaves actual Being just as much, indeed for the first time fully because finally, hanging in the air, as I found myself to be hanging in the air. The consequence is that the grounding in God of this Being which does not depend upon any necessity, points to an *ultimate freedom* which neither Being (as non-subsistent) could have, nor the existent entity (since it always finds itself as already constituted in its own essentiality). And so on the one hand, the freedom of non-subsisting Being can be secured in its 'glory' in the face of all that exists only if it is grounded in a subsisting freedom of absolute Being, which is God; and so, on the other hand, the dignity of an essential form evades being threatened by the encompassing act of Being and thus being swallowed up and devoured as an invalid 'stage of Being' only if its valid contour can be referred back to a sovereign and absolute imagination or power of creation. If the Ontological Difference must already, as bifurcation, be referred back to a *unicum* (as Plotinus correctly and definitively saw), then it will be secured as the authentic 'site of glory in metaphysics' in its deepest affirmation of Being under *the* condition that the 'gloriousness' of its floating in the air, its oscillation, is not hardened into a mathematical necessity (as ultimately happens in Heidegger) but remains the event of an absolute freedom and thus of grace within its open-ended sway, in which each 'pole' has to seek and to find its 'salvation' in the other pole: Being arrives at itself as subsistence only within the entity and the entity arrives at its actuality (and thus at the possibility of its self-generation and *perfectio*) only within its participation in Being.

And so in what is actual there reigns a mystery beyond fullness and poverty,[2] each of which expresses it accurately but still inadequately. Nothing is richer and fuller than Being in its incomprehensibly glorious and absolute victory over nothingness (Being without this fullness is inconceivable; it would be only spectrally present in the first beginnings of thought), and yet this fullness can unfold absolutely only *once*: in God. But since there is nothing against which it must assert itself (for nothingness is nothingness), it does not need, holding on to itself, to enclose itself in the casing of an entity in order perhaps to break out from this and communicate itself beyond its borders (which it does not have). Rather, fullness as such is pure power (Nicolas of Cusa: *Possest*) from whose potency (*Macht*) all that is potential (*das Mögbare*) proceeds as rich abundance (*das Vermögliche*), which is thus pure freedom and, as freedom which does not hold on to itself (or gather itself together into an 'entity'), is also pure gift and love. This mystery of the streaming self-illumination of Being, which was glimpsed by Plato and Plotinus and which alone explains the possibility of a world (that is, the paradoxical existence 'alongside' Infinite Being which fills all things and which stands in need of none), attains its transparency only when, from the sphere of the biblical revelation, absolute freedom (as the spirituality and personality of God) shines in: but not in such a way that the personal God encounters man as one existent marked off from another existent (with the omission of Being; as one could suppose if one were to interpret the Old Testament without recourse to philosophy), but rather in such a way that the personal and free depths of self-giving absolute Being first bring the mystery of Creation, the 'fourth distinction', into the light. God is the Wholly Other only as the *Non-Aliud*, the Not-Other (Nicolas of Cusa): as He who covers all finite entities with the one mantle of his indivisible Being in so far as they are able to participate in his reality at an infinite remove—as 'entities', which are not Him, but which owe their possibility to His power, and their wealth (to grasp Him as the One who is actual and to shelter in Him) to His creative freedom.

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[2] For the following see: Ferdinand Ulrich: *Homo Abyssus. Das Wagnis der Seinsfrage* (1961).

God-given Being is both fullness and poverty at the same time: fullness as Being without limit, poverty modelled ultimately on God Himself, because He knows no holding on to Himself, poverty in the act of Being which is given out, which *as* gift delivers itself without defence (because here too it does not hold on to itself) to the finite entities. But equally, the created entities are simultaneously fullness and poverty: fullness in the power to shelter and to tend (as 'shepherd of Being') the gift of the fullness of Being within themselves, however 'poor' they may be on account of their limitation, and poverty again in a double sense in as much as the container experiences its inability to scoop out the whole ocean with its small bowl and, instructed by this experience, comprehends the letting-go of Being—as letting-be and letting-stream, handing on further—as the inner fulfilment of the finite entity. Here, through the greater dissimilarity of the finite and the infinite existent, the positive aspect of the *analogia entis* appears, which makes of the finite the shadow, trace, likeness and image of the Infinite. And not in such a way that the finite 'first' constitutes itself as a 'closed' entity or subject (through the seizing and hoarding of the parcel of actuality which it is able to take into oneself from the stream of finite Being) in order 'then' (and perhaps for the rounding-out of its own perfection) to pass the surplus on. But rather in such a way that the finite, since it is subject, already constitutes itself as such through the letting-be of Being by virtue of an *ekstasis* out of its own closed self, and therefore through dispossession and poverty becomes capable of salvaging in recognition and affirmation the infinite poverty of the fullness of Being and, within it, that of the God who does not hold on to Himself. Only on this level and in this medium can the event take place which the Bible describes as the process from (God) person to (man) person: predestination, election, vocation, justification, sanctification, glorification (Rom 8, 28–30), for all these are *modi* of radiant and universal love and have as their basis the breadth of the world's creation as a whole (Rom 8, 18–25) and of its painful (painful for God and for the world) concealment in the mantle of the divine Being which encompasses all things (Rom 8, 26–27).

2. THE THEOLOGICAL *A PRIORI* ELEMENT IN METAPHYSICS

If in this manner biblical revelation rests on the basis of the primal God-world distinction, and thus on metaphysics, and radiates from this point, then metaphysics correspondingly attains fulfilment in the event of revelation, if it does not want to make a definitive halt at preliminary stages and thus become fatally fixed. The possibility, sketched out above in the third distinction, of a choice in the interpretation of the detachment of Being still remains unresolved. Could the glory of Being which soars above all that exists not be understood in its unsurpassable alienness in another way: as abandonment, instead of simply letting-be? Where is the guarantee that the finite entity is genuinely sheltered in the infinite indifference of Being? And if it experiences the incomprehensible alienness which prevails within the distinction and yet still gives precedence to its encompassing character, must it not then necessarily petition for its own self-elimination and, in so far as this is its concern, also strive for it, as happens in India and in so many areas of Western metaphysics too?

The 'choice' of the interpretation of Being is not something that can be decided by man, because both sides of the choice (which are mutually exclusive) each commend a truth. Both protective accompaniment and uncanny alienation prevail. It is impossible to merge the two into one on the same level (as Heidegger does); one can see from this that metaphysics in itself defies completion and, in the event that it nevertheless wants to attain completion, must make the different levels of the Ontological Difference identical—as we have shown.[3] The confusion is complete if in the end the negations of Negative Theology, the inner-divine mystery of self-outpouring (as basis for the following two aspects), the

[3] *Cf.* above, p. 447.

'noughting' of the communicated fullness of Being in its non-subsistence, and ultimately the kenosis of Christ are partially or wholly equated; thereby the ultimate theologoumenon is totally shorn of its theological character and cannot therefore be fruitful for metaphysics either. There exist at least tendencies towards this in the mysticism of the Rhineland, in Böhme, Hölderlin, Hegel and Heidegger. But such equations absolutise what belongs to the world and reduce God to world. The onset of confusion occurs where the events of historicity between God and man (to which also the event of an alienation of man from God belongs) are equated with the 'event' of the destiny of Being (Heidegger) or with the inner dialectic of the absolute Spirit (Hegel).

But where could metaphysics derive the authority to make a distinction between the levels—essentially those of 'creation' and 'grace'—before the Ground, which releases from Itself both Being and all that is, has manifested Itself as such in a personal and sovereignly free manner? Metaphysics can at most refer back to myth and attempt that hybrid synthesis of the 'unfinishable bridge', which is all the more hybrid in that myth itself persists in indissoluble ambiguity: a spirit-like cry from the depths of Being—or projection of the human personality on to impersonal Being? The claim of metaphysics to critical self-responsibility through reason will necessarily tend towards the latter and will explain man's address from Being as man's address to Being ('eros'). Thus the relationship between 'metaphysics' and still-surviving 'religion' which is not content with a mere transcendence of human longing becomes unclear. But to the extent that it holds to one kind of revelation or other, it alienates from itself the scientistic metaphysics which, as Plato said, tends increasingly to Titanism. Thus this becomes entirely man's own achievement, retrieves eros into itself as man's own potentiality and is no longer essentially distinct from any other science, whereby it effects its own elimination.

In distinction to this, the taking seriously of the address from Being tends in the direction of making the individual myth, as finite myth, transparent to the entire language of Being, which thus does not allow the individual to be submerged in anonymous ordinariness but can draw him out into the hearing of a personal address. This happened most magnificently in Virgil, but it was prefigured in Homer and Pindar, as it was in Greek tragedy. The hero of the *Aeneid* is *pius* as one who listens to and obeys his unique and yet universal task (the founding of the Roman empire), and his devotion to this mission is his achieved self-transcendence. In the same way, Alcestis in her self-sacrifice for her lover accepted an opportunity opened to her by God, Pindar's hero conquered in a grace which flowed from Being, the wandering Odysseus followed a path of providence, which he himself could not see, under the guidance of his protective goddess. This particular path has become integral in Aeneas as 'spoken Being' (*fatum*), containing within itself all the particular utterances of the gods. Virgil recapitulates in this the actual historical fate of the world—beyond the faded possibilities of metaphysics and religion. He unites in his allegorical image what could no longer be fused by the power of thought alone. As a poet, he therefore describes the point at which, without any possible anticipation, God begins to speak from the depths of His own heart.

All the fragments of meaning which inhere in metaphysics are contained in this unforeseeable speech: above all, the first dismayed astonishment at the fact 'that I am', which refuses consolation from any philosophical assertion of its necessity. Then it contains the hovering oscillation of the unbridgeable difference, to which there adheres need as well as glory, poverty as well as the fullness of true reality, and which cannot be grounded anywhere but in an absolute freedom which sanctifies the oscillation as such. And then the other oscillation—comprehensible only within it—between universality and unique personality: every existence in the world, every mission which gives fullness of meaning to a human life, all noetics, ethics and aesthetics. The ineluctable polarity of failure and success, of wound and healing, of sacrifice and happiness which prevails in reality as it is; the deep will to death and self-sacrifice which cannot be outweighed by the simultaneous will to life and self-fulfilment. So much are these concerns of the heart, which have been gained and understood on the basis of the Ontological Difference, contained in the biblical word and forever held open there, that mankind would like above all to appropriate and to interpret this revelation itself as the central projection of his own self-transcending heart. But the word of God prevents this by the unyielding force with which it turns upside-down the person who begins to listen to it. It convicts him first of his disobedience; it makes him responsible for his alienation from God; it imposes upon him an initially quite alien ('positive') commandment and law; it says disconcerting things about him which would otherwise never have occurred to him in his self-reflection. And precisely in this inexorability lies salvation for him, for it is only in this way that it is forcefully impressed upon such a person that 'Another' than himself is concerned about him, and that his famed concern (for himself or for Being) has long been surpassed by the concern which 'Another' bears for him and on his behalf. But the question of which form this concern has desired to take lies quite beyond the realm of metaphysics. We will speak of it in the final volume of this work.

But however at odds revelation may be to all that is foreseeable, and however little it may appear to be the supplying of a missing fragment, it must nevertheless enter into the distinctions as a form of completion: the word of God must be written into the word of Being, the word of Being into the words of creatures which are exchanged as comprehensible words among existent creatures. Thus the distinctions as such are obediently at the disposal of God's revelation. And they are so in so far as the highest distinction (between God and the Being of the existent) is only the oscillation between the giver and the gift, whereby gift signifies the being given (and being received) of the giver. Nothing substantial and subsistent, therefore, but the radiant fullness of God's Being in the condition of its being given to the finite recipient. The scholastics of the Franciscan school tentatively circled around this mystery, nor was it unknown, *via* the Plotinian and Dionysian tradition, to the Dominicans. The non-subsistence of the *actus essendi* is the creative medium which suffices for God to utter His kenotic word of the Cross and of glory and to send it as His Son into the world to experience death and resurrection. This word (which brings with itself its own grace) will ultimately be grasped only by those who hold out within the oscillation of distinction and who do not make themselves guilty of the 'essentialisation' (F. Ulrich) of defenceless and radiant Being—an 'essentialisation' which is the death and paralysis of both Being and the word.

To overlook the noughting of Being in favour of essences which with its help attain the power to be, is inevitably to blind oneself to the mysterious shining which inheres within Being: a shining which in its transparency contains the 'flowing light of the Godhead' (Mechthild) and raises the world of finite essences into its brightness. Being itself is 'not the light' but gives 'witness to the light' in so far as it points to it by virtue of its own non-subsistence. When therefore in Western philosophy Being is posited as the horizon of the cosmos, it is itself either understood to be the sphere of the shining (Aristotle) or better, as the 'first emanation' of a light of the 'Good' which prevails beyond Being, as the absolutised self-emanation. Thus the highest distinction is expressed in words which are still accessible to metaphysics at its extreme limits. But here it becomes clear why the pre-eminent spirit-place from which the shining of Being—in its serene elevation beyond all finite essence—becomes visible, has to be that 'poverty of spirit' which is distinguished in the history of metaphysics as ἀπάθεια—detachment or impassivity—and which is demanded by Plato too for his highest degree of eros: varied forms of self-stripping which, though accessible to false kinds of absolutisation are, as the renouncing of one's own self-interested power for the sake of harmonising with Being, also capable of being changed into evangelical poverty. But where the attitude of renunciation hardens to a defence against pain and death—and thus also against love—it becomes self-deception and deprives itself of its sensitivity to the light. Only rarely do metaphysicians entirely escape this danger; but Christianity by its own nature possesses the power and the responsibility of arming the spirit against this kind of abuse of detachment and to disarm the heart so that it becomes purely receptive—even, and precisely, to pain and deprivation. That which is thus received is not anything neutral, or abstract, but is a food which is worthy of the spirit. We can call it the 'word' of Being, if we understand that to be a communication which points beyond all formulated and formulatable speech to the origin of the communication and thus also to the origin of the facility of speech of spiritual beings. It is only necessary to distinguish this speech of Being clearly from all free revelations of the word from the heart of the Godhead, as well as from the free creative speech of existent beings. The communication of Being lies, as we have already seen, simply enclosed in the child's wonder at reality with the first opening of its eyes: in the fact that it is *permitted* to be in the midst of what exists. This condition of being permitted cannot be surpassed by any additional insight into the laws and necessities of the world. It emerges within the first distinction, communicates itself in the second to all co-existent entities and, in the third, grasps Being itself. Because no existent thing can be deduced by necessity from Being, but nevertheless exists in that it partakes in Being, and because this participation and sharing are two aspects of one and the same incomprehensible (because not able to be grounded within itself) oscillation, therefore the word of Being is itself the permission to be. This is recalled every time man raises his eyes above the pseudo-necessities of his empirical and transcendental activity. It encourages us to believe in an encompassing grace beyond all laws, categories and schematisms. The categorical imperative of Being does not only consider, as does that of Kant, our own human fellow-world upon which the human agent is supposed to impose a law, but it considers Being altogether, since this rises up above every law into grace. In this, it is even more demanding than Kant's system, in which man exists alone and forgetful of Being. Act in such a way, we are now told, as if you yourself, your fellow-man and fellow-object owed your existence to a boundless grace. To a grace in which Being itself bathes in its primal distinction as an emergence both dark and luminous, through which it reveals itself. It is not difficult to see how the language of intellectual beings evolves in descent from this primal word of the world, as the sign of having heard that indication and as its application to the sphere of spiritual freedom, which in speech always opens itself up with grace in its background, while in ascent from it the revelatory Word of God becomes possible, which now first reveals both the *foundation* for the fact that Being proclaims grace, and where the origin lies of the permission to be.

B. LOVE AS CUSTODIAN OF GLORY

1. THE LIGHT OF BEING AND LOVE

Let us consider again the distinction which opens up in four different ways: for the four phases shown were only the ever greater extension of the same thing which is already present in the first act of consciousness of the awakening child. This first act, journeying towards transcendence, immediately touches the final end: there can be nothing more beyond the love which wakens me and shelters me, and which greets me in the smiling face of my mother. Many things can interfere: incomprehensible departure and abandonment, privation, disappointment, not being understood, pain, death. But all that is only an interpolation. Perhaps it will appear infinite, perhaps interrupted by lightning recollections of the origin: but I have been given a measure for all that is called distance and distinction. However excluded I may be, I remain primally someone who has been permitted entry. And then comes the second insight: we have all been permitted entry. Our mother too. And the animals with which I play. There is much that is real, and yet Being overarches everything, sublime and serene; nothing of all this had to be as it is. Everything stands in an open light which is greater and more glorious than the essence of this world with all its terror and beauty. Thus there is the third point: what would happen to this light if none of us existed to see it? Does it stand in need of us? No, I, all of us, are 'accidental' with respect to it. Taken altogether, we are not a sufficient explication of being; it is free to manifest itself in an infinite number of other ways and to be a light for an infinite number of other entities. Nevertheless: what would light be if there were no one to see it? Are we then both necessary to one another: Being to existents and existents to Being? Do we both experience the process of noughting? Is the permission to be, the being given entry, a beginning both for me and for Being? Does it become glorious only by virtue of its being in need? Is it serene only because it has been given entry—into us? Do we then both hover in oscillation, and is this hovering that which has been freed, which is unconditioned? But how can this double dependence, and so mutual conditionedness, produce an Absolute? And so gingerly, almost against our will, we must posit the fourth opening of distinction: beyond the still conditioned, mutually dependent freedom of the existent with regard to Being and the freedom of Being to shine unconstrainedly as a light within the existent: an unconditioned freedom, or one which is at most one which is conditioned through itself, and which is untouched by nothingness, an *actus purus*, which is posited in the first instance only in order to preserve the light of openness between Being and the existent as a free and unconstrained light so that the individual entity is not submerged within the exigencies of a process of explication and Being does not lose its freedom in the same 'Odyssey' of its cosmic evolution towards itself. Otherwise the primal experience of the child is false and is contradicted by the ingenuity of adulthood and the wisdom of metaphysics. But if the most precious thing which must be preserved in Being can only be preserved by God, viz. its miraculous and glorious character, then must not God be pre-eminently the guardian and the shepherd of this glory: in direct contradiction to what the finite spirit imagines as necessity and absoluteness? And then is not that which we experience in the contingent and dualistic nature of the world as possessing the greatest beauty, that oscillation which is wholly unconstrained, both within itself and to others, which comprehends and grounds all justified and satisfying necessities, incomprehensibly, that which we find again, new and different, in God? If He creates the world without constraint and imparts to it, with its unconstraining unconstrainedness, something of the manner of His freedom and sovereign power of gift, and if this bestowing freedom deserves no name but love: then from what other ground could God 'be' than 'from' love? Any attempt other than this to approach the 'Absolute' beyond the Ontological Difference would have to ascribe less to the Absolute than to what derives from it.

The fundamental metaphysical act is love within the Ontological Difference (that is, the third distinction, which includes the first two within itself); the fundamental Christian act is love within the God-world distinction (than is, the fourth, which contains the first three within itself): in each case love means here the total human act which comprehends the totality of mind and body and, in particular, percipient intelligence. As metaphysical intelligence, it perceives the relation of the existent and Being which defies formulation and, as Christian intelligence, it perceives God's free word of absolute love which utters itself as a medium within this relation. But we must guard here against both false distinctions and false equations. We are following the right path when we genuinely locate the metaphysical act within the Ontological Difference—even if it naturally points to God as its depths—and understand the Christian act as a new response to the new word of God which, of course, contains the metaphysical act within itself and, beyond that, contributes also to its fulfilment. It is necessary to elucidate this once again by running briefly through the history of metaphysics. In distinction to the intellectual limitations and impoverishments of present metaphysical thinking, this must above all be a history of metaphysical love. In distinction to all the reductions of the metaphysical act, it is however necessary to pay attention at every point to the distinguishing of the degrees of distinction in order to unmask confusions and over-simplifications.

In *Homer*, the distinction arises elementally between those who are self-luminous (gods) and those who stand in the light (men); the self-luminous gods are at the same time both elevated and unconcerned, *and* illumining and involved in events, while those who receive their light become their true selves (heroes) the more they go beyond themselves (becoming *ek-sistent*) into the divine light through a posture which is prayerful and trusting. The light is common and reciprocal, and the darkness which it encloses (*moira*), though remaining unillumined, is also affirmed.

In the *Tragedians*, the distinction is affirmed in a similarly elemental way, but for man, in the radicality of his exposure, the light turns to darkness: the *moira*-darkness is assumed into the will of the gods and his luminous *ek-sistence* is experienced as the extreme form of unshielded vulnerability. But whatever the outcome of this encounter may be, man's salvation or his downfall, it is at any rate affirmed (tragedy is liturgy), and the ultimate self-sacrifice of man is reckoned in the statement of affirmation.

In the case of *Pindar*, the unity (identity) of the affirmed distinction is attained in the high-point of the *agôn*: the grace of the gods and the achievement of men coincide in the 'victory'. The first philosophers, for their part, pursue the unity of the distinction in proud soarings: *Heraclitus* when he includes the dark remainder within the law of harmony of the Logos, *Parmenides* when he eliminates the darkness of distinction as the non-existent; both do so in order to be able to utter a whole-hearted Yes and Amen to Being. The *Pythagoreans* appropriate the whole for themselves by numbers, in which quantity and quality harmonise.

By means of his questioning, *Socrates* keeps the distinction open and dies on account of his love for the immalleability of truth; *Plato* also holds it open in his *chôrismos* (the division between idea and thing) and stretches between them the eros which, bearing within itself the source (identity) as recollection, yearns for wisdom (*philo-sophia*). On the other hand, comprehending reason (ἐπιστήμη) discovers that the Being which is visible to our eyes is itself inwardly permeated with nothingness (dialectic). The final form (in the *Timaeus*) becomes indecipherable: eros is fulfilled in full affirmation within the perfect and rounded universe (which comprehends both gods and men), whose grounding through the Demiurge in accordance with the ideas can be narrated only in a 'sacred language of images' (myth). And only from its margins does the aroused eros of the entire universe become visible in *Aristotle* as all-grounding and self-reflecting mind together with man's participation from outside in Spirit (θύραθεν). But God, the universe which circles upon itself (κυκλοφορία), and the encompassing Being (οὐσία) together indivisibly form the object of metaphysics, and the second, third and fourth distinctions merge into one another. Not until *Plotinus* does the light arise afresh in greatness, since here the Spirit (the world of the ideas) is moved in a hitherto unheard-of manner by the eros of a yearning which is both needy and not needy: towards the Inconceivable, the Unique and the Good, which is the primal source of all beauty, although it does not itself even 'deign to be beautiful'. Here thought and love are one, and both are the light of the world, although this light breaks forth from an inaccessible place, which as a fathomless ground and source is a non-light or a darkness or a superabundant light. It is true that here Being is equated with thought, but both exist by the grace of the One, both too, in so far as they are eros-like, are permeated by nothingness (the doctrine of intelligible matter), and only in this way are both the ground which generates what exists as 'soul' and 'nature'.

Just as with Homer and the Tragedians love within the distinction was a metaphysical love which was in no way erotic in the sexual sense, and in Plato eros (of the homosexual and then also the heterosexual kind) was also only an image of the metaphysical eros, in the same way *amor* in Virgil becomes light which discloses Being; boyishly tremulous in the *Eclogues*, of manly solidity in the *Georgics*, pan-historically open in the *Aeneid*—love here as the pure *ek-sistence* of man in his obedience to fate, but also as the guiding, gracious, accompanying destiny itself (Zeus, Venus as the voices of Being) in the face of an all-contradicting fate (Juno).

It is *Augustine*[4] who takes over the metaphysics of Being-Light and the metaphysical Knowledge-Love into Christianity and who determines it more profoundly than does Plotinus by the (evangelical) decision of man for or against the light in which absolute love prevails. The light in which our spirit sees and thinks is not directly God, but even less is it the natural light which the creature possesses; rather, it is truth which holds sway as the openness of God, in accordance with which it thinks in orientation towards God an, in turning from which, it loses God. And this turning towards or away is determined by the claims of love and by man's response to them. After Augustine, and without renouncing his direction, the metaphysics of Being is conditioned by the paradoxes of the *Areopagite*: God revealed in the world *as* He who is concealed. The light in the world (which is the distinction between the *archai* and the existent) is the light of the divine eros towards the human eros, but it points as a whole towards the mystery of the more than radiant darkness. This holds also for *Gregory the Great*. It is critically important that those philosophies which work with the model of the God-world relation of implication and explication (*Erigena*, *Nicolas of Cusa*) also fully adopt that paradox and thus escape idealist rationalism, for which the implication (God) will be comprehensible, or even in an evolutionary way constructable, on the basis of the explication. In this way, they preserve space for love and also for that all-grounding awe which characterises above all the love of the founders: *Benedict*, *Francis* and *Ignatius*. If the scheme of interpretation of metaphysical love is determined by the eros of the ancients to such an extent that the *Victorines* do not in essence distinguish it in structural terms from agape, then eros from Augustine on is seen as *desiderium*, i.e., as all that is contrary to a love which victoriously takes possession, rather a love which powerlessly and longingly yearns and which disposes itself for the reception of free grace. As such, it also permeates the first ontological attempts to construe Being and the existent itself as gift: this is what we find in *Boethius* and *Cassiodorus*, for whom all the beauty of the world is received in prayerful thanksgiving as love which flows from the Godhead, in *John Erigena* in his distinction between *datio* (the gift of Being and substance) and *donatio* (the gift of the participation of the existent in the wealth of Being), in *Chartres* and in *Gilbert*, and even more so in *Alexander of Hales*, for whom the existent is understood as pure ('material') indefiniteness for the progressive endowments of Being, as in the doctrine of the real distinction of *Thomas*, in the ontology of *Eckhart* and from this point on within the whole spiritual family which was summed up in the 'Metaphysics of the

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[4] *Cf.* Vol. II, pp. 95–143 (Eng. trans.).

Saints'. It is within this context that we must place the medieval metaphysics of light, which only rarely makes the mistake of understanding Being itself (divine or worldly) to be substantial light (*Adam of Paris*), but which either sees the highest analogy to God in the worldly light with its power of revelation (*manifestabilitas*), as do *Grosseteste*, *Bonaventure* and *Albert*, or alternatively interprets the stages of the world's Being from the point of view of God as the streaming superabundance of light: *Areopagitically* above all as the potency of a loving reception (contemplation) and a loving flowing-on (action). And so even in the brightest of these doctrines of love, the dimension of the Dionysian darkness is never absent, neither in the Franciscan line (where love still presses on into that darkness of God where reason can no longer follow), nor in the Dominican school (since in Thomas negative theology takes precedence throughout).

A kind of testing of metaphysical love came with the epochal darkening of the fourteenth century: here there is a parting of the ways. The philosophers strain and storm *nominalistically* and shatter the web of the world dialectically, while the lovers surrender themselves to the night and discover the existential form of detachment (*Gelassenheit*). This presupposes that man is disposed, as in the literary tragedies of antiquity and in part the Stoa, to see even *the night* as a light (unseen, but therefore only all the more profound). It has to be admitted that here in most places the distinctions that pertain within the ontological distinctions are effaced, not only when Being is straightforwardly equated with God, but already when Being (as the first *archê* from God: *Dionysius*) is interpreted according to the Platonic analogy of the sun as the pure 'flowing light of the Godhead' (*Mechthild*, but also early Augustinian scholasticism) and thus the non-subsistence of the *actus essendi* is dissolved to the point of nothingness, and again when subjectivity is construed as pure (mystical) openness in the sense of a receptivity without any spontaneous act of one's own. *Thomas* erected a first wall here with his clear distinction between God and Being, but also with his doctrine of the spontaneity of the spirit, precisely in order that this can become '*quodammodo omnia*'; *Ignatius* again had to stress this spontaneity so that the fundamental human act of a loving preference for the elective will of God becomes possible. Thus we see that the express sighting of the third distinction (before the fourth one) in *Thomas* with his unlimited *esse* also highlights the positivity of *essentia* as *limitatio* and *capacitas receptionis*, supremely as the individual uniqueness of existence as spirit, underivable as form from *esse* alone and, like the latter, pointing back directly to the eternal ground. And thus also with *Ignatius* the individually unique decision-making freedom of the person is underivable from the 'freedom' of Being which is unattached to any entity or world; rather, it refers back to the eternally decisive freedom of the divine ground (*Kant*, *Fichte*, *Schelling*). It is in *Thomas* that the problem between Being and God first arises with this clarity, the problem between the active spontaneity of the human spirit (acting in wisdom) and the contemplative receptivity of the same spirit towards divine wisdom (perhaps mediated by the Church) which, even considered purely metaphysically, can lead to acts of *folly*. Folly no longer as mere acts of penance for the love of God and Christ, folly also no longer as the pure passivity of reason towards God (with the exclusion of all one's own thoughts), but folly as the conscious and loving preference for the unlimited and sovereign will of God, beyond all the spiritual harmony of the cosmos of the cardinal virtues.

These two distinctions conflict with the over-simplifications of the modern period, which must lead of necessity to the loss of the metaphysical act. The rediscovery of antiquity (Renaissance) meant two things: taking the world seriously in the face of a spiritualistic flight from the world, and taking the piety of the world seriously (natural religion) in the face of an over-positivisation of religion in biblical faith. But the pious metaphysical eros of *Ficino* founders as it becomes a primarily sexual one which already in *Gottfried of Strassburg* and later in *Bruno* usurps the place of the Christian and metaphysical eros, or goes no further than the universe (*Goethe*) or else is submerged within itself in an inauthentic melancholia (from Petrarchism to *Leopardi* and Pre-Raphaelism). But wherever love no longer seconds the encompassing metaphysical act, it collapses sceptically and agnostically within itself and limits itself to what is found within the world: the dimension of glory is lost within that of beauty. *Heidegger* represents an attempt to retrieve the classical and Christian form of metaphysical love, as detached readiness for the call of Being; but this attempt must fail, because he projects the fourth distinction into the second and thus turns the oscillation of Being and human existence, which should remain open and pointing beyond itself, into the fixed and indissoluble form of a sphinx, before which and for which man cannot live and love. Hermias (in Aristotle's hymn) dies for the sake of truth: but who would want to die for Being?

The other line, that of the philosophy of Spirit and later of transcendental philosophy, develops more catastrophically: here in a first phase (from *Descartes* to *Leibniz* and *Malebranche*) Being is left out of the picture in a pseudo-Augustinian aprioristic immediacy of relation between God and Spirit, and the metaphysical act is bound up with a somehow mystical love of God. This forgetfulness of Being takes its revenge as the loss of Being in *Kant*, in whom the pious immediacy of relation with God survives only in the moral and autonomous self-appropriation of the will, becoming then, inevitably, a Titanic immediacy of relation between God and the formal Self (the first philosophy of *Fichte*), which in its inner infinity appropriates the divine point of view for itself through the world. Thus not only does 'glory' collapse into the beauty of the world, but it becomes the prayerless self-glorification of the Spirit, which takes not only itself but also all that remains to it under its own control. With this, metaphysics comes to an end and, at the same time, all metaphysical love. There remain at best the substitute forms of a love within the world and a love among men. And because the former must be increasingly dissolved within the latter, as man himself takes control of the world, for which a transcendental and evolutionistic philosophy furnishes the justification to salve his conscience; because he himself has the world in and beneath himself, there remains for him—like the last of his emergency rations—only love among men.

From *Feuerbach* and *Marx* onwards, this interpersonal love has the choice either of understanding itself to be the Absolute within the world, as 'God', for which all else can be sacrificed and consumed as material, or, if that is to be debunked as a mystical utopia, to dissolve itself within the process (as in *Hegel*) in order itself to become material which has been sacrificed to the—no less utopian—future goal of the greatest 'happiness' of the greatest number of people. A highly problematical form of 'happiness' which can be evaluated even now, weighed in the scales and found to be wanting, and to which I am supposed to subordinate the whole of my being-permitted-to-be as a means to an end. If I am no more than a means, then so too is the Thou whom I love, and then we can give nothing to each other by way of grace, since neither of us is unique as an entity nor, as existents, have we really been permitted to *be*. This means that there is no gleam of glory surrounding personal love any more, or at most the deceptive illusion of one, which lovers are always supposed to see through in a melancholy or cynical way—for the glory of love can flourish only within the context of an at least intuited glory of Being. Where personal love has been debased and reduced to the status of being a machine-part in an either transcendental, biological and evolutionistic or materialistic process, then no other value can compensate for this loss, human existence itself lacks all radiance and meaning, and there is no longer any reason why it should be better that something exist rather than simply nothing at all. What kind of gift can the other person be for me? Within the transcendental system he is essentially no different from myself: one aspect of the absolute subject; what he is in 'empirical' and 'psychological' terms is provisional and accidental and certainly undeserving of any absolute commitment. Within the biological and evolutionistic system, he is a fertile (and fertilisable) cell within the whole organism, who can enjoy only a prospective intuition of an invisible evolutionary goal; all human life thus becomes animal life. Within the materialistic and economic process, both my consciousness and yours remain a material product which is in principle constructable by technical means and which can be transformed at will and made into something else, into something which is sub-, super- or near-human, so that there is nothing better for consciousness to do than to ready itself from the outset for its own self-elimination in every possible manageable direction. Every form of metaphysics, therefore, which withdraws the light of Being from man in order to locate the light in its entirety within his self ceases of itself to be metaphysics and becomes 'science' which takes control of (manifest) existence. At the same time, Being and love are extinguished, for the philosophical act lives from both.

2. THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION TO METAPHYSICS

A Christian has to conduct philosophical enquiry on account of his faith. Believing in the absolute love of God for the world, he is obliged to understand Being in its ontological difference as pointing to love, and to live in accordance with this indication. As suggested above, the mystery of the fact that anything exists at all becomes for him yet more profound and in the most comprehensive sense more worthy of enquiry than it does for any other kind of philosopher. For every philosopher searches Being for a particular—albeit uncomprehended—ground which is presupposed *within it*. Thus the question as to Why becomes one as to What—τί τὸ ὄν or τὸ εἶναι—and thus leads openly (Aristotle) or hiddenly (Heidegger) to an essentialisation of Being. The Christian must deny Being an ultimate necessity and thus allow it to hover in the unheard of oscillation of not-having-to-be if he is to avoid the perilous path of a Leibnizean philosophy of Spirit which would deduce it, even as something created, out of God (whose freedom is love and therefore wills to communicate itself and whose will, being rational, must create the best of all possible worlds, which is the world as it actually exists). In this case the world would acquire the same necessity as God; God would lose his absolute rule over it and human reason, having raised itself to the level of absolute calculation, would combine its own glory with that of God, thus dethroning the latter.

The Christian remains the guardian of that metaphysical wonderment which is the point of origin for philosophy and the continuation of which is the basis of its further existence. Wonderment is constantly on the point of turning into a marvelling at the beauty of existence as a whole, of that order and orderliness of what is already 'adorned' and 'equipped' (κόσμος), and which the individual sciences are only too keen to enquire into. Plato himself seems finally to have lost the sense of wonder (*Verwunderung*) and to have acquired instead a sense of admiration (*Bewunderung*), and thus the way was open that led from metaphysics to the cosmology of the platonic school and that of Aristotle. The sciences now soar proudly aloft in their joy of intellectual discovery, their admiration turning now to the already achieved stock of order within existence and now to the presumed stock of order which is as yet unascertained. But this elevated feeling is not love. Love loves Being in an *a priori* way, for it knows that no science will ever track down the ground of why something exists rather than nothing at all. It receives it as a free gift and replies with free gratitude. Here that light weaves which is the source of all authentic images and cyphers together with the 'sacred words of origin' and thus also of all art which remains close to the origin. Here that metaphysical glory prevails which is higher than and prior to the perception of worldly beauty. It is right to understand eros and beauty as ordered to each other; it is true that it is for the sake of union that Nature adorns herself and that it is eros which makes the eye perceive as attractive that which has been thus adorned. But this play is governed by intentions, and if love were nothing but that, then Nature could still be Goethe's 'ruminating monster', or Hegel's 'horror which consumes its own formations'. The metaphysical eros prevails at a higher and earlier level, and it is ordered not to beauty but to glory. This is surely what Angelus Silesius' Cherubic Wanderer means when he says:

> Beauty comes from love, and even the countenance of
>   God
> Takes from her its beauty, or it would not shine.

Viewed from this elevated perspective, the aesthetic argument of theodicy, which we have encountered so often in the second volume (Augustine, Bonaventure) and in the present one (Plato, Boethius, Leibniz, Goethe, Hegel, etc.), and which has been understood in the main to belong to the 'lower' level of aesthetics, in accordance with its own formulation, acquires a deeper and more fitting significance: the beauty and the terror of this world complement each other like light and darkness in a perfect picture and on account of its total beauty God is justified even as the creator of such a world. But this idea becomes tasteless when it is the language of a contemplation which merely observes for its own satisfaction, in the face for instance of the suffering of this world. And when it is used by Christian thinkers in order to justify eternal damnation, it is wholly intolerable. And yet it has a shattering grandeur when it is the language of a lover who wishes to perceive the reflected glory of the first miracle in all Being's forms, even the most wretched and hideous, or even to believe it to be present. The Greeks, who found a place for Tragedy within their *Weltbild*, were of this mind, as was Virgil in his *Georgics*. But above all it is Christians who are required to adopt this perspective. And they are so on the basis of the special word of God in Jesus Christ, which lays down that the preferred place for the manifestation of God's love and thus for His emergent glory is precisely those areas of darkness which seem to fall out of every aesthetic contemplation. Areas of darkness which are otherwise excluded from any aesthetic view of the world (and thus prove the limitations of these views), or which lead the observer to look with stony gaze at Nature and Being, themselves hard as stone, and which now become precisely the critical touchstones of love and glory: both of the love of God which glorifies itself even and especially when it shows its light in the darkness, and also of the love of man, which then corresponds to this aesthetics of God's glory in so far as it recognises God's love there in its highest glory and worships it accordingly.

The Christians of today, living in a night which is deeper than that of the later Middle Ages, are given the task of performing the act of affirming Being, unperturbed by the darkness and the distortion, in a way that is vicarious and representative for all humanity: an act which is at first theological, but which contains within itself the whole dimension of the metaphysical act of the affirmation of Being. Those who are directed in this way to pray continually, to find God in all things and to glorify Him are able to do so on particular grounds (that is particular graces) which allow them to perform their 'creaturely duty' (as *Ruysbroeck*, *Bérulle* and *Condren* understood it). But in so far as they are to shine 'like the stars in the sky', they are also entrusted with the task of bringing light to those areas of Being which are in darkness so that its primal light may shine anew not only upon them but also upon the whole world; for it is only in this light that man can walk in accordance with what he is truly called to be.

The way for the Christian to perform this task successfully is clear from what is most deeply his own inheritance. If on account of their advancing blindness to the light of Being men and women have lost the treasure of love with the exception of those inalienable 'emergency rations' of interpersonal relations (as the last source of warmth in an area of cold), then the Christian is truest to his calling when he finds himself in the presence of this poorest and smallest area of love's manifestation. His duty is to experience the presence of absolute love, and himself to actualise it, and to make it visible, within his love for his neighbour; it is his task to effect the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves precisely out of this poverty ('What is that for so many?'). His faith teaches him to see within the most seemingly unimportant interpersonal relation the making present and the 'sacrament' of the eternal I-Thou relation which is the ground of the free Creation and again the reason why God the Father yields His Son to the death of darkness for the salvation of every Thou. The Christian love for our neighbour is therefore something quite distinct from a good and morally upright model for interpersonal conduct; it occurs always as the focal point, as the demonstration (*Erweis*) and realisation (*Vorweis*) of a love which itself wholly transcends man, and thus also as an indicator (*Verweis*) to that love which man cannot appropriate for himself as it has long since shown itself to him to be that which is ever greater than himself. A Christian encounters his fellow-man in grace and in each task of this love which is given both to him and to the brother who meets him, and under the pre-condition of its absolute radiance; it is not he who lifts his brother titanically out of the darkness by the strength of his own power of love; even in full-blown and active *engagement* (such as that of the Samaritan) he only testifies to the light, as Christ Himself, the Son of the Father to whom the light was given as His own, wanted in all His radiance only to testify to the Father. If the Christian therefore were to give definitively the love he has for his fellow men the character of a purely interpersonal (even if humanly perfect) love, then he would be acting counter to the command to allow his light to shine forth so that people may glorify God (Matt 5.16), and would rather be hiding his light under the bushel. The love which he concentrates like a light through a lens in his encounter with his brother comes from a place infinitely beyond the individual Christian and it reaches therefore infinitely beyond the limited reality of the present situation. He can only prove himself to be a friend of this light by showing that he is its servant. For it is not I who died for this brother, but he who is Lord of us both; and this representative death in love, which has already removed the resistance and the darkness of the brother, has long since been present for him, before I met him. 'Before Philip called you . . .'

What thus authenticates and points the way forward for the Christian is his faith. Whoever believes accepts a light of salvation which shines for him *a priori* from beyond the limits of pure reason and towards whose glory he is orientated receptively and attentively, seeing and hearing, which is to say 'contemplatively', in a primal break-through. It was not practical reason and its activity which existed in the beginning but the gift that comes from grace. This is the insight which Fichte, transcending Kant and his own titanism, struggled successfully to achieve. The 'destiny' (*Bestimmung*) of man really is his 'being-determined' (*Be-stimmung*), and it is precisely here that the mystery of freedom has its primal seat. And so the Christian faith unveils the metaphysical dimension—without being identified with it. But it is impossible that this determination as the act of the living God should not at the same time reveal the metaphysical dimension. It is the Christian mystery between 'contemplation' and 'action', or rather between being absolutely determined by God and the absolute appropriation of our own nature in freedom, which decisively illuminates the horizon of Being and of humanity who live within it. This fundamental metaphysical mystery can be perceived only within the Ontological Difference, because in the systems of identity the ('perfect') man necessarily coincides with the 'will of God'. Fichte glimpses the mystery for which he allows a place between primal life (*Ur-Leben*) and the Self. Heidegger sees it too in his own way, which approaches the philosophy of Zen. But for the Christian it is even more luminous, for in the 'Holy Spirit' he can through self-denial open up his own will to that of God. It was towards this passivity, which is the basis for all forms of active appropriation of our own destiny, that the entire 'metaphysics of the saints' was orientated; in their openness the great 'fools' were wiser than the teachers of wisdom, with their closed minds. Christianity casts a mercilessly clear and sober light upon this most inward point; it demands not only detachment from all that is (as did the Stoa), but also detachment from Being from which the primal words and the primal commands spring; and fresh forms of detachment are always needed since God remains free to alter, to develop, to apply and to deepen old commands anew in an unexpected, unhoped-for and unforeseen way. All the maturity of self-appropriation retains here its fertile womb. Whoever does not wish to root himself in detachment is already cut down and desiccated. This fundamental mystery of existence exposes the character of Christian existence. This is the meaning of Christ's command to leave all and to hate all. There is no 'world-task' of man, in particular of 'modern man', which has the right to uproot him from this ground or demand that he give it up. There is no form of worldly wealth which removes from him his poverty in Being. There is no kind of mastery over Nature which belongs to his destiny, that may or can tear him away from the glory in which alone he finds the measure of beauty without losing sight of himself in the context of the whole.

The encompassing glory gives the Christian a freedom with regard to the beauty of the world. In so far as the encounter with the brother (and with him with the whole surrounding world as it is) takes place in the light of eternal love, guilt and wrongfulness have a quite different appearance for him (that is as *sin*) than they have for someone who has *a priori* balanced all things out aesthetically in a rhythmic law of beauty. For the Christian, it is impossible to view sin in any way other than against the background of the eternal love which dies for it. This is sobering; it breaks the wings of the 'cosmogonic eros', but also those of the 'phenomenology of the Spirit' in which guilt is at most compensated for by fate but sin is never eliminated (*aufheben*). Since sin is visible only for the eye of love, it is only in the gaze of this eye that it can be drawn through the act of love into the glory of love which comprehends all things. Translating this greater glory into the terms of the laws of a beauty of this world can be a sign of blindness to value (and to its lack). In this way the καλόν is transposed by the Christian mystery—precisely because of its recognition of the metaphysical dimension—into the ultimate sphere which is its due; and is thereby fulfilled in so far as its true premisses are uncovered, and it is negated in so far as its finite aspects emerge, in which it expels from itself what is unlovely. But this, in the Christian approach, becomes precisely the place chosen for the manifestation of the all-encompassing glory of love. We shall return to this theme in our final volume.

It is from this point of view that the responsibility for developing a comprehensive and contemporary metaphysics falls to the Christian. This task seems to be made more difficult by the fact that the form of modern life is clearly influenced by the onesidedness of a metaphysics which has forgotten Being (with which the Christians too have collaborated, not without incurring blame). But it also appears to be made easier by virtue of the fact that this metaphysics has brought its hidden premisses out into the light of day during this, its final phase, and that the impoverishment of the times offers the responsibility and the opportunity to the Christians to yield to their own concept of poverty and thus authentically to develop the true glory from within it. Humanity today is struggling with the material world in order to master it. That is one part of their destiny, which by the ways of metaphysics is given an appearance of wholeness; through the logical materialisation of the concrete, through the removal of God from the classical vision of Being, through the titanic verticalisation of Spirit into the essence of world and also that of Being. Thus according to Hegel's logic, man himself becomes the slave of what he sought to master: matter and the machine. He frees himself from this antithesis and so finds his true destiny (as master of Nature) only by examining again the ground of this mastery, which certainly cannot be secured by unphilosophical theories of evolution (which want to encourage him to endure the present drudgery because things will improve at some later date), but only by a present act of elevation as ek-sistence within the Ontological Difference. In his consideration of the Difference, it becomes immediately clear to him that no possible evolution can surpass it nor even touch it, that no asymptotic approaches of the existent to Being are possible, and that thus no concept of human (individual or collective) wholeness can be constructed from the function of a mastery and domination of the world.[5] If this has been proven not to be the case by an authentic metaphysics, then at the same time the positive side also emerges, which is that of a greater horizon of freedom—in orientation to Being as a whole—and also that distance to his work is given to man without which it cannot ever become masterful. And it is only a distorted, that is partial, metaphysical perspective which prevents him from seeing this, in that it makes him believe that the classical contemplative vision of the θεῖον within the order of the universe was only possible because it was an ontic rather than a transcendental orientation to existence; and for the latter precisely the subhuman is nothing other than a component element within man himself who thereby, in knowing Nature and controlling it, in essence only knows and controls himself. But if man who exists is not Being itself (or indeed God), then it remains no less worthy of wonder for him than it was for the Greeks that this whole reality of Nature was given to him as a prior basis (for he was not himself there, as God tells Job), and so there is no reason why the harmonious laws of Nature into which he has gained a much more profound insight should not make existence as a whole yet more theophanous for him. It is therefore a superficial reasoning which seeks to make the transition from a natural culture (of farmers and shepherds) to a technical one responsible for the fundamental loss of piety. The former possessed a horizon of Being which was restricted to the surrounding world of Nature, which today has to be broadened to its true—and in man infinitely widened—dimensions.

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[5] *Cf.* my *Das Ganze im Fragment* (1963).

And so what we are truly concerned with here is a new integration in which Christians must lead the way, an integration of the service of the world into the all-embracing openness of man to Being. 'Service' would mean the responsibility for a destiny whose dimensions lie with Being, which disposes and determines. 'You cannot serve two masters', and so one of them, the service of the world, must take its measure from the other, which itself has no measure (being 'indifferent'). For a man can give himself fully only once. But his gift of self is a response, to the one who is the ground of his being-permitted-to-be; to him who ultimately wants from man not things and objects but his very self. *Fili, praebe mihi cor tuum.* However perfect things may be, man will never improve his heart through them; the world will only be filled with love by making ultimate decisions for love, and never through the ameliorations of technology. Only within the Ontological Difference does the irreducible mystery of fullness and nothingness emerge, as we have seen, and thus an uneliminable *use-lessness* (*Vergeblichkeit*) of all (human) existence, which can experience the *gratuité* of absolute Being only when it has made this *vanité* of its own. It is use-less (*vergeblich*), and so it can be forgiven (*so kann es ihm vergeben werden*), and so forgiveness is possible (*es kann vergeben werden*). And only then can it too speak with the absolute word: 'As we forgive those . . .'

All this will, of course, prove a hard test for Christians; if they want to be the teachers of our times, then they must learn to read the signs of our times. This age cannot be purified by fire if Christians are not ready to allow themselves to be tested in the same fire to see whether they are made of gold or of potash, whether their hearts and their work are of 'gold, silver and precious stones' or of 'wood, hay and straw' (1 Cor 3, 13). This is the ultimate truth: that Christians, as guardians of a metaphysics of the whole person in an age which has forgotten both Being and God, are entrusted with the weighty responsibility of leading this metaphysics of wholeness through that same fire. But metaphysics is not a ware which can be bought and sold ready-made: we must ourselves think. And if the Christian is brought by Christ to a place of ultimate and profound decision ('Whoever is not for me, is against me'), then as a serious thinker he is brought to the same point of decision, for there is no 'neutral' metaphysics. Either one sees the mystery of the ultimate oscillation or one does not, and becomes blind. It is in no way a question of facilitating or sparing oneself thought on the basis of a theology that one already knows, and then of juggling with systems *ab extra*. This has often been the view of Christians, who have donned and stripped off metaphysics like a form of outer clothing; and this has been the cause of part of the historical tragedy. But Christians cannot divide their decision any more than they can their gift of self: *as* Christians they are always human beings and thus entities who are determined by the metaphysical act. They can only adequately answer God's universal engagement with the world in the love of Jesus Christ for them by lending their own love, in the *concretissimum* of the encounter with their brother, that universal breadth of Being which—consciously or not, explicitly or not—the metaphysical act possesses and is. If they are called to be the guardians of thought, then they will note the extent to which pre-Christian thought in all its complexity preserved an advent-like openness of the coming of something greater than itself by which it could be determined, and how much post-Christian thought, whether it will or not, has been determined by that which is greater than itself. The Christian sees this but does not become arrogant. As a man among men, he is involved with the destiny of all. It would give rise to a false idea which would be difficult to dispel if we were to say that the metaphysician can only 'ask questions' of Being whereas the Christian brings ready-made answers from revelation, which surpass the act of thinking and destroy it from within. For neither did Aristotle mean that philosophical thought is merely a form of questioning—thought is certainly a form of knowledge, even if it is one which is 'above science'—nor does the Bible primarily exist in order to toss ready answers down to ascending thought. But the way in which Jesus Christ lives in openness towards the Father and in this openness shows both the supreme exposure of the love of God and the supreme decision of man for God, can cause the metaphysician to ask himself whether he already thinks and enquires sufficiently openly, or whether perhaps he has come too quickly to an end. It is in this sense that the Christian is called to be the guardian of metaphysics in our time.

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Hans Urs von Balthasar

THE GLORY OF THE LORD:
A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

By Hans Urs von Balthasar

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HANS URS VON BALTHASAR

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INTRODUCTION

1. Transition to the Concluding Theme

With this concluding volume, in three parts, we arrive at the place towards which the whole work has been tending: to the theology of the glory of the living God, who 'in many and various ways spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets' and 'in these last days speaks to us by the Son, . . . the splendour of his glory and the very stamp of his nature' (Heb 1.1ff.). The present volume, therefore, looks back directly to the first volume which, by way of introduction, outlined a theological aesthetics as an *aisthēsis*—a 'beholding' of the glory that reveals itself. From the outset we insisted on the preliminary character of that first volume, because the theological act is shaped by its content, to which it attains only in an act of transcendence. This transcending occurs not only in the general philosophical sense that applies to every form of knowing, but in the specifically theological sense according to which every act of 'beholding' the living God presupposes a 'transport' of the creature beyond itself and its natural cognitive faculties. For the creature such transport bears the name of 'grace', which enables the creature to withstand the splendour of the Lord's glory as he reveals himself to it.

If, in place of 'the Lord's glory' we were to say 'God's divinity', then it would be evident that nothing can be the formal object of the believer's perception of revelation except God, *in so far* as he is *God* and not, for instance, in so far as he is the horizon of the world's origin and goal, since in this respect God is the object of philosophy or 'natural theology'.[1] It becomes evident, therefore, that in spite of the fact that even though God uses creaturely guises to speak and act throughout Holy Scripture, what is essentially at stake is solely men and women's encounter with the divinity or glory of God. In this respect we can agree with Oetinger when he says: 'God's glory constitutes not only the chief content, but also the formal foundational character of Scripture.'[2] This glory (*Herrlichkeit*) of God's—his sublimeness (*Hehrsein*) and lordliness (*Herrsein*), which are sovereignly active both in himself and in his self-disclosure—is (on the basis of all the analogies of being that doubtless exist between God and his creatures, and also on the basis of the many ways in which grace trains the creature to be capable of confronting this glory at all) precisely what constitutes the distinctive property of God, that which for all eternity distinguishes him from all that is not God; this is his 'wholly-otherness', which he can communicate only in such a way that, even as it is communicated, it remains his and only his: ἀμεθέκτως μετέχεται.[3] In a biblical sense this means that, the deeper a creature is allowed to encounter God's glory, the more this creature will long to extol this glory as being exalted over itself and over all creation. Such is Mary in her Magnificat. The deeper a creature is allowed to penetrate into God's opened realm, the more it will understand grace to be grace. And the more deeply it attains to a real, cognizant understanding of God's divineness, the more clearly does it realise that God's love transcends all comprehension: γνῶναι τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην—'to know the love which surpasses knowledge' (Eph 3.19). *Succumbat ergo humana infirmitas gloriae Dei et in explicandis operibus misericordiae ejus imparem se semper inveniat.*[4]

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[1] 'Ecclesia tenet et docet, Deum, rerum omnium *principium et finem*, naturae humanae rationis lumine *e rebus creatis* certo cognosci posse.' *Vatic. I*, ss III, c. 2 (*DS* 3004).

There is no dodging this paradox, which begins with the self-communication of the Wholly Other and ends with the thanksgiving of the creature that has been overtaken. If, under pretext that God's paradox is too steep for him and also too unfruitful because insoluble, a Christian were to turn away from it and seek his alleged salvation by turning exclusively to his fellow creatures (Christ's mission has, after all, directed him towards creatures!), such a Christian would, for himself, have already stepped outside the proper sphere of revelation. A Christian encounters his neighbour in a Christian sense only when he has experienced in the 'fear of God' something of the wholly-other measure of the love of the Lord God and then attempts to love his neighbour with all humility according to this unattainable measure. Relations among human beings are as such already established upon the 'dialogical' level, since men and women commune with each other in virtue of their common nature.

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[2] *Theosophie*, ed. C. A. Auberlen (1847), p. 333. Obviously this does not commit us to Oetinger's particular understanding of God's glory. *Cf.* also Robert Minder, *'Herrlichkeit' chez Hegel et le monde des Pères souabes* (*Etudes Germaniques* 6, 1951), pp. 275–290.

[3] Proclus, *Stoicheiōsis Theologikē*, 23f.

[4] Leo, *Sermo 11 de passione Domini*, c. 1 (PL 54, 549C–550A).

God's relationship to the world, however, can presuppose no such prior communion, for even the created world, in its non-necessariness, points back to an abyss of free and sovereign lordliness. Any philosophy which would not, or would no longer, press on to this experience would rightly fall victim to the criticism of Karl Barth. If God speaks his word to created men and women, surely it is because he has given them an understanding which, with God's grace, can achieve the act of hearing and comprehending. But if it is really *God's* word and self-communication that they are to hear and understand, then this can surely not occur on the basis of a neutral foreknowledge about what 'words' mean or what 'truth' is. Such encounter with God cannot take place on a dialogical plane which has been opened in advance; it can occur only by virtue of a primary sense of being overawed by the undialogical presupposition of the dialogue that has started, namely, the divinity or glory of God. If this shock did not take place then the whole conversation would rest on a foundation of untruth. In so far as God sends forth his word in omnipotence, this word has the power to take to itself and keep the person whom it has struck: his creatureliness quakes to its foundation and, so threatened, he would like to flee from the spot with closed eyes. But the word has the power to bring him to give the answer required by obedience. However, the first impact of divinity can never be spared him, a shock which will then penetrate and affect all succeeding speeches and replies. One may become God's familiar, but one can never get used to him. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom', but also: 'to fear the Lord is wisdom's full measure' and its 'crown' (Sir 1.14, 16, 18). This is why it will not do to delimit the object of theology with the concept of 'mysteries', as if formally it consisted of 'truths' that lie beyond the ken of the human mind and must therefore be believed, in order then to be understood in some measure as 'a magnificent order, a higher heavenly world . . ., a masterpiece of God's many-splendoured wisdom.'[5] What is at stake here is not primarily truths, but the living God in his glory; he himself is all truth, and he suffices.

It is significant that at decisive places in Scripture God's 'glory' (*kabod*) manifests itself *before* God's word is heard. This is the case with the great epiphany on Sinai, the vision in the burning bush, the visions through which Isaiah and Ezekiel received their vocations, the visions on Tabor and at Damascus, and finally the apparition of the Son of Man at the beginning of the Apocalypse. The fact that God's glory at first appears without any words makes clear whence it is that it comes and the consequent paths that God's word will have to take. Such glory without words is, in effect, the apparition of him who, in his utter differentness, must be perceived in his reality and truth before his address can be heard. Concerning the word, man always thinks he has a certain foreknowledge of it deriving from the dialogical sphere. But, when confronted by the appearance of God's glory, 'Moses falls to his knees and bows his face toward the earth' (Ex 34.8), Elijah veils his face (1 Kg 19.13), Isaiah considers himself lost (Is 6.5), Ezekiel falls with his face to the ground (Ez 1.28), Daniel is oppressed in spirit (7.15) and sinks in a swoon with his face to the earth (10.9), the Apostles on Tabor are 'beside themselves' (Mk 9.6), 'drowsy' (Lk 9.32), in great fear (Mt 17.6) at the sight of it; Paul is thrown to the ground and blinded (Acts 9.4, 9), and John falls as if dead at the feet of the appearing Lord (Rev 1.17). The creature experiences its limit and in its finitude undergoes a death; hence the saying that traverses Scripture: a man cannot see

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[5] Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, I (1873), p. 25. *Cf.* volume I, pp. 98–110.

God and remain alive (Ex 19.21; 33.20; Lev 16.2; Num 4.20; Jg 6.22; Is 6.5). But when it does occur, the event is greeted with almost unbelieving amazement (Gen 32.31; Dt 5.24) as a unique grace (Ex 24.10f.; Num 12.7f.; Dt 34.10). From his death man is put back on his feet by the spirit of God himself (Ez 2.2); man encounters God's word not in his own power but through the power of God's grace. The biblical scenes we have enumerated show only by way of example what applies to every hearer of God's word: he perceives God by being transported outside of himself; he hears and grasps God in God and through God. Whatever happens in the sphere of the revelation of the living God takes place in an arena which has been opened by God and has been made accessible to man beyond any claims of his mere 'nature.' Only where God wills to take up his habitation with the chosen people—only in a place that belongs to God, therefore—does a covenant relationship become possible, an existence according to God's instructions (*torah*), a holiness within the space of God's own holiness. And, in the great exemplary lives, the investiture with a mission follows in each case immediately on the vision of God's glory: Moses, Elijah, the biblical Prophets and Paul are men that have been expropriated as a result of their visions; they are men who have been conscripted for total obedience, instruments of God's word and action. In a secondary sense, as we shall see, even the whole liturgical and sacral institutions of the priestly writings can be traced back to the epiphany of the glory on Horeb; but, precisely by virtue of this institution, which perennially represents the reality of the Covenant, Israel can live as the people that has been chosen by God from among all other peoples and been led beyond itself and introduced into the sphere of God.

Even before man is addressed, however, or before any grace, promise or demand is granted him, the appearance of the absolute Subject is never abstract or without a relationship to the human party or parties involved. The glory of the God who disclosed himself always reveals his holiness as well (however we may wish to define it), and thus it also discloses the full unholiness of the person beholding the glory: 'Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips' (Is 6.5). 'When Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord"' (Lk 5.8). For Paul the voice comes out immediately from the blinding light: 'Why do you persecute me? It hurts you to kick against the goads' (Acts 26.14). Ezekiel sees the glory already in the colours of judgment, and Daniel likewise (Dan 7.9f.), and the glorified Son of Man seen by John also has the figure of a judge (Rev 1.13–16). It is not possible to enjoy a reposeful aesthetic contemplation of the divine glory, a contemplation that would consider God 'in himself' and thus could dispense with the opposition between God's holiness and the unholiness of the world, of which the contemplator is the mathematical exponent, as it were. Glory is the intruding lordliness of him who comes to confront the world, both judging it and gracing it. It is this that distinguishes the biblical reality from the epiphanies of gods outside the Bible.

2. *The Themes of Biblical Aesthetics*

If our thinking is to be obedient to biblical revelation, we will in no way attempt to detach the theme of glory from the context of revelation for the sake of which we are studying the theme in the first place; and, in any event, this is a context which, in all its phases and aspects, is coloured by the emerging glory of the Lord. Other themes that suggest themselves simultaneously with and subsequently to the theme of glory (and we will have to discuss these also) can in no way be isolated from this glory, to be dealt with elsewhere. This applies even to themes that occupy a relatively autonomous sphere. No theme of revelation can be isolated from the field of theological aesthetics. And if other Old Testament themes at first appear to enjoy a certain independence alongside the theme of glory (for instance, the theme of creation, life in the world, man, and, further, the theme of the erecting of a valid order between God and creature, starting on God's initiative), even then these sets of themes can never, for the biblical thinker, become distanced from the realm of God's lordship (*Herrschaft*) or, thus, from

God's glory (*Herrlichkeit*). Indeed, the historical development of revelation shows all these themes to be more and more tightly intertwined, to the point of becoming inextricable.

A second theme of theological aesthetics would, therefore, be the theme of God's creaturely partner, who from the first pages of Scripture is referred to as his 'image and likeness'. Now, the theme of 'image' is obviously something new, different from the theme of 'glory'; nevertheless, the relationship between them is from the outset unmistakable. In the first place, it belongs to God's lordliness for him to be able to set an image of himself over against himself. In the second place, if this image is indeed to resemble its archetype, certain traits of glory must intrinsically be proper to it (Ps 8). And finally, the whole movement of revelation has it as its goal to make image and glory coincide in Jesus Christ. Thus, to the primal tension between 'splendour' and 'form'[6] proper to an inner-worldly aesthetics there corresponds at the highest biblical level a tension between the 'formless' (Dt 4.12) glory and its well-formed image. This latter image in the end so greatly becomes the vessel of divinity that it can have 'the whole fullness' of the God who is above all forms dwell 'corporeally' in itself, all the while expressing it (Col 2.9). The fundamental question of aesthetics—that concerning measure and measureless—will have to be clarified here in an archetypal manner.

A third group of themes concerns the work that God has willed to set up between himself and his image: this is the whole realm delimited by concepts such as grace, covenant and justification. From the glory on Sinai there immediately issue the 'Ten Words' (Dt 4.13; 5.22) that as such are a most exalted grace. For these words are the proclamation of the charter that makes it possible for the people to dwell in God's realm and for God to dwell in the people's realm. They are an instruction of how human life must be shaped to be considered 'righteous' and 'godly' in God's sense and to be found acceptable and permissible by God—and this beyond the abyss that divides divine standards and claims from inner-worldly and even sinful ones. But there is a final mystery of biblical revelation which will also have to be the final question of a theological aesthetics: this is the question of how it is possible that the transitory and constantly failing order of mortal existence is able to perdure in the face of the absolute and unmovable order, the question of what course things must take so that God's apparently necessary and extreme indulgence and condescension—whereby what is crooked in man is actually *considered* straight and a righteousness valid before God is imputed to the unrighteous man—will coincide with *real* ontological righteousness. Only the New Covenant will be able to shed full light on precisely this group of questions, since it is in the New Testament that God's Image becomes one with God's Word and that, therefore, God's Image itself becomes the subsisting Covenant (Heb 9.14f.) and thus also subsisting grace (2 Cor 8.9) and divine justice (1 Cor 1.30). But the question emerges in God's design from the outset, and receives a profound development already in the history of the Old Covenant.

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[6] *Cf.* volume I, p. 18; III/1, p. 276ff., 706ff.

These three themes and their elaboration, however, still do not bring the decisive factor into full view. To stop here would perhaps mean to have not finally gone beyond the realm of mythical analogies to the glory of God in the Bible. When together with God's glory there appears his holiness and sinful man falls to the ground, only then does the contradiction between light and darkness, holiness and sin, come into full view, and the *drama* is begun which—beyond all mythical parallels of deities wrestling with the forces of the abyss—is to lead to the reconciliation and redemption of the world. The outward defeat of God's enemies, which for a very long time ancient Israel also counted on, was seen to accomplish nothing where the most interior spiritual oppositions are concerned. No glory of the gods has as its opposite what is called 'sin' in the biblical sense; and only the glory of the living God, which lacks all analogies, can, by its 'wildly strange and astounding works' (Is 28.21), put an end to that darkness which at first appeared to set a limit to the extent of the lordship of God's glory. And it is above all in the time of classical prophecy and in the melting pot of the

Exile, that Israel will, through its experience of suffering, become aware of this interior and hidden drama, so deeply aware of it, in fact, that it already reaches the threshold of the New Covenant with regard to the content of its faith.

To develop all of this with equal thoroughness would mean constructing a complete theology of the Old and New Testaments, something impossible within the limits of this work. The concept of glory will remain to the fore, therefore, and the other two areas will be considered and presented from this perspective. Even in this, however, no critical study concerning the meaning and development of the concept of *kabod* is intended, but rather a look at the reality to which this word points in the Old Testament, and this reality is not limited to the actual occurrence of the word (and certainly not to its sense in the priestly writings). The same thing is intensely discussed already by J and E, and much later, when the Septuagint translates *kabod* as δόξα, it will retain the much richer content of its meaning. The New Testament will further multiply the forms of expression for 'glory'. But already the Old Testament transformations of *kabod* and δόξα are so rich and problematic that by studying them we will be able to discern the great articulations of the history of revelation.

3. Glory as Constant Biblical Theme

The transformation in the idea of divine glory, which runs from the Pentateuch right through to the Johannine writings, is remarkably great, and yet the intermediate steps are so interconnected and they so clearly point to one another that in their very variety these phases constitute a whole, the parts of which support and substantiate one another. If one were to take the epiphany on Sinai only in itself, in the face of the various versions one would be tempted to regard the whole phenomenon as a contradictory composition which it would be best to dissect into heterogeneous images of mythical theophanies; by themselves, however, these images would scarcely allow us to glimpse what really occurred on the Mountain of God—and this is even supposing that something did in the first place occur which can be experienced as a theophany. But then we do have the return of Elijah to Horeb and the mysterious theophany which presents itself to us both as an opposition and a continuance of that first happening and to which we cannot deny an historical core. Both events, in turn, are presupposed as the background of that occurrence which the Apostles report as being Christ's transfiguration on Tabor, and they report it in a way that we can hardly dismiss as a mere theological arrangement: the luminous splendour and the cloud are seen again (as they will be also at the Ascension), and the voice that resounds from the cloud is also heard. Moses and Elijah are speaking with the Lord about his final mission and about the sealing of the covenant with his Passion. And precisely at the climax of the Passion the sun is darkened and the earth quakes, and we are confronted anew with the divine darkness that had been experienced when the covenant had been entered into on God's mountain in the desert. The prophets' visions of glory somehow begin without a previous tradition; this is true of Micah ben Imla and especially of Isaiah. Already in Ezekiel, however, and even more so in Habakkuk, there are unmistakable retrospective references not only to the experience of Isaiah, but also to the theophanies of the Pentateuch and, strange to tell, even to the divine glory which was supposed to have manifested itself at the construction of Solomon's temple (corresponding precisely to the portrayal of the Exodus in P) and which so many would like to dismiss as being no more than literary ornamentation. New ground is again broken in the seventh chapter of Daniel, which doubtless has an authentic vision as its basis; from here direct paths lead both the visions of Stephen and of Paul, at Damascus, and to the apparitions in the Apocalypse. Before the Sanhedrin, moreover, Jesus himself refers to the glory seen by Daniel and lays claim to it himself. Another line, which presupposes both the Exodus and the vision of Isaiah, leads, partly already in Ezekiel and more markedly in Deutero-Isaiah and post-exilic prophecy, to the eschatological expectation of God's glory, and this is likewise taken up by Jesus and understood in the writings of the Apostles as being the hope of the Church. The reposing of God's glory over the tent, and apparently also over the temple at the feast of its consecration, becomes an occasion for the Psalms to speak of the fact that this glory can be seen starting from Zion and then spreading out over the whole earth (this is also stressed in Isaiah's vision), and indeed over the entire cosmos (Ps 19.1). The Psalms and the Prophets, moreover, develop a whole hymnic world of theophanic images which stands at the disposal of all prayer glorifying God; this hymnic world enriches the received facts and quite spontaneously considers God to be manifest both to man's spirit and to his senses. The wisdom literature, to say nothing of the apocryphal apocalypses, affirms this manifestness of God's glory both in nature and in history, and Paul attests to it both in his letters (Rom 1.18–21) and his discourses (Acts 17). Then, too, Paul refers directly in 2 Cor 3 to the resplendent countenance of Moses, which reflected the splendour of God's glory (Ex 34.29f.), and he uses this reference to explain the proximity and distance between the two Testaments and the nature of Christian existence. When Stephen, as he lay dying, saw 'the glory of God and Jesus at God's right hand' (Acts 7.55), he did not in his discourse refrain from transposing the appearance of the 'God of glory' all the way back to the stories of the Patriarchs, so that even Abraham experienced it (Acts 7.2). In the Apocalypse, finally, nearly all utterances concerning glory in both the Old and the New Testament come together and, in this confluence, they exhibit the interior unity of their variety.

If, out of this confusingly variegated panorama, we were to isolate the one thing at which all else aims, then surely we would turn to the prologue of John's Gospel. What the Old Testament experienced and described as God's glory in an endless series of forays and always both in a spiritual and a sensory way—that reality attained its definitive form in the Incarnation of the Word: 'We have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth' (Jn 1.14). John understands this glory as entailing the fulfilled 'truth' of the 'image' and the fulfilled 'grace' of the 'covenant', and in the end he is able to behold God's glory in the unity of the cross and the resurrection. The depth of this vision thus makes John's theology to be the last word of the Bible, and in John's vision the *tension* between the present contemplation of God's glory and the eschatological hope of it even emerges as the Christian's penultimate experience.

4. Conclusion [III/2, Part 3]

The biblical themes will constitute the first two parts of the concluding volume. But biblical theology naturally develops into ecclesial theology, which at the present moment in history must be taken and presented in all its ecumenical breadth, comprising the Orthodox Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Evangelical Churches. Many aspects of this ecclesial theology have already been sketched by anticipation in the earlier volumes; the results must now be brought together in the concluding synthesis.

This summary takes shape almost of itself. The *first volume* especially makes a direct and natural transition to the present volume, particularly since in the section concerning the 'objective evidence' that first volume already had to deal with issues which will now be developed. The fact *that* God's glory is beheld could not be established without an advance glance at *what* it is. *Volume II* then took up the theological and historical demonstration of the full import borne by the aesthetic viewpoint in Christian theology; this it did by examining in the course of history twelve systems of thought which are particularly well-contoured in a theological sense and which have mostly been very decisive in theological history. But that second volume had promised to demonstrate later on how it is that these very different systems may be interpreted and justified from one common centre. Only biblical theology can and must necessarily become the standard by which to judge the whole range of the historical developments in question, and by using this standard we can see that not all these systems have remained in equal proximity to the source, and that not all of them have

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This part was abandoned by the author and so never appeared (Ed's note).

portrayed the innermost concerns of biblical theology with equal success. We will carefully have to keep, however, from regarding the theology which is contained in revelation as a (super-)system, following which we could construct other (infra-)systems according to rational methods. The glory of God's love in Jesus Christ remains the omnidimensional reality, and its utter transcendence of everything that can be known or systematised can itself be known only very dimly (Eph 3.18f.). For as Anselm says, *rationabiliter comprehendit incomprehensibile esse* (Monol 64). It is only the Holy Spirit who can expound, for the consciousness of the Church throughout all ages of history, the breadth and height, length and depth of the glory of God's love in Jesus Christ. It is quite possible that many forms of the theological interpretation of God's glory (think here of those of Denys or of Dante) spoke more directly to one age than to another; or it could be that theologies which were long thought to be defunct (such as Irenaeus') suddenly come to life again, while others (such as Augustine's, Anselm's, and Pascal's) provide a leaven for all ages.

Volume III/1 attempted to survey the mythical, philosophical and poetic experience and portrayal of 'glory' in the West both before and after the time of Christ. Here the connecting points to theology are numerous. This is so because, on the one hand, biblical revelation took root in the concrete historical terrain of human thought, feelings, and imagination, always using all these forms for its own expression. On the other hand, and according to this same revelation, from the outset there has existed a supernatural relationship between God and both the created world and man's spirit. Divine grace, predestined in Christ to be given to the whole world, is secretly at work in the whole sphere of history, and thus all myths, philosophies, and poetic creations are innately capable of housing within themselves an intimation of divine glory.

In three particular places in the Bible we see quite expressly how biblical revelation takes up or assumes pre-existent religious forms. We first of all see how in primitive biblical history (the religion of the Patriarchs) mythical forms of the encounter with God and of cultic worship are integrated into the history of revelation and are slowly penetrated and transformed by the Jewish understanding of revelation. This process continued until the Exile, since Israel's ever-recurring capitulation to the mythical world of Canaan and of the great surrounding cultures must be counteracted, and it is precisely this struggle with the myths that will permit new and genuine insights to emerge from the heart of revelation. Something analogous occurs, in the second place, with the 'Solomonic humanism' of the time of the kings. This humanism, reflected in Proverbs and other biblical books related to or dependent on it, borrows and grafts onto the Bible in scarcely modified form and with astounding nonchalance a 'wisdom of life' which had been spreading internationally between Egypt and Mesopotamia. In the third place we finally have the broad Hellenistic current of Greek thought which, already before Christ (in the Septuagint's late historical and sapiential books), had effected a fusion of Hebraic and Greek thought in various proportions. This fusion will then be everywhere detectible in the New Testament: we have only to think of the Letter to the Hebrews and its literary dependency on Philo[7] and Platonic forms of thought.[8] Such an appropriation of historical forms of expression on the part of revelation is quite natural; if it had not taken place then revelation would have to become suspect either of not having become historical at all or, in case it had, of having been but one form of the historical utterance of human experience among others. The characteristic of revelation in all its phases, however, is that the 'mythical' (and, analogously, the 'philosophical' and 'religious') forms of its ever more restrictive and definitive content are utterly denuded, and that it is only after going through such a 'death' that these forms become a suitable expressive means for the revelation of the living God. As an example of this we could take the story of Abraham in its great theological articulations. In other cases the Yahweh-religion launches from its midst, by way of a directly

[7] C. Spicq, *L'Epître aux Hébreux*, I (1952).

[8] F. J. Schierse, *Verheissung und Vollendung: Zur theologischen Grundfrage des Hebräerbriefes* (1955).

challenging counterstroke against myth, a theological principle that not only totally demolishes the myth but which—almost as a byproduct—overtakes it and incorporates it. Such is the case when Hosea outstrips the mythical sexuality of Canaan's 'marriages of the gods' with the revelation of a totally non-sexual and yet wholly incarnate relationship between Yahweh as husband and Israel as bride; such is also the case when Ezekiel uses images from Babylonian myths in his great hymns of indictment concerning Tyre and Egypt. This will in due time open the way for the Christian 'application' (χρῆσις) of the mythical world of the Greeks by the Church Fathers and by later Christian humanism. The provisionality of myth must allow itself to be judged by the finality of the Gospel, so that in this finality the world of myth may attain to its rightful rank and expressive value. Possible cross-connections between Greek epic and tragedy or Vergil with the Old Testament will be judged correspondingly, and in this the Old Testament itself will ever anew receive the final rank that belongs to it. Something similar holds for philosophy which, in its pre-cursoriness to revelation, must allow itself to be irradiated so as to exhibit the degree of its readiness to be penetrated by the ultimate mystery of the epiphany of glory. Thus, the tragedians, Plato, and Plotinus were questioned concerning their transparency. When later on the 'sphere of metaphysics' becomes Christian, the problem of the 'discernment of spirits' continually emerges—of discernment between the penultimate ('philosophical' or 'poetic') standard of judgment and the definitive biblical criterion, which comes to the fore only in this concluding volume. To us it seems that the real tragedy of intellectual history, from the Middle Ages to modern times, has lain in the secret struggle over this ultimate criterion ('Metaphysics of the Saints', 'Holy Fools and Glory', and the two paths of the 'Ancient Mediation' and the 'Metaphysics of the Spirit'). Finally, if it has been demanded of Christians that they should be the 'guardians of glory', this becomes possible only by a constantly renewed descent to the very heart of what in the Bible constitutes the glory of the incarnate God, who ever anew bestows the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And this must suffice by way of summary of the earlier volumes.

Biblical theology concludes by opening out into an ecclesial (ecumenical) theology. But as theoretical theology it has a foreground—the liturgy—and also a postlude—(Christian) art.

a. *Liturgy* grows directly out of the innermost substance of scriptural revelation, in so far as God's demonstration of his glory is always necessarily answered by the glorification (doxology) of God. Indeed in the Bible it is impossible to distinguish adequately between the two spheres of God's word and man's answer. This applies not only to the 'praise of the lips' in psalm and hymn but also to the whole area of sacrificial liturgy, which P expressly derives from divine revelation and as such is regarded as the word of God enacted by men. In the liturgy of the New Testament—the Eucharist—God's gift to man and man's return of the gift to God become even more inseparable. Around this Eucharist the churches develop an extended liturgy of psalms and hymns, and into it are absorbed the sacrifices of the Old Testament. Glory in the biblical sense is perfected in the reciprocity of God's giving of himself to man and believing man's praising acceptance of this gift.

For this reason no Christian church can regard its cultic liturgy in isolation from the liturgy of an existence in faith which, as it actualises what it understands itself to be, knows that it is an existence established, first, upon the mystery of the Father's hidden will-to-salvation. Second, the Christian's existence in faith is established upon the 'dimension of God's grace and love for everything which is to come about', a dimension already contained in the mystery of the Father's will and which is opened up by the presence of his incarnate Son on the Cross. And, third, that believing existence is established upon the Christian's admission through baptism into this realm of God's grace, even as he recognises the Christian truth that may now become a living reality in his grace-filled existence. Paul can thus define this existence as order εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης, that is, an existence 'unto the glorification of his glory' (Eph 1.14): 'Admitted into this mystery [of God's will] by the very definition of what we *are*, we experience the mystery in the forgiveness of sins even as it becomes luminous to us in *gnosis*. Thus, it is from what we are and from what we experience that we bear the splendour of God's mystery in ourselves, and praise God by means of what his benediction has made us to be' (H. Schlier).[9] Exemplary *sanctity* in the Church has always been understood in the light of this definition of a liturgy of life, not in the sense that sanctity has been subjectively understood to be the extended splendour of the *kabod-Yahweh* in the saints (only Paul once came close to this as he discussed the existence *of the Church* as such in 2 Cor 3), but in the sense that all of the Christian's existence now lives away from itself and thinks exclusively in terms of an obedient recognition of God's glory alone. 'To do everything with a mind to God means to have eyes only for God, to be always looking at God. The lover beholds the beloved uninterruptedly, thinks only of him and is wholly turned towards him. All his thinking, speaking, and acting occur only in connection with him . . . O my God, I offer Thee all the moments of my life for Thy greater glorification, as a sacrifice to Thine honour, in order to be obedient to Thy will for the redemption of many . . .' (Charles de Foucauld).[10] Ecclesial liturgy, therefore, always connotes and includes the living liturgy of the individual Christian's existence: it presupposes it and effects it ever anew because in the innermost mystery of the Church as bride of Christ both spheres coincide and have as their exclusive meaning the 'glorification of God's glory'.

b. *Ecclesial theology* will always find its centre here again after all other particular considerations. But for this it does not suffice that the principle of *Soli Deo Gloria* be formally commemorated at the beginning and at the end as in most standard theologies, to be wholly forgotten in the interim. Such theology does indeed conventionally affirm that God could create the world only for his own glorification; but this statement can be understood without scandal only if, in the course of the total theological development of God's saving action, one is enlightened as to what this glorification actually consists of.[11] This same theology likewise promises us an eschatological kingdom of glory, with the 'contemplation of God's glory' in heaven and a participation in it through the 'transfiguration' even of the material world at the resurrection of the body. No objection can be made to this either, as long as it becomes clear that this final irruption of God's glory is but the conclusion of his self-glorification throughout the whole course of salvation-history; and only from the perspective of salvation-history can eschatological glory be understood—but then really understood—as the manifestation of the fact that God's glory is its own origin and its own reason-for-being. This is already made clear by the whole span of the Old Testament, and even more so by its transcendence in Jesus Christ.

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[9] *Der Brief an die Epheser* (1957), p. 74.

[10] *Schriften* (Benziger, 1961), pp. 191, 229.

Instead of elaborating a systematic dogmatics with its various propositions under the heading of 'glory', it seemed to us more fruitful to show the central position held by the concept of glory by developing an *ecumenical dogmatics*: this presumes, however, that the dogmatics of the Orthodox, Evangelical, and Catholic churches in each case has its centre in the concept of the *Gloria Dei* and that, consequently, a fruitful dialogue among these churches can be conducted only starting from this common centre. In this dialogue the total ecumenical understanding of the *Gloria Dei* will be able both to uncover the one-sided emphases and limitations of a particular dogmatics and to lead to a reciprocally beneficial interpenetration of viewpoints. The fact that Catholic dogmatics exhibits a sort of 'projection' over the other two dogmatics will have to be pondered precisely in the light of our theme: this projection can be accounted for by the fact that it conveys to us a decisive and final deepening of faith's understanding of God's glory.

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[11] The distinctions with which scholastic theology analyses the concept of glory are as follows. On the one hand, we have the *gloria fundamentalis* or *objectiva* (the object itself, that is, the worth of the being that is praised) and *formalis* (the glory itself). On the other hand, we have the *gloria intrinseca* (which the praiseworthy being ascribes to itself in its knowledge of its own worth) and *extrinseca* (the glory given it by others). From this we see that Scholasticism quite carelessly interprets the biblical *kabod* with the pagan philosophical concept of *gloria* in the sense of honour, praise, fame, renown. Augustine borrows the definition from Cicero, who in the *De inventione* (II, 55) defines *gloria* as *frequens de aliquo fama cum laude* (see Augustine, *Contra Maximinum* II, 13; PL 42, 770; *In Jo. ev.* 100, 1; 105, 2; PL 35, 1891, 1905, etc.). In essence Thomas adopts Augustine's definition: *clara notitia cum laude* (Ia IIae 2, 3; *Contra Gen.* 3, 29, etc.). But all of this, for one thing, reduces the biblical *kabod* to the element of 'honour' or 'fame', and secondly the concept of 'glory' becomes univocally applicable to both God and creature, so that the theological principal nowhere emerges.

c. As a kind of postlude and somewhat by way of an appendix we will finally ask the question concerning the relationship between the theologically beautiful (glory/image/*charis*) and inner-worldly beauty as a question having particularly to do with *Christian art*. In so doing it will be wise once again to look back to the Bible, since it is there that the forms and branches of the artistic domain are in various ways made serviceable to revelation. According to P, artists were hired and especially endowed with the charism of the divine Spirit (Ex 35.31) so that they could produce the liturgical buildings and accoutrements; and the theme of the true temple traverses all eras of the Bible down to the Apocalypse. All available forms of poetry are taken up by the Prophets in order to proclaim God's word effectively, and music and the dance are not disdained. All of this will have to be kept in mind when the question is seriously posed and when we seek to give it a thorough answer—always, of course, maintaining critical distance and caution. One thing is certain, however, and this is that wherever God's free revelation intervenes in a human context, this context cannot be reduced to theoretical laws or practical rules in the manner of human science or technique.

For this reason, too, our whole attempt to restore to theology the third dimension of glory—alongside the dimensions of the true and the good—must itself remain a fragment, and at best it can serve as a stimulus to do new homage to the incomprehensible mystery of divine love.

I. GOD'S GLORY AND MAN

A. GLORY

1. DIALECTIC OF SENSORY MANIFESTATION

a. Appearance, kabod

How can revelation take place? How can the abyss and Ocean of all reality make itself knowable and perceivable to the 'drop in the bucket' and the 'speck of dust' (Is 40.15) that is man? How can the 'grass that withers' and the 'flower that fades' be touched by the 'word of our God, that will stand for ever' (Is 40.8)? To have an inkling of the divine, to adore it from afar, to learn to be silent before it and to allow it to hold sway: this may be granted to creatures at their very limits. Such an intimation appears to creatures to be revelation enough: on the shore of their finitude they discover the Wholly Other, and buffeted all about by the surge of its breakers creatures learn something like piety—a sense of awe before the undecipherable Meaning that pervades and directs even the apparent meaninglessness of their existence. They can also invent gods for themselves, cosmic or supra-cosmic beings that exhibit themselves majestic and free at a level where men stand in the grip of fate. They can elaborate for their gods qualities which they themselves would like to have, or qualities that they do have but would like to understand better. They put words in the mouths of their gods which correspond to their own dreams and longings; they ascribe to them deeds and powers that surpass their own, and they manifest their idea of the absolute in concrete gestures, prayers, and sacrifices by means of which they put themselves under the protection of their gods and participate in their praeternatural might.

But suppose that these pious attempts of humanity to penetrate into the region of the inscrutable are all pushed aside by a contrary movement whereby the Abyss and Ocean of all reality, on its own initiative, presses in upon humanity in order to disclose itself, in order to reveal itself as 'what' it 'is': if this *could* happen, how *would it have* to happen? Does not man immediately give to everything that approaches him as an infinite or absolute reality a limited form and a relativity which fixes it as the 'other pole' of a finite relationship, which is the only thing of which he is capable? Or can the Infinite—which, as Abyss and Ocean of all reality, must also be the fullness of omnipotence—bring about what is unthinkable for man and make itself known, in spite of everything, as what it 'is'?

Beings in the world possess the never wholly comprehensible power of appearing before one another and manifesting themselves, not only in their naked existence, but also in their potency, which casts a spell around itself, either to keep others away from the sphere of its own life or to keep them in its power. This is the richly ramifying biological substratum for related anthropological occurrences, which rise to the level of the spirit only by bringing along all their native biological potentiality. If it is true that each human being possesses a personal, free, and secret sphere, it is also true that this sphere is exhibited externally to various degrees, and defended. The expression 'prestige' (Latin *praestigiae*, actually meaning 'tricks' or 'illusions') is significant: there exists something like a magic or a legerdemain of the personality which attracts or holds at a distance, which is more vitalistic or more spiritualistic, a mysterious centre of forces in the person whose existence and effects cannot be denied and which, even before words and gestures come into play, shapes and orders the space around itself in a jointly biological and spiritual fashion. Both things about it must be affirmed at the same time—the aspect that pertains to life and that which pertains to the spirit. In order to have graphically before us this primal phenomenon of potency—which opposes every attempt to dissect it into a physical-sensory and a spiritual component—we have only to think of the forcefulness possible in a given look, which even someone turned away can feel on his back repeatedly, or the look with which a teacher can hold his class in check or a speaker can spellbind his audience.

Here we find access to what the Bible calls the *kabod* of God.[1] In the human realm *kabod* means the 'resplendent and thus appearing "weightiness" or might of a being'.[2] The root *kbd* initially connotes what is physically heavy or weighty, but then it can refer to everything which gives any living being, especially man, an external force or impetus (*gravitas*) that makes it appear imposing:[3] this can be exterior wealth such as Abraham possesses (Gen 13.2) and Jacob inherits from Laban (Gen 31.1), or the 'burden' of precious objects (Nah 2.9), but also the renown, fame, or honour that an individual (Job 19.9), an official (Gen 45.13), a king (Ps 21.6), or a people enjoys among others (Is 16.14; 21.16). Finally, it is not only the mysterious external radiance that is designated as *kabôd*, but also the 'radiant centre' of the person himself, his 'I' or 'self' in its stateliness for himself and for others (Gen 49.6), especially in prayers in which this 'self' is recommended to God for salvation (Ps 7.6; 16.9; 30.13; 57.9; 108.2).[4]

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[1] Bibliography for the *kabod-Yhwh* (on the relationship of *kabod* and *doxa*

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see below p. 52, note 3): A. von Gall, *Die Herrlichkeit Gottes* (1900). W. Caspari, *Studien zur Lehre von der Herrlichkeit Gottes* (Habilitationsschrift Erlangen, 1907). W. Caspari, *Die Bedeutung der Wortsippe KBD in Hebräischen* (1908). W. Lotz, 'Die Herrlichkeit Jahwes und das Gewitter', *NKZ* 19 (1908), pp. 854–871. J. Morgenstern, 'Biblical Theophanies', *Z. f. Assyr.* 25 (1911), pp. 139–193; 28 (1913/14), pp. 15–60. I. Abrahams, *The Glory of God: Three Lectures* (Oxford, 1925). R. Kraemer, 'Bausteine zum Begriff "Die Herrlichkeit Gottes"', in: *Festgabe für K. Müller* (Erlangen, 1933), pp. 7–38. H. Kittel, *Die Herrlichkeit Gottes: Studien zu Geschichte und Wesen eines neutestamentlichen Begriffes* (1934). G. von Rad, '*Kabôd* im Alten Testament', in: *ThWNT* II (1935), pp. 240–245. G. R. Berry, 'The Glory of Jahve and the Temple', *JBL* 56 (1937), pp. 115–117. K. Neuhaus, *Der Kebod Jahweh als Offenbarung* (Diss., Erlangen, 1936). B. Stein, *Der Begriff Kebod Jahweh und seine Bedeutung für die alttestamentliche Gotteserkenntnis* (1939). Jürg Jeremias, *Theophanie: Die Geschichte einer alttestamentlichen Gattung* (Wiss. Monogr. *ANT* 10, 1965, Lit). *Cf.* *RGG*^{2}, art. 'Herrlichkeit' (Hertzberg); *RGG*^{3}, art. 'Herrlichkeit Gottes' (Hesse, Fascher); *Bijblesch Woordenboek* (1934), art. 'Heerlijkeit' (P. van Imschoot); *LThK*^{2}, art. 'Doxa' (Schnackenburg); W. Eichrodt, *ThAT* II (1950^{3}), pp. 9–12; L. Koehler, *ThAT* (1936), pp. 110–112; Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik* II/1 (1940), pp. 685–764, esp. 725f.

[2] M. Buber, *Königtum Gottes* (1936^{2}), p. 234, note 17.

[3] *Cf.* Pindar, *Nemean Odes* 3, 40: 'Because of his innate glory (συγγενεῖ εὐδοξίᾳ) he is greatly imposing (μέγα βρίθει).' In later Greek we find the substantive βάρος in the sense of gravity or dignity.

[4] In these passages a change from *kabod* to *kabed* ('liver', that is, the 'interior' or 'soul' of man) can 'hardly be justified' (von Rad).

Can we then also speak analogously of a *kabod* on God's part, in so far as he, too, in an incomparable and yet comparable manner, manifests and engages his 'I' over against man, along with its own 'weightiness' and spell-binding preponderance? If this is the case, then the mightiness of this 'I', which is the Absolute, would at once assume the character of majesty, and its spellbinding power (which holds others simultaneously at a distance from and in close proximity to itself) would assume the character of lordliness and—to the extent that God's absoluteness is here made present—also the character of sublime glory. But let us consider that, even though a certain potency that is inseparably biological and spiritual-personal belongs to the human *kabod*, nevertheless God can in no way become submerged in the biological sphere (even if he does undertake an engagement of self in the sphere of the world that is analogous to man's potency among his fellows) in such a way that the biological sphere becomes for him the horizon for a natural utterance. With this we have described exactly the problematic situation that is posited by the *kabod-Yahweh* in the Old Testament. The theophanies, of which the most important takes place on Sinai, are intended to be understood as overwhelming events in which the living God becomes present. On the one hand, they occur in such a way that the sensory sphere that belongs essentially to man is brought into play: an experience takes place whereby God is externally 'seen' and 'heard'. On the other hand, however, the person involved clearly understands that the sensory manifestation is the indication, as it were a signal or a symbol, for the fact that the absolute, spiritual, and invisible Mightiness is here present, comparable to the way a person catches his interlocutor's attention before he begins to speak with him.

Whatever else we will say later about the sensory forms of God's appearing to man, and much will be sharply critical, we must from the outset say this: in the sphere of biblical revelation there are no such things as 'purely spiritual' revelations on God's part. This is so because man as man is never 'purely spiritual', and because God, as the creator of the material world, takes this world as it is when he introduces into it a new relationship based on his self-revelation. On the other hand, the appearing form as such is never the mightiness (*kabod*) of God itself but only its indication, which however calls the person addressed to 'attention' before the absolute Subject that is making itself present to him. Thus, the sensory forms of apparition in the Bible are very closely related to the various ways in which the divine Subject expresses its interior in freedom. God's *kabod* is inseparable from his particular 'holiness', from the 'might' of his spiritual actions, from the manifestation of his 'name', from the turning of his 'countenance' to man; and yet, in spite of its inseparability from these aspects, *kabod* does not fully coincide with any one of them. Nor, conversely, can it be restricted to the merely 'sensory sphere', since the 'weighty force' that imposes itself is that of the subject and, thus, of the very divinity of God. What will remain the decisive foundation for the whole course of our investigation—namely, that all aspects must be seen in their mutual complementation and interpenetration—is shown to be the essential principle of interpretation already here in our preliminary discussion.[5]

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[5] It is therefore incorrect to restrict the *kabod-Yhwh* one-sidedly to the 'visible aspects' of revelation, that is, to those variable elements that convey the 'impression of weighty force' (thus Neuhaus, pp. 82–86), who later adds quite correctly: 'The natural eye does not see the *kabod*. In order to perceive it, in the natural eye there must emerge the supernatural glance', p. 92, so that between the natural phenomenon and God's apparition there reigns 'not identity but transparency', p. 94). The *kabod-Yhwh* can be rightly equated only with one natural phenomenon: the tempest (thus von Gall, at least for the pre-Exilic era) or a certain shimmer of light within the cloud (Morgenstern). Conversely, the *kabod* ought not to be understood one-sidedly in terms of a purely spiritual ethics, as Caspari tends to do (the God who is worthy to be adored appears behind and above the storm), even more so Abrahams (who sees in the storm an internal attribute of God, related to his justice), and most emphatically Kraemer, according to whom *kabod* expresses 'God's total will-to-salvation, which in holy love powerfully presses on toward revelation . . . until it completes its transforming effects in the history of mankind' (p. 7). He rightly stresses the fact that the *kabod* 'is never identical with its constantly changing form of appearance. It is essentially an action that imposes itself, an expressive power, an ability to represent' (p. 12). But he presses his case too far when he says: 'To see anything natural in the *kabod-Yahweh* means to externalise what is most interior, to naturalise the historical and the moral, to exchange the essence

Although in what follows the aspects of 'appearance' and of 'subject' will be treated in succession, their intimate connection must not be lost from sight. Because precisely *this* particular subject is involved, Scripture speaks of its appearance in *this* particular (broken) way. Appearance must always be spoken of in a broken way, especially when what appears is a free subject. It does indeed present itself by appearing, but it does not thereby abandon its freedom to be able to appear also in some other way. The Second Book of Esdras has found a splendid image for this: 'Thy glory passed through the four gates of fire and earthquake and wind and ice, to give the Law to the descendants of Jacob, and thy commandment to the posterity of Israel' (2 Esd 3.19): not the 'gates' are the *kabod*, but rather the *kabod* passes through them with the power proper to it. We have already seen that this freedom of appearance is an essential element of the beautiful.[6] How much more will this be true of the appearances of the eternally free God, who cannot be naturally contained by any worldly form.

The point of departure of God's coming into presence—even if it conveys the strongest feeling of a tremendous presence—can only be abstract for human perception, in the sense in which Hegel calls sensory perception abstract, since the content of the being becoming manifest has in no way been integrated in such perception. We will therefore have to reject the usual terminology that speaks of a 'concrete *kabod*' when the sensory dimension of the phenomenal manifestation is meant and of an 'abstract *kabod*' when what is involved is 'only' God's essential dignity—his honour, which is visible to the world and acknowledged by it. The decisive indication for the fact that the redactors of the Pentateuch were very much aware of this abstractness of the sensory signals is their concern to harmonise the different traditions before them

for the form of the appearance' (p. 18). If we want to do justice to the texts, we will have to stress both sides at the same time. B. Stein correctly remarks that the *kabod* cannot be considered as a detached phenomenon, but rather that it is 'God himself or at least divine attributes in their manifestation' (p. 306), and indeed this applies already to the oldest texts.

[6] See volume I, p. 20, and volume III/1, pp. 271f., 865f.

only in a relatively superficial manner, that is to say, only in such a way that their interior incompatibility is still clearly retained. And in the present case our focus is precisely on this final form of the redaction: although one may attempt to trace the individual strains of each tradition back even to the mythical realm, still no theological gain can be hoped for from the enterprise. The Pentateuch is rich with theophanic phenomena; but these receive the name 'glory of God' (*kabod-Yahweh*) only in P, which also unifies the phenomena for their own (mostly cultic) purposes but also allows older versions to stand. For us what is essential is the theological dialectic that unfolds through the contradictions that the various narratives leave open.

b. Knowing and not knowing

In Ex 3 Moses arrives at the 'Mountain of God' while grazing Jethro's sheep and without noticing where he was going. There he catches sight of the burning thornbush. He approaches with a certain curiosity, is called from the bush by name, is warned not to come nearer, and then is told that in the bush there is dwelling the Elohim of his fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And now Moses covers his face for fear of seeing God. He then is charged to lead the people out of Egypt, to bring it to this 'Mountain of God', whereupon he asks his question concerning the name of this God of his fathers, and receives God's double answer: 'I am who I am' (or 'I will be who I will be for you'), and: I am '*Yhwh*, the Elohim of your fathers', 'this is my name for all eternity'. While in the remainder of J the name *Yhwh* is taken for granted as already familiar, here in E God's revealing of his name occurs for the first time. Moses thus stands in a dramatic dialectic *between knowing and not knowing*. He knows of a God of the tradition, but he neither knows that he is here present nor who he is (what his name is). And when he asks for the name on account of his mission, he receives a dialectical answer: the one name is a designation without apparent content,[7] and the other name contains the promise of God's self-attestation by a free intervention on behalf of the people, but it evades a specific designation. The name is indeed 'disclosed', and only when it is known is a cult of its God possible for the people.[8] It is now impossible for Israel to say that it does not know its God. Nevertheless, Israel knows him by the fact that its God acts for it and yet concedes it no control over his divine freedom: precisely when one thinks one knows him, this God shows himself sovereignly to be Another. Possibly there once existed a story about the revelation of God's name in connection with the giving of the Law on Sinai: that would be the story in which Moses desires to see the 'glory' (Ex 33.18) or the 'face' (Ex 33.20) of God, but he is refused and receives a vision of God 'only from behind', after God, on going by, had pressed him with his hand into the crack in the rock. 'Yhwh passed before him, and cried out:[9] "Yhwh! Yhwh! a God merciful and compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in grace and fidelity . . . to the third and the fourth generation." And Moses made haste to bow his head toward the earth, and worshipped' (Ex 34.6ff.). Here the dialectic of knowing and not knowing passes over into that of seeing and not seeing.

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[7] L Koehler, *ThAT* (1936), pp. 22f.; Eichrodt, *ThAT*, I^4, pp. 86f.

c. Seeing and not seeing

The contradiction between seeing and not seeing is glaring. Moses is expressly said to enjoy a vision of God 'face to face, as a man speaks to his friend' (Ex 33.11). Of Moses God says: 'With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speech; and he beholds the form (*temuna*) of Yhwh' (Num 12.8). Moses 'knew God face to face' (Deut 34.10). When the covenant was concluded the one version in Ex 24, which transfers the event to the mountain, tells how Moses according to God's command has himself accompanied by Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders: 'They saw Elohim of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness.

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[8] G. von Rad, *ThAT*, I, p. 184.

[9] It is God who calls out his own name, not Moses; *cf.* Ex 33.19.

And he did not lay his hand on the chosen men of the people of Israel; they beheld Elohim, and ate and drank' the meal of the covenant before him (Ex 24.9ff.). In a form which is already very reflected, Deuteronomy says also of the whole people that they were 'spoken to by the Lord face to face' (Deut 5.4), 'up on the mountain . . . out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness' (Deut 5.5, 22). And the people testifies: 'Behold, Yhwh our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have this day seen God speak with man and man still live' (Deut 5.24). But in the fire and in the cloud 'you saw no form; there was only a voice' which you heard (Deut 4.12, 15). This denial, which here applies to the people, applies also retrospectively to the chosen ones who on the mountain were to 'worship afar off' (Ex 24.1) and who perhaps were not at all present on the mountain at the concluding of the covenant (Ex 24.3–8). Finally, it applies to Moses himself, who is spared the vision of God out of mercy, since 'no man can see me and live' (Ex 33.20). The narrative equates the vision of God with that of his face and of his glory; it refuses to say that one can see 'only' God's glory and splendour but not God himself, and the dialectical nature of the situation is expressed in the story by the movingly naive image that God can be seen 'only from behind'. Caught up in this vision/non-vision, Moses is further said to have been so irradiated by God's glory that, on his descent from the mountain, he had to cover his face before the people with a cloth that he would remove only when he entered the tent to converse with God. This later story may derive from a very old particular tradition (Ex 34.29–35) not belonging to P, and Paul takes it up in a significant passage (2 Cor 3.7; 4.6).

d. Form and non-form

The passages we have quoted reveal the opposition between form and non-form. Can we then speak of a 'form' of God in his revelation? To be sure, fire, cloud, pillar and so forth have something of a form-quality about them, but compared to the forms of the images of the gods they have no form at all. But this is not what is meant when, as a great exception and a special honour, Moses is allowed to see the form of God (Num 12.8). The same word (*temuna*) is used in Deut 4.12 and 15 to refuse the people any vision whatsoever of a 'form' in the fire at Sinai, out of which God's voice had spoken. Only twice more does this same word occur in connection with God. The first time it is used to express the longing of a psalm-singer, who says that in the morning, 'when I awake, I will be sated with beholding thy form' (Ps 17.15)—as if precisely this privileged word contains the boldest and most exuberant hope of a believer.[10] The second and last time the word *temuna* occurs is the description of a vision by Eliphaz, the friend of Job: 'Dread came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones shake. A spirit glided past my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern its appearance. A form was before my eyes; there was silence, then I heard a voice whisper: "Can mortal man be righteous before God . . .?"' (Job 4.14–17). Here again, in an ecstasy of fright, there is certain knowledge about the presence of a form that is more felt than seen. Nor is there in Num 12.8 any thought of the *mal'ak-Yhwh*, those temporary embodiments of God in a purely transparent messenger-subject, a personified embassy from God[11] such as we encounter in the old narratives but no longer in Deuteronomy, in P, or in any of the Prophets. For the passage to which Num 12.8 refers is none other than Ex 33.18: 'I pray thee, show me thy glory.'[12] It is in this vision that Moses wanted to be a participant, and not in any mediating embassy. What is actually granted to Moses? He is granted a vision of the Glory after it has passed by, since no one can see it in the

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[10] For an interpretation, see H.-J. Kraus, *Psalmen* I (1961²), p. 134.

[11] This is manner of expressing the dialectic that exists 'between the God who is incomprehensible for man and the God who nevertheless really and substantially reveals himself in the phenomenal world.' We here have before us 'a concept of relationship which seeks to characterise an effect as originating in Yahweh and as revealing him, in order then simply to equate the effect with God himself' (Eichrodt, II³, p. 7).

[12] This is the correct reference, as von Gall states (p. 18). No reference to Ex 24.9f. is possible.

'face' (Ex 33.23). And in this context the word *tub* ('beauty') emerges most unexpectedly: 'I will make all my beauty pass before you' (Ex 33.19). The beauty of God, which is really seen even though his essence (his face) is not seen: *beauty* as a word for a knowledge which, even in its concealment, is nonetheless disclosed and laid bare, a word for an intimacy such as Jesus must have meant when he reproaches the Jews: 'His voice you have never heard, his form (εἶδος) you have never seen; and you do not have his word abiding in you' (Jn 5.37f.).[13]

e. Dazzling darkness

The visible images that appear to the whole people move in an alternation between blinding light and deepest darkness. And in this it seems that different traditions have been brought together without being fully integrated, and this deliberately. According to the Elohistic tradition (which itself contains other traditions) the very core of the appearance is a deep, oppressive, and threatening darkness—the cloud out of which peals of thunder and flames of lightning erupt (Ex 20.16). To this phenomenal image belong the terrified retreat and flight of the people, which is afraid to die (v. 19) and must be reassured by Moses (v. 20). To it also belong the people's remaining off at a distance and Moses' entrance into the 'thick darkness where God was' (v. 21).

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[13] May we be allowed to reproduce here some verses of Ephraem the Syrian:

> Behold, as he instructed the people
> Moses spoke of the Majesty in human images.
> He exalted it when he said:
> 'You did not see an image in the midst of the fire';
> for the Unseen One on Sinai did not clothe Himself with an image
> lest the people should portray Him in colours.
> He made for Himself a form and a face
> in the case of Moses, so as to shape his heart [for Himself].
>
> And He did well by not showing
> [either] face or form on Mount Sinai,
> so as not to give the heathen an occasion
> to represent Him falsely before men.
> But He did well [also] by putting on the form of a face
> so as to show us His beauty, that we might perceive His glory . . .
> And although Moses did see,
> he knew that he had not seen.
> It did not escape judicious Moses that his Lord had put on borrowed images . . .
>
> The Genuine One had put on an image;
> the fullness was in it,
> but its splendour was covered by our form.
> For the form was not empty of majesty,
> and yet the image was not the Deity itself.

Hymns concerning the Faith, 26, after the German translation of Edmund Beck, *Corp. Script. Chr. Oriental.*, v. 155 (Louvain, 1955), pp. 73f.

An opposite representation is that of J, for whom the core of the appearance is a 'consuming fire' (as it was indeed with the thornbush in Ex 3) that, rather than a cloud, has smoke all about it, and this on two levels: on the natural level, because a great fire, like that of a 'kiln' (Ex 19.18), gives off much smoke, and also on the supernatural level, because the God who reveals himself as a blinding and consuming fire wraps himself in smoke so as to spare man. Now if the first sort of appearance has on the people the effect of the absolutely *tremendum*, then the second sort is the *fascinosum*: Moses himself had come closer in order to look more precisely at the phenomenon of the unconsumed bush; and for the people at Sinai strict prohibitions had been necessary: 'Take heed that you do not go up into the mountain or touch the border of it' (Ex 19.12). Moses alone climbed the mountain and penetrated through the layer of smoke to appear before the face of God.

When both images are fused they initially give the impression that what is involved is a volcanic phenomenon.[14] However, the (Yahwistic) divine fire does not erupt from inside the mountain but, like the (Elohistic) cloud, it descends from above. The fact that the 'whole mountain quakes' belongs to the *tremendum* of God's apparition; this motif persists throughout the entire Old Testament all the way to Golgotha and the Apocalyse. But the motif of light and darkness is subsequently transformed in many ways. First we have the theme of the divine cloud which, already before the crossing of the Red Sea, takes its place at the head of the people: 'Yhwh went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light' (Ex 13.21). And at the shores of the Sea (Ex 14.9) the 'angel of Yhwh' (14.19) changes his position and now walks among the host of the people, becoming for the Egyptians a purely Elohistic cloud of threats out of which comes God's dark glance, that strikes the enemy armies and wreaks havoc among them (14.24; *cf.* Josh 24.7).

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[14] At that time, however, there were no volcanoes on the whole Sinai Peninsula. The closest were perhaps found beyond the Gulf of El-Akaba in the northwest of modern Saudi Arabia. For the reasoning and documentation on this, see Gressman, *Mose und sein Zeit* (1913), pp. 409ff. Another plausible explanation may be found in A. Alt, *Det Gott der Väter*, in: *Kl. Schriften* I (1953), p. 5, note 4.

P harmonises both traditions and henceforth calls the phenomenal appearance the *kabod-Yhwh*: God, in the form of fire and wrapped in 'the' cloud, is present to the people; the appearing form dominates and, as it were, conducts the whole founding of the cult, most clearly in Ex 40.34–38. When it is completed, the tent of the covenant is taken by God as his possession: 'The cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode upon it, and the glory of Yhwh [the fire in the cloud] filled the tabernacle' (Ex 40.34f.). In the daytime the people sees only the cloud, and at night it also sees a gleam of fire shimmering through the cloud (then the fire is not only in the tent, but also over it: Num 9.15–23; 10.11f.). And it is this phenomenon, called the 'glory of God', which from Sinai on will rise and move on as sign that the tent was to be lifted, and it will go ahead of the people as either a pillar of cloud or of fire. Finally, P gives a prominent role to the 'glory of God' in the investiture of the priests and in the founding of the sacrificial cult: once the sin-offering, praise-offerings, and peace-offerings have been prepared for the first time, 'the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people, and fire came forth from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering' (Lev 9.23f.). Even in its liturgised form in P the glory retains its character as a *tremendum*: it is a hidden, consuming fire which, as in E, can at any moment break out as lightning. This is why the appearance of the glory comes into action also in the sacral administration of justice, either as a fire coming forth from the appearance and consuming (Num 16.19, 35; Lev 10.2),[15] the guilty (the band of Corah, Nadab, and Abihu), or simply as a flame that appears in bright daylight before the assembled people and thus manifests the divine wrath (Num 14.10; 17.7–11; 20.6). Nevertheless, in comparison with the primary dialectic between exceeding brightness and thick darkness, all of these instances that bring the ***kabod*** (by now univocally fixed in its essence) into play so as to explain the cultic and juridical spheres appear to us as quite derivative and, indeed, as 'faded' (2 Cor 3.10). The primary scheme whereby the glory is manifested as such again emerges at Tabor (the 'bright cloud'), and lives on as the supereminent light of God in the biblical mysticism of Gregory of Nyssa (the 'ascent of Moses'), of Denys ('dazzling darkness'), and John of the Cross (the 'dark night').

f. Abode and event

In yet another way the sensory manifestation of glory shows itself to be dialectical: namely, in the insoluble contradictions between the various spatial assertions concerning the presence of God. In his manifestations God presents himself as one who *dwells*, one who *descends*, one who *comes and goes* and, finally, as a *fellow-traveller*. In old cultic sagas which come to be a part of Genesis, and also in the saga about 'God's Mountain' (in Ex 3 and 18.5, probably an ancient shrine for pilgrimage and cult), God shows himself as one who dwells in special places and who reveals himself at times in dreams and visions ('Surely the Lord is in this place; and I did not know it,' Gen 28.16). The sanctuaries and cultic places in the country derive their existence from original appearances that had occurred there, until all of these are finally concentrated by Josiah and Deuteronomy (12) in Zion, which in turn has a founding theophany of its own (2 Sam 24; 1 Chr 21–22.1). But even the God of the Patriarchs was one who descended from heaven (Gen 11.5f.), and such he is again when he turns to the chosen people with which the covenant is to be concluded. The movement of descent opens up a living relational space between the 'place' that is God's and the 'place' that is man's[16]—that space of ascents and descents (Gen 28.12; Jn 1.51) which is the real stage for all biblical revelation. The divine mountain on which God 'dwells' (E) now becomes the divine mountain upon which Yhwh 'descends' in the form of fire (Ex 19.18) and up to which he calls Moses, in turn, to ascend (19.20) and experience a kind of meeting between Heaven and earth. But already in the next verse God tells Moses to go down again to the people (v. 21) and then once more come up together with Aaron (v. 24). Moses' mediatorship will, in spatial terms, result in the fact that henceforth what was valid up on the mountain would also be valid down below among men. This is true especially of the Ten Commandments, along with all the sacral rites that accompany them; but in the end it is also true of the cult which, having been prefigured on the mountain, must be exactly imitated on the plain (Ex 35–40), so that God himself will again be able to come down in his glory and henceforth pitch his tent and dwell among men.

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[15] In contrast to J, in which the earth opens up and swallows the guilty (Num 16.25–34).

Here we once again find several movements that have become perceptible to the senses. Even before the building of the tabernacle there existed (in ancient fragments of nomadic tradition deriving from E) a 'tent of meeting' (Ex 33.9ff.) outside the camp to which Moses went out to encounter God. 'And when Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the door of the tent, and Yhwh would speak with Moses', while the people would each stand before him own tent and throw himself to the ground in adoration (Ex 33.9f.).[17] The movement of encounter is conceived of as an event and not as a state, just as had been the case with the occasional appearing of the glory in a cultic or juridical context. In contrast to this, at the consecration of the tabernacle the glory descends definitively to 'abide' (*shakan*, whence *shekina*) within the camp (Ex 40.34–38).

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[16] 'The heavens are the Lord's heavens, but the earth he has given to the sons of Adam' (Ps 115.16).

[17] *Cf.* Num 11.24.f; 12.4f.; Deut 31.14.

But where did the concluding of the covenant actually take place? Here again two contradictory traditions intertwine beyond all unravelling. Was it up on the mountain where God dwells, the place to which Moses ascends with the representatives of the people and where they eat the covenant-meal in full view of God (Ex 24.1f., 9ff.)? Or was it down at the foot of the mountain where the people promises to keep all God's words and where Moses built the altar and poured the blood of the covenant half on the altar and half on the people after he had read the book of the covenant (Ex 24.3–8)? Both things can and must be asserted: man ascends to the place of God ('transport'), and God descends to the place of man. The event of the sealing of the covenant occurs in both movements, which are not 'purely spiritual' but, rather, take in the sphere of the senses.

And, last of all, after the people has experienced the decisive encounter with God, will it now be sent out into the world as a sanctified people? What will it take away from the experience? A memory, a permanent instruction, a representative of God, or God himself? Again the strands of different narratives intertwine. There must have been an old story in which the shepherd Moses is led to God's mountain, where he receives God's command to lead the people to this same mountain. Here, at his request, he would learn the name of God (Ex 34.6), see also something of his glory, and receive an instruction (33.13). Then follows a dismissal (33.1), for the mountain remains the place of God (33.3; *cf.* 15); but Moses wants to move no further unless God comes with him (33.15). And so God wants to give him 'an angel' (33.2) for the journey, or 'his appearance, his countenance' (33.14); but Moses needs more. If God does not *himself* come with them, the people will not be distinguishable from other peoples, since these have their gods with them (33.16). In the end, a tremendous experience of salvation takes place when God's final answer is given in the later version, which has 'God's glory' descend for ever down from the mountain to rest upon the tent, and from this new abode it will lead God's wandering people to the promised land: the eternal God who have can have no 'history' now becomes involved, right along with men, in accomplishing their temporal and spatial movements within the sphere of their lives, and this not only as an observer who steers things from above, but as one who journeys and experiences along with his creatures at their level.

g. Dialectic of fire

When the great paradoxes of God's sensory manifestation recede in Israel's later history, one last paradox, which likewise has one of its origins in Sinai, will always remain alive and constantly attain to new depths of meaning: this paradox is fire. Compared with the other paradoxes we have discussed, this one may appear disappointingly plain, so that we may be tempted to make a dangerous and direct equation: 'Yhwh, your God, is a devouring fire' (Deut 4.24; *cf.* Heb 12.29); and yet the phrase that immediately follows—'a jealous God'—shows that it never occurred to Israel to equate God with a material fire. But the *interior* dialectic of fire captivated Israel from the outset, making fire an excellent manifestation of the ineffable. In any event, fire is related to 'Yhwh's glory', which is perceptible to the senses: as lightning out of darkness (E), as 'flame surrounded by smoke' (J), as fiery light in the cloud (P). For Deuteronomy Israel is essentially the people which, at the true hour of its birth, had looked into the flame of God:[18] 'The Lord spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire' (5.4). But Israel could not withstand this frightful proximity to the fire, this salamander's existence, and therefore it sent Moses on ahead in order itself to draw back into cooler spheres (5.25ff., continuing Ex 20.18–21). No wonder that God's word, imposing itself from the midst of the divine incandescence, had to appear as fire. 'I am making my words in your mouth a fire, and this people wood, and the fire shall devour them' (Jer 5.14).[19] But the word burns only because God himself burns in his jealousy; and with this a glance into the heart of God becomes possible as never before: if this jealousy communicates so much about his spiritual being, this is because it is the jealousy of a unique election, and this directs us to the uniqueness of the living, free, and sovereign subject involved and already lays open the point where such election can become both a consuming love and the consuming fire of punishment. This is already the case at its first mention at the beginning of the Yahwistic decalogue: 'I am Yhwh, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. . . . I am a jealous God, punishing the iniquity of the fathers in the children . . . but showing steadfast love to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments' (Ex 20.2, 5f.).[20] In Deuteronomy this consuming character of jealousy is intensified in both directions. Very near is the wrath with which God could blaze out against the unfaithful people and wipe it out from the face of the earth (6.15). Israel's infidelity 'provokes him', 'stirs him up', and he will repay Israel by 'stirring them to jealousy with those who are a non-people' (Assyria); 'for a fire is kindled by my anger, and it burns to the depths of Sheol . . . and will scatter them like dust' (Deut 32.16, 21ff., 26). He will do this, however, because he had found that people 'in a desert land . . ., encircled it, cared for it, and kept it as the apple of his eye' (32.10). Beyond Deuteronomy, this dialectic intensifies in the Prophets, where at times it appears that God's punishing fire will burn utterly everything belonging to the earth (as in the seven oracles at the beginning of the Book of Amos), and where Yhwh's face itself emerges as one single blaze of punishment: 'Behold, . . . his anger glows, his doom is heavy, his lips are frothing with indignation, his tongue is a devouring fire . . ; his breath, like a stream of brimstone, will set afire' the shrine of worship where Israel slaughtered children to Melek (Is 30.27, 33). But precisely this consuming conflagration is God's 'eternal love'

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[18] Deut 4.11f., 15; 5.4f., 22–26; 9.10, 15; 10.4.

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[19] *Cf.* Jer 20.9; 23.29.

[20] Likewise Deut 5.6–10.

(Jer 31.3), which will at some time open up to man 'access and nearness' to his heart; for, in fact, 'who would (now) risk his life by approaching me?' (Jer 30.21). This mystery, moreover, will only be fully disclosed when believing man permits himself, in obedience, to be thoroughly consumed by God's fire. Thus, Isaiah is set afire by the glowing coal, Jeremiah feels the word of God burning unbearably in his bones (Jer 20.6), the three youths praise God in the blazing oven (Dan 3) and, finally, Jesus, bringing all this to completion, wants to be baptised in God's fire (Mt 3.11; Lk 12.50).[21] The dialectic of fire, which is launched at the beginning of the Bible with the fiery sword of the Cherub, finds its resolution only in the cross and the eschaton.[22]

Now Elijah had been the early prophet who had himself been full of a 'consuming jealousy for Yhwh Sabaoth' (1 Kings 19.10), who possessed the power to call down God's consuming fire from heaven (1 Kings 18.38; 2 Kings 1.10f.), and who, finally, rode up to heaven in the 'fiery chariot' drawn by 'fiery horses' in the 'whirlwind' (2 Kings 2.11). And it is significant that it is precisely this Elijah who, in his encounter with God, should leave behind all sensory manifestations of God. When following the solitary footsteps of Moses in the wilderness, he experiences on Horeb that God 'passes by' him too; and 'God was not in the great storm', and 'not in the earthquake', and 'not in the fire'. God was in the ultimate experience of *being grasped by*—rather than grasping—the 'gentle breeze', and this can hardly be perceived any longer by the senses and is more non-vision than vision. This experience, however, is not understood as a 'spiritualisation', but as an intensification of the presence of the 'Awesome',[23] the tremendous presence by virtue of which the contradictory signs are what they are meant to be: indicators which are equivocal in themselves but which derive their total clarity from him who is revealing himself in them.

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[21] On this, see A. Hamman, *Le baptême par le feu* (*Mélanges de Sc. Rel.*, v. 8, 1951).

[22] On this theme, see *Dict. Spir.*, art. 'Feu' (J. Gaillard), with bibliography.

[23] '. . . Thus, after the passing of the storm, after the earthquake and the fire, the situation did not now become less tense or even more pleasant just because a soft breeze could be heard. On the contrary, it only then became wholly awesome, or, at any rate, that is how it affected Elijah' (G. von Rad, *ThAT*, II, p. 33).

2. THE DIVINE 'I'

a. Integration

The Sinaitic *kabod-Yhwh*,[1] which recurs in the Solomonic *kabod*, was not an additional phenomenon for P, but rather the actual legitimation of the cultic and sacro-juridical order that had just been erected in the concluding of the covenant. It was God's seal on the document: he himself was visibly present in his majesty. But this sign, so clearly understood by P, is neither the first nor the last word concerning God's glory in the biblical sphere. For one thing, it has already been shown that the forms of sensory manifestation (in E and J—forms that go all the way back to Genesis) were already present before they became fixed in the almost 'technical' concept of the 'glory of God'. And then, too, this fixed formulation will not prevent a great number of similar concepts being utilised to express this same attribute of God, present in sensory phenomena—an attribute which once received not only the description *kabod* but, in the Greek translation, is precisely rendered as δόξα. This serves as a double warning not to cling one-sidedly to the expression *kabod* when developing God's glory theologically.[2] The word δόξα also renders *hod* (8 times: 'glory' as sublimeness, majesty, splendour, magnificence), *hadar* (8 times: 'glory' as sacred ornamentation), *tip'eret* and *tip'ara* (14 times: embellishment, pomp, but also honour, renown); a few times also *ga'on* (exaltedness, majesty, grandeur), *yekar* (preciousness, glorious appearance, splendour), *'os* (power, solidity, and, when applied to God, glorification).[3] All in all, δόξα renders a total of 25 different Hebrew words, of which *kabod* is the chief, occurring 181 times. Thus, it is *kabod* that determines the fundamental meaning and future profile of, and also, as we can infer, colours by association the other Hebrew words having to do with majesty and splendour. This means, in turn, that the sensory appearance which is the centre of gravity in *kabod* is not a marginal phenomenon that could, in other definitions of 'glory', be heedlessly suspended to make way for an invisible, 'abstract', 'ethical' glory. *Kabod* shapes the entire gamut of its meanings not least of all because the word has its origin ('heaviness', 'ponderousness', 'imposingness') in

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[1] This integration, whose result will be shown in the New Testament, forbids us to make a serious dichotomy between two religious schools in the Old Testament: a school of glory (*kabod*) and a school of holiness (*kedusha*), as Israel Efros suggests should be done ('Holiness and Glory in the Bible', in: *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 1950, pp. 363–377). The *kabod*-school would represent God's immanence and his nearness to man; the *kedusha*-school stands for God's transcendence and man's striving to exalt God as high as possible. The former would include Hosea, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Kabbala; the latter Amos, Isaiah, and the Hasidim. To be sure, one or the other predominates at different times, but each current requires the other and they are constantly crossing.

[2] When A. von Gall, as philologist and exegete, undertakes an investigation concerning the *kabod-Yhwh* (which if necessary can be

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translated as the 'glory of Yhwh') and seeks to define the limits of the concepts, he is quite right to refuse himself arbitrary theological remarks which elaborate the concept in an unbiblical manner (p. 16, note). But this does not mean that the English concept 'glory' has to be equated with the almost 'technical' restriction of the concept that P has effected. This is not desirable, for one thing, because then the transition to the δόξα of the Septuagint becomes unintelligible.

[3] Complete statistics in: Haire Forster, 'The Meaning of δόξα in the Greek Bible', in: *Angl. Theol. Rev.* 12 (1929), pp. 311–316; Helmuth Kittel, *Die Herrlichkeit Gottes* (1934), with tables on pp. 60f.; and Hatch and Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (Oxford, 1897), under the entry δόξα.

A less important issue for us is the much-discussed question as to how it was possible that the Septuagint could have rendered the Hebrew *kabod* as δόξα. On this see especially: J. Schneider, *Doxa: eine bedeutungsgeschichtliche Studie* (1932); E. C. E. Owen, 'Δόξα and Cognate Words', in: *J. Th. St.* 33 (1932), pp. 132–150, 265–279; both the works referred to above by Forster and Kittel; G. Kittel, *ThWNT* II (1935), pp. 236–240, 245–250; Christine Mohrmann, 'Note sur δόξα', in: *Sprachgeschichte und Wortbedeutung: Festschrift für A. Debrunner* (1954), pp. 321–328; Elpidius Pax, 'Ex Parmenide ad Septuaginta: De notione vocabuli δόξα', in: *Verbum Domini* 38 (1960), pp. 92–102.

In Greek usage outside the Bible, δόξα means the opinion that I have about myself or that someone else has about me; in the end it also means a good reputation or renown. It appears in no way to have connoted a luminous radiance perceptible to the senses, which is essential to the Hebrew *kabod*. Following a suggestion of A. Deissmann and of Reitzenstein, a sphere where the 'sensory' and the 'spiritual' are indivisibly fused, indeed a sphere where, when God is concerned, what manifests itself is without any doubt the very point of reference of the manifestation.[4]

In this respect what we have so far said has shown that the *kabod-Yhwh* in P is not an original phenomenon, but rather a derived and reflected one, a synthesis of elements which are at odds with one another and which indicate what is manifested not in a 'symbolic' but in a 'dialectical' form, since the subject of this manifestation cannot be given unequivocal expression within the human sphere. We must now concentrate our attention on the subject of this manifestation, namely, the divine 'I', which in the Bible reveals itself on its own initiative as both a speaking and an acting agent. Now, every person who reveals himself by speaking and acting

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Schneider thought he could demonstrate a certain element of light in δόξα by basing himself on Egyptian magical papyri and late inscriptions. But the sources used by him, in so far as they are conclusive, already belong to the Christian era and, in any event, they are dependent on the Greek Bible. Thus, the assumption of the whole content of the Hebrew word into the Greek word was an 'interference of unusual proportions into the formation of linguistic usage' (G. Kittel, p. 248). Cautious attempts, therefore, were again made to find an element of light in the usage of δόξα outside the Bible. The attempt of E. Pax summons little credibility because it is too far-fetched: he thinks that in Parmenides, and even more so in Plato (in the philosophical use of δόξα as 'true opinion', as in the *Meno*, 97B), a kindling of the intellectual light (as it awakens to *episteme*) may be detected. And his questionable translation of such passages connects not with δόξα as 'opinion' but with δόξα as τιμή (renown, honour). Simpler and more insightful is the thought of C. Mohrmann: 'un sens de splendeur, d'éclat dans le cadre des royautés hellénistiques' (p. 326). Whether or not this reference point existed, *it appears as even more essential that to the Greek translator the original element of renown in kabod seemed so predominant*—as we have ourselves already shown in our discussion—*that the centre of gravity seemed to live in this sense of renown and not in the element of splendour*. The Targumists will divide the two elements of *kabod* into two new words: *shekina* (from *shakan*, 'to dwell') will refer to the abiding presence of God's majesty, while *yekara* will be reserved for the sensory splendour of light. An analogous problem emerges, in turn, when we seek to translate δόξα into Latin: *majestas* (more European) and *claritas* (more African) were first used, and both were later on displaced by *gloria* which, already in profane usage, was the normal rendering of δόξα. See bibliography on this in C. Mohrmann, loc. cit.

[4] On this see especially Abrahams (loc. cit.), pp. 16f.

necessarily discloses as well something about his *nature*—supposing that the person is truthful. God too, therefore, by speaking and acting, discloses something of his unique being, which is infinitely exalted above everything worldly. Because of this, what we have been describing as 'God's glory' in the phenomenal realm is now inseparably coupled both to the modes of expression of the divine 'I' and to the qualities proper to God which must necessarily be disclosed in his revelation.

From the historical viewpoint, Israel's understanding of God must be deepened by the fact that, in God's active word, God's inner being is disclosing itself ever more richly. In this, the paradox that in his self-disclosure God becomes ever more manifest as the Incomprehensible One must retain its full vigour. It is also a process of integration: the more the aspects of God are differentiated, the more they reciprocally interpenetrate, and this because all of them bear that quality of the infinite subject which is discovered time and again in the other aspects. The historical unfolding and deepening of revelation (which we will not here be able to treat in detail) is, therefore, the most splendid possible introduction to *theology*, for it occurs under the guidance of the *Theos legon*—the speaking God—himself. The course of revelation shows that God 'is not only the Lord (*der Herr*), but the Lord of glory (*Herrlichkeit*), and, conversely that all glory is the glory of God the Lord (*die Herrlichkeit Gottes des Herrn*) . . . It does not go without saying that God . . . is the Lord of glory; there is a danger of a cleavage here. God as the Lord can be viewed and understood, so to speak, in a punctiliar or in a linear manner . . . We may well prefer the dark secret of our own existence to the whole range of this purely economic glory of God, i.e. to the unknown quantity, the inscrutable being who is concealed by it.' But in the end it would be deadly for faith 'if God were not the God of glory'. On the other hand, 'the glory of God can be seen and understood in a way which dissipated and dissolves it because it has no Lord.' This would be the case if we understood it to be something like a 'collection of mighty potencies . . ., conceptual forces, of principalities and powers', behind which God's being would withdraw as unknowable.[5] Late Judaism, with its hypostasisations of God's utterances and attributes, did not wholly evade this danger, and the Church's theology in both East (Gregory Palamas) and West (Gilbert de la Porrée) often approached it. But when this happens the very essence of revelation is destroyed.

Both historically and in an objective, systematic sense, the different aspects (of which we will treat only the most outstanding in what follows) become integrated as they converge through time; from a certain clarity which these aspects possess in the pre-biblical, mythical sphere, we see them proceed towards a point of convergence which will have to lie beyond the Old Testament in the new clarity of Jesus Christ. This gives to the Old Testament understanding of God that peculiar suspension we already spoke of in the first volume.[6]

b. Power

The overwhelming sensory signs by which God proclaims his presence point initially, in an elemental way, to power. At a later time these signs appear amalgamated in the phenomena of a storm: the threatening oppressiveness of oncoming darkness, the stormwind that suddenly scours the land, the growling voice of the thunder, the lightning that blindingly flares out of the darkness, the waters suddenly released from above, hail that wreaks havoc upon helpless man . . . And little imagination is required to understand even today how the Israelite, as a being close to nature, could see in the overriding might of natural forces an immediate and evident manifestation and a most sublime expression of the overriding might of his God. Yhwh, however, was never primarily a nature-god, but rather a God who led, chose, and instructed.[7] The power of nature does not characterise his being; at best it points to it. His power is the potency of one who *can*, one who has at his disposal a tremendous space of freedom within which to act.

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[5] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* II/1, pp. 324–326.

[6] Volume I, pp. 619f. (Eng. trans.).

[7] M. Buber, *Königtum Gottes* (1932); now in *Werke* II (1964), pp. 589–649.

To be sure, at first Israel experiences this might of its God above all in war. Yhwh has the powers of nature as his helpers to conquer his and Israel's enemies and cast panic and fear among them:[8] some foes he drowns in the sea, others he buries in the gaping earth.[9] He himself is a 'warrior hero' (Ex 15.3) and his glory merges in the processional hymn Ps 24 with his renown in war:

Who is the King of glory?
  Yhwh, strong and mighty,
  Yhwh, mighty in battle! . . .
Who is the King of glory?
  The Lord of hosts,
  he is the King of glory! (Ps 24.8, 10).

Victory in battle is the first decisive proof of the fact that the God who has chosen Israel and given it his command can accomplish what he has desired and begun. This proof-by-power demonstrates that that mysterious 'I', who wanted to reveal his name only by pointing to his active presence (Ex 3.14), had been the right divine 'I,' and that it is good to trust in him. Ever since this discovery Israel understands God's *glory* immediately to be a superior *lordliness* which imposes itself; both attributes become interlocked.

Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power . . .
In the greatness of thy majesty thou
  overthrowest thy adversaries (Ex 15.6f.).

In a storm-psalm we read: 'The voice of Yhwh is powerful, / the voice of Yhwh is full of majesty' (Ps 29.4). And in a hymnic psalm: 'Ascribe to Yhwh glory and strength!' (Ps 96.7).[10] It is important that in the New Testament the close union of 'glory' and 'power' will be preserved intact. The Son of Man will come to judge 'with great power and glory' (Mt 24.30). Paul wishes the Colossians to grow in the spirit of Christ κατὰ τὸ κράτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ (1.11); and when he censures the pagans for not having recognised 'his eternal power and divinity' from the works of his creation, he adds immediately: 'They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man' (Rom 1.20, 23). The divine subject is no empty, indeterminable point; he has the whole space of freedom, which allows him to be present wherever he will: in the world, in his enemies, but especially in the covenant with his chosen friends.

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[8] 1 Sam 7.10; Judg 5.4, 10; and *passim*. Perhaps the 'Sabaoth' over which Yhwh rules were originally mythical powers of the nature-religion (V. Maag, 'Jahwäs Heerscharen', in: *Festschrift für L. Köhler*, 1950, pp. 27–52), or also his own powers (O. Eissfeldt, 'Jahwä Zebaoth', in: *Miscell. Acad. Berolinensia*, 1950, pp. 128f.).

[9] Ex 16.4f.; Num 16.33.

[10] More passages in *ThW*, II, p. 293 (Grundmann).

c. Word

All sensory revelation of glory is directly oriented to the word of God. Such revelation does not for a moment produce a word that reposes in itself; rather, it is a signal of a speech that is just beginning, a signal that points to the quality of the speaker.[11] Even if the various forms of the decalogue are never wholly successfully incorporated into the stories of theophanies, the very fact of their incorporation, along with all the relevant instructions, shows clearly the place assigned to sensory manifestations. And in the calling of the Prophets the appearances and the word are even more intimately associated.

The word lacks all dialectical elements; both in its utterance and in its origin from the divine 'I', the word is unambiguous. The fact that it can and must also be two-sided—a word of grace and a word of judgment—in no way calls its clarity into question.[12] The signal of the *kabod* calls attention to the fact that the word which resounds is that of the absolute subject whose particular 'cadence' all by itself can sufficiently prove that it is the Lord's. For the word immediately confiscates, as it were, the whole existence of its hearers, their entire relationship both to God and to the world. Sirach has summarised all of this in two verses:

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[11] This is true starting from the revelation on Sinai. For certain theophanies of the period of the Patriarchs, see below pp. 193f.

[12] *Cf.* pp. 162ff., 169ff., 217f.

> Their eyes saw the glory (δόξα) of his majesty
> (μεγαλεῖον),
> and their ears heard the glory of his voice (δόξα
> φωνῆς).
> And he said to them, 'Beware of all unrighteousness
> (service to idols).'
> And he gave commandment to each of them
> concerning his neighbour (17.13f.).

God's word always undergirds its hearer's whole existence; it orders individual aspects of his life only by directing the entire course of his life. It is pure objectivity, which finds a foothold neither in the hearer's desires nor in his fears, and this objectivity quite simply expects only one single answer from the hearer: assent and obedience. It demands assent not because the hearer is 'of the same opinion' or because he suddenly 'intuits' what is at stake. Rather, assent is required because, in a most effortless way, the word possesses the quality of glorious lordliness and proclaims a will which takes hold of man beyond all appeal. In all the history of religions there is no analogy for such a unity of objectivity (it is the word that approaches man) and totality (the word demands obedience with one's whole existence). The objectivity permits no intervening space to exist between the speaker and the listening subject; what it creates there is perfect immediacy; and, because the word proceeds from him who is the owner of the listening subject and who as such knows him through and through, the word is a challenge to the subject which presents him with the most evidently sensible and possible of realities.

> This commandment which I command you this day is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it (Deut 30.11–14 = Rom 10.6–8).

It is precisely this immediacy, which penetrates mouth and heart, that demonstrates the power of the word. It does not, however, intend to be a power that does violence but rather one which summons insistently: in the word, the infinite 'I' summons the finite 'I' to be fully itself.

At Sinai the people is a vague and timorous collective (Deut 5.25f.); the possibility of being a self is communicated to it through the person of Moses. The fact that later on the king will not be a representative of the mythical collective before the deity, but rather a person called to obedience (consider Saul!), is due to the connection between Nebiism and the emerging monarchy. The first figure in all the history of civilisation to possess an 'I' perfectly is the prophet Isaiah, who hears God's question: 'Whom shall we send?' and at once gives his 'Here I am!' (von Rad). And the more deeply the human self awakens in the answer it gives, the more boundlessly do the heights and depths of the absolute 'I' open out before him in the glorious lordliness of the divine word. Israel, moreover, stylises its ancestor Abraham under this emblem, then to understand itself as his descendant. The present, however, is understood as an order established upon God's word of command (legal and priestly tradition); but it is an order that may not resist the word when it irrupts with ever-new commands (prophetic tradition). And if at first a great number of commandments appeared simply to coexist alongside one another, gradually one all-encompassing and form-giving commandment emerges ever more clearly: this is the command that the created 'I' shall be immediately and exclusively at the disposal of the disposing 'I'. Under the influence of Hosea, Deuteronomy formulates this as 'love with all one's heart, all one's soul, and all one's might' (Deut 6.5). This it was that resounded out of the shapeless fire (Deut 4.32–40). The Deuteronomic historiographs make this the criterion for the whole history of the people. P even has the sensory 'glory of God' become a kind of word of command which the people (ideally speaking) are to follow in an attitude of pure readiness:

> Whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tent, after

> that the people of Israel set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the people of Israel encamped. At the command of the Lord the people of Israel set out, and at the command of the Lord they encamped.

The same motif is played through to the end of the chapter (Num 9.15–23; *cf.* Ex 40.36ff.).

If, in the realms of sensory signs, the covenant could be concluded only by a 'transport' of the people up to the mountain, in the same way the word of God can be received and followed by man only by a 'transport' out of his *spirit* into the Spirit (*ruach*) of God, or—and this amounts to the same thing—by an ingrafting of God's Spirit into the spirit of man. 'This is my covenant with them, says Yhwh: my Spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth . . .' (Is 59.21). 'Thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them . . ., and didst warn them by thy Spirit through thy prophets,' prays Nehemiah (9.20, 30; *cf.* 2 Sam 23.2), and the penitential psalm implores: 'O God, take not thy holy Spirit from me' (Ps 51.11). Only in community of spirit with God is obedience to his word possible, and this community of spirit teaches the 'fear of the Lord': that is, the difference between the Thou that bestows and exacts in a lordly way and the Thou that acknowledges and obeys through its service. In the Spirit man experiences the glory of the word, in so far as in this Spirit he is given to know what Lord's word it is.

Regardless of whether man admits God's Spirit into himself interiorly or whether he resists it with a rebellious and hardened heart, God's word exhibits itself as *deed* by virtue of the power with which it imposes itself on man. Precisely by dividing for man simultaneously into a promise and a threat, a grace and a judgment, God's word demonstrates its transcendental unity and power. And the more the history of this power becomes revealed, the more does it become clear that God's word is not limited or frustrated by man's opposition; rather, it disposes of every enemy and brings the realisation of its every content to full term. Through the bifurcation of God's efficacious word into a grace and a judgment in its worldly form, the unity and uniqueness of the acting 'I' are laid bare in the most direct way possible. 'I, I am the Lord . . . I have revealed and saved and proclaimed . . . There is none who can deliver from my hand; I work and who can hinder it?' (Is 43.11ff.; *cf.* Num 23.19).

d. Holiness and name

The fact that God utters himself makes him both nameable and approachable, but by the same token it reveals his incomparability and unapproachableness. He does indeed disclose his name, but only as a holy name. Both these aspects of God, therefore, are immersed in his sublime majesty.

What the *holiness* of the living God might be comes to light for Israel only very slowly, following the same rhythm with which his word manifests him as the free and sovereign Lord. Along with the creature's primal, intuitive knowledge concerning the abyss in being between a relative and an absolute, between the world of men and that of the gods,[13] there also comes a primal concept of holiness: everything within the world that belongs to the realm of the divine or the god is radically 'set aside' or 'separated' from the world (*temenos* from *temnein*, *sanctus* from *sancire*, *tabu* = 'taken out'), and it is therefore dangerous for mortals to approach it. Whoever enters this sphere for cultic purposes is in need of purification, and whoever is permanently associated with the cult must be especially consecrated. The cult consists of prayer that placates and especially of sacrifice: the thing or person sacrificed is sundered from the realm of the profane and considered holy, in the sense of having become a possession of the god. All of this is still 'natural' religion which continues however to have a vital existence in Israel's understanding of holiness and in its cultic life. Holy is what belongs to the sphere of God: first of all, the heavens, God's dwelling on earth, the tent, the ark of the covenant, Zion itself; also everything having to do with the priesthood and the usages and objects of the cult. The element of danger is strongly emphasised throughout; the line of demarcation between clean and unclean cuts right through the middle of everyday life. The Israelite lives constantly on the dividing-line and must continually become aware of the fact that the realm of the divine is making demands on him. Is all of this a stubborn residue of the mythical understanding of existence? One thing is clear, namely, that in Israel ritualism does not wane while prophetism waxes strong; the former actually surpasses the latter, and in the final phase ritualism even gains new ground and passes on to the New Testament this primal form of massively incarnate human religiosity. The Letter to the Hebrews will in due time interpret the meaning of this transmission.

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[13] Volume IV, pp. 45–55, 93, 109f., 270f. (Eng. trans.).

In spite of the integrity of the concept, the interior understanding of holiness was drastically revolutionised by the revelation through the word, especially in the case of the prophets. This can be seen already in the fact that, by his word, God takes possession of the whole chosen people, thereby separating it from the world and introducing it into his own divine sphere. Moreover, if God can do this it is because he has power over the whole 'profane' world:

> From now on . . . you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests [or shall belong to the royal realm of my lordship as those closest to the king's hand] and a holy [consecrated] nation (Ex 19.5f.).

With this Israel has been fundamentally lifted out of the oppostion between sacred and profane, and since God has chosen Israel out of his possession, which is the whole earth, the whole earth too has been taken out of that dichotomy, at least with regard to the end of times (Zech 14.20). Once the dichotomy between sacred and profane is thus relativised within the world, then the centre of gravity of the concept of holiness is transferred to God himself: over against all worldly reality, God is the 'thrice holy' (Is 6.3) and, in the end, the 'only holy' one (1 Sam 2.2; Rev 15.4), because he alone is God, and he can swear by nothing other than his own holiness (Am 4.2), his own distinctive divinity. But God does not keep this his divinity for himself behind his revelation in word and deed; rather, he offers it as the divine space (*temenos*) in which Israel is henceforth to dwell after being 'transported' out of itself. This whole space now has the qualities formerly had by one single 'holy' object (as, for instance, the ark of the covenant): it is at the same time the bearer of salvation and a source of peril. This is an extension of the two aspects of grace and of judgment that already characterised the word of God; or, even better, judgment becomes inevitable when man receives the grace of being admitted to the dwelling-space of God and when he is given to know and to learn God's 'customs and ordinances' (Lev 18.4). 'Be holy, for I, Yhwh, your God, am holy' (Lev 19.2). By grace they have already been taken up and 'transported', so that now, by having heard God, they belong to God ('you are consecrated and have become holy, for I am holy,' Lev 11.44); under threat of judgment they must obey God and 'belong wholly to him' (Deut 18.13).[14]

Like his word, God's holiness is active; it imposes itself and has an effect. Starting with Ezekiel, this is expressed by saying that God 'sanctifies himself' before the world and its peoples,[15] and then also in Israel (Lev 10.3; 22.32; Num 20.12). And since in so doing he shows himself to be the Lord God, he also 'glorifies' himself. There thus emerges a circumincession between holiness and glory that also becomes visible in the fact that God consecrates the tent of meeting by his *kabod*: 'This place shall be sanctified by my glory' (Ex 29.43).[16] Or, as the latter part of the song of victory at the Sea of Reeds has it: God is 'glorious in holiness' (Ex 15.11).

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[14] In this passage there is an intricate but suggestive play of words with *hörig* and *gehörig*, *gehorsam* and *angehören*, all driving from the stem *hör*— and variously meaning 'to hear' or 'listen to', 'to obey', and 'to belong to', concepts which von Balthasar interrelates theologically. Translator's Note.

[15] Ezek 20.41; 28.22, 25; 36.23; 38.16; 39.27.

[16] Ex 14.4, 17. In Ezekiel the various verbs of sanctification and glorification are sometimes congregated in the same verse: μεγαλυνθήσομαι καὶ ἁγιασθήσομαι καὶ ἐνδοξασθήσομαι καὶ γνωσθήσομαι (38.23). Ezek 39.21 and 27 speaks in parallel fashion of God's revelation of his glory and his revelation of his holiness.

Drawing closely on Oetinger and Bengel, Herntrich has written (*Isaias*, Correspondingly, Israel's obedience must also be active; it will thus 'sanctify' the holy God (Num 27.14),[17] or, what amounts to the same, it will let him be Lord, thereby 'glorifying' him.[18] That this is no merely external giving of praise is clear from the outset; at the deepest level, it is by making room for grace that man obediently contributes to God's self-sanctification and self-glorification in the world.

By revealing his holiness God both manifests and communicates the distinctive fact that he is God, and by doing so he reveals his *name*.[19] The name is communicated to Moses in such a way that at once a mysterious reticence on his part follows—and this reserve is a continuation of earlier inquiries about God's name which had been met with a negative answer (Gen 32.29; *cf.* Judg 13.18). Even into the New Testament the naming and the Name will retain something of an esoteric side to it (Phil 2.9; Rev 2.17). That God dares to 'hand over' his name to men is a sign of the highest grace, love, and self-surrender; there is no question that with the *traditio nominis* God himself is handed over, and that he enters a commitment with those who know and invoke his name. Nonetheless, God does not come into their possession for the reason that, even as he becomes known by name, he also is revealed as the mighty and ruling Lord. Because he calls out

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1950, on 6.3): God's 'holiness is his hidden, concealed glory . . . And his glory is his holiness made manifest.' The interpenetration of these two aspects of God is nowhere expressed so clearly as in the vision of Isaiah.

[17] Deut 32.51; Is 8.13; 29.23.

[18] On this, see below pp. 204ff.

[19] We can here disregard all time-conditioned elements, since the fundamental understanding of what we mean is not dependent on them. Things which elsewhere hold a primordial place in connection with names have in the Bible become insignificant: for instance, that the name is by nature so closely bound to the being which bears it that, through knowledge of the name, one acquires power over this being and can cast spells with the name. The great difference here is due to the fact that the communication of God's name is so totally a free action on God's part that he is in no way robbed of his nature as Lord. Furthermore, one can speak only very marginally, and then only quite late, of hypostasisations of the name of God which, once again, are unimportant for a total understanding of the question.

his own name, it is *he* who calls and names man, thereby taking man as *his* possession (Is 43.1). When God's name was spoken over someone, it meant that he became God's possession. To know the name of God, who still remains eternally mysterious, does not therefore mean to know one part of God and not to know another and surely greater part. To know God's name, rather, means that one has been vouchsafed the self-revelation of a God who, even as he reveals himself, shows himself to be the ever-greater Lord and who has assumed into his service the person who henceforth knows him. Thus, Israel understood the grace of being allowed to know its God's name as a pledge of his presence, something like a sacrament, as with Christ's eucharistic presence in the New Testament. At the beginning of the Book of the Covenant God himself ordained which would be the places where his name was to be invoked (Ex 20.24), the places, therefore, where he wanted to be present in a special manner. When, in the passage about the establishment of a single place for the cult, Deuteronomy also emphasises the fact that God dwells in heaven[20] and that he allows 'only' his name to be present in the earthly temple,[21] the point may have been to implant anew the concept of the ever-greater and free God against suspected magical abuses of the time. But Deuteronomy never called into question God's proximity to man or man's intimacy with God (Deut 30.14). With the destruction of the temple one part of this tension is lost; God and his name are now one: God is manifest and acts in heaven and, from there, also on earth. From this point on the name (*shem*), as God's manifest aspect, will, on the one hand, be an alternate term for God himself[22] and, on the other hand, it will be interchangeable with God's 'word'.[23] With this, moreover, 'name' enters into circumincession with 'glory': objectively, in so far as the name is that aspect of God through which he shows himself in the world as mighty

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[20] Deut 4.36; 26.15.

[21] Deut 12.5, 11, 21; 14.23; 16.2, 6, 11; 26.2.

[22] For example, Ps 68.5; 86.12; 92.2; Is 25.1, and so on.

[23] O. Grether, 'Name und Wort Gottes im Alten Testament', in: *ZAW*, Beih. 64 (1934), p. 38.

Lord;[24] subjectively, because by the very act of knowing God's name, invoking, and taking refuge in it (Ps 124.8), man is glorifying God precisely in his name (Ps 86.9, 12).[25] The wise praise the Name (Ps 106.47; 145.21) as being objectively 'glorious' (*tehilla*, parallel to *shem*). 'Blessed be his glorious name for ever; may his glory fill the whole earth!' (Ps 72.19; *cf.* 102.16f.).

The mutal interpenetration of 'holiness', 'name', and 'glory' will be maintained in the New Testament, where Jesus' life's task is summarised as the glorification of the name of the Father (Jn 12.28; 17.4, 26), and where he places the prayer for the hallowing of this same name on the lips of his disciples (Mt 6.9; *cf.* Is 29.23), while Mary, hearkening back to Ps 111.9, praises the name of the Lord as holy (Lk 1.49).

e. Face

While God's word, his holiness, and his name have manifested ever more clearly *who* it is that has become involved with Israel, we may now last of all consider his countenance, the Face that turns toward the believer—the Face which he piously seeks, before which he stands, in which he takes refuge. We have seen that, in the case of sensory perception, the experience of vision/non-vision consisted of feeling one's way through the contradiction between excessive light and darkness. Here, however, total clarity is finally attained: God's face is light (Ps 89.16) and in no way darkness, and this emphatic clarity will persist uninterruptedly all the way to John (1 Jn 1.5) despite the gnosticism of every age. Word, holiness, and name qualify this unambiguous light as a love, a goodness, and a grace that is manifested in God's very act of turning toward the creature. This content of the act is so undeniable that it becomes impossible to speak of not seeing God's face. There exists in Israel an evidence of God's manifestness as the Lord that far outshines all inner-worldly evidence, and that divine evidence is in no way affected by the modern distinction between sensory vision and spiritual insight; rather, that evidence quite outdistances this distinction. All of bodily-spiritual man 'knows',[26] in the manner of perception, that the Lord who created him body and soul is there standing before him, and he himself lies there in outspread nakedness before the Lord's eyes. Thus, Philo interpreted 'Israel' (Jacob's new name after his wrestling-bout with God) not as 'strong against God' (which was originally probably 'let God be strong') but as 'God-seeing man'.[27] For this is precisely what God had intended for Israel: it was to 'see and know, consider and understand . . . that the Holy One of Israel has done this' (Is 41.20). So, also, speaks Deuteronomy when it interprets the theophany on Sinai as but the starting-point which actually implied the turning of the infinite 'I' toward man: 'Behold, Yhwh, our God, has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have this day seen God speak with man and man still live' (Deut 5.24). No evidence is more compelling than that provided by one's having been looked on, particularly when it is before the Creator's eyes that the creature is standing.[28] Israel already knew in a primitive way, not to be qualified as ‘mythical’,[29] what later on the Christian tradition of spiritual wisdom would seek after and know as ‘walking in God’s presence’—and for this the prerequisite is not an esoteric technique and training, but rather ‘purity of heart’ and the pliancy of faith. There is a dimension of listening to God that could be qualified as ‘seeing God’,[30] and this seeing is based on being seen by God. ‘He looks to the ends of the earth, and sees everything under the heavens’ (Job 28.24). ‘There is no hiding from his gaze, his seeing stretches from age to age’ (Sir 39.19f.).

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[24] Thus, too, the interchangeability of 'name' and 'power': Ps 54.1; 20.2; 44.6; Pr 18.10, and *passim*..

[25] In the Canticle of Azariah (S of 3 Y = Dan 3.24ff.) the plea for the glorification of the Name is incessantly repeated.

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[26] Here the various languages have become for us repositories of ancient wisdom. Greek εἴδω ('to see') is actually ←ειδω, Latin *video*. The root *weid* at once connotes 'seeing' and 'knowing' (Gothic *witan*, Old High German *wizzan*); Sanskrit *vedas* = 'knowledge', Gothic *weis* = OHG *wîs* = Modern High German *weise* = English *wise*. Greek ὁράω is actually ←οραω, Latin *vereor* ('to fear' or 'dread'); Gothic and OHG *war*: 'cautious', 'wary'; *wara*; 'heed', 'attention'; *gi-war* = MHG *gewahr werden* ('to become aware of'), *gewahren* ('to perceive'), *wahrnehmen* ('to perceive'), and also *warten* ('to await', 'to be on the look-out'). The root *wer* or *war* means 'to watch for' or 'to look after': Greek οὖρος = 'keeper', 'warder'; φρουρά (προ-ὁρά) = 'watch', 'guard'. Similar word-families could be traced for other 'sensory perceptions', which always connote the perceiving disposition of the *whole* person.

[27] *De Mut. Nom.* XII (81). Philo is here followed by Irenaeus (*C. Haer.* IV, 20, 1) and Hippolytus (*C. Noet.* 5).

[28] Philo, *De Somn.* 2, 226. Nicholas of Cusa, *De visione Dei* 5. R. Guardini, *Der Engel in Dantes göttlicher Komödie* (1951), pp. 128f. E. Biser, *Gott ist tot* (1962), pp. 48f. R. Mosis, *Der Mensch und die Dinge nach Johannes vom Kreuz* (1961), pp. 114f., and *passim*.

Once the hearer of the word knows who it is that sees him in such a way, this condition whereby his whole existence lies open in the sight of God produces at first a deep fright, and then a deep happiness, and it concludes with the plea that one may continue to be seen ever more piercingly by God in this manner (Ps 139).[31] This sort of statement, and others like it (Job 34.21; Ps 11.4; 33.13–15; Jer 32.19), at first has the whole span of the created world as its object; but gradually God’s glance gathers up, as it were, to focus on those who know him and, therefore, fear him (‘Behold, the eye of Yhwh is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love’, Ps 33.18), and on those who need him in their distress (‘From heaven Yhwh looked at the earth, to hear the groans of the prisoners', (Ps 102.19f.). If God's 'exaltation' above the heavens manifests his 'glory', then his 'glance into the depths' manifests his grace (Ps 113.4–7); indeed, his exaltation can be a judgment on those who raise themselves up proudly: on these the Lord turns his back; but all his sublimeness was never an obstacle to his regard for the little ones (Ps 138.6).

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[29] This, of course, does not mean that the experience of God’s presence in Israel, too, could not be extremely nuanced, according to the degree of purity of heart (Ps 11.7) and the intensity of faith’s surrender. But to assert the reality of the fact that one has been addressed by the word of God at once places one directly before the ‘face’ of the speaker. *Cf.* Scheeben, *Mysterien des Christentums* (1865), pp. 726f., 736, 746; *Dogmatik* III (1862), pp. 694f.; also, everything the present work has said on this subject (Vol. I, pp. 219ff. (English translation).

[30] Jer 23.18; Ezek 13.3; etc.; *cf.* God’s speaking with Moses ‘from mouth to mouth’, ἐν εἴδει, Num 12.8. And consider the way in which Sir 17.6 describes the formation of the human senses by God (‘he made for them tongue and eyes . . . and ears’), and v. 13 describes how they are to be used: ‘Their eyes saw his glorious majesty, and their ears heard the glory of his voice’: and both these faculties are naturally rooted in the same ‘power of comprehension’ (σύνεσις, v. 11, from συνίημι, ‘to bring together’, ‘to understand’).

[31] *Cf.* R. Guardini’s beautiful interpretation of this psalm in *Wahrheit und Ordnung* 3 (1955).

If the dialectic of sensory manifestation, however, has been transcended because God's face always gives forth light, nevertheless at this higher level another dialectic returns which derives from our manner of knowing. God's glance and his face are grace, but God's face can be either uncovered or concealed, turned towards one or averted. This elemental experience, too, can embrace the full extent of the created world, and in this way it expresses a radically anti-theistic religious experience of existence. When God hides his face everything created dies away, and when he again turns his face toward creation everything awakens to new life.[32] This experience, moreover, is ever more firmly rooted in Israel's distinctive experience, namely, that God's face can relate to it in contrary ways: in times of grace, God's face is turned towards Israel and gives forth light, in times of anger it is either turned away or turned towards Israel in a terrible manner, and beyond both these possibilities there is still the frightful experience of Job, for whom in the night of suffering God's naked glance becomes unbearably fierce.[33]

When God makes the light of his face shine on man (Ps 31.17; 44.4; 67.2; 80.4, 8, 20; 119.135; Dan 9.17) and man is allowed to live and walk in the light of the eternal Countenance (Ps 89.16), then man's experience of life itself moves into the light: 'In thy light do we see light' (Ps 36.9)—hence the prayer that the sunrise of God's face may dawn on man (Ps 4.7), and the liturgical blessing imploring that 'Yhwh may make his face to shine upon you . . ., may reveal his countenance to you' (Num 6.25f.; *cf.* 2 Chron 30.9). And, as he prays, the believer seeks to 'placate' God's face (1 Sam 13.12; Ps 119.58) when it is angry and turned away.

[32] Ps 104.29f.; 146.4; Gen 3.19; Job 10.12; 12.10; 34.14f.; Eccles 12.7.

[33] See the chapter on Job below, pp. 281–290.

There are numerous passages that either threaten people with such turning away or that describe it as having already happened; but in all of them it is the sin of man which is the cause of this concealment.[34] However, although sin does dig out the deep abyss between God and man (Is 59.2), God's turning away is not the simple 'result' of sin, but rather a personal decision of God (Is 57.17) that finally does indeed deliver the sinner over 'to the power of his sin' (Is 64.6b). In this active sense God 'turns his face against' the sinner [35] and declares war upon him.[36]

Once this all-embracing concept of God's face and glance, which can be turned toward or away from man, is taken seriously, then we will refrain from dismissing as a merely traditional and metaphorical 'manner of speaking' the very numerous statements about 'seeking the face of God' and longing for the 'vision' of him.[37] To be sure, the expression 'to see' or 'to seek the face of Yhwh' means first of all 'to come into the temple', analogous to the way in which they used to say throughout the Orient, upon being admitted to audience before a king or other high-ranking person, that one has 'seen the face' of the person involved. In the context of a pagan holy place the expression can additionally mean that one has come before the image of the god or that one has glimpsed the images of the gods in a solemn procession. In Israel there may have been an analogy for this in the procession with the ark of the covenant, which was considered the throne of the present God.[38] The plastic quality conveyed by those words that speak of God's becoming visible in the temple during liturgical celebrations has given occasion for the conjecture that, at given high points in the cult, certain ecstatics or appointed prophets used to give witness to a theophany granted to them;[39] but for this we have no proof whatsoever. The mythical analogies are too far-removed and the ceremonial analogies too shallow to explain the intensity of Israel's longing to see God. And even if at an early period the 'face of God' sometimes was taken to connote a kind of substitute theophany (in the already mentioned version of the Exodus saga, Ex 33.14, in which God, instead of himself going forth with the people, wants to appoint his angel or his 'face' to accompany them), still this distinction very soon disappears: God's face is himself as he turns in grace toward man and becomes fully present to him. This is what we read, for instance, in Is 63.9, where it is expressly said: 'It was no envoy, no angel, but he himself that delivered them; he himself ransomed them by his love and pity.' Over and beyond all mythical analogies, Israel's liturgical utterances are thus to be regarded as unique expressions of this 'historically incarnate' religion; it is a religion in which the evidence of the God who bears witness to himself in word and historical deed (Ps 105.4f.) is closely bound to the intimate experience of the believer's heart, pliant to the word and always reciprocating it. It is also a religion in which the official pilgrimage to the temple as authentic focus of God's presence is the same thing as taking 'refuge' there when in personal distress. 'In Yhwh I take refuge . . . The upright shall behold his face' (Ps 11.1, 7). And in Ps 17.15 we read the mysterious words: 'I shall behold thy face (*panim*) in righteousness (*sedek*, that is, in the realm of God's salvation); when I awake, I shall be satisfied with beholding thy form (*temuna*)'; here the parallelism points to a very high degree of actualisation. In Ps 24 we see an anticipation of the promise of the Sermon on the Mount that the 'pure hearts' (v. 4) which 'seek the face of the God of Jacob' (v. 6) will experience his appearing.[40] The person praying in Ps 27 importunes God in his desire for greater personal immediacy; here heart speaks to face: 'Of thee my heart says: "Seek his face." Thy face, Yhwh, do I seek. Hide not thy face from me' (v. 8). At the conclusion of the prayer ('Wait for the Lord!', v. 14) faith's certainty of the coming vision is almost indistinguishable from the hope that longs for it. The real fulfilment of the Old Testament lies in such heart-to-heart, face-to-face immediacy, and hence we can understand the battle the God of the covenant fights against all images of God, which pretend to mediate him to man but in fact only put distance between God and man. Augustine expressed it as follows when commenting Ps 94.9: 'We have a promise of the vision of God, of the true and highest God. For it is a good thing to see him who sees us. Whoever serves false gods sees them easily, but he is seeing gods who have eyes yet see not. But to us is promised the vision of the God who both lives and sees' (*Sermo* 69, 3).[41]

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[34] Deut 31.17f.; 32.20; Mic 3.4; Is 8.17; 54.8; 57.17; 59.2; 64.6; Jer 33.5; Ezek 39.23; Job 13.24; Ps 13.2; 22.25; 27.9; 30.8; 44.25; 51.11; 69.18; 88.15; 102.3; 143.7.

[35] Ezek 15.7; Am 9.4, 8; Ps 80.17.

[36] Job 16.12f.; Lam 2.4f.

[37] We find a balanced but not wholly satisfactory presentation of this in A. Gelin, '"Voir Dieu" dans l'Ancien Testament', in: *Bible et Vie Chrétienne* 23 (1958), pp. 1–12.

[38] W. Baudissin, '*Gott Schauen' in der alttestamentlichen Religion* (1915). F. Nötscher, '*Das Angesicht Gottes Schauen' nach biblischer und babylonischer Auffassung* (1924). One also enters the sanctuary to 'consult the face of Yhwh' in the manner of a mechanical oracle (2 Sam 21.1).

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[39] M. J. Kraus, *Psalmen*, p. 145; von Rad, *Ges. Stud.*, p. 239.

[40] *Ibid.*, I, p. 197.

The case of the pious believer who experiences these things does not, as a result, undermine the truth of the statement that Israel's God is invisible, even if the believer insists on seeking and finding God's face. The Wisdom literature will interpret this vision as an 'insight', a 'seeing into' which leads to knowledge (εἰδέναι: Wis 13.1; 15.3);[42] but the Hebrew origins of this vision should not be forgotten even though in this literature the mode of thought is becoming more Greek. In the transition from myth to philosophy, the Greek god becomes wholly invisible, but the God of the Old Testament does not, even in the Wisdom literature.[43] 'To seek God' here means at bottom to make the attempt to see with God's eyes, in God's manner of seeing (*cf.* Sir 39.16–35). To 'seek without respite' (Ps 105.4) is for the pious believer an essential part of his visionary experience. In Hosea the 'search for God' (3.5; 5.15) and *daʿat-Elohim* (the existential, experiential knowledge of God: 4.1; 6.6; etc.) are inseparably united. But what in the search is bestowed by anticipation contains ever-greater promises and projects the fulfilment of the vision forward into the eschaton (Is 40.5). In comparison with the coming light, the ultimate finding of the Face can without any sense of regret be called taking shelter in God's shadow, in the shadow of his wings or of his hand (Ps 17.8; 57.2; 63.8; Hos 14.8; Is 49.2; 51.16). And in Jeremiah and Ezekiel the paradox is proclaimed that God will be precisely with those who are sent into exile, and not with those who in the temple still have the pledge of his cultic presence (Jer 29.12; Ez 11.14f.).

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[41] Outside Israel, too, there are authentic parallels for this experience of being seen by God; *cf.* F. Nötscher, op. cit., pp. 119–147. But the distance between these parallels and Israel's own experience also becomes evident. Among the pagans, the god before whose glance one comes and in whose sight one lives is a dispenser of 'gifts': life, health, and so on; but never does he, above all, give himself, as is the case with the God of Israel.

[42] *Cf.* E. Fascher, 'Deus Invisibilis', in: *Festschrift für R. Otto* (1931), p. 58.

[43] R. Bultmann, 'θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε: Untersuchungen zum Johannesevangelium', in: *ZNW* 1930, pp. 169–192.

Because of his deep knowledge of the tradition, Paul will anchor every aspect of man's vision of God in God's all-embracing and ever-surpassing vision of man and in man's awareness of being thus seen (Gal 4.9; 1 Cor 8.3; 13.12; 2 Cor 5.11; Phil 3.12).

3. COSMIC LITURGY

So far our discussion has not integrated into God's glory some of the most essential attributes of the Godhead—we mean all those which express God's relationship as gracious to man.[1] And such attributes are indispensable in order truly to see the subject of biblical theophanies and, therefore, in order to be in a position to appraise the full implications of these theophanies themselves. Nevertheless, we can already at this point venture to examine something of those revelations of glory that take on the form of natural phenomena. The basic characteristic of all these utterances, whose realism does not wane in the course of time, is their orientation toward praise—praise that strives to witness to the ever renewed presence of the unquestionable glory of the God of history and of the universe, who never ceases to approach Israel as a living reality. The language of such witness does not always use the dialectical procedure of the redactor of the Pentateuch, but often a seemingly more straightforward form which describes the appearance of glory preeminently in terms of the threatening magnificence of the storm: storm-wind, ominous clouds that float, by darkness, lightning that erupts from the gloom, the roar of thunder, downpours of rain, and destructive hail. And yet these phenomena are nowhere described for their own sake, but only as emphatic symbols of the self-revealing Lord. Other symbols are also incorporated into the narratives that do not derive from the storm but that give the divine appearance an even more terrifying and (because of the mixing of images) also more abstract character; the addition of these symbols not deriving from the storm moreover, permits us to see that Yhwh was never seen as a storm-god.[2] The complex of literary utterances on this subject, tirelessly elaborated throughout the centuries and incapable of being restricted or tied down from any one angle, unites an intense realism with the feeling of distance that always characterises the Old Testament.[3]

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[1] See below under 'Grace and Covenant,' pp. 144f.

[2] A. von Gall, *Die Herrlichkeit Gottes* (1900), p. 23. Duhm, *Psalmen* (1922²), p. 356. S. Grill, *Die Gewittertheophanie im Alten Testament* (*Heiligenkreuzer Studien* I, Wien, 1931). On what follows, see especially Jörg Jeremias, *Theophanie: die Geschichte einer alttestamentlichen Gattung* (1965, henceforth referred to as *JJ*), where all texts relating to form, origin,

The oldest hymnic document which portrays a theophany, the 'Song of Deborah', would appear to provide us with the key for the understanding of most later compositions. Through Deborah God's word calls for Barak to entice the superior might of Jabin and of Sisera, the general of his army, into the bed of the river Kishon, along with his chariots and his troops; there God would deliver the enemy into Barak's hands (Judg 4.7). The song itself, full of archaic wildness, partly reads as follows (Judg 5.4f., 21f.):

Yhwh, when thou didst go forth from Seir,
  when thou didst march from the region of Edom,
the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped,
  yea, the clouds dropped water.
The mountains quaked before Yhwh, (that is Sinai)
  Before Yhwh, the God of Israel . . .
The torrent Kishon swept them away,
  the onrushing torrent, the torrent Kishon.
  March on, my soul, with might!
Then loud beat the horses' hoofs
  with the galloping, galloping of his steeds.

God comes from Seir which, as the gloss in v. 5 tells us, is Sinai. He comes from that Mountain of God of the old theophany where Israel came to know God as manifest,[4] and he comes on the road that Israel had taken (Edom). He comes

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and context are critically examined and organised. For our purposes a brief survey will suffice.

[3] J. Hempel (*Gott und Mensch im Alten Testament*, 1926) has concluded that this is the distinctive characteristic of God's revelation to Israel, by contrast to the surrounding religions: 'You are but a man, and no god' (Ezek 28.2, 9); 'The Egyptians are men, and not God' (Is 31.3); 'I am God and not man' (Hos 11.9). For what follows this statement of Norman W. Porteous is essential: 'Mythological language has the peculiarity of being able to outlive the actual myth that originally created it'; *Das Danielbuch ATD* 23 (1962), p. 53.

[4] It is certainly striking that the description of a theophany in the Song

as the saving God of history in the storm and in its dripping darkness, which swells the dry riverbed to bursting, entangles and sweeps away the chariots of the enemy, and routs the riders. The 'natural theophany' is, therefore, to the highest degree an historical 'theophany of salvation'. By means of a violent storm God has brought victory; the tribes of Israel have only 'fought alongside' God. In this the song would prove to be a decisive model. The archaic blessing of Moses also began with 'Yhwh's coming from Sinai, from Seir he has dawned upon us; he shone forth (ἐπέφανεν, LXX) from Mount Paran' (Deut 33.2), he 'rides through the heavens to your help, and in his majesty through the clouds. The God of old is your refuge' (vv. 26f.). Such a conception helps us understand why later compositions by the Prophets assume an archaic form when comprehensive aid is expected from God, an assistance which demands just as powerful a revelation. In the words of Hertzberg: 'The Bible knows something about total revelation.' Thus we read in one of Isaiah's most original creations, which we have already referred to:

Behold, Yhwh[5] comes from afar,
  burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke;
his lips are full of indignation,
  and his tongue is like a devouring fire;
his breath is like an overflowing stream
  that reaches up to the neck;
to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction . . .
Yhwh will cause his majestic thunder-voice to be
  heard

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of Deborah does not formally make reference to the theophany at the Exodus (*JJ*, pp. 105, 116). Still, J. Jeremias is right in pointing to the Sinai tradition as the only plausible point of departure for the theophanies, first, of the Song of Deborah, and then of the other victory hymns that contain a 'coming of Yhwh from Sinai' (Ps 68.9, 18, emended text; Deut 33.2; Hab 3.3 and portrayals of theophanies dependent on it). Already C. Westermann (*Das Loben Gottes in den Psalmen*, 1954, pp. 65f.) is in agreement with this view, by contrast to Weiser, who seeks for a *Sitz im Leben* in the cult.

[5] The present text has 'the name of Yhwh,' which doubtless is an anxious later weakening of a portrayal that was felt to be all too anthropomorphic.

and the descending blow of his arm to be seen,
in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire,
with a cloudburst and tempest and hailstones.
The Assyrians will be terror-stricken at the voice of
Yhwh,
when he smites with his rod (Is 30.27f., 30f.).

Habakkuk will make even more wholesale use of such archaic symbolic language, but to this we will come in a moment.

In the Song of Deborah there already lay the seed of a significant development: Sisera's chariots and steeds are swept away by the wildly erupting torrent, just as Pharaoh's chariots and steeds had been submerged in the tides of the Sea of Reeds as they crashed together. In the older song at the Sea of Reeds (Ex 15.1b–11), moreover, theophanic images had already been used: 'In the greatness of thy majesty (*ga'on*) thou overthrowest thy adversaries . . .; at the blast of thy nostrils the waters piled up' (Ex 15.7f.). Later reflection on that first historical event which lays the foundation for all of Israel's salvation comes to the conclusion that it was for Israel that God laid bare the bottom of the sea; and since 'sea' (*tehom*) also means 'abyss,' 'chaos,' 'nether-world,' here God's primal power over the forces of the abyss also becomes visible. Thus, to the portrayal of the natural forces which are agitated and set loose in the storm there is joined—secondarily and by way of illustration—another portrayal: that derived from the Akkadian myth of Marduk's taming of the chaotic waters (Tiamat and the monsters conceived by her).[6] Israel, which knows precisely what it can say and wants to say about its God, uses mythical imagistic materials unabashedly and combines these with the common Oriental images of the epiphany in the storm, for which there likewise existed numerous cultic hymns to storm-gods in Sumeria, Babylon, Ugarit, and Canaan.[7] The magnificent and very ancient Ps 29 surely contains pre-existent images and forms from hymns to weather-gods, but there is no question that here it is Yhwh's glory that predominates; to him all the heavens call out 'Glory!':

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[6] 'Weltschöpfungslied *Enuma eliš*,' in: *AOT*, pp. 109–29. The same connection between the miracle at the Sea of Reeds and the battle with Chaos is made also in Ps 77.17–20 and Ps 114.3–7; *cf.* Is 51.9f. *Cf. JJ*, p. 96 for the fact that there can be no question of a subsequent historicisation of the mythical battle with Chaos in the event at the Sea of Reeds; this had been suggested by Mowinckel and Wright. In Ps 114.3, 5 the miracle of the crossing of the Jordan is also included in the complex of motifs. If the Ugaritic myth takes the sea and the torrent as being enemies to Baal, then in our context this corresponds to the Sea of Reeds and the Jordan as being the forces repelled by Yhwh (*JJ*, p. 93).

Give to Yhwh, O heavenly beings,
  give to Yhwh glory and strength.
Give to Yhwh the glory of his name;
  fall down before Yhwh at his holy theophany.[8]
  the God of glory thunders,
  Yhwh, upon many waters.
The voice of Yhwh is powerful,
  the voice of Yhwh is full of majesty.
The voice of Yhwh breaks the cedars,
  Yhwh breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf,
  and Sirion like a young wild ox.
The voice of Yhwh flashes forth flames of fire.
The voice of Yhwh shakes the wilderness,
  Yhwh shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of Yhwh makes the hinds to calve
  and brings kids early to birth.
The God of glory thunders,
  and in his temple all cry, 'Glory!'
Yhwh sits enthroned over the flood;
  Yhwh sits enthroned as king for ever (Ps 29.1–10).[9]

God's roaring voice of thunder and his victory over the primal waters are here glorified without apparent reference to salvation-history; this psalm is a pure song of praise to him who alone is mighty, and all 'divine' beings, the whole palace of the heavens, are to join in its praise. Such a song, consisting of glorification that immediately passes over to the glory itself, can be adopted by Israel because it knows the 'name' of its God not from the garbled roll of thunder, but because God himself has revealed his name to Israel through instruction, historical assistance, and promises. How Israel interpreted such a hymn for itself may be seen from Ps 97, which derives from it; here all divine beings are likewise summoned to venerate God (v. 7), for the reason that God 'is exalted far above' them (v. 9). Here the description of the *kabod* in nature ('darkness and clouds' surround God) are immediately counterbalanced with 'justice and right' as being the supports of his throne. The 'consuming fire that goes before him' destroys his enemies all around him (v. 3) and 'delivers from the hand of the godless' (v. 10). And if the 'earth trembles, the mountains melt like wax before the Ruler of all the earth,' we also know that the 'heavens proclaim his righteousness and all the peoples behold his glory' (vv. 4ff.). The ultimate word on theophany is now 'light' and God's ultimate attribute, which gives us cause for jubilation, is 'holiness' (vv. 11f.).

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[7] *Cf.* the 'Hymn to Adad-Ramman,' in: *AOT*, pp. 248f. For Ugarit, see H. L. Ginsberg, *'Kitwe Ugarit': The Ugaritic Texts* (1936), pp. 129f. Numerous texts in *JJ*, pp. 75–87.

[8] For this translation, see H. J. Kraus, 'Psalmen I,' in: *BK* (1961), p. 233.

[9] The final verse (v. 11) is probably a later addition: 'May Yhwh give strength to his people! May Yhwh bless his people with peace!'

When late post-Exilic psalms undertake to recall the great deeds God wrought for Israel in the past, they consciously harken back to an archaic tone. This is shown in Ps 77, which presents the crossing of the Red Sea in the style of the Tiamat myth and the hymns to Hadad in order to underscore the significance of the Exodus as being the salvific re-creation of Israel:

> I will call to mind the deeds of Yah;
>   yea, I will remember thy wonders of old.
> I will meditate on all thy work,
>   and muse on they mighty deeds . . .
> Thou art the God who workest wonders,
>   who hast manifested thy might among the peoples
>   . . .
> The waters saw thee, O Yhwh;
>   when the waters saw thee, they were afraid,
>   yea, the deep trembled.
> The clouds poured out water;
>   the skies gave forth thunder;

the arrows flashed on every side.[10]
The crash of thy thunder was in the chariot-wheels;
thy lightnings lightened up the world;
the earth trembled and shook.
Thy way was through the sea,
thy path through the great waters;
yet thy footprints were unseen.
Thou didst lead thy people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron (Ps 77.11f, 14,
16–20).

The use of myth to portray the saving event and the use of the natural wonder to interpret an historical occurrence[11] show above all that, for Israel, the significance of the salvific miracle reaches far beyond what the bare natural phenomenon of the opening of the pathway through the Sea of Reeds appears to demonstrate.

This becomes fully evident in the theophany inserted into the first part of that 'royal *Te Deum*,' Psalm 18. The king give thanks for having been saved from extreme danger. 'The torrents of perdition assailed me, the cords of Sheol entangled me,' and in his affliction he cried to the Lord and the Lord heard him. Then there followed the description of the God who comes to deliver:

The earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations of the mountains trembled
and quaked, because he was angry,
Smoke went up from his nostrils,
and devouring fire from his mouth . . .
He bowed the heavens and came down;
thick darkness was under his feet.
He rode on a cherub, and flew;
he came swiftly upon the wings of the wind.
He makes darkness his covering around him,
his canopy thick cloud, dark with water.
Out of the brightness before him
there broke through his clouds

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[10] That is to say, the 'strokes of lightning.'

[11] A. Weiser, 'Glaube und Geschichte im Alten Testament,' in: *Beitr. z. Wiss. v. A. und N. T.*, IV, 4 (1931). M. Noth, 'Die Historisierung des Mythus im Alten Testament,' in: *Christentum und Wissenschaft* 4 (1928).

hailstones and coals of fire.
Yhwh also thundered in the heavens,
and the Most High uttered his voice . . .
He sent out his arrows, and scattered them;
he flashed forth lightnings, and routed them.
Then the bed of the sea was seen,
and the foundations of the world were laid bare,
at thy rebuke, O Yhwh,
at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.
He reached from on high, he took me,
he drew me out of many waters.
He delivered me from my strong enemy,
and from those who hated me;
for they were too mighty for me (Ps 18.7–17).

Images crowd in on one another in order to convey the full weight of what has occurred: God's glory is storm and tempest, but it also is the creative force exhibited for Israel's salvation through the miracle at the Sea of Reeds; such salvation, in turn, at the same time means deliverance from Sheol's realm of death; and the king, threatened in war and triumphant in victory, places himself squarely in the middle of this event, which is at once a cosmic happening and an event of salvation-history.[12] As in Ps 97, in Ps 18 too, after the theophany, everything is put in the context of God's attributes as saviour, of his condescension (v. 27), and of his love as redeemer (v. 50).

Now the same God who appears in his revelation of salvation as being the absolutely glorious is recognised as the Lord of the world from his manifestation in natural phenomena of great marvel. Job is no Jew and therefore cannot read the glory of nature directly in terms of an historical glory of salvation. Nevertheless, through the sublimeness, unfathomableness, and magnificence of nature he is able to glimpse at the glory of the transcendental Creator. In the great hymn of Job 36.22–37.24 the images drawn from the storm are there, but incorporated into other images which no less than the former impose a state of awe before the Inscrutable who 'is clothed with terrible majesty' (37.22; *cf.*

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[12] *Cf.* Ps 144.5ff.

Jer 10.12f. = 51.15f.; *cf.* Ps 135.7; 144.5). In the same spirit, but with brighter tones, Sirach sketches a great canvas of God's glory in the cosmos (ch. 43), where the magnificence of the storm is only one of the many witnessing wonders: 'The universe stands firm in his glory' (42.17). Also in Ps 104, a cosmic hymn, the stormy theophany constitutes but the beginning for the unfolding of the world's total goodness and beauty; from the outset God is clothed in the majestic mantle of the light (vv. 1f.), and everything draws life from the benevolent glance of his face and from the inspiration of his breath (v. 29).

If Ps 29 is the sensory glorification of the abstract (non-integrated) *kabod*, then Ps 104 is the sensory glorification of the concrete (integrated) *kabod*. And essentially all of it is a liturgy: a liturgy of man, who has an historical knowledge of God, united with unconscious nature, which in mute, encoded language delivers to itself 'hieroglyphic' tidings (Ps 19.2–5), while man, knowing God's commands in the form of the word (Ps 19.9f.), can render unto God with utter openness and clarity the praise of glory that is due him. It is certainly correct to say that the original *Sitz im Leben* of the theophanic Yhwh-psalms was the song of victory sung after a holy war; but charismatic wars had come to an end with the first period of the kings, and so this hymnic form is transferred to the liturgy. Here the form is, on the one hand, enriched with an extensive mythical imagery and, on the other hand, it is also given literary allures. The hymnic form becomes the traditional stylistic means for describing Yhwh's might and his eventful dynamism. Then the Prophets appropriate these images and the past or present event (Ps 50) is transferred into the future: the idea of the 'day of Yhwh'[13] blends with the traditional theophanic images: God, who earlier had stormed in as a warrior to fight for Israel, can henceforth approach also to give a judgment against Israel or to save it against the people who are to be judged. Ezekiel's first vision sees the 'glory of God' approaching in the storm-wind of the older theophanies, and the vision of the burning of Jerusalem (Ez 10.6f.) with a glowing coal from the fire of the *kabod* takes up one of the images of Ps 18: 'Out of the brightness before [God] there broke through the clouds hailstones and coals of fire' (v. 12).

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[13] *JJ*, pp. 97f. G. von Rad, 'The Origin of the Concept of the Day of Yahweh,' in: *JSS* 4 (1959), pp. 97–108. Numerous other pertinent texts of the Prophets and the apocalypticists may be found in *JJ*.

Yet again, in Habakkuk, we find a hymn (3.1–19) which also served liturgical purposes and which in a prophetic vision gathers up the whole gamut of archaic images, this time to give expression to an eschatological hope of redemption:

Eloah came from Teman
  and the Holy One from Mount Paran.
His glory covered the heavens,
  and the earth was full of his praise.
A brightness as of light was under him,
  rays flashed from his hand.
Before him went pestilence,
  and plague followed close behind.
He stood and shook the earth;
  he looked and made nations tremble;
then the eternal mountains were riven,
  the everlasting hills sank low.
I saw the tents of Kushan in affliction;
  the tent-curtains of Midian did flutter (Hab 3.3–7).

Once again the *kabôd* comes from Sinai (this is why in v. 7 the people of the south tremble); but into the exodus-tradition there is here incorporated the tradition of the vision of Isaiah, which sees the glory of the Unseeable One only 'under him,' as 'train' trailing behind him. History and prophecy are intertwined. The two demons that ward off enemies, Pestilence and Plague, have a mythical effect; they express the terrifying nature of God's appearance just as much as the more traditional breaking apart and bowing of the mountains.

Was thy wrath against the rivers, O Yhwh,
  was thy indignation against the sea,
when thou didst ride upon thy horses,
  upon thy chariot of victory?
Thou didst strip the sheath from the bow,
  and put the arrows to the string.

Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers;
the mountains saw thee, and writhed.
The raging waters swept on;
the deep gave forth its voice.
The sun forgets to turn in his course,
and the moon stands still at her zenith.
At the light of thy arrows they sped,
at the flash of thy glittering spear (Hab 3.8–11).

Again here images are interfused from both contexts—that of the storm and that of the victory at creation over the chaotic seas. But Yhwh is not Marduk, and the initial question, which presupposes this myth, for the time being remains unanswered. Yhwh's rage will afterwards be revealed as having had quite different motivations. For now the nature images predominate; even the almost apocalyptic image of the darkening and fleeing sun and moon is here still seen wholly in the context of the threatening storm: the glimmering of arrow and spear points to the lightning. Only the final strophe discloses where this wealth of images has been leading:

Thou didst bestride the earth in fury,
thou didst trample the nations in anger.
Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people,
for the salvation of thy anointed.
Thou didst crush the house of the wicked,
uncovering its foundations to the bare rock.
Thou didst pierce his head with thy shafts,
and his leaders are scattered by the whirlwind.
Their joy was to crush the just man,
to devour the poor in an ambush.
Thou didst trample their horses into the sea,
into the swell of mighty waters (Hab 3.12–15).

Thus what until now had been a battle in nature is revealed as God's historical struggle against the godless, in which he delivers his 'people' and its anointed king, the 'just man' who had already been drawn into an ambush where he was to have perished. Time and time again the image of the Sea of Reeds and of the primal ocean of the beginning emerges to give vivid portrayal to the eschatological battle of judgment.

In future this was to occur even more frequently: in Ps 50, which portrays God's judgment on Israel, the God who comes to judge is endowed with the attributes of the glory of the storm (vv. 3f.). Similarly Nahum (1.3–6) describes God's coming in a cosmic tempest to execute angry judgment on Niniveh. In Third Isaiah (63.19–64.3) the Prophet yearns for precisely such an appearance of God, since from it he awaits salvation: 'O that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake before thy face . . .'

This rapid survey has taught us one more thing—that one cannot establish sharp lines of demarcation[14] among the three forms of the *kabod*: the 'historical' *kabod* (with its centre in Sinai), the 'prophetic' *kabod* (with its clearest expression in Isaiah and Ezekiel), and the 'cosmic' *kabod* (in the nature-psalms, in Job, and in Sirach). The three forms are integrated beyond separation. In the theology of Israel the historical experience of God occupies first position, serving as foundation for everything else; this experience primarily[15] presents itself as including a sensory element, and then, for further clarification, it draws on both natural and mythical images. The prophetic experience, as Habakkuk has shown, can blend inseparably with the historico-natural experience; and the vision of God's glory in the cosmos is at bottom the vision of those who know God's historical word and action and who, with enlightened eyes, see the Creator in the creation (Rom 1.19f.).

After the battle God puts away his bow, with which he has shot the arrows of lightning. As a sign of peace between heaven and earth, he lays it upon the clouds. The Septuagint translates the *keshet* of Genesis (9.13f.). not as ἶρις but as τόξον: the rainbow that appears after the angry storm and the great waters is the bow as an instrument of war. No ancient man could, and not even modern man can, consider this sign, so erected, without being very deeply shaken. Even if the storm does not 'say' anything to him, the word 'peace' is uttered clearly by the bow of seven colours. It is this word that is perceived in the end, just as the God of Elijah was not in the violent storm, and not in the earthquake, and not in the fire, but in the whispering of the soft breeze (1 Kings 19.11f.). Thus we can understand why the last thing that Ezekiel sees and describes in his vision of God's glory is precisely this: 'Like the appearance of the bow that is in the clouds on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about [the Form]. Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord' (Ezek 1.28). And Sirach says:

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[14] Such as especially B. Stein (*Kebod Jahweh*, 1939) has attempted to draw.

[15] *Cf.* what we said above concerning the corporeo-spiritual totality of the experience of God.

> Look upon the rainbow, and praise him who made it,
> exceedingly beautiful in its brightness.
> It encircles the heaven with its glorious arc;
> the hands of the Most High have stretched it out
> (43.11f.).

In another passage he compares the high priest Simon with 'the rainbow, gleaming in glorious clouds' (50.7). Late Judaism warned against looking at the rainbow, because man cannot bear to look directly at the sight of God's glory and because it is audacious to presume to contemplate the revelation of God's glory without having withstood the revelation of God's holiness.[16] In John's Apocalypse the seven-coloured bow becomes an aureole about the Unnameable on the throne in heaven (4.3), a halo of light which can bathe even an angel in radiance (10.1). Here, too, it is the sign of the glory of God as he returns to a judgment of grace.

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[16] *ThWNT*, III, p. 341 (Rengstorf).

B. THE IMAGE

1. THE IMAGE AS THE CREATURE'S STATE OF SUSPENSION

a. The figure of God's hands

The beautiful does not live on splendour alone; it also needs figure (*Gestalt*) and image (*Bild*), even if what figure (*Ge-stalt*) does is attest to him who set it up (*der Stellende*), even if image (*Ge-bild*) is beautiful only as the imaging forth of that splendour which is beyond all images (*überbildlich*).[1] In the beauty both of nature and of art there is an element of victory: of the form-giving ***natura naturans*** and the human spirit which relates to it[2] over the rebelliousness of matter. Like no other theology, the theological aesthetics of the Bible allows for a serious and definitive development of the element of the image, for in the Bible alone the image is not a fleeting configuration of the imageless which must succumb to death or to the surpassing evolution of life or of the spirit; only in the Bible is the image something which God himself has set up with bold freedom over against himself—something which is to know God, respond to him in freedom, and welcome him with love. The full light of revelation will show that such a feat of daring on God's part is possible only because in God himself there exists an eternal reciprocity of living love: in the final analysis the biblical doctrine of the image can be understood only in light of the divine Trinity. And if in the end all worldly aesthetics needs a theological foundation, we can say in anticipation that only biblical theology provides a final, non-tragic justification for worldly beauty, since it is only here that the image, which finite worldly reality is of necessity, can be taken up and secured in the eternal Image, which is the archetypal image (*Urbild*) even as it is the image that transcends all images (*Überbild*).

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[1] See volume I, pp. 19f. (Eng. transl.)

[2] See volume III/1, pp. 719–723.

'Image' is the second of the three key ideas of biblical aesthetics, and it distinctively has to do with the creature which God has formed. The creature, in its identity as image, can be understood only through its origin from God and its consequent return to God; and yet, we must add at once that the creature is also granted a certain space to be at home within itself before God; indeed, a sphere of autonomy is allowed it over against God that it may be a 'world' of its own with respect to God. Only when this autonomy of the image has been sufficiently pondered can we then go on to the third leading concept: namely, grace, the offer of the covenant, the initiative of divine love toward the image of himself that he had formed; and in this not only does it become definitively evident what God's glory is, but also why God ventured such an image in the first place and wherein lies its perfecting. This results for the theologian in the establishment of a mutual priority between 'image' and 'covenant'[3] which, for the time being, must necessarily leave the essence of the image, considered in itself, in a state of suspension. It is the suspension proper to the creature as such, for the reason that, from its nature alone (and its nature is being-in-nothingness), the creature has absolutely no possibility of taking a position over against God.[4]

According to the tradition of P, at the conclusion of his work of creation God decided to fashion 'man' (the word is a collective noun and does not imply an individual), and, according to J, God 'formed' (ἔπλασεν) the first man from the pre-existent clay. This last work, therefore, is also a final 'victory' over 'matter', a crowning of the entire edifice that had preceded it. It is of theological significance that the Bible portrays God as a sculptor/potter whenever he sets about creating: for the creature the crux of the matter will always lie in reposing quietly and patiently between God's shaping hands.[5] The concluding statement which says that God breathed the breath of life into his creation completes the analogy with the creative artist by surpassing it. The concrete, parabolic character of this statement ought not to escape us, even if it is also said that God creates with his word and later on the final consequences are drawn from these initial premises: namely, that God creates from nothing and not from a pre-existent chaos.

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[3] Karl Barth has captured this priority in the now classical formula that says that creation (and, with it, God's image in man) is the outward ground of the covenant and the covenant, in turn, is the inner ground of creation.

[4] Pascal has much to say on this; see volume III, pp. 188 ff. (Eng. transl.)

[5] 'God is the fashioner (*yotser*) of the universe (Jer 10.16; 51.19; 33.2; Gen

Now suddenly we are told that the last creature fashioned by God is to be distinguished from all the previous ones by the fact that, as a 'fashioned image' (*selem*), it is meant to stand in a relationship of 'similarity to' (*demuth*) God himself (Gen 1.26). The first expression (*selem*) derives from the skills associated with handicrafts; it denotes something which has been cut and carved and is therefore also applied to the images of idols.[6] Erect statues,[7] precisely because of their quality of having been *formed*, already have about them something of the divine;[8] and then the second expression (*demuth*) tones down this quality and makes it somewhat more undefined

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2.19; Ps 74.17; 104.26; 95.5; Is 45.7, 18; Amos 4.13), the shaper of historical events (2 Kings 19.25; Is 22.11; 37.26; 46.11; Jer 18.11) and, especially, of man (Gen 2.7f.; Ps 33.15; 94.9; Is 27.11; 29.16; 43.1, 7, 21; 44.2, 21, 24; 45.9, 11; 49.5, 8; 64.7; Jer 1.5; 18.6; Zech 12.1). In all these passages the Hebrew original employs the same verb, namely *yatsar* ('to model' or 'to give shape to'). . . . In the following passages the Greek Bible uses πλάσσειν in exactly the same sense: Gen 2.15; 2 Macc 7.23; Job 10.8f.; 34.15; 40.19; Ps 90.2; 119.73; 139.5; Pr 8.25; 24.12; Wis 15.11; Hab 1.12; Rom 9.20; 1 Tim 2.13' (D. Barthélemy, *Gott mit seinem Ebenbild*, 1966, p. 88, note 4).

[6] Num 33.52; 2 Kings 11.18; 2 Chr 23.17; Ezek 7.20; Amos 5.26.

[7] We here base ourselves on the pioneering work of P. Humbert, *Etudes sur le récit du paradis et de la chute dans la Genèse* (1940), especially ch. 5, 'L'imago Dei', pp. 53–75. See also L. Koehler, 'Die Grundstelle der Imago-Dei-Lehre, Genesis 1.26', in: *ThZ* 4 (1948), pp. 16–22. Koehler is of the opinion that it is especially the erect posture of man, by contrast to the animals, that expresses his likeness to God and his domination over the world as a representative of God.

[8] The element of form, when referred to man, obviously includes his corporeality; but to oppose this element to man's psychic and interior component would be a modern move, not at all consistent with the mentality of the ancient Near East. As the Eastern mind sees it, the corporeal gives expression to the specifically interior reality of what appears. On the other hand, we can also say that, 'if form is an essential part of the *imago*,

and only analogical.[9] The second expression does not introduce an essentially new viewpoint, as shown by v. 27 (where *demuth* does not appear). And we can surmise nothing from the change of prepositions (*b*^{e} and *k*^{e}, in Greek κατά both times), since in 5.3 they appear precisely reversed.

The text, which is austere in its words and intentionally remains mysterious, leaves open the question as to where exactly it is that this similarity between God and his image lies. The text merely points to the fact of the similarity, and that in itself raises man up far beyond all other beings in the world. This elevation of man above all other inferior beings is what immediately emerges from what follows: 'Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth' (v. 26). In the first account God presents to man the plants and animals that had already been created; in the second, man's superiority is manifested by the fact that he is created first and that only

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this means that even God has form and that this is quite in keeping with the evidence of the Old Testament' (J. J. Stamm, 'Die Imago-Lehre von Karl Barth', in: *Antwort: Karl Barth-Festschrift*, 1956, pp. 84–98, esp. p. 95). We already saw in the first section of this part (see esp. 'Form and non-form') that all the anthropomorphic constructs of the Old Testament convey in general an awareness that they are at one and the same time both indispensable and questionable. We know that our older dogmatic theology considered the elements of form in the divine epiphanies as paths and preliminary steps to the Incarnation of the Logos. God is not formless; rather, he has a form beyond all other forms (*übergestalthaft*), something which Hegel saw in a very positive light.

Now, in two passages (Ps 39.7 and 73.20) *selem* also means 'shadow' or 'fleeting image' (although it is questionable whether in both cases the words can be derived from the same stem). But we would hardly do well on this account to claim that God's 'primal form', in accordance with which Adam's form was supposedly fashioned, is identical with God's 'appearing form' in the theophanies (T. C. Vriezen, 'La création de l'homme d'après l'image de Dieu', in: *Oudtestamentische Studien* II, 1943, pp. 87–105, esp. p. 96).

[9] The text offers no basis for the division introduced by the Church Fathers between *imago* (εἰκών) and *similitudo* (ὁμοίωσις), the former referring to man's natural image of God and the latter to man's vocation to a supernatural likeness to God (or his endowment with grace before the fall). But the tension itself which the Fathers detected in the concept of the image is fundamental and will shortly be discussed.

then does God 'make every tree to grow out of the ground' by means of the surge of water that he makes to spring up out of the earth (2.9,6). In both narratives the crux of the matter is man's function of ruling over the world.[10] We must remember that in antiquity an image commonly denoted the making present of the thing portrayed: this is why a great king would set up statues of himself in his provinces, and also why the practice suggests itself of casting spells with images of the gods and even of acquiring power over the god by possessing the image that contains him.[11] With this in mind we will clearly see the meaning of the text as saying that man is put in the world as a representative of God and of God's power as ruler. But this implies a special relationship of man to God—a proximity and an immediacy of kinship (God's *breath* entered man!) that sets him apart from all other beings.[12] And this is an 'ontological statement' concerning man, as Protestant scholars themselves affirm in spite of their own dogmatics: 'The Old Testament nowhere entertains the idea that man has lost his likeness to God because of having sinned.'[13] 'God's image in man has been neither lost nor mutilated. In any event, the Old Testament knows nothing of this. Gen 9.6 speaks as much about God's image in man as does Gen 1. This proves that man's being God's image in no way connotes that all is well between them, but rather that God has put man in a special relationship to himself. . . . This relationship is man's ontological calling to divine sonship, which is never lost, not even through original sin, because it is founded upon God's will and therefore in creation itself.'[14]

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[10] W. Caspari, 'Imago Divina', in: *Reinh. Seeberg-Festschrift* (1929), pp. 197f. 'The appointment of man to lordship over the earth is remarkably secular. According to the Babylonian epic of creation, the destiny enjoined on man at his creation is the service of the gods.' Von Rad, *ThOT* Vol. I, p. 147, note.

[11] J. Hehn, 'Zum Terminus "Bild Gottes"', in: *Festschrift für E. Sachau* (1915), pp. 36–52.

[12] F. Horst, *Face to Face: The Biblical Doctrine of the Image of God* (1950).

[13] G. von Rad, *ThWNT* II, p. 390.

[14] T. C. Vriezen, *Theologie des Alten Testaments in Grundzügen* (1956), p. 177. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* III/2: 'the dispute whether man lost his likeness to God by sin finds a self-evident solution. It is not lost' (p. 324).

Nevertheless, even as he establishes this relationship, God also preserves a distance that is expressed in the mysterious plural form of his monologue: 'Let us make men according to our image.' He here turns to his heavenly court—to the *Elohim* ('beings who surround God') or the *b*^{e}*ne-Elohim* ('sons of God', 'angels')—for God is not alone in his heaven (Is 6, Job 1), but is 'surrounded by all his heavenly host' (1 Kings 22.19).[15] Seen in this way, man receives a share of heavenly dignity; a godlike element has been bestowed on him. The Book of Wisdom would express the same thing in Greek terms: 'God created man in incorruption (ἀφθαρσία), and made him in the image of his own eternity (ἀϊδιότης)' (Wis 2.23).[16] The thought of 'immortality', however, is here barely

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J. J. Stamm (*op. cit.*, p. 91) declares: 'The Old Testament knows nothing of the affirmation by Reformed theology that man's likeness to God has been lost, and this insight' has become established among scholars 'by nearly unanimous consent'. In addition to the writers we cite, Stamm also refers to Dillmann, Gunkel, Eichrodt, Humbert, Koehler, and Zimmerli. The significance of this insight for ecumenical dogmatics is very great. *Cf.* von Rad, *ThOT* vol. I, p. 143.

[15] G. von Rad, *Genesis* (1953), p. 60; *ThOT* I, p. 145. Karl Barth has objected against such a conception as follows: 'How could non-divine beings even assist in an advisory capacity in an act of creation, let alone have an active part in the creation of man, as we are expressly told?' Barth therefore suggests, if not exactly the trinitarian interpretation of the ancient Church, then at least an indication of the interior vitality of God, who is 'not alone' but rather 'includes in Himself the differentiation and relationship of I and Thou' (*Church Dogmatics* III/1, p. 192). We would say, however, that this is surely one of those passages where we can clearly feel the presence of an inspiration that is making the inspired writer say more than he himself can grasp, given the stage of his religious consciousness. And, further, considering the unity of the Bible as a whole, we will certainly have to claim that the trinitarian interpretation does, in fact, yield the plenary sense (*sens plénier*) of the passage. Were we to inquire concerning the partial meaning of the passage, however, that sense of it that the writer must consciously have intended, then we ought not necessarily to exclude *a limine* the possibility of 'angels' who serve God as his collaborators. For in the ancient conception of the world 'angels' held the position of what the scholastics would come to call *causae secundae*, and in the second account of the creation we see God using the already existing (and somehow already fashioned) earth to give shape to Adam's *selem*.

[16] This is the correct reading, and not ἰδιότης, which is the unique 'nature' proper to God.

hinted at, since it does not lie within the scope of Genesis. What is essential here are the two aspects of man's distinct contraposition to God (as the work is distinct from the artist) and of man's task to represent God as ruler.

b. Crowned with glory

Psalm 8 begins with God's praise, with the 'greatness of his Name throughout the earth', the 'majesty (*hod*) that stretches out over the heavens', and the statement, unique in the Old Testament, that from the mouth of children and sucklings God has built for himself a bulwark against his enemies. And then, as if spurred on by this reference to God's opponents, the psalm continues:

> When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
> the moon and the stars which thou hast established;
> what is man that thou art mindful of him,
> and the son of man that thou dost care for him?
> Yet thou hast made him little less than a divine being (*Elohim*)
> and dost crown him with glory (*kabod*) and honour (*hadar*).
> Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands;
> thou hast put all things under his feet,
> all sheep and oxen and also the beasts of the field,
> the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
> whatever passes along the paths of the sea.
> Yhwh, our Lord,
> how majestic is thy name in all the earth! (Ps 8.4–10).

This psalm's reflection on the doctrine of Gen 1 still remains within the sphere of the latter to the extent that the psalm understands God's 'image' in man fundamentally as man's dominion over the animals created by God. But the psalm goes beyond the statement in Genesis because of its great wonderment at the fact that the exalted God has condescended to come so low and to put something of his own divine glory into man's tiny being. The thought starts off from the laudatory affirmation of the divine majesty in all creation, then passes on to the astonishment that heavenly *kabod* is to be found in man, finally to return to the praise of God's glory. With a tone of distant awe, the basis for man's dignity is then given as being man's relationship to the celestial sons of God, and not man's unmediated relationship to God himself. It is already astonishing enough that 'ephemeral', 'mortal', 'earth-bound' man (*enosh, ben-adam*) is compared to the Immortals. The figure formed from clay receives a crown which it does not apparently deserve; this crown, however, is bestowed on it not only externally, but it declares the creature to be interiorly a being related to God and destined to rule. The crux of the matter here is the incomprehensible oscillation between lowliness and exaltation, between God's glory, proper to God alone, and the reflected splendour of the glory that emanates from God and enfolds man, without the human form ever being able to contain this splendour within itself.

Both texts envisage man as a whole, without any preferential isolation of his soul, which would run counter to Hebrew thought. This enables Ezekiel to use the word 'beauty' (*yofi*) instead of 'glory' in a passage where he is using a creation narrative which was parallel to the narrative we read in Genesis: 'You were the exemplary seal, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God' (until the fall through sin): 'so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and the guardian cherub drove you out from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendour' (Ezek 28.12f., 16f.). From this story, obscure in many ways, of the fall through sin let us for the moment retain only the emphasis on man's beauty. Psalm 8 in no way takes into consideration a loss of the glory originally assigned to man; indeed, it speaks as if wholly overlooking all the historical aberrations of human nature. We must agree with Peter Brunner when, on the basis of these scriptural statements, pointing simultaneously at 'created form' and at 'God', he affirms:

> 'Man participates in God's theophanous form. . . . The concept of *hadar* expresses the fact that man bears a noble beauty within himself that becomes manifest precisely in his form. For *hadar* is parallel to *to'ar* ('beautiful form'; Is 53.2). Ezek 28.12, too, sees original man in paradise as possessing a perfect beauty. Beauty and form belong together. But beauty and God also belong together. The colours, forms, and sounds which belong to God's theophanous form and which are intimately bound up with God in the Apocalypse, indicate that God is not without relationship to the beautiful and, hence, also not without relationship to form: which, in turn, means that what is God's 'form' in the heavenly world must remain for us an utterly incomprehensible mystery. Like primal Truth and primal Goodness, primal Beauty is a reality established by God's divinity itself.'

And P. Brunner concludes by pointing to God's tri-unity as the ultimate clue to this mystery.[17]

Almost concurrently with the 'image' motif there emerges in both creation narratives, especially in the second, the motif of 'eros'. At first 'eros' is the yearning of the male as he searches out creation to find a being who possesses the same divine breath and the same reflection of divine glory as he has received from God. Then it takes on the form of the miracle whereby God creates the fulfilment of the male's yearning from the male himself and presents the astounded man with the woman. Finally, we see 'eros' as the 'one flesh' that results from this encounter of male and female. 'The Jahwist's story of creation practically issues in this aetiological explanation of the power of *eros* as one of the images implanted in man by the Creator himself (v. 24f.), and so gives the sexual relationship between man and woman the dignity of being the greatest miracle and mystery of Creation.'[18] But this is, precisely, no merely biological mystery; rather, it occurs at the level of man's distinctive beauty as constituted by his being the image of God. Eros and beauty will henceforth belong together, all the darkness of sin notwithstanding.

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[17] P. Brunner, 'Der Erstgeschaffene als Gottes Ebenbild', lecture given in 1951 and published in: *Pro Ecclesia: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur dogmatischen Theologie* (1962), pp. 85–95. Our quotation is from p. 91.

[18] Von Rad, *ThOT* I, p. 150.

It was important to establish all this because Christian theology of the Greek strain at once began, understandably, to locate man's character as God's image wholly in his aspect as spirit, and this ultimately led to Augustine's psychological trinity in the soul (*memoria*, *intellectus*, *voluntas*). Then too, Protestant dogmatics to this day tends to identify man's character as God's image one-sidedly with an endowment received by man in his primaeval state before the Fall, which he lost by sinning; or it at least tends to identify the God-likeness with the fact that man continues 'to be addressed' by God's Word.[19] By contrast Sirach in his meditation on the position of man in the cosmos, still understands the affirmations of Gen 1 and Ps 8 in the original spirit:

> The Lord created man out of the earth,
> and turned him back to it again.
> He gave to them few days, a limited time,
> but granted them authority over the things upon the earth.
> He endowed them with might like his own,
> and made them in his own image. . . .
> He made for them tongue and eyes;
> he gave them ears and a heart for thinking.
> He filled them[20] with knowledge and understanding
> and made them to know good and evil.
> He set his eye in their hearts
> to show them the majesty of his works.
> And they will therefore praise his holy name,
> and proclaim the grandeur of his works. (Sir 17.1–3, 6–10)

Only then does Sirach come to the Law and its understanding, to the 'eternal covenant' and insight into God's decrees. On this we read:

> Their eyes saw the glorious works of his majesty,
> and their ears heard the glory of his voice. (v. 13)

[19] *Cf.*, for instance, Emil Brunner, *Dogmatik* II (1951), pp. 64f. ('responding actuality'); H. Thielicke, *Theologische Ethik* I: *Die Lehre von der Imago Dei in der evangelisch-katholischen Kontroverslehre*, pp. 317f.

[20] Thus in the Jerusalem Bible.

Sirach, too, speaks at first 'unhistorically', from a perspective which, much to our amazement, encompasses both the primaeval state of man and his state after sinning. Here man's mortality (17.1f.) apparently is already part of God's original plan, without his character as God's image (v. 3) being thereby put in jeopardy; and the 'knowledge of good and evil' (v. 7) is given to man by God without God's 'glance' into men's hearts (v. 8) being thereby extinguished. In place of *kabod*, here 'might' (ἰσχύς) such as God himself has is praised as God's particular gift to man; both things are nearly equivalent. The 'image', moreover, includes both the bodily senses and the spiritual faculties of man, and the Moulder's intention this time goes beyond the mere governance of the cosmos to culminate in the praise of God's glory in both creation and covenant—the act of praise which Ps 8 actually embodies. Nothing is taken away from man's state as 'crowned with glory', but everything is reduced to the praise of God, which Sirach strikes up resoundingly, beginning at 42.15. With this the peculiarly 'secular' character of the classical statements in the Bible concerning man's nature as 'image' is attentuated, and adjusted in the direction of a general religious understanding of existence such as, for instance, that of Egypt or Babylon.

c. The suspension of the image

All of these statements concerning man as the image of God clearly exhibit a provisional character, as if the fulfilment of this theme had been postponed and withheld. The first sign of this is the negative emphasis on the prohibition of images, so strong in the Old Testament. Man may not do precisely what God has done, namely, model a *selem*. When God does it he imparts something of his own glory to the 'statue'; if man were to model an image of God, he would impart to this image not the divine but his own human glory, and so the image would distort the required immediacy between God and man.[21] Only within this immediacy does the beauty of man—and especially of Israel—retain the rank God assigned to it, as the reflection of the divine grace and glory. 'He is your praise' (Deut 10.21), and if you follow his instructions 'he will set you high above all nations . . . in praise and in fame and in honour' (Deut 26.19); he alone is Israel's glory, which cannot be exchanged for anything else (Hos 4.7; Jer 2.11; Ps 106.20; *cf.* Rom 1.23). This already shows us how suspended the reality of the image is: as we have seen, it is an attribute of man as such, in all the states of his historicity, and yet it remains essentially a reference to God as the origin and finality of this attribute. The doctrine of man's nature as image acquires stability only when this standard of origin and finality is applied to the suspendedness of the image, that is, when the meaning of the image's origin is brought to bear through the New Testament's understanding of the image. Thus, Ps 8 will undergo its complete christological transposition in Heb 2.6–10. But even though the theme remains sealed, as it were, in the Old Testament, it is nonetheless important to establish its full dimensions in advance, so that it will not suffer any abridgment when we come to the New Testament. Let us examine four of these dimensions.

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[21] F. Michaeli, *Dieu à l'image de l'homme* (1950). D. Barthélemy, *Gott mit seinem Ebenbild* (German ed. 1966), pp. 107–132.

1. Gen 1.27 juxtaposes two fundamental statements: 'God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him' and 'Male and female he created them.' We see that here man's 'procreative ability is removed from God's image and shifted to a special word of blessing.'[22] And yet, without the specification 'man and woman' the subject of the first statement remains without definite contour. The second account shows this with greater clarity. Even though this account knows of a pre-existent relationship between God and the first man (2.16f.), yet with God's judgment that 'it is not good that man should be alone' it points to the fact that, with the male, the creation (in which everything is 'very good': 1.31) has not yet been completed. Thus it is that, as

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[22] G. von Rad, *Genesis*, p. 61, with W. Zimmerli, *1 Moses 1–11* (1943). Karl Barth has at great length (*Church Dogmatics* III/1, pp. 289–329 and

the man sleeps deeply, the woman is fashioned by God from the man's rib (her origin is *from him*) as his companion (she is made *for him*), and at her sight the man exclaims: 'This at last is bone of my bones. . . .'; and the text adds: 'Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh' (2.23f.). If, therefore, the sexual relationship was initially set *alongside* man's nature as image of God, nevertheless the I-Thou relationship, especially of man and woman (but *not* as sexually derived), is now seen to be squarely located *within* man's nature as God's image, for it is only in this way that the subject is completely displayed which is the bearer of the image. At this point, moreover, we see that the existence-for-one-another of the man and the woman, which is hierarchical and yet co-equal, is what constitutes the human subject; and with this the motif of partnership between God and man—the fact that man can be addressed by God and that God does indeed speak in him—comes to light with full force as the interior depth of man's relation to God as his image.[23] Man, says Karl Barth, 'in virtue of his nature must be formally prepared for grace. This takes place as he is not left alone', but receives his partner.[24] But

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III/2, pp. 285–324) expounded his contrary opinion, which sees the second sentence of Gen 1.27 ('male and female he created them') as providing 'an explication which is a precise definition of the text' that immediately precedes it, namely, 'in the image of God he created him.' Since, for Barth, to-be-human fundamentally implies to-be-with-others, we can understand why he interpreted the plural that occurs in the divine utterance ('let us make man') in a trinitarian direction. 'To-be-with-others', however, is a much more comprehensive concept than the sexual relationship between man and woman (as P. Brunner also suggests and Barth's total discussion makes clear); and, further, the second creation narrative speaks of sexual relationship so obliquely (woman comes from man, in Paradise there are no children . . .) that sexuality cannot be directly derived from man's original state as image of God. But Barth's contribution to our understanding of the *imago* must be integrated as an essential, though partial, element of our growing insight into man's nature as divine image.

[23] Thus, in Sir 17.11f. the whole development of man's nature as God's image is oriented toward the knowledge of God in the 'eternal covenant'.

[24] *Church Dogmatics* III/1, p. 290.

the whole statement remains suspended, clearly delineated and yet again shifting the boundaries; the puzzle can be solved only 'pro-spectively', by reference to the New Testament, where the man-woman relationship, precisely in its subtle gradation, will be immersed in the whole zone of 'glory' (1 Cor 11.7–12): in the New Testament the carnal relationship between man and woman will no longer be only an *image* of the relationship between God and mankind (or God and the people: Ezek 16, etc.), but rather, as the incarnate relationship between Christ as Bridegroom and the Church as Bride, the man-woman relationship will become the supra-sexual goal of the entire relationship between the sexes. Marriage, therefore, is not an 'image' of God in the protological sense, but only in the eschatological sense that, beyond a certain point, marriage transcends itself to become the virginal and eucharistic reciprocity between Christ as the Man and the Church as the Woman.

2. A second suspension—that between nature and grace—emerged when, on the one hand, God's *kabod* over man was seen to perdure beyond the fall through sin, whereas, on the other, the text of Ezekiel cited could totally rob man of that *kabod*: he who had been created in glory rose up in revolt because of his own great beauty and thus desecrated God's sanctuary: 'So I brought forth fire from the midst of you; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you' (Ezek 28.18). Likewise, God reared that foundling, Jerusalem, decked her out with garments and ornaments, and the damsel's 'beauty . . . was perfect through the splendour which I bestowed upon you': but she shamelessly gives away to her paramours all the finery God had given her, until God angrily strips her down to her original poverty and leaves her 'bare and naked': (Ezek 16.14, 39). Thus, it is man who brings about that 'exchange of the glory of God' for the 'shame' (Hos 4.7), the 'impotence' (Jer 2.11), the 'image of corruptible man' (Rom 1.23) which makes God withdraw his gifts. Nevertheless, not even in his most humiliating judgments on the sinner does God take back his call, his claim, or his promise. But the return to the

primaeval state is impeded by the sword of the Cherub (Gen 3.24; Ezek 28.16); we simply cannot reconstruct what existence in the grace of Paradise was like, not even after the death sentence had been passed (Gen 2.17; Wis 2.24; Rom 5.12).[25] The opaqueness of the primaeval state, which can be approached by us only dialectically,[26] and the impossibility of unearthing wholly univocal structures of 'nature' from man's different historical states, compel us rather in the intention of the Maker of the image[27] to look for whatever God's image in man might in the last analysis be. This intention, however, points forward to the definitive image which will appear with Christ and gather up into itself the meaning of all suspended fragments of the image that is man.

3. A third suspension—that between being and act—is related to the second. We have seen how in Gen 1 and in Ps 8 the content of the image is primarily expressed in man's mission to rule over the world, something which implicitly (and then explicitly in Sir 17) dictates a dialogical relationship between the knowledge of God and the response of God's call. The first element, to which the I-Thou structure of reciprocal existence (*das Mitsein*) belongs, can be regarded as the perduring being of the image, while in the second element something like a breaking off of communication can occur

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[25] On this, F. K. Schumann ('Imago Dei', in: *Imago Dei: Festschrift für G. Krüger*, 1932, pp. 167–180) is quite right: from our sinful state we can only feel our way backwards, 'as far as the analogies of our own existence can lead us' (p. 173).

[26] Gregory of Nyssa seems to have been especially aware of this irreducible dialectic. *Cf.* my book *Présence et Pensée: Essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Grégoire de Nysse* (1942), esp. pp. 29–60.

[27] Schumann (*loc. cit.*) makes the following general observation: 'Everything which is called an image' (as opposed to a mere 'likeness', which can be a neutral concept) brings with it an intention 'which alone makes the thing comprehensible in its character as image' (p. 176). Notice how in Wis 7.25f. the attributes 'reflection', 'emanation' from God, 'mirror' of God, and 'image' of God are all related in rapid succession to the one subject (namely, Wisdom). This shows us that here 'image' appears as being in the strongest ontological and intentional dependence on the divine 'archetype' (*Urbild*).

with respect to God from the side of the sinner: the sinner no longer answers, or, if he does, it is only as one turned away from God or as one who flees to hide himself.[28] It would almost seem as if man's aspect as *being* remains intact, while his aspect as *agent* has collapsed. However, we also have to say that the aspect of being is itself also brought under the dark shadows of punishment: he who is lord over the world must now perform the painful duties of a servant (Gen 3.17f.). And then, too, hidden in the punishment is the promised salvation that is to come: for the saving Lord will appear as the 'servant of Yhwh', and the experience of punishment creates an anticipated hunger and thirst for the word of God (Am 8.11f.) even when this word can still not be found. But when the 'New Man' becomes accessible through God's grace—that Man 'who is renewed in knowledge (of God) after the image of his Creator' (Col 3.10; cf. Eph 4.24)—then what had been seemingly dead and fragmented will be reactivated, not to return again to the suspension of the original image, but now to enter the bright form of the Son of the Father, who is the 'reflection of the glory of God and the very stamp of his nature' (Heb 1.3). The tension between being and act is resolved in him.

4. Everything, therefore, is summed up in the final suspension, that between Adam and Christ: Adam's glory as God's image is truly resplendent and becomes legible as form only prospectively, that is, only with reference to the Christ who is to come; but Christ, as 'Son of David' and therefore of Adam, really entered into the old form of the image in order to open it up from within and bring it to perfection. But this perfecting from within is at the same time the most decisive transcending of everything that can be termed 'image' with reference to creatures and to the world; for the perfecting which Christ accomplishes authenticates the polarity between God as the image-maker and the creature as itself the image through the intra-divine relationship of the

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[28] Adam as we know, hides himself after sinning, but he can clearly hear God's call and he answers from his hiding-place (Gen 3.10).

Father as begetter and the Son as begotten. The Son appears before the whole world as the 'icon of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created' (Col 1.15f.), so that henceforth the task at hand is the 'proclamation of the glory of Christ, who is the icon of God' (2 Cor 4.4). This event does not abolish the whole theology of the creature as image of God possessing the mature lordliness of a spiritual creature and sent by God into the world as its proper realm of action; but this lordliness is relativised into a form of 'dominion' (Phil 2.11) determined solely by the paradox of the Son who, while existing in the form of God, takes on the form of a servant. The tension contained in the image of Adam, to whose inherent difficulties the first man immediately succumbed, now becomes evident in all its lethal character: How can one who has been appointed not only to dispose things fully, but even to rule, at the same time be wholly pliant to God and a servant?

This open suspension of the image will appear disappointing to one looking for clear, self-contained concepts. And yet, how can we expect to be handed an image of God that could be ratified by creatures—an image of the living, eternal God who is the Wholly Other? Would not such an image be a means of subjecting the ever-elusive, ever sovereignly free God? And is it not rather the dignity of man that he himself, as God's image, cannot be pinned down absolutely, and that only the One who is both God and man can possess, know and represent the contents of this eternally uncontainable image?

2. THE IMAGE: TO BE A WORLD BEFORE GOD

a. A sketch book

We must now take a concrete look at the interior vitality of the image as the Bible understands it—of the image as it stands over against God. Thus, we will not yet deal with the drama that will be played between God and man as a result of the Word of grace that is sent forth from the divine Self; this drama will be explored later. We will now concern ourselves with that breadth and fullness of the subject who receives the divine Word in all the freedom of space that has been assigned to him, in all his ability to be a world before God. It is quite evident where it is that the Bible unfolds this theme: in the historical period when Israel emerges from the stage of 'archaic pan-sacrality' in primitive times, the period when the world was full of *numina* (*elohim*) and their marvels and horrors, and Israel has not yet entered the stage in which its existence and history are under the shaping form of either the prophetic or the priestly-liturgical principle. The first stage can still be studied in the Book of Judges; the final stage may be observed in the great Prophets and in the priestly theology of Deuteronomy and of Exilic and post-Exilic literature. Between the two phases we find what Gerhard von Rad has termed the 'humanism' and the 'enlightenment' of the period of the kings, from David to Solomon and beyond:[1] the emergence of man from his subjection to a cosmos understood sacrally to his distinctive 'humanness', to a 'wholly demythologised profaneness'; an awakening interest for things as they are in themselves (Solomon's writings on 'natural science'), for what are regarded by mankind as political and human forms of association, education, and wisdom, for a 'new way of looking at and recounting history', whereby the 'distance from history' is the prerequisite and the result is the energy to 'recreate great historical constellations' with the sovereignty exhibited by the masterpieces of the Yahwist and of the narrator of the story of David: these combine 'a peculiarly cool distance' with the 'intensest realism'.[2] Just as Greek literature emerges all at once, with Homer, at its greatest peak of perfection, so it is, too, with the historical prose of the Old Testament, throughout which are strewn precious gems of perfect literature (the song of Deborah, the story of Jotham, David's dirge for Saul and Jonathan, his 'last words', the earliest psalms . . .). The 'story of royal succession' (1 Sam 9–20) does not contain a single miracle: the 'miraculous', incomprehensibly great and stupefying reality which is here sighted for the first time is man himself, *in so far* as he is the image of God and stands and acts on the world's stage either in proximity to or in guilty distance from his Archetype. God allows him the freedom to develop on his own, and yet keeps him in relation to himself: for man is an image, and in everything he does he remains in relation to his Creator, Summoner, and Saviour. It is precisely the tension between freedom received and continued relation that makes us see the clear parallel between the biblical and the Greek notion of the human, from Homer to the tragedies: in both cases we see man interpreting himself against the background of God. But Greek tragedy derives man's relation to God from the mythical past, while the biblical tragedian who wrote the story of David can quite abandon all dependence on sacral myths[3] and make David grow from within—without any reference to sagas of the gods or cultic sacrality—to attain a new, quasi-mythical greatness, or better, to become a human transparency of God. And when afterwards, under Solomon, the mythical elements of Egypt, Babylon, and Syria begin to penetrate and in the time of the kings again become a great threat to Israel's faith, we must carefully note that there lies at the source of this new incursion a purely human factor: the political reality, which, for the sake of attaining a position of power, must also accept in the transaction the religious contaminations which were part and parcel of diplomacy at that time. Quite significantly, everything further which in the Bible relates to the development of the image in its worldly character is joined to the name of Solomon: the secularistic, international ideal of 'education', the *savoir faire* of the Proverbs, the likewise international courtly love-poetry of the Song of Songs, and the pessimistic-eudemonistic 'philosophy' of Ecclesiastes. Through it all, however, the relation of the image 'man' to its Archetype can receive great variety of representation. The portrayal can be narrow and visible (as in the high points of the tragedy of David), or loose and almost invisible (as in the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes): but the Bible always takes care that the picture does not fall out of its frame. From this immense panorama we will focus for an instant on the figure of Saul, because, even though it represents the painful transition from the period of the Judges to that of the Kings, it nonetheless belongs above all to the line of direct charismatics. Saul, as one called forth (he did indeed have to leave the story of his calling to Samuel), is the prototype of the man taken up into the strictest kind of obedience: in contrast to David, he is precisely *not* launched on a wide-open field of political action. His enormous tragedy belongs to another field of forces.[4] It is true, as the tale of his first anointing (1 Sam 16) makes clear that David too comes as the last of the line of early charismatics; but nowhere is there exacted from him the strict obedience prophetically enjoined on Saul: in spite of his continued practice of consulting oracles, David is allowed the very free obedience of one who is to shape the world, who is responsible to himself. Precisely this release, however, into the sphere of freedom proper to the 'image and likeness' of God is an event so ominous and full of dangers that Scripture can portray it only in a dialectical and tragic fashion: the story of the rejection of the sacral kingdom of God of the early period and its replacement with the kingdom of men in the classical period is accompanied by a great number of reasons for and against the development, and of estimates of losses and gains, and the final redactor of the text has been careful not to smooth over such circumspection.

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[1] With this we could compare K. Jaspers' thoughts on the 'period of the axles' (*Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*, 1949).

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[2] G. von Rad, *ThOT*, I, pp. 48f. His understanding of biblical humanism and his penetrating portrayal of it will remain among von Rad's greatest accomplishments.

[3] The stories of the ark do not belong to this category. It is significant that, as he flees from his son, David sends back the people who want to follow him with the ark (1 Sam 15.24–29).

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[4] See below, pp. 210f.

What the brief story of Paradise relates concerning the splendour and the misery of human freedom then receives full polyphonic development in this decisive phase of Israel's history. With this Holy Scripture has done saying what in essence there is to say about worldly man existing in the worldly world; the New Testament will then have other more pressing concerns.

Compared to the classical tragedy of David, which in sheer quality competes with Sophocles and Shakespeare, the old stories of the Book of Judges strike us as a series of rough sketches. And only an epoch of unsubdued humanism such as that of the kings could possess the supreme ability to weave these stories in as a part of God's history with his people. It is the austere and pious Deuteronomist who produces such interweaving, and he organises all his material according to the supreme commandment, understood in its Old Testament sense: infidelity and decline, punishment, clamouring to God, deliverance. This pattern is so persistent that in the end it repels not only the reader, but God himself: 'You forsook me and worshipped other gods; therefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry for help to the gods you have chosen' (Judg 10.13). Into this rather late context, however, the historiographer, without beautifying them, inserts all his remarkable figures and events as forms that have been only half-sculpted out of the stone: the left-handed Ehud, who, under the pretext of bringing a 'word from God' to fat King Eglon, drives a specially made stiletto into the king's belly and escapes through a window (Judg 3.15–30); the martial Jael, the woman who hides Sisera, after his defeat, under a rug and then hammers a tent-peg through his temples as he sleeps exhausted (Judg 4.21); the raider leader, Gideon, whom God disarms and whose nocturnal victory over his enemies almost becomes a prank played by God himself (Judg 7.16–

22); the first sketched attempt at abolishing charismatic leadership and replacing it with dynastic monarchy, the dangers of which already shimmer from the golden ephod (Judg 8.27) and which then goes astray so pitifully in the Abimelech episode, where the whole gamut of robbers' *mores* is unfurled—delusions of grandeur, trickery, cruelty and, of course, treachery—and the ending exhibits the same *grandezza* as with Saul (Judg 9.54); the whore's son Jephthah, who had to suffer for it and became the proud leader of a gang of pillagers: he engages in an amusing war parley with the king of Moab, who has been complaining about the God of the Jews stealing others' lands: 'Do you too not possess what Kemosh, your god, has taken away from its owners? So, too, we possess everything that Yhwh, our God, has taken away from its owners' (Judg 11.24). It is the battle that will determine which God is stronger, and therefore the rightful possessor. But all of this is topped by the collection of pranks, shows of strength and stories of wenching revolving around that 'outdoors man' Samson, this less noble brother of Hercules who is full of coarse humour and suggestiveness (apparent meaning, for example, of the riddle he tells at the wedding-feast: Judg 14.14), of anecdotes worthy of the *Decameron* itself (Judg 16.1ff.), and is cheated by women, who finally bring him to a bad end: the hero must now play the jester for the Philistines until he again recovers his magical power and succeeds in burying both them and himself under the ruins of the palace. *Nil humanum mihi alienum*; Goliardic-type songs and drinking songs also belong to a people's literature. And the further away from the religious and, indeed, from the edifying such a mixed form appears to be (Samson somehow reminds us of Enkidu, the friend of Gilgamesh, who is changed from a legendary animal into a human being only by his sexual relationship with a prostitute), the clearer the divine frame becomes which the Deuteronomist is placing around the picture: Samson's force is that of the *nasir* chosen by God; the story of his election is parallel to that of Samuel, John the Baptist, and Jesus; his actions, like those of all great judges, are those of a man driven by the spirit of God. Over the abyss of apparent inadequacy, the archetype continues to be active in the image. Just as Prakriti, nature herself, unceasingly makes attempts at forming a worthy creation to offer God, into which he might breathe his spirit, and yet for a while she produces only monsters and gnomes which God rejects in order to spur her on to make something better,[5] so, too, it seems that here, with Samson, it is God's Spirit himself who is taking pains to shape the finished form into which he might pour himself: the 'man after God's own heart' (1 Sam 13.14).

b. The great theatre of the world

Can a king be wholly royal and wholly do the will of God? He can do it with God's grace, which carries him like a wind-filled sail, but in the end he must pay for his power—must pay a superhuman price as only kings can pay.[6] If here there can be talk of a 'glory' (*sebi*) of the kings (2 Sam 1.19), by contrast to the 'glory of Israel', which is God himself (1 Sam 15.29), this can have its place only within the perspective of the final tragedy: the word *sebi* is found precisely in David's lament for the fallen heroes, Saul and Jonathan. Colourful and surrounded by tales as David's rise to power is, his figure becomes ripe for history proper only from the tragic turning-point on. The shadows of the episode with Uriah and Bathsheba descend upon everything which is to follow: the difficult and vertiginous road that for long made its ascent through alien and deserted lands now, in its descent, leads back over the brook of Kedron and the Jordan and into the wilderness; and the final, almost liturgically staged return thither is but a postlude: the concubines whom his son had approached are locked away and no longer visited by him (2 Sam 20.3).

Like no other stories, the tales of the David cycle are developed with delight: delight in narration, in external tension and internal psychological precision, and in the art of touching and elevating the reader. There is in them laughing and weeping, and the great game of life with the constant incursions of death is played out. David is a shepherd like Moses, a lion-killer like Samson (1 Sam 17.32). In contrast to Saul, he is at first plain in appearance (16.7), and yet he embodies the ideal of the young knight of the new courtly society: 'He can play music; he is a brave man and a good fighter, wise in speech and handsome, and the Lord is with him' (16.18). When he confronts Goliath, he is again called a 'handsome lad' (17.42). The eye for beauty has been awakened; in the David stories the following persons are described as 'beautiful', 'very beautiful', or 'handsome': the wily Abigail (1 Sam 25.3); Bathsheba (2 Sam 11.2); David's daughter Tamar (13.1); his son Absalom, who was 'without flaw from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot' (14.25); Absalom's daughter Tamar (14.27); and Abishag, the girl who warms David in his old age (1 Kings 1.3f.). Jonathan, whose love was 'more wonderful than the love of women' to David, was also 'dear and delightful' (2 Sam 1.26): their relationship is comparable to that of Achilles and Patroclus. Prince Jonathan is the most daring hero of all (1 Sam 14); unwittingly he violates his father's vow, and when the oracle declares him to be the guilty party, he exclaims: 'I am ready to die.' When his father Saul wants to kill him, the people save their hero. Then comes the bond of friendship between the prince and the shepherd, whom Jonathan 'begins to love as himself' and to whom he gives his tunic, his sword, his bow, and his belt (18.1–4). Together they conclude a 'covenant for life', and David aspires to be killed by his friend's hand in the event he cannot escape Saul's wrath (20.8). By a hair's breadth David just misses having to go out in battle against Jonathan (28.1f.), but his friend falls alone in the distance and David erects for his 'brother' that splendid memorial which unites him in death with his doomed father:

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[5] Paul Claudel, 'La Légende de Prakriti', in: *Figures et Paraboles* (1936), pp. 103–159.

[6] In this respect David could be seen as the quintessence of the work of Reinhold Schneider: we find him at the very heart of the Bible and with no connections to the Greek, Germanic, or Indian tragic view of life.

> Delightful and dearly loved were Saul and Jonathan;
> in life, in death, they were not parted (2 Sam 1.23).

After friendship, David's great gift is magnanimity, the thoroughly human, Aristotelian sort: the *grandezza* which, in its sovereignty, knows how to forgive and, by so doing, also captivates without any ulterior motives. This is David's constant attitude toward Saul as he flees from the latter's disfavour: David continually exhibits his magnanimity to Saul (1 Sam 24 and 26), and it is that of God's elect towards one God has rejected—the graciousness of a man rising toward one in decline. Then we witness the forbearance of David, the guerrilla leader, toward those lazy companions of his who had wanted no part in wresting back from the Amalekites the goods and women these had stolen (30.21f.); also his generosity to the son of Jonathan (2 Sam 9 and 19.25–31), to his former benefactor Barzillai (19.32f.), and even, finally, to the disgraceful Shimei (19.16–24). All possible motives of human actions and attitudes are interwoven in the plot: perpetual intrigues to the very end; jealousies over the glory of victory and over women; dangerous escapes with comic effects (1 Sam 19.10b–17), with deceptions (21.2f.) that unwittingly unleash terrible consequences (22.6–19) and yet in the end turn to the advantage of this eternally happy go-lucky man (22.20); multiple acts of treachery (23.19f.; 26.1f.), and, in between, the burlesque interlude with Nabal (i.e. 'fool') and the sly Abigail, whom David in the end marries along with her considerable dowry (1 Sam 25); then the enforced desertion to the enemy (27), and the stroke of chance that at the last moment delivers him from the duty of having to fight against his own people. A whole panorama unfurls before us of espionage and counter-espionage (2 Sam 15.32f.; 17.17f.), dramatic traps into which the hero falls (2 Sam 12), all conceivable intrigues involving love and politics (David's relationship to the daughters of Saul, Abner's quarrel for Saul's concubine, 2 Sam 3f.), the war among brothers (2 Sam 2.12–32), insidious assassinations and vendettas (2 Sam 3.22–27), the very opportune murder of rivals on the part of the rising king, the shadows of which nevertheless fall on him and from which he can purify himself only at great effort (2 Sam 4, *cf.* 16.7). And through it all David, God's elect, is led by his star to ascend the throne first of one, then of both kingdoms: he conquers 'his' city, which now becomes the national shrine, and he establishes a great kingdom which his son will only have to consolidate (2 Sam 8).

The narrative, however, disposes of the main political events with surprising rapidity in order to make time for the great human tragedy, whose shadows begin to fall with the adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. Shortly before, God had, through Nathan's mouth, given the king the ultimate assurance: his royal house would stand firm forever (2 Sam 7.5–16, esp. v. 13), and in a disconcerted prayer the king had given thanks for this unimaginable grace (7.18–29). And now, again through Nathan, God proclaims the curse which will reach out into the future, contrasting the earlier blessing: 'Thus speaks Yhwh: I will bring trouble upon you from within your own family' (12.11). So begins the tragedy, which brings what follows so close to the ancestral curse of Greek families. (Such a curse had already been pronounced and carried out on the house of Eli: 1 Sam 3f., 22.6–19, 1 Kings 2.27; and in Saul we could clearly see what ἄτη is.) But David must first bear the incest between Amnon and Tamar, Amnon's deadly hatred for his ravished sister, then Absalom's fratricide against Amnon, the banishment of the murderer and, after his return, Absalom's rebellion against his father, who now, in his flight before his son, has to lower himself to the utmost humiliation. The whole theme had been hinted at from the beginning, although not yet with its dark undertones: David was said to be a 'poor man of low birth' (1 Sam 18.18, 23), and even his full Israelite genealogy is questionable: the Book of Ruth was written so as to dispel such doubts. David is looked down upon by Goliath (17.42); at first Samuel overlooks him (16.6f.); at the low point of his flight he has to play the lunatic and so invite contempt (21.10ff.); as king he has to endure constant suspicions. He is pathetically humiliated by Nathan ('You are the man', 2 Sam 12.7), and from then on the chain of humiliations is unbroken. The old man, as he flees, has to listen while Shimei heaps every possible insult on him and showers him with stones, while his son Absalom broadcasts the secret sin of his father and lies with his father's concubines on a rooftop (2 Sam

16.20–23). He becomes a King Lear, and even more an Oedipus at Colonus who, precisely as one humiliated, ripens to become a blessing for the land. Pressed to return curse for curse, he rejects the suggestion: 'If the son of my loins is out to kill me, who can wonder at this Benjamite? Let him be, let him curse; for the Lord must have told him to do it' (16.11). Earlier Jephthah had sacrificed his daughter just as Agamemnon had his in Aulis, and the girl had offered herself willingly, like Iphigeneia, for her father's victory had been purchased at the price of her life (Judg 11.36). But now another, even more painful killing takes place: David has to fight against Absalom, and from his officers he demands only one thing—that they spare his life. Joab, who is the Hagen of this epic, kills him nonetheless. From atop the city gate the old king is on the lookout, watching the two messengers as one overtakes the other (a scene that Aeschylus himself could have composed). And when he learns what has happened, he collapses: 'Absalom, my son! If only I had died instead of you!' (2 Sam 18.33). Who has killed whom: the father the son or the son the father? 'And the army stole into the city like men ashamed to show their faces after a defeat in battle.' Then Joab, three-time murderer (of Abner, of Absalom, and of Amasa), berates David as follows: 'You have put to shame this day all your servants, who have saved you . . ., because you love those that hate you and hate those that love you; you have made us feel, officers and soldiers alike, that we are nothing to you; for it is plain that if Absalom were still alive and all of us dead, you would be content. Now go at once and give your servants some encouragement; if you refuse, I swear by the Lord that not a man will stay with you tonight' (19.3–7). And the king, face bathed in tears, must then present himself to his men, a type of *Ecce Homo*.

The tragedies meet at many points. When David is forced to deliver seven sons of Saul over to the Gibeonites for impaling, another Antigone comes on the scene: Rizpah, the mother of two of them, keeps watch day and night by the corpses all summer long. In the daytime she chases away the vultures, and at night the hyenas.

This is indeed the theatre of the world; the action, however, is enveloped by a God who not only remains a spectator of the play, in order afterwards to reward and to punish, but a God who, in the actions of his 'images', remains the archetype that also participates in the action, both in hidden and manifest ways. He lets man explore the extremest possibilities of his freedom, and yet he conducts events as a play of his manifold elections and directions. He both ties and loosens the knots, and through it all he wants to further this kingdom and this dynamic promise. But he also wants to exhibit the tragic mask of the old king with the bleeding heart, who, if only he had been allowed to, would have so gladly died in the place of his lost son. And because out of his pain another, still concealed pain resounds, David can become the father of all those who sing and glorify the glory of God:

> The very word of David, son of Jesse,
> the very word of the man whom God raised up,
> the anointed prince of the God of Jacob,
> and the singer of Israel's psalms:
> the spirit of the Lord speaks now through me,
> and his word is on my lips. . . . (2 Sam 23.1f.).

c. The splendour of power

The first preliminaries related of Solomon the magnificent are the purges necessary whenever a new government comes to power: first, the liquidation of the other pretender, the older brother Adonijah, and (following David's directives) also of Joab the general; then the deposition of the priest Abiathar; finally, the removal of Shimei. The story of Solomon, however, really begins, even before the building of the temple, with his marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings 3.1), and this leads to his first encounter with God in a dream vision he has while offering sacrifice at the shrine in Gibeon: this could have been an initiation rite of the young king according to the Egyptian royal ritual, just as the 'king's dream', especially within the sanctuary itself (incubation oracle), was an established concept both in and outside of

Israel.[7] David's wholly unmythical kingdom must now be secured and established in peace especially through international alliances of a political and cultural nature and by commerce (5.2ff.). The main objective is power, and even love is subordinated to its service. At first it is power of quite an 'unmythical' sort,[8] a power which will act as mentor to a cultural 'enlightenment' which is itself not only 'unmythical' but even de-mythologising and which in the end, for reasons of strategy and prestige, cannot totally dispense with the mythical draperies that befit a great king of the period. Such superficial adornment has at times given scholars the impression that Israel at this time completely adopted the Egypto-Akkadian ideology of the king with its mythical liturgy. This is an undemonstrable thesis built on air. In reality the mimicry involved was limited to externals in the cultic sphere,[9] and had more serious effects only in the importation of foreign art (the temple buildings), in poetry (the psalms, the lyricism of the Song of Songs), and in Wisdom literature (the Proverbs). Admittedly, writing as he does with the total collapse of royal splendour in Jerusalem in mind, the Deuteronomist is keenly aware of the religious consequences of Solomon's diplomacy: the foreign princesses bring their own cults with them and for these a space must be set apart in the king's temple; moreover, love, which at first had been subservient to politics, now gradually becomes a theme of its own '(Solomon loved a great many foreign women . . . and was devoted to them out of love,' 11.1f.). The court, established for diplomacy, also becomes the stage for courtly love. And yet, behind all this, the *army*, as Gerhard von Rad clearly shows, played the decisive role. A lasting change takes place from a militia used defensively, and summoned up by the charismatic leader in times of need, to a standing professional army that keeps in subjection the foreign peoples conquered by David. To this is conjoined the extended 'army' of state officials, tax-collectors, regional administrators, and so on. This entire secular system of power now needs a religious justification, and 'good society' begins to relate worldly prestige to God: 'Thine, O Yhwh, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; . . . thine the sovereignty, and in thy power is the one who is exalted over all as head. Wealth and prestige come from thee; thou rulest over all; might and power are in thy hand. . . . We give thee thanks and praise thy glorious name' (1 Chron 29.10–13). How many power-words in one prayer!

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[7] S. Herrmann, 'Die Königsnovelle in Ägypten und Israel', in: *Wiss. Zft. d. Univ. Leipzig, Festschrift Alt*, 1934/5, pp. 33f.

[8] Saul and David were elected democratically either by the people or by the elders of the people, and this is again the case with Solomon's successor (1 Kings 12.2–20).

[9] On this see M. Noth, 'Gott, König, Volk im Alten Testament: eine methodologische Auseinandersetzung mit einer gegenwärtigen Forschungsrichtung' (1950), now in: *Ges. Stud. z. AT* (1957), pp. 188–229. Noth shows the one-sidedness of both the English school (Hooke) and the Scandinavian school (Mowinckel, Widengren, Engnell, Riesenfeld, Bentzen, etc.). R. C. North ('The Religious Aspects of Hebrew Kingship', *ZAW* 50, 1932, pp. 8f.) and C. J. Gadd (*Ideas of Divine Rule in the Ancient East*, 1948) were already moving in Noth's direction.

And yet the whole thing had begun with a very personal encounter with God (1 Kings 3.4f.) in which God lays out his graces before the young king for him to choose. He chooses wisdom; God grants it to him; and because he did not desire power, God gives him in addition what he had not asked for—'wealth and honour as no king of your time can match' (3.13). Solomon thus becomes the 'wonder of the world', actually for possessing in utter fullness both God's treasures and the world's simultaneously: 'King Solomon outdid all the kings of the earth in wealth and wisdom' (10.23). At the same time he builds the temple, according to the plan and layout of Phoenician temples and with workmen and architects from Tyre. For himself, adjoining the temple, he erects a royal palace, and within it the 'House of the Forest of Lebanon' with forty-five cedar columns (7.3; probably a place of amusement and a treasury) whose proportions alone already surpass those of the temple. But in addition he built a 'Hall of Columns' and a 'Hall of Judgment' containing the throne, for great diplomatic occasions. In short, what we have is a kind of Versailles in which a lavishly appointed and richly endowed House of God was *also* provided. And just as the Greek pantheon provides sensuous embellishments for the palace of the Christian king, so, too, mythical trees of life, lions, bulls, and temple sentinels (cherubs) find a place as showpieces in the development of Solomonic splendour.[10] Nor can the glory of Yhwh be missing from the total splendour of such religious and profane representation. Indeed, when the temple is completed and consecrated by the king, two actions are accomplished in this sense: the ark of the covenant, which David had already brought to his city, is now brought into the temple as well, as the central object of the cult (8.1); and then the king prays that the ancient *kabod* of Sinai might come down as the final legitimation of the new sanctuary.

'Then the priests came out of the Holy Place, since "the cloud" was filling the house of the Lord, and they could not continue to minister because of "the cloud', for the glory of Yhwh filled the house of Yhwh. And Solomon said:

O Lord who hast set the sun in heaven,
  but hast chosen to dwell in thick darkness,
here have I built thee a lofty house,
  a habitation for thee to occupy for ever.' (8.10–13).

Even this is not enough for the redactor of the Chronicle; even the final requisite from the Sinaitic period is called into play: 'When Solomon had finished this prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the whole-offering and the sacrifices, while the glory of Yhwh filled the house' (2 Chron 7.1).

Thus, God also comes into the action, but in so doing he chooses the garment of darkness and hiddenness. The aspect of his glory as light is represented by the sun and the magnificent temple;[11] this will prove a dissociation with heavy consequences. God has occupied the temple, but, as it were, with reservations. In the third theophany (1 Kings 9.1–9) God makes everything (even the promise to David in v. 5) dependent on the conditional clause: '*if* you live in my sight as your father David lived.' If not, 'I will renounce the temple which I have consecrated in honour of my name, and Israel shall become the byword and the derision of all peoples.' Neither the promise to David nor the temple nor the ark[12] can be used by man as mortgages against God.

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[10] J. Fichtner, 'Die Bewältigung heidnischer Vorstellungen und Praktiken in der Welt des Alten Testaments' (1959); now in: *Gottes Weisheit: Ges. Stud. z. AT* (1964), pp. 115–129.

[11] J. Fichtner, *Das erste Buch von den Königen* (1964), p. 136.

A king represents the divine order of the world; in his person God's presence in the world is concentrated. And so in Sumeria and Egypt the king was naturally seen as belonging to the divine sphere. In Akkadia he is at the very least the 'adopted son' and 'servant' of his god.[13] Also for Phoenicia (Ugarit) there are indications that the king was taken to be an embodiment of god.[14] With many varied nuances the idea and cultic practice of a 'divine marriage' are everywhere evidenced. From the king, therefore, there emanates something of the divine *kabod*, something of that terrifying and distancing radiance of power which casts down enemies and keeps ordinary mortals at a distance of awe. On the other hand, by virtue of his immediate relation to the divine world, the king as such is resplendent and a mediator of *joy*. It is a feature of the international style of the oriental courts always to be praising these two qualities of the king, and to ascribe them to him in both oral and written address.[15]

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[12] The *ark*, long the sacral centre of the covenant with the twelve tribes (1 Sam 1–6), resumes in itself the memories of the Sinaitic period (Num 10.35). Thus it is understandable that it was seen as a kind of substitute for God's former visibleness, as a token of his invisible presence, and that at the time of its loss during the war with the Philistines the painful cry could be heard: 'The glory has departed from Israel' (1 Sam 4.21). It is not because his sons are dead, but because the ark has been lost, that Eli falls dead from his chair. It is not because her son had fallen, but because the ark had been taken, that Phinehas' wife goes into labour prematurely, giving her child the name *Eikabod*: 'Where is the glory?' Doubtless because of the ark, Israel long retains a primitive attitude toward the numinous. Still in David's time the ark is dangerous, 'laden' with divine powers; whoever touches it must die (2 Sam 6.7f.). Because it was full of mana the holy mountain Sinai was also taboo during the theophany. Helmuth Kittel attempts to interpret *kabod* in the whole Old Testament from this perspective (*Die Herrlichkeit Gottes*, 1934, pp. 69f). Until the time of its transfer into the temple, the ark remains the 'place' of God's presence (Ps 99.5; 132.7; 1 Chron 28.2), but more and more it is regarded as the 'footstool' of a Lord who in reality has his throne in heaven. On the variously merging and changing perspectives, see von Rad, *ThOT* I, pp. 236ff.

[13] Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (Chicago, 1948). René Labat, *Le caractère religieux de la royauté assyro-babylonienne* (1939).

[14] Ivan Engnell, *Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East* (Uppsala, 1943). F. K. Euler, 'Königtum und Götterwelt in den altaramäischen Inschriften Nordsyriens', in: *ZAW* N.F. 15 (1938), pp. 272–313.

It is in this context that we must read the Bible's royal marriage hymn (Ps 45), whether composed for Solomon himself or for Ahab's wedding with Jezebel, the woman from Tyre, or for some other ruler. The song first describes the splendour of the young king and then the beauty of the foreign bride who is being brought him:

> You surpass all mankind in beauty,
> your lips are moulded in grace,
> so you are blessed by God for ever.
> With your sword ready at your side, warrior king,
> your limbs resplendent in their royal armour,
> ride on to execute true sentence and just judgment.
> Your right hand shall teach you terrible deeds:
> your sharp arrows flying, nations beneath your feet,
> the courage of the king's foes melting away!
> Your throne, O God, remains now and for
> ever. (vv. 2–6a)

The 'splendour and majesty' which are to terrify the peoples through his 'terrible deeds' have an even bolder model in the inscriptions of the Assyrian kings: 'For fear of my dominion and the dazzling horror of my powerful weapons they became frightened and with their own weapons they slew Giammu, their lord' (Salmanassar III).[16] Tiglath-Pileser III speaks of the 'glory of my lordship', which made an enemy 'collapse into madness'.[17] Sargon says: 'Fear of the splendour of my lordship enveloped him,' referring to the king of

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[15] K. Grzegorzewski, *Elemente vorderasiatischen Hofstils auf kananäischem Boden* (Diss. Königsberg, 1937). *Cf.* Is 33.17.

[16] K. Galling, *Textbuch zur Geschichte Israels* (1950), p. 45. *Cf.* Gressmann, *AOT*, pp. 339f.

[17] Galling, pp. 51f.

Melucha.[18] 'Luli, the king of the city of Sidon, had been struck down by fear of the splendour of my lordship, and so he fled far away, into the midst of the sea, and died.'[19] 'Hiskia (Hezekiah), from the land of Juda, was overcome by fear of the splendour of my lordship,' reads the inscription of Sennacherib.[20] This 'frightful splendour' is the destructive aspect of that majestic radiance which had bathed the king as it emanated from the Egyptian and the Sumero-Babylonian deity, a splendour celebrated everywhere in the royal hymns.[21] It is no coincidence, then, that the king in the psalm is addressed as 'God' and as 'divine', which is to say as one who, in his beauty and power, radiates the divine (*Elohim*).

The Book of Esther, in the scene of Esther's audience in the throne room of King Artaxerxes, introduces into the biblical sphere the whole *kabod* of the theophanous Oriental ruler.

'Passing through all the doors she found herself before the king. He sat upon his royal throne, decked with all the garments of his solemn appearance (ἐπιφάνεια), quite covered over with gold and precious stones, terrible to look at. And as he raised his face in dire anger, glowing purple as it was with glory, the queen collapsed, and in her swoon she changed colour and leaned her head on the servant accompanying her. And God turned the king's disposition to mildness.' He stepped down from the throne, took Esther in his arms, reassured her she would not die, and sought to console her. 'He raised the golden sceptre, placed it on her neck, kissed her, and said: "Speak to me." She said: "Lord, I saw thee like an angel of God, and my heart was troubled for fear of thy glory (δόξα),[22] for thou art magnificent, O Lord, and thy face is full of beauteous grace" (χάριτες). As she said this she (again) sank into a swoon' (ch. 5, with the LXX additions which go back to a Hebrew original that antedates the Masoretic text).

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[18] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 57f.

[21] Falkenstein and von Soden, *Sumerische und akkadische Hymnen und Gebete* (1953). W. H. P. Römer, *Sumerische 'Königshymnen' der Isin-Zeit* (Leiden, 1965). A divine radiance of their own is manifested by the offspring of Tiamat in the creation myth (*AOT*, p. 112; *Z*, p. 136) and by the monster Humbaba, whom Gilgamesh and his friend kill (*The Epic of Gilgamesh*). The 'radiance' in each of these cases is the *numinosum tremendum*. A great number of passages exhibiting this 'frightful splendour' of the Sumerian and Akkadian gods has been collected by J. Jeremias (*Theophanie*, 1965, pp. 75–85).

In the great king Esther doubtless sees a theophany; divine glory radiates upon her, first the 'frightful splendour' of the offended majesty and then, as the king comes down to her and kisses her, a 'gracious splendour'. She collapsed like all who in the Bible believe they are to die because they have seen God (Judg 13.22; Is 6.5) or who cannot bear the sight because of the magnitude of the radiance (Ezek 1.28; Dan 8.17f.; 9.15; Mt 17.6; Rev 1.17). She thinks she is seeing an 'angel of God', and this is probably a biblical accommodation of the original Persian concept of the theophanic quality of their great kings.[23] Several times David, too, was compared to an angel of God,[24] which was perhaps already a part of the courtly style. The Book of Esther is also a commentary on the following verses of Proverbs: 'A king's anger is a messenger (angel) of death, and a wise man will appease him. In the light of the king's countenance is life, his favour is like a rain-cloud in the spring' (16.14f.). This turning from a terrifying divine splendour to a splendour of grace and favour is precisely the high point and the real meaning of the story. The background is perhaps the hope of a possible 'conversion' on the part of Antiochus Epiphanes; for, if great kings of Persia can be won over by the Jews, why not he as well?[25]

Esther comes before the king 'after she had decked herself in all her glory (δόξα) and had become beauty itself (ἐπιφανής). . . . At the peak of her beauty she blushed and her gladsome face was open as with love.' Ps 45 portrays in similar terms the bride 'for whose beauty the king longs'. Again in a comparable manner, the Queen of Sheba comes before Solomon and all her expectations are surpassed (1 Kings 10.7). Solomon himself is seated on 'a great throne of ivory, overlaid with fine gold. Six steps led up to the throne; at the back of the throne there were the heads of bulls. There were arms on each side of the seat, with a lion standing beside each of them, and twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step. Nothing like it had ever been made for any monarch' (10.18ff.). This is indeed a stage fit for theophanies.

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[22] Another reading: 'for the glory of thy anger.' In the Slavonic Book of Enoch we still read: 'How frightful and perilous it is to come before an earthly king! It is fearful and dangerous because a king's will means life or death or great heat' (39.8).

[23] On all this, see William H. Brownlee, 'Le livre grec d'Esther et la royauté divine', in: *Revue Biblique* 73 (1966), pp. 161–185, esp. 171.

[24] 1 Sam 14.17, 20, 27; 29.9; *cf.* Zech 12.8.

[25] This is Brownlee's attractive attempt at interpretation.

From the outset the Deuteronomist follows with apprehension the Solomonic mixture of the spiritual and the secular, but he does so in such a way that at first he delights unabashedly in the wonderful unfolding of political power: he expressly traces such power back to God's favour, no less than the wisdom the king has prayed for. For the redactor the situation becomes questionable only when eros trespasses the limits imposed by reasons of state and becomes autonomous, for it is the blindness of eros that makes the ruler indifferent toward the imported pagan cults and deities. Discomfort grips us, for our part, somewhat earlier, when both spiritual wisdom and earthly glory are without distinction attributed to the grace of God. Doubtless the 'poor in Israel' subsequently also experienced the same sense of malaise. Attempts at legitimating the glory of the Christian empire—from Constantine to Justinian, from Charlemagne and the Ottonians all the way to the Sun King—have always been based on this Davidic-Solomonic conception, without any apparent awareness of the fact that the questionableness of such a representation of God through earthly power arises even earlier for the New Testament than for the Old. And yet the Bible nowhere categorically condemns as hybris the attempt of the 'image' to emulate its 'archetype' even in such a way and to find the gift of the Creator in all creaturely goods. Here, too, man is released to develop his possibilities with freedom; he is led 'on a long leash', but in such a way that God's might and glory envelop all unfoldings of human power in order to direct them and to dissolve them again at the right moment.

d. Wisdom of life

Education and enlightenment are a part of the splendour of a royal court. Solomon is also the arch wise-man in Israel; his 'wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt'; he 'uttered three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five' (1 Kings 4.30, 32). From the outset we have here wisdom on the level of and in competition with the 'East' (Edom, the inhabitants of the Arabian steppe east of Moab and Ammon) and with Egypt. The Book of Proverbs claims to derive from Solomon and its most ancient parts (chs. 10–22 and 25–29) could conceivably go back to him; in any event, it does derive from the period of the kings. It is commonly agreed that it contains passages embodying such 'Eastern' wisdom of life (the 'proverbs of Agur' and of 'Lemuel': 30.1–31.9) and, in addition, demonstrable textual borrowings from the Egyptian *Instruction of Amen-em-ope* (22.17–23.11). Indeed, the pattern of the whole work, both in thought-content and in form, is inconceivable without a knowledge of the expansive tradition of Egyptian wisdom. This tradition constitutes the cultural element of the class of scribes and officials. Under Solomon such a class is established also in Israel with the consequence that, if it is to contend with contemporary cultural and political relations, Israel's cultural deficiencies must quickly be remedied.[26] Apart from the introduction (1–9), which comes from a much later period, the Book of Proverbs is a monument to the new process of lay education that is to make a man into an internationally formed and useful *cortegiano* or *honnête homme*. The distinctively Israelite nuances are suggested most discreetly, in a way not painful to 'foreigners'. The talk is of God and providence, never of the historical revelation or the covenant. The unashamed objective is to equip the government official with the know-how and the polish necessary for a successful career and, of course, personal advancement, while all the while providing him with a religiously based ethic.[27] From the Christian perspective, what is offered here is an anthropocentric philosophy with a religious backdrop, or an enlightened, liberal theology. This amounts to the systematic development of the built-in possibilities of the 'image' by emphasising its counterposition to its divine archetype. Such a one-sided model, focussing on man as such in an international sense, is now assigned a place within the total encounter between the living God and Israel. Neither are this 'religion' and this ethic banished as being *the* titanic enterprise of unbelief (K. Barth), nor can they in the least come into competition with *God's* authentic revelation, however much the Solomonians and anthropocentrists of all ages would wish it so.

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[26] See the thorough analysis of the international (especially Egyptian) wisdom books and a comparison of them with biblical wisdom in: Hilaire Duesberg, *Les Scribes inspirés* (1939), with a bibliography. On our particular theme, see Drubbel, 'Le conflit entre la sagesse profane et la sagesse religieuse', in: *Biblica* 17 (1936), pp. 45–70, 393–406.

In order to acquire a right sense of proportion, we must now take a quick look at the Egyptian wisdom books which were regarded as the leading examples of the genre.[28] Our main interest here is in the key ethico-religious statements, and not so much in the customary instructions for advancement in one's career or the exclusive praise of the prestigious profession of scribe, which is always contrasted to the philistine and dirty occupations of those who work with their hands and to the miserable life of the government official[29] (reproduced by Sirach, 38.21–39.11). The order of the world rests on *maat*, the unity of truth and justice, which God has instilled into the world and according to which men must live.[30] Men are 'copies of God'.[31] They have God's instruction in their 'conscience'[32] as 'shame' (that is, 'dread', αἰδώς, fear and awe, shrinking back before the unjust),[33] if only they but listen to the teaching and desire to be wise. When shame is absent, the fool must be helped with the rod.[34] Wisdom is embodied in one's parents, teachers, superiors, and in the tradition; the whole endeavour is to learn what one does not yet know or has not yet experienced. A willing ear is the chief virtue of the young Egyptian,[35] and the readiness to continue to learn must be the mark even of the adult.[36] The goal of education is self-mastery,[37] interior 'balance', discretion, equanimity[38]—in a word, the cardinal Greek virtue of *sophrosyne* (with clear inclusion of *sophia* as wisdom and *andreia* as discipline and the rejection of everything seductive and hostile to the ideal).[39] Particular praise goes to patience and the ability to keep silence. Whoever cannot attain to this—the 'hotheaded' or undisciplined man—is the

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[27] 'Le problème consistait pour eux (les scribes inspirés) à construire une théorie du succès qui demeurât subordonnée à la morale de Jahweh', Duesberg, I, p. 456.

[28] An easily accessible collection is that of F. W. von Bissing, *Altägyptische Lebensweisheit*, in the 'Bibliothek der Alten Welt'. We quote our sources with the following abbreviations: Ptaotes (Pahotep) = P; Gemnikai (Kagemmi) = K; Meikras (Mery-ka-Re) = M; Achthoes (Kheti, son of Dwauf) = D; Instruction for Wentai-Amun, Lansing papyrus = L; Iniy (Ani) = In; Amenophis (Amenemope) = A; Demotic Wisdom Book of Phibis = Ph; Ipwer = Ip. We will give the page number of the von Bissing edition. Other texts also in: A. Erman, *Die Literatur der Ägypter* (Leipzig, 1923).

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[29] A 57f.; L 67–70.

[30] 'Justice is the great gift of God', A 87f. 'Many a man who understands the teaching does not know how to live according to it', Ph 98.

[31] M 56.

[32] Ph 120.

[33] Ph 98 and *passim*.

[34] 'Toth, the great god [of writing], has put the rod on earth for the instruction of the fool. To the prudent he has given shame that he may escape all evil', Ph 98. 'Love not thy belly' (to the Egyptian this means: 'Avoid excess in eating and in sexual actions'), 'understand the shame of thy heart; despise not the voice of thy heart', Ph 112. 'Better to die in poverty than to live without shame', Ph 113.

[35] 'Things will go well for a son that has listened', P 50. 'Behold a scribe who hears. One that listens attentively becomes proficient', D 60.

[36] 'Whoever listens is loved by God, but whoever is abhorred by God hears not', P 50. 'If thou listenest thou art a man qualified for an office', L 66; A 80.

[37] Ph 92.

[38] Particularly developed and emphasised in the Seventh Instruction of Phibis, 93f.

[39] *Cf.* the repeated injunctions to self-mastery with regards to women: P 48; In 74, 77. Likewise, it is much expected that a wise man confront

'fool' who does not quite coincide with the uncultured and simple-minded man, even though, as with the Greeks, 'ignorance' and 'wickedness' are very proximate concepts.[40] Justice and truth are exhibited in one's life by the veneration given to father[41] and mother,[42] by mercy shown to the poor, by compassion, and by forbearance: 'Do not find out the name of a widow when thou meetest her in a field, and listen to her excuse. Do not turn a stranger away from thy oil-jug and it shall be doubled for thy brethren. God loves more him who gives delight to the humble than him who honours the grand.'[43] 'When thou findest a poor man with a great debt, divide it into three portions; throw two of them away and let only one stand. Thou wilt see this to be a way of life' (*cf.* Lk 16.1–9).[44] And finally: 'When a prudent man is robbed of his clothes, he freely gives them, and a blessing besides' (*cf.* Mt 5.38f.).[45] 'Eat not bread when another suffers want and thou dost not reach out to him the hand with the bread.'[46]

All of these injunctions proceed from God and his just world-order. God is hidden, but only the fool denies him since God is manifest in the whole order of nature.[47] The 'reprisal' is the immanent justice of the world; no one may presume to retaliate of himself.[48] It is God who judges. 'God is always admirable, but man remains deficient. . . . Say not: 'I am sinless', and do not exert thyself in contradicting God. In God's hand there is no perfect man, but neither does anything deficient stand before him.'[49] 'Entrust thyself into God's arms,

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injustice: 'Whoever keeps silence in the face of injustice crawls away in ignominy', Ph 113.

[40] *Cf.* von Bissing, loc. cit., pp. 38f. On the 'fool' see especially chs. 7, 8 and 14 in Ph.

[41] Ph 91.

[42] In 76.

[43] A 90.

[44] A 85.

[45] Ph 113f.

[46] In 76.

[47] Ph 117f.

[48] Ph 118.

[49] A 87.

then thou wilt quietly lay thy opponents low.'[50] God tends his flock—mankind—and 'if they weep, he hears them.' God considers man's heart and disposition: 'God prefers to accept the virtue of the upright rather than the oxen of evil-doers.'[51] 'Come to know God's greatness that it may grow in thy heart.'[52] God is all-knowing; he 'knows the tongue's answer even before questions are put to it';[53] therefore, one should entrust oneself to him: 'When God blesses a blind man his way is open; when a lame man's heart is on God's way then his way is even. For God rewards trust with the blessings of protection.'[54]

All of this doctrine of wisdom remains within the confines of this world; uncertainty reigns over the beyond, whether Hades or Elysium,[55] and therefore also over the ultimate value of this earthly life.[56] This is why here, too, as in all cultures, various forms of an unashamed Epicureanism lurk behind the earnest moral teachings.[57]

The variations of these themes in Solomon are of no great moment, even if the name of Toth or of Ra is replaced with that of Yhwh. The concern is still with the education of a good official. Wisdom, on the one hand, is the art of mastering this world: oneself through self-discipline, and life through the knowledge of things, cleverness, *savoir faire*, all in order to get ahead. But an elegant humility and modesty in God's sight must also be cultivated, since in the end wisdom cannot be acquired without him.

Here, again the ability to listen, docility, and openness are held in great esteem, as well as incessant striving and self-exertion.[58] The ability to keep silence is, therefore, highly praised,[59] also modesty and natural humility[60] as remedies against arrogance, obduracy, presumption, *hybris*, and sarcasm, all of which are the special characteristics of the fool.[61] The person who is inexperienced but still teachable,[62] and the simple-minded person who has not had the advantage of higher education,[63] are carefully set apart from the fool. In this educational 'curriculum', which inculcates an 'expertise of life',[64] theory and practice, insight and discipline go hand in hand.[65] The paramount objectives are self-mastery,[66] composure and patience,[67] a kindly sense of justice[68] (in the second part of Proverbs the wise man is termed 'the just man' 48 times), industriousness (which alone brings profit),[69] and love of truth.[70]

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[50] A 89.

[51] M 56.

[52] Ph 116.

[53] Ph 117.

[54] Ph 100f.

[55] *Cf.* the four contradictory versions of the 'Harper's Song' in von Bissing's collection, pp. 141–145.

[56] *Cf.* the 'struggle of a despondent man with his soul', pp. 124–128.

[57] 'Drink, inebriate yourselves, do not stop feasting, follow your hearts as long as you are on earth' (from the grave inscription of Petosiris, p. 146).

What the Egyptians called 'conscience', awe, shame, here receives the name of 'fear of the Lord'.[71] Like attentiveness to the Lord, this 'fear' is a basic part of the wisdom of life. God sees everything,[72] tests everything;[73] his eyes protect the wise man.[74] Men have many plans, but only God's counsel carries the day.[75] God directs and leads, and one should entrust oneself to him.[76] Man should not rely on himself[77] or consider himself wise.[78] Only in the last part of the book do we come to the actual prayer to God for wisdom, since by now wisdom has become one of God's own qualities: through wisdom God made the world,[79] and it can be called God's first work, the foundation for everything else.[80] And only God bestows wisdom.[81] Only here does wisdom become personified as a 'sister'[82] (which could also mean 'spouse') and a 'confidante';[83] only here is wisdom portrayed as one calling, one whose voice ought always to be listened to.[84]

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[58] Prov 10.8; 12.15; 13.1, 10, 13, 18; 14.8; 15.5, 22, 31f.; 16.20; 17.10; 18.13, 15; 19.20; 25.12; 28.23; 29.20.

[59] Prov 10.19; 12.23; 13.3; 17.28; 25.9f.; 30.32.

[60] Prov 11.2; 15.33; 16.19; 29.23. Note that such humility is the way to honour (15.33).

[61] Prov 1.7, 22; 3.35; 9.7f.; 14.8; 15.12; 16.18; 21.24, 39.

[62] Prov 1.4; 8.5; 9.4.

[63] Prov 1.22; 8.5.

[64] Prov 1.5.

[65] Prov 1.2f.; 8.12.

[66] Prov 25.28; 29.11.

[67] Prov 14.29f.; 15.18; 16.32; 18.14; 19.11; 25.15.

[68] Prov 12.10; 15.28; 20.7; 21.26; 29.7.

[69] Prov 14.23; 21.5; 24.30–34.

[70] Prov 4.24; 8.7f.; 12.17.

[71] Prov 1.7; 2.5; 3.7; 8.13; 10.27; 14.26f.; 15.16, 33; 19.23; 21.30; 23.17.

[72] Prov 15.3; 15.11.

[73] Prov 16.2; 21.2.

[74] Prov 22.12.

[75] Prov 19.21.

[76] Prov 16.9; 20.24; 29.25.

[77] Prov 3.5, 7.

The older parts of the book (but also the later ones)[85] strongly emphasise the utility of wisdom: earthly happiness is its reward,[86] as well as popularity,[87] prosperity,[88] and success.[89] Everything comes in the wake of a certain immanent righteousness; the principles work themselves out; destiny takes its course, and through it all God is seen as the founder and guarantor of this order.[90] Selflessness and mercy, genuine love of neighbour[91]—and even of one's enemies[92]—are demanded, but these too are repaid. Poverty could be a consequence of foolishness.[93] The poor man is mostly looked down upon, forsaken and hated,[94] but the wise and just man has pity for the poor and thus honours his Creator.[95] The existence of both is founded on God's plan;[96] but the wise man will avoid both extremes and content himself with the middle-course as standard.[97]

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[78] 'To deem oneself wise is folly', Prov 26.12; 28.26.

[79] Prov 3.19f.

[80] Prov 8.22f.; as in Phibis, this is taught by looking at nature, whose order can be recognised but not plumbed to its depths.

[81] Prov 2.6; 3.19.

[82] Prov 7.4.

[83] Prov 8.1ff.

[84] Prov 8.34 and often in the prologue.

[85] Prov 3.2ff., 8; 8.18.

[86] Prov 19.8, 17.

[87] Prov 22.1.

[88] Prov 24.4.

[89] Prov 15.33.

[90] Prov 1.20–33; 9.12; 10.24; 11.6; 11.24ff.; 12.14, 21; 13.21; 18.3; 19.3; 21.13, 21; 22.4, 8; 26.27; 29.6.

[91] Prov 3.27–30; 10.12; 14.21, 31; 16.6; 17.17; 21.10.

[92] Prov 25.21f. Here we find the verse referred to by Paul: 'If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; for you will heap coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you.'

[93] Prov 13.18; 20.13; 21.17. The poor man can also be innocent and is in that case better off than the man who speaks foolishly or the deceiver (Prov 19.1; 28.6).

The Book of Proverbs gives instructions. Its intention is to educate, but not to convert the fool. The latter is quite beyond hope, as is shown by the following double proverb, which is dialectical in structure: 'Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.'[98] The book offers no doctrine of redemption, but rather a doctrine of right behaviour and success which is internally quite aware of its limitations. It takes its place alongside the ancient Near Eastern pre-stages of Greek philosophy, with its systematic order and structure; as such, Proverbs offers many a 'point of contact', much in the way of 'prior understanding' that might link the world and man as autonomous entities with the actual theological word which God will speak concerning himself and concerning man. More clearly than anything else in Scripture, the Book of Proverbs impresses on us the fact that God the Creator neither disowns nor rejects his creature's efforts to understand life and to come into a correct relationship with his divine origin; rather, God fulfills such striving by transcending it (*gratia non destruit naturam, sed elevat et perficit*), even if nature's intimations of and attempts at wisdom must again become foolishness in order to be fully introduced into the sphere of God's wholly different kind of wisdom (1 Cor 1.18–31).[99]

e. Eros and worldly beauty

The Song of Songs presents itself as 'Solomon's most beautiful song' (1.1), but the whole action, as is usual with love-songs, consists of youth and maiden disguising themselves as king and queen ('Shulammite', 6.13 = 1 Kings 1.3; 2.21f.). Even more frequently they play at being shepherd and shepherdess, or garden-visitor and owner of the garden. This loose handful of songs celebrates but one thing: the beautiful, resplendent, and awesome glory of the eros between man and woman: 'Who is she, . . . fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army with banners?' (6.10). Eros hovers freely about its own house, without any other purpose than loving and being loved: nowhere is there talk of marriage, or indeed of children. Eros is the sense-related, airborne, intoxicated condition whereby two persons exist for one another and with one another, and it takes the specific form of 'seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting.'[100] Eros is through and through lyrical; all of nature—the springtime, the flowers, the birds, the meadows and vineyards, trees, fruit, the wind and the night, sun and shadows, and especially fragrances—everything, impelled by the whirl of love, takes its place about the one event that alone matters. Other

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[94] Prov 14.20; 18.23; 19.4, 7; 21.13; 28.3.

[95] Prov 14.21, 31; 17.5; 19.17; 28.27; 29.7.

[96] Prov 22.2; 19.13.

[97] Prov 30.8f.

[98] Prov 26.4f.

[99] It is not the 'apocryphal' Book of Wisdom which first introduces the 'corresponding perception of the Creator from the greatness and beauty of created things' (Wis 13.5), and thus also the *analogia entis*. The presence in

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the Book of Proverbs of an international doctrine of wisdom attests that there exists in the universally accepted canon of Scripture, too, an ethic and a religion shared with the 'pagans', by which these can be judged no less than the Jews (Rom 2). However, the fact that all, Jews and pagans alike, stand within the all-encompassing embrace of God's judging and saving actions in no way diminishes the significance of the ethical and religious tribunal. Thus, the philosophical injunction to 'listen' which we find in wisdom literature *can* be heightened and become the true listening of faith, even though such inner-worldly 'listening' can (perhaps out of ambition) be bound up with a certain deafness toward God.

On the other hand, it is important to note that all this international wisdom of life, including that of Israel, is ultimately ahistorical, which makes it possible for it to be exchanged from people to people. This ahistoricity, however, which escapes the eminently historical nature of Israel's existence, lends 'Solomonic' literature its peculiar longevity and allows it a second chance in the later period when God's historical instruction will have been abstracted to become the supra-temporally valid and abstract law (*torah*). *Cf.* J. Fichtner, 'Die altorientalische Weisheit in ihrer israelitisch-jüdischen Ausprägung', in: *ZAW*, Beih. 2 (1933), pp. 81f.

[100] Gillis Gerleman, 'Ruth: Das Hohelied', *BK* 18 (1965), p. 62. 'As long as we have no proof of an older, allegorising interpretation, such an

people—the mother, the brothers, the girlfriends, shepherds, the night-watchmen of the city—play only the role of extras: they either help or hinder the lovers, receiving instructions or finding themselves outwitted. Eros is self-sufficient; God is nowhere spoken of, and this is all the more remarkable as the backdrop for this love is indeed the Holy Land: Jerusalem (1.5; 2.7; 8.4), Lebanon and Hermon (4.8; 4.11), Tirzah (6.4), Gilead (6.5), the pools of Heshbon at the Gate of Bath-Rabbim, the Tower of Lebanon which faces Damascus (7.4), Carmel (7.5, etc.). The whole landscape is there, but there is no trace of any historical memory, all the way back to the promise to the Patriarchs and Adam's fall. This is a supralapsarian eros, as it were; only by way of contrast are death and the underworld brought in, as if to be challenged: 'For love is strong as death, and mighty as the underworld is jealous passion' (8.6): this last word snatches from Yhwh's mouth his description of his love for Israel, and eros applies it to itself. Eros here dances out its unending roundelay; it twines and loosens the garlands: it is a seeking and a finding (2.8–14), an almost finding and a losing again (5.2–8), a conjuring of tension and an overcoming of it, a staying hidden and then at once a provoking through partial disclosure, a laughing over remedies cleverly devised (8.8ff.), a bragging about the uniqueness of the beloved ('You, O Solomon, may have the thousand,' 8.12), an endless describing of one another from head to toe and an incessant bestowing of one's own charms on the other, a playing with the veiled descriptions of what cannot be named and yet must by all means be hinted at (the most intimate things are alluded to with special delight in the language of scents: 'mountains of spices', 8.14; 'hill of frankincense' and 'mountain of myrrh',

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approach remains anachronistic as an explanation for the inclusion of the Song of Songs in the canon,' *ibid.*, p. 51. Gerleman's thought is so convincing in its critique and its positive exposition that we shall follow it without reservation in our own discussion. The integration of the Song of Songs into theology, which is our goal, derives likewise from Gerleman. K. Barth's views are also stimulating (*Church Dogmatics* III/1, pp. 313–321, III/2, pp. 293–298), even if we must part ways with him on one matter.

4.6). Eros is forever preparing new feasts for himself, and the poet introduces strange foreign words for which he draws upon all distant cultures: spikenard and saffron, clove and cinnamon, myrrh and aloe; and when he has quite intoxicated the lovers, then he himself utters the climactic word:

The Maiden: Awake, O north wind,
and come, O south wind!
Blow upon my garden,
let its fragrance be wafted abroad.
Let my beloved come to his garden,
and eat its choicest fruits.

The Youth: I come to my garden, my sister, my bride,
I gather my myrrh and my balsam,
I eat my honeycomb with my honey.

The Poet: Eat, O friends, and drink:
And become drunk with love! (4.16–5.1)

No poet who intended to express something else—namely, Yhwh's love for his people—would have written in so totally profane and areligious a fashion and with such wholehearted abandon to the joys of the senses. Such an allegorical interpretation emerged only after the translation of the Septuagint (250–150 B.C.), which itself still shows no trace of it, and we first find it attested by Rabbi Aqiba (d. A.D. 135). The allegorical approach made the book bearable for later readers of Scripture, and then, beginning with Origen's commentary, it begun its triumphal march through the Christian church of the Patristic period, the Middle Ages, and even of the Reformation and the Baroque Age. And yet the allegorical explanation was evidently not the pretext for admitting the book into the canon. 'A decisive role was doubtless played by the book's supposed antiquity and, above all, by its attribution to Solomon, which no one contested.'[101] But only outsiders like Theodore of Mopsuestia and the humanist Castellio dared to defend the book's profane sense. The first of these was condemned, and the second forced to leave Geneva. It was Richard Simon who finally gained recognition for the profane thesis. The powerfully secular tone, its 'de-mythologised profaneness,'[102] makes it likewise wholly impossible to see in the book a 'mythico-cultic drama' which would, for instance, be representing the marriage-feast of a divine brother-and-sister pair (Dod, or Tammuz, and Ishtar). When pressed to explain particulars, such an interpretation, too, becomes absurd. Herder found the Song of Solomon to be a piece of folk lyric poetry of unique innocence and purity, 'simple, true, and touching', an expression of love as such, for 'there is only one love, just as there is only one goodness and one truth'. But if there is one classification which the literary art of these songs excludes it is precisely that of popular folk poetry, as Gillis Gerleman has convincingly shown. Down to the details we are dealing with an imitation of Egyptian love-poetry, and this in turn refers us back to the older period of the kings when the political and cultural connections with Egypt were unusually lively. The copying of Egyptian styles was 'highly fashionable especially in courtly circles. . . . The language and concepts of the poems betray a level of culture which could only be conceived of in the upper classes.'[103] Quite apart from the comparison of the beloved with 'a mare of Pharaoh's chariots' (1.9), there are whole scenes (such as that of the festive nocturnal procession, 3.6–8) which can be explained only in terms of Egyptian usages. The descriptions of the human form presuppose a knowledge of Egyptian sculpture,[104] and for the actual form of the poems there are numerous parallels readily at hand.[105] All of this points us to the same milieu where the Book of Proverbs had originated—the enlightened, international culture centred on the royal court. In a similar way the culture-hungry German courts of the Middle Ages imported Provençal love-poetry (*Minnelyrik*) and on this basis produced poetic creations with a value of their own. While the Proverbs do have knowledge of Yhwh and yet wholly bypass salvation-history, this collection of love-songs dispenses with all references to the God of the people. And it would be totally anachronistic to seek for a hidden mythical meaning here, so long before Hosea!

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[101] Gerleman, p. 51.

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[102] *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 64.

[103] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[104] *Ibid.*, pp. 68–71, 147.

[105] *Cf.* Siegfried Schott, *Altägyptische Liebeslieder*, 'Bibliothek der Alten Welt', 1950. For the portrayal of persons, see also Günter Roeder, *Mythen und Legenden um ägyptische Gottheiten und Pharaonen*, 'Bibliothek der Alten Welt', 1960.

Karl Barth quite correctly has seen that in this strange book the second creation account is fully unfolded. Here we witness the thrill of the man before the woman that has been brought to him, and this thrill is reciprocated by the woman without any reference to family or children. Here reigns only 'eros, for which there is no such thing as shame, as we see from Gen 2.25'. And Barth asks: 'Who, then, was so pure to be able to write these texts as pure texts? And who had such pure eyes to be able to read them as pure texts? For the redactor of Gen 2 certainly knew about the breakdown in such a relationship!' Here Barth finds 'only one explanation, namely, both the author of the creation saga and of these love-songs had in mind another covenant': from the viewpoint of the creation it was the covenant of God with man, and, in an eschatological perspective, the New Covenant of Jesus Christ with redeemed mankind. 'Here God the Lord and the eros between the sexes, known precisely in Israel as a dangerous demon, were to be brought into closest relationship with one another. Here the 'flame of the Lord' and the very different flame of love (Song 8.6) were to be named in one breath.'[106] This is certainly so, but it builds on the even bolder presupposition that this eros, which loses God from sight and almost absolutises itself, is to be captured and domesticated only subsequently. Here, too, the Creator is leading his image, man, 'on a long leash', allowing him to live out his own possibilities. Through it all the Holy Spirit invisibly sees to it that the purely lyrical atmosphere makes the phenomenon unfold with an ahistoricity and a resulting abstractness which exclude all 'infralapsarian' elements. Here neither innocence nor sin nor any form of theological concupiscence holds sway, but rather pure, compressed, blazing eros, which now emerges as a mighty creative force. Eros here stands neither for the God of Israel (allegorical theory) nor for the Babylonian gods (theory of cultic symbolism); it stands solely for itself, and with this it enters that twilight between the divine and the worldly into which it will move as *daimon* in Plato's *Symposium*,[107] in a straight line leading later on to the courtly love-poetry of a Gottfried of Strasburg.[108] We have seen what great latitude is given to worldly power and worldly wisdom, with the peculiar abstractness that befits these forces when they provisionally dispense with the final, historical grounding in which the living and historically active God has rooted them. In an analogous way, eros too is allowed to unfold its own dimensions. It is no surprise, then, that the Song of Solomon is the book of the Bible in which the qualification 'beautiful' (*yafi*) for human appearance occurs most often (11 times out of 28); but Gerleman has shown that 12 other instances derive from the humanistic educational works of the same (post-) Solomonic period (the Yahwist and the story of David's rise and the succession to his throne). The element of worldly aesthetics breaks through in Hebrew consciousness at the same time as interest in power and international diplomacy and in knowledge.[109]

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[106] *Church Dogmatics* III/1, pp. 313ff.

But in Israel the Song of Songs remains incorporated in an all-encompassing whole which forces free-floating eros back into the world of historical reality. On the one hand, eros is bound to the ethical and receives its measure from it (Prov 11.22; 31.30; Sir 9.8; 26.13ff.); feminine beauty can blaze up in a brief idyll (Gen 24.16f.; 26.8f.), but it is soon subjected to the laws of family and genealogy (in his prayer Tobit invokes Gen 2.18 and protests that lust is not his motive for wanting to sleep with his wife, Tob 8.6f.) or to those of the people (Judith and Esther). On the other hand, we see the terrible revenge of the abuse of the beauty bestowed by God: what was to be understood as a pure gift from Yhwh is given away by God's bride as if it were hers to dispose of. Now the nakedness in which God finds the maiden is a disgrace, and the punishment for her infidelity and lasciviousness is yet again her stripping down, the 'exposure of your shame before your suitors' (Hos 2.12; Ezek 16.37; 23.25–29; Rev 17.16): this is the shaming, postlapsarian nakedness. And eros, as it floats about without a place of its own, is seized by the gravity of history, brought to a halt, and of necessity impelled in one of two directions. But how burning are the colours with which its image was painted and hung in the gallery of other biblical images! This can only have a prophetic meaning that points to the couple which will realise for all time what had been intimated for an instant in paradise and could not be made to last: the couple formed by the second Adam and the second Eve. This will no longer be a suspended idea, but the full, historical incarnation of the absolute love between man and woman, which is an end in itself and is no longer subject to any law of genealogy. In this sense the Church's many commentators on the Song of Songs are in the end found to be right when they interpret the book with reference to Christ and his 'bride without wrinkle or stain', whose real symbol is Mary and who provides the model according to which the believing soul strives to reach her Lord and Bridegroom.

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[107] Vol. IV, pp. 188f. (Eng. trans.)

[108] *Herrlichkeit* III/1, pp. 613f.

[109] Gerleman, pp. 74f. Some things on the theme of beauty in the Old Testament may be found in: T. Boman, *Das hebräische Denken, verglichen mit dem griechischen* (1954²), pp. 62–74. Claus Westermann, 'Biblische Ästhetik', in: *Die Zeichen der Zeit, Evangelische Monatsschrift* (1950), pp. 277–289.

f. The world's final dance

The autonomous glory of worldly being before God, which began with the kingship, must in the end necessarily lead to Qoheleth. The scene of the world in all the splendour of spring is inevitably transformed to a panorama of trees stripped naked by the great wind (*hebel*): 'all is vanity and a striving after wind' (Eccles 1.2, 14 and another 36 times). In this book of the Bible all 'glory' has vanished from both the image of God and the image of the world. When Eccles 8.1

says that 'a man's wisdom makes his face shine' or 'makes him smile', the wisdom meant is precisely that concerning the nothingness of things. There is a particular appropriateness in this late Hebrew wise man's putting on again the persona of Solomon (1.1, 12), and his book takes pains (ch. 2) clearly to explain the internal logic of this: the experiment in worldly power, worldly culture and worldly enjoyment has led its subject precisely to the point where wisdom bites its own tail and completes itself by abolishing itself. Why? Because the wise man who has tried to comprehend the finite things of the world in all their existential fulfilment has, in fact, been driven about by them in circles and, in so doing, has become aware of his own gyrations. Man is wise enough to realise his own radical finitude, but he does not have the power to transcend it. Qoheleth is a critical transcendentalist *avant la lettre*: the spirit's transcendental structure does, indeed, allow a self-critique on the part of inner-worldly concepts, but it does not permit any permanent dwelling in the realm of ideas. Chapter 3 first rehearses the inevitable polarity of all things: if we attempt to follow any one thing through radically, it will every time revert to its contrary (killing/healing, destroying/building, embracing/distancing, retaining/rejecting, etc.). All things, thus, are subject to the form of temporality, the form of the 'favourable moment' (καιρός: 'for everything there is a season', 3.1).[110] At this point the question is raised: 'What gain has the worker from his toil?' (3.9). Here 'gain' is meant in more than just an economic or promotional sense: What lasting value is produced by earthly efforts? The answer to this is the key to Qoheleth's 'philosophy'. 'I have seen the business that God has given to the sons of men to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time; he has also given them *'olam*, (eternity, that which is more than the present moment, the course of time, the 'long view' on what is constantly passing)[111]—'yet so that he cannot find out from the beginning to the end what God has done' (3.10f.). 'This is the only way in which Qoheleth can conceive of man's being the image of God and of his difference from the animals: man must question beyond his present moment. . . . But precisely here is where man feels the full brunt of his oppressive limitation: in everything he undertakes man exists in a world of whirling moments' (W. Zimmerli).[112]

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[110] K. Galling, 'Das Rätsel der Zeit im Urteil Kohelets', in: *ZThK* 58 (1961), pp. 1–15.

[111] E. Jenni, 'Das Wort *'ōlām* im Alten Testament', in: *ZAW* 64 (1952), pp. 197–248; 65 (1953), pp. 1–35.

This leads to the pure dialectic of wisdom. On one side, the side of immanence, the superiority of wisdom to foolishness is clearly evident, as clear as the excellence of day over night (2.13). No one can accuse this wise man of equating both things in a skeptical and even agnostic manner: 'I know well that . . .' he answers, and he repeats the traditional teaching on values (2.13; 7.12f.; 8.12f.). The great question comes up only *after* this insight. For wisdom, in so far as it 'does' something in the world and accumulates finite insights, cannot help arriving at its own opposite pole of foolishness. This can happen in two ways: first, because wisdom is such great 'toil' and 'exhaustion', imposed on man by God, that it shatters the human balance of the poles (12.12), especially if wisdom is practised for motives of ambition (4.4), and plunges man into isolation (4.7–12); and, second, wisdom can turn to folly in the sense that, in the course of time and in the passing of the generations, the efforts for clarity made by the elders become submerged and bear no fruit (2.18–23). From the perspective of eternity, the wise man and the fool have the same lot (2.14f.; 6.6), for the comforting doctrine of the afterlife of the good man no longer applies (6.4). And now we would have to transpose everything to the realm of the good, the realm of justice: certainly there is good and there is evil, but what has become of the reassuring belief that goodness is triumphant in the end? 'The sons of men are but wild beasts to one another' (3.18), the fate of man and beast is in the end the same (3.19ff.). Nevertheless, the farce of justice must be played out for the tranquillising of the people: 'If in a province you see the poor oppressed, right and justice violated, do not be surprised. You will be told that officials are under the supervision of superiors, who are supervised in turn; you will hear talk of the service of the king' (5.7f.).[113] People believe this, even though one constantly sees the social order turned topsy-turvy (10.6f.), even though acts of violence and oppression are the order of the day and remain unchallenged (4.1), and 'man lords it over man to his hurt' (8.9). 'There are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked, and there are wicked men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous' (8.14).

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[112] *Prediger*, *ATD* (1962), p. 172.

Universal laws that encompass the future cannot be imposed on the course of the world. Not even the individual man knows whether he will love or hate (9.1). 'Who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his vain life, which he passes like a shadow?' (6.12). 'For no one knows what is to happen to him' (8.7); 'man does not know the future' (10.4). This is why Qoheleth's thought continually goes back to the standard provided by the present moment; the ever-recurring refrain of the whole book is the advice to enjoy with gratitude and moderation the good things granted us at any given moment, in spite of or precisely because of the concurrent transcendental knowledge that they are finite, perishable, and vain: 'There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God' (2.24). 'I know that there is nothing better for man than to be happy and enjoy himself as long as he lives; also that it is God's gift to man that every one should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil' (3.12f.). 'I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should enjoy his work, for that is his lot' (3.22). 'Better is a handful of quietness than two hands full of toil and a striving after wind' (4.6). And so on and so forth (5.17ff.; 8.15; 9.7ff.). Marriage, too, and political activity are also included in the enjoyable, since none of it is found in *sheol*. It is not given us to look beyond the limits of this peculiar existence. It appears that in the designing of existence two contradictory elements were indissolubly attached to one another: for, just as the rivers run out into the sea and yet the sea never becomes full, so, too, 'the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing' (1.7f.).[114] Are not these receptacles of the finite, themselves finite? Or what is this relative infinity by virtue of which they can never be filled even while acknowledging that the finite is 'boredom' and a 'turning in a circle' and, therefore, 'vanity'? Death dissolves this contradictory amalgam: dust returns to the earth whence it had come, and God inhales the breath which he had lent (12.7). But 'who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down to the earth?' (3.21). Judging from death, which is the only thing one can observe, it would seem that 'man has no advantage over the beasts' (3.19).

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[113] Text of the Jerusalem Bible (Pautrel); see the accompanying footnote.

Qoheleth offers a philosophical world-view that has its ethical centre in the μηδὲν ἄγαν. The proper thing always is self-restraint and adapting to the standards of the καιρός, the given moment. Man should remain moderate both with regard to good and to evil ('Be not righteous overmuch, and do not make yourself overwise; why should you destroy yourself? Be not wicked overmuch, neither be a fool; why should you die before your time?', 7.16f.). In religious matters one ought to remain circumspect: in sacrificing (4.17), in making vows (5.4), in speaking with priests (5.5), and also in one's relationship with God. Fear is the proper attitude before God; why irritate him (5.6)? Advisable, too, is to keep one's distance ('for God is in heaven, and you upon earth', 5.1), for God is mighty ('who can make straight what he has made crooked?', (7.13). Qoheleth's God is decidedly a *Dieu des philosophes*.[115] He exists as 'beginning and end', but neither does one love him nor, therefore, must one love as God's gift of love the life he bestows. 'I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me; for all is vanity and a striving after wind' (2.17). The unborn have received the better lot (4.2f.; 7.1–4, 8); the meaning of being is abysmal ('that which is transcends my power of comprehension; deep, very deep, who can find it out?', 7.24); 'discouragement' (2.20) is what awaits us in the end.

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[114] Even if, with the Jerusalem Bible, we translate 'no man can say that eyes have not had enough of seeing, ears their fill of hearing', the paradox still remains.

[115] Isolated notes are struck in a more traditional Hebrew key, but these were certainly introduced by disciples and redactors. We can already see this, for instance, in 11.9b ('for all these things God will bring you into judgment'), 12.1a ('remember also your Creator'), and in the conclusion of the 'second epilogue' (12.13f.).

Just as the *eros* of the Song of Songs is not God's *agape*, so, too, the empty and history-less time of Qoheleth is not God's fullness of time in history. Qoheleth's conception of time knows nothing of incursions from the side of eternity which could offer the fleeting character of this world a mainstay and a meaning. His καιρός remains purely within the compass of the world; it has nothing to do with the καιρός of Israel's history or with that of the Gospel. Therefore, contradictory temporal meanings can balance one another out within a form of time which is itself empty of meaning.

It is profoundly significant that God's Holy Spirit included, within the work of his revelation, this final dance on the part of wisdom, this conclusion of the ways of man—the divine image who had set out to be an autonomous world before God. The whole gamut had to be run, and the entire undertaking both begins and ends in the name of the one Solomon. What remains in the end is *hebel*, the 'great wind'; not *ruach*, the divine breath that blows where it will, but rather a weightless wind that is tossed about for sheer airiness.[116] This time the stress falls not on the substantial form-quality of what it is to be an image, but on its unreality: *in imagine pertransit homo* (Ps 39.7, LXX). The breath of unreality blows toward death, and the portrayal of the approach of death, with a great becalming of the movements and sounds of life, is surely the climax of the Book of Qoheleth and one of the summits of the whole Bible (12.3–8). At the great conclusion of this struggle for an understanding of vanity, the breath of God's Spirit snatches the creature's directionless wind up into himself and makes it plain that, just as the *Dieu des philosophies* had been an abstraction to a wise man of Israel, so, also, the wise man as philosopher had become an abstraction to himself. But the living God subjected his own image to vanity (Rom 8.20) so that, through experience, it might learn that the concrete and unequivocal reality is the grace through which God opens out to his creature a space for living.

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[116] On the nuances of the concept *hebel* in Qoheleth, see Dom H. Duesberg, *Les Scribes inspirés*, II 1939), pp. 197f.

C. GRACE AND COVENANT

I. CONCRETE GLORY

Up to this point, the nature of the glory of the living God of Israel has been displayed only in an abstract form: in the dialectical intimation which was perceptible to the senses there appeared an absolute subject, powerful in its freedom, that revealed itself in the word as the only, holy God and that directed the face of the human person who was addressed to look directly to its own eternal face. The 'cosmic liturgy' was basically nothing other than the act whereby the created 'Thou' gave back all glory to the absolute 'I'. In the second place, the sphere of this 'Thou' was unfolded: it is characterised by the glory, proper to a copy, which falls on it from the original, a glory that grants it space but also leaves it in an all-encompassing twilight, since it cannot perfect itself in itself and give itself an unambiguous meaning, but can do this only with reference back to the original which reveals itself to it.

This relationship can become visible only when the self-revelation of the absolute subject has taken on content and concreteness, when the word which God addresses to the world no longer appears as an abstract communication divorced from himself, but appears as the rich self-disclosure of God that invites us to share in what is his own, i.e. when the abstract 'beautiful' of glory that blazes up and the abstract 'true' of the divine presence are complemented by that 'good' which alone, as grace, makes the beautiful beautiful and the true true. For the Hebrew, the transcendentals are disposed in a total mutual compenetration, such that the statements about the good stand together in the centre, and the truth and beauty of this good scarcely appear in any other way than as its modalities. Thus the truth (*emeth, emuna*) of God is fundamentally the truthfulness, freedom from deceit and reliability of his person, which is made known to Israel in the grace of his promise, of his covenant and of his conduct in keeping with the convenant. All the fundamental concepts that give expression to this gracious goodness flow into one another; they are not sharply distinct from one another, but are like intersecting circles with a common centre; that is important because the apparent exception, the concept of glory (*kabod*), itself, has in reality no possibility at all of being an exception. The identification made by the priestly document of the *kabod* of Yahweh with one particular mode of God's appearing, a mode perceptible to the senses and above all significant in the liturgy, occurs only at a later stage and may not be taken as a standard to measure the contents of the idea of divine glory, for three reasons. First, there was always an accompanying awareness of the ethical-personal root of the concept (weightiness, dignity); second, Judaism and above all the New Testament will employ the concept of *doxa* in a much more universal way than P; and third, even the thought of Israel with reference to the divine glory cannot be limited to the manner in which P employs the concept. The entire revelation of God in creation and salvation is as such glorious, nor is it possible to expect anything else if the 'beautiful' and the 'good' are only two aspects of the same reality (*tob*) in the Hebrew manner of thinking.

We have already encountered the statement that Yahweh is 'the glory of Israel', which Israel has exchanged 'for what is empty and powerless' (Jer 2.11), 'for shame' (Hos 4.7), 'for a calf that eats grass' (Ps 106.20; Paul will pick this up in a central passage and say that the people have 'exchanged the glory of the immortal God for an image of mortal man' and of animals: Rom 1.23): here there can be no doubt that glory is much more than one particular form of appearing that is perceptible to the senses, viz. the entire revelation of the God of grace who has disclosed his divine goods to men and made them accessible. It is not that the spheres covered by the concepts of 'glory' (*kabod*) and 'grace' were identical; but it is the case that grace itself has its own 'beauty' which belongs essentially to the divine glory. It is not the Greek word χάρις that is the first to possess the famous ethical-aesthetical dual meaning, as the favour that bestows gifts and as attractiveness; the corresponding Hebrew words too (*chen, chesed, gedula, tob, racham, rason*)[1] have all, in varying degrees of intensity, their aesthetic dimension. Thus it can be said at Is 40.6: 'All flesh is like grass, and its beauty (*chesed*, χάρις but δόξα in the LXX) is like the flower of the fields'. Or, at Ps 45.3: 'You are the fairest of the sons of men; beauty (=grace, *chen*; LXX: χάρις) is poured upon your lips'.[2] Ben Sirach will know of an 'ethical beauty' that is on the lips of the wise man (21.16) and goes before the modest man (32.10).[3]

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[1] Hatch and Redpath, 1455 column a.

It is important to note that it is the gracious act of God whereby he looks on his creature and pours beauty over it, although this does not mean that one can call the beauty of the creature purely 'forensic'. When the Creator has finished his work and looks upon it and finds it 'very good' (*tob*)—and the 'beautiful' is already included within the 'good'[4]—then the good and beautiful character of the cosmos is certainly not separable from the act and the gaze of the Creator in whose streaming light the earth is bathed; and yet it is also genuinely given the gift of the goods of his grace, and is entitled to keep those as long as it gives them back to the Creator in recognition and praise of him. The late wisdom teaching will give an exact formulation to this transcendence and immanence of the good and the beautiful, but this is not a discovery by the wisdom teaching. Jerusalem is 'the crown of beauty, the delight of the whole world' (Lam 2.15) and the temple is 'Israel's splendour' (*tip'ara* 2.1), as long as God dwells in it; he is the splendour (*nesach*, *cf.* 1 Chron 29.11) of the pious (Lam 3.18), and the holy land is the 'land of glory' (Dan 8.9; 11.16; 11.41), doubtless in a manner similar to that in which Ezekiel saw the glory of God bathing in light the earth which lay beneath it (Ezek 43.2; *cf.* Hab 3.3). And yet glory would not be glory if it merely sent forth an external radiance without affecting internally the being that is the recipient of grace. If grace is repeatedly likened to living water that springs up out of God (Is 12.3; 55.1; Jer 2.13; Ezek 47.1ff.; Ps 36.9–10; 46.5; Zech 14.8; Jn 4.14; 7.37; Rev 7.17; 22.17), then the meaning is not merely that man should bathe externally in this, but that he should come in thirst and immerse himself in it by drinking. Grace, together with its beauty, can belong internally to the creature to the extent that the latter is ready to return the gift: thus, Abraham never possessed his son more intimately than after he had gone through the ultimate renunciation.

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[2] *Chen* as attractiveness and beauty also in: Prov 1.9; 4.9; 5.19; 11.16; 17.8; 22.11; 31.30; Nah 3.4; *cf.* Sir 6.5; 7.19; 9.8.

[3] Here lies the exaggeration of the otherwise lovely and serious essay by Claus Westermann, 'Biblische Ästhetik', in: *Die Zeichen der Zeit, evang. Monatschrift* 1950, pp. 277–289.

[4] G. von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. I, pp. 364ff.

Here too lies the key to the understanding of 'nakedness' in Scripture. The one whose heart is disclosed in love before the God who discloses himself in love is naked in the good sense of the word: such a person is clothed with splendour and glory. But the one who is deprived of grace, and thus of the nakedness of love, must clothe himself with the apron of fig leaves and is 'clothed with shame as with a garment' (Jer 3.25; Mic 7.10; Ps 35.26; 109.29). External decoration is always suspect for the Bible: it is a false substitute for the clothing of the beauty of grace, and a day will come when it will reveal its true nature: 'Instead of perfume there will be rottenness; and instead of a girdle, a rope; and instead of well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a rich robe, girding of sackcloth; instead of beauty, shame' (Is 3.24; *cf.* 2 Kings 9.30; Jer 4.30; Ezek 23.40; Rev 18).

When the 'glory' of God is set in parallel (especially in the Psalms) to other characteristics of God that belong to his dispensation of salvation, this announces the new, higher integration with which we shall be concerned in what follows. The same heavens that declare the glory of God at Ps 19.2 declare his covenantal fidelity (*sedek*) at Ps 50.6. Ps 97.6 links both attributes: 'The heavens declare his covenantal fidelity, and all the peoples see his glory'. Ps 98. 2–4 makes a similar link between the revelation of glory that all the world can see and the covenantal fidelity of God which proceeds from 'the arm of his holiness'. Ps 104 praises for ever the glory of God (v. 31), after all his gracious acts have been listed, the acts with which God has filled the world. The first Hallel psalm, 113, praises God for the sake of his glory, with which he rises up and descends, and for the sake of his mercy, with which he raises up the lowly. Ps 138.5–6 links both qualities even more closely, by making the dimensions of the glory simultaneously the dimensions of the mercy: 'Great is the glory of Yahweh: though he is high, he regards the lowly (from near at hand); but the haughty he knows from afar'. Ps 145 too continually links both statements: on the one hand the powerful splendour of God's glory, on the other the gracious, loving mercy of God's goodness. God is always both at once for his people: 'He adorns the humble with victory; let the faithful exult in glory' (Ps 149.4–5). The God of glory is experienced by Israel so powerfully as the God of all grace that the mighty splendour of God is never experienced as being terrible, something from which one is repelled: fear of the Lord and love of the Lord shade off inseparably into one another. The light of grace which streams forth from God is not broken or called into question by any darkness; it is pure, unmixed, undisturbed (Ps 19.9–10; 12.7; 18.31a; Prov 30.5; 2 Sam 22.31). All God's qualities are integrated fully in the freedom of the absolute subject and become there the radiant fullness of the divine simplicity.

2. GOD ALLOWS HIS PEOPLE SPACE

When Moses begged that he might see God's glory, God hid him in the cleft of the rock and passed by him, crying out, 'Yahweh, Yahweh, a God merciful (*rachum*, from *rechem*) and gracious (*channun*, from *chnn*, *chen*), slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love (*chesed*) and faithfulness (*emeth*)' (Ex 34.6). In this experience, Moses was permitted to see the glory of God 'from the rear' (Ex 33.23) as it passed man by. The entire disclosure of God is grace; the phrase 'slow to anger' expresses the fact that grace is not the one part of a two-sided revelation, but rather wrath is a function of grace. When grace is bestowed on Israel, it receives thereby access to God, a place beside him and the right to dwell there. But the primary meaning of grace must be, not that God bestows on the creature, from the far distance of his heaven, a new 'quality', but rather that he bends down to the earth and raises man up to himself, making space for him in God's own realm in a manner that goes beyond all his qualities and possibilities, in, that is to say, an act of 'rapture'. Israel is familiar with a number of words that paraphrase this inexpressibly mysterious process; these all approach the same mystery from various sides, and therefore overlap one another to a certain extent, though never completely. They must be presented here briefly as they are interwoven with one another. If we were to demand that these words display the kind of conceptual clarity that the terms of a secular science must have, this would be both false to the material itself and unjust, for they all have their centre-point in the mystery of the grace of the God who discloses himself.

a. Berith: Covenant

The foundation of everything is the idea of the 'covenant' between Yahweh and his people. It is immediately obvious that the use of this category involves the difficulty that it suggests an agreement between two parties, while the idea of a divine revelation to man evokes above all the concept of a one-sided initiative of free grace. In order to meet this difficulty, one can take two paths of interpretation. First, one can hold on to the idea of mutual obligation and agreement, and then see the origin of the covenantal idea, not in an act whereby God and man obligate themselves, but in the act whereby the tribes come together to a religious federation (amphictyony) bound by oath; these tribes have sworn fidelity in the presence of their common God.[1] On this basis, one can hold the idea of a covenant between God and man to be secondary. But one can also start from a form of covenant-making (which has been demonstrated to be universal in the Orient) in which one who is stronger,[2] e.g. a mighty king, graciously offers an alliance to one who is weaker, e.g. a vassal; this alliance either is binding only on the latter, or else incorporates the graciousness of the Lord at a secondary stage into a legal relationship. But even then, we must still seek the point of transition from this relationship between men to the relationship between God and man. Even similarities in the form of covenant-making do not of themselves bridge this decisive gulf.[3]

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[1] The thinking of the following scholars goes along these lines: S. Mowinckel, *Le décalogue* (1927); M. Noth, *Das System der zwölf Stämme Israels* (1930); *idem*, 'Die Gesetze im Pentateuch' (1940, now in: *Ges. Studien zum AT*, 2nd edn. 1966, p. 54); G. von Rad, *Das formgeschichtliche Problem des Hexateuchs* (1938), pp. 11f.

[2] As early as *Wellhausen*, attention was drawn to this covenantal form which is frequently attested in the Bible (on the earlier history of the concept, *cf. R. Kraetzschmar, Die Bundesvorstellung im At* (1896); *P. Karge, Geschichte des Bundesgedankens im At* (1910)). In 'Berit, ein Beitrag zur Erfassung einer alttestamentlichen Denkform' (1944, now in: *Ges. Studien zum AT*, 1964, pp. 55–66), *Joachim Begrich* has once again emphatically sought to establish the original structure of the *berith* in this hierarchical relationship of the partners. '*Berith* originally always denotes a relationship between unequal partners. One who is stronger grants the *berith*-relationship to one who is without power . . . it is only the more powerful one who binds himself *vis-à-vis* the one who is less powerful, as in the cases of the Israelites *vis-à-vis* the Gibeonites (Josh 9) and Ahab *vis-à-vis* Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 20.34). No conditions are imposed upon the one who receives the *berith*' (p. 56). When the prince Jonathan enters the covenantal relationship with David, he gives him weapons and clothing (1 Sam 18.4). Thus the one-sided promise of Yahweh to Abraham could also be called a covenant, and here it is God alone who carries out the rite by which the covenant comes into force and passes through the midst of the animals which have been cut in half (Gen 15; *cf.* Jer 34.18; for the same concept, *cf.* also 1 Sam 11.1; Is 49.8). The covenant with Noah too was one-sided (Gen 9.11, 15), as were the Sinai covenant according to Ex 24.1–2, 9–11 and the covenant with David (2 Sam 23.5; *cf.* Ps 89.4f.). This original form of the *berith* was then (according to Begrich) 'increasingly taken over by the concept of treaty and transformed in keeping with this'; in the nature of things,

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nothing else could have been expected, since it is clear that certain preliminary conditions must exist for one who is weak to dare to ask a covenant alliance of one who is strong, and that there must exist political (and hence legal) advantages as well as the alliance itself for the one who is stronger.

From the beginning, clear two-sided alliances exist in the Bible: e.g., in the agreement between Jacob and Laban (Gen 31.44f.). Even in the Sinai covenant, initially conceived as something one-sided, an element of mutuality had to enter immediately: 'the conditions are made known to the people', the treaty document is read aloud when the covenant comes into force, and the legal demands of Yahweh are an integral part of the contents of this document. But this new understanding, which becomes the dominant understanding in Deuteronomy, falsifies (according to Begrich) the original meaning of the *berith* and indeed the entire relationship between God and man, since the unconditional character of God's offer as grace, and the meaning of his instruction (*torah*) is obscured, and his promise is made dependent on human conduct. Also, the divine partner is once again free if the covenant is broken by the human partner, and can in principle withdraw from the covenant treaty. For a critical assessment of Begrich's views, cf. M. Noth 'Das alttestamentliche Bundesschliessen im Lichte eines Mari-Textes' (1955, now in: *Ges. Studien*, pp. 142–154).

[3] Following a study by *V. Korosec* on 'Hethitische Staatsverträge, ein Beitrag zu ihrer juristischen Wertung' (Leipzig, rechtswiss. Studien 60, 1931), *George E. Mendenhall* (*Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near* East, Pittsburgh 1955) and *Klaus Baltzer* (*Das Bundesformular*, Wiss. Monogr. zum A und NT 4, 1960) have independently of each other taken the form of a 'treaty of sovereignty or vassalage between a great king and his vassal', widespread in the Near East and presented in Korosec's examples, as the starting-point for an interpretation of the covenant with Yahweh. This means that Begrich's idea, which had remained vague in legal terms, becomes historically perceptible, but this also indicates its limitation. 'The treaty character need not necessarily be abrogated by the fact that one of the partners in a covenant is superior to the other. Nor is it necessary that the conditions be laid down by both partners in an equal manner; they need only be accepted freely by both' in order for the character of a genuine treaty to be guaranteed (Baltzer, p. 33, n. 1). The formula of such a sovereignty-treaty, in its unchanging forms, can be glimpsed at several places in the Bible, especially in Josh 24. For Mendenhall, the 'book of the

One must therefore make the best of the fact that the chief event on which the relationship of life between Yahweh and Israel is based is something that lacks analogies. It cannot have been primarily a covenant made between human parties, which then at a secondary stage—for example, in sacral celebrations in which the covenant was renewed—had transformed itself into a covenant between God and the people; nor is it a case of a 'covenant' between a king, as the representative of the divinity, and the people—this is certainly quite out of the question because (as Gideon says) 'I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; Yahweh will be your king (*melek*)' (Judg 8.23), and because the 'mediator' Moses cannot in any way be confused with a representative of God in the world, such that he would have to make an agreement *for* this God with the people: rather, he presents himself as the servant of an absolute Subject that appears as one acting and disposing freely with unique impact (*kabod*). And the manner in which this divine 'I' addresses and lays hold of the people that stands before him at the mountain of God shows two things: first, the fact that this living God enters upon a relationship with this crowd of human persons in a special manner that sets a mark of distinction upon them, is in an elemental manner—and in a way that does not need to be mentioned specifically—pure, one-sided grace. Second, the same fact—that God wishes to enter into a unique living relationship with this crowd—lays claim to them in a total and unconditional way: what is at stake here is not something that is merely 'interior' and 'ethical' or 'cultic', but at the same time the whole external, 'legal' and 'political' existence of the group. Precisely this exclusiveness of the relationship between God and the people which is now shaping itself requires, if it is to be incarnated fully, the inclusion of the legal-political sphere.

It is of course possible to point out that in the early period

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covenant' (Ex 20–23) presents the substance of the contribution of legal materials made by the tribes in the two-sided covenant with Yahweh, and he sees the decalogue as the religious and ethical principle with governs the covenant and is the basis of the 'book of the covenant'.

in which the event takes place, there is no question of a separation between the ethical realm and the juridical-political realm. It is the 'father' of the extended family, the kindred group, the clan who is at one and the same time the chief who legislates and judges, and who embodies the spiritual sphere within which open mutual trust and support hold sway; in the same way, alliances can be made between clans that are alien to one another, uniting the realms in which they live[4] and building on a concept of mutual fidelity and loyalty that once again includes the ethical sphere and the juridical-political sphere together;[5] and in the same way, the alliances of sovereignty between great kings and their vassals which have been quoted in comparison, with their terms confirmed by oath and the inclusion of terrible curses for the one who breaks the treaty,[6] do not separate the two spheres from each other, because their aim is to establish between the partners a personal relationship of good behaviour, benevolence and openness even (and precisely) in the political realm. In an analogous way, the covenant of Yahweh, with all the fundamental forms of conduct it entailed, would have been ethical-political. While this is indisputably correct, it does not go beyond analogies and does not explain the terrifying exclusiveness, from which no escape was possible, of the relationship which is established here. In the same way, there is no path that leads up from the gracious character of the offer of a treaty which a great king makes to a weaker king—an act that is built *a priori* on a relationship of lordship and of service—to the endless grace of the God who leads his people and who points to the impetus of his salvific acts as the preamble to the covenant that is to be made: 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my *berith*, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine. And you shall belong to the realm of my royal lordship as the first who are at the right hand of the king and as a consecrated people' (Ex 19.4–6a).[7] 'With this office and this consecration, Israel is to realise its election to be a possession proper to Yahweh among all the peoples: this is the *berith* that he will make with Israel.'[8]

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[4] J. Pedersen, *Der Eid bei den Semiten*, 1914.

[5] W. P. Lofthouse, 'Ḥen and Ḥesed in the Old Testament,' *ZAW* 10 (1933), p. 33.

[6] *Cf.* n. 7.

The people will be granted admittance to God's own royal realm, to the extent that it is willing to accommodate itself to the usages and attitudes that hold good for the king. 'You shall be holy to me; for I Yahweh am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.' (Lev 20.26) The basis of this belonging is something much deeper than a 'treaty', and precisely for this reason, this belonging surpasses even the obligatory validity and the seriousness of the sanctions of every mere treaty. In the exodus from Egypt, the people has come to know a God who leads them, going with them and ahead of them, levelling the path for those who follow him. The covenant of life is not made between parties who are strangers to one another. God displays his credentials as the one who has led with might and who now makes election. Israel has already experienced him and can assent and say yes to its God when it is chosen, and can therefore also by implication say yes to all his usages, which can and will come upon Israel as requirements in the future too. For God is free. The obligations are included in the rights to belong to God's kingdom. The leader-king has mysteriously kept his name a secret, so that he may be for Israel only the one who will be, at each individual moment, acting and leading. And yet he is not one individual among others, 'for all the earth is mine'. Thus the 'covenant' is directed exclusively to the sovereign, free 'I' who cannot be captivated and controlled through any name used in magic. This is a dizzying, terrifying adventure for the finite human person, something that can be answered only by stripping one's own 'I' down to the naked kernel. This 'I' is demanded and must be presented in sacrifice (all sacrifices in Israel will be borne by the 'intention of presenting oneself in sacrifice');[9] this 'I' must make the appropriate answer. The prophets will always have this immediacy in view, going as far as the 'Servant of God' who gives the total answer (Is 50.4–5) and who thus stands in the direct line to Sinai.

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[7] Following the translation and interpretation by Martin Buber, *Moses* (1944), in: *Werke* Vol. II, *Schriften zur Bibel* (1964), pp. 120–122, instead of the usual translation, 'a kingdom of priests and a holy people', which obscures the link between Israel and the world by narrowing down the entire covenant which is to be made and seeing it only within a cultic context.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 122.

Between Sinai and the Servant lies *Deuteronomy*, which separates the paradox of the living community that has been established (and this ultimately is what is meant by *berith*) into its two complementary parts: the utter one-sidedness of the grace of God, which establishes the community, and the utter mutuality which is based therein: word and answer, love and answering love, directive and obedience. Both come into view simultaneously: the election of this one people, for which no reason can be given (7.6–7), without any merit on the people's part (8.17), on the basis of love alone (7.9; 10.15); the only possible response to this love is unlimited love (6.5; 11.1, 13), but in such a way that the one who loves 'does not live from bread alone, but from all that goes forth from Yahweh's mouth' (8.3), from that teaching of which the 'ten words' (Ex 20.1–17) are an embodiment. They are 'basic negations', since God 'is content with, as it were, signposts on the margins of a wide sphere of life, to which he who belongs to Yahweh has to give heed', while the sphere of life which has its borders marked out in this way 'remains completely without norms' in its interior.[10] For 'Yahweh has offered life by giving the commandments', he has given Israel the understanding of the grace that befalls it: the first table reminds the people of the gratitude that it owes the one who redeemed it from the house of slavery, and the second table gives realisation to the disposition of gratitude in the social, legal and political realm: 'Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt' (Deut 10.19; *cf.* Ex 22.20; 23.9), 'if there is among you a poor man . . . you shall not harden your heart . . . you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your God redeemed you' (Deut 15.7, 15). Jesus' parable of the servant who has no mercy is a radical synthesis of the genuine spirit of the decalogue. Since the 'covenant' between God and the people is a covenant between the central 'I' on each side, everything that forms a part of the people's existence has its role to play here: nothing in the world is excluded from consideration. God's kingdom extends into even the most profane realm. The obligatory character of the instruction comes from the greatness of the grace. It is therefore pointless to speculate whether the 'covenant', which is the basis of everything, was originally conceived as one-sided or two-sided. It is two-sided because it is based on the one-sidedness of the love of God that makes election.

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[9] Buber, *Königtum Gottes* (1932), in: *Werke* Vol. II, p. 642.

[10] G. von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. I, p. 194.

One can therefore properly understand the pure relatedness of God and people—'Yahweh the God of Israel, Israel the people of Yahweh'—as the 'covenant formula', and the long history of the Old Testament as the ever deeper exposition of this formula.[11] The history of this exposition isolates Israel more and more from all other human religions and from all ascetical and mystic paths to salvation, because of its undistracted stance eye to eye with its God, and through its will to be led and governed only by him. It is only right that we should derive this qualitative otherness from a genuine historical origin, even if it is no longer possible precisely to identify this with the methods of the historical. And it is true that the history of Israel always remains a history of ever new backslidings, attempts to flee, and substitutions when confronted with the one 'intolerable present moment'.[12] The substitution begins at the foot of Sinai, and cuts in two the very act of giving the covenant: in place of the imageless power and glory of Yahweh above the world, the image that embodies the natural power of generation is set: the golden bull (Ex 32) that is set up anew at the beginning of the great schism (1 Kings 12.28). Instead of the God who wanders with his people and leads them and directs them, the sedentary Baals are chosen as the *numina* of the region. Worse still, instead of the 'service with all your heart and all your soul in fear and love' which is demanded, the 'circumcision of the heart' (Deut 10.12, 16), there is set the distorted image of the cruel demon that is satisfied only when one's own children have been thrown into its glowing throat. It is true that Yahweh had revealed himself to the people's ancestor as the one who demands everything, requiring the first-born son of the promise, in order to keep the space between himself and the faith of Abraham pure and emptied-out; when this purity is established, the father can receive his son back again. And (in Israel's brilliant new interpretation of the ancient custom of circumcision) he incises the seal of his covenant on the bodily sphere (Gen 17.13) and thus sequestrates precisely the power of generation that was given full expression, almost as something divine, without any checks, in the cults of the land. Later on, the substitution is less brutal, but all the more perfidious: instead of the living instruction from the mouth of Yahweh there appears the cultic law which has petrified to become something that exists in its own right, and instead of the gift of self made in obedience of human hearts there appears the substitution of the sacrifices with their minutely-regulated activity, despite the protest of the prophets (1 Sam 15.22; Amos 5.21f.; Hos 6.6).

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[11] R. Smend, *Die Bundesformel* (Theol. Studien 68, 1963). Nevertheless, von Rad can thereby be correct in his assertion that Israel has no 'mid-point' but rather points out beyond itself, with the whole of its history, to the fulfilled and eternal covenant: *Th.At*, Vol. I, pp. 229f.

[12] D. Barthélemy, *Gott mit seinem Ebenbild* (1966), pp. 24f.

The immediate and absolute 'I–Thou' relationship between God and the people requires and justifies the concept of the divine *jealousy*.[13] For the time being, everything depends on the concreteness and hence the exclusiveness of love, so that any glance cast in the direction of other religious possibilities is to be counted as infidelity to the covenant, or adultery. No value whatsoever is placed on 'universality' and 'tolerance'. Everything that can become a temptation is to be 'banished', i.e. uprooted: at God's command, it must be sacrified in blind obedience to the one thing that matters in the present moment between heaven and earth (1 Sam 15). Every image of Yahweh is strictly prohibited, for it would distort the purity of his personal being and distract the human heart from this. If Israel remains true to the covenant, this opens up for the people a place of breadth and of freedom in God; if it seeks another freedom invented by itself apart from the covenant, it will entangle itself in the most crushing servitude.

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[13] B. Renaud, *Je suis un Dieu jaloux. Etude d'un thème biblique* (Lectio Divina 36, 1963), with bibliography.

Israel will not be able to sustain this 'I-Thou' relationship in the long term. It will break the covenant. The original intention is transposed *a priori*, in Deuteronomy's presentation, to Moses, the representative of the people. For the people, the voice of God rolls in waves that are too high and too dangerous, and the mediator is placed between God and the people as a breakwater: 'You, go near, and hear all that Yahweh our God will say; and speak to us all that Yahweh our God will speak to you; and we will hear and do it' (Deut 5.27). Clericalism is something invented by the laity: even at the outset, at Sinai, the people takes up a position at a distance. The true history of the covenant will be the history of individuals, of representatives. Deuteronomy insists that God's voice with its commands for all the people sounded forth from the pure, formless fire of his glory. And thus the people themselves attest: 'Behold, Yahweh our god has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire; we have this day seen God speak with man and man still live'. God is nothing other than a voice that calls out of the midst of the glory. And man, borne up by God's power, can hear the instruction without dying. For man is ultimately created, in a destiny that goes beyond himself, to support this voice. But the people continue, making mockery of all logic: 'Now therefore why should we die?' (And this, although they have just stated that they had seen and heard God, without dying.) 'For this great fire will' (finally?) 'consume us; if we hear the voice of Yahweh our God any more, we shall die' (Deut 5.24f.). To stand fast is too great an exertion for them: they withdraw and send a representative to the front of their ranks. Moses, who communicates to them in Moab before his death the words of God which he alone has heard, has lost the game before he even begins.

b. *Chesed, chen, rachamim: kindness, favour, mercy*

On the level of human relationships, '*chesed* constitutes the true substance of the covenant'.[14] But here there are various stages of intensity. *Chesed* belongs primarily to the sovereign Lord who establishes the alliance, and in this sense the word means something close to benevolence, grace, love; but following on from this, the inferior partner who enters the covenant must live in accordance with the favour which has been bestowed on him, he must so to speak reflect it back and order his general behaviour—*vis-à-vis* the Lord and *vis-à-vis* others—in keeping with *chesed*. Thus, *chesed* is 'originally the relationship of benevolence and appropriateness to the covenant that obtains between a lord and those who are his', and is therefore 'best translated by *Huld* (kindness) or *Holdschaft* (graciousness: in old German law, the *Holde* is the vassal) . . . in his kindness, Yahweh leads the people that he has redeemed from Egypt (Ex 15.13) and the faithful man who fights for Yahweh is called his *chasid*, his vassal (Deut 33.8)'.[15] Once again, when we consider the use of this concept in interpersonal relationships, we must note that the ethical and legal-political concepts are extremely closely linked in ancient times: members of the family, the clan, of allied tribes have mutual trust; fidelity and reverence are based on the legal relationship and in turn make it possible for this legal relationship to endure. *Chesed* is given by the host to the guest and is repaid by the guest as the occasion arises (Gen 19.19; Josh 2.12–14); one who has offered help in *chesed* lays an obligation on the one who has received the help to the same kind of attitude and action (Judg 1.24f.; 1 Kings 2.7). Where the legal element (of a treaty) becomes more prominent, *chesed* is best rendered by 'loyalty';[16] but this concept belongs more to the world of the 'covenant' than to that of the 'treaty', no matter what the motive for the making of an alliance may have been. If one translates by 'conduct appropriate to fellowship', this is correct only if one establishes as the root of the whole matter a personal, benevolent, loving attitude that indicates and opens up a sphere of mutual trust.[17] Naturally, in the alliance between God and Israel, it is only God who can show *chesed* in the original sense, but from Hosea onwards, God offers man his 'grace' 'like a gift to a bride', so that the only possible response of man to God is the 'free gift of his heart',[18] and man learns above all how to spread around himself the atmosphere of forgiving love (Hos 2.21; 4.1; 6.4, 6; 10.12).[19]

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[14] Nelson Glueck, *Das Wort Ḥesed im alttestamentlichen Sprachgebrauch als menschliche und göttliche gemeinschaftsmässige Verhaltensweise* (1927), quoted in 2nd edn., 1961, Beihefte *ZAW* 47, p. 11. *Cf.* E. Kautzsch, *Über die Derivate des Stammes ṣdq im alttest. Sprachgebrauch* (1881). G. Dalman, *Die richtige Gerechtigkeit im AT*, 1897. I. Elbogen, 'HSD—Verpflichtung, Verheissung, Bekräftigung', in: Festschrift für Paul Haupt (1926). H. J. Stoebe, 'Die Bedeutung des Wortes ḥäsäd im AT' (*VT* 2, 1954, pp. 244–254, summary of typewritten dissertation, Münster 1951: *Bedeutung und Geschichte des Begriffes ḥäsäd*). W. P. Lofthouse, 'Ḥen and Ḥasad in the Old Testament', *ZAW* 10 (1933), pp. 29–35. James A. Montgomery, 'Hebrew Hesed and Greek Charis', *Harvard Theol. Rev.* 32 (1939), pp. 97–102. A. R. Johnson, 'Hesed und Hasid', *Interpret. ad VT pertinentes*, S. Mowinckel (1955), pp. 100–112.

[15] M. Buber, *Der Glaube der Propheten* (1950), in: *Werke*, Vol. II, 1966, p. 356.

This permits us to see the extent to which *chesed* includes other fundamental concepts in itself, although it cannot be simply equated with these: *berith* and *chesed* condition each other mutually;[20] *chesed* cannot be thought of without the idea of reliability and truthfulness (*emeth*), and both appear very often together in the Psalms; salvation and pacification (*shalom*) are closely linked to *chesed*. To appeal to God's *chesed* does not mean merely to cry out to his grace, but also to remind him of his covenantal fidelity by giving signs of repentance and conversion which allow God to see that one still stands by this covenant of faithfulness. One dares to remind God of his fidelity to the covenant and to depend on this as on something that is already present by grace; naturally, it is not far to the idea that the entire mutuality of the alliance rests on the originally one-sided initiative of God's grace by which Israel was chosen, especially when the man who has sinned has once seen that he has no right to God's mercy (*rachamim*), but that a new and free bestowal of God's grace is necessary in order for the relationship of *chesed* and *emeth* to be restored.[21]

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[16] Lofthouse draws attention to the ancient Roman relationship of *cliens* and *patronus* and to the medieval ethos in the feudal regime: *loc. cit.*, p. 33.

[17] Here lies the essential critical contribution made by H. J. Stoebe to the work of N. Glueck. In the historical books from Judges to 2 Kings, *chesed* in secular use indicates a kind of conduct between human persons with a goodness and kindness that exceeds what one can expect or has deserved, a conduct that rather reveals generous, open readiness. And it is this that first makes fellowship possible (Stoebe, *loc. cit.*, p. 249).

[18] Stoebe, *ibid.*, p. 251.

[19] *Cf.* Jer 2.2–3, speaking of Israel's 'loyal affection of the youth' (Cheyne) *vis-à-vis* God.

[20] Glueck, *loc. cit.*, pp. 13, 33; both concepts appear together at Deut 7.2; 8.12; 1 Kings 8.23; 2 Chron 6.14; Neh 1.9; 9.32.

As the word loses more and more of its legal overtones in the late period, and the tone of pure favour and grace becomes dominant (*cf.* Est 2.9, 17), so the translation by χάρις is the most appropriate rendering possible.[22] But χάρις is almost invariably the translation of *chen* (from *chnn*), in which the element of favour, of the bestowal of a favour, is uppermost, the idea of kindness to which no one may lay claim. 'Do I find *chen* with you?' means: Will you turn your favour freely in my direction? Ruth finds *chen* with Boaz, David with Saul and with Jonathan; Joab finds *chen* with David when his request for the return of Absalom is granted. When Hadad flees, he finds *chen* with Pharaoh; Esther finds *chen* with the king. No mention is made of covenantal obligation in this universally-known human behaviour. But *chen* can also be the accompanying quality through which someone obtains favour for himself: charm, loveliness, even on occasion the fact that one is loved.[23] God, however, has the sovereign freedom to bestow his favour, without regard to persons (Deut 10.17), on whomever he will (Ex 33.19; Num 6.25). Yet here the ascent from what is customary among men to God's behaviour is even clearer than in the case of the previous concepts. The same is true of *rachamim*, 'mercy'—from *rechem*, 'womb', meaning 'bowels' in the plural as the seat of tender compassion—a reaction that man in hope attributes to God; he cannot actually (in terms of the covenant) presuppose that this exists in God, but he needs it bitterly when he must find God's forgiveness for himself as a sinner, and the re-establishment of fellowship with him (Is 63.15; Ps 79.8; 119.77; 145.9). God himself says that he feels this compassionate mercy for Jerusalem (Zech 1.16). The initial reference of this word is wholly to human feeling, but terminologically it is used only of a man and may originally have meant the act whereby the father expressed his definite will to acknowledge the newborn child (Stoebe). In this tension between the affective and the rational dimensions, it is used of God as the one who has mercy on Israel and especially on the poor, the widows and the orphans in Israel.

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[21] Glueck, *loc. cit.*, p. 64.

[22] It is true that there is a specifically Greek note in χάρις too, speaking of what is graceful, attractive, communicating joy (Lofthouse, p. 29), while (as Montgomery emphasises) the link between justice and kindness always remains perceptible in *chesed*. But both authors pay insufficient attention to the extent to which χάρις also includes the notion of making a gift (often mutual) and showing favour (*cf.* Pindar), so that the distance between the areas indicated by the two concepts is reduced.

[23] Frequently in Proverbs: 1.9; 4.9; 5.19; 17.8; 22.1; 22.11; *cf.* Eccl 9.11; 10.12; Ps 45.3.

In this way, the covenantal relationship between God and the people takes on an inner richness, light and warmth. A sphere of common life and fellowship is opened up: man has the right of access to this because he has affirmed the covenant, but the contents and the extent of this sphere cannot be calculated, since one may hope to receive more than one knows from the infinitely powerful, free and generous God. Nothing in this relationship tends to make man believe in a limit; God's *chesed*, *chen* and *rachamim* are not bounded by other divine qualities such as his freedom, his 'righteousness', his 'wrath'. The fear of the Lord, which is the basis of all wisdom (Prov 1.7; Sir 1.11–20), places man only in that distance of reverence which permits true and unlimited intimacy with God. The following comprehensive concept gives us a kind of test of this assertion.

c. Sedek, sedaka: right conduct in faithfulness

One of the unfortunate facts of the Greek translation of scripture is that no other word than *dikaiosune* (which we translate as *iustitia* and 'righteousness') was available for sedaka;[24] this translation has cast a shadow over the whole of the old covenant, and is 'not only a very inadequate rendering of the Hebrew *sedaka*, but is often actually a misleading one'.[25] This must be 'described . . . as the highest value in life, that upon which all life rests when it is properly ordered'.[26] *Sedek* is a value so universal that its totality embraces everything like a 'transcendental quality' of reality, and therefore escapes every attempt at a precise definition.

Once it was realised that it is not possible to find in the Bible any ethical and legal norms of action and behaviour that are absolute in the Western sense, the attempt was made to have recourse to a 'relational concept', 'in the sense that it refers . . . to a genuine relationship between two, but not to the relationship to an idea on the part of an object subject to judgment'.[27] This can be the relationship of the family, the tribe, or the people, and ultimately that of the people to God. This idea, which has been repeated again and again in the past sixty years, is however naive, because the question at once arises, how a relationship between two can be recognised as correct. The Greek, who endeavours by reflection to deduce the norm from the relationship which exists in reality, knows no less than the easterner that righteousness is a relational concept;[28] the easterner lives within the relationship and knows intuitively and generally when it is in good order, without defining the mutual relationship of the various aspects of the experience that have given him this knowledge in such a way that he can see this clearly. Yet here, at two points, the merely formal relationship is transcended. We find in the whole of the Orient the idea that the one who watches over the just order (whether this is an individual judge, or the king, or the divinity itself) must protect the *right of the weak* against subjugation by the strong.[29] It is well known how central the relevant legal requirement is in Israel and to what an extent this is placed under religious sanction: the covenant God himself is the supreme protector of the right of the poor, the oppressed, the powerless; the laws from the beginning (and with increased frequency in Deuteronomy) ordain that those who represent the law must uphold God's position in law on this matter in an effective manner, and the prophets see this as a chief theme of their preaching. The second point, likewise something common to the whole of the Orient, is the belief (which is almost a matter of knowledge) in an '*immanent righteousness*' in the order of the world:[30] the deeds of man have this 'in themselves' in the sense that they posit a state of affairs to which the one who acts is subject, with a power that comes into effect and is fully realised: evil deeds bring at some time or other to light the doom that lies inherent in them for their perpetrator, and good deeds bring to light their blessing. The one who acts may think that his deed lies in his own power, but in fact it is the deed that takes him into the sphere of its power.[31] This link between deed and outcome is felt to be so close that the same roots are employed to speak of 'morally corrupt' and

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[24] E. Kautzsch (*cf.* n. 14 above on *chesed*). F. Nötscher, *Die Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei den vorexilischen Propheten*, 1915. H. Fuchs, 'Das alttestamentliche Begriffsverhältnis von Gerechtigkeit und Gnade', in: *Christentum und Wissenschaft* 3 (1927), pp. 101–118, 149–158. K. H. Fahlgren, *Sedaka nahestehende und entgegengesetzte Begriffe im AT*, Uppsala 1932. H. Cazelles, 'A propos de quelques textes difficiles relatifs à la justice de Dieu dans l'AT', *Rev. Bib.* 58 (1951), pp. 169–188. Klaus Koch, *SDQ im AT. Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, diss. Heidelberg 1933; *idem*, 'Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im AT?', *ZTK* 52 (1955), pp. 1–42; idem, 'Wesen und Ursprung der "Gemeinschaftstreue" im Israel der Königszeit', *Z.f. evang. Ethik* 5 (1961), pp. 72–90. G. von Rad, 'Jahwes und Israels Gerechtigkeit', in: *ThOT*, Vol. I, pp. 370f. *W. Mann*, 'Gerechtigkeit', I, in: *Handb. theol. Grundbegriffe* I (1962), pp. 468–478.

[25] von Rad, *loc. cit.*, 374.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 370.

[27] H. Cremer, *Die paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre im Zusammenhang ihrer geschichtlichen Voraussetzungen* (1901), pp. 34f.

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[28] Plato, *Republic* IX, 441 D ff.

[29] 'In order that the strong one may not harm the weak ones': 37–39 of the introduction to Hammurapi's legal code, AOT 381.

[30] *Cf.* what has been said above about the ethics of Proverbs, p. 126.

[31] On this, *cf.* esp. Klaus Koch, 'Gibt es ein Vergeltungsdogma im AT?', *loc. cit.*, p. 18. The apocalyptic beasts of the Revelation of John are in the direct continuation of this idea: they proclaim that the deeds which have been carried out have got the upper hand over those who did them. The perpetrator 'encompassed' by his deed: Hos 7.2 and frequently.

'bringing disaster', as of 'evildoer' and 'one who is wretched', etc.[32] Accordingly, *sedek* means both correct behaviour (as deed) and blessing (as the power or effect that lies inherent in this).[33] No ancient people was able to conceive of this fundamental sensitivity to the righteousness immanent in existence without a link to the divinity, and as long as man does not demand that he be able himself to penetrate the functioning of this righteousness of existence, the idea that the divinity 'is the protector of right' remains unimpaired. Where the divinity is the covenant Lord of Israel, the whole scheme of immanent righteousness can initially be transferred almost unaltered into the reality of the covenant, and this produces the understanding of history of Deuteronomist historiography: Israel's turning away from the Lord of the covenant 'has its effect' as the disaster that God permits, and its repentance and its cry to the Lord 'have their effect' as salvation: God has mercy and sends a judge or a prophet. Sin, as departure from the realm of God's *sedaka* (as fidelity to the covenant), bears its 'punishment' in itself; God does not need to do anything particular of his own to punish it. Old Testament exegesis has revealed the astonishing state of affairs that God's *sedaka* is not a righteousness that deals out reward, and above all, not a righteousness that deals out punishment.[34]

But when we have said that the covenant righteousness is conceived as functioning in the manner of an immanent righteousness, we cannot have said the last word on the subject; nor is it enough to establish that Yahweh 'watches' over the link between deed and fate, and even brings about (perhaps 'hastens') this link thanks to his divine *sedaka*.[35] For this does not take sufficient account of his freedom in the covenant. This is seen in its fulness only where the immanent link in the link posited by God is transcended or removed and set within a larger context in a manner that cannot be comprehended, where God's free act of forgiveness 'bears away', 'covers over' the sin together with its consequences (Ps 32.1, 5; 85.3; 25.18), 'removes' (103.12), 'heals' (103.3; 107.20), 'wipes it out' and 'washes it away' (51.3), where man is 'snatched out' of his sin (39.9), where the might of the transcendent *sedaka* of the redeemer-God has the last word to say over the immanent *sedaka* of the creator-God.

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[32] Fahlgren, *loc. cit.*, speaks here of a 'synthetic understanding of life', *cf.* Koch, 'Vergeltungsdogma', who adds further to Fahlgren's examples and points out that the Old Testament has no specific word for 'punishment' (p. 29).

[33] Prov 14.34; 21.21; 2 Sam 19.29.

[34] F. Nötscher has upheld the position that God's righteousness in the Old Testament is also a punishing righteousness (*loc. cit.*), and *Descamps* too (*Studia Hellenistica* 5, pp. 69–91, Louvain 1948; 'Justice et Justification', in: *Suppl. Dict. Bibl.*, 1949) holds on the basis of several texts that one must maintain this. H. Cazelles, in the study mentioned above (n. 24), has swept away these last hesitations. 'No references to the concept of a punitive *sedaka* can be adduced; that would be a *contradictio in adjecto*': G. von Rad, *ThoT*, Vol I, p. 377. S. Lyonnet (*VD*, 1947) discusses in the same sense the Old Testament presuppositions of the 'righteousness of God' in Romans.

The immanent righteousness contains something anonymous and can be made alive at most through the personification of a quality of God (as subordinate deities of law in Egypt, Babylon and Phoenicia).[36] But where the absolutely divine *sedaka* of the free covenant God of Israel breaks through in the order of the world to create salvation, it shows all the characteristics of *glory*, e.g. in Ps 97, when the divine king thrones as judge of the world while the earth exults: 'Clouds and thick darkness are round about him, *sedaka* and *mishpat* are the foundation of his throne. Fire goes before him, and burns up his adversaries round about. His lightnings lighten the world: the earth sees and trembles. The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of all the earth. The heavens proclaim his *sedaka*; and all the peoples behold his *kabod* . . . Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart'.[37] In the same way, it is once again the heavens that proclaim his *sedaka* (v. 6) when in Ps 50 God goes forth to judge Israel with the theophanous attributes 'in radiant, perfect beauty' (v. 2) and in the fire of the tempest. Here every order that is invested in creation and in salvation history is traced back to the absolute 'I' that reveals himself. Ps 99 too places the praise of God's 'right', 'order' and 'righteousness' within a framework of a theophany (v. 1) and a mention of the exodus glory (v. 7). For this reason, God's *sedek* has always the quality of salvation,[38] and is 'closely akin' to the concept of *chesed* 'and frequently overlays it'.[39]

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[35] K. Koch, 'Vergeltungsdogma', pp. 9, 21. 1 Kings 9.32: 'Condemn the guilty by bringing his conduct upon his own head, and vindicate the righteous by rewarding him according to his righteousness'.

[36] H. Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom, Studies in Hypostatizations of divine Qualities and Functions in the Ancient Near East*, 1947.

[37] Ps 97.1–6, 11.

But what is the relationship between the *sedek* of man (to the extent that he lives in God's covenant) and the *sedek* of Yahweh? The answers are varied, and often give only hints. It seems more important for the old covenant not to neglect any of the aspects that come into question here, than to assemble them into a system. As we have seen, there exists an evidential quality, aiming at man as such, of what is right and righteousness in the behaviour of individuals to one another and in the public order; and God is the one who establishes, preserves and watches over this right. This right is promulgated and established in a new way when the covenant is made: as a human mode of being right that must be accommodated to the revealed sphere of the divine mode of being right, and has to be the product of Israel's attitude of thankfulness for the grace of the covenant. Since the realm of the divine mode of being right is disclosed, an ontological point of view predominates over everything else: the one who stands within the covenant and is loyal to it, dwells with the whole of his being in the realm of salvation and is 'justified'. The action that is man's response can make this realm secure and extend it, but it always presupposes the existence of this realm. The only possibility for man to have the confidence that he is behaving correctly, is for him to be able to trust that reality as a whole is right: in this sense, *sedek* is 'the ability to stand firm, having permanence, finding a reason to exist', and for Israel this is especially God's 'covenant fidelity' which reveals and renews itself daily in one's existence and in which one can place one's trust in future. 'When they trust God's covenant fidelity and live in accordance with his covenant in promise and precept, men acknowledge that God is right and themselves come to their own right. They achieve the right state of affairs, not only in relationship to God, but also among themselves and in their relationship to things.'[40]

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[38] On the association of *sedaka* and salvation (*yesha'*) in Deutero-Isaiah, *ThoT*, Vol. I, n. 6.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 372, n. 6.

But before we speak of keeping the commandments, it is necessary to indicate the outlines of a *sacramental form* by which one can place oneself, anew or more deeply, in God's mode of being right, thanks to the sphere of right which his grace has opened up.[41] This form corresponds to the ontological thinking which is active here along with other forms of thought. To observe the ordinances of God is naturally a decisively important part of human 'being right' before God, but, significantly, this is not without relation to cultic behaviour, where the priest who receives and appraises the sacrifices acknowledges them to be 'right' and free of defects or else, perhaps, rejects them as insufficient, and thus has a mediatory function. Man's offer is not immediately pleasing to God: it must be 'declared' to be pleasing to God, in order to be 'reckoned for righteousness' to the man. This procedure, which is repeated again and again in the cultic laws of the Pentateuch,[42] gives man practice in paying heed in his non-cultic activity too to God, who declares on his own behalf what possesses validity in his eyes and what does not possess validity. The whole body of sacrifices is pleasing to him only if it is the parable of an attitude and an activity that are in keeping with what is right.[43] A list of conditions such as those drawn up at Ezek 18.5–9, similar to the lists used in preparation for confession, tells us who counts as

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[40] J. Moltmann, *Theologie der Hoffnung* (1965), p. 185.

[41] K. Koch, 'Wesen und Ursprung der "Gemeinschaftstreue"', *loc. cit.*, pp. 83f. He refers to the 'sacrificial meal of *sedek*' at Deut 33.19, which is also mentioned at Ps 4.6 and Ps 51.21; *cf.* also Ps 65.6b. Koch thinks of 'a kind of sacramental food' (p. 85), through which the pious man receives a share in God's *sedek*. There will have existed something like a cultic confession with the declaration of absolution, although it is no longer possible for us to discern the individual details of this (G. von Rad, *ThoT*, Vol. I, pp. 379–80).

[42] Lev 7.18; 17.4 and frequently.

[43] Is 1.11; Mal 1.10; Ps 51.18f.

'right' before God—one must avoid idolatry, one must respect one's neighbour's wife, give one's bread to the hungry and clothe the naked, oppress no one, avoid lending at interest, give right judgment as judge, etc.—and here man must pay heed to God's declaration: he cannot say that what 'his conscience advises him to do' is right. The decisive factor for the one who lives in God's covenant is that something is accepted as 'right' in God's sight, for he must await his definitive being right as something that comes to him from heaven.[44] According to Gerhard von Rad, even the solitary statement about the faith of the patriarch must be seen as derived from the cultic formula of declaration: 'Abraham believed God (his promise), and he counted this to him as righteousness' (Gen 15.6), 'certainly a striking and perhaps even revolutionary formulation for those contemporary with it'.[45] And yet the formula does no more than go to the basis of the covenant relationship which had existed from the outset: its basis was from the outset obedience, out of reverent and thankful love, to the God of promise and of salvation (Ex 19.5; Deut 7.8f.), and it was here that life in accordance with God's directives had its ground and unity. The declaratory formula only makes it plain that the covenant is built upon the free love of God, as the form of his grace, and that the standard of the 'right' which holds good here is laid down by God. This does not mean that the righteousness of the believing Abraham is 'forensic'; rather, it shares in the existential realm of the covenant to the extent that it admits God to be in the right at all points, in the fullest readiness of obedience.[46]

d. Mishpat: right which comes into effect as salvation

A further all-embracing concept lies very close to *sedek* and also to *chesed*: *mishpat*, *mishpatim*, with a spectrum of meanings that is still wider than the previous concepts.[47] Before entering the specifically legal sphere, it speaks of what has been laid down in tradition, what is customary, usual (Gen 4.13; Judg 18.7; 2 Kings 17.33). 'What *mishpat* did the man have?' asks Ahaziah of the men who had met Elijah (2 Kings 1.7). In the legal sphere, then, it denotes the judgment that has been established, the juridical decision itself, but more precisely its meaning and contents: the correct legal judgment (1 Kings 3.9, 28), and ultimately the concern for what is right, right as a whole (1 Kings 10.9, where *mishpat* is accompanied by *sedaka*: the legal order that, by God's grace, radiates out from king Solomon). It is never formal law, but is based in what is ethically right (*cf.* Gen 18.19), and this in turn emerges irrefutably in concrete terms in the claim of the poor to what is right. The older prophecy sets the just treatment of the poor, who are incapable of enforcing their own right and establishing it, in the very centre of God's conventional requirements. In the face of the injustice done to him, the 'poor' becomes simply the one who is 'innocent' (Amos 5.12), and that which is 'right' becomes straightforwardly what is 'good' (5.14–15); once again, *mishpat* and *sedaka* appear jointly (5.7, 24; 6.12). In Isaiah, *mishpat* becomes the all-embracing concept for what is right, with an unconditional seriousness

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[44] Hos 10.12; Is 45.8; Joel 2.23; *cf.* 2 Sam 24.23; Jer 14.12; Ezek 20.14; 43.27; Amos 5.22; Hos 8.13.

[45] G. von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. 1, p. 379; *idem*, 'Die Anrechnung des Glaubens zur Gerechtigkeit' (1951) now in: *Ges. Stud. zum AT*, 3rd edn. 1965, pp. 130–135.

[46] G. von Rad has taught us that we should not take even the post-exilic

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declarations of the pious that they are righteous before God (Ps 26; 73; 119, etc.), which are often difficult to bear with, as psychological or individual-ethical self-assessments, but rather as confessional acts expressing the fundamental desire to be loyal to God—i.e. in fact as acts of faith (*ThOT*, Vol. I, pp. 380–383). The harsh and unmediated 'either/or' of 'righteous'/'unrighteous' derives from the sphere of the unconditional quality of faith. And the criterion taken to determine whether such a fundamental loyalty to God exists is *delectari*, the joy in God and in his directive, joy in resting in his presence, 'refreshing oneself' and 'letting oneself be spoiled' by him (Ps 37.4; Job 22.26; 27.10). Jesus will uncover the risks of such acts of pronouncing oneself to be righteous.

[47] H. W. Hertzberg, 'Die Entwicklung des Begriffs mišpat im AT', *ZAW* 40 (1922), pp. 256–287, 41 (1933), pp. 16–76. L. Koehler, 'Die hebräische Rechtsgemeinde', in: *Der hebräische Mensch* (1933), pp. 150f. G. Quell, 'Der Rechtsgedanke im AT', in: *ThW* II (1953), 176–180 (with bibliography). K. Cramer, *Amos* (1930), pp. 165f. The brief analysis which follows here takes up especially the interpretation of Hertzberg.

both in the area of ethics and in the area of law: *mishpat* is that which must be brought into force in all circumstances and is made clear again and again in the model of the poor and the oppressed, the widows and orphans. As an ethical central concept, *mishpat* here comes near to what Augustine and Anselm (with reference to the Old Testament texts) will call *rectitudo*, the *cor rectum* (Is 1.16–17, 23; 3.14; 5.20, 23). Together with *sedaka*, *mishpat* denotes the embodiment of the messianic goods for which one hopes (9.6; 28.17; 32.1, 16f., where it makes the transition into *shalom*). This shows that there lies something 'urgent' in *mishpat*: it expresses the right that must at all costs be put into force on earth, the right that also has the power with God to have its way (*cf.* 5.15).

For the source of *mishpat* is God: it is from him that 'justice goes forth as the light' (Hos 6.5), new every day (Zeph 3.5), in order to establish itself in Israel, and on behalf of Israel in the case of its foes (Deut 33.21; 2 Sam 18.31). The right that is with God is revealed for the people through his instructions (thus, above all, in Deuteronomy); civil and sacred law, including cultic law (*Jus et Fas*) form a unity, since the entire realm of what is right is understood, with reference back to Sinai, as the extension of the 'customs of God' which are valid within the sphere of the covenant. But there appears a further motif in Deuteronomy which has decisive importance for the future: when God sees that the right of the poor and the oppressed is not established, he is moved by compassionate love (*'hb*) to help them to establish their right. God appears, not as the severe judge above the world, but as the kind father who cannot bear that his children should be the victims of injustice. In Jeremiah, legal help for the poor is central;[48] the terrible thing is now that the people no longer knows the *mishpat* of God (5.1, 4f.; 8.7; 22.15f.) and has lost the disposition of *rectitudo* (17.11). Ezekiel speaks, in the same way as Deuteronomy, of the *mishpatim* as the embodiment of precepts and customs of God:[49] the people ought to have found its orientation in these, in a right which was established

[48] 5.28; 7.5f.; 21.12; 22.3.

[49] 5.6–7; 11.12, 20; 18.9, 17; 20.11, 13, 16, 19, 21, 25; 36.27; 37.24.

transcendentally ('my *mishpatim*', 44.24),[50] for if Israel wanted to prescind from God and to lead its life in accordance with a right that seemed good in an immanent perspective, then it would have been still better if the right had been given to the Gentiles (5.7; *cf.* Gen 20.9). But God leaves this 'right that blinds' with the people (Ezek 20.25f.), so that he may deal with them according to their conduct and judge them according to their legal statutes (7.27; *cf.* Matt 7.2), i.e. he allows the immanent righteousness to take its course.

The exile brings a decisive turning-point. The immanent righteousness has been accomplished: Israel has paid a more than sufficient penalty (Is 40.2), and now it has landed as a whole among the poor, the downtrodden, the oppressed, the humiliated and humble (*ebiyon*, *ani*), i.e. among those who have first claim to God's compassionate work of bringing about justice. Now, *mishpat* is justice as the fruit of compassion, as grace (Is 51.3, 8). And the raising-up of the 'poor' involves the laying low of the rich and satiated, who are cited before the court of God's justice because of the injustice they have done. But it is the 'Servant of Yahweh' who becomes the especial mediator of God's *mishpat* to the whole world (Is 42.1–4). The last Song shows how this happens: 'By his sufferings, my servant will make the many to be righteous.' (53.11) Now the way is open for the praise of God's *mishpat* in the late Psalms: how God no longer remembers sin but permits only grace to have sway, 'leads the righteous in *mishpat*, and teaches the humble his way' (Ps 25.8–9), how God does not reproach for ever, but has mercy as a father on his children, 'lets his *mishpat* have sway', since he knows what kind of creatures we are while his own *chesed* endures eternally (Ps 103.6f.). *Mishpat* and grace are often set alongside each other (Ps 33.5; 48.10–12; 101.1; 119, 149; Zech 7.9).

It is true that the late period returns in a determined fashion to the idea of mutuality between the justice of God and the justice of men; not only the poor man (who as such is already a *saddik*, one who is 'faithful') can expect grace, but every 'pious' man who is fundamentally on the side of God can look for this, and this mutuality (*cf.* what was said above about *sedek*) threatens to obscure the absolute priority of the divine justice which establishes what is right. Nevertheless, the prayer even of the poor and the sufferers knows that God is free to hear the cry of prayer, and that it is therefore free grace, if he decides in favour of those whom he loves in a special way (and how right he is to do so!). Something in Peter's question expresses the viewpoint of late Judaism very well: 'Behold, we have left everything and have followed you: what then shall we receive in return?' (Mt 19.27). Thus the spectrum of meaning embraced by *mishpat* penetrates deeply into the sphere of election, covenant, discipleship, faithfulness, and grace. The ground is laid for Paul, but the final step is yet to be taken.

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[50] The best commentary on this is Ps 147.19–20: God 'declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and ordinances to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his ordinances.'

e. Emeth, emuna: proved excellence

The all-embracing concept *emeth*, *emuna*[51]—which is no less flexible and adaptable than the previous concepts—expresses the joy that comes from the fact that it is truly so, that there is no deceit: one takes hold of something firm, something that can give support, something valid and reliable; one can dare to enter into a relationship with it, one can count on it and depend on it. And this is fundamentally important in the case of a covenant with so much that remains in the realm of promise. The usual translation in the LXX is ἀλήθεια and ἀληθινός, etc.; occasionally, δικαιοσύνη and δίκαιος etc., as well as πίστις, πιστός (worthy of confidence), are used instead. Its employment in legal language shows a certain kernel in its meaning: '*de facto* state of things', 'state of affairs with legal validity', and thus simply 'truth'. After her son had been raised from the dead, the widow says to Elijah, 'Now I know that you are a man of God and that Yahweh's word in your mouth is truth (fact)' (1 Kings 17.24; *cf.* Jer 23.28: 'Let him who has my word, speak my word in a reliable manner').[52]

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[51] H. Holemann: *Bibelstudien*, I: *Die biblischen Grundbegriffe der Wahrheit* (1895), pp. 1–53. G. Quell, 'Der alttestamentliche Begriff emet', *ThW* I (1933), 233–237 (with bibliography). A. Weiser, *ThW* VI (1959), 183–191 (on *'mn*, *amen*, etc.).

Since it characterises the realm of salvation opened up by God and given its form wholly through his own being, the statement is rich in every way: it establishes that one can trust the new territory: God's glory, which has appeared, is no mirage, but a place where one can dwell, and experience teaches that one does well to do so; on the basis of what has been experienced, one can entrust oneself even to the dimension of the promise that cannot be understood, and one can entrust oneself to the word that gives the direction, when a path and conduct are demanded: 'Teach me, Lord, thy ways, so that I may walk in thy trustworthiness' (Ps 86.11). God's reliability requires a corresponding reliability in the man who has entered his covenant, both in his conduct *vis-à-vis* his fellows and in his conduct *vis-à-vis* God himself; the one conditions the other. When Hosea laments that *emeth* is missing in the land, alongside *chesed*, the feeling for the fellowship, he means primarily reliability in relationships between men, but this stands beside the 'knowledge of God', which is likewise lacking (4.2). And the demand that one 'utter true judgment between man and man' stands in Ezekiel beside the statement: 'He walks in my statutes, and is careful to observe my ordinances, in order that he may live (reliably) truly' (18.8–9). The sinner knows that he does not live in accordance with the transparent truth of God, and so he prays: 'Thou desirest truthfulness in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me, and I shall be clean' (Ps 51.8–9). *Emeth* can stand as the embodiment of the precepts of God (Ps 119.160), and in the late period it denotes above all the firm rules of life that give orientation to the pious man. *Emeth*, as a characteristic of revelation, is clearly close to the wisdom of God which is present in the world and gives form to all things. *Emeth* can also coincide materially with *chesed* (Ex 34.6) to characterise God's conduct;

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[52] 'The translation "fidelity" commends itself nowhere', *ThW* I, 233 n. 2, *cf.* 237 n. 12.

this is absolutely valid and irrevocable (Ps 132.11), because God is the eternal reliability (Ps 146.6).

All this is ultimately addressed directly to the eternal divine 'I'; it bears witness to a unique experience of reality that is able to utter an unconditional 'yes' of acceptance, not only to God, but also to his creation and to history. Here there is nothing of the uncertainty felt in India and Greece about the reliability of the 'world of appearance'. On the basis of the absolute truthfulness of God, a full affirmation of the world is discovered—but precisely on the basis of what God has promised.

f. Shalom: pacified realm of salvation

As the last of the words indicating a totality, we can take *shalom*,[53] which once again reveals the universality of such concepts—which often become almost ciphers and mere indications. *Shalom* denotes in innerworldly terms quite generally 'wellbeing, with a clear emphasis on the material side',[54] especially for the people as a whole, and thus political peace is naturally one of the chief preconditions for this, the peace that is assured by peace treaties (*shalom* with *berith*: Judg 4.17; 1 Kings 5.4, 26, etc.). But it is clear that for Israel, which dwells in God's land, the wellbeing of the era of peace appears from the outset as a gift of God's salvation and the dowry of his covenant; for this is what God has promised: 'I will give *shalom* in the land, and you shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid; and I will remove evil beasts from the land, and the sword shall not go through your land' (Lev 26.6). No matter how fragmentary the fulfilment may be in the course of Israel's history—until its hope of peace is transposed wholly into the end-time—it is nevertheless worthy of consideration that the world in itself (apart from man's guilt) is by God's promise a pacified realm of salvation, and that such peace is not (as for Greek philosophy) an immanent or transcendent settling of the πόλεμος ἐμφύλιος, the war that is inherent in all things, but that this pacification goes beyond all realism of natural distress in human existence (Gen 9.2) to be God's institution of salvation with humanity and indeed with the entire cosmos (Gen 9.9f.). The struggle between the prophets of *shalom*[55] and the prophets of doom (above all Jeremiah and Ezekiel) remains, despite everything, only an episode when seen against the background of this all-embracing understanding of existence; it is true that the prophets of *shalom* have failed to sense the storms from God which are brewing over Jerusalem, but even if God does shatter the unfaithful city, this is only in order that he may institute a true realm of peace in an utterly new manner, a realm such as the great prophets immediately proclaim (Jer 29.11; Ezek 34.25f.; 37.26). From the time of the exile onwards, where Israel (as we have seen in the case of *mishpat*) somehow seems to have fallen on the far side of the judgment of God, *shalom*—often linked to *sedaka* (Is 48.18; 54.13; 60.17) or to *mishpat* (Zech 8.16)—becomes the wide-open eschatological expectation, now virtually nothing more than a cipher for the definitive salvation that is coming, and therefore it is linked also to the appearing of the glory of God (*kabod*) that is awaited for the end-time (Is 66.12).

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[53] W. Caspari, 'Vorstellung und Wort "Friede" im AT', *BFTh* 14, 4 (1910). *Idem, Der biblische Friedensgedanke*, 1916. G. von Rad, *ThW* II, 400–405.

[54] von Rad, 400.

Ps 85, which comes from the same period, gathers together for the end-time not only the peace of salvation and glory, but all the other great attributes of God too, and their encounter and mutual compenetration in love is the most beautiful image to express the fulfilment of all that is promised, for the end when 'God will be all in all' (1 Cor 15.28): 'Let me hear what Yahweh will speak, for he will speak peace . . . his glory will dwell again in our land. *Chesed* and *emeth* will meet; *sedek* and *mishpat* will kiss each other. *Emeth* will spring up from the ground, and *sedek* will look down from the sky. Yea, Yahweh will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase; *sedek* will go before him, and *shalom* with follow his steps' (Ps 85.9–14). This piling-up of attributes is not an isolated instance; very similar terms recur in Hosea (2.21f.) to describe the definitive wedding between God and his people, and likewise at the most solemn point in Micah, where Israel's disposition before God is summarised and embodied (Mic 6.8).

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[55] 'They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, '*Shalom*, *shalom*', when there is no peace' (Jer 6.14). *Cf.* Jer 28.

The great qualities of God, which make his holy sublimity concrete for man, seem at first glance almost to obliterate his utter otherness, for all are taken from the world of human relationships (where, admittedly, they always had a religious reference), and have taken on a unique character only when they are attributed to the absolute subject. But not for a moment is it forgotten *who* is the object of the affirmation: i.e., the one who as the only Lord stands alone over against all other beings, which are his creatures and servants. God's remoteness does not actually lie in the fact that he is unknown, so much as in the incomprehensible fact that he, the only one (Is 43.10–12), who is absolutely free and sovereign, deigns to communicate himself to the others, to the many, permitting them to enter the sphere of his uniqueness and holiness. This grace is an unheard-of demand made of the creature, something that snatches it from its own dwelling in the land of servitude into a 'land' that belongs to God, and all the creature's concepts are transformed thereby: a ray of God's glory touches them all, and this makes them more beautiful, but also heavier. Everything is now measured against the standard of divine rightness, of his ethical '*justice*' and his aesthetic '*justesse*'. In God's covenant, grace and demand are inseparably locked into one another.

3. EXISTENCE OUTSIDE ONESELF

a. A dwelling-place in God's life

1. Israel is chosen, not in order to dwell by itself, but in order that it may dwell where God is. This is how everything began: 'Yahweh said to Abraham, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will *show* you"' (Gen 12.1). And since he obeys—it was a test—he can then be told, 'To your descendants I will give this land' (12.7). The only thing that Abraham acquires for himself there is a grave, as a first instalment. Then the election is repeated, this time from Egypt: God has put himself under obligation to the fathers with an oath[1] that he will give them the land; he remembers this and leads the people out. He promises them the land—even Moses receives only a first instalment, when he looks out from Nebo (Num 27.12f.)—and Israel dwells there, although it inhabits only a part of the country (as a result of its guilt, according to Judg 1.21 and 2.20–21, or out of necessity, according to Josh 15.63, or so that it may be tested and disciplined, according to Judg 2.22 and 3.2), until it is punished by being driven from the land to Assyria and Babylon. Now for the third time there appears a theology of emigration and returning home, but not even this is definitive, for the land which is regained is no longer what it was, or not yet again what it is to be; indeed, it is *never* what corresponds to the promise. The decisive fact seems to be that Israel is never allowed to dwell in its own place, nor is it able to do so, but—whether at home or aborad—must live in relation to itself as a foreigner.

Two theologies interpentrate here. The first has God say 'The land is mine; for you are strangers and sojouners with me' (Lev 25.23). God possesses the territory, and the people receives the ground from God as his vassals; the sign of this is the great sacral fallowness every seven years, which makes 'Yahweh's real and exclusive right to possession appear clearly once again'.[2] Then lots were cast afresh for the land, which was portioned out anew.[3] Basically, we have here the ancient Sumerian idea that the land belongs to the god, who permits it to be portioned out and cultivated through his representative ('ensi', the priest-king), but always in the interest of the god and through his grace.[4] Buber has drawn attention to an old Sabaean document (700 B.C.) which likewise 'knows the god as 'owner of the goods' and 'private property as a fief'.[5] But in Israel, this idea is raised from the sphere of 'primitive sacrality' into a sphere that is characterised by the unqiue covenant with the God-king Yahweh who leads his people, and is balanced by a second theological conception: God promises (a land) and fulfils his promise (by leading the people there); the Hexateuch (especially P) is above all a training in this theological way of thinking, while it is characteristic of Deuteronomy to combine two conceptions: the commandments of Sinai are to be kept as the condition for receiving the promised land, *and* they will acquire the force of law when the land is received. In any case, they have a prospective intention: they are precepts for an existence on the basis of hope. Thus we see once again that Israel—irrespective of the theological schema that is used to interpret its existence—exists in a state of being taken outside itself. It lives in the realm of the covenant that is offered and opened up by God, and must acknowledge the existential conditions of this realm as its own. 'Be holy, for I, Yahweh your God, am holy' (Lev 19.2).

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[1] G. von Rad, 'Verheißenes Land und Jahwes Land im Hexateuch' (1943), now in: *Ges. Stud. AT*, pp. 87–100, has collected forty-eight texts dealing with this 'oath to the ancestors'.

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[2] A. Alt, 'Die Ursprünge des israelitischen Rechts' (1934, now in: *Kl. Schriften*, I, 1953, p. 327).

[3] The requirement existed (Lev 15.4–6), no matter how and to what extent this process may have been carried out in practice. R. de Vaux, *Les institutions dans l'Ancien Testament*, I (1958), pp. 264–267.

[4] H. Schmökel, *Das Land Sumer*, (1955) pp. 53, 81f. Schmökel holds that this social theocracy can be compared 'best with the organisation of the medieval monasteries'.

[5] 'Königtum Gottes' (1932, now in: *Werke*, II, 1964, pp. 583–586. Buber relies on N. Rhodokanakis, 'Altsabäische Texte', in: *Sitzber. Wiener Ak. phil.-hist. Kl.* 206/2 (1930).—The land west of the Jordan counts as the real 'possession of Yahweh' (Josh 22.19), and this may be the source of the conflicts in Josh 22; in describing the new apportioning of the land, Ezek 48 does not mention the land east of the Jordan at all. G. von Rad, loc. cit., p. 94.

2. If Israel as a whole is a foreigner with God and God's resident alien then the tribe of *Levi* is like a further concentrated embodiment of such an existence that is handed over to God. When the land is taken in possession, Levi receives no *nachala*, no hereditary share in the land, and he is separated from those who are themselves separated, in order to be Yahweh's possession in a yet more authentic sense (Num 8.14, 16; 18.6). The Levites are those who have been 'given', handed over (Num 3.9; 8.19): from Israel to God, from God to Aaron for the cult. Is the basis of this a curse of Jacob that had threatened the dissolution of the two tribes of Levi and Simeon among the other tribes because of the cunning way in which they had avenged their sister Dinah (Gen 34.30; 49.5–7), or is this curse in reality a 'blessing', like the blessing that appears in Deuteronomy for Levi (33.8–11), where his tribe already stands as a priestly tribe chosen in order to present the holocausts to God and to make known to the people his directives in the oracle? For when the people were put to the test at Massah, the sons of Levi had taken up their position on the side of God against their own flesh and blood: 'He said of his father and mother, 'I regard them not'; he disowned his brothers, and ignored his chidren. For they observed thy word, and kept thy covenant'. For the word *sacer* denotes both accursed (excluded from the community) and consecrated. (One can also be 'given' to Moloch: Lev 20.2.) In Num 3.12, P has thought further and discovered that the Levites were set apart from the people for God instead of the first-born, who belonged to God; in the encampment, their tents lie closest to the tabernacle of the testimony, and keep the divine wrath away from the other tribes through their expiation; thus, as men who are chosen, they are also mediators (Num 1.53; 8.19).[6] Levi, the tribe without land, is the token in Israel that it is given over as the

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[6] Once again, we are concerned here with the 'ideology'; the complicated

people to God. It is predestined to represent, prophetically and in the postexilic period, the *ebiyon*, the poor man who is expropriated and who must rely on God alone, and thus to embody in a privileged (because existential) manner the covenant and the knowlege of God in the covenant.

3. In this ever deeper exproportion there take place finally those strange acts of transcendence which were prepared in a long internal process and which grow organically out of the theological ontology of the state of being taken outside oneself, but which surprise the one who has not given any deeper thought to these implications of the covenant as something sudden and inexplicable. What Paul will describe as faith's act of transcendence—'I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me' (Gal 2.20)—is experienced and described in 'Psalm texts with an almost fragile tenderness'[7] in postexilic *Levitic circles* who take seriously their 'being given' to God; this act of transcendence is seen as an *ekstasis* into the life of God himself. Something of this has already become clear in the description of *sedek*: the sphere of the right(eous), in which the 'poor man' is permitted to live, is filled by the sedek of God; by the faith which the 'poor man' fundamentally professes in God, he is also fundamentally and 'in toto' right(eous). There is scarcely any evidence of reflection on the question of the extent to which, as an individual person, he corresponds ethically to this ideal; there is horror on the occasion of clear personal guilt, but also the quasi-sacramental confession of sin and the quasi-sacramental priestly assurance of salvation, which makes a clean break with the past (2 Sam 12.22ff.; Ps 51.14f.) and re-integrates the sinner intact into the sphere of salvation. This realm of salvation appears for all the Israelites, but especially for the priests and Levites, in a very concrete form as the realm of the temple. Here are those whom 'God allows to draw near', so that they may 'dwell in his courts'; God takes the place of food and drink for them

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historical questions, including that of the relationship between priests and Levites, need not detain us.

[7] G. von Rad, '"Gerechtigkeit" und "Leben" in den Psalmen' (1930, now in: *Ges. Stud. AT*, pp. 225–247).

(in the same way as with the manna in the wilderness); 'let us be filled with the good things of thy house' (Ps 65.5). This again is a quasi-sacramental idea that stands close by the experience of the divine glory and makes possible such unheard-of, apparently extravagant statements as these:

So have I looked upon thee in the sanctuary,
beholding thy power and thy glory.
Because thy steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise thee.
My soul is feasted (on thee) as with marrow and
  fat (Ps 63.3–6)

Bodily life, which elsewhere in the Old Testament, is the highest of all good things, is clearly relativised here: 'thy steadfast love is better than life', just as thy being is more nourishing than worldly food. Earthly life, food, and light have their source and root in God, and the one who is chosen and 'given' is permitted to penetrate as far as that sphere, in order to dwell there.

How precious is thy steadfast love, O God
The children of men take refuge in the shadow of thy
  wings.
They feast on the abundance of thy house,
and thou givest them drink from the river of thy
  delights.
For with thee is the fountain of life;
and in thy light do we see light (Ps 36.8–10)

Ps 16 (like 142.6) calls God 'my part', 'my cup', 'my inheritance', 'my lot': this is the most spiritual aspect of the Levitical existence in the temple.[8] Here, Yahweh becomes genuinely and experientially the part and possession of the one who has been caught up to him (Num 18.20); thus there is a snatching out of the realm of death and mortality into the realm of the God who is life and who does not die, in Ps 73. The psalm speaks first of the apparent injustice of the world: the wicked prosper, while the good suffer. Then the one who prays 'seeks to understand this' (v. 16): the one who looks very deeply within sees that there are two paths, one that runs far from God in a 'dream' and 'illusion', and one in God's intimacy. And now the psalm says:

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[8] 'Here we meet a particular circle of spiritual men, who—as is shown by the continued mention of dwelling in the temple—are to be sought among the personnel of the cult': *ibid.*, p. 241.

> Nevertheless I am continually with thee;
> thou dost hold my right hand.
> Thou dost guide me with thy counsel,
> and afterward thou wilt receive me to glory.
> Whom have I in heaven (but thee)?
> And there is nothing upon earth
> that I desire besides thee.
> My flesh and my heart may fail,
> but God is the strength of my heart
> and my portion for ever.
> For lo, those that are far from thee shall perish . . .
> but for me it is good to be near God;
> I have made Yahweh my refuge,
> that I may tell of all thy works (Ps 73.23–28)

Here it is God who 'takes hold', then 'leads' and finally 'catches up'. The word used to express the last of these is the same used for the rapture of Enoch (Gen 5.24) and of Elijah (2 Kings 2.3, 5). 'There is no reason to question that this is what is meant at Ps 49.16 and 73.24 . . . The one who prays is so sure of his security with Yahweh, the source of his life, that he discovers anew the full measure of what is guaranteed to him by this fellowship of life with God in the Old Testament conception of being handed over.' 'The ancient conception of rapture was stripped of its semi-mythological accretions, and is here certainly the object of hope in God's act *post mortem*.' But this is not a wholly 'new and revolutionary insight, something like a "breakthrough" to the idea of a "life beyond death"; rather, there grew in the circle of the spiritually-minded a confidence that came exclusively from the certainty that a living community offerd by God could not be destroyed'.[9] God is higher than life on this side of death and then life beyond death, and the one who is permitted simply to dwell with God is definitively certain of God.

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[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 244–245.

b. Contemporaneity

The endeavour of *Deuteronomy*[10] to carry out an inexorable reduction of all of Israel's religious instruction, praxis and tradition to the sole fact of the covenant—as election by God in pure love, and as the answering love of the people in obedience—and to confront the people with equal inexorability with the fire of the primal event by casting them back to it at each moment, is something unique in the old covenant. This grandiose project of the late period of the kings, bearing testimony to a burning faith, in order to win back the contemporaneity with the origin, is cloaked in a tragic dimension that has its basis in Israel's temporality; only in the new covenant will the eternal be incarnated in time in such a manner that the historical event can lay claim to validity for all times.[11]

The generation of the eye-witnesses of Sinai is addressed by Moses one last time in Maob, before they enter the land—an experience in which he will not share. 'You have had the experience, not your sons. They have neither seen nor known the majesty of Yahweh your God' (11.2). In Moses' testament, the situation of Horeb is *the* event that is utterly present today; indeed, it only really becomes fully present when Moses makes its fullness known for the first time. 'Yahweh our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. Not with our fathers . . . but with us, who are all of us here alive this day. Yahweh spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire, while I stood between Yahweh and you at that time, to declare to you the word of Yahweh; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up into the mountain' (5.2–5). There was thus the moment when Israel stood naked and defenceless before God; this moment—its true origin—is admitted by Israel: 'Behold, Yahweh our God has shown us his *glory* (*kabod*) and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire, we have this day seen God speak with man and man still live' (5.24). 'Fire' and 'voice' were the 'glory' of God, before which they stood unprotected: a theophany perceptible to the senses (together with the darkness, 4.11) and a direct word that is not shut off by any form ('you saw no form; there was only a voice', 4.12). All Israel must once against enter this primal event of face-to-face confrontation as covenant ('Nor is it with you only that I make this sworn covenant, but with him who is not here with us this day as well as with him who stands here with us this day (and who was not present then at Sinai)', 29.13f.). It is a covenant as election (7.6f.; 32.8f.) on the basis of love for which no reason can be given (7.7: *chashak*, 'to be attached to someone'), and the only answer which man can make to this love in the primal event is absolute answering love, obedience, readiness to serve (10.12). Israel has heard only the 'ten words' out of the fire (5.6–21), and 'nothing else' (6.22), but this embodiment of the loving offer that is made in the covenant can be answered only by the embodiment of man—'the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole strength'. As has already been said, the whole problematic of a one-sided *berith* (of grace) and a two-sided *berith* (of treaty) is left behind in this theology: the offer of God's love releases in man the whole readiness to follow God's directive, when man says 'yes' in thankfulness. The formula recurs nine times: one must love God, 'with all one's heart and all one's soul' (6.5; 13.4; 30.6), one must seek him and find him (4.29), hear his word and follow it (30.2), return to him (30.10), love God and keep his commandments (10.12; 11.13), put his directives into practice (26.16). In the midpoint of the heart, love and obedience are one. And already there is talk of the 'circumcision of the heart' (10.16; 30.6), which means the same thing. The fire of glory on Sinai is given a deeper interpretation as the 'consuming jealousy of love' (4.24; 5.9; and frequently; Zeph 1.18, as far as 2 Cor 11.2) which forbids all images (4.15f.) and, as word, wishes to nourish the hearts of those who are loved (8.3). This burning jealousy is at the same time a fidelity that goes further than all else, further than every act of punishment and destruction, without repentance (4.31). It is a love higher than erotic love (and this is the reason why Hosea's parable of married love does not appear),[12] a love that takes entire possession of the one who is its object, in the nakedness of soul to soul (4.37). The veiled images, the constellations (which point to the *theion*) are left to other peoples for worship (4.19–20; 17.3; Wis 13.2); they are subject to angels (Deut 32.8; Dan 10.13f.), while Israel has a direct relationship to God. The terrible thing is that this intimacy with God 'does not go beyond your possibilities'; one cannot make the excuse that what is demanded is too steep ('Who will go up for us to heaven, and bring it to us?') or too far away ('Who will go over the sea for us, and bring it to us?') for: 'The word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it' (Deut 30.11–14). Israel is already 'handed over', it is *kadosh*, 'consecrated', 'sacrificed', 'holy'[13] (7.6; 14.2, 21; 26.19; 28.9), delivered up to the power of the naked divine 'Thou'. And this is something that happens at each present moment ('today' occurs fifty-two times). The strong emphasis on the present fulfilment of the covenant promise—expulsion of the foes, *shalom* and earthly prosperity—submits the truth of the event to proof at each moment: that which is most spiritual, most internal, has a reality that goes to the limits of what is material.[14] Much of the formulation of the primal moment takes the form of a preview, bringing the future into the here and now ('when God shall have brought you into the land', etc.: 12.1; 17.14; 18.9; 19.1; 21.1; 26.1); this is therefore not eschatological, but refers to the present time. The total absence of eschatology is striking: the 'historical' today is only the unfolding of the primal historical 'today'. Everything is composed with a view to emphasising the uniqueness of the 'I-Thou' relationship in the covenant of grace:[15] the absolute 'uniqueness of Yahweh' (4.35; 6.4), of the chosen people, the strict unification of the place of worship (12.8–12), of the sacrifices (12.13f.), of the Passover (16.1–6), and of the supreme court (17.8–10). Finally, prophecy too, without limitation of its freedom, is set in relationship to the absolute point of the covenant and measured against this: here is the definitive truth (the truth of love), which not even God himself can now any longer contradict in his free word.[16] Against the self-evident character of the covenant faith, signs and wonders, and even prophecies that come to pass, have no external, evidential character (13.2).

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[10] On what follows, *cf.* G. von Rad, *Das Gottesvolk im Deuteronomium* (BWANT III/11, 1929); *idem*, *Deuteronomy* (with bibliography); *idem*, *ThOT*, I, 219–231.

[11] Great renewals in the period of the Church always proceed from the contemporaneity with Christ, which is always presupposed and created anew by the *hodie* of the liturgy. Thus with Francis of Assisi, Luther, Ignatius, Kierkegaard (who opposes the idea of contemporaneity with Christ to every temporal and conceptual mediation: *Phil. Fragmuents* ch. 4), Karl Barth. The relationships to Ignatius are particularly close: a Christian in the original sense of the word comes into being as he returns to the moment of the word of God which becomes event in Christ and out of the existential act of being present there and hearing (as a Spirit-filled eyewitness). 'To fear God, to follow him on all his paths, to love him and to serve him all one's heart and all one's soul' (Deut 10.12) characterises the relationship to God of the 'Exercises' (nr. 23. 91). *Cf.* also what was said in Vol. I of this work about the eyewitnesses and the archetypical experience of revelation.

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[12] Although Deuteronomy must presuppose this intensification of the covenant as the event of love which is found in Hosea.

[13] On the meaning of this holiness: von Rad, *Gottesvolk* (n. 10 above), pp. 25f.

But precisely at this point, where the highest degree of unification seems to have been achieved, the fissure breaks open; and that not only subsequently, but already in the primal event itself. The people *has* seen and heard the glory of God, the unbearable fire and the even more unbearable word, and they have even admitted that one can 'stand' God without dying.[17] Nevertheless, it expresses its mortal anxiety and appeals to the generally acknowleged truth: 'who is there of all flesh, that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and has still lived? Go

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[14] 'Through a holistic conception, the accent of what is absolutely endless falls on something finite that is utterly abandoned in its relative creatureliness': von Rad, *Gottesvolk*, p. 64.

[15] *Berith* and *chesed* occur together: 7.9, 12.

[16] 'The prophet has lost his free position, since he is the object of a positive estimation only when Israel's relationship to Yahweh is recognised to be absolute, for in Deuteronomy this stands above even the prophet': von Rad, *Gottesvolk*, p. 54.

[17] On the anxiety that one will not be able to stand before God, *cf.* 1 Sam 6.20; Ps 76.9; Nah 1.6; Zech 3.7. The title 'Fear of Isaac' (Gen 31.42, 53) is also rendered in recent translations as 'kin of Isaac'.

near, and hear all that Yahweh our God will say; and speak to us all that Yahweh our God will speak to you; and we will hear and do it' (5.25–27; *cf.* Ex 20.18–21). The people themselves withdraw from the glowing centre and send their representative ahead of them. But Moses stood from the outset as the mediator between God and the people (5.5), clearly without disturbing the immediacy which is so much emphasised here. The people received the decalogue in this original situation. Only subsequently does the withdrawal take place, and now it is Moses who hears everything else (5.31) and who later proclaims it to the people in Moab as his testament. The great 'speaker for God' (prophet) stands in twilight: he has already been instituted in this function (clearly by God), and he is instituted in this function once again by the people, who wish to spare themselves the necessity of hearing to the end. Not only the Law, but also prophecy was instititued in the first hour, at Horeb (everything in Deuteronomy is concentric), when God explicitly agreed to the people's request that they might send one ahead in the place of all (18.16). And since the one, this singled out Moses, will now die without entering the land, once again one is promised to the historical 'today': 'Yahweh your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed' (18.15). He, this single one, will have withstood the glory of God to the uttermost and what he will communicate will be this glory, no longer as a glory seen by the senses, but in an interpretation of which the innermost principle is: God has loved you groundlessly, so you must love God wholly, be wholly faithful, wholly with God (*tamim*) (18.13). From Deuteronomy onwards, the true kernel of glory emerges from the *kabod Yhwh*: absolute love. And the single ones who stand their ground under this love are the ones who communicate it.

At this point the book is not afraid to take even the ultimate step. In the earlier portraits, Moses is punished because of a personal mistake, when he is refused entry to the promised land (Num 20.12); but here he becomes the one who suffers vicariously: 'Yahweh was angry with me also on your account, and said, "You also shall not go in there"' (1.37; 3.26; 4.21). The role of the mediator of the covenant, which Moses already has in Exodus, is thrown into sharper prominence: now he lies twice stretched out without nourishment for forty days and nights on the mountain before the face of God, in order to perform penance in substitution for the people (9.9f., 18f., 25). Earlier, he had asked God to delete him from the book of life, if this would bring about forgiveness for the people; but God has said, 'Whoever has sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book' (Ex 32.32f.).[18] But even if God wishes to understand Moses' intercession as meant in an 'exclusive' sense, it is understood on Moses' side in an increasingly 'inclusive' fashion;[19] he speaks of 'our guilt' (Ex 34.9), he stands alongside the people, alongside the sinners, in solidarity with them.

It is from the Deuteronomistic absolutisation of the covenant reality that there grows the figure of the mediator, the vicarious representative who prays and suffers, the figure that will characterise all the high points of the covenant history in ever new realisations.[20] If we except echoes of the general history of religions in the early period, where particular persons have a magical power with God and over God,[21] intercession lies initially in the sphere of competence of such individuals as are entrusted by God with a particular mission: Abraham, who is commanded by God to intercede for Abimelech so that he may not die (Gen 20.7) and who appeals to God for Sodom in a dialogue of reverent boldness, saying that perhaps a few righteous people can be found there;

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[18] The other intercession at Ex 32.9–14 is a Deuteronomistic addition.

[19] Althaus, *Grundriss der Dogmatik*, II (1932), p. 128; idem, *Die christliche Wahrheit*, II (1952), pp. 255f.

[20] On intercession, *cf.* especially: Nils Johansson, *Parakletoi, Vorstellungen von Fürsprechern für die Menschen vor Gott in der alttestamentlichen Religion, im Spätjudentum und Urchristentum*, diss. Lund, 1940; Frank Hesse, *Die Fürbitte im AT*, diss. Erlangen, 1949; H. Thielicke, 'Grenzen der Fürbitte', in: *Theologie der Anfechtung*, 1949; H. W. Hertzberg, 'Sind die Propheten Fürbitter?', in: *Tradition und Situation*, Festschrift for A. Weiser (1963), pp. 63–74.

[21] Above all Ex 8–10 is surely to be classified in this category. P. A. H. de Boer, 'De voorbede in het Oude Testament' (in: *Oudtest. Studiën* III, 1943), interprets all intercession in the Old Testament only on the basis of this stratum, and thereby gets its particular reality wrong.

although he does not meet with success, he reveals the legitimacy for him (as bearer of the promise) in such an appeal. Alongside Abraham, who is given the name of prophet by God precisely in this context, alongside Moses[22] and Joshua (7.6–9), who bear responsibility for the people, there stand the 'men of God' of the early and middle periods of the kings, men who cannot be precisely separated from the 'prophets' and who are given the power of intercession thanks to their union with God (1 Sam 3.20; 7.5f.; 12.12f.; 1 Kings 13.6; 17.20; 18.42; 2 Kings 4.33; 6.17–20). The kings in their turn who live as God would have them live and who intercede for the people whom they shepherd, are bearers of a commission: David (2 Sam 24.17), Solomon (1 Kings 8), Hezekiah (2 Chron 30.18–19). Then we have many of the great prophets: Amos (7.2,5), and in the period after the Deuteronomist, Isaiah (2 Kings 19.2–7; 20.2), Jeremiah[23] and Ezekiel (9.8; 11.13), and standing all by himself, the 'Servant of Yahweh' in Second Isaiah (53.12c). After the exile, when prophecy has died out, it is the high priest who is invested with the office of representative of the covenant with the power and the right to make intercession.[24]

The offices and their titles change, but the place where the mediator and intercessor stands is always the same: it is the heart and point of intersection of the covenant. This can be seen in the case of Moses: he is no disinterested third party who mediates an alliance between God and the people: he has poured himself into the reality that is the 'covenant', and he embodies the covenant with God over against the people, and the covenant with the people over against God. The whole dialogue between God and man passes through Moses in such a way that he must not only continuously represent God's standpoint over against the people, but can equally continuously set out before God the standpoint of the people, where this is at all defensible. This takes place when he takes God at his word, i.e. at the word, the covenant, that has been given once and for all. He reminds God of the earthly and historical consequence of his union with the people. He represents the immanent God against the transcendent God. Yahweh, who has bound himself to Israel, is quite simply no longer free. What would the foes say, if they saw that the protector God had become weary of his alliance and had destroyed the chosen people in the wilderness (Num 14.16)? And what would become of the sworn promise to the fathers? Would not God contradict himself, if he began to build and did not finish (*cf.* Ex 34.11–14)? The mediator must defend what is divine against God: God's commitment and obligation against God's freedom, God's will to bestow grace against his punitive righteousness, ultimately God's 'weakness' against his strength. He does not represent things that God does not know, things that God would have to learn only from Moses: what men are like, and how one must deal with them. He merely 'reminds' God of the consequences of his covenant: here he can place the emphasis of his mediatory work on the side of the sinful people (Ex 34.9). And precisely becaue he can do this, God too can lay the weight of the sinful people upon him: this is the new mystery of the Servant of Yahweh. But if God does something like this—how deep is then his commitment to his covenant! How divine are the functions and qualities that he lays upon the shoulders of the man who embodies the covenant in his mediation! This is the reason why the only ones who stand in this place are those who are absolutely obedient to God: from the blind obedience of Abraham (Gen 22) to Moses the servant of God, to Elijah and to the Servant of Yahweh whose 'ear is opened every morning', who 'makes no resistance and does not withdraw' (Is 50.4–5): in this obedience, he hears God's word and receives at the same time the blows and the spittle of the people. An obedience that is open on both sides permits the covenant to be embodied substantially on earth. And the one who is 'wholly' with God, like Abraham (Gen 17.1), will also be initiated into God's plans (18.17) in order to be able also to understand how God rules in the world.

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[22] Ex 32.11–14; 33.13; 34.9; Num 11.1; 14.13–20; 21.4f., 13; Deut 9.25–29. At the end of the Pentateuch, Moses receives the title of 'prophet' (Deut 18.15; 34.10); but he is already characterised as such at Num 11.24–30, indeed as more than a prophet at 12.6–8.

[23] Four times he is forbidden to intercede for the people: 7.16; 11.14; 14.11; 15.1. *Cf.* 15.11; 18.20; according to the narrative of Baruch: 37.3; 42.2. At 2 Macc 15.12–16, Jeremiah appears beside the high priest Onias as the great intercessor for the people with God.

[24] As early as Joel 2.17 we have a description of a liturgical act in which the priests carry out intercession. See too Zech 3.7. According to Jer 15.1 and Ps 99.6, the great intercessors are Moses and Samuel. 2 Esd 7.106–111 completes the list: Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, Elijah, Hezechiah.—Here, we are considering the intercession of human beings; there is wide attestation in the late period of the intercession of angels (also at Job 33.23, although we are not convinced by Johansson's interpretation of Job 16.19–22 and 19.25–27 in this sense).

Deuteronomy states that 'Moses had to die vicariously for the sake of Israel's sin',[25] and 'therefore this portrait of the prophet converges on that of the suffering Servant of Yahweh in Deutero-Isaiah'.[26] By withdrawing from the immediacy of hearing God (already at Ex 20.19f.) and sending Moses on ahead, Israel, without fully realising what it was doing, was both helping to institute the office of prophetic mediation (Deut 5.27; 18.6) and unloading its guilt on to the mediator: it kills the prophets whose office it has instituted (Mt 23.34ff.). This structure of the covenant event is clearly seen in Deuteronomy. Without the mediation of Moses (5.5), the immediacy of the people to the glory of fire and word would not have occurred (5.24), and in this mediation God has *a priori* calculated and overcome the withdrawal of the people, in such a way that the mediator, who bears the sin of the people, must die in its place.

c. Reaching backwards and forwards

The Mosaic covenant, as the basis of the confederation of the twelve tribes, stands abruptly and unmediated in the midst of the history of the peoples of the world. Its self-understanding necessarily requires us to reach back into prehistory and primal history (provenance, Genesis) and to reach forwards into existence alongside other peoples and the world as a whole: what is the relationship taken to them by God's glory which has appeared? In both movements, a double movement must become clear: a centripetal movement—the lines of history converge on the God of Israel and on his covenant—and a centrifugal movement—the light of the God of Israel shines out into the peoples and into the world, and ultimately, Israel exists not for itself, but for the world. In both movements, the double relationship displays the inner compenetration of the world of creation and salvation history. The Book of Genesis says that he was at work and coming even before Moses; the covenant has preliminary stages: there were the Noachic covenant with creation and the covenant of promises with Abraham. The Psalms say that the God who shines forth from Zion is the God of the whole world, both of the history of the peoples and of all of nature. It is the prophets who bring the ultimate understanding for this paradox, the opening-up of the future.

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[25] von Rad, *Deut.*, p. 201.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

Genesis is prehistory (from Abraham onwards) and primitive history (from Adam onwards). The prehistory is given an artistic and dialectic articulation by the way in which the three sources J, E and P are fitted into each other: the 'God of the fathers', with the plural name Elohim (E)[27] that brings the individual gods together, was always from the outset Yahweh (J), even if he revealed himself at that time as this one God under the name El Shaddai (P). This as yet fragmentary state of affairs, still in the process of coming into being, indicates on the one hand that shadows of twilight still lie over the glory of God, but on the other hand also that one could look backwards from Moses and declare with the same certainty: our God was already then in the process of coming, wholly personally, just as one day the apostles will declare, after the resurrection of Jesus, that he was already then the Son of the living God, under the veils of the flesh. The stupendous liberality of the Jahwist has not been ashamed to declare the 'mythical' anticipatory forms of the religion of Yahweh to be its wholly genuine roots in the soil of the world religions, thereby establishing even for that preliminary period open relationships of kinship between Israel and the peoples. In his study *Der Gott der Väter*, Albrecht Alt[28] has shown the existence of a type of *numina* which is not bound to the holy places at which it appears (like the Elim),[29] but to the person of a tribal lord (θεὸς πατρῷος) whose name the god continues to bear precisely in the case of (semi-) nomadic tribes for the members of the clan, for those in the following generations, and even for foreigners.[30] Not only does there exist in the being of such a *numen 'a priori* the possibility of free movement in space',[31] but its revelation to the tribal lord emphasised the personal element of the obligation which was entered upon: 'no subsequent experience of second and third persons was the equal in significance of this first encounter',[32] and thus the form of the union already offered an analogy to the Mosaic covenant from the perspective of religious sociology. The difficulty with Alt's thesis lies in the connection—for Alt a secondary connection which occurred during the possession of the land of the 'patriarchs' to the local El-*numina*, who do indeed 'appear only for a moment' in Genesis,[33] but whose local ἱεροὶ λόγοι are clearly superimposed on the original sagas of the nomadic period; however, enough has been preserved of the original character of the *numina* who are now bound to localities and sancturaries ('the God of Abraham', 'the fear of Isaac', 'the strong one of Jacob')[34] to make possible the later genealogical linkage, not only of the fathers themselves, but also of their protective deities, and to identify this one God of the fathers still later with the one God of the covenant of the amphictyony.[35] Such an inherent relatedness is discovered between the certainly extremely ancient scene of the making of the covenant with Abraham in Gen 15 and the Mosaic covenant that even originally polytheistic materials (like the theophany at Mamre, Gen 18) could be fused into the whole, and that it did not entail 'any μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος but merely an elevation of what had existed hitherto',[36] when 'the gods of the fathers' were understood as 'παιδαγωγοί leading to the greater God' and the promises of those gods (above all of the occupation of the land and a great progeny) were integrated into the universal scheme of promise and fulfilment in the Hexateuch as a whole, which now portrays the first occupation of the land as something provisional, while the long detour *via* Egypt is seen as providential for the coming into being of the people, which can then take definitive possession of the promised land.

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[27] According to E, it is only before the eyes of Moses that this 'God of the fathers' accomplishes the synthesis with Yahweh (Ex 3.15).

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[28] 1929, quoted from: *Kleinschriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, I (1953), pp. 1–78.

[29] El-Bethel (Gen 28.12f.), El-Olam (Gen 21.33), El-Elyon (Gen 14.18), El-Shaddai (Gen 17.1f., etc.).

[30] Alt adduces convincing parallels from a later period, loc. cit., pp. 29–45. Martin Buber's distinction between the 'leading gods' (*melek*) who accompany the people and the 'land gods' (*baal*) who are bound to a place continues the trend of interpretation begun by Alt.

[31] Alt, p. 22.

[32] Alt, p. 42.

[33] Alt, p. 19.

[34] There were certainly more of these, *cf.* 'the God of Nahor' (Gen 31.53).

While the stories about the fathers, to a great extent, narrate profane family episodes, which permit us to see above all the guidance of God's providence (the wooing of Rebekah, the marriages of Jacob, and the magnificent story of Joseph), individual scenes emerge of immediate encounter and relationship to God with a terrifying precipitousness, scenes that transpose the whole consuming unconditional character of the later covenant back into the archaic forms of the early period, in their final redaction. G. von Rad[37] has taught us to evaluate the deep strata of such texts which shimmer through, strata that reach back into myth, in their polarisation towards the final meeting. The relevant scenes concerning Abraham are composed with a view to emphasising absolute, 'blind obedience':[38] this is true already of the making of the covenant, which passes by in silence Abraham's anxious, doubting question about the realisation of the promise and sends in 'deep darkness' a 'dread' and a 'stupor' down upon him after the customary cutting in two of the sacrificial beasts 'after sundown', while the invisible partner passes as 'a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch' between the pieces of the animals (Gen 15.7–12, 17–18). This one-sided act by the one who gives the promise is continued in the miraculous rescuing of the ancestress, which is narrated three times,[39] in the delaying of the promise when man himself wishes to bring it about (the first story of Hagar, ch. 16), in the fertility of the barren woman (ch. 21), in the sacrifice of Isaac (ch. 22) which puts to the uttermost test the total commitment to God which is required (17.1), the sacrifice that once again seems to destroy the whole promise and its fulfilment which has been begun. Israel could have found no more grandiose way to portray its own self-understanding in its tribal ancestor, and this then allowed it to go on to interpret itself ever anew from the basis of this origin.

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[35] Alt, pp. 58–59.

[36] Alt, p. 62.

[37] *Das erste Buch Mose*, ATD 1953. Thus, e.g., on the story of Peniel (Gen 32.23f.): 'Who will venture to say how the Yahwist and his readers came to terms with this trait (of the god who attacks by night)? Probably they held that not every individual detail of such sagas is able to be interpreted . . . The puzzling word . . . belongs to the category of broad and really vague statements that are so characteristic (of such sagas that are taken over)' (pp. 280–281). 'Material that has been taken over is employed, but it is not completely worked through and penetrated' (p. 283).

If Isaac is above all the one who was potentially sacrificed,[40] while the theophany to him appears colourless and formed in imitation of other stories (26.23f.), this only serves to make the two theophanies to Jacob, embedded as they are in wholly secular novelistic materials, all the more impressive: the appearance at Bethel (28.10f.) with the zikkurat ramp on which the 'angels' descend from heaven to earth—an image whose powerful echoes reach into the New Testament (Jn 1.51)—and the nocturnal struggle with God at the Jabbok (Gen 32.23f.), where despite all the mythical and demonic elements in the background, the intention is to give expression to an encounter with the living covenant God of Israel, *a fortiori* because here the patriarch has deserved to receive the honorary name Israel, the name of the covenant partner *tout court*. This time, it is not an experience of God in the dread in darkness, as in Gen 15, but a wrestling match in mortal

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[38] von Rad, *Ges. Stud.*, p. 91.

[39] Chs. 12, 20, 26.

[40] D. Lerch, 'Isaaks Opferung in der Auslegungsgeschichte', *ThZ* 5 (1949), pp. 321–338; *idem, Isaaks Opferung christlich gedeutet* (1950).

combat. When God and man depart from one another, each takes with him the permanent experience of the long, undecided struggle: Jacob's hip-joint remains wrenched out of place, but apparently he has 'got the upper hand' *vis-à-vis* the god (or the former nocturnal ghost, which becomes weak with the dawn), as is suggested by v. 27; he was 'strong against God' (v. 29). But although he received his name in this struggle, he was not able to loosen God's grip upon his own name: all that he received was the blessing. The final statement almost overtakes the event at Sinai: 'I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved' (v. 30): the covenant is established and set in a night-long struggle between God and man, which becomes the primordial form of the 'face-to-face' encounter, with the outcome of mutual acknowledgment and weakening, and a blessing for the man. Naturally, this gruesome event (which is repeated once again, and in an even more puzzling manner, for Moses: Ex 4.24–26) does not call into question the absolute obedience of Abraham and of Moses.

The God of the fathers is to the highest degree a personal and living God. He 'sees' and he 'is seen' (Gen 16.13; 22.14). He is also seen when man does not see, when he permits Abraham to see the promise in the stars of heaven (E), but takes from him seeing, hearing and feeling when the covenant is made (J). And even if the theophanies, espeically in dreams, are colourful and impressive, the images remain functions of something more important, viz. of the words of the promise, and they are noted down by Israel for the sake of these words. Much that is typical and national is linked to the figure of the fathers and thus personalised, in order that it too may share in the personal leading of the covenant God. In the great finale of the story of Joseph, this God already appears almost as incarnate, so transparent is his loving guidance in Joseph's acts of concealing and disclosing, convincing and forgivng (Gen 45.5–8).

The prehistory is preceded by a *primitive history*. While the former displays the liberal tendency to show that all the surrounding peoples are originally related to Israel through the clan of Abraham (and thus are by no means originally Israel's foes), and indeed to set up brotherly relationships between Abraham, Nahor and Lot, between Isaac and Ishmael, and between Jacob and Esau (Edom) that bridge the boundaries between religions, the primitive history in its turn embeds Abraham (and Israel) in the context of the peoples of the whole world (chs. 10–11, P). The line from Adam to Abraham does not run unbroken, as if Israel were concerned egotistically to trace its provenance back to the first man; twice, it widens out into the universal dimension, in the covenant with Noah, which is made with the world as a whole, and in the universal list of the peoples.[41] But with its eye made keen by the history of the covenant, Israel has been able to distinguish as far back as the event of creation the free, personal God who is not dependent on any matter nor oppressed by any chaos, the God who has created man by admitting him to the intimacy of his own breath and who, despite man's failure, accompanies him even in punishment with forgivness and grace, even protecting the murderer; this is the God who catches up the righteous Enoch to himself and has saved Noah with his family in their passage through the universal judgment. Once again, one with whom a covenant is to be made is compelled to 'blind obedience':[42] he is to build a ship on dry land. After the flood (in which an ancient motif from saga is made to serve as a vehicle for theology), the strange covenant is made with the cosmos. In this covenant, while the decisive step is taken beyond judgment to the grace that outweighs it (9.9–17), account is still taken of the fact that the constitution of the world as a whole has been disordered since what happened in paradise (9.1–7): the covenant of peace, sealed in the sign of the rainbow, is established, and is at the same time the covenant of the shed blood of beasts and the covenant that requires vengeance for the blood of man that is shed—each of these is a regulation for punishment as well as a regulation for expiation. The sign of peace that is set up between earth and heaven 'brings to mind' the covenant not only to man, but also to God himself: God too is bound in the covenant. Like the covenant, the list of the peoples has a universal intention, even if its starting-point is a Palestinian model: the history of the world as a whole stands under the sign of salvation. When a new beginning of explicit salvation history is made with Abraham, the very first notes make the universal goal known. 'I will bless those who bless you . . . in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed' (12.3). Even the mighty confusion of hearts and then of languages when 'culture' strives titanically to conquer heaven can no longer call all this into question. Now the shadows of dispersal come down on the world of the peoples, while Israel's gathering begins; but Israel is preparing the light in which the scattered world is to receive its definitive mid-point (Is 60; Acts 2).

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[41] von Rad, *ThOT*, I, p. 162f. 'Israel did not simply draw a straight line descending from a myth of primordial time to itself as existing within time. This direct linking with the myth is the essence of the religion of the *polis* . . . (but) Israel saw itself without illusions and quite unmythically in the midst of the world of the peoples . . . In terms of biblical theology, the insertion of the list of the peoples signifies the radical break with myth': von Rad, *Genesis*, pp. 120–121.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

The form of the reaching backwards justifies the *reaching forwards* which is carried out above all in songs of praise, for in the prehistory and the primitive history, Israel appeared again and again as the exceptional form of something universal: the intention of the exclusiveness in the covenant was from the outset the inclusion of the whole world at its end. While it is true that the covenant with Noah is a stage *en route* to the covenant with Abraham and Moses, the latter cannot forget their foundations but must retain an openness in this direction. The lateral progeny of the line of the ancestors (Ishmael, Edom) are not left without their blessings, for all the peoples are to be blessed in Abraham, and thus those who stand in the shadow encounter those who are in the light again and again as blood-brothers, despite all enmity (Gen 33). And Abraham bows down before the king of (Jeru-)Salem, Melchisedek, priest of the Most High God, and is blessed by him: 'Blessed be Abraham by God Most High, who has made heaven and earth'; Abraham picks up this divine title in turn and only prefixes the name Yahweh to it (Gen 14.19, 22): *Elyon* can be understood in a relative sense (the highest of the gods) or in an absolute sense (the one who is the highest, beyond all compare).

There is no doubt that Jebus-Jerusalem, the city of the Jebusites which David conquered, was familiar in its cult with the 'highest god' or 'god of the gods' or 'heavenly Baal' or 'god-king' who was venerated everywhere in Babylon and Phoenicia, the god who claimed a universal lordship both as the one who shaped the world and as the one who judged it. When Yahweh's ark makes its entry into Jebus, Israel's God inherits the cultic titles of Canaan: the other gods are reduced at once to servants, to the court of the one God, and Yahweh is the true 'king of glory' (Ps 24.7–10) to whom the entire heaven cries out, 'Glory!' (Ps 29.9). He is creator, judge, lord over his court and over the world from his heavenly throne. 'In the characterisations and concepts that are linked to Yahweh in the Psalms, we see everywhere the struggle for the true reception and integration of the pre-Israelitic cultic traditions into the faith in Yahweh. Here it must be affirmed as clearly as possible that the "universalism" . . . is no late product of a process of religious development within the history of Israel, but is rather an element of the Canaanite world which already existed in the *typos* of the veneration of the "highest god"'.[43] There is no kind of 'struggle' about the understanding of the uniqueness of Yahweh, but only about the question of how he can be clothed in the correct, reverent manner with the foreign splendour which has been won as booty. When the ark is borne in procession in Jebus, the question can be raised again: 'Who is this king of glory?', and the answer is decisive: 'He, Yahweh Sabaoth, is the king of glory!' (Ps 24.10). How will be prove himself to be the right Elyon over against the other heavenly kings? Not merely by means of the attributes that God assigns to himself—Amon-Re too was all-seeing and all-present and therefore judge of the world, and Hadad the storm-god too was all-powerful—

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[43] H. J. Kraus, *Psalmen*, I, 2nd edn. 1961, pp. 199f. The relevant bibliography is also given in the important excursus on the cultic traditions of Jerusalem.

but exclusively by means of his own incomparability that he communicates in his covenant and in his covenantal instruction. Only the one who is caught up out of himself into the covenant and into the world—like the singer of Ps 119, the great song of praise of the world of grace—can bear witness to the uniqueness of Yahweh, and to the reason why he only is the king of glory.[44] And precisely this God who is recognised as unique by Israel is the creator, ruler and judge of the whole world. Thus the Psalms speak a dialectic language from several points of view.

Since Jerusalem is built on Jebus, Yahweh himself demonstrates his own reality and legitimacy by raising the claim of the earlier El Elyon. His reality and legitimacy are shown in the power of the word of Yahweh: 'Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfil it?' (Balaam: Num 23.19). 'I, Yahweh say it, and I do it'(Ezek 36.36; Ps 33.9), and since the word of my promise has been fulfilled hitherto, absolute trust can be placed in my power (Is 42.9; 48.3f.). Israel's thought moves from the word of history to the word of creation; from God's free power to act within history, it arrives at the inner understanding and the affirmation that the world was created through his free word. Thus in Ps 135: God is good and lovable and great, since he has chosen, and therefore he can do all that pleases him in heaven and on earth, in the sea and in the abysses (vv. 3–6). He has power over nature (v. 7), because he has demonstrated his power in history to save Israel (vv. 8–11) and has in the occupation of the land bestowed the fufilment of the word of the promise (v. 12). The gods are shown to be unspiritual nonentities (vv. 15–17); those who are devoted to them and trust them, fall accordingly into nothing (v. 18). The true God is praised by Israel and 'from Zion' (vv. 19–21). God shows himself to be the lord of nature, when he strikes Pharoah within history by means of the elements (vv. 7–9),[45] and when he continually employs the powers of nature for deeds of salvation in the whole period in which he leads Israel through the wilderness (Ps 77). Thus the great litany of thanksgiving in Ps 136 can list the 'great wonders' in such a way that the creation is set at the beginning (vv. 4–9); then come the wonders of history (vv. 10–24), and the Psalm closes with the vista of the universal goodness of the creator (v. 25). Again, in Ps 146 it is the gracious favours of the faithful God that include his power in creation (v. 6) as their presuppostion; and these gracious favours (vv. 7–9; Is 61.1 = Lk 4.18f.) are known only to Israel at present, so that only Israel is capable of truly understanding God's grace in the creation and is therefore right to demand the conversion of the peoples who are at any rate not deprived of the graces of nature (Acts 14.15–17).

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[44] A. Deissler, *Psalm 119 und seine Theologie*, Münch. theol. Stud. I, 11 (1955).

[45] Above, in the section on the 'cosmic liturgy', pp. 74f.

Ps 104, the great Psalm of nature, shows that Israel is able, on the basis of its historical experience of God's grace, to interpret the entire cosmos in joy and admiration as God's 'splendid garment' (v. 1), and can invite God himself to rejoice in his works (v. 31). Kraus is correct to speak, in the case of the double Ps 19, which first praises the wordless, silent speech of nature and then the public speech of the historical word of God, of the 'disclosure of the code-word that deciphers'.[46] When the word of instruction is compared to the sun, what is at issue is the purity, genuineness, clarity and total transparency of the word (*cf.* Ps 12.7; 18.31; Prov 30.5). so that it is possible to entrust oneself fully to it in order to be oneself totally illuminated and purified (Ps 19.12–14) and in order to integrate into the transparent song of praise all the apparently hostile forces in nature—darkness, cold and dread (Ps 148.7–8; Dan 3.65–73). As Israel knows, these powers have been restrained from the outset by the creator (Ps 89.10–11; 65.8), and one can remind him of this so that he may hasten to Israel's help with his power (Ps 74.12–17). He can send his word twice: once to work in nature (Ps 147.15–18), and again as instruction for Israel (vv. 19–20). It is the total transparency of the creative word of instruction—and not the (Egyptian) comparison with the sun—that also determines the biblical understanding of the disclosure of all hearts before God (Ps 33.13–15, 44.22; 94.9–11), and of the impossibility of escaping from God's sight (Ps 139; 2 Kings 19.27; Amos 9.2–3; Jer 12.3; 23.23–24; Job 7.17–20; 11.8–9; 12.22; 23.8–9; 31.4; 34.22; Prov 15.11; Jonah; Dan 2.22), and of God's righteous judgment of all men (Ps 67.5; 76; 82.8; 95–98; 99.4).

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[46] *Psalmen*, I, p. 160.

This means that God *in himself* (and from himself, i.e. from heaven) is revealed to the whole world; but *for* man, he is revealed in Israel and in the place of his cult, Zion. The temple and the ark are the special 'stool for his feet' (Ps 99.5; the general 'stool' is the earth: Is 66.1). This is the reason for the recurring phrase 'out of Zion': it is from the heart of Zion that instruction goes forth, that glory shines forth, that power proceeds and blessing streams out. It is true that here too, Zion inherits certain of the privileges of Jebus: as the seat of the 'highest God', it is the 'mountain of the gods' (as the 'mountain in the north', Is 14.13f.; Ps 48.3), the mid-point of the world, from which holy streams flow out (Ps 65.10), which cannot be conquered (Ps 87.5; 125.1f.) even when it is the object of battle (Ps 46.7), etc.[47] But this 'safe stronghold' was in fact then overthrown and reduced to ashes; and therefore this early theology of the 'glorious city of God', over which mythical shadows still lie, is replaced by a late, eschatological theology which implores that Zion be re-established, in order that it may be once and for all the light of the world and the sacrament of the presence of God among the peoples (Trito-Isaiah; Ps 102.17–18, 23). Even when Israel expresses the wish that God's glory may rise over all the world (Ps 57.6, 12; 72.18), it is always clear that this wish rises from the midst of Israel: 'I will give thanks to thee, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praise to thee among the nations!' (Ps 57.10; 68.33–36). God himself shines forth upon the world from Zion (Ps 50.1–2), and here too Zion has taken over an attribute of the earlier mountain of God, Seir (Horeb; Deut 33.2)—although this naturally does not prevent God from riding forth in judgment from heaven and earth against

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[47] *Ibid.*, I, pp. 342–345. On the whole question: J. Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem, Jahwes Königssitz. Theol. d. Hl. Stadt im AT* (1963).

Zion, when Israel's worship becomes decadent and offensive (Ps 50); indeed, God can condemn the sacrifices offered to him by comparison with the purer sacrifices of the Gentiles (Mal 1.11).

When we speak, further on, about the exile, we shall have to say more about Israel's reaching forwards into the totality of history. Our aim here has been to understand how Israel could enter upon a mythical inheritance without in the least being unfaithful to itself,[48] and how the universalist tendency could be assumed into the exclusiveness of the covenant relationship in order to take on a wholly new form as a result of this. Israel alone knows God's plans of salvation (Ps 147.20), thanks to the special election which he has made in love (Deut 7.7–8): 'Wisdom has not been heard of in Canaan, nor seen in Teman . . . our God gave her to Jacob his servant and to Israel whom he loved. Afterward, she appeared upon earth and lived among men' (Bar 3.22, 37–38). This wisdom which Israel—and Israel alone—receives, is none other than He himself.

d. Integration of glorification

God's glory, integrated in the grace of the covenant, exists for Israel: 'His splendour is over Israel' (Ps 68.35). But Israel itself is integrated in its own answer, viz. thankfulness as glorification: 'My mouth is full of thy praise, of thy splendours all the day' (71.8). Israel's self-understanding, so difficult to attain, comes to rest in praise which is the affirmation, the profession of the historical facts which have their source in God.[49] The word 'I will' resounds through all the songs of praise: 'I will bless you all my life' (63.5), 'I will bless you all my days' (145.2), 'I will bless Yahweh all my life, will sing praises to my God while I have being' (146.2), 'I have chosen' (119.30). It is necessary to see clearly how all the facets of Israel's existence meet in this point, overlap and become identical. Just as the fullness of the God who is to be praised can be separated into its individual components—'immeasurable greatness, glory of the promise that is made, wonderful events, goodness, proven reliability, favour, mercy, patience and kindness, power and sovereignty, closeness, truth, holiness . . .'—only to be reunited in the one statement 'kingdom for ever' (Ps 145), so the fullness of human dispositions is integrated in the will to give glorification. This is called 'giving back to Yahweh his *kabod*' (Josh 7.19; 1 Sam 6.5).

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[48] Israel's continuous unfaithfulness consists in projecting the living God back into mythology by attributing to him the characteristics of Moloch and Baal, whereas we have here the opposite process of a genuine demythologisation.

[49] H. Grimme, *ZAW*, 1940, pp. 234f. On the whole question: C. Westermann, *Das Lob Gottes in den Psalmen*, 3rd edn. 1963.

When Israel sees all wisdom as based in the fear of God (Prov 1.7; Sir 1.14), this means the affirmation of God as God. 'The fear of God is obedience, the constant acknowledgement of his greatness through carrying out his will'.[50] In this way, it is the opposite of all mysticism of absorption into the deity, because the act whereby man transcends himself to enter the covenant realm which God has opened up always presupposes and displays the difference between the eternal God and man who passes away. Man 'raises up his soul' (Ps 25.1–2; 86.4; 143.8) by yearning for God (119.20, 40), thirsting for him (63.2; 143.6), losing the ground under one's feet as one hangs on his words (Ps 119), pressing one's soul against God (63.9; 119.31), leaning against God's breast silently, weaned, in the spirit of childhood (131), looking fixedly at God as the servant looks to the hand of his lord (123.2), constantly admitting his need of grace (51.7; 130.3; 143.2), being satisfied with the imperishability of God's love (103.15f.) instead of stopping short at the realisation of his own perishability (37.2; 39; 90.5), and being ready to interpret the puzzling process whereby creatures come into being and pass away as the breathing in and out of the breath of God (104.29–30). If only God's word remains (33.11; 119.89; Is 40.7–8)![51]

The man who lives through the word and for the word will recall this to himself at every moment; this is how the precept runs (Deut 6.6–9), but it also corresponds to the yearning of his heart: he lives from the *meditation* on the mighty deeds of God (Ps 77: 105; 114; 135; 136), in a continuous act of 'remembering, repeating, reflecting' (143.5) on the basis of which we can 'bring it to the consideration' of others too (145.4–5), because God himself has founded the being of Israel on 'tradition' (78.5–7). As philosophy consists for Plato in the struggle against forgetfulness and in the recalling of what has been seen in the presence of God, so Israel's existence consists in overcoming the forgetfulness of the grace that has been experienced in history (Deut 32.7; Ps 78.11); God's word should continuously 'murmur' like a spring of water in the heart and mouth of the pious man (Ps 1.2; 19.15; 63.7; 77.13; 143.5).

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[50] L. Koehler, *ThAt*, 1936, p. 28.

[51] Mt 24.35; 1 Pet 1.24–25; Jn 1.1f.

Man stands transparent before God at the point at which he says 'yes' and accepts the instruction unconditionally; the object of his wish and his plea is to be freed of all disturbance of the heart (even that of which he is not conscious) by God, in order to stand before him in absolute clearness as a mirror (17.3; 26.2–3; 139.23); indeed, he goes so far as to demand the painful (66.10) thorough examination of his heart, so that he can then 'walk in thy truth'. The seemingly offensive protestation of one's own purity denotes the will to be transparent before God. The plea for 'purification' and 'spotlessness'(119.80) is one with the plea for humility and obedience (19.12–14), for the strange alienation, expropriation and poverty (73.25; 119.19a, 54b) that are the presupposition for the total mutual transparency between God and man that is aimed at, the transparency that is described in the second part of Ps 19. Here there is the realisation of that intimacy and familiarity in the mystery between God and man that is the life of the covenant: to dwell beside God, hidden in the mystery of his tent (27.4–5), to take refuge in his face (31.21), and also to be received into the very heart of the word (119.11, 88, 131) which in itself is joy and delight (119.14, 16, 24, 47, etc.) and thereby bears its reward in itself (119.33, 47, 112, 162); one opens one's mouth wide and sucks in greedily (119.131), one promises to preserve it faithfully (145), not to forget it (119.16, 61, 93, 141, 153, 176), to accompany God to the end of the road (119.81–82, 123) and to be undivided in oneself (119.113).

For it is only in this way that it is possible to attain the mutuality that is demanded by the word of God. 'If there had been evil in my heart, the Lord would not have listened to me' (66.18f.). 'I seek Yahweh, he answers me' (34.5), 'look to him and be radiant' (34.6). This is a dialogue of mutual blessing: man sends God's blessing back to him (65.5; 113.2; 115.12f., 18; 134).[52] The two acrostic Psalms 111 and 112, which are doubtless placed intentionally alongside each other, reflect upon each other the archetypical disposition of God and the disposition of man which copies this and thus illuminate in the best way to what a degree Israel wanted to be pure answer and pure light reflecting back light, and this even (and precisely) when it sends back God's own word to him in prayer like a reproach: the deed of promise, which the word contained, has not yet been put into practice (Ps 60.9–19; 89)! Where man endeavours not to forget, there is no room in God for forgetting. It is impossible that his love or his word should be exhausted (77.9–10). Thanks to the covenant, Israel is completely convinced that God's grace is superior to his wrath; the latter lasts only a moment, but grace lasts for ever (30.6; Is 54.7–8).[53] For otherwise, the covenant would be impossible, since it is built by God on the foundation of grace, and by man on the foundation of hope, trust and love.

By *giving back the word* to God in the unconditional act of praise, Israel is perfect, i.e. in the state in which God requires it to be in order to make out of the word of answer a word of God himsef. Israel's answer to God is not only an inspired word of sacred scripture: it is a word of revelation. God's revelation contains not only the statement about himself, but also the divinely-constructed dialogue between the partners of the covenant. This dialogue is perfect where man accepts that it be determined by the place of fidelity to the covenant, of fear of God, of obedience to God. Since this dialogue is entirely shaped by God's grace, it is formally a trinitarian revelation, even before the Trinity is materially revealed in the new covenant. Naturally, Israel intends that this giving back of the word to God should not exclude, but rather include the obedience of its own existence, as is attested, e.g., continually by Ps 119: God's instruction is to be the 'path' that is 'maintained' and 'kept to', the word is to be the 'lamp for the steps and light for the path', etc. The protestations of faith, of confidence, of hope, that overflow from the 'exultant lips' (63.6; 71.23), are not at all meant as mere words. And yet all achieves its measure of satiation in the act of *confessio*, in its double, Augustinian sense: profession of the grace of God and, included in this, profession of one's own sin, powerlessness, need of grace. God has kept his word perfectly (Ps 105), and Israel has continually broken it (Ps 106): but in the confession of sin, the broken word becomes whole again, because it is changed into the praise of grace. Israel's true 'originality' lies in the fact that it is able to transform everything into praise, to invite everyone to join in its song of glorification, and even to draw them into this whether they wish to take part or not. It has employed its best powers in this endeavour: thus the 'incarnation of the word' as holy scripture is Israel's true fruit. Israel's blood sticks to the pages of the Bible. The correctness (*justesse*) of its praise cannot be formally surpassed by the New Testament, and this is why the Twelve of the old covenant stand before God's throne with the same right as the Twelve of the new covenant who are beside him (Rev 4.4). Israel's apostolate lies in *confessio*; the individual has known in an elemental manner that he must give thanks for God's grace as a witness before the 'community', in public: 'I will make thy name known to my brethren, praise thee in the great assembly' (Ps 22.23; 26.12; 35.18; 40.10; 51.17; 52.11; 66.16, etc.).[54] This is a matter of 'making public' the praise of God, of its publication (64.10; 71.14f.; 75.2; 92.3, 6). No matter what the spiritual *locus* from which the confession proceeds—whether from a feast celebrating a king's victory or a marriage, from a great liturgical celebration in the temple or 'out of the depths' (Ps 69; Jon 2.3–11; Ps 130; Lamentations), or as 'the gift of praise in the night' (Job 35.10)—and no matter what the object of the confession is—whether the absolute, cosmic glory of Yahweh as an eternal fact (Ps 93; 96–100) or as an event that is present at each moment (Ps 47),[55] or the grateful praise for unique victories of God (the song at the Sea of Reeds, the song of Deborah), or a king or a community or an individual gives thanks—always, the world as a whole is laid bare in principle before God (Ps 104), the earth and precisely the Gentile peoples too are summoned to praise or included in the praise as something taken for granted (66.1, 4, 8; 67.4–6; 96.1, 3). Here, in giving back the word, Israel best understands its universal mission to give back to God, in the name of the world, God's word which goes forth to the world as a whole. It is not for nothing that so many psalms and hymns speak of Yahweh's theophanies:[56] in a linguistic form which is laid down for the purpose of the cult and yet is continually varied by the poets, what is spoken of here is the witness to God's manifestation in the cosmos, a manifestation which does not limit itself to the non-material sphere, but in sovereign fashion takes hold of the bodiliness which is perceptible to the senses. This pictorial language is employed in a free, almost playful way: the freedom which Israel possesses thanks to its knowledge of God's disposition and concerns gives it the right to use even such metaphors as these.

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[52] F. Horst, 'Segen und Segenshandlungen in der Bibel', *Ev. Th.* 1–2 (1947), pp. 23–37.

[53] Ex 34.6f.; Num 14.18; Ezra 3.11; Neh 9.17; 1 Chron 16.34; Ps 86.15; 103.8–10; 106.1; 107.1; 136.1; 145.8; Is 57.16; Jer 3.12; 33.11; Joel 2.13; Jon 4.2.

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[54] The wisdom literature too is full of this need: *cf.* Sir 39.12f. It can express itself as an irresistible compulsion (Job 32.6f.) or as the involuntary

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streaming forth of 'fragrances' (Sir 24), since wisdom (even the wisdom communicated to man) is 'a wholly pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty' (Wis 7.25).—Proclamation to sinners is also reparation for sin: Ps 51.15.

[55] As the taking into possession of something that (in Israel's understanding of God) was possessed from the outset: if it is the case that elements of a Canaanite or Babylonian-Ugaritic inthronisation feast were taken over in Jerusalem (for example, in connection with a procession with the ark, which was brought back to its place on high), then this was done only in order to express the wholly unmythical fact that God is *always* king *from the outset*. H. J. Kraus, *Psalmen*, I, excurusus on the cultic traditions of Jerusalem, pp. 197f.; 'Was a "feast of Yahweh's inthronisation" celebrated in Jerusalem?', pp. 201f.

[56] See above on 'cosmic liturgy', pp. 74f.

G. von Rad judges correctly, therefore, when he discusses the *aesthetic of the Old Testament* in speaking of Israel's praise. 'The artistic peculiarity of Israel's poems undoubtedly stands in a very close relationship to her faith, from which in the last analysis it received its stamp, though it is hardly possible any longer to ascertain the relationship scientifically, for it is faith which creates for itself the form and the style. Israel's most intensive encounter with beauty was in the religious sphere, in the contemplation of Yahweh's revelation and action, and because of this concentration of the experience of beauty upon the *credenda*, Israel occupies a special place in the history of aesthetics.' 'When Israel contemplates the created world (Ps 104), it considers God's creative working 'with every evidence of a joyful emotion', with a sublime '*delectari*'. 'In this creation, all is splendid, splendid even without purpose.' These poetic compositions overflow with an inebriation with beauty that had reached the ultimate limits. But it is not the real things described in the poems that set the poet into such an ecstasy, but the fact that at the same time their relation to God becomes visible. Therefore for man too, to sing praises is 'fair' ('pleasing', 'comely', Ps. 92.2; 147.1)—it means aesthetic satisifaction for him when he can offer up to God in praise the splendour which God granted to the world and man. This means that, for Israel, the beautiful can never be separated from the covenant, but remains 'something increasingly bestowed by God on the world' and thus 'a datum of faith', and the enjoyment of this beauty of God is truly present as early as the hymns and is most certainly present in the utterances of the prophets as something anticipated, that is, it is orientated towards an eschatological fulfilment: it is perception in faith and faith perceived. It is a contemplation of world and history with the eye of God. Finally, the beautiful in Israel remains conditioned by the manner in which God bestows himself; it is characteristic that Israel accompanied the condescension of Yahweh, 'which went even to the point of a divine *Kenosis*, with statements about beauty':[57] if Zion is 'perfectly beautiful' (Ps 50.2)[58] and 'the joy of all the world' (Ps 48.3), and if the king is termed 'the most beautiful of the children of men' (45.3), then Israel could not approve of 'setting' such statements 'in an absolute contrast to the other, the Servant of God who has no form of beauty (Is.53.2), for with the latter as well there is a splendour (otherwise he would not be pictured in poetic prose), only it is much more hidden. This bold accompaniment of the movement of the hidden God, in which Israel was still able to perceive splendour even in the deepest *kenosis* of God's action, is certainly the most noteworthy characteristic in the Old Testament's utterances about beauty.'[59]

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[57] See the following section on 'the staircase of obedience.'

Israel is happy when it sings. By giving back his glory to God, it fulfils itself as God's image, and also understands why it is not permitted to make for itself any carved image of God. In the exchange of the divine word, the archetype and the copy must stand uncovered in each other's presence. Only so is the space made ready in which God's Word can become flesh.

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[58] The LXX transposes what is said about beauty of God himself: 'Εκ Σιων ἡ εὐπρέπεια τῆς ὡραιότητος αὐτοῦ. At Ps 96 (95). 6 we have the ἐξομολόγησις καὶ ὡραιότης ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ (*hod* and *hadar* before his face) understood as 'kingly glory', as the 'aura that surrounds the God-king' (Kraus, *Psalmen*, ad loc.). It is only the next hemistich that goes on to praise the beauty of the temple. Thus, beauty is understood here as the irradiation of the living God into the world, something that Wis 7.26 will call his 'emanation', 'mirror', 'image'. Ps 149.5 (*cf.* vv. 11–12) can pile up the words in the sense of Ex 33.18–19 and speak of the 'splendour of the *kabod* of the honour of God, of his mighty deeds and of his kingdom'.

[59] All quotations here (without marks of elision) from von Rad, *ThOT*, I, pp. 364–367.

II. THE STAIRWAY OF OBEDIENCE

A. THE BROKEN COVENANT

1. SIN AND MALEDICTION

Everything that has been said up to this point has—let us repeat it—an abstract validity, because it is seen in isolation from history. It is only *history*, which convicts man as a sinner and confronts God with the fact of the broken covenant, that permits us to see the concrete reality of God's glory. We shall not portray all the details of Israel's long history of infidelity to the covenant; in keeping with our theme, all that needs to be illustrated is the way in which God's glory responds to sin. In the perspective of the 'covenant', sin appears essentially and formally as infidelity, whatever the precise contents of the trespass may be.

This means, first of all, that for Israel, the central concept of evil—whatever its peripheral filling and supplement may look like—is derived from its fundamental experience of God and concept of God. Indeed, the uniqueness of Israel's concept of evil is nothing other than the negative mirror-image of its concept of God, and thereby the counter-evidence of the uniqueness of this concept of God. Although the reality of evil comes into action in the field of interpersonal ethical conduct, its deepest roots are not there, but lie in the field of conduct towards the covenant God: it is the central failure of Israel to give the only acceptable answer to the covenant which was offered, i.e. Israel's infidelity. It is true, as we have seen, that there exist analogies between a *berith* between men, with the appropriate sanctions, and the *berith* with Yahweh, which likewise has its severe sanctions; but Israel is aware, and becomes more and more strongly aware, that its relationship to God is isolated and exceptional, and that the claim made on Israel by this relationship is of an incomparable quality. On the other hand, there is no possibility of seeing evil as rooted anywhere in the divine sphere: neither in Yahweh himself, since he is all-holy, nor in any divine powers hostile to him, for no such powers exist, nor, finally, in a demonic sphere, for classical Israel knows of no devil, and the concept of an accusing angel (Satan) plays an unimportant role. Israel is alone with its God and has sufficiency of all things in its God; evil arises precisely at the point where this God seems insufficient to Israel, which therefore turns away from him to look for other gods. Evil *is* this very act of turning away.

This understanding of evil is as unique as the divine covenant itself. It is a fully theological understanding that transcends every 'metaphysical' understanding of evil, whether mythical or (in later periods) philosophical. When biblical theology later takes up the Greek concept of the μὴ ὄν and στέρησις in order to come closer conceptually to the essence of evil, this is not an error on the level of metaphysical truth, but it does not reach the distinctive essence of theological guilt, which consists in the incomprehensible refusal of an answer of love to the incomprehensible offer of eternal love.

The few decisive vistas which are opened up in the Old Testament by the theme of guilt are very conciously governed by the concepts of infidelity to the covenant.

Thus, the story of the golden calf is pitilessly set by the Yahwist right in the middle of the event of the making of the covenant: the all too near God with his terrible demands is replaced with the image and likeness of worldly power and fertility, to which one gladly 'sacrifices', and before which one can calmly 'eat and drink' and then 'play' (Ex 32.6). God is the one who is immediately affected by this: he draws Moses' attention to what is happening, his anger flames forth and he wishes to destroy the people (32.10). Moses, the mediator, must stand on both sides: he must let himself be kindled by the flame of God's anger at the people and incarnate God's reaction in the gesture of breaking the tablets (32.19); but in the same kindling of anger, as the one who embodies the anger, he must 'turn back to God' (v. 31), confess the sin and offer himself for a self-immolation in which anger and sin would become one: 'But now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written' (v. 32).

Here, sin is an open 'no' in the face of the God who is in the precise act of disclosing himself to make a covenant, a 'no' that is itself built into the making of the covenant. This is how the Yahwist interprets historical man as a whole, when he looks back: he begins from this point. Adam, placed in the state of original grace, at once renounces obedience, in order to create for himself a relationship to God after his own liking in 'eating and drinking and playing', outside the grace and the space given him by God. As the 'no' to God (between the first and second acts of making the covenant) enters constitutively for Israel into the history of the covenant in such a way that its 'original sin'—in the Deuteronomist's interpretation of history—will be idolatry, so does the 'no' of the first human pair enter, in the Yahwist's view, constitutively into the structure of historical human nature.[1] This is seen by the malediction which attaches to all existence after paradise (Gen 3.14–24) and also by the clear Yahwist statement about the corruption of the human heart (6.5) before and after the flood (Gen 8.21). But once more, the 'no' of the first human pair—*in actu primo* of the relationship of grace which God had established—strikes the as yet unveiled, unalienated face of the God of grace; it is infidelity and ingratitude that is not excused by the subsequent lack of understanding by alienated man.

The third vista is opened up by the Deuteronomist historiography, which in its own way sets the entire history of Israel under the heading of the chief commandment and thus evaluates the people only in terms of its turning towards or away from the living and only God, measuring how and to what extent the 'existential' factor of the 'golden calf' has the effect of something 'constitutive' throughout the history. It is true that in this view of history, in keeping with Ex 32, Israel's original sin is read off almost exclusively from its cultic conduct, while the prophets then indicate that the chief commandment has been transgressed also, and decisively, by pointing to the transgression of the commandments of the second table; and it is true that this historiography excessively simplifies and makes too straightforward the historical state of affairs at each point: when Israel turns away from God afresh, it comes under the malediction, but when it turns back to God, the benediction comes into effect. Such a way of looking at things can shed light—on the basis of the catastrophe that happened to Jerusalem—only on some partial aspects of the history which actually occurred. However, the essential point is that here too the entire history is interpreted under the single heading of fidelity/infidelity.

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[1] The constitutive significance of the texts is given insufficient prominence when Herbert Haag discusses the biblical foundations of 'original sin': *Biblische Schöpfungslehre und kirchliche Erbsündenlehre* (Stuttg. Bibelstudien 10), 1966, pp. 46f.

In fact, the making of the covenant was subject to the sanction of mighty and utterly unforeseeable maledictions which were added to and intensified as time went on (Lev 26.14–16; Deut 28.15–68). While such curses were usual in contracts in the ancient Orient, here (where God himself is partner) the seriousness and significance of the curses naturally surpass immeasurably the juridical schemas. The promises of benediction are formulated much more briefly and vividly than the maledictions, since the grace of the covenant is, as such, the benediction; the occupation of the promised land belongs to the clauses of the covenant. The good conferred by the covenant, that one is allowed to dwell with God, is so great that only the most destructive maledictions can indicate this—negatively. And whoever is taken up into God's love and fidelity through his election can never again become what he was earlier, if he loses God's grace through his infidelity. He burns in the fire of love which he has rejected and offended; like Cain, he will be one preserved and protected by God himself for this existence in flight from God or (what amounts to the same thing) for an existence pursued by the God from whom he cannot escape.

Existence in flight and in catastrophe, since the glory of God has changed to blazing wrath, is one of the fundamental themes of the old covenant. The great lists of maledictions in Leviticus and Deuteronomy are already in part the verbal expression of the experience of such catastrophes; the books of the prophets are full of the descriptions of these. Round about Israel too there are more and more descents into hell and 'pursuits into the darkness' (Nahum 1.8): from the flood to the destruction of Sodom in the fire of God, to the destruction of Samaria (Hosea, Amos, Is 9.7–10.4), Tyre (Ezek 26–28; Is 23), Egypt (Is 19, Jer 46; Ezek 29–32), Niniveh (Nahum 2–3), and Babylon (Is 13; 21.1–10; 47.1–15; Jer 50–51), to the final ruin of Babylon and the concluding lamentation in Rev 17–18. But in the midpoint stands the rejection which is the necessary reverse side of the privileged election: the rejection of Israel and of its holy mountain, Zion. God's glory has withdrawn; Zion stands an abandoned wilderness, a dwelling place for the jackals (Is 34.13f.; Lam 4.1; 5.18). 'Behold, your house will be left forsaken' (Jer 12.7f.; Matt 23.38). The Israel of the millennia represents the side of God's salvific activity in which he rejects; this is the inexorable inner consequence and logic of the grace which had entered into history.[2]

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[2] On this, see above all Karl Barth's doctrine of election: *Church Dogmatics* II/2 (1942), pp. 1–506, especially: 'Israel and the Church', pp. 195ff., 'The Determination of the Rejected', pp. 449ff.

2. SHEOL AND GOD'S MOBILITY

But what insoluble questions are posed by these statements, what contradictions that are not to be smoothed over by men in any way! Did not God make his covenant of peace with creation after the flood? Whence then do these flames of fire come that destroy cities and kingdoms and, above all, the holy city of God? There opens up an abyss of hostility to God in man's 'no': how will God's glory respond to this? Whoever falls out of the sphere of the covenant, which is the sphere of divine life, falls into the grasp of the sphere of death: is God's glory there—perhaps in the form of his wrath? Or is God absent from there? But if there exists a place where God is absent, does not that mean that he is subject to limitation? The language of the Bible must become dialectical at this point.

The mythical images of a 'creation battle' with the powers of chaos had at any rate expressed God's victory in which he disposed of all hostile powers and kingdoms. Leviathan, Behemoth, Rahab, Tiamat-Tehon: all are subdued.[1] As we have seen,[2] traits of the miracle of the Red Sea are present in many descriptions of this creation event: Yahweh's power and his 'rebuke' dries up the sea (Nahum 1.4; Is 50.2; Ps 18.16; 106.9), the fire of his anger burns down to the depths of Sheol (Deut 32.22). Thus Sheol too lies naked before God (Job 26.6; Prov 15.11; Ps 139.8, 12), and its darkness is light before God. Yahweh's glory overwhelms all the glories of the abyss:

> Yahweh on high is glorious
> above the glory of the surgings of the sea (Ps 93.4)

But is he glorious even in the abyss itself?

Sheol, as the realm of those who have died in the body, is first of all the boundary for life in the dimension of time, but at the same time also the boundary for the relationship to God, which is available only to those who live in time: 'in death there is no remembrance of thee; in Sheol, who can give thee praise?' (Ps 6.6).[3] This is a central statement which is not shaken by question-marks on the margins. But Sheol lets its kingdom cast shadows over into life: the one who is sick, opposed by foes and persecuted, the prisoner, man in every kind of poverty, misery, shame and oppression is always 'on the edge of the pit', 'at the gates of death', and 'the great waters' threaten to swallow him up: here Babylon and Israel have the same understanding.[4] When those in such distress cry to the Lord 'out of the depths', he can still save them; in their lamentation they say only that they are 'close to Sheol', and it is only when they look back and give thanks that they declare that they have truly been saved out of Sheol (Ps 30.4; 86.13; Sir 51.2, 5).[5] Sinners too and wicked men are in the shadow of Sheol: they walk in the darkness (Prov 4.19) and their path goes towards the realm of the dead,[6] but they do not beseech God to save them. They themselves—as 'fools'—strive to leave the realm of life and of standing in the gaze and the remembrance of God (*cf.* Ps 88.6), they skid away, fall into emptiness, are like a dream (Ps 73.18f.). In a hidden way, they already share in the powerlessness and inessentiality of existence in the realm of the dead.

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[1] Texts in: H. Gunkel, *Schöpfung und Chaos* (1895), pp. 29–111. On the role of the sea in the Bible: A. J. Wensinck, *The Ocean in the Literature of the Western Semites* (1918); O. Kaiser, *Die mythische Bedeutung des Meeres in Ägypten, Ugarit und Israel* (Beih. *ZAW* 78), 1959.

[2] See above, pp. 77f.

The songs which celebrate the fall into hell of the Titanic great powers and emperors tell of their arrival in the kingdom of Sheol. They are finished for ever (Is 14; Ezek 32). It is different with God's curses and punitive judgments on Israel: the faithless people which now is rejected never sinks into the cold, clayey depths of Sheol without light: rather, it exists in the fire of the curse; it can indeed apply to itself again and again the assertion that 'Yahweh kills and gives life, he brings down to Sheol and brings up again' (1 Sam 2.6; Deut 32.39;

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[3] *Cf.* Ps 30.10; 88.11–13; 115.17; Is 38.18; Bar 2.17; Sir 17.27.

[4] Christoph Barth, *Die Errettung vom Tode in den individuellen Klage- und Dankliedern des AT* (1947), pp. 93–118.

[5] *Ibid.* p. 111.

[6] Prov 2.18f.; 5.5; 7.27; 11.19; 12.28; 21.16.

Tob 13.2; Wis 16.13), but all this expresses is the absolute power of God over life and death. God could indeed save sinful Israel; he has the power to do this. But does he will to do so? Sin—interpreted as conscious infidelity—must in its intensification necessarily reach the point where the limit of the bearable is attained, where the covenant, which was made with a view to mutual fidelity, must count as broken and therefore as dissolved. It is true that the mutual relationship was based on a prior one-sided election made by God in grace and love: but can one play off this prior act against the mutual relationship of the covenant? Can the covenant, which must be dissolved, nevertheless continue to exist because of grace? And how then is a covenant to continue to exist beyond the boundaries of the realm of life into the realm of death? If the godless 'make a covenant with the nether world' (Is 28.15; Wis 1.16), will God wish to enter into something like that? Would not his entire glory wipe itself out, if he were to enter into a relationship with that which is opposed to himself?

This is a knot of mutually-entangling questions. As soon as an element of what is definitive and exclusive is caught sight of, a suspicion arises somewhere that this element in its turn can be surpassed by something else.

It is clear for Israel that God does not need to struggle against the realm of death, any more than he needs to exert himself in the chaos at creation in order to bring it into order through his struggle. And yet: can it suffice that Yahweh is enthroned 'gloriously on high', indisputably superior to all the regions of death and of reprobation? Must not God also subdue the chaos from within and from below, in some kind of analogy to the Sumerian and Babylonian concept of the descent of Innana or Ishtar into the underworld[7]—but now stripped of the mythology? Does not God owe it to himself 'to glorify' his glory even there (Ezek 39.21) and 'to sanctify' his holiness even there (Ezek 28.22, 25) where all glory has been extinguished since all is empty unholiness? Where man has utterly failed, the history of the covenant of God becomes a history of God with himself. There was absolutely no way to foresee the manner in which this history ultimately turned out. God wills to construct for himself a stairway in the men whom he has chosen, a stairway that is to lead him down into the god-less darkness. A stairway constructed of obedience.

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[7] *AOT*, 2nd edn., pp. 206–210. A Falkenstein, 'Innanas Gang zur Unterwelt', *Arch. f. Orientforschung*, 1943–1944, pp. 113f.; S. N. Kramer, 'Innana's Descent to the Nether World', *Journ. Cun. Stud.* 4 (1950), pp. 220f.; 5 (1951), pp. 1f.

Right from the outset the God of the old covenant possesses a remarkable mobility, based not in imperfect anthropomorphous concepts of him, but in his inconceivable inner freedom, in virtue of which he can do all that he wills. We have seen to what extent he was from the beginning a God who 'goes with' men: it is precisely his 'glory' that wanders with his people through the wilderness; God leads the war in the wilderness for those who belong to him: indeed, he himself is this path. At the start in paradise, he was a God who came and went (Gen 3.8), and later he was a descending God (Gen 11.5, 7) who went in the opposite direction to man who strove to ascend into heaven. He shows himself ascending and descending in his angels to Jacob, and promises once again that he will go with him (Gen 28). To this outer mobility there corresponds an inner mobility which can already be seen in the fact that he freely and personally commits himself at specific moments of history. He makes decisions, but he can also 'repent' (Gen 6.6; 1 Sam 15.11, 35; Amos 7.3, 6); he proclaims, but he can be persuaded to change his mind (Judg 2.18; Joel 2.14; Jon 3.9). We see into his troubled heart (Gen 5.6), we share in his taking counsel of himself (Gen 18.17–19); he is tired of saving his people, and yet in the end he cannot endure their situation any longer (Judg 10.16). Indeed, not only does he 'lead them down to the realm of the dead', but he accompanies man there, for he says to Jacob, when he appears to him by night, 'Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt' (where things will go so terribly for the people for hundreds of years), 'for I will there make of you a great nation. I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again' (Gen 46.3–4). A similar promise is made even to the sufferers in the Psalms (Ps 91.15; *cf.* Is 43.2). God brings about such 'utterly strange things' in his freedom (Is 28.21) that he himself is astonished at this (Jer 31.20), although he owes himself—as God—precisely these incomprehensible things (Hos 11.8–9). Perhaps these are only the consequences of his *mishpat*, since he cannot do anything else than take up the cause of the poor and of those who have no rights, or because his weariness at the sin of the world brings him into an ever deeper solidarity with the weary. Perhaps it is because he is treated so shamefully in his covenant that he loves from the very beginning to be with those who are weakened and treated shamefully: with the men who cannot have children and with the barren women (Gen 18.10f.; Judg 13.2f.; 1 Sam 1; Lk 1.7), with the exiled son of a harlot, Jephthah (Judg 11.1), with the one who is 'poorest' and 'least', Gideon (Judg 6.15), with the man who is unable to speak, Moses (Ex 4.10); with the lad from the smallest family of Benjamin (1 Sam 9.21), who is the object of scorn (10.27), Saul, and with the least significant of the sons of Jesse, David (1 Sam 16.11).

This solidarity with the lowly occasionally poses insoluble puzzles. It is God himself who 'humbles' Israel, in order to put it to the test (Deut 8.2–16), and he will humble Job too in this way to the uttermost and make him the 'mockery' of all and the butt of their scorn (Job 30). Thus a man can become a puzzle for many, for the sake of God (Ps 71.7); the solidarity can be reserved: 'for thy sake I suffer scorn, and insults cover my face . . . the insults of those who insult thee falls on me' (Ps 69.8, 10). The knot of the covenant history is tied here: it will be untied only in the new covenant.

B. THE OBEDIENCE OF THE PROPHETS

1. ABRAHAM, MOSES, SAUL

The image of the great founders, Abraham and Moses, must be accepted in the way that Israel's self-understanding ultimately formed it for itself and for the world. The essential point of this image is not that they gave commands, but that they obeyed. Whereas the great kings of Egypt and Mesopotamia were caught up in a charismatic dialogue with their gods, so that the divine word of command resounded through the sacral earthly institutions and their regulations and was perceived to be such, the glory of the living God of Sinai and (in his light) even of the God of the fathers breaks through this magical continuum and replaces it with the infinite difference between God and creature, Lord and servant. To know God means to fear God, and this means to obey.[1] Since everything depends on this first principle, it must be put to the test, to see if it holds when things become serious. So Adam is tested with the apple, Noah is tested with the command to build the ark, and the ancestor of the people, *Abraham*, is tested most severely, to see whether he can sacrifice not only his 'son, the only one, the beloved' (Gen 22.2), but also the promise which in him has come within reach, to the God who disposes over all things in invisible freedom. Since every last trace of magic has been expelled from this deed (for Abraham has no designs upon God and does not wish to get his own way with him in anything) to make way for the pure blind obedience, the transparent beginning of the history of revelation is posited here. Man serves God by making his will the servant vessel for the absolute will.

In order to bring the 'unruly people' later to bow under this will, a leader like *Moses* is necessary, one who initially himself seems to be a pure exponent of this unruliness before God as he issues his demands to God and who ultimately must be routed in the harsh disputation by the God whom he has angered (Ex 3–4). While Abraham's obedience is a purely abstract function of the covenant of grace, untouched by the sinful condition of humanity, the covenant which God will enter upon through Moses is deeply coloured by the concrete state of sin. The very event in which Moses is called involves the crushing of a revolt, and the outcome of the argument is the dualism (which was not foreseen at the outset) of Moses and Aaron as 'hearer' and 'speaker' (Ex 4.16; 7.1), 'prophet' and 'priest'. Moses will be an incomparably faithful servant over the house of God (Num 12.7), to whom it never occurs to play God on earth, and who will receive a punishment, imposed by his Lord for an error of bad temper, that looks like divine ingratitude: he is not allowed to enter the land of grace. If Moses stands in solidarity with the people in what is bad, he also stands in solidarity with it in what is good: the transformation of his picture in Deuteronomy—from one who is punished to one who is stricken vicariously—is consistent.

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[1] Gen 22.12; Deut 10.12.

The tragedy of the first king, *Saul*, must be interpreted (no matter how difficult this may be) on the basis of the final redaction of the narrative, which has been painted over so many times.[2] The *ruach* (inspiration) which Moses had possessed and which had been distributed among the elders of the people too (Num 11.24–30), had repeatedly fallen on individuals during the period of the judges and inspired them to deeds that freed the nation. But the loosely united tribes could no longer resist the surrounding peoples, who were skilled in war and internally united: it was no longer possible to avoid the establishment of a central, institutional leadership. The dominant figure of the transitional period, Samuel, had to proclaim the end of the weakened and corrupt priesthood which had charge of the ark; this was destroyed in the next war with the Philistines, in which the ark was taken as booty, while Samuel, accredited by the fulfilment of his prophecy, rose to be the one in Israel who bore the Spirit ('prophet', 1 Sam 3.20), with the important support of a group of inspired men (*nebiim*) over whose 'assembly' (ἐκκλησία) he presided (19.18f.). As one who bears the Spirit and enjoys high spiritual prestige, he does indeed exercise the function of a 'judge' within Israel, but he does not take the place of the warlike judges of old in the sacred war of resistance *ad extra*: instead of fighting, he offers intercessions and sacrifices, which God answers (according to the narrative) with a miraculous theophany that repels the foe (1 Sam 7.9f.; *cf.* 12.18). He attempts to institutionalise the prophetic role of the judges within Israel (thus continuing tendencies of the 'minor judges') by installing his sons as judges alongside himself. The representatives of the people, disturbed by these half-measures, demand the full institution, which must also encompass the dimension of foreign politics: kingship. The judge-prophet opposes this, but God bids him accept and do what the people want, though naturally in such a way that the king who is to be instituted for the first time must remain one who obeys, despite the institutionalisation. The opinions sound shrilly as they interrupt one another in the text: is not kingship the abandonment of God's lordship (8.7)? Voices from the later period sound a warning note in the midst of this, a warning that comes from their dire experience with a kingship which has become absolutist (8.11–18). But God grants—indeed, he himself sends—the new *nagid* (chief, prince) who is to free and govern 'my people' (9.16–17). Samuel anoints Saul who is sent to him (ch. 10), who is also chosen by lot in the assembly of the people and acclaimed as king after the great victory over the Ammonites which he wins as the Spirit-possessed warrior (ch. 11); after this, Samuel retires, after he has drawn attention once more to the conditions of the new statute: 'Your God is your king. And now behold the king whom you have chosen, for whom you have asked; behold, the Lord has set a king over you. If you will fear the Lord and serve him and hearken to his voice . . . if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the Lord your God, then it will be well . . .' (12.12–14).

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[2] On this, *cf.* above all the unfinished work of M. Buber, 'Der Gesalbte', in: *Werke*, Vol. II (1964).

Samuel has introduced the anointed Saul to the possession of the Spirit. On his way home, he will meet the band of prophets: 'Then the Spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon you, and you shall prophesy with them and be turned into another man. Now when these signs meet you, do whatever your hands finds to do, for God is with you' (10.6–7). When he joins the guild of prophets, therefore, the new political ruler is equipped with the Spirit and so enters into his majority. His mature act and his great hour are related at 11.1–11. But is it possible for the Spirit of God, which falls freely on a man on individual occasions and is bestowed charismatically, to remain guaranteed to a continuing institution? Samuel believes not. By linking the bestowal of the Spirit on the king to the encounter with the fellowship of prophets, he binds the institution of the kingship to something like an institution of prophecy as to a corrective; and from David to the last king of Judah, this painful and yet fruitful dualism will dominate history: the close confrontation between the king, who obeys the political necessities, and the prophet, who relates the whole political sphere to the direct word of God and points to direct obedience.[3]

Thus the text lets both stand beside each other in almost unbearable harshness: the permission, which has been mentioned, to 'do what the occasion requires', *and* the strict instruction to wait at Gilgal seven days for Samuel, with whom the sacrifices are to be offered: then 'I will show you what you shall do' (10.8). Urgent political necessity—the army is dispersing, the foe is coming nearer, one must act without delay—leads Saul to offer the sacrifice himself on the seventh day; then Samuel comes, upbraids the king for what he has done, and declares that he has been rejected by God, who has already selected another who is better (13.7b–15). In the doublet in ch. 15, Saul's disobedience is somewhat more clearly manifest: Samuel has ordered destruction 'without mercy' for the holy war against the Amalekites, but Saul spares the captive king and the best of the cattle, in order to sacrifice it to God when he comes home (15.15). But

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[3] The *opus* of Reinhold Schneider shows how this problematic continues to work in the realm of Christian history. *Cf.* my book, *Reinhold Schneider, Sein Weg und sein Werk*, 1955.

'obedience is better than any sacrifice' (15.22), and no penitent prayer of Saul, indeed no intercession by Samuel is of any help now: God has repented that he made Saul king over Israel (16.1). From this point onwards, in the histories of David, Saul is the figure of the one rejected: 'the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him' (16.14).

And yet, Saul had been a pious king. He would not have gone into battle without offering sacrifice (13.12); on the day of the battle he orders that the whole army shall hold a great fast (14.24), and when his son Jonathan breaks this fast unawares, he is ready to sacrifice his son in expiation of the vow that has been broken (14.39, 44); he also cleanses the land of witches (28.3), and it is a part of his tragedy that he ultimately goes to inquire of a witch, because God no longer answers him in any way. Samuel contrasted obedience with witchcraft (15.23): for in magic (as in sacrifice) it is man himself who is in charge, and it is only in obedience that he lets God be in charge of him.[4] And yet Saul, like Samson, was one whose election lay far back, at the beginning of his life: the infancy narrative which now has Samuel as its central figure once belonged quite clearly to the saga material about Saul, as is shown by the fact that the play on words with *sha'al* (to request, demand, choose) which occurs nine times points to the name *Sha'ul*, not to Samuel. Saul is the one who is first 'requested' by his barren mother, who takes an oath to make him a Nazirite, he is 'asked for' and is then 'required back' by God (1 Sam 1.27), and finally is 'chosen' by the people (12.13), consecrated to God for the whole of his life (1.11, 28). He has had to yield up even the history of his own election to another, so unhappy and rejected is Saul.

Does not Samuel overreach himself when he demands of the mature king on whom the gift of the Spirit has been bestowed a seemingly petty obedience, indeed—in the case of the seven days' wait—a blind obedience that contradicts every *raison d'état*? Whatever one may say about the present state of the text, however the divergent voices may be distinguished from one another and fitted into historical categories, it is certain that the new institution of the kingship, as 'the replacement of the immediate primitive theocracy by the mediated theocracy',[5] needed to be bound inexorably to the obedience of Abraham and Moses, and in the concrete state of Israel this was possible only by binding the kingship to the office of the *nabi* in which it shared: sharing with it the effusion of the divine *ruach*, but sharing likewise precisely in a wholly concrete, incarnated obedience. Only so can the new kingdom, which emerges from the primitive pansacrality into the secularity of the new period, be a function free of compromise in the people that belongs to God (1 Sam 9.16–17).

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[4] H. W. Hertzberg, *Die Samuelbücher*, ATD (1965), pp. 101–102.

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[5] Buber, *loc. cit.*, p. 759.

2. EARLY PROPHECY

In the period of the judges, there was no distinction between the bestowal of the Spirit and political action, even though the intensity with which those chosen by God experienced Spirit – possession and their consecration to God could vary considerably. The solid establishment of the political leadership function which emerged with Saul and which, historically, was unavoidable called prophecy into existence as a counterweight and corrective. Its beginnings lie far back in time and it is scarcely possible to shed any light on them; but where prophecy enters history and takes on theological significance, it stands in tireless confrontation with politics; it retains an orientation to politics that can take very various forms (very clear in Elisha, then again in the great literary prophets and still in the post-exilic period), just as in its turn the kingship in Israel cannot divorce itself from prophecy.

Although prophecy had strong ecstatic traits in its beginnings (corresponding to a primitive stage of consciousness in which God's act of falling upon the prophet expresses itself in the man as a whole, in his body and his soul, and takes on communal form at the same time), another characteristic appears at once: that of obedience. In the case of the boy in the temple—whether he is called Saul or Samuel—this is initially obedience to the God who calls to him: 'Speak, Yahweh, for your servant hears' (1 Sam 3.9). Three times, the Lord does no more than call: he waits for the agreement of the boy before he makes proclamation of the word, the message, the fourth time. The necessity of such a willingness to hear is presupposed in the whole history of prophecy. In the ancient period, his Spirit can also fall from heaven without prior warning; but his word (*dabar*)—which moves into the centre in the eighth and seventh centuries and dislodges the concept of Spirit—is an address to one who has the willingness to hear. The one who hears must be *ʿanaw*, subordinating himself, feeling himself to be a servant, humble: his *ʿanawa*, humility (Zeph 2.3; Prov 15.33; 18.12; 22.4) becomes the vessel in which God's '*anawa*, his 'condescension' (Ps 18.36;45.55?; 2 Sam 22.36), is received. Thus something like a fellowship in attitude and destiny becomes possible between God and the prophets, as is attested in God's word to Samuel: 'According to all the deeds which they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day' (i.e., they have abandoned me and served foreign gods), 'so they are also doing to you' (1 Sam 8.8).[1]

This willingness *vis-à-vis* God, leading the prophet to live in expectation of the word, is something which, in the beginnings of the prophetic movement, has to be consciously inculcated with an almost incomprehensible harshness that directly equates the superior's word of command with the divine word. Many of the fragmentary accounts from the early period cast light virtually exclusively on this obedience, which seems to be raised to the status of a life or death criterion of the prophetic role, as for example in the story of the man of God in the reign of king Jeroboam, who is charged by God to eat and drink nothing on his way, and is then tricked into eating by a prophet who appeals to his function as prophet and to an inspiration from an angel, with the result that the man of God must pay with his death for his disobedience of the direct word of God (1 Kings 13.11–32), [2] or in the other story of the 'man of the sons of the prophets' who, again charged by Yahweh, commands one of his fellows, 'Strike me', and when he refuses, tells him, 'Because you have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh, behold, as soon as you have gone from me, a lion shall kill you' (1 Kings 20.35f.). Here there blows the same wind as in the early Christian *Apophthegmata Patrum*. The call of Elisha to be the successor of Elijah is significant: Elijah throws his mantle over Elisha as he ploughs. Elisha leaves the oxen and asks permission to take leave of his father and mother, receiving a brusque reply (similar to that in Lk 9.62); he slaughters the oxen and uses the wood of the ploughs to cook the meat, which he gives to the people to eat; 'then he arose and went after Elijah, and ministered to him' (1 Kings 19.19–21). The fact that Jesus takes up this scene shows that here already the definitive, New Testament obedience has been formally attained. In the miracle stories too, it is always necessary first to obey—this is seen most beautifully in the episode of Naaman (2 Kings 5.10)—before God's word of power shows itself to be effective. All of this is characteristic of the atmosphere of the new prophecy, and is, at it were the training of a novitiate. The image of Moses and doubtless that of Abraham too have acquired their final theological profile directly or indirectly from here.

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[1] It is possible that this sentence is a later interpolation, which misunderstands the context, but it gives expression to one aspect of prophetic existence.

[2] *cf.* also the exemplary obedience of the Rechabites (Jer 35). Deut 13.1–5 requires an obedience to the naked word of the Law, even in contradiction of prophetic signs which are fulfilled—if the prophet himself is in contradiction of the commandment of God.

In the period of the great prophecy, which is coextensive with the period of the kings, God enters into a hitherto unheard-of kind of dialogue with the chosen people. He sharply attacks the people's disobedience, desertion and distance from God. No longer does he send thunder and lightning from heaven: he incarnates his word in those whom he has chosen for the perfect ministry of obedience. Certainly, it is individuals (a concept which probably enters the consciousness of the world for the first time through the prophets) who are set in this immediacy to God, and from God's perspective are set in the distance taken by the authorised proclaimer *vis-à-vis* the people;[3] but the consciousness and the whole existence of these individuals undergoes (although in very varied degrees of expression) an incomprehensible broadening-out, leading initially to the direct encounter with the divine glory (Elijah, Micaiah son of Imlah, Isaiah, Ezekiel), and from thence to acceptance of the mission into the uttermost hopelessnesses of the erring people. The prophets must be acquainted with these dark remotenesses, in order to give the word the right, pertinent formulation, so that it can be understood. A prophet must make himself so available in his ministry that he can embody what God has to say—and God's word is always God himself in his majestic act of deciding and working, but always in the act of laying bare his heart. G. von Rad is so bold as to say that the prophet in the state in which he receives the revelation 'became detached from himself and his own personal likes and dislikes, and was drawn into the emotions of the deity himself. It was not only the knowledge of God's designs in history that was communicated to him, but also the feelings in God's heart, wrath, love, sorrow, revulsion, and even doubt as to what to do or how to do it. (Hos 6.4; 11.8; Is 6.8)'.[4] One dimension of this in the case of many prophets is that the bodily sphere is taken decisively into service, with bodily functions, states and gestures (which however are profoundly connected with the spiritual dimension) being laid hold of as the sphere in which God's emotion and action are expressed. Ezekiel must eat the scroll, he and Hosea are expropriated in their married life so that they become parables of the relationship between God and the people, and so on: 'we may ask whether this entry of the word into a prophet's bodily life is not meant to approximate to what the writer of the fourth Gospel says about the word becoming flesh'.[5] For it is certain that in the prophet, God intends truly to reach the sphere of darkening and backsliding; and for this reason we see the prophet in many places, as he stands in profound solidarity with the members of his people, suffering more deeply under their situation than they themselves suffer because he sees and understands them in the truth that comes from God. Thus suffering becomes a fundamental word in prophecy, going far beyond the θεὶα παθεὶν of the Greeks (in the Apolline-Delphic realm as in the Dionysiac realm): the prophet must take up his position at the place where God can penetrate only in a hostile manner, only as fire, judgment and annihilation, into the realm of what is opposed to God, where men must be utterly terrified of falling into the hands of the living God.

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[3] The idea that one day all the people can become prophets is a wholly extravagant, eschatological idea of Joel (3.1f.) which is fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2.17–21).

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[4] *ThOT* (1960), Vol. II, p. 63.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Accordingly, even where the most grandiose visions of the divine *kabod* present themselves (Is 6; Ezek 1; 10), the prophet remains without curiosity (unlike many later apocalyptists); in obedience, he sees as much of God as God thinks good to show him, and the vision is always the spring-board for the main thing, the mission. Thus it is with Isaiah, who begins his book in the midst of his carrying out of his commision, and relates the sending only at a later point; the decisive thing for him is that the fire of God's *kabod* becomes the glowing coal that purifies the prophet's lips and that God's question, 'Whom shall we send?', is followed without any delay by the prophet's answer, 'Send me!' and by the commission to harden Israel's heart. In Jeremiah, no vision of glory perceptible to the senses is required: God's word of election, the prophet's shrinking back, God's assurance that the commission can be fulfilled, are sufficient, and at once two tests follow: 'What do you see, Jeremiah?' 'I see a rod of almond.' 'You have seen well, for . . .' And the second time: 'What do you see, Jeremiah?' 'I see a boiling pot, facing away from the north.' This time, there is no further need to praise the prophet: God explains the image at once. The uniquely decisive matter is that the prophet sees and translates exactly, for the glory of God now wishes to entrust itself to the capacity of this bridge to bear it. In this 'descent', the *kabod* becomes a fire of judgment; it will soon become plain in the prophets how much it assumes this form, becoming a 'consuming fire' even in their hearts (Jer 20.9).

But the prophet is not only inwardly consumed by the fire of God; since he becomes the one who exposes the word of God to the people, God exposes him to the opposition and hate of the sinners. The unheard-of element in this process is that God himself exposes himself to sin in the suffering and dying of those who are obedient to him. Jesus will emphasise that it is necessary that the prophetic obedience should lead to martyrdom: 'For it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside Jerusalem' (Lk 13.33b); he raises to a general principle what happened under Joash (2 Chron 24.20–22), Manasseh (2 Kings 20.16) and Jehoiakim (Jer 26.20–23). And even if the prophet does not perish physically, he must at the very least suffer as the one who embodies God's word. It is God himself who uncovers his heart to blows in the prophets, for they are the men who belong to him and he loves them because they obey him. By having them obey and sending them ahead against the battle-front of the sinners, he commits himself to the very hilt. He is already *en route* to the incarnation. He creates the necessities which will make his own death necessary: 'But how then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that all this must (δεῖ) happen thus?' (Mt 26.54).

Everything takes on an unheard-of presence and contemporaneity. God speaks and issues demands *now*, he wants an answer *now*; the great religious traditions have no independent value in the present moment, and no emphasis is laid above all on the significance of the past for the present, as in Deuteronomy. Rather, the mighty deeds of God become proofs of the fact that he is living now, images that show how he acts today and tomorrow, and thus the glory of God, which essentially belonged to yesterday for Israel as it celebrated the cultic feasts, can change unexpectedly in the focal point of the prophetic present to become tomorrow:

'And one can see as only now coming from afar
what one believed had already happened.' (Novalis)

3. AMOS AND HOSEA

In the earliest of the literary prophets, *Amos*, 'Yahweh roars from Sion' (1.2), no longer only with the majestic thunder that announces the storm (Ex 19.16; Is 30.30), but with the power of the wild beast that is certain of its prey in advance (Hos 5.14). The seven oracles with which the book of Amos begins show this determination in the refrain which occurs every time, 'I will not revoke the punishment' (1.3 etc.). Such is the force with which Yahweh's voice insists: 'Does a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? . . . The lion has roared; who will not fear? Yahweh the Lord has spoken; who can but prophesy?' (3.4, 8). And when this word of prophecy is literally 'unbearable' for the land, according to the judgment of the priest of Bethel, and the prophet is told to depart, he replies: 'I am no prophet, nor one of the sons of the prophets; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, "Go, prophesy to my people Israel"', and he immediately prophesies terrible things that will happen to the priest (7.14f.). But surely it will not be so terrible as that? Will not a remnant always escape? 'Thus says the Lord: "As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who dwell in Samaria be rescued . . ."' (3.12)—after they have thought they could forbid the prophets to prophesy (2.12). The destroying fire breaks forth each time from the seven oracles. But ever again in the course of the whole book, there resound words of glorification, a song of glory that justifies God out of the midst of the fire of judgment.[1] The judgment goes forth because God's righteous ordering has been disrupted among the people: 'You oppress the poor, you crush the needy' (4.1). 'They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals[2]—they that trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth and turn aside the way of the afflicted' (2.6–7; 8.6). God is in solidarity with the poorest. And in the oracles against the pagan peoples, who do not know this legal ordering, God truly defends 'natural law': he sends his fire, because they have crushed men under threshing sledges, deported whole peoples, handed them over, persecuted them, ripped open pregnant women, etc. God uses his 'plumb line' (7.7–8), a measurement that is valid for him and that ought to be known to man too, but which finds man lacking.[3] Man is essentially one who falsifies measurements (8.5).[4] The essential point in Amos is that God's application of this measurement is irrevocable. During the first two visions, the prophet turned to intercessory prayer; but with the third vision, where the measurement is applied, this is no longer possible (7.8). And when in the final vision Yahweh destroys his sanctuary with his own hand, and says that no one can escape from him through flight, even if he were to hide in Sheol or in the depths of the sea, for even 'there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them' (9.3); when the one who seeks to escape from Yahweh runs directly into him ('as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him', 5.19); and when finally he holds all Israel in his sieve and sieves it through (9.9), then the essential point everywhere is that God acts alone: he has his whole judgment in his hand alone, including the serpent of the abysses which is always at his service for this. He does not have a relation of necessity *vis-à-vis* Israel such that he must show his gracious favour,[5] nor does he need an opposition in order to be the victor: he himself creates light and darkness (4.13) and changes

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[1] So-called doxologies of judgment: Amos 4.13; 5.8–9; 9.5–6. F. Horst, 'Die Doxologien im Amosbuch', *ZAW* 47 (1929), also in *Gottes Recht* (Theol. Bücherei 12), 1961, pp. 155–166.

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[2] On the meaning of this verse: R. de Vaux, *Les institutions de l'A.T.*, vol. I (1958), pp. 258f.

[3] If God applies his measurements, numbers and weights to the world (Wis 11.21; but *cf.* already Is 40.12; Job 28.25), he has the right to apply this measurement of his anew as judge, to test men: 2 Kings 21.13; Is 28.17; 34.11; Lam 2.8.

[4] In the falsification of the measurements which are valid between man and man there occurs also the falsification of the measurement that is valid between God and man: Lev 19.35; Deut 25.13f.; Mic 6.10–11; Hos 12.8.

[5] This is seen in God's astonishing, sovereignly carefree statement that he has not only 'brought up' Israel (from Egypt), but has also brought up the

the one to the other (5.8). This God calls to Israel, whose 'time has come' (8.2): 'Prepare to meet your God' (4.12) in a 'dark night' (5.20).[6] In this night, there will be 'a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord . . . but they shall not find it' (8.11–12).

In *Hosea*, who prophesies a decade later, we find initially the same certainty that God, and God alone, will deal with Israel. 'I will be like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will rend and go away, I will carry off, and none shall rescue' (5.14). He will punish the faithless wife, 'and no one shall rescue her out of my hand' (2.10). 'So I will be to them like a lion, like a leopard I will lurk beside the way. I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will tear open their breast . . .' (13.7–8). But already in these words we can sense that something completely new is beginning to surface in Hosea. Israel's falling away from the God of the covenant to the Canaanite fertility gods and their rituals was literally a sinking down to a cultically justified fornication. When the people 'departs' from Yahweh to 'go whoring' (4.12; 9.1), this ends in the drastic situation in which sexuality becomes central, a situation that shows the depth of the abandoned and desecrated covenant in a completely new light. And although the first sin of this kind is to be dated back in the scene in Baal-Peor on the edge of the wilderness (Num 25.1–5), it is only here that the unheard-of consequences are seen, when God takes hold of the sexual dimension of his prophet Hosea in order to portray himself therein in his supra-sexual relationship to Israel. God embraces the sphere of male and female gift of self in the flesh, in order to make use of it as an instrument of revelation on the basis of the total obedience of the prophet—the exact opposite

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Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir (9.7). Thus, he does not need Israel's sacrifices either: he is weary of them (5.21–25).

[6] The people 'yearn for the day of the Lord', since they hold that God will appear as a warrior, like one of the mythical gods, and vanquish their enemies for them. They have not yet understood that they themselves are the enemy, and that therefore the day of the Lord will be 'dark, without any light' for them (5.18–20).

of what the people had done by 'going off whoring'. Two actions are prescribed: first, the prophet must marry a 'harlot'[7] and have 'children of harlotry' with her, whose names make it clear that they do not belong to Yahweh. Later, Hosea must act out an analogous parable: '"Go again, love a woman who is beloved of a paramour and is an adulteress; even as the Lord loves the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods . . ." So I bought her[8] for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley. And I said to her, "You must dwell with me here for many days; you shall not play the harlot, or belong to another man; nor will I come to you"' (3.1–3), for it is thus that God wishes to have his relationship to the people embodied. In both cases, Hosea's sexual conduct is determined by obedience to God and by renunciation: both in the exercise of his marital rights, which humbles him, and in the non-exercise of the marital relationship. His love and the form which this takes in each case are prescribed for him, and his obedience makes it possible for a bridge to be built where this had seemed impossible: the Canaanite emphasis on sexuality is integrated into an entire scheme which utterly supersedes it, and thus God's relationship to the people is disclosed—for the first time in the history of Israel—as love, burning and tender love, because this love appears in the deepest humilation. Through this, with disconcerting suddenness, we are given a proleptic view of the final act of the drama: that which is divine in God, his glory, becomes understandable as love, so that everything that God (in the image of the prophet) will undertake *vis-à-vis* his people—including the most terrible measures—is necessarily set under the sign of love. Israel's prophecy will never again be able to deny this breakthrough of Hosea: with it, the transcending of the old covenant into a new and definitive form, and *a fortiori* the transcending of every form of myth in the attainment of the revelation of the divine love[9] is a *fait accompli*. Hosea is so overwhelmed by this disclosure of the humiliated love of God that he is very far from being able to conceive of attributing to it the traditional splendour of the *kabod*. He says only that Israel will see its 'glory' flying away because of its fornication (9.11), and also that the calf of Beth-aven (=house of iniquity, instead of Beth-El=house of God), which was the object of idolatrous worship, will lose its 'glory' since it will soon be carried off to Assyria together with those who live there (10.5).

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[7] We can leave aside here the question of whether Gomer was a harlot in the usual sense of this word, or had only offered her virginity to other men in the sacred precincts in accordance with the Canaanite fertility ritual; but H. W. Wolff, *Dodekapropheten*, I, *Hosea* (BK XIV/1, 1961, p. 14), who decides in favour of the latter interpretation, is correct to emphasise in this case that 'The woman whom the prophet is to marry is thus precisely no wicked exception, but represents contemporary Israel'. The children whom Hosea must procreate with her are called 'children of harlotry' 'because the mother wanted to achieve her fertility in marriage by means of a rite that is foreign to Yahweh, a rite that is harlotry according to the judgment of Yahweh' (*ibid.*, p. 15). But Gomer need not have been a professional hierodule (temple prostitute). Naturally, the theological significance of the symbolic action is increased if we accept a cultic context for the fornication of the woman.

[8] Not the same woman as in ch. 1, since the second woman is explicity called an adulteress.

Everything begins with God's statement—concerning Hosea's first act of obedience—that 'the land commits great harlotry by forsaking the Lord . . . You are not my people and I am not your God' (1.2, 9). This is the situation: the covenant has been *de facto* dismissed and dissolved. The people no longer knows who God is; they have lost the 'knowledge of God',[10] and the chief guilt for this belongs to the priests who have themselves fallen prey to fornication and have taken the people with them, causing the great 'forgetting' (4.6; *cf.* 2.15; 8.14; 13.4–6). The people has 'abandoned' God (4.10) and 'rebelled' against him (7.13; 8.1); they have 'fled' from him (7.13) and 'turned to others' (3.1), 'letting themselves be initiated into shame' (9.10); thus God too has 'withdrawn' and, if one were to seek him, he would not be there (5.6). The people has 'spurned' him (8.3), and so he too will 'spurn' them and 'depart from them' (9.12).

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[9] H. Braun, 'Der Fahrende', *ZThK* 48 (1951), pp. 32–38, emphasises the incomparability of Hosea and Oedipus, despite all external similarities.

[10] Certainly this is a knowledge due chiefly to the living tradition of salvation history (H. W. Wolff, 'Wissen um Gott bei Hosea als Urform von Theologie', 1953, now in: *Ges. Stud.*, Theol. Bücherei 22, 1964, pp. 182–205), but in such a way that the living memory of the grace received (in the occupation of the land and in the fact that Israel was permitted to dwell in the land) was transformed into ever new 'experience'.

But while this is revealed and openly proclaimed by Hosea's first symbolic act, God's relationship to Israel secretly moves to take up a position under the second symbolic action, the weaning of the adulteress from her ways. The mythical fertility mysteries to which she hands herself over are vain infertility: 'no birth, no pregnancy, no conception!' (9.11). And precisely this barrenness will itself be an act of love that heals her in a hidden manner: 'Give them, O Lord—what wilt thou give? Give them an infertile womb and dry breasts!' (9.14). 'The wind of the Lord shall come, rising from the wilderness: and his fountain shall dry up, his spring shall be parched' (13.15; *cf.* 9.16). Thus the fertile land, the perceptible sign of the covenant, will be dissolved backwards into a wilderness that bears no fruit—precisely the wilderness out of which Israel came to begin with. This is God's judgment: '. . . I will strip her' (the unfaithul one) 'naked and make her as in the day she was born, and make her like a wilderness, and set her like a parched land, and slay her with thirst' (2.3). Many paths converge in the key word 'wilderness', which is the second focal point of Hosea's ellipse. The 'wilderness', with which 'Egypt' is linked, is the place out of which Israel was chosen. 'Egypt', alongside Assyria, is the superpower with which Israel is consorting politically today, so that it is literally flirting with the place where it was *not* chosen. And when God in judgment promises Israel that it will 'return to Egypt' (8.13; 9.3; 9.6, 11.5), he thereby declares that salvation history is at an end. The produce of the land, 'grain and wine and oil' (2.11), which has been squandered on foreigners, is taken back by God to himself, so that the land is desolate and automatically reverts to the wilderness, quite apart from the deportation which is shortly to take place. The 'zero situation'[11] is established once again. But 'wilderness' also means something quite different for Hosea: the origin of the love between God and his people, as yet prescinding from all work and reward. 'When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son . . . it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of compassion, with the bands of love, and I became to them as one who lifts a child up to embrace it; and I bent down to it and fed it' (10.1–4). 'Like grapes in the wilderness, I found Israel' (9.10), 'Israel was a luxuriant vine' (10.1). And so the God who judges reveals his plan, indeed virtually blurts it out incautiously: 'Therefore, behold, I will allure her' (the harlot), 'and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her . . . And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt' (2.16–17). In the aspect of judgment, this undoubtedly means a total stripping (2.5) which goes to the point of shameful nakedness (2.12): 'I will hedge up her way with thorns; and I will build a wall against her, so that she cannot find her paths. She shall pursue her lovers, but not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them' (2.6–7), and this will be the inherent end of her deeds: 'her deeds have encompassed her' (7.2). But in the aspect of love, this means that she is weaned from the interior 'spirit of prostitution' (4.12; 5.4) so that she becomes accustomed to something else, but only through a search in a void: 'they shall go to seek Yahweh, but they will not find him; he has withdrawn from them' (5.6). This is the 'nothing' of the Bible—oscillating between shameful judgment and love of election—a higher midpoint between the Indian nirvana and the *nada* of St John of the Cross. It is the oscillation between the final point of 'departure to practise harlotry' (9.1) and the initial point of 'coming in trembling' (3.5), 'coming with quaking' (11.11) to God. Here there is no anticipated grasping at a re-appearance of God, who 'comes back as surely as the dawn' (6.3); Yahweh is no Osiris or Tammuz or Baal,[12] who return with regularity or who can be brought up with ritual lamentations and prescribed sacrifices. It is into this situation that the word is spoken: 'For I desire steadfast love' (i.e., faithfulness to the covenant), 'and not sacrifice' (6.6). Hosea sharply criticises the patriarch Jacob, who secured election for himself surreptitiously in his mother's womb and presumed to struggle with God (12.3–5), and did service for a foreign woman (12.13): it is necessary to go behind even the period of the patriarchs into an emptiness which is nevertheless the place of the prophetic word and of the encounter with God in every specific today (12.10–11).

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[11] Wolff, *Hosea* (n. 7 above), p. 78.

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[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 127, 147, 151.

From this point, the promises of a new, a definitely faithful love between 'I' and 'thou' flow out in a great torrent: 'I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness (*sedaka*) and in justice (*mishpat*), in steadfast love (*chesed*), and in mercy (*rechem*). I will betroth you to me in faithfulness (*emuna*); and you shall know Yahweh' (2.19–20). And following on this rightness (*justice*) between God and man will come the great parallel answers (*justesse*):[13] 'in that day . . . I will answer the heavens and they shall answer the earth; and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine and the oil, and they shall answer' (the fertile land of) 'Jezreel' (2.21–22).[14]

Thanks to the mediating obedience of the prophet in the most intimate sphere of human life, there occurs in Hosea a disclosure of the heart of God which is new and unheard-of when compared with all that has gone before. In pure obedience, Hosea overcomes *ab intra* the world of the mythical deities which has fallen prey to sexuality, and is able, precisely through this, to bring to light the love of God which is supra-sexual. 'God *suffers* under Israel's false love-affairs';[15] he cannot bear them, and we see him as it were wavering between mercy on the guilty wife and the necessity of punishing her ruthlessly. 'What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?' (6.4). It is love that wins the day: 'How can I give you up, O Ephraim! . . . My heart recoils within me, my compassion grows warm and tender. I will not execute my fierce anger, I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am *God* and not man, the Holy One in your midst' (11.8–9). Although the word is not used, it is the ***kabod*** of Yahweh that reveals itself in a new, incomprehensible depth as the love that lies beyond wrath and has to do with God's being God, with his absoluteness. But this unattainably transcendent element is at the same time profaned by human beings in the world and humiliated by them, since its love carries it to the point of defencelessness. The adulteress is purchased 'for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley' (3.2), so that she may sit still beside the Lord once more. And he 'allures her seductively' (2.16) so that he may speak to her heart. Hosea is commanded to 'love' this woman: this is the word that expresses the love between man and woman (*'hb*), with the difference that in him it is selflessly helpful while in her it is lascivious and full of desire. Hosea's message meets with no greater acceptance than that of the major literary prophets: 'The prophet is a fool! The man of the spirit is mad!' (9.7); he is expelled from the land. Even in this fate, he declares something of the 'foolish' God's love (1 Cor 1) as he runs after a faithless harlot. God has begun to do something here that will not come to a stop until Golgotha.

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[13] *Cf.* vol. III of this work, pp. 465ff., 512ff., *cf.* pp. 233ff.

[14] The eschatological correspondence appears in Hosea, with inherent logic, above all under the image of fertility. The fatal fertility of the beginnings (10.1–4) changes at the last into a paradisal fertility without danger, with the presupposition that Israel now grasps that 'you bear fruit thanks to me' (14.9).

[15] Wolff, *Hosea* (n. 7 above), p. 53.

4. ISAIAH

Just as Isaiah represents the very summit of Old Testament prophecy, so too his vision of the glory of God at his call stands in a dominant mid-point between the glory of Sinai (and of the temple) at the beginning of the history of the people and the eschatological glory which was expected at the end of this history. Just as his whole work summarises the tradition and carries it forward without any rupture,[1] interpreting it beforehand in terms of the messianic future, and has a particularly weighty significance for the present moment in which he writes, so too his vision of glory, without explicitly mentioning this, binds together the various historical periods in the present moment.[2] It is a vision of what cannot be seen: the one who 'sits on a high and lofty throne' now fills the whole of the temple with his train: the space in which Isaiah stands is broken open in an unimaginable manner; in the heights fly the seraphim with their tireless cry of 'Holy!', and they in their turn make everything that is drawn together in the temple shake and break open; in that unapproachable height is God, the holy one, at rest in his absoluteness, separated from all the world, a glory so all-consuming that it remains inaccessible even for beings of fire, who must veil themselves in its presence—and yet what they have to say to one another cannot be anything else than the incessant utterance of what cannot be uttered. But while God's train fills the temple, which is his place on earth, the 'stool for his feet' (Ps 99.5), 'his *kabod* fills the whole earth' (Is 6.3) and is thus precisely *not* restricted to the temple and the holy land, although this is without any doubt the place from which it radiates forth and the place where it at once conceals itself again in 'smoke' (6.4). Nothing at all is said about what this *kabod* of the most holy God is: certainly it is a primal presence of the dignity and weightiness of his holiness, which permits itself to be perceived and establishes its authority, but in a visibility that can be grasped by the 'earth' which is God's work and which opens up to the earth in an elemental way in the infinite contradiction: 'Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people with unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, Yahweh Sabaoth!' (6.5).

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[1] The commentary by Otto Kaiser in ATD 17 aims to show this.

[2] Precisely in the case of this vision, one should keep most strictly to the consciously brief account given by the prophet and refrain from looking for analogies that may be discovered in contemporary literature and art (thus especially I. Engnell, *The Call of Isaiah*, 1944). For who will say to what extent God, when he reveals himself, takes up one or another motif which is familiar to man (though undoubtedly with the intention of breaking through its limitations at once), or to what extent the prophet on his part takes up images and concepts which are familiar to his hearers, in order to make comprehensible, at least in some measure, something that is unique and scarcely capable of expression?

It would be beautiful—but it remains unlikely—if Isaiah himself had linked the glory of God which he saw backwards to Sinai and forwards to the eschatological glory: 'When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning, then the Lord will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy and a pavilion. It will be for a shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain' (4.4–6).[3] But the image is probably too elaborate to be attributable to the master of the great and strict form.

The vision communicates to the seer an ineradicable knowledge of the utter exaltation of the holy God. He repeatedly calls God, with emphasis, the 'holy one of Israel',[4] in order to remind the people of its incomprehensible privilege. This is the God before whom everything must bow, so that he alone may always be exalted higher (2.11, 17). From this height, he contemplates what happens on earth: 'I will quietly look from my dwelling, like clear heat in sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest' (18.4). But the prophet's vision was only the starting-point of his mission: it was not an end in itself, but served to point his commission in the right direction. His deep horror at his own sinfulness has already opened up the fissure which is the first thing that must become visible before salvation can come. The lips of the stained man are touched by the seraph with the burning coal: 'Behold, your sin is taken away, and your guilt is forgiven' (6.7). And before he can reflect on the consequences of this event, he hears, as one who has been admitted to the royal council of God, the voice of the Lord: 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' 'Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."' He has just experienced his solidarity with the impure people: now, in an obedience which is antecedent to all reflection, he is the man who apprehends what God wills and needs, in highest freedom, because he must do this and nothing else comes into question.[5] Thus, after a moment of apparent discontinuity, the solidarity of the one who is sent with the 'impure people' is re-established, but now from above, in the commission which is given. Isaiah will suffer this to the full and will also express it in his refined way, on occasion,[6] although it does not become a major theme for him as it does for Jeremiah. He is a pure instrument of transmission for God's activity.

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[3] *Cf.* in the 'Isaian Apocalypse' 24.4. There we find also the reminiscence of the appearing of the glory of God 'in the presence of his elders' (Ex 24.9f., (16f.), which however is now transferred from Horeb to the 'mountain of Zion in Jerusalem'.

[4] 1.4; 5.19, 24; 10.17, 20; 12.6; 17.7; 29.19, 23; 30.11–12; 31.1; 37.13.

The commission on which he is sent has 'hardening' as its direct aim: 'Go, and say to this people: "Hear and hear, but do not understand; see and see, but do not perceive," Make the heart of this people fat' . . . 'Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And he said, "Until cities lie waste and without inhabitant . . . and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land"' (6.9–12). A hardening of the heart, therefore, with a 'time limit': a mission to dismantle until there is a great emptiness—the wilderness of Hosea—which is the only place in which the glory of the Lord can arise. And a hardening of the heart, so that there is no possibility of making connections too early, out of a misunderstanding: this is why the Lord, who cannot be separated from his glory, appears first in an 'utterly strange' form (28.21) that corresponds to the sinful state of Israel, and 'will again do marvellous things with this people, wonderful and marvellous' until at last 'the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hid' (29.14). The aim which is laid down at the outset ('how long?') is of decisive importance for the many discourses about judgment which the prophet makes: he is to humble everything that rises up in rebellion and exalts itself, until the sublimity of God has become inescapably evident through his act of judgment, and the glory can emerge as present salvation from its disguise in the 'terrors of majesty'. In Isaiah, this salvation always appears very concretely immediately in the wake of the 'emptiness' that has been attained: it is a salvation that is certainly intra-historical, near at hand in a messianic sense, attainable, following on the judgment as its *telos* and not separated from the judgment by any pause. 'Yahweh Sabaoth is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness' (5.16).

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[5] G. von Rad has pointed out this highest freedom of the prophet, who here gives full expression to the concept of the ego—for the first time in world history: *ThOT*, Vol. II, pp. 70–79.

[6] E.g. 22.4.

The radicalness with which the entire private sphere of the prophet on earth is laid hold of by God corresponds to the radicalness with which he was laid claim to before the throne of God. Isaiah is expropriated for his mission in his marital life—in a manner that is less dramatic than in the case of Hosea, but no less fundamentally. How else would he have come to give his first son a name with such a nakedly clear reference to salvation history as Shear-jashub ('a remnant shall return')? It is only within the living tradition of Hosea that such a name can have been given, either by a direct instruction from God or by a certain deduction on the part of the prophet that this was what God wanted. Isaiah, bearing the directive of God, goes out to meet Ahaz accompanied by this boy who has become the embodiment of the prophecy (7.3f.). The second prophecy, concerning the destruction of Damascus and Samaria, is first written down in a document in the presence of trustworthy witnesses at God's command:

'The spoil speeds, the prey hastes', but this does not suffice, for the same prophecy must become flesh. Isaiah had drawn near to his wife, the 'prophetess'—a term that doubtless indicates that the marital relationship of both has become a function of the prophetic mission—and when she is to give birth, the prophet is told to give the boy the name 'The spoil speeds, the prey hastes' (Maher-shalal-hashbaz): thus, he too becomes an embodied word of God and a living testimony along with the 'written' document. And as in the case of this boy, the first babbling of the names of father and mother becomes a fixed date of salvation history (8.4), so in the case of the young woman who is to bear a child, the attaining of the age of discernment by the boy 'God with us' becomes a fixed day in salvation history (7.13f.). Man, woman, child, the periods of human growth: all directly serve the word of God as its vessel. And whether a prophet is to serve Israel as a sign in celibacy (like Jeremiah later on) or, like Isaiah, 'together with his children' (8.18), is unimportant, for every possibility of human existence can be employed for revelation.

A short time after the vision in which Isaiah receives his calling, there sounds forth the song of the 'Day of the Lord' (2.6–22 and 5.15–16)[7] with the threefold refrain: 'Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from before the terror (*pachad*) of Yahweh and from the glory of his majesty (*hadar*), when he rises to terrify the earth'. The one theme that, with all its variations, is played out is that everything in the world that rises up and climbs on high, everything that towers aloft and thinks highly of itself, will bow down, sink and be humbled, until God 'is exalted' (5.16) and compels adoration for himself alone against all the idols of man. The linking of 'terror' and 'majesty' shows that the *kabod* has the form of judgment. In the song about Yahweh as a 'snare' (8.11–15), God takes the prophet himself by the hand in order to draw him away from the path of the people: he is not to fear what the people fears, but God himself is to 'be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he will become a sanctuary, and a stone of offence, and a rock of stumbling . . . a trap and a snare . . . and many shall stumble thereon; they shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken'. This is because the 'speech and the deeds' of the people 'are against the Lord, defying his glorious presence' (3.8). 'They draw near with their mouth and honour me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me' (29.13); they 'hide' themselves from Yahweh (29.15), they 'say to the seers, "See not", and to the prophets, "Prophesy not to us what is right"' (30.10), and thus they 'bring evil upon themselves' (3.9). This is why they must wither away (1.30; 19.6–7; 33.9); indeed, God is forced to uproot his own vine and let it wither (5.5–6) and to drive the one who errs into 'darkness and terror', where he 'sees only night' (8.21–22). At the end of his ministry, the prophet must admit that he has no idea what further blows could be inflicted on Israel: 'From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and bleeding wounds; they are not pressed out, or bound up, or softened with oil' (1.5–6), and yet despite all this—as he confides to his testament, in exact correspondence to the original command to harden their hearts—they are 'sons who do not wish to listen' (30.9), for they think they know better. Already after his first failures with Ahaz, the prophet learns that Israel divides itself into a great majority from whom God hides his face and the small group of the faithful, the prophet and his disciples, his 'children', who set their hope precisely on this God who veils himself.

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[7] The vision is in the year 740, the song of judgment between 738 and 735.

> Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my
>   disciples.
> I will wait for Yahweh, who is hiding his face from
>   the house of Jacob,
> and I will hope in him.
> Behold, I and the children whom Yahweh has given
>   me are signs and portents in Israel
> from Yahweh Sabaoth, who dwells on Mount
>   Zion (8.16–18).

They portray and signify no other conduct in life than that which would be possible for all in the people, even for the leaders, even for the king. They embody no other ethics than that which ought also to be the basis of politics. It is the ethics of the one who allows himself to be humbled by God and, standing before him in littleness, has the ability to perceive the directives that come from God's sublimity. The one who does not twist the good into evil and the evil into good, who does not call the bitter sweet and the sweet bitter (5.20), the one who helps God's righteousness to be established by protecting the poor and the one who has no rights[8] (3.14; 10.2; 11.4; [32.8]). The entire purification of Israel in the crucible aims at the establishing of this divine justice (1.25–27).

But the only one who is able to hear God's directive—this is Isaiah's particular message—is the one who has the inner stillness that allows him to give the word a place within himself, and to grant it at the least an importance greater than that of all of his own opinions which rush ahead on their own: 'the one who trusts will not wish to rush anything' (28.16 in Buber's translation). A lack of faith presses forward: 'Let him make haste, let him speed his work, that we may see it; let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near, and let it come, that we may know it!' (5.19): i.e., God is to accommodate himself to the tempo of human beings. Against this, the testament says in conclusion: 'For thus has my Lord spoken, Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel: in returning and rest you will be set free, in quietness, in composure will your heroism take place. But you do not wish this' (30.15 in Buber's translation). The clay figure ought to lie open and quiet in the hand of its potter (29.15–16), and man ought to 'pay attention' and 'look to "the potter", God' (22.11).[9] But precisely the opposite happens: 'they do not regard the works of Yahweh' (5.12). They 'carry out a plan, which is not mine' (30.1). They 'rely on horses, and trust in chariots because they are many . . . but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult Yahweh!' (31.1). They are afraid of political conspiracies, but: 'do not call conspiracy all that this people call conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But Yahweh Sabaoth, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread' (8.12–13). Therefore, in the decisive moment when the only political solution against the armaments of Damascus and Samaria seems to be to take refuge in Assyria, God tells Ahaz: 'If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established' (7.9).

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[8] Invective against the big landowners: 5.8–10.

[9] The post-Isaian verse 17.7 is similar.

Should one say that prophecy meddles here without authority in political matters and demands an absolute, blind obedience where a king ought to reflect well and take his own decisions? Is this perhaps a late, decadent form of what was 'holy war on God's behalf' in the naively sacral early period of Israel, a form that can no longer be made plausible?[10] No, for Israel has only one 'king, Yahweh Sabaoth' (6.5), and even the kings of the people must be his obedient sons; and as yet the Spirit incarnates himself in individual prophets for individual directives, before he goes over to the people as a whole in the new covenant in keeping with Joel's prophecy (Joel 3.1–2). The 'keeping still' and 'not rushing' the 'work of God' (Is 5.12, 19; 28.21; [29.23]) would be the way for Israel—in the position of perfect humility—to allow God's judgment to change into its salvation. At the end of his 'work' stands the newly-promised possession of the land:

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[10] G. von Rad (*Der heilige Krieg im alten Israel*, 2nd edn. (1952) has shown how the charismatic 'holy war' was an undertaking of God together with his people in the ancient period, and how the people ventured into the fight 'in the state of a primitive pan-sacralilty' but also in the knowledge of 'Yahweh's freedom and unpredictability', to such an extent 'that the idea of faith, i.e. the assured trust in Yahweh's action, had its true origin in the holy war' (p. 31)—but then he shows how in the 'post-Solomonic fictional literature' the holy war came for many reasons to be understood increasingly as a one-sided miracle worked by God and how this understanding was imported, with appropriate images, into the ancient narratives (where the people do virtually nothing more than 'look on': *cf.* Ex 14.13b–14.30)—and how ultimately, in prophecy, this scheme of the miraculous working of God alone and of the mere trustful keeping still on the part of the people continues in the word of God which lays down something of political import. When, therefore, Isaiah directs the king to be still, instead of taking direct action, he has undoubtedly 'put into effect' in this desperate situation 'the ancient regulations of the holy war . . . that one should let Yahweh act', but now precisely not in the original sense; rather, we see him 'pretty accurately representing the understanding that we find in variations in the later novelists'. 'On the other hand, the difference is clear: the one is telling a story, giving edifying instruction, while the other is a prophet who wishes to prepare the way for the miracle by calling the people to faith in a genuine situation of trouble' (pp. 57–58).

> If you are willing and obedient,
> you shall eat the good of the land;
> but if you refuse and rebel,
> you shall be devoured by the sword (1.19–20).

God will deal with Israel: so much is implied, too, in the promises of unconditional forgiveness of sins (1.18; 1.25), in keeping with which the prophet was purified (6.6); God's

One should also recall here that, even after the problematic separation of prophecy and kingship under Samuel (which was initially, and even subsequently, harmonised by the idea of the charismatic endowment of the king and the clearly political authorisation of the prophet), Israel had to remain conscious of its own nature as the chosen people with an immediate relationship to God (Deut 32.8) and thus led by the God-King, and also that the conflict of the year 753 in the Syro-Ephraimite war signified a borderline case or an exception, since there was always an aspect of political reasoning to be seen in the other political interventions of the prophets: the Israel of the period of the kings is no longer the Israel of the period of the judges, but is *de facto* hemmed in between expansionist superpowers. The nervous conspiracies of the small states of the area in their relationships with these superpowers were questionable from the very outset, and it could be an aspect of the faith which God was entitled to demand of the people that they accept the fact that, under the temporary hegemony of a superpower, 'being still' was more correct than a will to be autonomous at any price, since Israel's vocation lay elsewhere. The people understood much of this under Cyrus.

Finally, one must consider the recognisably political function of pre-Israelite prophets in some recently-found texts of the archive of letters at Mari (*c.* 1700 B.C.). 'In the great Isaiah . . . we are aware of vivid reminiscences of those prophets' (von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. II, p. 11), in a manner that goes beyond any form of 'fiction' which could mean that his demands would ultimately appear to be a misunderstanding. What he requires is—for the state which Israel had reached at that time—a genuine, politically-incarnate obedience which would have been able to demonstrate its inherent correctness through 'paying heed to Yahweh'—this is perfectly clear in Jeremiah's conflicts—and did not in the least need to be a mechanically-blind obedience.

decisions are irrevocable and no one can cancel them out (14.24–27). The new kingdom which God will set up stands clearly before the prophet's eyes: the kingdom with Israel's temple in its midst, from which Yahweh's instruction for all the peoples goes forth, and which, in turn, is willingly accepted (2.1–5). Under this lordship, the eyes of those who see and the ears of those who hear will be open, 'the mind of the rash will have good judgment, and the tongue of the stammerers will speak readily and distinctly' (32.1–4). The 'wonderful Counsellor' and 'prince of peace' will sit on David's throne (9.5) and will exercise justice and righteousness. The 'precious corner stone of the foundation' (28.16) will be set in place, and everything will be the work of God alone, but in a genuine (though now scarcely visible) continuity with the tree that was broken down: a 'stump' remains (6.13) and puts forth a fresh shoot (11.1). It does not matter that Isaiah in his vision leaps across the centuries; but it is important that the salvation which he sees is the wholly concrete end of the concrete judgment which is now taking place. It is not for nothing that the unknown prophet who shines as a light in the exile will pass over the whole development of the storms of destruction in Jeremiah and Ezekiel and incorporate what he has to say in the Book of Isaiah. For he will realise Isaiah's words, as no one else does, in his Servant Songs: 'I was not rebellious, I turned not backward' (50.5), 'dumb like a sheep under the hand of its shearers' (53.7).

5. JEREMIAH

Jeremiah comes from Anathoth, a tiny place outside the gates of Jerusalem which still belongs to Benjamin and thus to the northern kingdom; and the prophet begins, before Josiah's reform, with a proclamation that is completely permeated by Hosea. Later, after the 'discovery of the law' (621), he adopts the thinking of Deuteronomy, which likewise seems to come from the northern kingdom, until his own prophetic commission takes full hold of him and isolates him. In Hosea, the breakthrough occurs to a God who is near in a hitherto unknown, incomprehensible manner; in Jeremiah, this nearness becomes so oppressive and burdensome that almost the only aspect of it which is experienced is the incomprehensibility, which means a new, paradoxical distance: 'Am I only a God at hand, says Yahweh, and not also a God afar off?' (23.33). Jeremiah is attacked, taken hold of and inhabited by this incomprehensible Other who lays claim to him as a whole, down to the very marrow of his existence. It is not (as with Hosea) one piece of the intimate sphere of his life that he must make available to God, but everything: 'You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place' (16.2), i.e. a total virginity so that he can be utterly obedient to Yahweh, even with his body. He must share in God's withdrawal: 'Do not enter the house of mourning, or go to lament, or bemoan them; for I have taken away my peace from this people, says the Lord, my steadfast love and mercy . . . You shall not go into the house of feasting . . . Behold, I will make to cease from this place the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride' (16.5, 8–9). He is cut off from other people in loneliness. 'I did not sit in the company of merrymakers, nor did I rejoice; I sat alone, because thy hand was upon me, for thou hadst filled me with indignation' (15.17). He is a vessel for the divine feelings, which are foreign to him: 'I am full of the wrath of Yahweh, and I am weary of holding it in' (6.11). He must proclaim him, therefore, but this brings him only scorn and a new isolation: 'The word of the Lord has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name," there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot' (20.9). If we take into account also the message that the prophet must proclaim more and more unambiguously and inexorably—the national defence must be abandoned, they must capitulate before the king of Babylon who is first drawing close and then besieging Jerusalem, they must above all bid farewell to every false hope set on the temple, for this time God will not rescue it—a message with which the prophet will draw upon himself only the mortal enmity of 'all right-thinking people', hatred, persecution, imprisonment and assault—then we have without any doubt the picture of an excessive demand which was scarcely bearable in human terms.

The constellation in which Jeremiah is set can be resolved only christologically. No psychological resolution is possible, because the word that lays hold of him and exploits him is a word external to him; the will that drives him is the will of another who compels him to keep on saying, 'Let not my will be done', and to keep on doing and proclaiming precisely what he would like to avoid at all costs. He must sacrifice all his powers and all the circumstances of his life to this will. Indeed, he is already—thanks to his calling—to such an extent the one who has been laid hold of, that his own gift of self actually comes too late: he always limps on, trying to catch up with his own vocation. And here lies his problem: not only the problem of how he, Jeremiah, is to bear and live out such an existence, but the much deeper problem of the justification that the portrayal of his inner struggle can have within the Bible as a whole. In Amos, Hosea and Isaiah, man's silent obedience was the precondition for the pure appearing of God, indeed the appearing of the inner suffering and struggling of God. But in Jeremiah, it is a struggle *between* God and the prophet that comes into the forefront. Is this correct in terms of the history of revelation? Or would Baruch have done better to destroy the 'confessions' of his master? Is this tension meant to shed light on some christological aspect—or does it rather obscure this? Jeremiah is essentially *sad*, unlike any other of the prophets.

The glory of God is like the sinking of the sun, as the shadows lengthen. 'Give glory (*kabod*) to the Lord your God before he brings darkness, before your feet stumble on the twilight mountains' (13.16). 'Woe to us, for the day declines, for the shadows of evening lengthen!' (6.4). The approaching destruction is brought about by something unheard-of, something that never happens anywhere else in the history of the peoples: 'Has a nation changed its gods, even though they are no gods? But my people have changed their glory (*kabod*) for that which does not profit' (2.11;[1] *cf.* Hos 4.7; Rom 1.23). Israel, which itself was God's glory, praise and beauty (13.11) and has in itself the throne of his glory (14.21; 17.12), sees this glory as it were dissolving into darkness on the one hand and into a devouring fire on the other side. Jeremiah, who feels both darkness and fire in himself, is doubtless the first to experience a kind of *supratemporal* burden of the divine presence, of the actions and decisions of God. The realities of 'eternal, unquenchable fire' (4.4; 7.20; 21.11) and 'eternal love' (31.3; 33.11), 'eternal covenant' (32.40),[2] appear at the same time. This is linked to the fact that the prophet, when he was called, instead of seeing the glory as Isaiah had done, received the assurance that God had personally chosen him in his eternity, before he was formed in the womb of his mother, and consecrated him for his mission (1.5); his shrinking back, with the anxious objection that he cannot speak, has already been anticipated and overcome by the terms of his mission: 'I have put my words in your mouth . . . they will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you' (1.9, 19), and by the threatening prohibition: 'Do not be dismayed before them, lest I dismay you before them!' (1.17). He is constantly aware that something eternal is laid upon him, even in his first objection, 'I do not know how to speak' your word (1.6). It breaks him open: 'My anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain! Oh, the walls of my heart! My heart is beating wildly!' (4.19). 'Is not my word like fire, says Yahweh, and like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces?' (23.29). God's fire is to blaze in the prophet himself: 'I am making my words in your mouth a fire' (5.14); if he does not utter them, they burn him himself (20.9).[3] But naturally, he loves this terrible word; it is everything for him. He cannot call the word God's glory, so he calls it at least his present revealed state, his name: 'Thy words were found, and I ate them, and thy words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I am called by thy NAME, Yahweh, God of hosts!' (15.16).

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[1] *Cf.* 18.13–16.

[2] And independently of this text, after the exile: 50.5.

But this burden which is laid upon him utterly slays him. God opens the eyes of the credulous Jeremiah to the plots against him: 'I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. I did not know it was against me they devised schemes!' (11.19). This image becomes more and more serious as the prophet comes up tighter against a wall of obstinacy and unwillingness to learn when he proclaims his word. He must speak, but with the certainty that it is futile: 'So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you' (7.27). Indeed, worse than this is in store: although the prophet must represent the people before God, he is told beforehand that all intercession will be in vain: 'As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with me, for I do not hear you' (7.16; 11.14; 14.11). This means also that any concept of his suffering having a vicarious meaning on behalf of the people is excluded in advance. Everything must seem totally futile to him, whether he is put in the stocks (20.2), or the king burns his book (36.23), or he is suspected of being a defector (37.11–16), or imprisoned for a long time (37.16), or thrown into the muddy cistern (38.6), or finally, after the destruction of the city, is deported to Egypt against his will (43.7). He himself has only the word of Yahweh, which sounds impotently in his mouth, because he cannot prove what he says about the future and has at the moment no argument against the prophet of success, Hananiah, who breaks the symbolic yoke which Jeremiah has to bear on his shoulders (28.1–11).

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[3] Fire is repeatedly threatened and promised, much more extensively than in Amos and Hosea: 11.16; 15.4; 17.27; 21.14; 22.7; 48.45; 49.27; 50.32; 51.30, 58.

In this, the prophet has to stand at once in time and above time: in time, he must continue to offer a fresh chance, until finally king Zedekiah in his vacillation and uncertainty asks him for counsel—and there would still be the possibility of capitulation. But above time, he knows simultaneously that the chances have all been lost and that the final disaster cannot be averted. And so a great bitterness rises up in him: basically, his commission is no commission at all, but only something that humiliates him and deprives him of his dignity; God has 'tricked' him with this vocation. 'O Lord, thou hast deceived me', just as a girl is seduced, 'and I was deceived; thou art stronger than I, and thou hast prevailed' (20.7). 'Wilt thou be to me like a deceitful brook, like waters that fail? . . . Why is my pain unceasing, my wound incurable, refusing to be healed?' (15.18). It is as if they were engaged in a duel, as at Jabbok; as if in a dialogue between partners, and not simply a making space for God. In the three passages where God deigns to give a reply, we see that such a parleying was not foreseen in the original commission. In the first passage, Jeremiah has admitted at the outset that God 'has right on his side', but has then asked about the meaning of the injustice in the world. The reply is a question to the questioner:

> If you have raced with men on foot,
> and they have wearied you,
> how will you compete with horses?
> And if in a safe land you fall down,
> how will you do in the jungle of the Jordan? (12.5).

The second text is even more severe: God replies to the complaint about loneliness and hurt and to the accusation of deceit simply by calling back to the prophet:

> If you return, I will restore you,
> and you will stand before me.
> If you utter what is precious, and not what is
>   worthless,
> you shall be (once again) as my mouth (15.19).

And then God adds once more the words of promise of the original mission: although people will fight against the prophet, they will not overcome him.

The third reply is made to Baruch, who has likewise complained to God. 'Thus says Yahweh: Behold, what I have built I am breaking down . . . that is, the whole land. And do you seek great things for yourself? . . . I will give you your (naked) life as a prize of war in all places to which you may go' (45.4–5).

Does not the instrument of God become himself excessively the central theme everywhere here, so that the transmission of *God's* emotions suffers under this?

Nevertheless, Jeremiah gave forth mighty notes as the Aeolian harp struck by God's stormwind. Having developed Hosea's themes in his like-minded song at the beginning (2.1–4.4), he is caught up into the incomprehensible great wind of destruction which he senses approaching; he sees beforehand, in visions of undoubted authenticity, the desolations which this will bring, and sings of them in a terrible song-cycle.[4] He ends with the summons to Zion to roll in the dust and to strike up a threnody as for an only-begotten son (6.26)—a theme that had already been taken up by Amos (8.10) and which resounds again significantly in the last prophecy (Zech 12.10). The great burning wind of destruction, 'a wind full of menace' (4.12), changes everything anew to wilderness,[5] but the hidden intention of God to teach, as in Hosea, cannot be seen here. It is the wilderness of God: God dries everything up, because he found no grape on the vine, no fig on the fig-tree (8.13); God turns his back (18.17), because the people has shown its back to him first (2.27). God departs: 'I have forsaken my house, I have abandoned my heritage . . . they have made it a desolation' (12.7, 11). 'I am weary of relenting' (15.6). Through their sins, the sinners have reached a point beyond mercy (16.13); for 'all faithfulness has perished' (7.28). 'The Lord has rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath' (7.29). 'I will dash them one against another, fathers and sons together. I will not pity or spare or have compassion, that I should not destroy them' (13.14). The prophet must smash a potter's flask symbolically before invited spectators and comment: 'Thus says Yahweh Sabaoth: So will I break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel, so that it can never be mended' (19.11). And God shows the prophet in the potter's house how one reworks a spoiled vessel on the potter's wheel, in order to make something else out of it (18.4–6). The end is the unburied corpse, the public putrefaction lying on the fields (8.2; 9.21; 16.4; 22.19; 25.33; 36.30), the poisoned water (8.14; 9.14; 23.15).

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[4] 4.5–8; 4.9–12; 4.13–18; 4.19–22; 4.23–31; 5.1–6; 5.7–11; 5.12–17; 5.26–31; 6.1–8; 6.9–15; 6.16–21; 6.22–26.

[5] 4.11–12; 4.26; 6.8; 7.34; 9.1; 9.11; 10.22; 12.11; 18.16; 19.8; 22.6; 25.38; 33.10, 12; 44, 22; 46.19; 49.33; 50.3; 50.12; 50.40; 51.26, 29; 51.43.

What is transparent in Hosea, and will once more be transparent in Ezekiel—the fact that God's glory, indeed his love, blazes in the midst of his consuming fire—remains obscured in Jeremiah, for it is precisely at this point that the prophet's own lamentation rises on high. Thus his prophecies of salvation retain something that is oddly uncommunicated. Of course, one sees that although God turns his back, he 'attends' (23.2) very precisely to the people that is to be punished and follows all its paths, even to its exile, with his eyes (16.17; 44.11,27); but one does not sense a hidden love therein. The bridge between judgment and love passes through the prophet's heart and is secretly built where he knows that his whole struggle against God within time is overtaken by the grace of his mission before and above time: where his rebellious, bitter heart has acknowledged from the outset that God is in the right (12.1), where the 'God of terror' (17.17) whom his imagination portrays to him has always been perceived to be in reality the God of mercy, where the artificial ignorance of God which he imposes on himself is always based in a knowledge of God that is not to be clouded. This is the source of the promises that are sketched out: above all, the 'new heart' which God himself will give, so that they may 'know that I am the Lord . . . for they shall return to me with their whole heart' (24.7); 'one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever' (32.39). This process penetrates the interior: 'I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts' (31.33), in that abyss in man which is accessible only to God and which can be interrogated only by God (17.9–10; 8.6a); then no external instruction about God will be necessary any longer, for 'they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest'. And this is because 'I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more' (31.34). And since the old covenant is broken and the shattered vessel can no more be mended, this grace which is bestowed on what is interior in man will have to be called the 'new covenant' (31.31), and then, since this forgiving grace (50.20) comes from the supratemporal dimension in which the mission of the prophet was rooted, it will be an 'eternal covenant' (32.40; 50.5).

The saga links this wholly spiritual promise of the prophet with a parable-like action which he is said to have carried out on his last flight to Egypt: he had the holy tent, the ark of the covenant, and the altar of incense dismantled, found a cave on Mount Nebo, placed the holy vessels there and closed the entrance; those who accompanied him could not find the entrance again, when they looked for it. But Jeremiah reproached them: 'The place shall be unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows his mercy . . . and the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear, as they were shown in the case of Moses, and as Solomon asked that the place should be specially consecrated' (2 Macc 2.1–8).

6. EZEKIEL

The same event that takes place in Jeremiah's quivering heart under the aspect of subjectivity occurs in the priest-prophet Ezekiel under the aspect of the objectivity of purely sacral ministry: this permits the glory of God to become once more the chief reality that makes itself visible in the existence of the prophet, which is expropriated for God's service; this only intensifies the subjective dramatic quality, both because the servant's responsibility is emphasised much more explicitly (3.16f.; 33.1–9) and because the dimensions of the divine invade the dimensions of the servant with less consideration, to the point of breaking through the ultimate boundary, and thus the harshnesses of the commission appear to be intensified beyond all human attempts at moderation.

Ezekiel's theophany of glory is the greatest and most detailed of the Bible; it is no wonder that the curiosity of religious gnosticism in the late period was strongly attached to this book and, in the form of Merkabah mysticism, became a preliminary stage to the Kabbalah.[1] 'By the river Chebar the heavens were opened' (1.1)—this phrase stands alone in the Old Testament, for it 'goes far beyond the opening of the windows of heaven, mentioned elsewhere, so that the gifts of heaven can be bestowed', 'it has true parallels only in the New Testament' (Rev 4.1; Acts 7.56).[2] In terms of event, the only thing comparable would be Elijah's assumption to heaven with a vehicle of fire and whirlwinds, but the event here is the opposite of this: here, it is the glory of heaven that storms down from the open heaven. And in exact contradistinction to Isaiah's sublime, static vision of the glory of God in and above the temple on Zion, it appears before Ezekiel, incomprehensibly, in the impure land of exile, and with a clear character of judgment which refers backwards, more clearly than the glory which Isaiah saw, to the mysterious and terrifying phenomena of the exodus.

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[1] Gershom Scholem, 'Merkabah Mysticism and Jewish Gnosticism' in; *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (1961), pp. 40–79; 355–369.

[2] Walter Eichrodt, *Der Prophet Ezechiel*, ATD (1959 and 1966), p. 5.

'As I looked, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, and a great cloud, and fire flashing forth continually, and in the midst of the fire, as it were gleaming bronze. And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the form of men, but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet sparkled like burnished bronze. Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man in front; the four had the face of a lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle at the back. And their wings were spread out above; each creature had two wings, each of which touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies. And each went straight forward; wherever the spirit would go, they went, without turning as they went. In the midst of the living creatures there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches moving to and fro among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. Over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of a firmament, shining like crystal . . . and above there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness as it were of a human form. And upward from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were the appearance of gleaming bronze; and downwards from what had the appearance of his loins I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about him. Like the appearance of the bow in the cloud on a day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. Such was the appearance of the likeness of Yahweh. And when I saw it, I fell on my face' (1.4–28).[3]

All this is only a manifestation, without a single word; it is only in the next verse that Ezekiel, who has sunk to the ground, is addressed. It is, then, an 'open heaven' with a vitality and a differentiation that goes far beyond Isaiah. The three seraphim which sing praises as they fly are replaced by four cherubim, each with four faces: and this twelvefold character is closer to the world of human beings, while at the same time it is red-hot with the Spirit of God who drives it on always to something new, something that lies in the future; there is never any turning back to what has been in the past. Each is driven on individually, but is in contact with the others through the tips of its wings; each is a personified mission, like the mission that the prophet will have to accept: the unity of highest spontaneity and highest availability to the Spirit of God, and all the space between them and within them is filled with the fire of God which is alive and throbs as it emits lightning-flashes. All of this is the base on which rests the firmament with the throne, and the invisible God sits upon this—for the first time!—in a form comparable to the human form, which makes clear the mysterious 'form' of Yahweh which Moses (while not seeing the face: Ex 33.20) had seen (Num 12.8). And this 'form' of God is differentiated into a form 'upwards' and a form 'downwards' (in the direction of the world) and a rainbow light that flows around everything.

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[3] The text as reconstructed by Eichrodt, omitting the glosses and the description of the 'wheels' that accompany the four living creatures, which has been taken over from the second vision of *kabod* in Jerusalem (ch. 10) and worked into the first vision.

When visions of such impact and strangeness, which fall on the seer with the vehemence of the 'wholly other', are described, it is wholly misguided to suppose that the seer has pasted the individual elements together from some motifs or other which were well-known at that period.[4] The very repetition by Ezekiel in this passage of 'as it were', with its rejection of any inner-worldly univocal character, shows clearly that we have no interlacing of images from his memory here, but something that surpasses all normal dimensions and imposes itself with sovereign force from above. Here, Sinai becomes present in a new form: in the unity of the darkness of the cloud and of the lightning-flashes and flames that break forth from its midst. But while at Sinai there was a vertical descent of Yahweh (Ex 19.20), here it is a driving storm from the north, whence invasion and catastrophe customarily come: it is explicitly the glory that arrives for judgment, glory that becomes judgment through its 'mobility', because it is not bound to the holiest place, the temple on Zion, but is able to leave it (as once in the past the glory passed from the ark to the foe: 1 Sam 3–6; Ps 78.61), as it does in fact do demonstratively, taking off eastwards before the prophet's very eyes: 10.19 = 11.22–23. This glory will become judgment in a yet more terrible way, because one of the seven angels of destruction will fetch from the midst of its flames the burning coals with which Jerusalem is to be burned: 9.1–10.2,7. Both events are linked in the second great complex of visions, chs. 8–11.

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[4] Eichrodt must ultimately admit that: 'Ezekiel himself clearly felt more strongly what distinguished his vision from the Old Testament world of images than what these had in common'. But he had previously spoken of a 'spontaneous coming to life of a familiar world of images'—a phrase that is very mild when compared to other evaluations—and had pointed to the well-known Phoenician thrones of Astarte, with their seat borne by two winged beings on the right and the left, and to an ancient Babylonian statue in bronze of a god with four human (!) faces; he finds a source of the wheels and the throne chariot in a portable framework in the temple at Jerusalem for the ark when this was carried in processions (pp. 53–54). Once one ventures upon such speculations, one must also suppose that the seers

The first vision, at first wordless, culminates in God's address to the prophet, now prostrate on the ground: the word penetrates him as the power of the Spirit and sets him on his feet again. The glory is almighty to such an extent that it itself creates its partner and sets him on his feet. Throughout the book, the one who is now to be sent is called 'son of man', marking out afresh every time the distance which is proper to reverence, adoration and service. Once again, this is from the very beginning a vocation to go to the rebellious and stiff-necked, a commission to do something futile, without anxiety, but without any genuine hope (2.3–7). 'Whether they listen to you or not' (2.5,7), God will

of the Bible have simply copied from each other, which means that the concluding vision of the open heaven, the Apocalypse of John, is degraded to the level of a literary product. One must rather insist on the 'vision world' with its objective contents, a world that makes its fullness, transcending the world, visible in ever new aspects through the centuries, although it is not possible to use earthly concepts to calculate what there is of progress all in this. On this, and on the form of reality of the contents of the vision, *cf.* Adrienne von Speyr, *Apokalypse*, vol. I (1950), pp. 13–44.

establish his power, and in judgment or salvation 'they will know that I am Yahweh'.[5] Nor is it for the sake of those who refuse him that God will establish his power, but solely for his own sake, because God owes it to himself, because he owes it to his own name, because he swears it to himself[6]—the various phrases are piled up to make it clear that every relationship between God and others in salvation history can find its ground only in God himself. Whatever there is of love within this salvific act of God, it is initially enclosed within the circulation of the tremendous, absolute divine 'I' which is filled through and through with his own glory.

From this 'I', there goes forth a commission to the 'son of man', summarised in a scroll which he must eat and 'fill his stomach' with (3.3), although it contains 'words of lamentation and mourning and woe' on the outside and the inside. Ezekiel as it were receives his mission in the form of communion: no longer will he live, but the mission will live in him. He is taken hold of in a more total and more brutal manner than the earlier prophets, but not in such a way that Ezekiel would thereby become a mechanical instrument: quite the opposite is true, for his own responsibility grows beyond all measure, since he is not only required to proclaim and to carry out symbolic acts, but is explicitly made responsible for those whom he addresses. If he fails to warn the sinner, and the sinner dies without having been rebuked, then while it is true that the latter will bear the consequences of his guilt, nevertheless 'his blood I will require at your hand' (3.18). An aspect of this ministry as 'watchman' is the intercessory prayers of the prophet, which however are brushed aside both times without explanation (9.8f.; 11.13). Through his mission, therefore, the prophet is both the personified word of God for the people and also one who has totally entered into its destiny of destruction and is thus fully in solidarity with the people; he is the anger of God that breaks upon their heads, and the one upon whose head this anger breaks. He unites these two natures in his person, and their unification reveals the absolute contrast between the transcendent glory of the absolute Lord and the weak, tortured bundle of humanity that Ezekiel is, as he stands at the head of his guilty fellow sufferers. It is but a step from here to the 'Servant of Yahweh' of Second Isaiah and to the 'Son of Man' of the new covenant.

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[5] W. Zimmerli, 'Erkenntnis Gottes nach dem Buche Ezechiel', 1954, reprinted in: *Gottes Offenbarung* (1963), pp. 41–119.

[6] 'For the sake of my name': 20.9; 20.14; 20.22; 20.44. God swears by his own life: 5.11; 14.16; 14.18; 14.20; 16.48; 17.19; 18.3; 20.3, 31, 33; 33.11; 33.27; 34.8; 35.6; 35.11. God will sanctify his name: 36.22–23; 39.7; 39.25. God reveals his glory: 39.21; his holiness: 39.27.

Once again, what is significant is God's laying hold of the bodily dimension, a process which had begun with Hosea and appears here in intensified form: the prophet is stricken with dumbness (3.26) and paralysed for a long time (4.8), and he will be freed from the defencelessness of not being able to explain himself only when one who has escaped from the catastrophe of Jerusalem comes and confirms his prophecies (24.26–27; 33.22). He must act out a symbolic siege of Jerusalem in the land of exile (4.1–8), taking upon himself 'the punishment of the house of Israel' and then 'the punishment of the house of Judah' (4.4, 6); during this time, God 'binds him' like a beast that is to be sacrificed. He must content himself with siege-food, prepared in a disgusting manner (4.9–17), and he must cut his hair and his beard, burning a third, cutting up another third with the sword, and casting the last third to the wind: only a tiny remnant is to be sheltered in his mantle, and even a part of this is to be burned—even Isaiah's 'remnant' is called into question, and what holds out in Jerusalem will be destroyed. The prophet must pack his goods and escape from his house at night through a hole in the wall in deep darkness (12.1–16): he *is* the departure into exile. He must eat his bread in trembling and drink his water in fearfulness (12.17–18), for he *is* the existence of Israel scattered abroad. And when he is declared to be a '(land-)mark' (12.6b; 12.11; 24.24), then one must bear in mind that the bodily sphere is not only an allegory for the spirit, but the place where the spirit realises itself and portrays itself. The symbolic actions of the prophets[7] are more than an 'autonomous means of proclamation':[8] while they certainly do display 'a striking similarity to magical action', they yet lack any magical quality, since they are actions carried out in obedience to God; the best way to look at them is as the beginning of something that will become the sacraments of the new covenant (*sacramenta continent quod significant*, 'the sacraments contain what they signify': Trent session VII; Denzinger-Schönmetzer 1606), in that the bodily existence of the one sent is expropriated in favour of the incarnation of the divine word and commission. This becomes terribly clear one final time, in the commission that comes upon Ezekiel at the death of his wife: 'Son of man, behold, I am about to take the delight of your eyes from you at a stroke; yet you shall not mourn or weep nor shall your tears run down'. 'I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died. And on the next morning I did as I was commanded.' And he explains to the people that the destruction of the holy city, 'the pride of your power, the delight of your eyes, and the desire of your soul' will take place so suddenly that there will be no time left for songs of lament (24.15–24). There is nothing in the bodily sphere that is too personal to be expropriated for God's purposes and made an instrument for these. Ezekiel gesticulates with his whole existence. He is charged to clap his hands and stamp his feet while he prophesies (6.11), to 'cry and wail' with broken heart (21.11); indeed, it looks as if the terrible 'song of the sword', in which Yahweh's sword takes on a life of its own and jumps and flashes on all sides in the desire to kill—while Yahweh himself beats time to this with his hands—was sung in a genuine sword-dance (21.14–22).[9] But every effort is in vain and pointless: people listen for a while to the prophet, as to one singing on the streets, and then go on their way (33.32), as will happen to Jesus too (Lk 7.32).

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[7] G. Fohrer, *Die symbolischen Handlungen der Propheten*, 1953.

This humiliation of the prophet is the salvific mediation between the ever deeper involuntary humiliation of the disloyal people and the hidden ever deeper humiliation of the glory of God as he carries out his judgment.

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[8] W. Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[9] Van den Born, *Ezechiel uit de Grondtekst vertaald en uitgelegd*, 1954; quoted from Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

In order to understand the humiliation of the people, one must see that for the priest Ezekiel—who agrees here with the Deuteronomist(s)—all sin is faithlessness against the one God of the covenant, above all the profanation of his holy presence through foreign cults. It is not for nothing that the aim of the second great vision of glory is to lead the prophet in the spirit through the rooms of the temple and to show him there one after another the cult of Ishtar (8.5–6), Egyptian secret cults (8.7–13), the Tammuz cult (8.14–15), and the Babylonian cult of the sun (8.16–17). But had things ever really been better? Ezekiel paints the entire history of Israel in great frescoes: for him, Israel's faithlessness goes back to the remotest times. The fresco in ch. 20 puts the origin of the cult of idols at the time of Israel's election in Egypt and traces its development in four stages, in which God spares the people for the sake of his name. The same is true of ch. 25, where the northern and the southern kingdoms appear as two harlots whom Yahweh has chosen in love: 'they played the harlot in Egypt; they played the harlot in their youth' (23.3, 19); Judah's fornication changes from the Egyptians to the Assyrians, but is not satisfied with that, and finally woos the Chaldaeans. At the close, Yahweh gives the harlot the cup of his wrath, which Samaria has already drunk, with a drinking-song (23.32–34): 'you shall drink it and drain it out, and its sherds will tear your breasts'. Ch. 16 summarises the whole theology of harlotry since Hosea in a final, detailed fresco which was subsequently expanded twice (16.44–52, 53–63, perhaps also vv. 30–34): Jerusalem (as the beautiful girl is called this time) is told, 'Your origin and your birth are of the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite'[10]—thus she has already idolatry and fornication in herself as a part of her inheritance. Unwashed, exposed in the open field contemptuously, she is weltering in her blood when Yahweh finds her and brings her up; when her body blooms and her breasts swell, at 'the age for love'

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[10] The 'casual remark . . . is amazing . . . because the two terms exactly fit the actual historical conditions which obtained in Jerusalem before the time of David—a Canaanite population and a 'Hittite' governing class': von Rad, *ThOT*, vol. II, p. 221.

Yahweh binds himself to her, makes a covenant with her, clothes and adorns her as beautifully as possible. 'And your renown went forth among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through the splendour which I had bestowed on you. But you trusted in your beauty, and played the harlot because of your renown, and lavished your harlotries on any passers by': on the Egyptians, Assyrians, Canaanites, and Babylonians. Indeed, the harlot does not even require payment, for she herself pays her customers with the presents which her true husband has given her. Thus (as in ch. 23) the unfaithful one will be utterly humiliated: she will be stripped naked in the presence of all her lovers (this was always the embodiment of shame for Israel), her bed of lust (the holy land) will be laid waste, she herself will be mutilated (23.25), then stoned and burnt: 'So I will satisfy my fury on you'. The first addition is fully Ezekielic:[11] it sets Jerusalem, which was the first thanks to its election, mission, and responsibility,[12] in the last place after the disloyal Samaria and Sodom, the very embodiment of sin: through the shame of her fornication, she has 'justified' her sisters, relatively speaking. Therefore, as the second appendix adds, she will also be the last to be re-established. And when God, out of sheer mercy, wishes to recall the covenant which he once made with the girl, then she will 'remember and be confounded, and never again open your mouth again because of your shame' (16.62–63).—Although Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah had sung of the vine which God had planted, Ezekiel initially uses this image only as a further means to humble the people (ch. 15): the wood of the vine cannot be used for anything, the carpenter cannot find any use for it, 'it is given to the fire for fuel'. What Jerusalem could have been, would have been the product of grace alone: in itself, it is worth less than the woods of the other peoples; the word here is *en route* to Jesus' parable of the vine. Israel will be humiliated until it is utterly disgusted at itself (6.9; 16.63; 20.43; 36.31); and since this ultimate goal seems far off to Ezekiel, he must prophesy the destruction of Jerusalem with uttermost harshness and mercilessness. Everything must be put in the smelting oven (22.17–22) and a wild 'cooking song' (24.3f.) stokes the fire of wrath, until the brew is completely cooked. All compassion is out of place now (7.9; 24.14), and even children will not be spared because of their pious parents (14.12f.), or, if they are spared, this only for the sake of a deeper judgment (14.22). On the margin, as an accompaniment, Ezekiel sings of the fall into Hell of the superpowers of the world, in extensive poems that belong to the most powerful passages in the Bible.[13] But while these Titans are being buried in Hell, God will take another path with Israel: it will be led into the 'wilderness of the peoples' (20.35). This wilderness is only remotely reminiscent of the event of the exodus, and it has only external connections with the image of Hosea's and Jeremiah's yearning, the image of return to the solitary intimacy of the early period. Ezekiel's wilderness is a space empty and burnt out after all the fires of destruction, a state that lies almost on the far side of death in direct confrontation with the God who chooses and rejects, who is judge and loving husband. 'I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face . . and I will make you pass under the rod', as the shepherd does when he counts the herd and brings it home, 'and I will let you go in by number' (20.35–37). This is a judgment that establishes justice by separating: 'I judge between sheep and sheep, rams and he-goats' (34.17).[14] It is only by passing through this wilderness that Israel can find the path back to God, for even now he is with the exiles and not with those who are in Jerusalem and still believe that they possess the sanctuary (11.14–18): for his glory has appeared at the river Chebar and has withdrawn from the temple to the sound of the rushing wings of the cherubim (11.22–23).

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[11] Its motif is anticipated at 5.5–7. The theme goes back to Jer 3.6–11, and even the comparative justification is present there already (3.11).

[12] The navel of the world: 38.12; 5.5; *cf.* 17.22 (Jerusalem on the mythical world-mountain).

God undertakes the task of Ezekiel's purification more personally than with any other prophet. Thus it is deeply significant that the fire which is to destroy Jerusalem is fetched with a liturgical solemnity out of the midst of the burning glory of God. After the six angels who have been sent out have marked the sign of the cross[15] on the forehead of the chosen, the seventh is addressed: '"Go in among the whirling wheels underneath the cherubim; fill your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim and scatter them over the city". And he went in before my eyes . . . And a cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim to the fire that was between the cherubim, and took some of it, and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out' (10.2, 7).[16] Here God commands him first to strike the temple, to 'make it impure' by filling it with corpses (9.7). God in his judgment often comes into such an unprotected proximity to sin in Ezekiel (*cf.* 14.9;[17] 20.25–26), a proximity that makes a scandalous impression on a pious person, but with a shocking effect that is intentional. God reserves Israel's punishment to himself (35.11) a punishment he will deal out at close quarters. He knows what he is doing: 'As I live, I will deal with you' (20.33f.). All that can be done now is to understand this pitiless surgery as an act of utterly secret tenderness, a tenderness that humiliates itself more deeply in Ezekiel than ever before. God burns his faithless bride and tempers her with his own glory. It would be very superficial to see in Ezekiel's judging God only an unapproachable sublimity removed far above the world, and in the prophet himself only an iron servile obedience that is often cruel. The fire that blazes around God and the prophet is the inexorable glow of absolute love,[18] humiliated by the harlot Jerusalem and by the two harlots Samaria and Judah in order to be given up through them to the mockery of all the peoples with whom the harlots dally.

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[13] Chs. 26–32.

[14] In the context, this oracle, which points ahead to Matt 25, refers above all to the judgment against the wicked shepherds of the people.

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[15] The letter Tau, as an upright or diagonal cross (Fohrer, *op. cit.*, p. 54).

[16] One must certainly also set alongside this passage the fall from Heaven of the king of Tyre, who was initially (in an image from the myth of the original man) set by God in a heavenly paradise of 'marvellous beauty' as a 'seal of perfection', provided with a cherub to protect him, 'walking in the midst of the stones of fire', until hubris took hold of him and he was 'cast down' by God 'from the mountain of God,' 'and the guardian cherub drove you out from the midst of the stones of fire', and God 'brought forth fire from the midst of you' and 'turned you to ashes upon the earth' (28.11–18). Although the mythical poetic images which Ezekiel employs here are not precisely the same as those of the vision, the latter is still recalled by the sequence of existence within the realm of God's fiery glory and then a judgment that makes the consuming fire break forth from within the sinner.

[17] *Cf.* here 1 Kings 22.

It is only from the utter desolation of the scene of the fire and the wilderness that the love of God can set up a pure kingdom: through forgiveness of sin, washing the stains away with pure water, without any merit (ch. 20; 36.25), through nothing less than a resurrection of the dead bones to living life as the work of the Spirit of God (ch. 37). Here it is God himself who plants his 'humbled tree' anew and makes it grow into a 'wonderful cedar' so that 'the birds of heaven make their nests therein' (17.22–24). It is God who deposes the bad shepherds and himself undertakes to be the shepherd of his people, going in search of the lost sheep, binding up the wounded and healing the sick (34.16). It is true that a final battle must still be fought against the great enemy from the north; but God must fight this battle all alone for mankind, until the weapons of the foe can once and for all be burnt (chs. 38–39). Then will God's glory radiate out over his people (39.7, 13, 21). As in Jeremiah, the turning-point is the moment at which God carries out the inner purification and preparation of hearts for the covenant of his love: 'A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and observe my ordinances . . . and you shall be my people, and I will be your God' (36.26–28).[19]

The external image which corresponds to this interior process is the vision of the return of the glory of God to the renewed temple (43.1–9), with the earth reflecting the glory of God. Once again 'the glory of Yahweh now fills the temple', and this is 'the place of my throne and the place where I set my feet', as in the time of Isaiah. But the sanctuary which Ezekiel sees, recording its measurements together with a measuring angel, is an eschatological temple, like the Jerusalem whose measurement Zechariah and then John will see. The mighty image of the spring of living water that flows out of the new temple and swells mightily as it descends to the Dead Sea, is doubtless the last thing that is from the hand of Ezekiel himself, and it will be given new life in John's Apocalypse.[20]

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[18] This point is made insistently and very correctly by W. Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, pp. 126–127.

[19] Disciples have subsequently placed this high-point of the book in an anticipatory position in the section dealing with judgment (11.19–20), where it is out of place.

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[20] It seems impossible to attribute to the prophet himself the petty prescriptions of ch. 44.4–46 and ch. 48: it is only too clear that the eschatological image is being dragged down to the level of the superseded legalism of the priestly circles of Jerusalem. Precisely this synthesis was something desired by these circles, but we cannot attribute this to the mighty spirit of the prophet. These chapters document the attempt of Judaism to narrow down the breadth which had been attained in the exile and to bring it back to an earlier format.

7. LITURGIES OF LAMENT

Israel prays even in the period in which the glory has departed; at the site of the temple, after its destruction by fire in 587, it celebrates the liturgy of the 'Lamentations'. As charred beams make present the *absence* of the once-beautiful house, so the desolation of Jerusalem makes present the absence of Yahweh. Only the one who once was chosen knows what it is to be rejected; only the one who once was cherished and loved knows what it is to be abandoned. Israel has no possibility of interpreting this emptiness, which is all that remains to it, as a mode of the divine presence, or the evident character of its present rejection as a mode of its election. Israel can do only one thing: see its situation and take it to heart, and this above all in prayer, presenting itself in its greatest shame and nakedness before the God who has justly brought all this about. And since this is a liturgy, petitions and the expression of hope will not be wholly absent; but they give the impression of soullessness, they reach up to Heaven like stumps of trees stripped of their leaves. The community in its lamentation is far from a positive assessment of its suffering as fruitfulness or even as vicarious representation in any sense.

This separates the lamenting city from Paul, when it calls itself 'offscouring and refuse' (3.45), for 'her uncleanness' clings to her, 'therefore her fall is terrible' (1.9). Once she was beautiful, because God's glory shed its light on her. But 'the perfection of beauty, the joy of all the earth' has passed away (2.15), her 'splendour' (*tip'ereth*, 2.1), her majesty (*hadar*, 1.6), have vanished, her 'crown has fallen' (5.16), her 'gold has grown dim, the pure metal is distorted' (4.1). For God's anger 'surrounds her like a cloud' (2.1), 'he will regard them no more' (4.16). When his glory dwelt in her, she was in heaven, but now she has been 'cast down from heaven to earth' (2.1), 'into darkness without any light' (3.2). Since God's being is revelation, his absence is the interruption of communication: 'the law (Torah) is no more, and her prophets obtain no vision from Yahweh' (2.9); all that they can do now is to sit in silence on the ground (2.10).

And this is the outcome of what has been done by God, who once had fought on behalf of Zion but has now become her declared 'enemy': 'he has destroyed all its palaces', 'he has broken down his booth, laid in ruins the place of his appointed feasts','in his indignation has spurned king and priest' (2.5–6).[1] But this raging of God against his people is understood as the fulfilment of the promise, or rather the threat (2.17), and this already means that it is the consequence of Zion's own guilt. What is bitter is not (as in the case of Job) to think of the incomprehensible act of God in surrounding Zion with a cloud; rather, it is 'wormwood and gall' (3.19) to think unceasingly of one's own sin, which is greater 'than the sin of Sodom' (4.6): 'the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests' (4.13), and already the sins of 'our fathers', with whom the people of today stand in solidarity (5.7). The liturgy here above all indicates, discloses and spreads out the terrible reality. But the liturgy calls on God to look. 'Behold, and see our disgrace!' (5.1). 'Yahweh, behold my affliction' (1.9). And, with a certain trepidation, there is also the prayer: 'Look, Yahweh, and see! With whom hast thou dealt thus?' (2.20). But this is not a judgment on the Lord, but rather the admission that he is right: 'Yahweh is in the right, for I have rebelled against his word' (1.18). This is judgment on oneself, within the judgment made by God, and thereby 'doxology of judgment',[2] giving God *the* glory of which one had deprived him and which he himself has withdrawn and veiled.

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[1] *Cf.* 4.11. It is clear from the comparison with the Sumerian hymns of lamentation that the 'lament for the destroyed sanctuary' exisits in other cultures of the Near East: Falkenstein and von Soden, *Sumerische und akkadische Hymnen und Gebete* (1953), pp. 187f., 192f.; *cf.* H. J. Kraus, *Klagelieder* (1960), pp. 9f.; S. N. Kramer, *Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur* (Oriental Institute of Chicago, Ass. Studies 12, 1940). Here too we have a lament for the divinity that has departed, leaving its 'perch empty', with the divinity itself beginning the lament in some cases. But precisely where the forms correspond to one another, the distinctiveness of the experience of abandonment because of the guilt of broken fidelity to the covenant becomes all the clearer.

A text from Leviticus, probably contemporary with Lamentations (26.27f.), describes the same wrath of Yahweh that rages against people, city, land and sanctuary until everything is destroyed, driving the human hearts into anxiety (vv. 36f.) in order thus to compel them to confession of sin and self-humbling, something that is then understood explicitly as expiation and is accompanied by forgiveness (vv. 41–42). But the liturgy of Lamentations does not wish to anticipate this forgiveness.

The third liturgy, in its middle section (3.21–33), modulates into hope. Old themes from the Psalms emerge, but everything remains subdued. 'One must hope in silence.' 'Perhaps there is still hope.' And there is the direction 'to turn the other cheek to the one who smites'. It is as if the lamentation was ashamed to ask for further graces after all that has happened.

Like the Book of Job, and like many passages in Jeremiah and Ezekiel and many Psalms, the Lamentations seek to sketch an *absolute* suffering. They do this, not by intensifying the subjective element, but by drawing on their knowledge in faith about the darkness that comes into being where God turns away and withdraws. The shadows of death from the nether world far removed from God, the embodiment of what is not redeemed, cast the darkness of their definitiveness upon the living. Here the Biblical lament is quite different from the Greek tragedy which likewise attempted to portray absolute suffering in the face of a black heaven.[3] It is not the capacity of the human heart to suffer (a capacity that permits it to grow beyond the gods themselves) that provides the measurement of absolute suffering, but the reality that is brought about by the turning away of the living God. The one who laments and implores stands *in* this reality, determined and judged by it, without being able to forge out of it an argument against God, since it furnishes him with nothing that can be measured in human terms. Although the darkness surpasses his human format, since it is the shadow and the emptiness of God, the smashed sanctuary in which he now sits is the image of his own guilt. It is only one who has been chosen that can be rejected, and this means that he has no other choice—if he wishes and is able to escape from his condition—than turn to the one who has turned away, or (as Augustine puts it) to take flight to the one from whom one is in flight. This is why the hymns end with a question:

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[2] Kraus, *op. cit.*, p. 33. On the theme of the doxology of judgment, *cf.* F. Horst, 'Die Doxologien im Amosbuch', *ZAW* 47 (1929). pp. 45f.

[3] Vol. IV of this work, pp. 101–154 (Eng. trans).

'Or hast thou utterly rejected us? Art thou exceedingly angry with us?' (5.22).

8. JOB

In Ezekiel, God's 'glory' had appeared in a 'stormy wind out of the north', blazing in lightning-flashes in the dense cloud that accompanied this wind (Ezek 1.4), and already in the later Isaiah God's visitation could take this form of 'tempest and the flame of a devouring fire' (Is 29.6). But in Job, all that is left of God's glory is the 'tempest' (*se‘ara*); Yahweh had not been present in the 'tempest' for Elijah (1 Kings 19.11), though he had in the end caught him up to himself in the 'tempest' (2 Kings 2.1, 11). In Job, however, the God who appears in the 'tempest' is not the God who appears in wrath (Jer 23.19; 30.23), but the one who is utterly stripped of the splendour of his appearing, a 'naked *kabod*' that corresponds to Job's stripping and nakedness before God.

No matter when the ultimate redaction of the poetry may have taken place, in terms of ideas it belongs between Ezekiel and Lamentations on the one hand and Deutero-Isaiah on the other: between the departure of the glory of God, leaving behind burnt-out ruins, and the mystery of the night of the 'Servant of Yahweh', although there is as yet no intuition of this figure.[1] Since Job is not an Israelite,[2] he stands outside the problematic of covenant and covenantal solidarity. With Noah and the Ugarite Daniel, he is one of the exemplary wise men of the primitive period (Ezek 14.14, 20); the framework narrative presents him as the type of the man who stands in integrity (*tam*)[3] before God, and he will himself appeal in his speeches to the integrity (*tumma*: 1.1, 3, 9) which is acknowledged as his at the beginning of the story (27.5; 31.6). When he is robbed of all his goods and his wife incites him to blasphemy, he does not sin with even a single word, but blesses the name of God from whom he is willing to receive misfortune as a present, just as he is willing to receive good fortune; God, who sent him forth naked from the womb of his mother, can strip him naked as a preparation for his death (1.21; 2.10).

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[1] On this dating, *cf.* D. Barthélemy, *Gott mit seinem Ebenbild* (1966), p. 23.

[2] On the whereabouts of Uz: *cf.* Friedrich Horst, *Hiob* (1962), pp. 8f.

[3] Thus at once in 1.1 and then frequently: 1.8; 2.3; 8.20; 9.20–22.

The integrity of Jacob's 'yes' to God forms the indispensable framework for his struggle with God, whose image becomes so distorted for him in the dark night of suffering that it takes on demonic form. We shall find the definitive answer to the question of how this obscuring of God's image is possible only at the conclusion, but we shall not be wrong to see the answer as connected with God's 'wager' with the accusing angel, even although the 'prelude in Heaven' is concerned only with the withdrawal of Job's external possessions and ultimately of his physical health. The fall into the inner spiritual darkness is the prolongation of these withdrawals and a hidden intervention of the heavenly world is at least one of the presuppositions of this fall.

Job does not transpose himself, but *comes* into a condition that is unknown to him and that cannot be brought into any proportion to the states that could be envisaged on the basis of the relationship with God which he has had hitherto; this also means that it is not possible to identify the path taken from those old religious experiences to this new experience, since a yawning gulf lies between the two worlds of experience that forbids any spiritual linking, any common language, any dialectical reconciliation. On the one side sit the three friends with the old experience (which was Job's experience too), on the other side sits Job by himself; and when both sides speak with one another, their monologues pass each other by without meeting. The friends continually appeal to their experience, which is the universal experience crystallised by tradition.[4] Job rejects this impatiently with an 'I know, I know'.[5] 'I also could speak as you do, if you were in my place; I could join words together against you, and shake my head at you', as you now do at me (16.4). But precisely this is the point: Job speaks out of the pain of an experience of being robbed, an experience that the others do not know. 'If I speak, my pain is not assuaged, and if I forbear, how much of it leaves me?' (16.6). Just as the friends who draw near to Job initially do not recognise him, because his external appearance is so disfigured (2.12), they do not recognise him internally during the whole conversation. He has been robbed of all dignity, all the splendour (*kabod*) that his being earlier possessed and irradiated, the *kabod* that is bestowed on man by creation[6] (19.9). This makes him spiritually one of those cast out, and he describes himself thus in great detail (30.1–8). He has lost his human honour, he is the object of mockery (30.1), of scorn (30.10), one on whom people spit (17.6). Thus he has come into absolute isolation, which has the bitterness of abandonment for him: he is 'avoided', 'evaded', 'forgotten', he becomes 'a stranger and an alien' for those who live in his house; indeed, he becomes one whose 'evil stench' is repulsive to them (19.13–19).

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[4] 'I speak from experience' (4.8); 'Lo, this we have observed; it is true' (5.27); 'consider what the fathers have found' (8.8); 'what I have seen, I will declare, what wise men have told' (15.17–18).

[5] 'Truly I know that it is so' (9.2). 'Lo, my eye has seen all this, my ear has heard and understood it. What you know, I also know; I am not inferior to you' (13.1–2). 'I have heard many such things; miserable comforters are you all' (16.2).

This isolation is so deep that only God himself can have caused it. 'In your light do we see light,' says the Psalm (36.10), and these deeply mysterious words must mean that where the light of human existence, its dignity and its communication, has disappeared, the deeper 'light of the face of God' (Ps 27.1; 89.16) has been taken away too (29.3). God 'hides his face' (13.24), as the traditional expression says, although this reveals only one side of the paradoxical relationship. Ps 139.7–10 had described the impossibility of fleeing from God, since he is present everywhere, but Job harshly upholds the contrary position:

> Behold, I go eastwards, but he is not there;
> and westwards, but I cannot perceive him;
> in the north I seek him, but I cannot behold him;
> I turn to the south, but I cannot see him (23.8–9).[7]

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[6] Ps 8.6.

[7] At this point the mighty poem about the essentially hidden, unsearchable wisdom of God in the creation, which is interpolated in ch. 28,

But just as, in the Psalm, man meets God who is present everywhere, even when he flees, so Job unfailingly encounters the God who is absent. He is 'encircled' by him (3.23), just as those who lamented in Jerusalem were 'walled about with hewn stones' (Lam 3.9), he is put in a prison (12.14), besieged (19.12) by the God who shows himself to be his enemy, as he was the enemy of those who lamented in Jerusalem too (13.24; 16.12f.; 19.11). God hunts him down (10.16) and covers him with war (10.17); but in such a war it is clear from the outset that God has the 'upper hand' (9.2–3; 9.19; 12.13–25) and therefore 'ravishes' the frail creature and 'despises the work of his hands' (10.3). 'Thy hands fashioned and made me; and now thou dost turn about and destroy me' (10.8). Did God have the thought of destruction at the back of his mind at creation, when he set in work the whole business of procreation (10.9–10)? Even then, this humiliated creature would still stand under God's gaze, but God's act of noticing, observing, indeed of staring relentlessly (7.16–20; 10.20; 14.3) from an invisible ambush (9.11) would then be only the terrible parody of the feeling of security in the wings and in the embracing gaze of God, of which the pious in Israel sing.

Job has come adrift from the old relationship to God, and all the arguments drawn from this relationship have no further power to reach him. 'Your maxims are proverbs of ashes,' he tells the three friends when they suggest that he should cultivate patience and trust (4.6), that he should keep to the traditional wisdom (8.8–22), that he should pray (11.13), and above all that he should admit his guilt before God, since his suffering can be understood only as a punishment. Indeed, it is at this point that the dialogue breaks down into a dialectic: for the friends, Job's speeches convict him irrefutably of the sin that he refuses to admit, and his

is given its justification. Just as Job does not doubt the reality of God, so this poem does not doubt the reality of the wisdom that conceals itself behind all that exists: but 'The deep says, "It is not in me," and the sea says, "It is not with me" . . . It is hid from the eyes of all living, and concealed from the birds of the air. Abaddon and Death say, "We have heard a rumour of it with our ears"' (28.14, 21–22). This is the extension to the whole cosmos of Job's experience: God is present as the one who is absent.

accusations against God are blasphemous (15.6); but from Job's perspective, the insistent exhortations of the friends are nothing other than the proof that God has become his enemy, for now he has turned even his friends into opponents:

> Men have gaped at me with their mouth,
> they have struck me insolently upon the cheek . . .
> God gives me up to the ungodly,
> and casts me into the hands of the wicked (16.10–11).

The lethal dialectic is driven to its extremes by the intervention of a fourth speaker, Elihu, who dismisses the arguments of the three friends as inadequate and makes himself 'God's advocate' *vis-à-vis* Job (36.3). His weapon in argument—with full justification from his own standpoint—is the divinity, i.e. the absoluteness of God: God is right *a priori*, because he is God and also because as creator he has established all innerworldly justice (34.13–17). On this basis, it is easy to disqualify Job's claims—that he has not sinned in such a way that he would deserve such a punishment, that he is obliged to go to law against God because he has been denied the justice owed him, and that it does not affect God whether or not a man sins (33–35)—with reasons that Elihu finally summarises in a hymn to the transcendent God (36.22–37.24). This hymn goes beyond a similar hymn of Bildad (25.2–6; 26.1–14): while Bildad describes the greatness of God with strongly mythical hues—the trembling of Sheol and of its inhabitants before God, his stripping Abbadon naked, God's fight against 'Rahab' and the 'fleeing serpent',[8] and the appearing of God in the epiphany of the storm—these mythical images recede in Elihu to make way for praise of the greatness of God in nature and in its wonderful works, praise of the obedience of the natural beings to God's instructions, praise of God's inscrutability, culminating once again in the traditional image of the divine epiphany in the storm. The emphasis lies on the idea that man 'is to look with astonishment' on God's working in nature and in the world of mankind in 'reverence' and 'at a distance' (36.25; 37.24). Man knows God through the phenomena of nature, which serve him as the Lord by rewarding the good and by punishing the evil (37.13). God himself is clothed in a 'sublime majesty'[9] which remains inaccessible to us (37.22). Both speeches, the 'more primitive' speech of Bildad and the 'more learned' speech of Elihu, ultimately demand the creaturely *reverence* that is the beginning of wisdom for Psalms and for sapiential writings (Prov 1.7; 9.10; 15.33).

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[8] I.e., Babylonian-Ugaritic mythical images of creation as the conquest of Tiamat (the sea of primal chaos) and of the primal serpent; thus frequently in the Book of Job (3.8f.; 7.12; 9.13; 26.12; 40.25) and generally in the Bible: Ps 65.8; 74.13–14; 77.17; 89.10–11; 93.3–4; 104.6–7, 26; 107.29; 148.7; Is 27.1; 51.9.

Job opposes this somewhat watered-down 'fear of the Lord' with an elemental *'terror'* in the presence of God. In astonishment, he asks those who are supposed to be his friends: 'Will not his majesty terrify you, and the dread of him fall upon you?' (13.11), while he says to God himself: 'Withdraw thy hand far from me, and let not dread of thee terrify me' (13.21). When he thinks of God, the hairs rise on his flesh (21.6). 'I am terrified at his presence; when I consider, I am in dread of him . . . for I am hemmed in by darkness, and thick darkness covers my face' (23.15, 17). 'God's poisoned arrows'[10] dart at him out of this darkness, 'the terrors of God are arrayed against me' (6.4). So he calls for an advocate and a referee, so that 'he may take away his rod from me, and let not dread of him terrify me' (9.34). 'Terrors are turned upon me' (30.15), active and aggressive: these are the glances from God that the sufferer constantly feels directed at him with unbearable hostility (7.17–20).

On the one side there is reverence, on the other terror before God: this is what separates the two levels and makes the conversation impossible, since it is precisely this fear in the presence of God that the friends take as the tell-tale sign of Job's secret guilt. They recognise sin in his fear.[11] And precisely these charges drive Job away from all communication with others, deeper into the loneliness of his fear in God's presence. The two worlds collide with each other in chapters 18 (Bildad) and 19 (Job): for Bildad, the wicked man is pursued by the furies who finally drag him before the 'king of terrors' (Pluto, the Babylonian Nergal, the lord of the nether world), while Lilith (the female Babylonian storm-demon) makes her home with him (18.11, 14–15). He is one 'uprooted' (v. 16), banished (v. 18), condemned to infertility (v. 19). Job is not troubled by the fact that he must make use of the same images in order to describe his suffering (19.10); it is precisely here that he presses forward to his highest, most truly valid statement: 'Oh that my words were written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book with an iron pen!' (19.23–24). 'O earth, cover not my blood, and let my cry find no resting place. Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and he that vouches for me is on high. My cry is my advocate with God, while my eye pours out tears to God' (16.18–20). The situation is very close to Greek tragedy, in which the cry of suffering finitude becomes a memorial in eternity, raised up like a host to the gods, equal in rank to the glory of Olympus and perhaps superior to it.[12] The pain towers so high, growing so far beyond the transitory subjective dimension, that it sets up something objective between Heaven and earth, something that can never be destroyed again—transcending the struggle and the enmity with the cruel God (30.20–21) who listens to no prayer. 'Earth' means here a human life lived in an honest and pure endeavour in accordance with God's commandments (29.11f.; 31.1–40), and 'Heaven' means the closed darkness in front of which this life was lived. Suffering is the 'caution money' (17.3) which earth lays up in advance in Heaven, giving it an inviolable right to an existence beside God. The one element of what is otherwise totally perishable[13] that can remain standing in the presence of the divine is the terrible weight of the sufferings, when this is weighed on just scales between Heaven and earth (6.2). And for this reason Job too must pose the challenging question of Euripides' heroes: 'Does it seem good to thee to oppress, to despise the work of thy hands? Hast thou eyes of flesh? Dost thou see as man sees? Are thy days as the days of man?' (10.3–5). He demands *justice* for himself from God and speaks in the concepts of a court case:[14] he laments the lack of a referee (9.32–33), and he makes his suffering itself an advocate for himself (19.25f.). There are certainly ethical concepts and questions standing behind the legal concepts—'Why do the wicked live?' (21.7), why are they punished in their children rather than in their own persons? (21.19), what remains of God's righteousness? (24.1–17)—but these questions do no more than accompany Job's own problem from the sidelines, illustrating it; it has a different structure. Behind the legal thinking there stands ultimately an aesthetic intuition: the proportions between Job's life and Job's suffering are wrong; no matter how sublime, transcendent and absolute one's description of God may be, he remains responsible for such elementary failures in proportion. And so the 'man of integrity', Job, dares everything, 'takes his flesh in his teeth and puts his life in his hand' (13.14), and 'this boldness will be my salvation, that a godless man would not dare to come before him' (13.16); since a genuine dialogue with God is not possible now (23.3f.), he dares to 'rebel' (23.2). But Job's concern here is not himself, but—and in this he can be compared to the Prometheus of Aeschylus—the absolute order between Heaven and earth; he appeals from a reduced god (the 'Zeus' of the new generation of gods) to the total God who is truly worthy of the divine name.

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[9] LXX: μεγάλη ἡ δόξα καὶ τιμὴ Παντοκράτορος.

[10] The 'poisoned arrows' which God shoots at the sufferer are a frequent term for illness, or also for famine: Job 6.4; 7.20; 16.12–13; Deut 32.23; Ps 38.3; Ezek 5.16; Lam 3.12.

[11] 15.20; 18.11, 14; 20.25; 27.20.

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[12] *Cf.* Vol. IV of this work, pp. 101ff. (Eng. trans.). — The theme is taken up by Rilke in the *Duineser Elegien*, where likewise the angel stands in amazement at the suffering of man who perishes, and the ultimate reality is the 'landscape of lamentation'.

[13] The theme of finitude and transcience is continually brought up by

When the Jews put such questions out of the perplexity in the broken covenant and the exile in Babylon, God will answer in the 'Book of Israel's consolation' and in the Servant Songs. This answer is not anticipated in the Book of Job. The inner disunity of the answer corresponds to the inner disunity

Job, in the tone of lamentation which however threatens all the time to turn into accusation.

[14] 6.29; 9.19f.; 13.3, 6, 18; 14.3b.

of the formulation of the problem. For in point of fact, who is this non-Jew Job? Does he come before or after Israel? Is he the representative of 'the world of the Gentiles', which has not yet received any promises and is left to shape for itself an image of God on the exclusive basis of its understanding of existence? Or is he the result of Israel's experience of exile, which must transcend its previous understanding of the covenant and abandon its religious wisdom-teaching (as this is represented by the three friends) for something obscure that lies on the far side of death? The resolution of this question remains open; the whole story remains a *mashal*, a poetic parable that projects the sketch of an unattainable totality. Its significance is that it rejects every solution that would too quickly transfigure harsh reality, while giving a very exact outline (in negative form) of the conditions of the possibility of a redemptive synthesis, which will not be available at any price lower than Job's experiences of abandonment and his terror—and than his total inability to understand. The concept of 'vicarious representation' is not yet present; even although it will soon appear in the Servant Songs, it remains something not understood in the depths of suffering—for otherwise the suffering would not be complete.

Since this is how things stand, God's reply to Job out of the stormwind can only start with the tone taken by the 'rebel' and with his demand for a court case with due process of law, exposing the inner contradiction in what Job says. This is the source of the divine irony, which crosses the border of humour in the description of the wonders of creation.[15] The vision of the glory of the covenant God of Israel, which would have to be presupposed for an answer on the far side of the exile, cannot be supplied in a speeded-up process where this is lacking; so God speaks only of his absoluteness and eternity, in respect of which Job is only a latecomer: 'Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?' (38.4), and he speaks of his power and wisdom which he has invested in the world. The great riddle of the cosmos and the touchstone of every valid world-philosophy—the reason of the irrational animals—is quite properly evoked. Man, with all his problems, lives in a world with a wisdom which he has not established, but which he cannot exclude from his consideration so that he can relate as an isolated individual to God and thereby play at being 'God's censor' (40.2). 'Deck yourself with majesty (*ga'on*) and dignity (*goba*); clothe yourself with glory (*hod*) and splendour (*hadar*)' (40.10), the distinctively divine attributes, 'then I also will bow down before you' (40.14). Job must concede that he is beaten in the presence of the 'omnipotence' and the 'things too wonderful for me' (42.2, 3b), and he sinks down sighing[16] before the majesty 'in dust and ashes' (42.6). And he utters the beautiful saying: 'I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees thee' (v. 5), although this is a word that more veils than reveals the true situation and fits ill with God's justification of Job to his friends: 'You have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has' (v. 7). God calls Job his 'servant' (*'ebed*) four times in his concluding speech. Does this mean, then, that Job had spoken in the closest proximity to the 'Servant of the Lord', and that the friends had embodied an obsolete, superseded stage of the religion of Yahweh? And had God himself, in all seriousness, led Job into this darkness, to which he alone has the key and for which he alone is answerable, with all the lamentations and the apparent blasphemies which are uttered in this darkness? And would this mean that the building-blocks have been gathered together for the final synthesis which *a fortiori* only God can achieve: the unity of the glory of God and uttermost abandonment by God, Heaven and Hell?

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[15] The texts in the third exchange of speeches were already hopelessly confused and fragmentary (22–24: even transpositions cannot restore a whole text); and God's speeches too are certainly expanded at a secondary stage (as is shown by the repetition of 38.1, 3 at 40.6.7 and of 38.2 at 42.3) and thereby deprived of much of their effect; 39.13b–18 and 40.15–41.26 are additions. Job can have spoken only *one* concluding answer: 40.4–5 and 42.2–6 belong together.

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[16] Not: 'regretfully' (Hölscher).

9. DEUTERO-ISAIAH

The vocation of the anonymous prophet who was introduced more deeply than any other into the mysteries of God's grace in the night of the exile is threefold (Is 40.1–8): he is called to console those who have suffered more than enough (vv. 1–2), he is called to hear the cry: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord . . . and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together' (vv. 3–5), and he himself is called to cry: 'All flesh is grass . . . the grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it . . . but the word of our God will stand for ever' (vv. 6–8). In this vocation to bring consolation, the glory of God remains a future reality for everyone, and the personal mission takes the one sent into the origin of the absolute antithesis between the origin—the word of God which exists forever—and the total frailty of flesh which is like hay, together with all its loveliness.[1] This glory is so absolutely a future glory that the cycle of God's previous self-manifestations appears complete and completed; now something utterly new arises, something that is 'hidden, that you have not known',[2] not a continuation, but 'created even now',[3] something that returns to the absolutely creative moment of the first beginning.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel have come to an extreme end-point, to an end of the ways: hence there is a hiatus, and a new beginning arising again out of the origin, with a God who has no relationship to anything else, a God who is utterly 'incomparable',[4] who gives his glory away to none other[5] and, if he creates, can do so only for his own glory.[6] This

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[1] V. 6: *chesed* (LXX: δόξα), suggested alterations in Gesenius.

[2] 48.6.

[3] 48.7.

[4] 'Who can be compared to me?': 40.25; 44.7; 45.5; 46.9. 'To whom will you liken me and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be alike?': 46.5.

[5] 42.8; 48.11. This means also that God, as in Ezekiel, can forgive sins only for his own sake: 43.25.

[6] 43.7.

God exists before all time, he is absolutely the First and precisely for this reason is also the Last, and there is nothing higher than the future appearing in glory of his word, of his righteousness, and of his salvation, nor can anything higher be thought of.[7] All that the creature can do is to entrust itself totally to the shaping hand of its creator;[8] everything else on which people had relied has failed to come up to expectations; the anonymous prophet is able to do and to demand what Job was unable to do and what Jeremiah achieved only with effort.[9] 'There is none who can deliver from my hand; I work and who can hinder it?'[10] This too, once again, is directed against Job.

The prophet does then give consolation, with flattering, almost deluding words from which the possibility of judgment is far removed (for the first time in the old covenant); God openly professes his love ('Because you are precious in my eyes, and honoured, and I love you', 43.4), a love greater than that of a mother (49.15), a love that makes the creator a bridegroom (54.5), an 'eternal love' (54.8, 10). But a price is paid for this unheard-of admission of love: viz., that Israel's boundaries are broken through and it is led into a future which it cannot foresee; it is expropriated and becomes a *model*, reduced in significance so that it may serve an historical act of God that has its origin further away than Israel and makes for a goal that likewise lies beyond Israel. When Israel is thus left dangling outside its historical form, it experiences its own nothingness (41.14) and that of all the peoples (like drops of water in the bucket, like dust on the scales, 40.15–17) and of the kings and judges (40.23), and its own weariness contrasted with God's eternal, indefatigable strength (40.28–30). Being is divided in its very roots, and in the primal act, whereby God creates and the creature is created, there stands, beyond all analogy, incomparability (46.5).

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[7] God as 'the first and the last': 41.4; 44.6; 48.12; *cf.* 52.12. His salvation is eschatological: 51.6.

[8] The creator is repeatedly called the 'sculptor' or 'potter': 42.5; 43.1; 43.7; 43.21; 44.2; 44.21; 44.24; 45.9–11; 45.18; 49.8.

[9] 50.5, perhaps with a sidelong glance at Jeremiah.

[10] 43.12.

Thus Israel, which possesses the historical analogy between God's promise and God's fulfilment and is thus witness to God's veracity in his active word, is expropriated together with its 'proof of God's existence', set within the framework that goes from the sovereign First to the sovereign Last, who is not at man's disposal, and left dangling in oscillation before his presence. Its proof of God's existence is valid, and thereby nullifies the claim of all the idols to authenticate themselves by fulfilment within history.[11] Israel—with the terrible fulfilment which it is suffering now from the prophecies of God—is a witness before all the world,[12] 'so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am He' (43.10). But precisely because Israel gives objective testimony to the exact proportion within history between promise and fulfilment and thereby to the power within history of the only true God, it is suspended within the pouring-out of his power and cannot itself have any power over this proportion. Is the promise simply one of returning home, so that a second exodus through the wilderness would correspond to the first, rounding it off by going backwards? With the Lord going before, and also as rear guard (52.12), with water from the rock (48.21) and food in the wilderness (49.10)? But is this in keeping with the idea that the Lord, as the good shepherd, will himself bring his sheep home, kept safe in his arms and in his heart (40.11)? No, the proportion known within history is superseded, and the God of the origin, of creation, of what is new every moment, is now creating, prophesying and sketching out a new future. 'From this time forth I make you hear new things, hidden things which you have not known. They are created now, not long ago; before today you have never heard of them, lest you should say, "Behold, I knew them"' (48.6–7). The 'scheme of things that is Israel' is broken through, and therefore Israel must 'remember'[13] (in order to know *who* it was who made the promise then), and yet at the same time 'remember not the former things',[14] so that it can

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[11] 41.21–24a; 44.7; 44.25–26; 48.3–6.

[12] Israel as witness of what God does to it: 43.10, 12; 44.8; 55.4.

[13] 43.26; 44.21; 46.8–9; *cf.* 42.20; 23, 25.

[14] 43.18.

'hearken'[15] without distraction, precisely when the 'ways and thoughts' of the Lord 'are higher than yours, as the heavens are higher than the earth'.[16] Against the horizon of what is new, going beyond 'Abraham my friend' (41.8), the 'wretched worm Israel' must pay heed to the Noachic covenant with all creation (54.9–10), and indeed to the order of the creation of Heaven and earth which bears witness to the immense 'I' of the God who freely makes election,[17] and this is to be the basis from which Israel dares to spring out into what is unknown and to accept the new prophecy of what is new, the prophecy which is created at each individual moment.

But can a prophet give an anticipatory clothing in words to the new thing that is oriented towards the eschatological revelation of the glory of Yahweh? It is true that 'The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him that is needy' (50.4), and that the work of the prophet contains many well-hewn, pugnacious answers; but when he continues, 'Morning by morning he wakens, he wakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I turned not backward . . .' (50.4–5), this hints at an intimacy with God that goes beyond everything known in the old covenant, a permanent initiation by God, going deeper and deeper, to which there corresponds on man's part pure 'non-resistance', a state in which the only desire is to let oneself be drawn in. The sharp struggle between the divine 'I' and the human 'I' in Jeremiah and Job, and the lordly gesture with which God took hold of Ezekiel's spirit and body, have given place here to a mystery of penetration that finds nothing in the old covenant with which it can be compared, no category into which it can be fitted; even the one of whom God thus takes possession will himself speak of it in a remarkably quiet, foreign, wholly impersonal manner, as if it were something that ultimately did not concern him—although this matter lays hold of him in a way that pierces to the very centre of his being. Two names sound forth from this sphere: Cyrus as the ‘Messiah’ chosen by God (45.1) and Ebed-Yahweh as the Servant of God.

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[15] 48.18.

[16] 55.9.

[17] 40.12f.; 40.26; 42.5, and in stereotype formulations throughout the whole book.

‘Cyrus’ is the name under whom the future salvation must first submit to a sober intra-historical perspective which is in contrast to all the vivid traditional images of Israel’s hope, such as the Yahweh who fights miraculously for the people as a hero in war,[18] and the exodus filled with miracles.[19] The first thing the mind of the prophet will have seen is the overwhelming of the Babylonian power and the release of the captives and the freedom given to practise their cult; and since he recognises the Persian here as the willing (although unconscious)[20] instrument which God himself has fetched from a far country,[21] he inevitably sees here the eschatological incarnation of the divine will and word in the deed that is carried out. Israel, as a people, is not the place where the deed is carried out, since as a whole it is still blind and hardened in heart.[22]

The ‘Servant of the Lord’ stands even more in the place which is opened up by the ‘blind’ Israel, although it does not know this; the commission to set free which he receives is not the external commission, as in the case of Cyrus, but the internal commission. He is the one in whom God ‘will glorify himself’ (δοξασθήσομαι, 49.3), but in such a way that the Servant feels ‘the weariness of futility’ and the ‘fruitless abrasion of his strength’ (49.4), and ‘is glorified in the eyes of Yahweh’ (δοξασθήσομαι, 49.5b, likewise 52.13)[23] only in this way, in a manner that lies beyond his experience: the glory of God lies in the Servant, the glory of the Servant lies in God. We are shown, with the concealment and discretion which have been mentioned, what this glory consists of immediately after we are told about the intimate refusal of the Servant to oppose the Lord who awakens him every morning: 'I turned not backward. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I hid not my face from shame and spitting' (50.5–6). After the confessions of Jeremiah and after what happened to Hosea, Isaiah and Ezekiel, it is quite impossible that the language here should be metaphorical, just as it is impossible that the sufferings should be endured by a collectivity. There is no break in the continuity of verses 50.4–6; besides this, the Servant has a mission to Israel which he must fulfil (49.5). In the same way, there is no break in continuity from the Moses of Deuteronomy (who suffers and dies for the people)[24] to Ezekiel and to the Servant: an individual offers himself, or is chosen, to make vicarious expiation. Ultimately, this is a heaping-up here of external and internal suffering: blows and spitting, 'being pierced through' (53.5), 'ulcers' that take him to the point of being killed and to a grave among the godless and evildoers; 'mockery' to which he must oppose 'a face hard as flint' (50.7) just as he must oppose this face to the prophets of doom, 'contempt' (49.7), 'being counted of no value', 'being abandoned' to the point that all cover their faces before him, and that he has no longer 'form or beauty' (53.2), but 'has lost his form' and no longer has 'human semblance' (52.14).[25] But unlike Job, 'he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter' (53.7), although he too, like Job, asserts that he has never 'done violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth' (53.9). The Servant knows something that Job did not know: that one cannot submit God to questioning (45.11). He bears the guilt of the sins of 'many' (i.e., of all).[26] God's plan of expiation is realised in a way that cuts through him (53.10). He pours out his life in death and is reckoned among the sinners, and it is precisely through this that he wins from God those whose sins he bore, and whom he justifies (53.11–12). An individual who has been called experiences this (49.1), one who is at once 'a sharp sword, a sharpened arrow'—and 'hidden in the shadow of his hand, hidden away in his quiver' (49.2). This takes place in a mystery, and despite everything it happens in public (45.19; 48.16). The one who passes through this night casts the deepest veil over himself: to the extent that he is aware of his election to this wholly isolated destiny—and aware also that he will come into the light after his disgraceful death and that God will win for him the victory and acknowledgment on the part of the kings (49.7) and will 'exalt' him (52.13)[27]—then he must enter totally into the anonymity of the pure personification of the task that is to be carried out. He is clearly aware that he must give up his name, indeed more than this, that he is drawn into an area of destiny in which he remains a foreigner, although he would not be able to say who—other than himself—would have the right to occupy this area.

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[18] 42.10–13; 52.8–10.

[19] 41.17–19.

[20] 45.4–5.

[21] 41.2, 25.

[22] 42.16, 18; 43.8; 48.4.

[23] On this slightly overtaxed use of the concept of *doxa* in the LXX compared to the MT, *cf.* Zimmerli in *TWNT* V, 676.

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[24] Deut 1.37; 3.23f.; 4.21; 9.9, 18–19.

[25] The LXX forms three world-pairs: εἶδος and δόξα (*to'ar*: beautiful form) at 52.14, εἶδος and δόξα (*hadar*: beauty as dignity) at 53.2a, and once again εἶδος and κάλλος (*chemed*: beauty as attractiveness) at 53.2b: the great terms of Greek aesthetics are collected, in order to be negated: everything that has form, all attractiveness and dignity, is turned into its opposite, deprived of its form and thus made unbearable to look upon.

[26] J. Jeremias in *TWNT* VI, 536f.

Thus the initial vocation (40.1–8) is fulfilled: to bring consolation as a preparation of the way for the coming glory, but by 'crying out' the distance that separates the eternal God and the flesh that is grass. And now God himself, who has hitherto maintained a restrained silence, 'cries out' with him, as a woman in childbirth cries out (42.14). This means that the ultimate point in Deutero-Isaiah is not a word. Perhaps his message was somehow become stiff in face of the difficulty in which he finds himself, the excessive demand that he give an answer.[28] And out of necessity he must turn back to the traditions of the exodus, and of David and Zion, in order to have images of the coming glory. It is wholly clear that the non-image of the Servant is expressed by the 'new world'; the task of drawing a definitive image of him goes beyond the power of the old covenant. The last thing we see is God accompanying the redeemed humanity in its wandering (49.10–11; 52.12).

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[27] Here too the LXX has δοξασθήσεται.

[28] Joachim Begrich, *Studien zu Deuterojesaia* (1938), pp. 121–124, 130.

III. THE LONG TWILIGHT

A. THEOLOGIA GLORIAE

The task entrusted to the five centuries which remained until the coming of Christ was difficult to the point of impossibility. While the form of the covenant stood before their eyes as an idea which had been half-realised at individual points in the past (although the reflection of the major prophets expressed ever greater reservations about this realisation), the history of the covenant was not only the history of a periodic decadence (as in the Deuteronomistic historiography), but an unstoppable rush into the arms of catastrophe: God's glory abandons his earthly sanctuary, and the people of twelve tribes, with which the covenant had been entered upon, is definitively scattered abroad, with at most a remnant permitted to come together again; is it possible at all now to speak of a continuation of what had begun so greatly? There were indeed revelations like lightning-flashes as the sentence was carried out, in the depths of abandonment by God, that seemed to hint at a unity of glory and night, but who could think of taking such flickerings as the starting-point for the interpretation of the worldwide light of God's covenant with humanity?

But had not even the prophets of doom themselves promised a salvation that lay beyond judgment, in the coming age of history? Were not their words of darkness balanced by their words of light? Had not Israel, which had gone through the deepest depths, the right—precisely because of the promises of the prophets—to await God's great coming in glory behind the judgment? After all, the Second Isaiah, who disclosed the mystery of the Servant of the Lord, had given the most unambiguous promises of salvation for the future.

This salvation did not come, and prophecy as a whole ended in the historical non-fulfilment of the prophecies of salvation. The echoes of post-exilic prophecy are insignificant, petering out in the concerns of the priesthood (Zechariah) and the cult (Malachi). The silence that takes the stage after the prophetic voice has fallen still is ominous. Has God really given up his people now? Are the endeavours that it will now undertake in order not to lose God—clinging to the Torah, the wisdom teaching, the sacrificial cult, even apocalyptic—ways willed by God, or are they defiance and the wrong path? There is no longer any positive historical continuation of the form, which had been readable in history, that God had inscribed upon the history of humanity in his history with Israel. This form, which was supposed to have proclaimed the eternal in the transitory, remains a code abruptly broken off, sealed up.

At the end of the long twilight, the seals will be broken for a moment in Jesus the Christ, who accomplishes what is impossible for the Old Testament and reveals the glory of the Father in the abandonment of the Son. But precisely this long twilight, with the distance it created, was necessary in order that the definitive sign of salvation in Jesus might be set up over and in the history of the world and that it could be understood as such (in the midst of the scandal): the twilight is both failure and opening. Failure, because it compels the acknowledgment that man is not able to establish the synthesis of the covenant idea and the historical reality of the covenant; opening, because in the half-millennium of prophetic silence, the event of salvation from Moses *via* David to the 'Servant of the Lord' draws closer to an historically recognisable form: distinct from a present that cannot simply interpret itself as the inner future of this form, distinct also from a space that opens up between Heaven and earth (precisely because the earth is not the future of this form), and distinct lastly from any kind of universal perception of God in the world and in human life as a whole (for here that form would be seen virtually as only a particular instance of something general). These three openings are necessary, if the synthesis of the history of the covenant which has taken place and also its totally new establishment in Jesus the Christ are to be possible; but they must likewise necessarily remain in the twilight, taken as a whole and individually, because they must inevitably seek to anticipate the synthesis and because these attempts must fail, since they are hybrid (not to say *hubris*).

The three undertakings of Judaism can be understood from the starting-point of the theme of glory as attempts to force the glory of God into the open, despite its elusive hiddenness. *The first attempt* (which failed at once) is the proclamation of the messianic-historical glory of God which is now infallibly coming: it was for this reason that prophecy broke down. *The second attempt*, apocalyptic, wanted to get hold of the glory of God, which was not coming in the future within history, through mysticism, in Heaven 'above' or in the anticipation of the second (heavenly) aeon; this fails because it leaves behind, as something insignificant, the form which God has inscribed on history. *The third attempt*, the Hellenising wisdom theology, does not seek to get hold of glory either in a purely futurist sense or in a purely mystical-eschatological sense, but seeks rather to see and experience it contemplatively out of the totality of creation and salvation-history: in this way it creates the broadening of perspective that will link the wisdom of Israel to the wisdom of the peoples and will create a common language as the presupposition for mission, while however losing its feeling for the sharp distinctiveness of what Israel had experienced as the event of the glory of God.

Without messianism, apocalyptic and wisdom theology, there would be no New Testament: all three are indispensable mediators, because they permit the historical form of Israel to become transcendent in three directions. But where they propose themselves as solutions with their function of broadening, they at once obstruct the place for God's solution and become its opponents—the same is true precisely within Christianity too. It is only by accepting the providential mediation of Judaic theology with its inherent oscillation that one can link ancient Israel's experience of glory with the Christians' experience of glory. Messianism, apocalyptic and wisdom teaching are only a 'climate' in which Christianity was embedded and came to development; it is not bound to the historical form taken by these mediating forces, but makes use of them in order to say what is its own and to be itself; and this looks directly to the mystery of glory in old Israel.

If here the three dimensions in which Judaism developed its theology of glory are presented under the title of

'Theologia gloriae', this is done bearing in mind the further meaning that this phrase has acquired in more recent Christian theology: it is a theology that has somehow put the nights and terrors of the judgment behind itself, without integrating them in depth. And when at places here we see points of transition from the theological glory to 'philosophical' beauty (with the splendour of the *theion* which points to its fulfilment above), then such places shows us clearly the loss of substance involved, no matter how meaningful such openings of the biblical perspective into the general metaphysical sphere may be from another point of view.

1. GLORY AHEAD

a. The glorious image of Jerusalem

In the deeply tragic futurist dynamics of messianism in exilic and post-exilic prophecy, one element comes to fruition that had characterised Israel's theology from the beginning. The dynamics of the religion of the patriarchs was essentially oriented to taking possession of the land; the Yahwist had to make the fulfilment for the patriarchs only provisional, in that Abraham was permitted only to acquire a burial place for himself in the field of Ephron the Hittite. The dynamic of the period of Moses and Joshua, and most strongly of all in the Book of Deuteronomy, was totally oriented to the definitive occupation of the land: but no matter how splendid the description of the entry may be in the saga of Joshua, the historical reality was no less questionable (Judg 1–3). The conquest of the remaining parts of the land by the first kings, who thereby incorporated ancient pagan peoples into the realm of their sovereignty, led directly to the flagrant breaches of the covenant that the covenant God answered through the destruction of the amphictyony. From of old, the glory of this God had lacked true presence; the model of promise and fulfilment within historical time remained a mere model that left space for a future and for hope, all the more strongly in that the prophets must condemn the present. In the case of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, there exists a certain equilibrium between judgment (going as far as total destruction) and promise of a subsequent 'new Zion', a 'new and eternal covenant' with the purification from all sins and the pouring-out of the divine Spirit into the hearts. Was this reversal then not intended in an historical sense?

Deutero-Isaiah declares: Israel's 'iniquity is pardoned, she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins' (40.2; 51.17, etc.). It is thus that the sweet, almost intoxicating song of consolation by this prophet can sound. At one point of her history, Israel has the judgment behind her and has come into the area of sheer mercy. Thus the return of the exiles can be proclaimed as a pure event of salvation. But the historical reality became almost the opposite of this: arrival at a heap of ruins, poverty, hindrance, loss of rights, with boundless disappointment as the consequence.

Here *Trito-Isaiah* (Is 55–66), a disciple of the exilic prophet,[1] dares to take an extreme step: the coming of God's glory in the re-established union of the tribes and in the redeemed Jerusalem will be seen in the immediate historical future. His central message (chs. 60–62, as well as 57.14–20; 65.16b–25; 66.6–16) is a pure and extravagant declaration of salvation, using the vocabulary of glory with a hitherto unknown lavishness.

'Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising' (60.1–3). And already the *kabod* (i.e., the wealth and beauty) 'of Lebanon' too is on its way, especially 'the cypress, the plane and the pine' in order to 'make glorious' the temple (v. 13), and Jerusalem sucks the breast of kings (v. 16). 'Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land for ever, the shoot of my planting, the work of my hands, that I might be glorified (or: in order to be beautiful)' (v. 21). There is an eternal marriage between God and the people (61.10; 62.4–5) and eternal exultation, while God creates Heaven and earth anew round the glorified Jerusalem (65.17–25). The image of glory, which the author certainly initially understands as earthly,[2] is raised to a yet higher plane (doubtless by another hand): 'The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night; but the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory (*tip'eret*)' (60.19).

Apart from its projection into the future, two things about this concept of glory are noteworthy. It is positive that it is an 'integrated' *kabod*: glory that is understood at the same time as God's salvation in the widest sense. Thus, at 62.2 'glory' stands together with *sedaka* (*cf.* 58.8); and the glorious light of Jerusalem, to which all the peoples flow (66.18), is at the same time the great peace of God (57.19; 66.12). On the other hand, the original *kabod*, which was to be described only in a dialectic way, has risen into a curiously unambiguous 'light'. God rises almost like a star; instead of the event of revelation we have a kind of mild state of being revealed. 'The element of war is completely missing, and all that remains of the accompanying phenomena of the coming of God is the shining forth of the light; thus the older concept of epiphany is strongly spiritualised, and the words resemble the manner in which the New Testament (especially the Gospel of John) speaks of light and darkness.'[3] Other concepts (e.g., that of 'anointing', 61.1) appear 'worn down,' the language becomes literary. And beside the divine glory, the worldly beauty of the 'bride' on whom God heaps so many privileges becomes a theme at the margin too. Nevertheless, it is Trito-Isaiah too who has composed the great ch. 58 on false and true fasting, the latter understood as corporal works of mercy, portrayed with almost as much urgency as in Jesus' discourse on the judgment of the world (Matt 25): if one frees those unjustly imprisoned, shares one's bread with the hungry, shelters the homeless poor, clothes the naked, does not turn away from 'one's own flesh' (*cf.* Deut 22.2), then one's 'light shall break forth like the dawn'. 'Your righteousness shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard' (58.6–8): here, then, the light that is embraced by the glory of God is the light of love, which is at the same time *sedaka*, doing what is required by God's covenantal will. Chs. 59 and 63, the two great psalms of the people's lamentation from the time of the exile (63) and from the post-exilic period (59), underline the seriousness of the expectation of salvation: the prophet has dared to answer this expectation with the words, 'We look for light, and behold, darkness, and for brightness, but we walk in gloom! . . . We look for *mishpat*, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far from us' (59.9, 11). The remembrance of the history of the people makes their sin known, and the cry in need rises up to the only 'Father' God, who must let himself be moved and must not let the hearts of the children become hardened: 'Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down!' (63.16; 64.1). The word 'face' is used repeatedly in this context—expressing the directness from person to person—as is the word 'Spirit': for the fathers have offended God's holy Spirit, and the Lord's Spirit led the people into rest (63.10, 11, 14; *cf.* 59.21; Hag 2.5; Zech 4.6b; 12.10). These are words expressing intimacy, which scarcely call for an external manifestation of glory. The cry is deeper than anything that the prophet knows how to promise, even when he leaves the fullness of salvation indeterminate behind the extravagance of the images of glory: earthly, material contents are predominant in the promises (60.16, 17). At the same time, the consciousness becomes stronger that Israel's light exists for the world. Even if, to begin with, its light 'draws' the peoples and the kings, and they bring their presents, a movement in the opposite direction begins too: the temple opens for the foreigners (56.3f.), God will even choose some of them as priests and levites (66.21), and some of those who return from exile will be 'sent out' again by God to the peoples, 'and they shall declare my glory among the nations' (66.19). It is a premonition of the new covenant.[4]

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[1] K. Elliger, *Deuterojesaia in seinem Verhältnis zu Tritojesaia*, Beitr. Wiss. ANT IV 11, 1953.

[2] C. Westermann, *Das Buch Jesaja Kp. 44–66*, ATD (1966), pp. 238ff.

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[3] *Ibid.*, p. 284. The interpretation of the glory of God as a dawning light is already present at Is 9.1.

A song-cycle which has been introduced into the Book of *Baruch* (4.5–9a, 9b–16, 17–29, 30–37; 5.1–4, 5–9, the last song almost identical to Psalms of Solomon 11.2–7, from the first century before Christ) shows that the spiritual situation which is caught by Trito-Isaiah did not lose its relevance in the course of the centuries. Now it is Jerusalem herself, the 'nursing mother', who is the 'abandoned one' who speaks words of consolation to her exiled children and indicates that they will have God's help to return soon; here too, extravagant use is made of glory (δόξα), radiance (λαμπρότης) and beauty (εὐπρέπεια), here too δόξα and light are virtually one and the same (5.9), and δόξα is understood in an integrated sense; the author can speak of the 'glory of the fear of God' (δόξα θεοσεβείας), and glory is closely linked to 'joy', 'mercy', 'righteousness' (5.9). In the hymn of *Tobit* (Tob 13.9–18), a bright radiance goes forth from the rebuilt Jerusalem, because 'the glory of the heavenly King' dwells in it, and the whole city with its gates and towers is made of precious stones and pure gold (*cf.* Is 54.11f.). Thus, when *Judith* carries out her mighty deed 'for the glorification of Jerusalem' (Jdt 13.4), it is not for nothing that the radiant splendour falls on the heroine: she is the glory of Jerusalem (15.9), who struck down the enemy 'with the beauty (κάλλος) of her countenance' (16.7). In order 'to lead him astray', she adorned herself: 'her sandals ravished his eyes, her beauty captivated his mind' (16.8–9).

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[4] The Book of Jonah takes up problems of mission in its own way: Israel may not flee like Jonah from God's missionary commission, and above all it may not be jealous like Jonah of the Gentiles who could come to salvation.

But these are only intermezzi. It is the prophets of the second building of the temple who carry the great lines of thought forward: in order to stimulate those who have become discouraged, *Haggai* takes up afresh the promise of the Second and Third Isaiahs, but with a new, significant nuance: 'Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not in your sight as nothing?' (Hag 2.3). But one must have patience, for 'in a very little while' God will shake all the peoples, and then all the treasures of the world will be brought together here (for 'the silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts'). Then 'the latter splendour of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give *shalom*, says the Lord of hosts' (2.6–9). But today, when the splendour seems 'as nothing', in the interval between the glories, 'My Spirit abides among you'. This Spirit must take the place of the missing glory, or is he indeed its full equivalent? This Spirit 'today' (2.15, 18, 19) means: first one must seek and build the house of God, then one's own; the temple is the image of the covenant and the kingdom.[5] This Spirit means therefore: transcendence even in tribulation and disappointment. And the temple is to be built without foreign help (which would then have led to a right to shared authority on the part of Samaria and Persia), and without ecumenical excuses (2.14); salvation is to radiate forth, not from a *mixtum compositum*, but from Israel as representative.

Zechariah, with whom prophecy ends and apocalyptic begins, sees in the third of the eight visions of a single night how an angel measures the extent of Jerusalem and another resists him: 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, because of the multitude of men and cattle in it. For I will be to her a wall of fire round about, and I will fill her with my glory within' (2.5–9). Despite this protest, Nehemiah will soon afterwards complete the walls around the earthly Jerusalem (Esr 4.12; Neh 3). And yet the defencelessness of the city promised by God seems to go together with the promise of the glory within the city and its protective fiery light that radiates out from it. The picture sketched here is still earthly (men and cattle in multitudes dwell in the city), but, as in Trito-Isaiah, nevertheless goes beyond itself into the supernatural dimension. As in Haggai, the immediate expectation is earthly and concrete: this even dares to identify an historical figure, Zerubbabel, as the Messiah-designate, as the 'branch' meant by Jeremiah (Jer 23.5f.; Hag 2.23; Zech 3.8; 4.6b; 6.12);[6] the expectation of the coming of God as king (2.14; 8.3) and of the complete fulfilment of the covenant (8.8b) is likewise concrete. No less concrete are the prophecies about the Jerusalem of the last times which are fully developed in Deutero-Zechariah (9–14). This will at first be beset by an attack of hostile peoples,[7] then it will be raised up on a high mountain after a miraculous transformation of the landscape, where it will give light and water to the world and will become the place of pilgrimage for all peoples; from this place, according to Isaiah, Jahweh's will and law will be proclaimed to the whole world (Is 2.2–4). But before this elevation of Jerusalem in the last times through the prophets from earth to Heaven[8] takes place, apocalyptic has already come in: Ezekiel sees 'in divine visions' (40.2) the city on a very high mountain, and for Zechariah there opens up a whole visionary space that shows future reality as proleptically present where God is. From the perspective of apocalyptic, the city which is raised up in the last times is the holy city that descends from God 'in the radiance of the glory of God' (Rev 21.10–11).

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[5] G. von Rad, *ThOT* II, 282.

[6] The designation here has passed from Zerubbabel to the high priest Joshua; both figures are united, as bearers of the kingly and the priestly ministries, in the fifth vision (ch. 4). On a further layer added to the text, *cf.* Elliger, *Kleine Propheten* II, ATD (1951), p. 122.

[7] Here there may also be pre-Davidic mythic motifs which have already been 'historicised' in the Canaanite period, as Ps 110.5–7 seems to hint. On the whole question, *cf.* K. L. Schmidt, 'Jerusalem als Urbild und Abbild',

b. Messianic hope

The attempt, shown here, to make the coming of the glory of God—which recedes at every point—immediately follow the present age, in the aftermath of judgment, must be located within a larger context. What appears in the final stadium as an extravagant utopia has its roots in the entire phenomenon of Israelite prophecy, which in turn is based in the preceding self-understanding of Israel as the partner in God's covenant. To put it very briefly: as reflection on the essence of the covenant goes ever deeper (as happens, for example, in Deuteronomy), the people are confronted in an ever more terrifying degree with the glory of the absolute subject, to whom ultimately no historical situation has truly been able to make the proper response: the historical books had pitilessly disclosed the sin and failure of even the greatest representatives, and the Jahwist had set his pessimistic anthropology as a preface to the whole course of history. In

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Eranos-Jahrbuch 1950, pp. 207f.; J. Schreiner, *Sion-Jerusalem, Jahwes Königssitz*, 1963 (bibliography); E. Rohland, *Die Bedeutung der Erwählungstraditionen Israels für die Eschatologie der alttestamentlichen Propheten*, diss. Heidelberg (1956), pp. 145f.

[8] Zech 14.6–11, to be compared with Is 2.2–5; Mic 4.1–5; Ezek 17.22; 40.2.

the origin on Sinai,[9] against which no historical period could truly measure itself with any positive outcome, there lay not only a power that pointed essentially into the future—for Israel had never been tempted to understand its covenant history in an evolutionary manner, as an increasing approximation to the grace and the requirement of the origin—but also a power of the future such that the people were directed, beyond any human capacity for realisation, essentially to an original new action of Jahweh himself. The increasing depth of reflection on the absoluteness of the starting-point requires that the realisation too be absolute, not only extensively—in that God shows himself to be the only God, and thus the God of all peoples and of the whole of history—but also intensively, in that the personality of the absolute divine subject finds a corresponding personality also in the subject of the partner, a personality that translates into reality everything that in the actual making of the covenant as yet remained only in the realm of ideas.

Here lies the theological origin of all the expectations that clustered around a Messiah or a figure like the Messiah. The inherent unclarity of all these concepts is due to the fact that they must at one and the same time remain within history and burst the bounds of history. Within history, they must link up with the origins, in order to make clear what is coming,[10] but they must also explode history, because the full answer to these expectations could be expected only from God, in a coming of God upon earth such that this must necessarily be both absolute judgment and absolute fulfilment. Drawing on the conceptual material of myth in the ancient cultures that lay at hand[11] in order to describe this paradox was indeed permissible, but remained secondary; its expressive power was in the end limited when compared with what was to be said on the basis of Israel's religious understanding of its existence.

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[9] The merit of being the first to see this anew belongs to E. Sellin, *Der alttestamentliche Prophetismus*, 1912. His line of thought is carried further by L. Dürr, *Ursprung und Ausbau der israelitisch-jüdischen Heilandserwartung*, 1925.

[10] A new exodus is to take place (Hosea, Deutero-Isaiah), a new covenant is to be made (Jeremiah, Ezekiel), a new David is to come (Is 11.1) with a new Zion (Is 1.26).

[11] W. Eichrodt. *ThAT* I (4th edn. 1950), 252 n. 4.

Israel, like the rest of the ancient peoples,[12] had no (linear) understanding of time at the outset. Although the theological reflection of the period of the kings and prophets made such an understanding necessary from within Israel, this was true only in a dialectical sense, because it always transcended the (linear) understanding of time: the fulfilment which was prophesied, for which one could live and hope, lay both in the future (which, as time, corresponded to the historical past) and in another dimension of duration which could be encompassed and made accessible only through the transition through what H. W. Wolff calls the 'situation of zero-point', of total discontinuity in judgment. Therefore there was also a germ of apocalyptic in all prophecy (in intratemporal language, a germ of utopia). And since prophecy could not admit any kind of temporal (evolutionary) mediation of God's new action—which had an absolute urgency that became visible in the impossibility of delaying the judgment on Jerusalem—*all prophecy has imminent expectation as its inner form* in which there lie both the fulfilment and the transcendence of historical time which as a whole stands under judgment. This alone explains why the 'tragic dimension' of Old Testament prophecy cannot be removed: it must make an absolute promise and demand for the imminent future, and the coming of this absolute must and will be recognisable in historical events on the level of historical continuity.

In the Hexateuch, there was the naively-applied schema of promise and fulfilment (promise of the land and occupation of the land); we have already seen that this was continually transcended.[13] Within this schema stood the first messianic promises: the prophecy about Judah in the blessing of Jacob (Gen 49.8f.) and the last of Balaam's oracles (Num 24.7, 17), which find their preliminary fulfilment in the coming of David. But David is not the end: he himself receives new promises for his house (2 Sam 7), and precisely the introduction of the oriental court ceremonial, with its creation of mythical qualities, into Jerusalem becomes an occasion and a stimulus to reflect on the extravagant royal titles from foreign sources in the light of the covenant relationship: is David, the heir of the old Jebusite royal ceremonial, to be seen as the adoptive son (Ps 2.6), indeed as the natural, 'begotten' son of God (Ps 2.7; 110.3), as a 'god' (Ps 45.7)? Is the king the representative of the entire divine salvific righteousness on earth, instituted by God himself *in all seriousness* (and not only in the words of courtly flattery), so that all who are deprived of their rights, the poor and the oppressed can set their sure hope on him (Ps 72)? In that case, he must be a king who sits with full right on the throne of Jahweh himself (1 Chron 28.5; 29.23; 2 Chron 9.8) while giving the honour and the kingdom back to God in fullness (1 Chron 29.11f.). 1 Sam 8 had seen through the historical character of the king once and for all in its deeply questionable nature; but Isaiah takes up the spotless image, adds the spotless Zion as the seat where God is present, and projects the whole into the future. It is significant, and characteristic of Isaiah's seriousness, that the messianic king on David's throne is precisely not clothed with words of glory, but is characterised by means of two concepts: divine justice (9.6; 11.4–5)[14] and divine Spirit (11.2), and further, that he appears, not simply as a descendant of David, but has an origin in what is David's own origin (11.1; Mic 5.1; *cf.* Amos 9.11). Isaiah's Messiah stands in a unique manner in the covenantal space of God which has been opened up; the extent to which this is true is illustrated by the mythical image used in the Psalms, which the prophet dares to take up afresh: 'mighty God' (9.5).

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[12] G. von Rad has set this out almost too strongly in: 'The Origins of Hebrew Thought about History', *ThOT* Vol. II, 99–112.

[13] Above, pp. 178, 195.

In the messianic text in Micah which depends on Isaiah, the king who comes from the clan of Ephrathah (the clan of

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[14] On the basis of these texts, 2.3b too can be understood of the function of the Messiah in proclaiming and enforcing God's law from Zion. The effect of the covenant when it is put into action is salvation and peace (11.6–9) and 'the knowledge of God' in the whole land (11.9). Only in the secondary text Hab 2.14 do we find the pleonastic expansion: 'knowledge of the glory of God'.

David: 1 Sam 17.12) 'shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of Yahweh, in the majesty (*ga'on*) of the name of the Lord his God' (5.3); the imminent expectation is that this king, together with his mighty men, will drive off and pursue the menacing Assyrians (5.4–5). In Jeremiah, the 'true branch of David' (23.5) is not only the 'true king', but is also admitted to an unparalleled intimacy with God himself (30.21): this statement is the counterpart to what Isaiah says about the sixfold gifts of the Spirit. And thus, when he comes, Ezekiel can say that the whole judgment is entrusted to him by God (21.32). But at this point the figure of the Messiah definitively goes beyond his royal prototypes, and it is now around this figure that other, likewise transcendent images cluster.[15] The intimacy with God identifies the Messiah as the 'prophet' whom Moses promises at Deut 18.15f.: equal to him in rank, since Moses had an intimacy with God that was never equalled (Num 12.6–8) and was the true mediator for whom the people had asked at Horeb (Deut 5.25f.). This intimacy likewise identifies him as the (high) priest, since David too was already 'according to the order of (the Jebusite priest-king) Melchisedek' (Ps 110.4); and Ezekiel too had characterised the Messiah as priest (44.3; 45.16f.; 46.2f.). Deutero-Zechariah adds, at the margin of the image of the Messiah, the perfect image of the one who is faithful to the covenant as docile and humble (9.9). But it is also important to note that other great figures of the history of the people could no longer be included in this image: above all, that of the Servant of the Lord and silent lamb in Deutero-Isaiah (who had, moreover, already bestowed the title of Messiah on Cyrus), whose successor is doubtless the one 'pierced through' for whom lamentation is made at Zech 12.10; the same is true of the angel or messenger of God and of the returning Elijah (Mal 3.23), and above all of the Son of Man of apocalyptic (Dan 7, Books of Enoch, 2 Esdras), whose clear pre-existence in Heaven cannot fit into the traditional image of the Messiah. It is only when prophecy falls silent and a distance is achieved from it that the immanent apocalyptic element in prophecy can then be seen, and the unity of Messiah and Son of Man be established.

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[15] It is more correct to discuss the Messiah as Jahweh's warrior (*cf.* Ps 2 and 110) when we discuss apocalyptic.

c. Poor before God

If the Messiah of the final times is to establish on earth the divine justice (*sedek*, *mishpat*) which is based on God's grace, and if this deed essentially affects those without rights, the oppressed, who cannot help themselves, then the 'poor man' moves more strongly than before into the centre of attention. The poverty of the population of the land, who were shamelessly exploited in the time of Amos and Isaiah in the newly-founded royal system of government, was seen by the prophets both as a scandal of economics and ethics and as a scandal in terms of covenant theology. Poverty as such is not a value,[16] should not be, and must at all costs be abolished.[17] It humiliates the human person to the status of a needy beggar (*'ebjon*), to one who is bowed down (*'ani*), thin, physically and intellectually weak (*dal*), one who is absolutely poor (*rash*). Job describes how the poor are naked and hungry at night, like beasts in the fields and in the vineyards of the rich where they look for food—and it is these same rich people who have stolen their fields and garments (24.2–12). Deuteronomy thinks of these poor when laying down the law, and the wisdom teachers warn against turning away one's eyes from them, lest their curse follow the one who is well-fed (Sir 4.5). But if Yahweh's justice is incarnated in his people, then a very close relationship is established between idolatry and the oppression of the poor, so that these become interchangeable terms: then God takes zealous action both for his name and for the poor, and his judgment extirpates the proud and haughty, who have taken this attitude *vis-à-vis* God and the poor simultaneously.

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[16] This is clearly set out by H. Bruppacher, *Die Beurteilung der Armut im Alten Testament*, 1924. On the whole question, see the well-balanced study by A. Gelin, *Les Pauvres de Jahwé*, 3rd edn. 1956 (German trans.: *Die Armen—sein Volk*, 3rd edn. 1957).

[17] Naturally, the realism of the Old Testament knows about the poverty that is one's own fault, and Proverbs especially rebukes laziness: 6.9–11, 24.30–32; 27.19 and frequently.

Zephaniah is the first to understand this, and thereby raises poverty to a theological concept.

I will remove from your midst
your proudly exultant ones,
and you shall no longer be haughty
in my holy mountain.
For I will leave in the midst of you
a people humble and lowly (*'ani*, *dal*).
They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord,
those who are left in Israel (Zeph 3.11b–13a).

The concept of spiritual poverty is now made available: 'Seek righteousness (*sedek*), seek humility (*'anawa*); perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the wrath of the Lord' (2.3); the Psalms develop this,[18] but it is Jeremiah, persecuted, ridiculed and humiliated, who describes himself as *'ebjon* (20.3), who offers the visible model, so to speak, and later becomes the true patron of the spirituality of the poor. Poverty is now the condition of helplessness, without rights, that unfailingly draws God's attention to itself. Even if he dwells in the lofty heights, yet he is 'with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite' (Is 57.15). 'Heaven is my throne . . . but this is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble (*'ani*) and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word' (Is 66.2). And as we have seen,[19] when Israel as a whole becomes poor and deprived of rights in exile, it receives the right of admission to the mercy of God.

But here there begin once again the unclarity and the dialectic that are characteristic of the old covenant as it draws to a close. The one who is concretely poor, and likewise the one who openly confesses his poverty before God, knows that he belongs to those whom God favours, to those who are in the right situation, the righteous. The great *'anawim*-prayers like Ps 9–10, 25, 34, and 37 make a close connection between humiliation and triumph; the poor know that they are God's true people, whom God is obliged to save and to glorify:

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[18] S. Mowinckel, *Psalmenstudien* I (1921), pp. 113f. H. Birkeland, *'Ani und 'Anaw in den Psalmen*, Oslo 1923. J. van der Ploeg, 'Les pauvres d'Israël et leur piété', in: *Oudtest. Stud.* 7 (1950), pp. 236–270.

[19] Above, p. 172.

> For the Lord takes pleasure in his people,
> he adorns the humble (*'anawim*) with victory.
> Let the faithful (*hasidim*) exult in glory (*kabod*)
> (Ps 149.4–5).

The more deeply the 'poor' man bows down before God, the higher can he also triumph over the 'proud' when they are judged and when they fall—and they will fall soon. The expressions of the vocabulary of poverty have 'become proud titles of honour' (R. Kittel),[20] especially after the exile. And just as everything in Judaism comes together in groups ('sects'), so there exists now the group of the poor also, not precisely as an organised brotherhood,[21] but still as a movement that is visible in some way.[22] They have understood the demand made by the Lord of the covenant, to let go of themselves and be stripped of everything, throwing themselves into his grace; the stripping takes place in the confession of sins, which—in keeping with the continuing power of the theory of immanent righteousness[23]—is also a confession of misfortune; by giving both, inextricably bound with each other, into the hands of God, they have the right to immediate, concrete rescue. 'I am poor (*'ani*) and needy (*'ebjon*); but the Lord takes thought for me. Thou art my help and my deliverer; do not tarry, O my God!' (Ps 40.18). For the Bible, humility is only one aspect of *'anawa* as the condition of being bowed down before God (like Moses at Num 12.3); but the Old Testament constellation, which does not know of any opening into a life beyond death, and above all offers no trinitarian foundation of lowliness and humiliation, makes this fundamental attitude continually reflect upon itself, and establishes a clear relationship between humiliation and glorification.

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[20] *Die Psalmen* (1922), p. 286.

[21] As was held especially by A. Cause, *Les 'Pauvres' d'Israël* (1922); *cf.* also A. Rahlfs, *'Ani und 'anaw in den Psalmen* (1892).

[22] W. Baudissin, 'Die alttestamentliche Religion und die Armen', in: *Preuss. Jb.* 1912, pp. 209–224.

[23] Above, pp. 126, 164f.

> The reward for humility (ʿ*anawa*) and fear of the Lord
> is riches and honour and life (Prov 22.4).
> The fear of the Lord is instruction in wisdom, and
> humility (ʿ*anawa*) goes before honour (Prov 15.33).
> Before destruction a man's heart is haughty, but
> humility (ʿ*anawa*) goes before honour (Prov 18.12).

Since it is precisely the 'person that is greatly distressed, that goes about bent over and feeble' who 'will ascribe to thee glory and righteousness, O Lord' (Bar 2.18), God cannot respond to these in any other way than with exaltation. While this path can lead directly to the Magnificat and to the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount, it can also lead, with equal directness, to the Jewish arrogance which Jesus rebuked in the Pharisees.

This dialectic of poverty takes on an ultimate, almost intolerable intensification in the Qumran community, where it is united to the dialectic of the figure of the Messiah which was described above. Here we find the usual declarations of lowliness piled up and strengthened: the pious man is not only poor, wretched and small,[24] despised and scorned,[25] thrust down into the realm of the dead,[26] but he is above all the radical sinner who can never justify himself[27] and who therefore trusts utterly in justification through the grace of God and must spring with both feet into this grace.[28] But when this leap has been made, i.e. once one has entered the community of 'purity'—which is a sign of divine predestination—then the praise of God sounds just as 'Pharisaic' as the figure whom Jesus describes in the temple: 'I praise you, Lord, for you have not let my lot fall in the community of deceit, nor determined a place for me in the fellowship of those who belong to darkness . . .'[29] The one who is elect walks 'in perfection in all the ways' of God,[30] and knows that he is determined for eternal life.[31] The War Scroll, one of the most appalling documents of religious aberration, portrays the eschatological battle of the two Messiahs—one a layman from the tribe of Judah, the other a priest from Levi—against the sons of Belial: the disciplined battle-array of those who once were 'poor' and 'humble' cuts the ranks of the evil to pieces in a kind of liturgical battle ceremony, led on by the clergy blowing trumpets.[32]

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[24] 1QH (Thanksgiving Hymns) II 32, 34.
[25] 1QH II 9–13; IV 8; V 14.20–21.
[26] 1QH VIII 26f.; IX 3f.
[27] 1QH I 25–26; IV 29–30; VII 28.
[28] 1QS (Community Rule) XI 2 XI 9–15; 1QH IV 37.

Although the fellowship of goods in Qumran was meant as an expression of the renunciation of hated riches, of 'the net of Belial',[33] one cannot speak of a genuine 'ideal of poverty' in the sociological sense.[34] In the Old Testament, genuine (not spiritual) poverty remains clearly an evil that is to be avoided; the new evaluation by Christ presupposes a new basis for the whole concept of the covenant.

[29] 1QH VII 134.

[30] Damascus Document II 15–16; VII 5.

[31] Damascus Document III 19.

[32] On the dialectic 'of radical awareness of one's own nothingness and consciousness of sin on the one hand, and of the highest awareness of election and perfection on the other hand', which is 'the special characteristic of the anthropology' of Qumran, and on the distance between the teaching on justification by pure grace and Paul's teaching on justification, *cf.* J. Maier, *Die Texte vom Toten Meer*, Vol. II, *Anmerkungen* (1960), p. 68. On the 'piety of the poor' at Qumran, *cf. ibid.*, pp. 83f.

[33] This is how wealth is described in the Damascus document (A) IV 15; but there is no fellowship of goods in force here.

[34] A. Gelin will be correct to say that 'there is no spiritual poverty without real poverty', and that the meaning of the renunciation of private property (at least to a certain extent) at Qumran was 'to create anew also the material preconditions for poverty', the conditions that stood at the basis of the theological-spiritual evaluation in the earlier prophets. But he is also correct to draw attention to the ethics of community in Plato and in Pythagoreism, to which the atmosphere of Qumran stands closer than to the ideal of Christ and of the primitive Church: *op. cit.* (n. 16 above), pp. 95–97.

2. GLORY ABOVE

a. Daniel

The hope of glory in the purely temporal future lacked one dimension, which had indeed been present, sensed in the background, after Elijah was taken up to Heaven, Isaiah saw the majesty of God, and Ezekiel saw God's glory in the fury of the storm as he carried out judgment, but which opened wide only in the Maccabean period with Daniel's visions. This newly-opened space between the Heaven of God and the earth of men and their history not only creates distance: it is a space that takes its life from the tremendous tensions of the heavenly action, that is filled with transcendental powers of history and catches up what happens in the world into the transcendence, in a way that serves only to intensify yet further the impact of the temporal-eschatological pressure as the gaze is directed vertically on high. The opening-up ('apocalypse') of the space between Heaven and earth in the central vision of the Book of Daniel (ch. 7) allows one to see both the drama of the forces of history in the presence of God—in the form of the four 'monstrous' apocalyptic beasts—and the scene of judgment in Heaven: the judge's throne set up, the fiery seat of God's glory, the myriads of angels, and 'with the clouds one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days', who then 'was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed' (7.9–14). At least this vision is something genuinely seen in a revelation,[1] something that cannot be derived from the already existing mythological elements,[2] and something that looks across directly to the concluding revelatory visions of the Apocalypse of John, whereas everything that lies between these two, above all the Books of Enoch, is obviously mere literary imitation. In particular, there is nothing derivative—unless the source be the reserved hint of Ezekiel (1.26)—about the figure of the pre-existent Son of Man in Heaven on whom the messianic kingdom of the final age is conferred, although there is not the least explanation of how this heavenly figure could at the same time be a descendant of David, and there is no hint of a connection with the vicariously suffering Servant of the Lord. The dimension which opens up in Daniel is fundamentally a christological dimension, although one in which no kind of synthesis is foreseeable between the elements which are put forward, and the inquisitive imitators of Daniel—the apocalyptists of the two last centuries before Christ and of the first Christian century—will take possession of the space opened up here in a wholly unprovidential manner.

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[1] 'One is strongly tempted to hold that here we have the description of an actual ecstatic experience, whatever may be said about some of the later visions': Norman W. Porteous, *Daniel* (1965), p. 107.

[2] The derivation of the four beasts from known or 'unknown' myths (Gunkel, Bentzen, Heaton) offers little help to the interpreter. The fact that

Although the genuinely visionary character of the three last visions of Daniel (chs. 8, 9, and 10–12) is less assured (since everything there aims at an exact calculation of the imminent coming of the Messiah), the aspect of the judgment which is being carried out at every moment by the battles of the heavenly forces attains greater prominence at 10.13, and thus it is possible that 'the holy ones of the Most High' (7.22, 25, 27) were originally the angels,[3] who belong to the Son of Man and form a kind of heavenly community together with him, before this expression was transferred to the community of the pious on earth. We sense the outlines of a society of angels and men that spans Heaven and earth; and this means that is is possible to think—though still only by way of an unclear perception—of a resurrection that bursts the boundaries of death, at least for the pious who are worthy of

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the beasts rise out of the stormy sea may indeed be a reminiscence of the Babylonian creation-myth, but the motif is not developed in Daniel; nor do we have a 'creation battle' here, but the historical struggle in the last period of history.

[3] M. Noth, 'Die Heiligen des Höchsten' (1955), now in: *Ges. Stud. AT* (1957), pp. 274–290.

eternity (12.2); there had been only one hint of this hitherto, in the apocalypse of Isaiah (Is 26.19) which is very difficult to date. But when once the space between time and eternity has been opened up, then it is not only world history that find its representation there: the individual too enters this space with his destiny—however mysterious this may be.

With the appearance of the fighting angelic powers, the seer feels that the definitive judgment of the entire history of the world has begun. Storms break over the heads of men, as described in the Hellenistic-rhetorical images of the Second Book of Maccabees; the glory of God in the sacred war has taken on a new eschatological-historical form of theophany: 'About this time Antiochus made his second invasion of Egypt. And it happened that over all the city, for almost forty days, there appeared golden-clad horsemen charging through the air, in companies fully armed with lances and drawn swords—troops of horsemen drawn up, attacks and counter-attacks made on this side and on that, brandishing of shields, massing of spears, hurling of missiles, the flash of golden trappings, and armour of all sorts . . .' (2 Macc 5.1–3). When we read this, our mind wanders over to Homer and Vergil and to German mythology; in Daniel however everything remains oriented to the time of the Messiah.

The midrashim on the ancient stories from the period of the exile (Dan 1–6) are also oriented to the principal theme: Daniel and his companions are introduced into the world of the pagan court; but this is not like Joseph and Moses, for they are representatives of their people; when they take part in the international 'literature and wisdom' (1.17, 20), they are not like Solomon, but do so as men who have been deported and therefore humiliated.[4] Their career (2.48f.) does not excuse them from the obligation of bearing testimony with their lives in the fiery furnace (3.19f.) and the lions' den (6.17f.; 14.31f.): in situations evocative of the final times. And the royal dreams which must be interpreted are likewise dreams of the final times: the composite colossus will fall

[4] The prayer of penitence in Dan 9 shows the deep solidarity of Daniel with the members of his people: he feels the exile to be a punishment by God and a 'confusion of face', dishonour (9.7, 8).

because of the Messiah (2.44), the worldly king must go down into the ultimate humiliation in order that the lowest of men can be exalted (4.14), and the proud king who did not give God the glory will be measured, weighed and cut off, and must yield to another (5.22–30). In the first part of the book, as in the second part, God establishes his sovereignty over all the great powers of the world.

A final characteristic of Daniel's prophetic ministry is connected with the opening-up of the space between earth and Heaven: the seer and his various states take on a certain thematic quality—powerlessness, fainting, falling down, and being touched and raised up again by the revealing power (10.11, 16, 18). The man who is to rise from the dead into the eschatological sphere already has his home there, from a certain point of view, and something of the one who reveals and of his revelation is even now able to be discerned from the situation of the seer, as from a mirror. In the biblical seers—Daniel, Paul, John—this 'mystical' element remains strictly related to the commission of revelation and is measured through this commission; the situation is a part of the mission, and the seers have their existential share—although this is the share of an instrument—in the event that they must proclaim. If this criterion and this pure relatedness to the matter in question is missing, then there is no way of avoiding the fall into the ambiguities of the occult, of inquisitive gnosis, and of the process whereby the human person makes himself the theme of the revelation, as is seen in what follows.

Daniel says very little about the glory of God, just as the Apocalypse of John likewise displays a chaste reserve. This, however, is not true of the apocalyptic literature that spreads out between Daniel and John. In their inquisitiveness, they press forwards and break through, making inquiries about the heavenly realm like tourists and having angels lead them even to the throne of the glory on high. It is worthwhile taking a brief look at these side-shots of Jewish literature, because it is easier then to follow the development of the chief line.

b. At the throne of glory

Just as previously the messianic hope had unleashed an extravagant flourishing of declarations of glory concerning the earthly future, so now the apocalyptic which was unleashed by Daniel unleashed in turn a flood of experiences of glory in the heavenly realm, which is at the same time the still-hidden new age which the mystic proleptically reconnoitres.[5] But since the world has grown old[6] and is hastening at greater speed towards its end,[7] this new age will soon be the age of all men. 'Everything that is corruptible passes away, everything that is mortal departs; thus the whole of the present time passes from the memory . . . We wish what is future to come now, we create what comes afterwards. For there exists a time that does not pass away; the time that remains forever is coming, the new world which no longer hands over to corruption those who attain it in blessedness. But it has no mercy with those who go into the torment.'[8] While the earthly messianism has somehow put the judgment behind itself, this judgment is once again expected in the future, as the transition between the ages. The transition from time to what lies above time,[9] from this world to the new Heaven and the new earth,[10] brings at the same time the definitive divorce of good and evil, a righteous judgment that is found in all this literature, without exception. The link between the old covenant theology with its requirement of absolute decision for God, with its either/or of blessing and curse, and the new doctrine of the ages automatically generates such an eschatology with Heaven and Hell. The old age, which is making swiftly for its end, is most profoundly mixed, mutable, polarised, two-sided and ambiguous; this experience of existence was already familiar to Ecclesiastes, and it is more strongly the experience of the apocalyptists,[11] who therefore count the temporal dimension as a dark 'cloud'[12] and a 'prison',[13] yearningly praying for the great turning-point: 'Show thy glory with all speed, and delay not with thy promise!'[14] Baruch is instructed to teach the people: 'They are to learn that in the last time they will no longer die',[15] for even now the old age is in labour like a pregnant woman who can no longer hold in the fruit of her womb.[16]

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[5] The apocrypha and pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament are cited according to the editions of E. Kautzsch (1900) and P. Riessler (*Altjüdisches Schrifttum ausserhalb der Bibel*, 1928 = R). The latter collection is much fuller. [English translation: H. F. D. Sparks, ed., *The Apocryphal Old Testament*, Oxford 1984.]

[6] 2 Esd 5.50; 14.10, 16; Ascension of Moses 7.1; Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch 85.10.

[7] Syriac Apoc. Bar. 20.1–2; years of life growing fewer: Jubilees 23.9; Enoch 80.2; 2 Esd 4.26.

[8] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 44.9, 11f.; 74.2–3.

[9] Slavonic Enoch 65; 2 Esd 7.30f.; Testament of Job 36.3, 5.

[10] Ps.-Philo 3.10; Enoch 93.16.

In such a pervading expectation of the end of the world, Daniel's vision of the open heaven was bound to unleash the flood waters: there is a way out; a very few people have borne witness to it, and one may believe them and perhaps follow them on the paths they have taken upwards. To give the guarantee of authenticity to the new revelations, they are attributed to the great fathers of the people, to Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Solomon, Elijah, Isaiah, Baruch, Ezekiel, Job, Zephaniah and Esdras, all of whom have transmitted in secret writings[17] their mystical experiences of the heavenly realm. We have, first, a great quantity of information about cosmological and astrological mysteries, dealing with the geography of heaven;[18] as in Hellenism[19] and later in Dante,[20] one may enjoy looking back on tiny earth from the height of the spheres.[21] More important is the inspection of Hades, Hell, or at least of the preliminary torture chambers where the wicked are tortured even before the last judgment.[22] The journey upwards goes into 'glory':[23] Enoch is able to describe the *kabod* of Yahweh in all its details, by employing and developing the visions of Ezekiel and Daniel,[24] and he can describe and name the four angels of the face of God;[25] the Slavonic Enoch, who cannot see God, is nevertheless clothed in 'garments of glory' at God's command[26] and anointed with the 'oil of glory'.[27] He becomes like one of the heavenly beings: fear and trembling drop away from him, and he can remain standing before God for all eternity. When Abraham is caught up in rapture, he does not see God himself,[28] but he sees 'a splendour of invisible glory' spread out over the whole of heaven;[29] Baruch is repeatedly promised that he will see the glory of God.[30]

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[11] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 21.15f. 'In what now exists, passes away, and appears, the good is not fully good, the evil not wholly evil': *ibid.*, 83.9.

[12] *Ibid.*, 56.3.

[13] Apocalypse of Elijah 19.3. On the nothingness of the present period of the world: Syr. Apoc. Bar. 82.2–9.

[14] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 21.25.

[15] *Ibid.* 76.5.

[16] 2 Esd 4.40–42.

[17] At 2 Esd 14.46, Esdras (Ezra) is told to keep in reserve seventy secret writings.

[18] Apoc. Abraham 15; Greek Apoc. Bar. 2–17; Apoc. Zephaniah *passim*; Eth. Enoch's journey narratives, 17–36; 41; 72–82; almost the whole of Slavonic Enoch; Test. Levi 3.

[19] See Vol. IV of this work.

The Essenes of Qumran were particularly fond of this apocalyptic literature, and they succeeded in building into their system of life the anticipatory entry into the heavenly world on the other side of the grave which this literature contains. In the Book of Jubilees, which divides the history of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus into periods of jubilees of seven times seven years, Qumran created a system embracing cosmology (comparable to that of Pythagoreism), sacred history and the liturgical feasts, a sacred network of numbers into which the biographies of the patriarchs were forcibly incorporated, but which also regulated the rhythm of the life of the members of the community. This numerical system was as valid on the 'heavenly tables' (the 'prototypes of what happens on earth')[31] as on the earth: 'the whole world moves in the number seven'.[32] Since the Essenes feel themselves to be the bearers of the true priesthood of Levi, and Levi (according to his Testament) saw the heavenly liturgy in a rapture,[33] and was indeed invested in his office in person by the angels[34] and thereby became one of 'those who stand near God',[35] the earthly liturgy celebrated in Qumran is a participation in the heavenly liturgy. This becomes even clearer in the Testament of Isaac to Jacob, the father of Levi, to whom is transmitted the entire ethics and ascetic system for the priests: 'Their service on earth is like the service in heaven, the angels are their companions because of their perfect fidelity and purity.'[36] Here, apocalyptic turns into the strictest liturgism: no day may be omitted, no festival transferred to another day,[37] 'new moon, seasons of the year, sabbaths and feasts': everything must be observed with painstaking attention to detail. The patriarchs in the Book of Jubilees enjoin on their sons as the most important matter the feasts (which arose much later), the laws and rites (circumcision, sacrificial customs):[38] a legalism extended out to cosmic dimensions and now truly subordinate to the 'elements of the world'. There can also exist parallelisms between the stars and the saints on earth.[39] This is the Essene way to be *simul justus et peccator*: a sinner in this corrupt world, righteous in being joined to the new age, but in such a fashion that the righteousness still displays itself clearly now in that liturgy of existence which Paul will reckon among the 'works'. Although the awareness of sin has become deeper than in the period before the exile, widening out from the consciousness of individual sins (2 Sam 11–12) to become a consciousness of the hatitual state of sin, the dialectic of the ages introduces a motif that is foreign to the old concept of the covenant. The widening, which is indispensable in order that what is coming may be received, involves a narrowing-down at the same time, and thus remains ambiguous.[40]

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[20] See Vol. III, p. 70 (Eng. trans.).

[21] Apoc. Abr. 21.

[22] Greek Apoc. Bar. 4; Vision of Esdras; Eth. Enoch 22; 103; 108.5; Slavonic Enoch 10; 42; Test. Isaac 7, etc.

[23] 'Now I am no longer in the glory in which I was above': Apoc. Abr. 30.3.

[24] Enoch 14.8–25.

[25] *Ibid.* 40.

[26] Slavonic Enoch 22.8.

[27] *Ibid.* 22.9; 56.2.

[28] Apoc. Abr. 16.3.

[29] *Ibid.* 19.5.

[30] Greek Apoc. Bar. 6.12–13; 7.2; 11.2.

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[31] Kautzsch (n. 5 above), II 285, n. c.

[32] Aristobulus 2.79 (German text: Riessler, p. 184).

[33] Test. Levi 5.

[34] *Ibid.* 8; there is indeed mention of a threefold ministry: prophecy, priesthood and kingdom: 8.11–14.

[35] *Ibid.* 2.10.

[36] Test. Isaac 5.9.

[37] Jubilees 6.32.

[38] E.g. Jubilees 2.17–33; 6.17: renewal of the covenant. 'This whole festival is celebrated in Heaven too': 2.18; feast of tabernacles: 16.20–31; sacrificial prescriptions: 21.5–20; sabbath: 50.6–13, etc.

[39] Enoch 43.4.

The image of the Son of Man in Daniel is continued in the Ethiopic Enoch and 2 Esdras. He is certainly an eschatological-messianic figure: he is called the 'chosen', 'anointed', 'righteous', the 'light of the peoples', he is set apart by the Creator (before the creation of the world: Enoch 48.6) to redeem the creation (2 Esd 13.26; Enoch 62.7). He can be called 'servant' (or 'son': *pais*) of God (2 Esd 13.32, 37, 52), but the vicarious suffering of Deutero-Isaiah's Servant of the Lord is nowhere attributed to him.[41] He sits on the 'throne of glory' (pleonastically in Ethiopic Enoch 45.3; 55.7; 61–62; 69.27, 29) when the 'totality of judgment' (69.27) is entrusted to him. Here the tradition of First Isaiah is continued,[42] and the pouring-out of the gift of the Spirit and of holiness upon the Messiah can be understood as simultaneously the pouring-out of glory.[43] In the final battle, he destroys the enemies of God with the breath of his mouth (2 Esd 13).[44] Whatever may be said of the mutual influences of Judaism and Christianity in these texts, the Son of Man of the apocrypha is a figure of glory in the post-exilic, non-integrated sense, who nowhere recapitulates the depths of opposition to God by transforming them in himself.

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[40] It is true that the doctrine of '*original sin*' also flourishes in this twilight, but it is characteristic that the form this takes is itself a twilight form. Adam is accused: 'What have you done, Adam to all your descendants? . . . Now the entire mass is subject to corruption; those whom the fire devours are countless' (Syr. Apoc. Bar. 48.42f.). But does this not mean that there was a kernel of evil from the outset in Adam, who belongs to the temporal age? 'Already the first Adam had an evil heart: so he came into guilt and was conquered. The same is true of all his descendants. Thus the illness became lasting' (2 Esd 3.21–22; *cf.* 4.30–32; 7.118). On the other hand, each person is once again placed in the original situation: 'Adam bears the guilt for himself alone, we are all Adam, each one for himself' (Syr. Apoc. Bar. 54.19). Each one is placed with his free will between the good spirit and the evil spirit (Test. Judah 20, Test. Asher 1.4–5). But, in general, guilt appears as a common doom in which original guilt and personal sin are inextricably mingled with each other, and this situation gives rise to the great lamentation: 'O Adam, what have you done? For though it was you who sinned, the fall was not yours alone, but ours also who are your descendants. For what good is it to us, if an eternal age has been promised to us, but we have done deeds that bring death? And what good is it that an everlasting hope has been promised us, but we have miserably failed? . . . Or that the glory of the Most High will defend those who have led a pure life, but we have walked in the most wicked ways?' (2 Esd 7.118–122).

c. Emphasis on man

There is often a morbidity in the interest taken by the apocalyptic literature in the glory above; it is inclined to transfer the emphasis of thinking and life into the world that is coming after death and to discount the earthly world, forgetting that this is the good creation of God, the place of his covenant and the abiding foundation of all the promises. By contrast with the wisdom literature, Enoch says: 'When wisdom came to take her dwelling among the sons of men and found no dwelling-place, wisdom returned to her place and took her seat among the angels.'[45] Human reason is too weak to be able to know more than what belongs only to this earth.[46] 'Heaven, earth and the depths tremble before the glance of his majesty, but the sons of men sin and are quite indifferent to all this.'[47] The simple life that looks to the God of the covenant, protected by his grace and therefore without reflection on oneself, seems to have become unattainably distant. But this means that an excessive emphasis is laid on man: as moral and ascetic subject, or as an existential rebel.

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[41] *Cf.* P. Volz, *Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde* (1934), p. 217.

[42] Psalms of Solomon 17.29 and 18; Test. Levi 18.1–5.

[43] Test. Levi 18.6.

[44] On the question of what is Danielic, possibly pre-Danielic, or a Christian interpolation in Eth. Enoch (2 Esdras was written after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70), *cf.* the discussion (with bibliography) by H. H. Rowley, *The Relevance of Apocalyptic*, 3rd edn. 1963. In Eth. Enoch 71, Enoch himself is equated with the Son of Man: this may be the oldest kernel of the Enoch speculations (thus T. F. Glasson) or else a later (presumably Pharisaic) attempt to neutralise the figure of the Son of Man which could not be localised in terms of the ancient biblical material.

[45] Eth. Enoch 42.2.

The *moralisation* of the great figures of salvation history in late Judaism is a trait that is carried out with thoroughness and an appalling universality. The Book of Jubilees is interested in edifying and moving, indeed in sentimental family scenes, for example when Jacob sleeps in his old grandfather Abraham's bed, on his bosom, unaware that his grandfather has died in the night, and sees when he awakens in the early morning that he is embracing a cold corpse, whereupon Rebecca rushes to Isaac while Jacob lights the path ahead of her, Ishmael weeps, etc.[48] The various *Vitae* of Adam too give novelistic descriptions of how the first family come to know pain, longing and penitence, and ultimately death, after they are driven from paradise, and how Eve and Seth attempt during Adam's mortal illness to fetch the healing oil from paradise: Seth is bitten by the serpent and both are rejected, while the devil reveals to them the true reason for his hatred—God had commanded the angels to venerate the image and likeness of God in the future human being[49]—and finally they describe how Adam's corpse is taken up by the angels and borne to God, because God 'demands the vessel that he himself has formed',[50] and he will remain there until the last day. 'He is his image, and therefore he has mercy on him.'[51] The dead Moses too is borne in this way before

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[46] 2 Esd 4.21.

[47] Test. Levi 3.9–10.

[48] Jubilees 22–23.

[49] Life of Adam and Eve 13–16.

[50] Apoc. Moses 31.

[51] Life of Adam and Eve 46. The dialogue of God with the dead Adam becomes a dialogue of the Messiah with Adam in the Christian interpolation in Test. Adam 3: 'Adam, Adam, do not fear! You wanted to be God: I make you God—though not now, but after many years shall have passed . . . I do not permit you to remain in the nether world . . . For love of you,

God.[52] Biographies of the prophets are composed;[53] in the work of Jewish propaganda, especially in the Egyptian diaspora, episodes of scripture are narrated anew in enthralling novels, such as the lively and intensely moral narrative of the chaste Joseph and the equally chaste Asenath,[54] or the descriptions of the final days of Jerusalem as it was destroyed.[55] Psychological sensitivity describes the most various attempts of the Egyptian woman to subvert Joseph's chastity,[56] and indeed a tragic poet does not disdain to bring the calling of Moses on to the stage in the form of a Greek tragedy, having the voice of God sound forth from the bush and the obligatory 'messenger' giving the account of the destruction of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea.[57]

Above all, the leitmotiv now is 'virtue' and 'good works'. But one should bear in mind that these good works are the same that are sketched in the Sermon on the Mount and in Jesus' parable of the world judgment and that are prominent above all among the Essenes: to help the poor, to protect orphans, to clothe the naked, to take care of the weak and ill, to lead the blind, to bury the dead.[58] 'Blessed is the one who judges aright, who helps every one of the oppressed, who clothes the naked and breaks his bread with the hungry . . . Blessed is the one in whose mouth is mercy and meekness.'[59] Several of the Testaments of the Patriarchs are oriented entirely to these virtues: Zebulun is concerned with mercy and compassion, and with the commandment to love one's

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I taste death and enter the house of the dead'. (On the relationship between Apocalypse of Moses, Testament of Adam, and Life of Adam and Eve, see Sparks, op. cit., pp. 141–143.)

[52] In the surviving fragment of the Assumption of Moses, this is hinted (11.7–8); the lost continuation must have narrated this, for v. 9 of the Letter of Jude alludes to it.

[53] Reissler, pp. 871–880.

[54] Sparks, op. cit., pp. 465ff.

[55] Paraleipomena of Jeremiah: Sparks, pp. 813ff.

[56] Test. Joseph 1–10.4.

[57] Ezekiel the Tragedian: Reissler, pp. 337–345.

[58] 2 Esd 2.20–21. Whoever has not done so comes into the eternal fire: Slavonic Enoch 10.5.

[59] Slavonic Enoch 42.7–13; *cf.* 63.1–2.

neighbour as oneself and to prove this in the case of the poor, the naked and the needy,[60] while Joseph praises God as the one who performs the good works for him: 'I was sold as a slave, but the Lord gave me freedom; I was a prisoner, but his strong hand helped me; I was tortured by hunger, but the Lord himself nourished me; I was alone, but the Lord consoled me; I was sick too, but the Most High visited me . . . I was the victim of calumny, and he pleaded my cause.'[61] Gad, who has sinned against love of neighbour, praises this above all:[62] 'Love one another in deed and word and dispositions!'[63] Benjamin admonishes his brothers not to requite evil with evil,[64] but to practise the love of enemies.[65] For the Fourth Book of Maccabees, the martyrdom of Eleazar, of the seven brothers and of their mother is the occasion for an ethical diatribe about control of the senses through the reason.[66]

Natural ethics is accompanied by natural religion. Abraham possesses a *meritum de congruo* for his election: through his own reflection on the nothingness of the idols of his father Terah and through his burning of these, and through a rational conclusion from the creatures to the existence of the Creator, he earns the reward of being addressed by God and being led by him in a particular way.[67] It was, further, useful for apologetics to have Abraham (who was familiar with the study of the stars because he knew the 'Chaldeans') bring astrology to the Egyptians,[68] to make Moses (= Musaeus) the teacher of Orpheus[69] and to characterise him as the great mediator of culture to the Jews, the Phoenicians and the Greeks.[70] Job underwent the strangest transformation of all: in the new version, there is no longer any trace of a night of abandonment by God, and Satan's rage against Job is given a psychological explanation: Job has cut down the image of an idol and refused to receive a devil who visits him.[71] Job's virtues, especially his unheard-of generosity to the poor, are described ('I was already then so noble'),[72] as is his exhortation to patience in suffering; the devil 'weeps' and is 'in turbulent confusion',[73] while Job can draw the attention of the three friends who lament over him to his merits which are laid up in heaven: 'My throne stands in the world above, and its splendour and glory stand at the right hand of the Father. The whole world passes away . . . but my kingdom stands for eternal times, its splendour and glory rest on the chariot of the Father.'[74]

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[60] Test. Zebulun, especially chs. 4–8.

[61] Test. Joseph 1.

[62] Test. Gad 4.

[63] *Ibid.* 6.1.

[64] Joseph and Asenath 23.9; 28.14; 29.3.

[65] *Ibid.* 28.12; *cf.* the speech of the dying Rebecca to her sons: Jubilees 35.20f.; Test. Joseph 17.2.

[66] Eng. trans.: *The Common Bible* (1973).

[67] Apoc. Abr. 1–8; Jubilees 11.16–17.

[68] Artapanus 1.

[69] *Ibid.* 3.5–6.

[70] Eupolemus 1 (Reissler, p. 328).

This transfer of attention to man has its reverse side: when his virtues become the theme, his problematic necessarily also receives attention, and since the glory from on high does not shine through these darker sides, the latter imperceptibly become more important than the former, the glory which is deemed to have insufficient weight. The Job of the period of the first exile will be far surpassed as one who struggles with God by the Esdras of the second Book named after him and by others like him who write after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The first thing we note is the role assumed by *death* in the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature; while it is in keeping with the Bible that this literature contains mostly Testaments, these are Testaments in which the necessity of dying is a leading motif. Naturally, this is true above all in the *Vitae* of Adam, where death is experienced by man for the very first time. It is only now that the first ancestor knows: 'I am stripped of my righteousness, with which I was clothed . . . I am removed from my (!) glory.'[75] And again: 'God, our Lord, was very angry with me and banished me from our (!) glory.'[76] The whole world of plants and animals has changed around him, 'our nature too has changed'.[77] And now that death is a certainty, life as a whole is empty: it is of little importance now whether it is short or long.[78] This is the experience of being cast forth: 'We did not say to our fathers, "Beget us!" We did not send down to the nether world to say, "Take us in!"'[79] 'You came without asking, and you depart against your will.'[80] In such a situation, the fundamental rebellion against dying is understandable. God requires that Adam be ready to die, because only this can lead him back anew to the tree of immortal life.[81] But Isaac protests when the angel fetches him to die,[82] and ultimately Esdras and Shadrach refuse point-blank. Esdras feels that he is man's advocate against God:

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[71] Test. Job 2–6.

[72] *Ibid.* 13.6.

[73] *Ibid.* 27.2.

[74] *Ibid.* 33. The 'chariot' will be the vehicle of the divine glory in Ezekiel. The three friends are saved for the sake of Job, but the fourth, Elihu, who had mocked him, must go to Hell. Job gives his new three daughters magical girdles with which they can see the heavenly things.

Lord, if thou takest my soul from me, who will
  remain
to plead with thee on behalf of the human race?
And God said, Since you are mortal and of the earth
you should not plead with me.
And the prophet said, I will not stop my pleading with
  thee.
And God said, Even so, give up now what has been
  entrusted
to you: the crown has been made ready for you.
Come die, so that you may obtain it.
Then the prophet began to weep and say,
O Lord, what have I gained from my pleading with
  thee,

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[75] Apoc. Moses 20.
[76] Life of Adam and Eve 16.
[77] Apoc. Moses 11; 24.
[78] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 17.
[79] *Ibid.* 48.16.
[80] 2 Esd 8.5.
[81] Apoc. Moses 28.
[82] Test. Isaac 2.

if I am now to sink down into the earth?
Alas, alas, for I am to be consumed by worms.
Weep for me, all saints and righteous men;
for I pleaded much. Weep for me, all saints and
righteous men, for I have entered the depths of
Hell.[83]

When Shadrach's death is announced to him, he asks for a postponement, and then bids his body farewell in a great lyrical monologue:

O head, so marvellous and adorned like heaven! . . .
The head controls the whole body's movement.
O fairest and most beloved of all my members,
now must you sink into the earth and be forgotten.
O hands, so gentle, docile and hard-working . . .
O feet that walk so well, that run of your own
accord,
most agile, that cannot be restrained! . . .
Body most beautifully adorned, light-giving, elegant,
all-knowing!
Now you must sink into the earth,
and beneath the earth your beauty disappear.[84]

One would expect these two by profession to argue continually and about everything with God; they think that it would be best if the creation had not taken place. What is the point of creating a free being and then allowing it to go to its destruction?[85] Why did not God kill the devil? Why does not God take hold of man by the foot, when he is setting out to sin? Shadrach declares himself at any rate to be in solidarity with the sinners: 'Remit thy punishments: or else, count me also among the sinners!'[86] 'I will not be separated from our race.'[87] And when he is to die, he says: 'I will not give my soul to thee.'[88] Esdras is no different: he too demands that God's hand have mercy on his image: 'Pass sentence on

[83] Apoc. Esdras 6.18–26.
[84] Apoc. Shadrach 11 *passim*.
[85] Apoc. Shadrach 3.5.
[86] *Ibid.* 5.7.
[87] *Ibid.* 8.12.
[88] *Ibid.* 9.3.

me rather than on the souls of the sinners; for it is better to punish one soul than to bring the whole world to destruction.'[89] He continues with his obstinate questioning: Why did God allow Adam to fall? Why did he give him, as companion, Eve, who was to seduce him? How can God accept patiently that the human race should be deceived in this way? And ever anew: 'Lord, why didst thou fashion man and deliver him to judgment?'[90] Baruch's questions are much the same.[91] The refrain of all these people is: 'It would be better for us not to be here than to come here and live in ungodliness!'[92] 'This is my first and last word, that it would have been better if the earth had not produced Adam, or else, when it had produced him, had restrained him from sinning'.[93] Esdras is familiar with the torment of the reason which is forced to ask questions: how much better off are the beasts![94]

God's answers to these bitter and desperate questions are distinctly feeble, for they leave the chief accusation, about the existence of judgment, damnation and Hell, unanswered. God's righteousness must simply be implemented.[95] And is it not shameful when a man abandons God, his Father, and leaves for a foreign country with the goods that belong to God? What will the Father do then? He will 'take his property back, and banish him from his glory'.[96] And does Esdras really love his people more than he loves his God?[97] If men choose what is vain, then they meet a just fate when vanity becomes their lot,[98] and so on. Sometimes the concepts of the late Jewish 'theology of suffering'[99] appear; this seeks to correct the questionable character of the old theory of the immanent righteousness[100] by saying that God permits the pious to suffer on earth in order not to be obliged to punish them any further in the judgment, whereas the wicked are permitted to enjoy good things for a time because they are reserved for a merciless judgment.[101] But, especially in 2 Esdras, the radicality of the questioning goes beyond these attempts at a solution.

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[89] Apoc. Esdras 1.10–11.
[90] *Ibid.* 2; 4.34; 5.16.
[91] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 14.
[92] 2 Esd 4.12; Apoc. Esdras 5.9; Apoc. Shadrach 4.2.
[93] 2 Esd 7.116.
[94] 2 Esd 7.62–66.
[95] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 48.27.
[96] Apoc. Shadrach 6.5–7.
[97] 2 Esd 5.33.
[98] 2 Esd 7.25.
[99] Wolfgang Wichmann, *Die Leidenstheologie. Eine Form der*

A final characteristic of this anthropocentrism is the importance that the sexual sphere acquires within it. It is not by chance that the myth of the fall of the angels through intercourse with human women (from whom the giants descend: Gen 6.1–4) takes on a disproportionate weight: this ἱερὸς γαμός is the original sin, described at length and in detail in the Book of Enoch[102] and mentioned in other sources too.[103] The sin in paradise too can be given a sexual interpretation;[104] or procreation is termed the result of sin and mortality.[105] In Essene accounts, there is also a division of paradise into separate areas for male and female animals.[106] The Book of Joseph and Asenath upholds an ideal of chastity that is almost unhealthy; the Book of Jubilees declares, when speaking of Reuben, that harlotry is the greatest sin;[107] Edom's corruption is seen in his attachment to the women;[108] Rebecca exhorts Jacob above all to 'purity'.[109] The Testaments of Reuben and of Joseph glorify this virtue above all. The Essene angelism is a form of apocalyptic pessimism about the world.

Leidensdeutung im Spätjudentum, Beitr. Wiss. ANT 1930. The principal emphasis of this work is on the rabbinic texts.

[100] See above, pp. 126, 164f.

[101] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 13.9.; 52.5–7; 78.3; 2 Esd 8.46ff.

[102] Eth. Enoch 6–16. According to Jubilees 5, all anarchy on earth has its origin here.

[103] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 56.12; Eth. Enoch 67.

[104] Apoc. Abr. 23.

[105] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 56.6.

[106] Apoc. Moses 15; likewise Philo, *De vita contemplativa* II 471f.

[107] Jubilees 33.20.

[108] *Ibid.* 35.14.

[109] *Ibid.* 25.

d. The barrier of judgment

The decisive fact for us in this image of the world of 'the glory above' and of the two ages is the fact that this superior glory does not penetrate the final judgment. The dualism is posited in a definitive and absolute way. We are nowhere told that any kind of thoughts of hope could overcome the division of good and evil, of right and left, of Heaven and Hell. The language of the great prophets was always a double-sided, existential language that proclaimed judgment *and* salvation, but here this hardens into a cosmological system in an apocalyptic gnosis about the double outcome of the final judgment. Daniel gives the initial impulse (12.2). But it is the apocalyptists who by way of anticipation take a journey to Heaven and above all to Hell, in order to inspect the place and the forms of punishment of the damned. The one who struggles with God finds an insuperable obstacle in two things: the fact that the majority are damned and only very few ('a remnant'!) are chosen, and that all mercy for the condemned ceases with judgment day. The 'multitude' stand on the left side at the judgment, those separated out stand on the right.[110] 'Here bliss and rest—there pain and fire!'[111] 'The multitude'[112] are lost, 'the whole great mass', 'innumerable',[113] 'almost all who have been created;'[114] 'the lost outnumber the redeemed, just as the flood is more than the drops'.[115] Those who follow 'the broad path to perdition'[116] are lost. Esdras' desperation comes from the fact that he knows this for certain. God's answer is that it is natural that what is precious in the world, like gold and jewels, should be rare, while lead and clay, which exist in great quantities, are counted as nothing. Such a God declares that 'what is more rare is more precious . . . he who has what is hard to get rejoices more than he who has what is plentiful . . . I will rejoice over the few who shall be saved . . . and I will not grieve over the multitude of those who perish.'[117] Since the sinners themselves have chosen their path, 'there shall not be grief at their destruction',[118] but rather the righteous find satisfaction in the righteousness of God.[119] At the judgment, mercy ceases to exist.[120] 'And the Most High shall be revealed upon the seat of judgment, and compassion shall pass away, and patience shall be withdrawn; but only judgment shall remain.'[121] The sins surpass the mildness of God,[122] and the temporal cursing of the wicked, which was a part of Israel's prayers,[123] will become an eternal curse.[124] And when Esdras goes through Hell and breaks out into the cry, 'Lord, have mercy on the sinners',[125] each time he sees a fresh kind of torment, when he is called by the angels into Heaven and answers, 'As the Lord lives, I shall not come until I have seen all the punishment of the sinners',[126] when he remonstrates with God that he would display his love and his goodness by having compassion with those 'who have no treasure of good works',[127] then he is told clearly that he must cease his intercession,[128] and must think of himself and of the glory of the chosen brethren.[129] There is no more place now for the entreaty 'of the fathers for the children, of the children for the parents, of the brothers for the brothers, of friends for their fellows';[130] not even the great intercessors from Abraham to Moses and Elijah[131] would be heard now. Now one must 'have no regard for the evildoers' and 'pray for the pious'.[132] His own election must suffice for Esdras.[133] The whole tormenting dialectic, that the Christian Middle Ages will stir up again in its depths, above the existential conduct of the Christian *vis-à-vis* the supposedly 'known' damnation of Christian brothers—a dialectic that finds its violent resolution in Dante[134]—has its true *locus* in these apocryphal Jewish apocalypses which grew in an inauthentic position between the genuine old covenant and the Gospel of Christ.

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[110] Apoc. Abr. 23.5–6.

[111] 2 Esd 7.38; Ps. Sol. 2.37–38; 3.12–16; Test. Zebulun 10.3–4; Apoc. Abr. 31.3f.

[112] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 44.15.

[113] *Ibid.* 48.43.

[114] 2 Esd 7.48.

[115] *Ibid.* 9.15.

[116] Test. Abraham 8.16.

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[117] 2 Esd 7.58–60.

[118] *Ibid.* 7.131.

[119] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 51.5.

[120] *Ibid.* 44.12.

[121] 2 Esd 7.33–34.

[122] Apoc. Esdras 2.21.

[123] *Cf.* in Slavonic Enoch 52; the great curse of Isaac against the Philistines in Jubilees 24.28–33. The curse in the Prayer of Eighteen Benedictions is a post-Christian addition (Reissler, p. 9).

[124] Eth. Enoch 102.5.

[125] Vision of Esdras; only in the Christian interpolation about king Herod does Esdras say, 'You have judged rightly, O Lord': v. 40. At Apoc. Esdras 5.28, the seer bursts into tears 'when I saw the human race in such a punishment'.

[126] Vision of Esdras (Sparks, p. 950).

[127] 2 Esd 8.36.

[128] *Ibid.* 8.47.

[129] *Ibid.* 8.50–51.

This dialectic is the consequence of a misunderstanding of the meaning of election in the Old Testament: Israel was to stand before God as representative of the peoples and in an attitude of openness towards them. The break-through in Daniel to the glory above discloses initially a living supratemporal dimension of Heaven which accompanies history on earth, imparting a compelling understanding not only of God's universal presence and omniscience, but also of his sovereignty and predetermination of the future too. Predestination becomes a determining religious experience,[135] but loses its function within salvation history thereby and hardens in the same way as the concept of the final judgment. The future is already present to God in the new age; in place of the Jerusalem which was destroyed, the new Jersusalem is already present in Heaven, and the mystic can have access to it: 'It is not this city which lies before you with its buildings that is the future city . . . which is made ready here beforehand . . . I showed it to Adam before the fall . . . I showed it also to my servant Abraham . . . I showed it to Moses on Mount Sinai, where I displayed to him the image of the tabernacle and all its equipment. Thus it lies ready now for me, together with paradise.'[136] But this means that the contribution of the old age to the new has become superfluous and despised; it is impossible for the earthly to enter the heavenly realm, and salvation history has been robbed of value. Revelation becomes a gnostic mysticism in flight from the world. And since for Qumran everthing stands written in advance on the 'heavenly tablets' and the only concern of man is to live beforehand in accordance with those tablets, the eschatological division between the chosen good and the non-chosen wicked can already be made validly here below. The spirituality of Qumran is one of purity through separation, and the renunciations, vows and rites of the community members are the attempt to avoid any contact with the impurity of the corrupt world:

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[130] *Ibid.* 7.103; *cf.* Syr. Apoc. Bar. 85.12: 'No more opportunity for repentance of soul, no intercession for sinners, no petition of the fathers, no pleading of the prophets, no help from the righteous'.

[131] *Ibid.* 7.106–109.

[132] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 48.48.

[133] 2 Esd 7.76.

[134] *Cf.* Vol. III, pp. 82–101 (Eng. trans.).

[135] 'You saw the future things already present': 'Syr. Apoc. Bar. 21.5; *cf.* 23.3; 'He knows what the world is, before it was made, and what will happen from age to age': Eth. Enoch 39.11.

'I see, my son,' says Abraham to Isaac in the Book of Jubilees, 'that all the works of the children of men are sin and wickedness; all their deeds are impurity, abomination and stain, and there is no righteousness with them. Take care that you do not walk on their paths . . . keep far from all their doings and all their impurity.'[137] And to Jacob he says: 'Separate yourself from the peoples! Do not eat with them! Do not do as they do! Do not be an associate of theirs, for all their work is impurity'.[138] 'For there is no hope at all for the godless in the land of the living: they descend into the nether world and go to the place of judgment, and they have no memorial any more upon earth.'[139] The Book of Enoch too ends with this sharp dissonance: 'Those born in darkness will also be thrown into the darkness, while the righteous shine in glory; the sinners cry out loudly, when they see how the others shine, but they go to the place where days and times have been determined for them.'[140]

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[136] Syr. Apoc. Bar. 4.2–6.

[137] Jubilees 21.21–23.

[138] *Ibid.* 22.16.

[139] *Ibid.* 22.22.

This means that while the broadening of the horizon, which was indispensable for the Christian dimension which was coming, has indeed taken place formally, the attempt to fill the new space with the elements of the old covenant was bound to fail; for Christianity too will have grave problems even in the period of its foundation, and even more in its later intellectual history, with these distortions of the original covenant idea.

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[140] Eth. Enoch 108.14–15.

3. GLORY ANTICIPATED

a. Success and danger of the wisdom literature

Yet a third form of development is characteristic of the end of the old covenant, and this too is indispensable in view of what comes later, since it involves something of decisive importance for world history: the broadening-out of Israel, which had become closed in on itself, to the surrounding culture of Hellenism. This broadening-out, through language and thought-forms, for the very first time, created the presupposition for Christian mission (which is something other than the Jewish affiliation of proselytes). Such a broadening-out must necessarily mean making contact with the 'sphere of metaphysics', which was described in the preceding volume of this work: with myth, philosophy and religion. But this initial contact was very difficult for Israel, since it meant engaging in an authentically genuine dialogue with Hellenism, without rejecting or even merely lightening the burden of Israel's own unique election, of the exclusive covenant relationship to Yahweh. Formally speaking, the difficulty lay in the fact that a certain contemplative distance to Israel's own heritage was required, in order to be able to have a simultaneous view of this and of Hellenism, while at the same time this distance could not be allowed to affect the immediacy of the relationship of faithfulness to the God who had chosen Israel. Indeed, it was not possible to seek or to tolerate an ambivalence in the statements for reasons of propaganda, so that the truth being set out would seem Greek to the one reader and Jewish to the other, or would seem Greek if considered from the one side and Jewish if considered from the other, or in such a way that this truth would make peripheral concessions to the Greek world while remaining Jewish at heart and in the essence of what was meant. Although we do find these formulae of ambivalence in Philo, who attempted to build a bridge between Moses and Plato, one should be careful not to make superficial criticisms of the synthesis which was his aim, on the grounds that this was, after all, completely impossible on the level of the old covenant and using the elements which it contained; the broadening-out was required, and its foundations were laid—yet at the same time it was reserved for a future time. It seemed to have contemporary relevance because the drama of the history of the people, played between God and Israel, had come to a standstill since the exile, and this seemed to permit a contemplative distance to the historical covenant relationship. But precisely this word 'seemed' indicates the ambiguity of the situation, an ambiguity that necessarily entered Philo's attempt at a synthesis too.

On the other hand, similar attempts had already existed in ancient Israel to mediate between one's own religion and foreign religions and 'philosophies': the assimilation of religious materials and concepts by means of careful demythologisation was not only a concern of the earliest period, but something that had also preoccupied the period of the kings in violent clashes—one may think, for example, of Yahweh's claim to the title 'Baal' as he struggles to woo the people in love (Hosea). Likewise, one may think even more of the assimilation of the international 'wisdom' at the court of the first kings; here, late Judaism found a fertile precedent which it could be meaningful to take up anew, though now it was not the Egyptian/Phoenician/Akkadian wisdom that was the basis of the dialogue, but the Sophia of the Hellenism that belonged to Greek and Roman antiquity while remaining still Egyptian. We have discussed the 'Solomonic' wisdom literature when we spoke of the 'covenant': here it is above all the expression of the religious dimension of what is human. The two great bodies of wisdom teaching in the Bible, Ben Sirach and the Book of Wisdom, go beyond this sphere to form a kind of concluding contemplation of the reality of Israel, naturally in the broadened perspective of the entire dispensation of the working of divine wisdom for the world. Writings like Proverbs and Qoheleth find their place in this perspective, raised to a higher level. In keeping with the intellectual situation, it is inevitable that the biblical 'glory' (both as *kabod* in the narrower sense and as *doxa* in the broadened, integrated sense) should come into contact here with the *kalon* in the myth-philosophy-religion of Antiquity. The newly interpreted Sophia of the later wisdom writings, a figure that refers at one and the same time to the entire revelation of God in creation and in salvation history, serves as the wished-for mediation here.

We may leave Philo out of consideration, since he is too far from the biblical theology; the same is true of the small sketches or fragments of Hellenisation of Jewish material.[1] But the two works which are to be discussed here stand for their part in a difficult and exposed situation within salvation history which makes it virtually impossible for them to speak of the entire glory of God otherwise than in a (formal) anticipation of what is to come, although the materials at their disposal cannot suffice to give an account of this: for how were they to sense anything of the cross of Christ? Their contemplation, therefore, brings to a close what is not in fact brought to a close: and in this, they inevitably practise a *theologia gloriae* in a manner that can be criticised on the basis of the new covenant. The authors of these writings lack the sharp messianic dynamics that aim at the 'glory ahead', and the mystical and sectarian fanaticism for the 'glory above'; they are pious men who try to find God in all things of creation and salvation history, and who see 'glory all around'. Their aim is to praise God in all his works, and here they are a continuation of the psalmists; but here too they are very 'post-exilic', since all that remains in them of judgment in God's speech and action is a few fragments that they have in common with the apocalyptists. This means that they too stand in the 'long twilight', and the glory that they praise remains ethereal and bloodless; as has often been remarked, they belong to a bourgeois age, not in the least to an age of heroes. They are amazed at the ever greater wisdom of God, just as the Greek philosopher is astounded at the marvels of being; but they do not know the depths of wisdom on which Job's Sibylline gaze was fixed (Job 28). They have a passion for universal praise, for lauding and glorifying, which is the alpha and omega of the Old Testament existence in God's covenant.

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[1] E.g., the proverbs of Ps.-Menander (Riessler, pp. 1047f.), Eupolemos (p. 328), the Sibylline Oracles (pp. 1014ff.), the Letter of Aristeas (pp. 193ff.), Aristobulus (pp. 179ff.), Artapanus (186ff.), Ps.-Aeschylus (p. 192), Ps.-Sophocles (p. 1046), Ps.-Orpheus (p. 729), Ps.-Heraclitus (p. 474), 3 and 4 Maccabees, Ps.-Phocylides (pp. 862ff.)., Theodotus (p. 1263), etc.

b. Ben Sirach

Ben Sirach writes about fifteen years before Daniel, and the perspectives which the latter opens up so dramatically are still closed for him; for his flights of praise, the world on this side of death and earthly life,[2] on which the sun of God's grace shines, are sufficient motive. As we have already seen above,[3] man is created in the image of God and is given God's sight in his heart so that he may recognise the greatness of his works, may recount them and praise God's holy name. Immediately after this, Ben Sirach describes the making of the eternal covenant, which proclaims God's good decrees to men and permits them to see the 'glory (δόξα) of his majesty' and to hear the 'splendour (δόξα) of his voice', giving them the commandment to venerate the true God and to love their neighbour.[4] Ben Sirach feels no distance from that glory which appeared to the fathers at Sinai, for the bridge of tradition carries it to him: Moses was permitted to see something of it in the dark cloud and to hear God's voice face to face,[5] Ezekiel had the 'sight of glory (ὅρασις δόξης) anew,[6] and prayer is made that this may once again fill the temple.[7] When it is said of the wise man that he finds shelter in the shadow of wisdom and makes his dwelling 'in her glory',[8] then this (like 41.27 doubtless also) is an early attestation of the rabbinic *shekinah*, God's 'dwelling beside' man. The wise man, whose inner eye sees both what happened in past history and what is naturally present today, is the perfect *contemplator*. By 'looking (ἐμβλέπειν) to the generations past he sees' the gracious favours of the Lord,[9] he 'reflects (διανοεῖσθαι) on them in his heart' with a 'listening ear',[10] he is concerned and occupied (μελετᾶν) with the commandments and precepts of the Lord.[11] The statements are piled up in the spirit of the contemplative Psalms:

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[2] In Sheol there is no longer any praise of God: 17.27–28.

[3] Above, p. 96.

[4] 17.1–17.

[5] 45.3–5.

[6] 49.8.

[7] 36.19.

> Blessed is the man who meditates on wisdom
> and who reasons intelligently.
> He who reflects in his mind on her ways
> will also ponder her secrets.
> Pursue wisdom like a hunter,
> and lie in wait on her paths.
> He who peers through her windows
> will also listen at her doors . . .'[12]

This man is the 'theoretician' of God, in that θεωρεῖσθαι[13] means to look on something in contemplation. This does not prevent Ben Sirach's book from being full of a colourful multitude of practical rules of life in which he develops the Solomonic proverbs and enriches them through observations and experiences of his own; this is because, for him, everything here belongs to wisdom, is read off from the Word of God, is perceived in God's Spirit or at any rate brought into harmony with him. This is already what Cusa will call the *venatio sapientiae* ('hunting for wisdom'), in a love for the lady Wisdom who is both virgin, mother and beloved wife,[14] who fills the whole world yet has put down her roots in the 'people of glory', so that she may 'grow' from there to put forth her 'branches of glory and graciousness' and to pour forth her fragrance, so that she may once again fill the whole world.[15] The principal duty of this people is to give praise (δόξαν διδόναι, 51.17; αἰνεῖν, 51.22;[16] δοξάζειν, 43.30[17]), and here the sublimity of God is glorified best by the lowly and humbled ones (3.20).

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[8] 14.27.
[9] 2.10.
[10] 3.22; the word occurs eighteen times, and διανόημα seven times, in Ben Sirach.
[11] 6.37.
[12] 14.20–23; *cf.* 39.7.
[13] 42.22.
[14] 15.2.

It is characteristic of Ben Sirach that this act of glorifying God casts a broad glow of glory, a kind of halo, on man; the concluding section of the book goes through the ranks of Israel's ancestors to praise the great glorifiers of God and thereby to share itself in the glory which was bestowed on them by God. 'Let us now praise famous men! . . . The Lord created great glory and showed his majesty [through them] from the beginning . . . all these were honoured in their generations, and were the glory of their times' (44.1–2, 7). Here we must recall that there is no immortality for Ben Sirach: the reward of the great men is the praise of them that remains afterwards among the people. 'No one was like Abraham in δόξα' (44.19). 'God gave Moses a δόξα like that of the holy ones (i.e., the angels) . . . and he glorified him in the presence of kings' (45.2–3). 'They glorified David for his ten thousands' (cf. 1 Sam 18.7), he bore 'a crown of δόξα' (47.6) and sat on a throne of δόξα (v. 11), 'in all that he did he gave thanks to the Holy One, the Most High, with ascriptions of glory' (v. 8). Joshua was glorious in war (ἐνδοξάσθη, 46.2). Because of his courage, Phinehas is named 'the third in δόξα' after Moses and Aaron (45.23). But it is Aaron's priesthood, in its rites and its vestments, that appears as the perfect glory to the author, and he never tires of praising it (45.6–22), especially when he describes the high priest Simon in the splendour of his liturgical functions (50.1–21); unlike Qumran, where the earthly liturgy is wholly transcendent to the heavenly liturgy, here the glory of heaven seems to become incarnate on earth in the temple of Jerusalem. The author specifically notes that Solomon stained his δόξα (47.20), and the disobedient kings are punished by having to relinquish their δόξα to a foreign people (49.5). This passage and others show how strongly for Ben Sirach the glory that he gives to God casts a reflection back upon himself; it is, of course, not himself that the 'holy' man praises (only Wisdom can do this: 24.1–2), but it is only right that he should be praised by his contemporaries and by those who come afterwards, sunning themselves in his light as an element of the glory of revelation. Δόξα and καύχημα[18] (the word that becomes so important in Paul) are therefore frequently found together and can be used as interchangeable terms (1.11; 10.22; 44.7; 45.7–8): one can also say that the biblical meaning of the word (δόξα = *kabod*) and the profane Greek meaning (δόξα = τιμή, fame, honour) are wed to one another in Ben Sirach for reasons of his theology. But this theology likewise permits the union of δόξα and χάρις (which are found together at 4.21 and 24.16), for δόξα is nothing other than the making present of God's salvation in his world, and thus precisely grace. Once again, the profane Greek χάρις[19] with its double meaning of grace (showing favour) and charm is transfigured on the basis of the biblical δόξα.[20] Finally, there is an intimate link between χάρις and κάλλος (beauty; 40.22); a woman's[21] attractiveness is perfect when it is both sensual and moral (26.13, 15–18).

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[15] 24.9–20.

[16] Eighteen times.

[17] Thirty-one times, mostly in the sense of giving honour, where it is a matter of parents, priests, etc.

The mutual compenetration of the meanings of words is at its clearest when the author speaks of the praise of God's glory in the cosmos: here the biblical form of experience and expression (as found above all in the Psalms) takes up the Greek form of experience and expression, without however being itself essentially altered. One fundamental expression is: 'The sun looks down on everything with its light, and the work of the Lord is full of his glory (δόξα)' (42.16); or even more clearly: '. . . the universe stands firm in his glory' (42.17).[22] The thought is strictly biblical: while the amazement (θαυμάζειν: 43.18, 24, 25) is directed to the marvels and beauties of the world, it looks at the same time through these to see the Creator as the source of all marvels and beauty: his δόξα is looked on in the beauty of the world as in a slide. But—and here is the Greek element—the beauty of things is truly contemplated and admired as such, and here δόξα and κάλλος become one: 'The δόξα of the stars is the κάλλος of Heaven' (43.9). The firmament is said to be a 'spectacle of glory', the sun is 'a marvellous instrument, the work of the Most High' (43.1–2), the rainbow is 'exceedingly beautiful in its brightness (αὔγασμα); it encircles the heavens with its glorious arc; the hands of the Most High have stretched it out' (43.11–12); Ben Sirach goes on to admire clouds, wind and storms, thunder and lightning, snow, hail, ice and thaw, and finally he listens to the experiences of those who journey by sea, who tell of things quite different from those already known, strange and wonderful things and creatures (παράδοξα θαυμάσια ἔργα), and concludes with one of the most astounding statements of the Bible: 'Though we speak much, we cannot reach the end, and the sum of our words is: "He is the all" (τὸ Πᾶν ἐστιν αὐτός). Where shall we find strength to praise him? For he is *greater than* all his works' (43.27–28). The Greek-pantheistic formulation expresses for the Jew precisely what the seraphim of Isaiah had sung to one another: 'The whole earth is completely full of his *kabod*' (Is 6.3). The only thing that is new is the insight that the world exists *in* God's *kabod*, or in other words that God is not only transcendent to the world as one who is 'other' (for then he would be subject to limits), but is also totally immanent to the world precisely because of his total transcendence.

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[18] Seven times, the verb nine times.

[19] Forty-two times.

[20] At 21.16, χάρις is ethical graciousness (doubtless following Ps 45.3), and often it is magnanimity in attitude and deed (almsgiving, generous gifts), just as δόξα and πλοῦτος are found together at 24.17 as the blossoms of wisdom.

[21] As merely external beauty of a woman (κάλλος): 9.8; 25.21; 26.17; 42.12; as generally 'beautiful appearance', 11.2.

The most beautiful expression in Ben Sirach of God's total transcendence is not abstract, as in Greek philosophy and in the gnosis which is descended from this, but is biblical as the expression of the experience of the ever greater, ever more incomprehensible glory of the God of grace who reveals himself. 'When you praise the Lord, exalt him as much as you can; for he will surpass even that. When you exalt him, put forth all your strength, and do not grow weary, for you cannot praise him enough. Who has seen him and can describe him? Or who can extol him as he is? Many things greater than these lie hidden, for we have seen but few of his works. For the Lord has made all things, and to the godly he has granted wisdom' (43.30–33).

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[22] Following the Greek: Hebrew has: 'before his glory'.

If God is the one who is ever greater, he is this for the world essentially as the one who is full of grace. Ben Sirach does not known the Essene doctrine of double predestination, which is diametrically opposed to the ancient understanding of the covenant. God's goodness is one with his righteousness (*sedaka*), and his judgment is one with his mercy (*mishpat*). Although God had to be angry with his people because of their sins, he 'will never give up his mercy, nor cause any of his works to perish' (47.22). This total goodness of God does indeed correspond to Hellenistic ideas, but these only confirm here what Ben Sirach knows on the basis of the ancient scriptures.

> The compassion of man is [only] for his neighbour,
> but the compassion of the Lord is for all living things:
> he rebukes and trains and teaches them,
> and turns them back, as a shepherd his flock . . .
> The Lord is patient with them
> and pours out his mercy upon them.[23]

Hosea and his school had known this patience of God the educator, his goodness present even in his severity: now this insight is developed in Greek knowledge of the divine *paideia*. Deuteronomy had emphasised (10.17) that God knows no respect for persons, and this statement had a lasting resonance.[24] When Ben Sirach takes it up (35.12–16), he does so in the perspective of the biblical transcendence of God: the 'poor', the 'oppressed', 'orphans' and 'weeping widows', the 'lowly' do not miss out at the hands of God (35.11–19); by establishing justice, God shows his mercy (35.23). And yet

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[23] 18.13, 11.

[24] Job 34.19; 2 Chr 19.7; Wis 6.7; Acts 10.34; Rom 2.11.

God is not bound in a one-sided way; even the covenant with Abraham is based for Ben Sirach in the universal covenant with Noah, in which ultimately all one-sidedness in God's election is evened out: 'Everlasting covenants[25] were made with him that all flesh should not be blotted out by a flood' (44.18). In terms of Greek thought, this means: God is higher than the innerworldly contradictions, and the contradictoriness of things—the sign that they are not God—is 'very good' (Gen 1.31) in the presence of the Absolute which encompasses them. The statements of Ben Sirach on this subject are decisively important for the linking of revelation and philosophy with one another and for the entire future history of metaphysics, quite apart from the consideration that they incorporate the tired relativism of Qoheleth into a greater context that gives justification:

> All men are from the ground,
> and Adam was created for the dust.
> In the fullness of his knowledge the Lord distinguished
> them
> and appointed their different ways;
> some of them he blessed and exalted,
> and some of them he made holy and brought near to
> himself,
> but some of them he cursed and brought low,
> and he turned them out of their place.
> As clay in the hand of the potter—
> for all his ways are as he pleases—
> so men are in the hand of him who made them,
> to give them as he decides.
> Good is the opposite of evil,
> and life the opposite of death;
> so the sinner is the opposite of the godly.
> Look upon all the works of the Most High;
> they likewise are in pairs, one the opposite of the
> other (33.10–15).

> How greatly to be desired are all his works,
> and how sparkling they are to see!
> All these things live and remain for ever,

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[25] Greek, against Hebrew which has: 'sign'.

> everything obeys him in every situation.[26]
> All things are twofold, one opposite the other,
> and he has made nothing incomplete.
> One confirms the good things of the other,
> and who can have enough of beholding his
> glory? (42.22–25)

Such considerations will allow Paul to transcend even the most inexorable consequences of the doctrine of election into an ultimate harmony (Rom 9–11). Ben Sirach deduces this conclusion from the 'very good' of the first origin:

> No one can say, 'What is this?' 'Why is that?'
> for in his time all things will be sought after.
> No one can say, 'What is this?' 'Why is that?'
> for everything has been created for its use (39.16,
> 21).
>
> The works of the Lord are all good, and he will supply
> every need in its hour.
> And no one can say, 'This is worse than that',
> for all things will prove good in their season.
> So now sing praise with all your heart and voice,
> and bless the name of the Lord (39.33–35).

The interplay of opposites in the world is such that 'one cannot take anything away or add anything'; but this also means that one has no overview of the entire construction, since through the puzzling totality of the world there shimmers the much more inscrutable totality of God. Thus it holds true that:

> It is not possible to trace the wonders of the Lord.
> When a man has finished, he is just beginning,
> and when he stops, he will be at a loss (18.6–7).

One should, however, note once again that Ben Sirach, unlike the apocalyptists, does not know of an eternal condemnation,[27] and does not include this in the marvellous play of opposites (as does Christian theology from Augustine to Bonaventure and Dante).

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[26] Hebrew.

[27] The things of nature which were created to punish the sinners, such as 'fire, hail, famine and death' (39.29), are therefore equally at the service of the God who educates with patience.

When he rises up to God's place in order to contemplate the 'very good' of the world together with him, then he understands the creature, in the spirit of Israel of old, as something essentially oriented to obedience, making no resistance to God's word and the command of his eternal order (16.27): above all, it is the stars that 'are not disobedient to his word' (16.28), the host of heaven (43.10), the sun (43.5) and even the elements obey him (39.17–18; 43.13f.). The animals obey likewise (16.29). 'The entire creation obeys his will' (42.15) and becomes transparent to his glory thanks to this obedience, the space within which this glory unfolds itself (42.16). Man, however, is created free: God has set before him the choice between life and death, and he must decide (15.11–20). For Ben Sirach, the knowledge of good and evil belongs from the outset to this freedom (17.7),[28] as does the knowledge about the link between fear of God (or obedience) and wisdom (19.20). No one in the old covenant spoke with greater enthusiasm and eloquence than Ben Sirach about the fear of God as the 'origin', the 'root', and the 'perfection' of all wisdom (1.11–20). For him, the fear of the Lord is 'glory and praise', 'delight and joy', 'blessing in death': it is the free availability for God which the other creatures naturally possess, creating in man the space for the wisdom which pours itself forth from God into the world (1.1–10). For this, a certain poverty in spirit is necessary: 'Better is the God-fearing man who lacks intelligence, than the highly prudent man who transgresses the law. There is a cleverness which is scrupulous but unjust' (19.24f.).[29] If one has sinned, one must repent and abandon one's evil deeds (17.25): fear of God and repentance are one (21.6). Ben Sirach prizes worldly fame: when man is honoured, he receives a small reflection of the divine δόξα (10.26–31); but ultimately he knows well that, whether poor or rich, honoured or not, only the one who fears God has true value (10.19–25).[30] Indeed, the fear of God shelters the pious man more than the canopy of the *shekinah* (40.27; *cf.* Is 4.5–6).

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[28] But 'the knowledge of wickedness is not wisdom, nor is there prudence where sinners take counsel' (19.22).

[29] This is a riposte (direct or indirect) to what sounded all too utilitarian, worldly and managerial in the ancient proverbs from the period of the kings.

Even though Ben Sirach includes many traditional perspectives on virtue and piety—self-control and patience,[31] keeping silent,[32] caution in dealings with others,[33] the avoidance of credulity,[34] of over-activity,[35] of lust of the flesh,[36] of enjoyment of wine,[37] etc.—his image of God brings those elements to prominence which draw him close to the New Testament: obedience and love of God seen in unity (2.15–16), spiritual poverty and humility (πραῦτης ταπείνωσις),[38] unlimited confidence in God (2.18), love of neighbour (7.20f.), forgiveness of sins (28.1–7), bending down to help one's neighbour in every kind of need (4.1–10; 7.32–36; 11.12; 34.21–22), and naturally almsgiving, with an immanent reward[39] that is often emphasised (7.32, 10; 29.8–13; 40.17). It is characteristic also that one is recommended to be good to oneself (14.5, 11–15); one should let oneself enjoy something of God's good gifts. In all this, the Old Testament boundaries are not crossed: one is not to do anything for the sinner or help him: 'refuse him your bread, do not give it to him, for he could become stronger than you'. And this is to be done in imitation of God: 'For the Most High also hates sinners and will inflict punishment on the ungodly. Give to the good man, but do not help the sinner' (12.1–7).

The last things are spoken of with reservation: the only thing certain is that each one will be rewarded in accordance with his deeds, and that the end of each one will disclose the value of his life (11.26–28). 'The fire of flame' and 'Sheol' are mentioned together as the end of the godless (21.9–10). The real emphasis lies on his assertion that life is a trial, πειρασμός: if one wishes to serve God, one must arm oneself with courage for 'the furnace of humilation', and one must bring faith, confidence, hope, and patience, a heart that is always ready (2.1–18); it is the divine Wisdom itself that puts man to the test to see if he trusts her, indeed 'she will torment him by her discipline until she trusts him' (4.11–17). Here Ben Sirach reaches his profoundest point: Wisdom, as she imparts her education, lies like a heavy stone on the ignorant and rebellious, and there will never be more than a few who can hold out under her weight. But 'put your shoulder under her and carry her, and do not fret under her bonds . . . when you get hold of her, do not let her go . . . her fetters will become for you a strong protection, and her collar a glorious robe' (6.18–31). Such exhortations to renunciation and discipline seem little different from the wisdom for the practical conduct of life in Egyptian, Oriental and Hellenistic religions, and they certainly throw a bridge across to these traditions; but behind them is Ben Sirach's love for the Wisdom—virgin, bride and mother—that flows forth from God and is the mode of God's presence and providence for man. A hidden tenderness makes all morality appear as something done out of thankfulness to God and in order to glorify him. Here there shines out something of the fire of the theology of obedience of the major prophets in the *theologia gloriae* of late Judaism, and we perceive something of what will be called glory in the new covenant. But the concealment of the new in the old (*Novum in Vetere latet*) remains tightly sealed: the scholar of Wisdom does not put his shoulders under the cross, but under something that puts him to the test because it 'educates' him in the Hellenistic and late Jewish sense.[40] But fortunately, he knows that the standard in accordance with which and for which he is being educated is no anthropological standard; all wisdom comes from God alone (1.1) and therefore remains unfathomable (1.2–3, 6) and hidden (11.4); and what man knows of Wisdom is even now too great for him: 'Do not meddle in what is beyond your tasks, for matters too great for human understanding have been shown you' (3.23). God's revelation is a flood that is directed into channels, 'but lo, my channel became a river, and my river became a sea' (24.31). The man who is nourished with what belongs to God will always hunger again as he eats, always thirst again as he drinks (24.21), for he has become a function of the one who surpasses him. He is born so that he may give praise, but God is yet greater than all praise (43.30); the infinity is not the infinity of vanity and emptiness (as Qoheleth thought), but the infinity of a fullness that cannot ever be measured (18.1–7).

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[30] *Cf.* 6.17.

[31] 1.22–24.

[32] 5.10f. 19.6f.; 20.1f.; 27.16f.; 28.13f.

[33] 6.5f.; 7.26f; 9.1f; 9.10f.; 12.8–18; 13.1–3: 18. 19–27; 33.20f.

[34] 19.13f.

[35] 11.10–11.

[36] 22.27–23.6; 23.17f.

[37] 31.25–31.

[38] 1.27; 1.30; 3.17–18; 4.8; 7.17; 10.14, 28; 36.23; 45.4

[39] The doctrine of immanent retribution is unavoidable in Ben Sirach, since he knows of no retribution after death. *Cf.* 9.12; 21.27–28; 27.9, 25f.; 35.10; 41.7.

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[40] On the *musar* as discipline, correction, rebuke, education, teaching, direction, moral formation, *cf.* the comprehsensive remarks of D. Hilaire Duesberg in: *Les Scribes Inspirés*, 2 vols., 1938.

c. The Book of Wisdom

Although written one hundred and thirty years after Ben Sirach, the Alexandrian Book of Wisdom (*c.* 50 B.C.) sounds essentially the same note. It too anticipates a synthesis that can exist materially only when Christianity comes, and in Wisdom too the world—as nature and as history—is the disclosure of God's glory; but once again two barriers are erected: first, the depths of the night that opened up in the major prophets and in the exile are deliberately kept closed (Israel is 'the blameless race': 10.15), and second, the eschatological division into black and white remains and is indeed sharpened (through influences from apocalyptic which has come into life since Sirach was written): the seven great antitheses between Egypt and Israel which bring the book to a close, in which existence in the light of the covenant stands over against existence in the Egyptian darkness, is a terrifying closure to the old covenant and shows that the decisive word from God has not yet been spoken. This will have to be a pure eschatological act, which no contemplative synthesis can anticipate; thus it is not possible for δόξα to unveil its ultimate countenance here. The whole book stands in the mild, diffused light of δόξα, which has become the 'effluence' and 'mirror' of God (7.26) but which is no longer God himself. Δόξα suffers from the same deprivation of power that has been its fate since Third Isaiah, although it is no longer 'glory ahead' and 'glory above', but is a radiance from God poured out over the whole cosmos in the present tense. Contact has now been made with the metaphysical concept of glory in Plato and Plotinus: the glory of what 'exists' in the world (11.24) is now the ultimate ground of all being (τὸν ὄντα, 13.1) which shines forth in the 'measure, number and weight' (11.20) of all things, and the analogical recognition of this glory through the beauty of the world is now portrayed explicitly as possible and necessary (13.5).

Like the earlier wisdom teachings, the Book of Wisdom emphasises that wisdom, which is hard to find, is with God and belongs to him, and that it is given only to the one who has the fear of God, who begs for it and receives it in an open and thankful heart. Wisdom's love for mankind was already given prominence in the latest part of the Book of Proverbs;[41] but the readiness of wisdom to let herself be found is something new. Here she is *gratia praeveniens*: 'she hastens to make herself known to those who desire her', indeed 'she goes about seeking those worthy of her, and she graciously appears to them in their paths, and meets them in every thought'.[42] She is 'radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her',[43] just as God himself 'lets himself be found by those who do not put him to the test, and manifests himself to those who do not distrust him' (1.2), for 'wickedness makes men blind' (2.21). This is therefore the encounter of the divine agape with the praying eros of the one who seeks wisdom—a thought that is in accordance both with the piety of the Psalms and with Platonist philosophy. The eros corresponds both to the duty and to the inclination of man: he loves wisdom because she is beautiful, but on a deeper level, because God himself loves her.

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[41] Prov 8.31; Wis 1.6; 7.23,

[42] 6.13, 16.

[43] 6.12.

> 'I loved her and sought her from my youth,
> and I desired to take her for my bride,
> and I became enamoured (ἐραστής) of her
> beauty.
> She glorifies her noble birth by living with God,
> and the Lord of all loves her.
> For she is an initiate (μύστις) in the knowledge of
> God,
> and an associate in his works.'[44]

It would follow that mysticism is initiation into Wisdom, which is here called God's mystic: a sharing through prayer and love in the mystery of God which is disclosed in the world by God.

But who or what is this wisdom? The book maintains a deliberate reserve, speaking only in circumlocutions of the mystery and giving the impression through the images it employs of something oscillating and flowing that may not be pinned down on any one side rather than another. And although it employs images and concepts from the various schools of Greek philosophy without reserve, it does not commit itself in the slightest to one particular system; the words point to a mystery that cannot be captured in any system. Wisdom is a 'breath (ἀτμίς) of the power of God',[45] a 'breath' or 'spirit' (πνεῦμα, corresponding to *ruach*, always implies bodily breathing as well),[46] which as such is 'reasonable' and 'holy',[47] but the direct equation of wisdom and spirit[48] is not made;[49] likewise, wisdom is close to the word of God, without being identical to it.[50] She is the purest

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[44] 8.2–4

[45] 7.25.

[46] On this, *cf.* D. Barthèlemy, *Gott mit seinem Ebenbild* (1966), pp. 227–246.

[47] 7.22.

[48] At 1.6 one must translate: 'Wisdom is a spirit (breath) that loves men'.

[49] 1.7 speaks of 'the Spirit of the Lord' which 'fills the whole earth'.

[50] The word of God creates the world (9.1), but wisdom chooses what is to be created (8.4), is present at the creation and know what pleases God (9.9). The word proceeds from God as a judge (destroyer: 18.15) and saviour (healer: 16.12), wisdom is oscillating presence (7.22f.).

'emanation' (ἀπόρροια) of the 'glory (δόξα) of the Almighty': thus she both is and is not the glory of God: she is glory in the mode of not remaining alone by herself; she is the 'reflection (ἀπαύγασμα), of the eternal light', 'spotless mirror of the working (ἐνέργεια) of God', 'image (εἰκών) of his sovereign goodness' (7.26); thus always God in the act of going forth from himself, which is never an act of alienation from himself, for this is excluded by the adjectives 'pure' and 'spotless' and by the descriptions piled up at 7.22–24, which wish to have wisdom appear precisely as the immanence of God in his creation: 'in her there is a spirit that is intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, mobile, clear, unpolluted, distinct, invulnerable, loving the good, keen, irresistible, beneficent, humane, steadfast, sure, free from anxiety, all-powerful, overseeing all, and penetrating through all spirits . . . for wisdom is more mobile than any motion; because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things'. Let us repeat that one should not speak of an eclectic popular philosophy when one considers this stammering list: one should grasp that here the theological mystery of the presence and indwelling of God (which mocks every attempt at systematisation) wishes to be described in the distinction and non-distinction from itself. The new covenant will take up with care these great images that are set up here in their ranks and made ready for its use, but ancient philosophy too, in its concluding form in Plotinus, will be in harmony with this description when it makes its fundamental statement about unity and multiplicity and about God's remaining in himself and going forth from himself; wisdom is 'unique and manifold', 'though she is but one, she can do all things'; 'compared with the light she is found to be superior, for it is succeeded by the night, but against wisdom evil does not prevail' (7.22, 27, 29–30). Thus she shares God's property of being superior to all contradictions, *non-aliud*.

This removes from the God of the old covenant a suspicion which could not seriously be entertained about him but which was repeatedly laid to his charge—not least by Hegel![51]—

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[51] Vol. V, pp. 911f. (German text).

namely, the suspicion that he is 'a' God who is powerful and demanding, but who is separated from the world by his emphatic personality (and perhaps separated also from other real or possible gods) and thus limited in himself. The 'one Yahweh' (Deut 6.4), who is the 'one' (Wis 7.27) and 'unique' (7.22), is also the one whose sovereignty extends through the universe, the one who remains in himself, 'without stepping outside himself', and yet at the same time can be his own emanation, reflection and image in the world. One cannot accuse the Book of Wisdom of having obscured or even betrayed the traits of the living God of Israel here; even if it does not mention all his traits, the new Testament will supply what has been left out here, and will re-establish the unity of early and late Judaism in the higher Christian unity.

Since the wisdom of God multiplies itself in the world, it becomes the occasion for the development of the human sciences; Solomon, who is understood as the one who speaks and acts here, becomes the patron of 'true knowledge of the things that exist, (τῶν ὄντων): teaching about the cosmos and its elements, astronomy and zoology, psychology, botany, and pharmacology are mentioned specifically (7.17–20); in the same way, one can recognise on the basis of the biblical knowledge of the 'rightness' of God (*sedaka*) as 'fruits' the cardinal virtues of ethical philosophy: 'self-control and prudence, justice and courage' (8.7).[52] But since wisdom nevertheless remains one and the same even when she is multiplied in the world and in history, she must provide the basis of the philosophy of religion too, with its proofs of the existence of God: the κάλλος (goodness and beauty) of the works of God gives sufficient occasion to attain God through drawing analogies (13.4–5). Indeed, the beauty and goodness of the works of God is so great that those 'seekers of God' who do not go beyond the glorious heavenly bodies and deify these 'deserve a lighter rebuke' (13.6) than those who fashion idols and commit an unforgivable sin (13.10–15.19). All the other sins derive (14.27) from this religious perversion, whose psychological origin is vividly portrayed (14.12–21), for all sound ethics depends on a sound religious relationship to God.

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[52] The fact that δικαιοσύνη means here both the general 'rightness' and the individual virtue of 'justice' shows the perplexity of the Greek translators when confronted with such fundamental Hebrew concepts as *sedek* or *mishpat*; but it also shows that a link has been made to Plato, who derives all of the cardinal virtues from universal rightness or appropriateness (δικαιοσύνη: *Rep.* IV 443f.); *cf.* vol. IV of this work, p. 173 (Eng. trans.).

But although God is the 'friend of the living' (11.26) who loves all that exists (11.24) and accompanies it with his providence (14.3) and permits it to share the benefits of his 'sparing' (11.26; 12.16), nevertheless it is only Israel whom he has made blessed with the light of his wisdom. It was wisdom who protected the people of Israel and went before them, giving light in the pillar of cloud and fire (10.17), and when Solomon asks for her, she too protects him 'in her glory' (9.11): instead of the darkness that covers the eyes and souls of the Egyptians, 'thou didst provide a flaming pillar of fire as a guide for thy people's unknown journey, and a harmless sun for their glorious wandering' (18.3).

For the Book of Wisdom, this *kabod* is very close to the 'imperishable light of the Torah which was to be given to the world' (18.4). It sits beside God's throne (9.4) and is also the 'archetype' of the sacred cult, as Moses saw this on the mountain (9.8). This especial closeness to the revealed wisdom gives Israel a mysterious share in eternal life, the share which the author describes in his eschatology, once again employing hues of Greek philosophy: while those who do not know God walk the path of death (1.13–15), of perishable enjoyment (2.1–9) and of scorn and oppression of the pious (2.10–20), a path that ends with the fall into Sheol (4.19), 'the righteous will live for ever' and will receive 'a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem' (5.15–16). For 'their hope was already full of immortality' (3.4: this is the first time that the word 'immortality' occurs in the Bible). No particular value is attached now to having descendants (4.1: this too for the first time in the Bible): the infertile woman and the eunuch can have their own greater fruitfulness in wisdom (3.13–14), and a young life in love of God can already be fulfilled (4.7–14); it is not the quantitative evil length of life with its useless fruits (4.3–6), which God did not desire (3.16f.), that counts in the judgement, but the only form of life that is worthy of man, the life that keeps to the original divine image. 'For God created man for incorruption ἀφθαρσία, and made him in the image of his own eternity' (ἀϊδιότης: the reading ἰδιότης, his own being, is scarcely to be accepted as original: 2.23). This is new, even when compared to Ben Sirach (Sir 17.1), and betrays a higher concept of the dignity of man, although we are not obliged to discern a Platonic element of flight from the world in this. Death (2.24) and the nullity and transitoriness of the world are secondary when compared to God's original plan; but wisdom permits man to live on the heights of the original plan of wisdom, even if this is a life under 'trials' (2.19; 3.5–7) and 'education' (11.9;12.21–22). The existence of the one who trusts in God is recognised as eschatological, as sharing in the 'new age', and thus the fruit of the apocalypses is brought home, while their extravagances are abandoned. The concluding sevenfold antithesis between Jews and Egyptians which was mentioned above is a double existential analysis of living with God and living without God; it is worth noting that the latter analysis is carried out as the analysis of the fear of those whose lives are rooted in nothing and are terrified by nothing (17.1–20). [53] Characteristic of the former is the 'turning' to the 'sign of salvation', the bronze serpent (16.6–7), eating the 'food of angels', the manna, with a taste that accommodated itself to the longing of each individual (16.20–21), walking in the light of instruction (18.3–4) and of the powerful word (18.15), indeed, life out of the word (16.26). Thus the author succeeds in uniting the philosophical and world-historical breadth of 'religion' with the decisiveness of the biblical eschatological either/or. Even if his dual image of judgment and his conceptual material remain just as characteristically Old Testament as those of Ben Sirach, he still goes beyond this to create a formal synthesis which the New Testament will fill with its own contents.

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[53] I have set this out in greater detail in my *Der Christ und die Angst* (1951), pp. 16–22.

B. THE PRESENT DAY WITHOUT GLORY

1. THE EMPTY TIME

If one surveys the three developments of the *theologia gloriae* which have been sketched above—the reaching-out into the future, into the heaven above, and into the surrounding cosmos—then it immediately becomes terrifyingly clear that such an urgent need for glory can derive only from a great deficiency. As long as the people were still impressed by Yahweh's salvific activity in the present, they could not become aware of the full profundity of this deficiency, even if Yahweh's salvific activity also revealed its character as a judgment that embraced the most breathtaking experiences of the night and historical catastrophes. But this deficiency became ever more acutely perceptible when the exilic and post-exilic prophecy failed to be fulfilled: now God sends a true famine into the land, 'not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of Yahweh . . . but they shall not find it' (Amos 8.11–12). There is no longer any prophet (1 Macc 4.46; 9.27; 14.41) Since they are so few in number, the 'remnant' that returns home from the captivity does not feel itself to be the embodiment of the chosen people; rather, in order to give itself such a consciousness, it must first fashion an entire ideology for itself (Chronicles); it lives in a deep uncertainty that underlies its whole life, viz. whether it can validly represent the covenant relationship held by the confederation of the twelve tribes when as a people it is far from representing the whole confederation. This uncertainty is heightened by the silence of prophecy. In this long period, the remnant of Israel must experience something that is important and very difficult: the freedom which God has to speak or to be silent, to act or to be still. God no longer speaks and acts as he did in the epoch that goes from the exodus to the destruction of the holy city. Everything that was to be said and done has been completed, for the time being: Israel has sufficient material to meditate on in a sabbath that lasts for centuries. The pause which is imposed here cannot be described either by means of the presence of God or by means of the terrible absence experienced in Lamentations and Job—for them, the most intensive negative experience of his glory. It would be exaggerated now to speak of a genuine abandonment by God: it is only impossible to determine whether God is truly 'there'.

In this meditative pause, God's glory—the assurance of his lordship—is covered by a thick veil. This concealment is revealed by the passionate reachings-out in all directions for this glory. Once, during the period of salvation history, the decisive way to make the divine glory a present reality was to reach-out backwards into the origins in an especial manner: the Book of Deuteronomy sees the *kabod* of Sinai as the basis of everything. Several prophets point to the pure and spotless situation of the origins in the wilderness. The intention here was to establish a genuine system of relationship between the former and the present historical periods. But is the present day of the post-exilic period a historical period at all? In Deutero-Isaiah, the historical span between the foundational period (of the journey through the wilderness) and the present time in exile was contemplated from a distance that was the beginning of a detached standpoint outside events: God's new activity comes from far off (from the creation) and makes for further goals; only, the prophet lacked the categories in which to speak of this new thing that was to come. But now no one knew whether the growing stillness had something to do with this new thing—for it was in any case not a salvific act of God—or whether Israel had gone off the rails in some terrible way. But this meant that the effective appeal backwards, to the glories of the historical beginning, was fundamentally no longer possible. This was the reason for the three new ways of reaching-out.

Their hidden salvific meaning was hinted at above: the sign of the God of grace which was established in history, but was necessarily subject to the restrictions of the historical dimension, must first be transplanted into a much widened sphere in order to be appropriate as the basis for the universal salvific act of God that would embrace the whole world:

while the historical sign was permitted to show its innate truth through the relationship between promise and fulfilment, it must subsequently become *as a whole* a promise that transcends itself into a future that is the first *true* fulfilment.

The messianic dynamic of all Israel, oriented towards the future, was this first transcendence, which bore the weight of all the historical impatience of imminent expectation: first the impatience of the political imminent expectation of the Davidic prophecy and of the great instructions and proclamations of the literary prophets, and then (growing almost seamlessly out of this) the impatience of the apocalyptic imminent expectation of the Book of Daniel and of all the hopes for the end times that stem from this book.

The reaching-out for the 'glory above' opened the second dimension, which is closely linked to the first: the dimension between earth and Heaven, between first age and second age. This apocalypse of the world above arose from two basic experiences of Israel: first, that there was always a more than historical power at work in the great salvific acts of the origin—an experience clearly expressed in the poetical formulations in the hymns that sing of the theophanies—and second, that the present form of the covenant did not in any way match and correspond to those origins, and that this present, as the prophets proclaimed, must be exploded in order to make space for the form that absolutely *must* come because it is postulated by the historical origin and because God must remain true to himself by carrying through what he has begun. Not only the so-called apocalyptic 'pessimism', but also and even more the great self-reproaches and confessions of sin on the part of late Israel (from Ps 51 and Is 63–64 to Neh 1.5f.; 9; Ezr 9.6–15; Dan 9: Bar 1–2) testify to the awareness that everything must become completely different in the future, and that nothing on earth can change unless Heaven intervenes. This is the reason for the strange conspiracy between messianism and apocalyptic: the former draws the necessary force to look to the future from the latter: the messianic period claims that everything must be completely transformed, but this cannot be expected of the powers that are at work within history, and now mysticism must provide an experiential proof that the supra-historical heavenly powers are already on the way to make the decisive intervention.

The third reaching-out, that attempted in wisdom teaching, seems to be unrelated to the first two, but is nevertheless closely linked to them. Wisdom assures itself in advance of the glory of everything, seeing the totality of the creation as existing within the glory of God. But while the (deutero-) canonical wisdom books remain content with a familiar description of the ordering of human life, of visible nature and of the well-known history of the nations, the apocryphal writings make an encyclopaedic incursion into the history of the whole earth and soon after into the astronomy of the heavenly spheres, and from here it is but a step to a gnosis of the entire course of history; from God's standpoint, one can also investigate the ordering of all historical periods and therefore the future. Just as (late) messianism is concerned with the absolute future and apocalyptic with the break-through of eternity, so wisdom is concerned with the cosmos as a whole, which must be thoroughly inhabited by the glory of God. [1]

In considering this threefold demand made by Judaism that the glory of God should come, one cannot suppress the question whether Israel, taken as a whole, ever shared in this glory in any form other than that of a great *deprivation*. The mighty theophany in which the covenant was sealed lay in the dim past that was not to be brought back. Hymnody and the theological interpretation of history continued to give their poetic interpretation of this event, until it took on the variously dialectic form in which it has been canonised in the Pentateuch. And when Israel later cried to its God, who no longer worked such signs of salvation as in the exodus from Egypt, at Sinai and in the occupation of the promised land, did it not ask in such prayers that it might receive a glory in a splendid form that it had itself thought up and portrayed? The glory of the origin was no longer attainable: the

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[1] On the connection between wisdom literature and apocalyptic, *cf.* G. von Rad, *ThOT. I*, pp. 446f., 451; Vol. II, pp. 306–308

'Enlightenment' of the period of the kings no longer reckoned with this as a possibility, Deuteronomy took it as a cipher for the burning relevance of love and of the covenant, and the priestly author set it as the seal of legitimation on the cultic forms. The only glory that remained now was that which the prophets saw in their call-visions, and occasionally in other visions: but the only testimony to this was that of the seers themselves, a testimony that was laid open to attack by the offence which their prophetic task as a whole gave; the same would be true later of the testimony of the twelve apostles and of Paul to the resurrection. Besides this, glory remained essentially a promise, unless it was the content of praise; but this praise was fundamentally based on Israel's faith, on the courage with which it held fast to its election, on its love for its God, and on its confidence in his present and future guidance. The proclamation of the divine glory in nature and in history which we find in the wisdom teachers is likewise related to the confessing hymns and to the courage which these display. It is, therefore, easy to understand the attraction of the apocalyptic literature, which sets the slender testimony of an Isaiah and an Ezekiel on a much broader base: now, all the great figures of Israel receive their mystical vision of glory in Heaven, while this literature possesses a presence which permits the readers in some closer or more distant form to share in the visions which are described, either by repeating the experiences or in hope. And yet most of these mystical protocols are mere literature—and often very bad literature—and the conscience of Israel, which is undertaking at this very period the selection of its sacred writings which will set the boundaries of the canon, is well aware of this.

Thus Israel's entire knowledge of the glory of God suddenly seems extremely threatened. The object of this knowledge withdraws continually, never becoming a present reality: it is at once past and future. Israel comes from some place to which it can no longer attain, and is *en route* to some place which it cannot yet reach. What it possesses is a faith—in its election, in the covenant, in the promises—and a hope that inviolably knows that, through all the experiences of night and through all judgments, the end which must necessarily comes lies in the gift of the beginning. And Israel possesses a love for the God who redeemed it from the house of slavery and has promised to remain true to his side of the covenant. The Psalms are a book of love.

But now the love of the covenant-God has put his partner to the hardest test by placing him in a period empty of history—although history was always the mode in which God revealed himself to the people. The fact that 'sacred history' ceases in the post-exilic period is one of the most terrible things in the biblical revelation. At first, the attempt is made to interpret the poor fare of the events after the return from exile as a continuation of sacred history: we find this in Nehemiah and Ezra. This is like a brook in the process of drying up. The Books of Chronicles merely adapt past sacred history to the ideology of Judaism and of the Levitical service in the temple. The Books of Maccabees do not succeed in portraying anything other than the secular history of a religious war carried out with pious enthusiasm and heroic idealism. Despite this, all of these books can certainly be inspired, and belong to the canon of the 'sacred books', just like the 'midrashim' of Esther, Judith and Tobit; but, at least from the perspective of salvation history, they lie a whole level lower down. Sacred history in the ancient sense begins again only with John the Baptist.

This is the difficulty that for Judaism cannot be resolved: how could the period which was empty of significance for salvation history be filled and shaped, if it was no longer given a structure by the salvific acts of God in history or dented by his eternity? If the solution of the timelessly even contemplative wisdom was rejected, then two attempts could be made to answer this almost lethal question. The contemplative distance which was permitted or imposed by the ceasing of salvation history could in no sense be understood as a valid substitute for Israel's unique consciousness of time, for that would have been the abandonment of the historical election and hence of the distinctive understanding of God held by the chosen people: it would have been an approximation of the timeless religious 'metaphysics' of international wisdom teaching, and later of Hellenism. It had, however, already been seen that the 'last dance' of this wisdom in Qoheleth has been partly attributable to the loss of qualitative time: the Preacher knows only empty time that turns in a circle with merely relative, innerwordly 'fortunate moments' for this and that, moments that balance and cancel each other. The whole sapiential understanding of time in Ben Sirach and the Book of Wisdom too threatened to go in the direction of a similar 'entropy' of time and thus of an understanding merely in terms of the 'history of religions', unless quite other motifs worked against this.

Priestly theology contributes such a motif, which is embodied in an extreme form by the Essene theology of the Qumran group, who of course saw themselves as the only true sons of Zadok. This consists in the through-going liturgical structuring of the year with a calendar of feasts, which is traced back (in P) to the very event of the making of the covenant, the event which legitimises it. To us, the historical improbability of the detailed derivation in P is troublesome: the sanctuary in the wilderness is 'revealed' in its every detail (Ex 35–40), and minute prescriptions are given for the sacrificial ritual (Lev 1–7, 17; Num 28f.), the installation of the priests in office (Lev 8–10), the functions of the Levites (Num 1.48ff., 3.5ff., 4), the yearly cycle of feasts (Lev 23; Num 28–29), and the holy years (Lev 25); but for the priestly way of thinking, this derivation was indispensable, if the 'empty time' was to be steadily a participation in the time of God—which for Qumran was the heavenly time of the new age. And the more massive and material were the rites, their contents and elaborations, the more 'incarnate' did Israel's covenant relationship seem—if it was possible to legitimise the entire cultic complex on the basis of the making of the covenant. We shall have the opportunity later to evaluate the priestly ritualism as an 'objective' form of existence caught up in rapture to the realm of God. Here it suffices to determine the inherent boundary of the whole conception: as a form, it is not essentially distinct from the ritual of other, ahistorical religions which think of time in a cyclic manner, and when Israel gave an historical significance to the cycle of Canaan's seasonal feasts, by understanding them as days commemorating the historical salvific acts of God, this opened up the possibility of the opposite danger: i.e., that the historical dimension would be dissolved once more in the cyclic. P's notion that Moses had seen the model of the tent of the covenant in all its details on the mountain and had then made a copy of it in the camp below, is not essentially different from Platonic thinking; it is therefore theologically irrelevant (no matter how much the question may be debated from an historical perspective) whether a genuine theology of P is pursued to its logical consequences in the liturgicism of Qumran, or whether there was an openness here to Hellenistic (Platonic—Pythagoraean) influences. If the whole of the temple activity and the thorough-going sacralisation of secular life (through the perpetual distinction between pure and impure:) (Lev 11–15) can be derived from immediate revelation, why not the whole of Qumran's calendar with its cosmic numerical speculations too? But then it is logical also to follow P in the Pentateuch by treating the *kabod* of Yahweh only as one arbitrarily applicable seal of the attestation of a king among the diverse cultic institutions—something that means that the true glory has passed from God to the institution. In this sense, the Chronicler customarily speaks of the 'glory of the temple', but he means, instead of the (vanished) splendour of Solomon's temple, the whole liturgical commotion of the feasts, pilgrimages, processions, sacrifices, vestments and inspired songs, which fill his heart with joy and seem to him to be the unsurpassable form of the presence on earth of God's salvation (2 Chron 5.11–14; 29.25ff.; Ezr 7.27 = 1 Esr 8.25; 1 Macc 1.40; 2.9,12; 14.15; 2 Macc 3.2; 5.16 ,20 etc.; Sir 50.1–21). But Jesus prophesies the total destruction of precisely this self-radiant, timeless, architectonic-liturgical glory (Mk 13.1–2 par.).

The other motif is imminent expectation. The empty time is always on the point of going over into fulfilled time. Qumran also employed its numerical speculations and astrological calculations to work out the date of the coming day of the Lord, and it does not seem utterly impossible that the three *Magi ex Oriente* came to Bethlehem from that region. In this looking to the future, Qumran stands on the shoulders of Daniel, for whom, as Martin Noth has shown,[2] 'the concept of history scarcely plays any noteworthy role'.[3] 'Daniel' is not interested in the succession of the four world-empires which are the prelude to the coming of the Messiah; he merely takes over at that point a pre-existing schema which originated outside Israel, and does so with an alteration that betrays no understanding of history whatever, since he inserts a non-existent Mede empire between those of Babylon and Persia;[4] his perspective does not even embrace the temporal succession of the empires, nor the idea, commonplace in Antiquity, that each successive empire is worse than its predecessor; all that interests him is the overall orientation of the whole historical period towards the eschatological point in time. This point in time is still left open in the king's vision of the falling colossus (Dan 2), but it is determined in the interpretation of the vision of the four beasts (ch. 7), and still more openly and idiosyncratically in the prophecy of the seventy weeks (ch. 9): here, a precise point, very close in time, is determined, by submitting the statement of Jeremiah to a new interpretation. It is significant that here precisely the destruction of the temple glory by Epiphanes plays such an important role, because this draws on the sacerdotal understanding of time to help in the prophetic interpretation of time: the obvious ending of the valid period of the temple must coincide with the beginning of the fulfilled prophetic time: 'O Lord, cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary, which is desolate' (Dan 9.17; *cf.* 9.19). If Judaism survived the point in time indicated by Daniel, and continued to set up the glory of the temple again and again afresh, this is only in the sense of something which has properly been declared dead but which outlives itself (and here Qumran had the correct instinct). Although the prophetic interpretation of time continually made predictions that failed to come true, it had won the victory. The fullness of time, which had already come upon the scene in principle in God's great historical acts of salvation, and had thereby disclosed something of God's glory, was nevertheless—as fullness—only *en route*. The scheme of promise and fulfilment, which had been taught on various levels by the Pentateuch and was then taken up by the prophets, and surpassed by Deutero-Isaiah in an especially radical way, had maintained its true formal dimensions because of the experience of the *empty time*, but these dimensions could be filled with content only through the new covenant. The third section below ('The Blood Event') will show that even the 'superseded' sacerdotal time was to contribute a positive word here.

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[2] 'Das Geschichtsverständnis der alttestamentlichen Apokalyptik' (1954, now in: *Ges. Stud. AT*, pp. 248–273).

[3] Pp. 249, 273, quoted by L. Koehler, *Der hebräische Mensch* (1953), pp. 125f.

[4] *Cf.* also H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the four World Empires in the Book of Daniel* (1935).

2. THE SPEECH EVENT

But how was it possible for Israel to hold on to such a living awareness of its election, its uniqueness and its mission for the whole world even in the periods of its tragic decline and of its apparent abandonment by an active, saving God? There must have been more to this than merely reminiscences of far-off history; even in a present deprived of glory, there must have remained such strong impulses from the historical period, such strong witnesses of the *kabod* of Yahweh, that these could be experienced as fully valid substitutes for what was missing. And *de facto*, the event-character of two factors in Israel's religion retained their power even in the period when events were few; the event of the word of God and the event of the blood of man and beast.

As far as the word of God is concerned, the period of Judaism is said to be the period in which the verbal form of the Bible received its definitive fixed written shape (the contemplative distance from the word which had gone forth in history seemed the best presupposition for this process), while on the other hand the living word, which had always been spoken out of historical situations, became an absolutely posited 'law' which solidified ahistorically. But although this account of things does reflect aspects of what was a very ambiguous period, the whole phenomenon of the 'word of God' or even of the 'Torah' cannot in the least be so described, for God's word never ceased to be a speech event in Israel.

In order to assure ourself of the truth of this statement, one need only take the Bible in its final redaction as testimony and history of the covenant with God: it is clear that it has an increasing tendency to assimilate and incorporate everything that has to do with the law in the cultic, ethical and juridical sense into the original event of the covenant and thereby to give it a new relevance in a theological sense. The five great events of history which structure the life of the chosen people all stand in decisive fashion under the impression and influence of the word. In the act of the making of the covenant itself—between the sprinkling of the altar with the blood of the sacrificial beasts and the sprinkling of the people with this blood—Moses takes the 'book of the covenant' which was written on the previous day, in order to read it aloud to the people and to bind them to it (Ex 24.6–8). The event in Moab, which is presented to us in Deuteronomy as a repetition which makes the Sinai covenant present anew, is essentially the point where the fullness of the word of revelation, which has hitherto been unknown to the people becomes an event for them. The assembly at Sichem (Josh 24) is likewise a speech event, since the gathering of the twelve tribes sets the seal on their entry into the covenant by answering three times 'We will' to Joshua's threefold questioning, and then 'Joshua wrote these words in the book of the laws (*toroth*) of God' (24.26). After Deuteronomy had lain unread for about a hundred years in the temple at Jerusalem, its discovery and its reading under king Josiah become a mighty conversion event; the priest who finds it says, 'I have found the book of the Torah in the temple of Yahweh' (2 Kings 22.8), and the book itself presents itself as the document of the 'words of the covenant' (Deut 28.69; *cf.* 5.3). And even if we do not know precisely[1] what book the 'secretary of the law of the God of Heaven', the scribe Ezra (Ezra 7.12), read aloud in post-exilic Jerusalem—the book that made such a tremendous impression on the hearers—nevertheless it must have been a collection of texts that was closely related to our Pentateuch, and, if H. Cazelles is correct,[2] precisely a collection that had added P (the priestly document elaborated in the Babylonian exile) as a new element to the document combining J, E and Deuteronomy which already existed in Palestine. Naturally, Ezra read only 'excerpts' from the law, and he continued the first reading, which had caused such dismay and so many tears in the hearers, for a week (Neh 8.8f., 18); there is no evidence that this speech event, which was the beginning of Judaism, had an essentially different character from (for example) the reading of Deuteronomy under Josiah.

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[1] M. Noth, *The History of Israel* (1958), pp. 300ff.

[2] 'La mission d'Esdras', in: *Vet. Test.* 1954, pp. 113–140.

Nevertheless, one must distinguish two trends which diverge sharply from each other from the time of Hosea and Isaiah at the latest. The first, which can be called 'subjectivist', understands the word of revelation above all as the act whereby God manifests his personal favour in turning towards man in unmerited election and love: the only possible response to this is the full, direct turning 'of the whole heart and the whole soul' of man to God. All the individual commandments and laws are interpreted and understood in the light of this one covenant event, above all, naturally, the negative formulations of the first commandment, that one may not tolerate any foreign gods alongside Yahweh, or set up any carved image of God before his face. This is the line of Deuteronomy and of all the historical and psalmic writing that depends on it; but it goes without saying that even this chief instance of subjective-personal piety contains extensive 'legal' parts which incarnate this piety in the sphere of politics and ethics. On the other side, there is the 'objectivist', and above all cultic, priestly piety which takes form in the southern kingdom as the 'holiness law' (Lev 17–26) at roughly the same time as Deuteronomy is written in the north. The fundamental concern of this piety is to give a covenantal shape to the objective, supernatural sphere which has been opened up by God. Here the concrete, bodily existence of the individual is being regulated in all its aspects in the perpetual act of distinguishing pure from impure—and while it is true that many ancient taboos are carried foward consciously here, the chief purpose is to remind the member of the holy people continuously that he lives on the boundary between the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God—and this even more strongly in circumcision, in which God incises his sign bloodily on the one who belongs to him, in the many bloody and unbloody sacrifices (where human sacrifice always stands somewhere in the background—the idea that one owes oneself with body and soul to God), and in the sabbath commandment, where God makes yet another claim to man, who must yield up the seventh part of his time to God.

All of this is called 'covenant' in a very concrete fashion, repeating the one word silently a hundred times in order to impress it upon man's existence from all sides. This silent word is voiced when it is uttered as Torah: the original meaning of this word is the instruction given by the priests as they interpret the conduct customary in the objective sphere of God. It is an oral word that is given out of God's possession and in God's commission to the people, in order that it may shape its daily life in accordance with the will of God.[3] While genuine preaching does exist on the basis of Deuteronomy, as an introduction to the covenantal attitude 'with all one's heart and all one's soul' (and indeed, Deuteronomy itself in its first part is already the deposit of such preaching), the Torah is not a sermon, but the official, guaranteed *expression in words* of the divine will which is in force and established in the realm of the covenant. Each is in its way a theological speech event, viz. divine revelation in the human act of speaking. One could call the earliest Torah of all the scene in which Moses comes down from Sinai and proclaims to the people the 'words' (*dᵉbarim*) and 'ethical rules in force' (*mishpatim*) of Yahweh on the day before the liturgical sealing of the covenant, and the people declare that they accept the words that have gone forth from Yahweh; these words, which are in force for God, are then written down as words that are now in force for the people (Ex 24.3–4): we find the codification at the same point of the sequence of events here as at the assembly of Sichem.

We cannot and need not trace the complicated process whereby the earliest Torah of all, the expression in words by Moses of the conduct required by God (in the present Pentateuch, above all the decalogue at Ex 20, to which however the 'book of the covenant' is already joined), offers itself as the basis for further expressions in words which are assimilated in various phases to the complex of the covenant event and thus are considered as belonging to the *original* making of the covenant[4] and to the speech event which was united to this. But precisely this process was repeated until the post-exilic period—P is the last document of the Pentateuch to be completed—and this continuous enrichment of Torah material, adding ever new and more nuanced expression in words of the basic materials of the covenant, threatened with time to take on an excessive importance, acquiring a value in itself that concealed rather than disclosed the event which was originally to be given expression in words. It is to this point that Jesus' decisive criticism will direct its attack (Matt 15.1–20) with his clear exposition of the fundamental covenant words: *sedek*, *rachamim*, *emeth* (Matt 23.23).

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[3] Joachim Begrich, 'Die priesterliche Tora' (1936, now in: *Ges. Stud. AT*, 1964, pp. 232–260). One need not agree with him in his excessively strong reduction of Torah to the sphere of what is cultically pure and impure.

It is incorrect to describe the development of the old covenant as a process of the gradual hardening of the living word of God into a dead law. All the five great speech events mentioned above are, each in its own way, the original and living expression in words of the covenant, in which the 'event' and the 'laws' always balanced one another. It is significant that the title which Ezra bears ('secretary of the law of the God of Heaven') is imposed on him from outside, by king Artaxerxes, and that the Chronicler interprets it as follows for Jewish ears: 'For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord (*toroth Yhwh*), and to do it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel' (Ezra 7.10); the ordinances can also be called '*toroth* of Moses which the Lord, the God of Israel, has given' (7.6). Ezra is the man who seeks to understand, in order to live and to put into words for others, what is to count as established by God ('word') in the verbal expression of Moses' instruction.

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[4] To the extent that it is possible to speak of such a making of the covenant in P at all, since in the form in which we know P today, it contents itself with the handing-over of the 'law' to Moses and with the interpretation of this (M. Noth, 'Die Gesetze im Pentateuch', 1940; now in: *Ges. Stud. AT*, p. 121). But it is impossible to know what the final redactor excluded from his source on the grounds that the equivalent was already present in another source. The authors of P, who gave a detailed account of the covenants with Noah and with Abraham, will doubtless for that reason have understood the event at Sinai as a covenant. On the other hand, Noth holds that P is a purely narrative work which does not itself contain laws, but only the description of the institutions and dispositions established at Sinai, with the pre-Sinai history (with its various covenants) as a general introduction to these; the laws in P would then be inserted at a secondary literary stage. Noth: *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch* (1948), pp. 7ff., 250.

Judaism is essentially the attempt, in the absence of original events of salvation history, to persevere in the abiding speech event of interpretation. As we have shown, this event was indeed already present in the double stream of tradition in sermon (Deuteronomy) and cultic prescription (holiness law), but there is no point at which these two streams can be cleanly divided from one another, since they continually flow into one another. Deuteronomy itself is Torah (2 Kings 22.8), and its homiletic parts count as instruction; the form of the Torah as instruction is taken up and imitated by the prophets, to say nothing of the case of Ezekiel, who is priest and prophet in one person. The work of the Chronicler is interwoven with many sermon sketches, which are frequently an interpretation of sayings from the 'law' or even from a prophet,[5], bringing such sayings up to date. This presupposes a very living relationship to the ancient 'words'.

The central speech event, however—in terms of chronology and in terms of its contents—remains Deuteronomy, inspired by a political spirit and reacting to the prophets. Deuteronomy dares to make present in the seventh century the word of Moses in Moab, just as Moses makes the earlier historical event at Sinai present in his word, in such a way that for Moses in Moab the divine act of salvation, which had taken place *per se* at that earlier point in history, but had not at all been genuinely made a reality by the people, now for the first time truly takes place *for the people* too. And this takes place through the speech event which comes about in the preaching and instruction of Moses: the revelatory power of this speech event is seen ultimately in the fact that Deuteronomy is taken into the canon. The extraordinary thing about this event is that it allows Moses also to reach out with his word from Moab into the distant future of the seventh century, so that the 'today' of which he continually speaks is both the 'today' of Moab—in which the 'today' of Sinai becomes actuality—and the 'today' of the Samaria which faces its destruction, and also the 'today' of king Josiah who reads it 'at the pillar' in the temple of Jerusalem. The author of the book did not intend in all these overlapping speech events to forget or devalue the historical event of Sinai, or to demythologise it into the speech event, but he knew that the history of interpretation is an essential aspect of the fullness of the historical event. And perhaps one can draw closer to an assessment of the Old Testament situation (as opposed to that of the New Testament), if one says that the real thrust of the salvific event lies in the continuing generative power of the divine word as it interprets itself, in the inextricable knot between the word of glory and the word of glorification, the knot which characterises the existence of Israel wholly as existence in the word of God—unlike the new covenant, in which the word has become flesh and what one previously could and must term a speech event is subject to an altered law. We shall discuss this in the next Volume of this work.

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[5] G. von Rad, 'Die levitische Predigt in den Büchern der Chronik' (1934, now in: *Ges. Stud. AT*, pp. 248–261).

The greatest speech event of the old covenant has been consciously bracketed off from this whole consideration, viz. prophecy in which the actuality of the word of God attains its height: what in Deuteronomy is the fruit of much effort—making present the historical event of the origin—is in the major prophets sometimes bestowed seemingly without effort on their part. As Origen saw, this presence of the 'word of Yahweh' is a genuinely eucharistic mode of the active presence of God in the history of his people. We shall not discuss here how this miracle of the word, which took place ever afresh, was possible—no psychology suffices to explain it[6] nor how various was the manner in which the original divine word translated itself into human images and words in the experience of the seers, nor how far it imposed itself on them and how far they were free to make use of already existing poetical forms when they gave it expression. For now we are discussing the period in which it is precisely the miracle that no longer occurs, while the believer in Yahweh nevertheless dares to attempt to persevere in the tradition of the word event.

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[6] Friedrich Haeussermann, *Wortempfang und Symbol in der alttestamentlichen Prophetie. Eine Untersuchung zur Psychologie des prophetischen Erlebnisses* (1932), totally fails to do justice to the theological phenomenon,

One must not overlook the immensely moving element in this attempt: the twilight dominates everything, for the prophets have declared the old covenant to be broken and dissolved—and who will assert with certainty that the new covenant prophesied by Jeremiah and Ezekiel has now come? At any rate, the mighty signs which are to accompany its coming have not yet taken place. And (as we have already pointed out) who can say whether the few thousand Judaeans who live in and around Jerusalem validly represent the former subject of the covenant, the twelve tribes, before God? With its wily naïveté, the Book of Chronicles has attempted to put David as the new founder-figure in the place of Moses, so that everything really began with Jerusalem and the temple, rather than with Sinai. But this clericalisation of theological history could not suppress even the Book of Kings, let alone the Pentateuch. In this situation it is moving to see how the decimated people, which is deprived of the historical presence of God, takes refuge in his naked word and makes the Torah its firm stronghold. This is, so to speak, a forcible renunciation of everything else—yet a renunciation ratified by the people themselves—in order to meet the absolute Subject directly in the word: like Moses on the mountain when he receives the tablets, like the hearer of Deuteronomy, like the one who speaks in Ps 119. What he speaks of is no congealed 'law', but existence in the pure and utterly vulnerable receiving of each word that goes forth from the mouth of God, even when this mouth remains invisible for him. Such existence means hanging on God's lips, trusting in his commandments, walking in the path of his instructions, and loving the word,

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when he says, following C. G. Jung, 'The religious interpretation' (through the prophet himself) 'is a fusion of the [image-]products of the unconscious with the conscious religious possession' (pp. 101–102). Better: J. Hänel, *Das Erkennen Gottes bei den Schriftpropheten* (BWAT, N.F. 4, 1923); O. Grether, *Name und Wort Gottes* (1934).

the directive and prescription, the decree and the command, the order and the promise unconditionally with the same love one has for God himself: and seeing in this pure grace, sheer goodness. 'How sweet are thy words to my taste!' (199.103).

The one who spoke in this way knew that the original covenant with God was the presupposition of every law. It holds true for the whole of the old covenant 'that the laws presuppose an order of things which is antecedent to them and does not require them for its justification. For the bond to the one God is not made the object of legal determinations; rather, all that is done is to forbid, negatively, the dissolving of the order of things which exists for this reason into innumerable individual legal precepts'.[7] M. Noth, who says this, insists that the laws in the Pentateuch are not laws of the state, but only express the sacral ordering to which the union of the twelve tribes committed itself, as to something held in common by all, by seeing in this ordering the expression of its loyalty to this God and to no other. This is the reason for the strict prohibition of falling away from him, for the strictness of the dispositions in the holy war, the strict prohibition of foreign cults (and the declaration of the impurity of those animals which were used in such cults), and the sober, strict ordering in the sexual sphere (which was so often misused in the foreign cults), etc. But this is also the reason, in positive terms, for the regulations governing interpersonal relationships among the people on the basis of the light of the covenant with God. If now, in the post-exilic period, a new tendency, often giving the appearance of anxiety, to separate oneself from the surrounding peoples and cultures gets the upper hand—so that any interference of Samaria in the restoration of the temple is rudely repelled (Hag 2.10ff.), while Ezra violently dissolves the many mixed marriages between Jews and the neighbouring peoples (Ezra 9–10) and requires a public confession of sin (Neh 9.2), and 'they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent' (Neh 13.3)—this is not primarily the expression of an arrogant consciousness of election (for precisely this consciousness had been secretly called into question during the long twilight), but is rather the attempt to continue faithfully the ancient forms (e.g., the ban in the holy war) so far as was at all possible. And when the Jews were confronted later with the requirement of professing their faith, but also the requirement of preaching to the Gentiles and making converts, it was not the fault of the Jews, but lay rather in the way in which their faith was structured, that the split between exclusiveness (to the point of refusing all contact with others) and intellectual expansion (to the point of apparently breaking with the faith of the people) was not resolved in an inner peace; the most that could be attained outside the inspired books was the attempt to think with the head and speak with the tongue as a Hellenist, while at the same time believing and confessing with the heart as a Jew (Philo).[8]

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[7] Martin Noth, 'Die Gesetze im Pentateuch', loc. cit., p. 71. For Noth, therefore, there is a fatal inconsistency in the fact that Deuteronomy took a kingly law into itself (Deut 17.14–20), for this later allowed Josiah to apply the sacral law as a law of the state, and even more, allowed the Deuteronomist historian to measure all the kings of Israel against the single standard of their relationship to the sacral law (reduced to the law of centralisation of the cult).

The effort made by Judaism to remain within the covenant relationship despite God's silence, by adopting the interpretative directives of the Lord of the covenant as its way of life, goes hand in hand with its effort to anchor in the origins the form of covenantal life which was possible in the present. Here we have not only the relocation of the post-exilic temple cult with all its individual details in the period of the wilderness, but also the assigning to Abraham of the circumcision rite which is mentioned in passing at Lev 12.3, in order to elevate this to the true sign of the covenant (Gen 17.9ff.), the assigning of the sabbath commandment to the very order of creation (Gen 2.2f.), and of the pouring-out of blood in non-cultic slaughter (Deut 12.23f.) to the covenant with Noah (Gen 9.1f.),[9] etc. What is possible and has been effected is in the present sanctioned as correct and decisively important by being styled the essential Torah and being elevated to this status. Jesus will have been conscious in some way of the historical conditioning of this disposition of the sources, when he raises himself above the sabbath praxis. This relocation in the origins of the covenant life in the present took place across the gulf of the great judgments and catastrophes; the twilight and ambiguity of the contemporary situation were bypassed in this process, in order to construct a tradition with a fully unequivocal character.[10] Although one could speak *here* of unconscious self-justification on the part of man, one must not overlook the possibility that this could take place in good faith, because of the will to remain in the covenant relationship to Yahweh at any price and to show him the harmony between word and answer by means of the Torah itself. If one adds the element of imminent messianic expectation, the problematic here is still further reduced, since the relationship between Torah and obedience does not appear as a closed and immobile relationship, but—in spite of everything!—as the attestation of a confidence in the promise of the Lord of the covenant, in whose word the holy community has put its trust.

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[8] *Cf.* what has been said above about wisdom teaching. This division was overcome only where Christ could be proclaimed as the *inner telos* of all religions; this could not be affirmed of Moses, because the historical character of the old covenant could not be transcended. Only the resurrection of Christ and the sending of the Spirit permit the standpoint which is simultaneously historical and supra-historical.

The will to remain within in the word event has largely determined the form of the Bible, which is so strange in many places. The tradition was never given a fixed literary form simply in order to set something into the past as definitively closed-off, but rather in order to keep historical events in the present. We can go further: the continuous process of further

[9] Noth, 'Die Gesetze im Pentateuch', loc. cit., p. 89.

[10] As an example of this, Noth (pp. 107f.) analyses the prayer at Neh 9, in which the present-day community is equated as a matter of course with Israel of old and 'no break of continuity' is noticed 'in the essential question of the relationship between God and the people'. I cannot agree with the harsh formulation here of Noth's chief thesis, that from this time onwards the law has become an absolute entity of timeless and ahistorical validity (p. 114) and thus a reversal of the covenant understanding—instead of grace, achievement and reward! Despite Paul and despite Luther, the categories of grace and achievement are not appropriate to shed light on the difference between the old and the new covenants.

work on the text seemed to be allowed and indeed required because the present demanded a new version that would bring out certain aspects that had hitherto remained hidden. This process becomes very clear in the bringing up to date of prophetical words which in each case were addressed to quite specific situations and thus apparently belonged to the past, but have nevertheless been either expanded or re-interpreted by later persons for their own present. Thus new strophes are composed and added to words of Isaiah (e.g., Is 18.7 or the two further compositions added to 22.15–18: vv. 19–23, 24–25); the entire message of Hosea, which was once addressed to the northern kingdom, is given 'a new address, to the southern kingdom'[11] by the mere insertion of the name 'Judah'; the prophecy of Deutero-Isaiah is taken up by Trito-Isaiah and adapted to new circumstances; Daniel takes up the prophecy of the seventy weeks and gives it a wholly different meaning, etc. 'The basic conviction underlying the process of tradition was that, once a prophet's word had been uttered, it could never in any circumstances become void. The time when, and the way by which, it reached fulfilment were Jahweh's concern; man's part was to see that the Word was handed on.'[12] More than this, indeed, they must always feel themselves addressed anew by the word that had gone forth from God. G. von Rad is right to conclude from this that the categories of authentic and inauthentic are inappropriate here,[13] since the fact that the divine word refers to an *historic* (*geschichtlich*) event cannot be limited by an *historical* (*historisch*) situation; hence one must bear in mind, when interpreting a text, that the 'self-understanding of the prophet is only one possible way among many of understanding an oracle'.[14] From this perspective, we need not dismiss the Chronicler's shy claim that something like prophetic inspiration exists even in his own period—although this is above all in the cultic sphere (1 Chron 25.1, 2, 3; 2 Chron 29.30; 35.3, 15). There is an indistinct transition to the

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[11] G. von Rad, *ThOT* Vol. II, p. 43; *cf.* Vol. I, pp. 70–71.

[12] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 45.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 45–47.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 48f.

Levitical sermon, which presupposes that one is filled with the Spirit of God (2 Chron 20.14; 24.20) but also quotes words of the Torah and of the prophets and demands faith in God and in the prophets (20.20). The Chronicler has Ezra's reading from scripture continuously translated by the assisting Levities into the language of the country and made more understandable for the people in Targumim (Neh 8.7–8), and this soon became the rule when the synagogue service began. The sermon has been invented; the written word of God, which can no longer be developed in the framework of scripture, remains the speech event which it was from the outset, when it is proclaimed in the ever new interpretation.

3. THE BLOOD EVENT

By contrast with such tentative reachings-out for a *theologia gloriae* the central awareness of the people made this demand: we must remain with the word. Even in its unglorious form[1] as Torah, God's word of instruction demands to be followed: in pure obedience, or at least in an attempt at pure obedience, no matter how painstaking and embarrassing this in practice always is. The instruction is the one unambiguous thing in the midst of the twilight and of the uncertainty about whether God truly still stands by his covenant. *Facienti quod est in se non negatur gratia* (grace is not refused to the one who does what lies within his power): in the uncertainty, one's own persevering 'action' remains the foundation of hope.

A part of this 'action' is still the bloody sacrifices which continue to be slaughtered in the temple—in an almost stubborn faithfulness to the tradition which is untroubled by any spiritual development in its self-understanding. There is no doubt that these sacrifices have their origins in the distant past, in what they hold in common with all the other ancient religions; they had their golden age when Israel brought them into relationship with the covenant and with the historical salvific acts of Yahweh, and they had their crisis when the prophets indicated the limits of such cultic action and gave a drastic description of God's displeasure at mere external acts without the corresponding disposition of the heart (Hos 6.6; Amos 5.21f.; Is 1.10f.) and those who prayed the Psalms took the criticism to heart: 'Sacrifice and offering thou dost not desire; but thou hast given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering thou hast not required. Then I said, "Lo, I come; in the roll of the book it is written of me"' (Ps 40.6–7; *cf.* 50.8–13; 51.7–19). But Israel also knew that the mere spiritualisation and interiorisation of the sacrifice was not permitted to it; Deuteronomy centralises the cult and thereby gives it a new official character, and Ezekiel holds fast to it, while the priestly document P develops its casuistry even in exile, where sacrifice had for the time being become impossible. Those who return from exile rebuild the altars and begin with the sacrifices at once, although 'the foundation of the temple of Yahweh was not yet laid' (Ezra 3.6). Then the blood flows down through the centuries with no change, until the time of Jesus; the Books of Chronicles delight in piling up the gigantic numbers of sacrificed beasts. It is as if, despite the reservations of the prophets, this act were a part of the obedience of the people. Characteristically, the idea of expiation almost totally suppresses every other earlier purpose of sacrifice in the post-exilic period. It is as if the flowing blood calmed the tormenting uncertainty: are we still in the covenant? It is as if the blood event took away the ambiguity from the twilight: it was thus in the beginnings, with Noah, Abraham and Moses, and the one who continues with this remains in the tradition. The priesthood of Jerusalem was not to be affected by any criticism, not even by the 'Protestant' criticism of Qumran. This unshakability permitted the carrying-out of the plan of providence that the bloody sacrifices—unchanged, unspiritualised and finally even uncomprehended too—should be delivered in their incarnate, crude realism at the door of the New Testament, that the ancient Passover of blood should be celebrated in the temple at the same afternoon hour as the new Passover of blood was celebrated outside the gates.

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[1] There is of course no lack of attempts in late Judaism to transfigure the Torah with a *kabod* splendour of its own (texts in W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im ntl. Zeitalter*, 1903, pp. 89f.), but we do not need to investigate these speculations any more than those concerning the *shekhinah*.

Why was this so important? Because nothing expresses so clearly the provisional character of the old covenant as the bloody sacrifices. The old covenant was made between the 'living God'[2] and the people living on earth in time. The paradox of this covenant, which already characterises it when it is made and (as it were) lays an excessive weight upon it in the very act of constituting it—it is as if a mighty tree were to be planted in a flower-pot—is the fact that a covenant relationship in which the 'eternal' God is a partner must bear in itself traits of eternity which surpass the possibilities of man who lives in time. This paradox was experienced and endured by the piety of the Old Testament, although there was no way for human beings to overcome it. The one who is dead no longer stands in the covenant. He can no longer praise the living God.'For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in Sheol who can give thee praise?' (Ps 6.6). 'For Sheol cannot thank thee, death cannot praise thee, those who go down to the pit cannot hope for thy faithfulness' (Is 38.18). The belief in immortality and resurrection in late Judaism is less attributable to the certainty of faith and hope[3] than to the fact that the ethical paradox could not be borne: just as Israel had demanded a king in order to be an accepted and respected earthly people, so it ultimately demands a last judgment in order that it can survive alongside the other religious ethical systems of the peoples. It is true that this too may have been providential, but did not correspond to the chief interest of divine providence. Israel's covenant relationship was essentially a relationship in time and in history, and God's revelation to Israel itself had this temporal and historical dimension in its inner constitution and could therefore not be changed into any atemporal dogmatics. God's glory for Israel was a *kabod* that wandered with the people from stopping place to stopping place in the wilderness of this temporality, giving direction, shining out into the darkness ahead.

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[2] Deut 5.23; 32.40; Josh 3.10; Hos 2.1; 1 Sam 17.26, 36; Jer 10.10; 23.36; Ps 42.3; 84.3.

Post-exilic theology showed that there was an awareness of the boundary that had been laid down precisely as a boundary that must be crossed at all costs and yet could not be crossed. The necessity of crossing over became evident in the threefold attempt of the theology of glory to advance into the future, into the heavenly world, and into the cosmos as a whole. But the dimensions of the Old Testament theology do not have sufficient substance to fill this sphere which has been formally opened up. In spite of this, post-exilic theology wished to undertake the expansion and therefore smoothed out the element of historical catastrophe in the divine judgment, and carried on after judgment as if nothing essential had happened.[4] There is indeed an awareness of the boundary of death, but this knowledge is suppressed. And yet, against their own will, they kept the knowledge of this boundary alive and present in the blood event of the cultic sacrifices. This blood event had been an accompaniment of every act of making a covenant from the beginning, as a universally acknowledged ritual sign that must always be present when matters are serious. True seriousness means commitment of one's entire bodily existence, and therefore includes the blood; here it is irrelevant whether one emphasises the identity of life and blood, as the Old Testament texts do (Lev 17.11; Deut 12.23), or whether it is only the *de facto* loss of blood that, naturally, brings about the loss of life.

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[3] This is the case in the few texts from the Psalms discussed above.

Since man uses blood for the covenant with God, the covenant is always made on the boundary between life and death; but if God's glory in the old covenant shines over the realm of the living, the boundary area between light and night, life and Sheol is always trying to escape from the light of the divine glory. Man can indeed make the sacrificial blood poured out in the cult a form of his glorification of God and interpret it in this sense, by accepting in some fashion and seeking to achieve the total commitment of temporal existence to the grace which is offered; but God's directive that something living is to be sent into death (i.e., into what lies outside the sphere of the covenant) is not covered by the *kabod* of God. And thus the act of carrying out such an impenetrable directive belongs to a blind, wordless obedience.

In this perspective, the 'blood event', especially in the post-exilic period, has something in common with the 'speech event' of the Torah in which a naked word of instruction, stripped of its attributes of glory, demands an equally naked obedience that asks for no reasons—no matter how questionable this stripping of the word may be. Both events are phenomena of something that has survived beyond its time. It is as if these two pillars had remained standing from a period of theological history that is now past: the pure relationship, giving the impression of nakedness in its abstractness, between the directive word and obedience, and the pure relationship—once again abstract, dumb, lacking a meaning that can be fully seen, since it is deprived of the historical framework—between the absolute sovereignty of God over the creature and the pouring out of the blood of the creature without reserve before the Lord.

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[4] So much is correct in M. Noth's radical thesis 'Die Gesetze im Pentateuch', loc. cit., pp. 1–141.

Since both phenomena fit together so naturally in Israel, the provenance of its sacrificial practices in terms of the history of religions is of little significance. This is true, not only of the sacrificial categories of Leviticus, but significantly also of the Passover and the rite of circumcision, out of which too Israel made a cultic 'blood event'. The multiplicity of pre-Israelite origins, as well as the multiplicity of possible relationships between the blood events of Israel's historical tradition—relationships worked out *de facto* in the later rabbinic speculation—create an almost infinite net of oscillating meanings, a perspective of endless vistas that cannot be deprived of its ambiguity in any one direction. Blood is both a sign of resistance and also, within the covenant, of union; it calls for vengeance and brings about reconciliation; in sacrifice it lends emphasis to praise, to request and to thanksgiving; it is sacrificial and sacramental in the rite; it is the seat of life and the sign of death—but whatever it may portray, recall and be, it represents absolute seriousness, the commitment of what is ultimate, whether this is demanded and imposed or freely decided and offered. And when blood and word stand together, then the blood certainly stands in the place of the last word, which perhaps can no longer be uttered, and can only be whispered or shouted: it continues to shout, when men can no longer shout, or on the contrary it summarises what the existence of the man ought to have wanted to say and was not able to say. The blood events of the old covenant, taken together, form a gallery of larger-than-life parables which together fail to produce a form that can be interpreted definitively, because their centre seems as if held in reserve; here, the theology of blood is very similar to the theology of image, for just as there is a prohibition of images at the centre, so there is a prohibition of blood: blood must be poured out, it must not be drunk. That which is the seat of life belongs to God and must be given back to God: man may not have it at his own disposal, he may not allow himself to benefit from it, he may not take it into his own body. The centre, which is the aim of all this, is released only in the new covenant.

Everything begins with the blood of Abel: the 'mortal sin' is the murder of one's brother, the pouring-out of his blood (Gen 4.1–16). Why did Cain kill him?, asks John (1 Jn 3.12), and he gives the same answer at the end of the Bible as the Yahwist at the beginning and Jesus in the centre: 'Whoever hates his brother is a murderer' (1 Jn 3.15; Mt 5.21f.).[5] But since man is the image of God and the bearer of his breath, he is also God's property, so that God himself reserves to himself the punishment for murder. He alone, as the Lord of life, disposes over the murderer: he can set his sign upon him, as with Cain, so that no one may lay hands on him and carry out vengeance for blood on him on his own initiative (Gen 4.15f.), but he can also hand his divine prerogative of judgment over to men: 'Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image' (Gen 9.6). This establishes a limit to wild, exorbitant vengeance for blood, such as Lamech boasts of (Gen 4.23f.). Abel's blood cries out, not first of all to his fellow-man, but to the author of life, to God. And God ordains all the regulations governing blood for fallen humanity after the flood: the killing of animals is conceded, since 'fear and trembling' precede fallen man—the groaning of the creature begins. But the blood is to be poured out as a sign that the ultimate Lord of nature is not man, but God. *A fortiori*, man's blood belongs to God; if it is shed, he requires it (Gen 9.1–6): and just as he permits the killing of animals, so he can entrust the expiation of blood that has been shed to human authorities as his representative (Rom 13.4).

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[5] When we have seen this point, the rules concerning involuntary killing and the right of asylum in this case remain secondary (Ex 21.13–14; Num 35.9f.; Deut 19.1f.). It is different in the case of the atonement for the country in the case of a murder where it cannot be determined who has committed the crime; for there can exist ethical guilt for which the community must pay (Deut 21.1–9); this concept must not be dismissed by being termed primitive-magical.

The fact that Abel, as a shepherd, already offers God 'some of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions' (just as Cain offers some of the fruits of the ground) is an anticipation of the Noachite regulation; for in the structure of Genesis as a whole both brothers are already in the post-paradisal, fallen world. And God, in his freedom, has preferred the bloody sacrifice of Abel to the unbloody sacrifice of Cain. Later on, God will explicitly require both: the first-born of animal and also human fertility in the pastoral culture and the first-fruits of the ground in the agricultural culture. The two sacrifices of Cain and Abel are united in the encounter between the Passover feast of the Hebrew nomads, who are to slaughter the year-old, spotless male lamb, and the agrarian feast of unleavened bread, an ancient New Year rite in which one 'casts out the old leaven' (1 Cor 5.7) in order to offer the festival bread from the new harvest,[6] to eat it, and in this connection to offer to God the 'sheaf of the first-fruits of the harvest' (Lev 23.11). And yet, of course, in such a union the two sacrifices are transcended by a new idea which is of momentous importance, an idea which God himself expresses in the event of the exodus from Egypt which is constitutive of salvation history: not only does every first-born and each first-fruit belong to God, the creator and giver of all life and all fertility, but they also belong to him, in an age which has fallen under sin's dominion, as the judge and the one who calls in the debt of expiation.

But when God utters this sentence of judgment, he does so only in connection with his redemptive act of salvation, in which he makes himself known as the one who freely chooses and saves, and, besides this, as the righteous one, i.e. as the

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[6] The probable origin of the unleavened bread of the feast too is as sacrificial bread; the late-Jewish tradition explicitly associates it with the unleavened loaves of the presence (Philo: *De spec. leg.* II 159, 161).

God of mercy who makes his own concern the injustice that is done to the oppressed, those without rights, and the poor, by fighting victoriously for them against the oppressors. All these aspects of the God of Israel can be seen proleptically in the theology of the Passover at the exodus from Egypt: the first-born both of the Egyptians and of the Hebrews belong to God and have been forfeited to him as judge; but since the Hebrews are in the situation of the oppressed, they are allowed to redeem their first-born through the blood of the Passover lamb, while the sword of the angel of God smites the first-born of the Egyptians who oppress them.[7] When the first-born are struck dead, this is to open the eyes of the persecutors and say to them: 'What you are doing to these helpless people whom you hate, falls back on the helpless ones whom you love; for every blow that strikes a helpless being strikes the almighty judge in the apple of his eye.' But why then does Israel need a substitute sacrifice of its own, in order to escape the punishment? 'In order to make it clear to it that it escapes this punishment, not because it is Israel, but because it is a victim.'[8] The sacrifice of the Passover lamb which Israel offers at God's command, when seen on a deeper level, is the act of substitution carried out by God himself, whereby *he* wins Israel for himself as his first-born: 'Israel is my first-born son' (Ex 4.22). 'Is *he* not your father, who created you, he who made you and established you?' (Deut 32.6).

This polyphony of the same motif, which resounds through the order of creation, judgment and redemption, explains the strictness of the Israelite *lex talionis*. It does not, according to Albrecht Alt, form part of the legal principles of the casuistically-formulated civil law common to Oriental civilisations, where laymen gave sentence, but of specifically Israelite sacral law which was formulated apodictically and set forth by priests. Here it is God's claim to give sentence that is the immediate question at issue, above all in the case of killing someone, which is an act that affects the special property of God.[9] Specifically, this is justice in connection with the 'first and fundamental covenant which Yahweh makes with Israel in the time of Moses at the mountain of God in the desert',[10] from the 'early period of Israel before they lived in cities', 'desert law' of completely untamed and aggressive power, 'which intends absolutely to subject every sphere of life to the unconditional claim to sovereignty made by Yahweh's will for his people, and which therefore cannot recognise the existence of any profane or neutral zone'.[11] Whoever harms a member of the chosen people harms a member of God's first-born: this is the reason for the extraordinary penalty. The theme which is sounded here continues to resound until the rejection of Israel in connection with the breaking of the covenant in the time of the prophets (Jer 16.10–13) and with its rejection of the Messiah (Mt 23.37–39). The formulation of the *lex talionis* is the reverse side of Yahweh's 'zeal' and 'jealousy' in his love for his people: the necessary consequence of the total commitment of his groundless love which has sought out and chosen his people. Thus even the destruction of the first-born of Egypt and the sparing of the first-born of Israel by passing them by (*pesach, pascha*) is not simply the expression of an event with two sides (on the one side pitiless justice—on the other side incomprehensible love); rather, the destruction of the first-born of the oppressor is a function of the sparing of the first-born of the oppressed; the truth of all this will be disclosed only in the course of salvation history, ultimately in Paul's theology of history (Rom 11).[12]

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[7] *Cf.* the masterly brief synthesis of the Old Testament theology of blood in D. Barthélemy, *Gott mit seinem Ebenbild* (1966), pp. 205–226.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 210–211.

If the scene of the election and redemption of God's 'first-begotten son' is characterised by a blood event, so is the other focal point of the foundational history, the Sinai covenant. Just as the covenant with Noah is made with burnt offerings (Gen 8.20), and the covenant with Abraham is sealed by the passing of the smoking oven and the burning torch through the midst of the halves of the animals (Gen 15), so the covenant with Moses is sealed in the equal distribution of the 'covenant blood' between altar and people (Ex 24.6–8): this is the cultic expression for the total seriousness of the contracting parties and a first prelude to what Jesus will call the 'new covenant in my blood' (Mt 26.28 par.; *cf.* 1 Cor 11.25). We need not follow here the separating out of this blood event into the various temple sacrifices which actualise it ever anew (and the Passover too will belong to these from the time of Josiah onwards): everywhere we have a ritual vicarious representation of the one who sacrifices through the blood of the animal that flows, although it is not necessary that the idea that the *death* of the animal is the vicarious taking-on of punishment should be at the centre,[13] even if this idea cannot be excluded *de facto* in the case of certain expiatory sacrifices.[14]

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[9] A. Alt, 'Die Ursprünge des israelitischen Rechts' (1934, included in: *Kleine Schriften*, Vol. I, 1953), p. 309.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 329.

[11] Pp. 330–331. In the essay 'Zur Talionsformel' (1934, *Kleine Schriften*, Vol. I, pp. 341–344), Alt suggests a Punic parallel which likewise seems to belong to the sacral sphere: the severe restitution for damage is justified because 'substitution is made to the deity' which 'is damaged . . . by the killing or bodily wounding of a man'.

[12] In this, the theology of the Book of Wisdom, which here holds on to the strict double-sidedness (ch. 18), shows its provisional character. *Cf.* above, p. 358.

But always in Israel there stands behind all the ritual the existential element, which has a (real) symbol in the vicarious shedding of blood. Here it is first the relationship between covenant blood and circumcision blood that is significant, in that circumcision is the covenant sign in the living flesh (Gen 17.13) and (according to the rabbis) at least a drop of blood must flow at every circumcision.[15] The obscure scene in which God wishes to kill Moses, but his wife Zipporah cuts off the foreskin of her son with a sharp stone and touches Moses' member with this as she says, 'Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!' (Ex 4.24–26), attributes the same apotropaic efficacy to the blood of circumcision as to the blood of the Passover; both blood events are repeatedly linked in the late tradition, for example in the interpretation of Ezek 16.6, where in his mercy God passes over Jerusalem which is writhing in its blood: 'it is a double blood: the blood of Passover and the blood of circumcision'.[16] The second relationship is even more important: the archetypical gesture of sacrifice is that of Abraham on Moriah; here too the rabbinic interpretation tells of blood that was supposed to have flowed when Isaac was bound,[17] but the decisive thing is Abraham's victory in faith, which proves itself in the sacrifice in blind obedience whereby he gives up his 'only, much loved' son who was promised him and given him; while the substitution of the ram (Gen 22.13) is related almost without any emphasis and is basically a reward for the superhuman exertion of faith,[18] it still shows incidentally what bloody existential seriousness had to exist behind the ritual sacrifices of Israel. Sacrifice is obedience and preferring Yahweh above all other things as the prophets will emphasise. And the Letter of James is not wrong to integrate this existential side into the Pauline concept of Abraham's faith (Jas 2.21–23), for what is at stake here is much more essential than in the case of the circumcision 'in the living flesh': it is a thrust into the living heart, which is pierced through by the sword of the *fiat* offered to God (Lk 2.35).

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[13] A. Metzinger, 'Die Substitutionstheorie und das alttestamentliche Opfer mit besonderer Berücksichtigung von Lev 17, 11', *Biblica* 21 (1940), pp. 159–187, 247–272, 353–377.

[14] In the ceremonies of the feast of Atonement: Lev 16.3f.; 23.26f. Num 29.7f.

[15] N. Füglister, *Die Heilsbedeutung des Pascha* (1963), p. 84.

In this rich sense, Israel is bound to God in blood; a late prophet (Zech 9.11) has God redeem the captives because of this: 'As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your captives free from the waterless pit'. We set out earlier the history of revelation as the 'ladder of obedience' on which God descends to man. Seen from the other side, the same obedience is the perfecting of man in his willingness to sacrifice everything, or (which comes to the same thing) to demand everything of himself and to let everything be imposed upon him. If Abraham is the prototype of this obedience, Joseph is in another way the other who carries it out: handed over and sold by his brothers, he lands in Egyptian prisons, while his blood-soaked garment is shown to his father at home; his generous forgiveness shows that he bore this willingly. The path from Joseph to the 'Servant of Yahweh' is not a long one; in the latter, we have the freely-accepted 'yes' to every word that comes from God, a 'yes' that is thought out to its uttermost consequences and that at the same time embraces every blow that comes from men (Is 50.4–6), since both are essentially one and the same thing: faith, as acceptance of every word from God, is the perfect disposition of sacrifice which allows God to make the one who believes the perfect sacrificial beast, the lamb that is led to the slaughter without opening its mouth. When it is a man who carries out the sacrifice, the attitude of the beast is irrelevant; but the meekness of the lamb, which accepts that this happens, becomes relevant when the man who sacrifices becomes the sacrificed, bleeding lamb (Is 53.7). For at this point, the subjective acceptance of the one who is bloodily done to death transcends the objective call for vengeance of Abel's blood shed before God. The Servant of Yahweh says 'yes' to the commission of bearing vicariously the trespasses of his human brothers: the oppressed, defenceless poor man bears the sins of his oppressors. The mystery of solidarity in guilt binds and overcomes the double-sided righteousness of God: the slain first-born of the Egyptians becomes identical with the Passover lamb which is slain vicariously for the first-born of the Hebrews—always assuming it to be possible for a human being to say a 'yes' so unreserved, 'to the end' (Jn 13), that he himself was in no sense an oppressor, so as to become the poor and oppressed in every sense. This is the mystery of Israel, like a boundary-concept in terms of which its great figures—Moses, Samuel, David, Jeremiah—are interpreted; but since they are all guilty and oppressors, none of them reached the boundary. The boundary opens out into the new covenant.

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[16] Texts in Füglister, pp. 87, 94–96.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

[18] It matters little in this connection whether there is an original aetiological reference to a replacement of human sacrifices by animal sacrifices, just as it matters little to the author of the narrative.

Until then, animals continue to be slaughtered in the temple, the feasts of Passover and the Day of Atonement are celebrated bloodily, and circumcision is carried out bloodily: and yet the one drink that contains life is still withheld. Only after the threshold is crossed can we hear the words: 'My blood is truly a drink' (Jn 6.55). Precisely this is the point towards which the bloody sacrifices of the Old Testament on the one hand and the Old Testament covenant and fraternising meals on the other hand converge, without being able to reach it. It remains decisively important that the life which is sacrificed belongs to God; it may not be consumed by human beings. This consumption becomes possible only where the two lines converge: where the perfect vicarious bearing of guilt (going to the point of bloody death) becomes identical with perfect faith or (the same thing) with the perfect acceptance of being poured out into death (Is 53.12) through every word of God, with the capacity of the one who is sacrificed to be shared perfectly among all the brothers who sacrifice him. The mystery of Jesus, which in itself is so excessively rich that it seems impossible to untie the knot that binds it, becomes clearer when we see the paths that converge upon it from the old covenant.

It is not as if this point of convergence were able to be constructed by means of reason alone. It remains an 'utterly strange work' (Is 28.21), 'offence' and 'trap' (Is 8.14), 'something unheard-of' (Is 52.15), a work from which all 'form and beauty', all 'glory' of God is initially absent, essentially a work of the night. 'For that night' (*illa enim nox*, Wis 18.6) in which at about midnight the work of redemption and the work of annihilation took place simultaneously, 'thy all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed, a stern warrior carrying the sharp sword of thy authentic command . . . and touched Heaven while standing on the earth' (Wis 18.14–18): this night remains impenetrable. It is absolute judgment, and—in the very heart of this—the incomprehensible superabundance of grace (Rom 5.15–21). It is the ever greater measure of humanity's failure, which increases the blood-guilt beyond comprehension, and—therein—the ever greater measure of the mercy of God, who, thanks to the 'yes' of the Lamb, has neutralised every 'no' by means of a stronger 'yes' (in the night of death). In this impenetrable night, God keeps watch for man, and man for

God. 'It was a night of watching by the Lord, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night of watching kept to Yahweh by all the people of Israel throughout their generations' (Ex 12.42).

C. ARGUMENTUM EX PROPHETIA

What has just been said opens the way for the question which every theology of the old covenant must ask itself by way of conclusion: the question of the meaning of this covenant history and of the sovereignty of God which appears and acts in it. Does this history, like every other history on earth, remain only a touching fragment of human struggle and failure, or does it amount to a form that is found nowhere else in the realm of history? And if this form exists, where does it lie, in Israel itself or beyond Israel? Is Christian theology's constant manner of reading and understanding the old covenant correct, viz. that Israel's formlessness can be understood only when it transcends itself in the son of Miriam: Jehoshuah?

The relationship between old and new covenants has already been discussed once under the theme of 'form' in the first Volume of this work (pp. 619–659); we do not need to change anything of what was said there. But now, at the end of our path through the old covenant, we may be permitted to set it out once again in another form, since we have now gathered impressions and experiences which give a much brighter light of assurance to the transition from the old to the new covenant and to the intimate union between them. What is to be set out here will have its usefulness, above all for the next Volume on the new covenant. If it is true that the historical-critical method has destroyed the old form of the *argumentum ex prophetia*, which understood sayings of the old covenant as having been spoken with direct reference to Christ (such as Isaiah's saying about the 'virgin' who conceives a son), the elimination of this all too naive concept left space for something much more important and splendid, viz. for the prophetical character of the whole history of Israel. This is the covenant history of the chosen people with God, a history with a greatness, a catastrophe and a self-transcendence that drives forward to a fulfilment that cannot be clearly seen or constructed: that which brings fulfilment can be understood only together with *what* it fulfils. It is essential today to insist as strongly as possible that Christianity cannot be understood without the old covenant; every attempt to interpret the form, message and subsequent impact of Christ in the world necessarily fails unless it is able to assess it all precisely in its closeness to and its distance from the old covenant. It has become impossible today simply to discard the innumerable references to the Old Testament in the New as time-conditioned proofs from scripture: 'Nowadays, such references are legitimated by a branch of Old Testament scholarship that cannot be overlooked, as fundamentally in harmony with the Old Testament, and this means that New Testament scholarship can no longer pass over the interpretation of the Christ event on the basis of the Old Testament, which is developed broadly and centrally in the New Testament, unless it wishes to fail to do justice to an essential aspect of the self-understanding of the New Testament'.[1] For us, this means that the particular mode of formlessness which is Israel's transcends itself objectively in such a way that it comes truly into its own in the particular mode in which the Christian Church knows that it is a form, and is also legitimated as such on the basis of Israel. In order for this *argumentum ex prophetia* to stand as valid in the face of the historical-critical method, it must essentially be developed not in two, but in three steps. It then runs as follows:

1. The individual forms which Israel established in the course of its history converge together upon a point that remains open and that cannot be calculated on the basis of the converging forms and of their mutual relationship, especially when they stand in opposition to one another.

2. The midpoint is occupied in the fullness of time by one who lives this midpoint, although his primary interest is not to construct and conceive of his existence as the fulfilment of

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[1] L. Goppelt, *Typos. Die typologische Deutung des Alten Testaments im Neuen*, 1939; preface to 1966 reprinting.

the various (and hitherto irreconcilable) individual forms of Israel.

3. When this midpoint is interpreted subsequently, it is seen at a secondary stage that the midpoint retains its place as midpoint through the crystallisation of the periphery around it, and that it is only through this crystallisation that the periphery acquires its point of reference which gives it form.

On the first step: the individual forms in Israel are subject to a reservation which is clearly expressed in the prohibition of making images and in the prohibition of drinking blood, i.e. in the prohibition of conceiving for oneself the true image of God, which the Son of God will be, and of receiving a share in what is reserved for God, which will be the κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος (2 Cor 13.13), the eucharistic participation in God through the Son in the Holy Spirit. While the images do amount to a vague 'outline',[2] they stand in an 'extremely odd theological vacuum'[3] which makes it impossible for them even to have contact with one another, so that no line drawn from one image to another is able to unite them into a form embracing them all. The messianic idea does not adjoin the idea of the Son of Man, nor the idea of the Son of Man that of the Servant of Yahweh, etc. Even when two partial images are diametrically opposed to one another, it is not possible to draw a line between them such that its half-way mark would establish the midpoint which one sought. This fact characterises the entire old covenant as *figura*, as an 'aesthetic reality' as opposed to an 'ethical' reality which is definitively incarnated.[4] For our theme, this means that a clear boundary which cannot be crossed is drawn in the old covenant for the appearing of the glory of God: the fact that death has not been overcome. 'The realm of the dead remained an undefinable third party between Yahweh and his creation. Apart from isolated questionings (e.g., Job 14.13–22), it was not a subject of real interest to faith'; this is undeniably 'one of the greatest theological enigmas in the

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[2] Vol. I, p. 623 (Eng. trans.).

[3] G. von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. II, p. 349.

[4] Vol. I, pp. 620–624 (Eng. trans.).

Old Testament'.[5] The terrifying proof of this is the distorted eschatology of the apocalypses, which want to tear down this boundary violently. The *Triduum sacrum*, with Holy Saturday in its midst, will be the only possible breach of this boundary; only when Adam in 'Hell' and all who wait with him (Heb 11.39f.) meet the descending Christ, will the boundary be removed and the veil removed from the glory (2 Cor 3.16).

It will be the task of our New Testament theology to give a commentary on the other two steps, and so we shall indicate only a few points here. The life of Jesus is a life in hiddenness and insignificance; 'he will not cry or lift up his voice, nor will any one hear his voice in the streets' (Is 42.2 = Mt 12.19); it is not his task to compete with the Old Testament images on their own level or even to pile them up and trump them. If his life is to be the breaching of the Old Testament boundary, then the event that is his life can only be obscure for the world, since it is an eschatological event.[6] Here the Word of God has become flesh, and therefore it is ultimately irrelevant how much this incarnate Word itself actually says. It is certainly not without interest to establish whether and to what extent Jesus himself laid claim to the Old Testament titles 'Messiah', 'Servant of Yahweh', 'Son of Man', 'king', 'bridegroom', etc., for himself, but this is not a decisive question for the character of the Christ event. It is true that Jesus preached, and preached as one who has authority, one whose proclamation was qualitatively different from that of the scribes (Mt 7.29), but the preaching as such remains on the same level on which the prophets worked by means of the word: but 'wisdom is justified' in the decisive manner 'by her *deeds*' (Mt 11.19). When Jesus does lay claim to the traditional word, he does so with an almost careless gesture, just as a lord disposes as a matter of course over what is his own property. We see this, for example, in the way in which Jesus disposes over the foal on which no one has ever yet sat: 'If any one asks you, "Why are you untying it?", you shall say this, "The Lord has need of it"' (Lk 19.30f.).

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[5] G. von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. II, p. 350.

[6] Vol. I, p. 645 (Eng. trans.).

After Easter, when the Church sets about expressing the incarnate word in human words, it falls back as if automatically on the Old Testament images which surround this word and have it as their midpoint. In this process, the essential question is not the particular way in which the lines are drawn between promise and fulfilment. The choice of Old Testament texts and images can be partly time-conditioned as regards the understanding of the words, and unsuitable as regards the selection made. This is unimportant, since the images only serve to illustrate a much more general correspondence between the Testaments of which the preachers and the New Testament writers are aware.[7] A statement such as the one that Christ was to rise from the dead 'in accordance with the scripture' (1 Cor 15.4) presupposes, beyond all individual quotations, a total vision of the relationship between old and new covenants. But the individual images occur to the one who contemplates the Christ event in such abundance and with such facility, and with such a clear appropriateness that exists objectively and has not been brought together, grouped and arranged at a subsequent stage, that the theology of promise and fulfilment, of type and antitype, which comes into use at once, arose as it were of its own accord as the expression of a great wonderment. The ancient scripture becomes the instrument with which the Church learns to understand the Christ event and expresses this in words, and it has Christ himself hand over this instrument into its hand (Lk 24.44f.). The necessity of what *de facto* happened ('*Must* not the Christ suffer this and thus enter into his glory?', Lk 24.26) is unfailingly deduced from the way the formless images take on form.[8] This necessity, which arises out of the fact of the event, and shows the fundamental difference and the qualitative leap between the old and the new covenants, is the kernel of the 'spiritual' understanding of scripture, which has nothing essential in common with the general literary concept of 'allegory'.[9] It is of course true that there is a continual process of transcendence and expansion within the Old Testament itself, new interpretations giving deeper insight into precisely the reality that is held in tension between promise and fulfilment: the promise to Abraham of land and progeny is surpassed and extended in the structure of the Pentateuch as a whole, and this structure too is later given new, eschatological dimensions; this is the 'dynamic' dimension in Israel's form of thought. But the fulfilment which is posited in the fact of Jesus is not simply one new stage added in this process of transcendence. It belongs to a wholly different order. Compared with it, everything that came earlier stands at the proper distance to what is in process of historical development, while it establishes itself on the far side of this boundary line as an eschatological event. The 'long twilight' was an intra-historical preparation for this qualitative otherness, which is also seen in the fact that it has the same relationship of immediacy to every individual form in the historical development of Israel. The type of 'Isaac's sacrifice', or 'Job's night of abandonment by God', or 'Elisha's multiplication of bread', or 'the Passover lamb', or 'the Servant of Yahweh', etc., is in each case in the same immediate relationship to the antitype as every other type. This naturally does not mean that the images can 'be abstracted from their context in salvation history and taken each as something existing in themselves';[10] for they bear their meaning in themselves only as history that has happened between God and Israel, and it is only thus that they form an analogy to the definitive event of Christ. But, precisely as types, they stand in a time of promise which is qualitatively different from the time of fulfilment.[11] Together, they form an organ console fitted out with innumerable registers, which is ready to be used by one who knows how to play.

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[7] 'It has been overlooked, or at least evaluated only in a negative manner—e.g, with a view to criticising the historical character of biblical statements—that the use made of scripture in the New Testament goes far beyond the direct quotations of Old Testament passages . . . In many New Testament writings, the bulk of the employment of scripture and the central emphasis in the understanding of scripture is to be sought in the abundance of the allusions that scarcely touch the wording of the Old Testament': Goppelt, op. cit., p. 239. *Cf.* von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. II, pp. 331–332.

[8] W. Grundmann, art. δεῖ, *ThW*, II, 21–25.

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[9] Henri de Lubac has repeatedly and tirelessly emphasised this recently: 'A propos de l'allégorie chrétienne', *Rech. Sc. Rel.* 47 (1959), pp. 5–43, and already in: 'Typologie et allégorie', *Rech. Sc. Rel.* 35 (1947), pp. 180–226, in the concluding chapter of *Histoire et Esprit* (1950), and repeatedly in the four volumes of *Exégèse médiévale* (1959, 1960, 1964). See also: J. Coppens, *Les harmonies des deux Testaments* (1949); J. Daniélou, *Sacramentum futuri, Etudes sur les origines de la typologie biblique* (1950, with bibliography); *idem, Etudes d'exégèse judéo-chrétienne* (1966). Among Protestant scholars, apart from L. Goppelt: W. Zimmerli, 'Verheissung und Erfüllung', *Ev. Theol.* 12 (1952/53), pp. 34–59; Fr. Baumgärtel, *Verheissung. Zur Frage des evangelischen Verständnisses des AT* (1952); G. W. H. Lampe and K. J. Wollcombe, *Essays on Typology* (1957).

It is, of course, only on the *theological* level—i.e., with the eyes of faith—that it is possible to see this whole relationship in its objective correctness,[12] and not with the eyes of the historian or psychologist of religion who abstracts from faith. This vision of faith is already required if the particular quality of the Old Testament situations (which are all determined by the unique relationship to the living God of the covenant) is to be distinguished from other religious situations in humanity. Everything human breaks down at its boundaries, and Israel too breaks down. But Israel's failure is of another kind: the boundary at which it breaks down is not above all the finitude of existence, but God, who has made it choose between life and death, blessing and curse (Deut 30.19). But to break down at the boundary of God and his covenant does not mean simply to be finished and disqualified, since every two-sided covenant relationship is based on an antecedent unique election.[13] This failure has a theological quality which gives it continuing relevance throughout the time of the Church which Paul describes at Rom 9–11 and on which Karl Barth comments in his doctrine of election (*Church Dogmatics* II, 2).

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[10] As von Rad correctly emphasises: *ThOT*, Vol. II, p. 371.

[11] On this, see my *Theologie der Geschichte* (5th edn. 1962).

[12] H. de Lubac, in final chapter of *Histoire et Esprit* (German trans.: *Der geistliche Sinn der Schrift*, 1952, p. 50); Vol. I of this present work, p. 175 (Eng. tr.).

[13] This is too little heeded by R. Bultmann, 'Ursprung und Sinn der Typologie als hermeneutischer Methode', *ThLZ* 75 (1950), pp. 205–212. One must bear in mind that the commission to harden hearts which Isaiah and Ezekiel receive is a primary missionary commission from God and thus cannot be anything other than a commission that brings salvation, and that precisely the text from Isaiah occurs often in the New Testament, and indeed is quoted by Jesus himself (Mt 13.14–15).

This relevance of the Israel which is always present in history makes it significant as a whole and in all its types for Christians too and for humanity as a whole. The Church would not have been right to make such wide employment of Israel's hymns of praise for its own prayer if it had not been ready to pray the psalms of penitence, judgment and confession with Israel too, and this means knowing and feeling that it is guilty and subject to failure along with Israel. 'In the Old Testament word, God encounters us along with Israel . . . God acts in the present towards us as he acted towards Israel . . . In this, the Old Testament is not at all outmoded for us. Here, we experience the significance in salvation history of the Old Testament testimony for our Christian faith.'[14] The images of the periphery have not been absorbed and dissolved in Christ as something that is superseded; the midpoint of the new covenant retains its full historical form together with the images that fill it; Moses and Elijah appear on Tabor to speak about the Passion, the twenty-four elders before the throne are made up in equal measure of the 'pillars' of the old and the new covenants. For there are forms in the old covenant which cannot be left behind by the new, even when they are filled here with new contents and with greater glory (2 Cor 3).

One of these elements which cannot be superseded is the knowledge of the absolute sovereignty and glory of God: the horizon of the absolute divinity of the living God, and thereby also of the absolute creatureliness of the world and of man, of his character as image of God, his commission in the world and his duty to glorify God the creator and lord of the covenant. Likewise, it is not possible to discard as outmoded the attitude of utter acceptance of everything that God wills and orders, irrespective of what one thinks and understands oneself, the attitude of Abraham, which Paul will portray as the archetypical faith and which makes Abraham the father of all believers, both Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. To this we must add the mysterious fact, to which Gerhard von Rad has continually drawn attention,[15] that Old Testament forms, both in their commissions and in their self-utterances, interpret themselves as opening out into a 'form' which is to be understood on the basis of the covenant with God and which absolutely transcends their empirical subjectivity. For example, the 'form' of the one who suffers in the Psalms, in Lamentations, in the prophets and in Job, the 'form' of the kingship in Solomon, the 'form' of vicarious representation in Moses and in the Servant of Yahweh have a character of absoluteness which transcends the person, not only with a view to the literary typology, but also in the direction of something given form in the covenant relationship by the divine partner. They are like the moulds of a commission which is to be given to one who is both God and man. This becomes clearest in the portrayal of those prophetic missions which involved suffering in obedience to the commission: and this was meant to make present the divine suffering caused by Israel, more than the human suffering of the prophet in compassion with his fellow-men. Something similar is true in the case of the aged David who stands before the dead Absalom. He descends (e.g., in Ps 22) 'with his complaints to a depth that lies beyond the depths of his suffering'.[16] What is involved here is more than a hidden event that takes place between God and the human heart (as happens everywhere in humanity and is portrayed, for example, in Greek tragedy): more than this, there is a form modelled by the covenant God of Israel who gives it a shape that is destined to enter the definitive form of the revelation of the glory of God in Jesus Christ.—A further sign of belonging to this form moulded by God is to be seen in everything that remains earthly and bodily in Israel's religion, despite progressive spiritualisation: it is never possible in Israel to abstract from time and place, or to relativise the holy land and, later, the holy city, the temple as God's dwelling place, the sacrifices which are to be offered only there, and the whole world of the ceremonies. No matter how provisional it is in fact in God's plans, it must continue until God's word becomes flesh in space and time and history. When this one point is reached, then—strangely enough—all that was earthly and all too earthly in Israel is dismissed; all of this *meant* something that was absolutely earthly and fleshly (the temple is truly 'his body': Jn 2.21), and yet could not mean it as it was in reality.

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[14] Fr. Baumgärtel, op. cit. (n. 9 above), pp. 48, 54.

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[15] von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. II, pp. 276f.; *cf.* Vol. I, p. 398; Vol. II, p. 63.

[16] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 400.

For God's becoming flesh was to be much more 'fleshly', was to penetrate the flesh much more deeply than Israel could ever dream of. All its historical images were more or less capable of being seen and interpreted in a spiritual sense. But the descent of the divine word into the flesh will leave all 'form and beauty' behind it and force its way down into an unconceivable formlessness—which for this reason is also incapable of being seen and interpreted, since it is hidden—in order to display the lordship and glory of God even in territory which hitherto had been out of bounds. In order to hint at this path which becomes invisible in the realm of the dead, the forms of the Old Testament, taken together, form something like an arrow pointing out the direction; its sharp, unambiguous head is the Servant of Yahweh. Israel ought to have concentrated its self-understanding by focusing on this arrow-head, but instead it had blunted this arrow-head in the evasions of the post-exilic theology of glory.[17] It is only the finger of the Baptist, pointing like an arrow to the Lamb that takes sins away, that once again assumes the role of Israel; with this gesture, the theological period of history begins to move once more; he is 'the greatest' of all who point and yet it is only as 'the least' that he penetrates the time of fulfilment (Mt 11.11). Whether it will or not, Israel must be a sign and a pointer. It is a sign together with that which it fulfils as well as with that in which it fails, for its failure is embraced within a form which is greater than Israel itself. And even if it cannot or will not fill out the form, the form remains standing nonetheless, as the requirement of the 'law' to love God above all things and one's neighbour as oneself, and as the requirement of the cult to pour out again and again before

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[17] On Israel's refusal to recognise its own mission in Deutero-Isaiah's Servant of Yahweh, *cf.* D. Barthélemy, *Gott mit seinem Ebenbild* (1966), pp. 216–217.

God the blood that had been withheld. Towards the end of the old covenant, it is the discrepancy between the form and what fills it out that, necessarily, appears most clearly: when the form reveals itself in its true and expanding dimensions—Heaven and earth, history and end-time, chosen people and all of humanity—it becomes clear that it is inherently impossible for Israel to do justice to this claim that knows no bounds. And the images which were produced in the course of history show definitively their disparate character which means that they cannot complete one another to make a single form.[18]

How could it be otherwise, if the old covenant was truly to be God's *history* with the people? For such a history could not unfold in terms of the pattern of worldly evolution ('education of the human race'), where the earlier events are left behind by the later events and where thus God's activity and word are inferior to the law of development of the world; and it would not have been right for this history with God to be synthesised at some concluding point of time and history and to be gathered together into a form embracing the whole of it—to a 'dogmatics' of the truth of revelation in the Old Testament, for example—because this too would have subordinated the historical relevance of the concrete moment to something possessing atemporal validity. Thus the old covenant is inherently oriented towards a temporal ending which, however, cannot be thought of as timelessness but only as the mystery of the coincidence of genuine time and genuine eternity: the entry of genuine eternity into time (the incarnation of God), the entry of genuine time into eternity (the resurrection of Christ and of the creation in him).

This paradox of the new covenant, which makes the time of the Church something quite different from the time of Israel, is thus inherently demanded by the entire manner of Israel's existence. From this perspective too, the old covenant is 'in the logic of revelation' the indispensable access to understanding the mystery of Christ. The only way to draw close to the 'once and for all' (ἐφάπαξ) of the New Testament, in its power that lies above history and yet is the foundation of all history with God, is from the starting-point of the time of revelation to Israel, in which every deed and every word of God signifies both fulfilment (because it is God who is present) and promise (because God addresses and acts in the time which continues).

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[18] Vol. I, p. 637; von Rad, *ThOT*, Vol. II, p. 301.

It is necessary to integrate the tension between fulfilment and promise which comes from the old covenant as fully as possible into the manner of existence of the new covenant, because Christ—since he lives in time and is therefore mortal—points ahead with his whole being to what is coming, to the kingdom of the Father, the integration of genuine time through the resurrection into eternity. Christianity and the individual Christian live on the basis of this tension, as Paul, Irenaeus, Origen, Augustine and modern theology with a new passion proclaim. But the structure of the time of the old covenant is qualitatively different from the structure of the time of the new, since the new time begins its promise with the fulfilment of the old time. In the death of Christ, all *is* accomplished, the eternal light has been carried into the uttermost darkness. 'Christ has offered only the *one* sacrifice for sins and then taken his place at the right hand of God, now waiting "until his enemies are laid as a footstool under his feet"' (Heb 10.12f.). If the history of Church and world is a Christ event that leads from promise to fulfilment, from *spes* to *res*, and if there can be no doubt that this event does not leave unaffected the Christ who leads his 'body' to fulfilment (as Origen and Augustine emphatically assert), still it is always the fulfilled Christ (Eph 1.23) who fills his unfulfilled members with his grace and his form (Gal 4.19). And since Christ as God and man is the fulfilled covenant in himself, bridegroom and bride are brought by him into the divine fulfilment: the total breach of faithfulness by the daughter of Zion and her rejection are no longer possible, since all the breaches of fidelity—even the most terrible—by the Church on earth are undergirded by an indefectible nuptial fidelity which—in the resurrection of the bridegroom and, as its necessary consequence, the bodily assumption into heaven of the ἀπαρχή, the firstfruits, of the bride—justifies the cry in the midnight of this age: 'Behold, the bridegroom comes!' (Mt 25.6).

CONCLUSION

It is superfluous to assure the reader that our intention in this book was not to present a 'theology of the old covenant', even if only in summary; a great number of important themes for such a project are entirely missing here, or are touched only in passing. The book contains no more than a monograph about the concept of 'the glory of God' in the old covenant, and this is seen essentially from the perspective of the work which has been undertaken here as a whole.

The contents of this book can be summarised as the answer to the question: what path must have been taken by the concept of the *kabod* of Yahweh in order for it to be able to appear in the new covenant, in Paul and in John, as *doxa Christou* and *doxa Theou*? This path was initially described as that of integration from an abstract-sensuous *kabod* to the concrete-personal *kabod* which was more and more understood as the total statement of those qualities of the covenant Lord which are revealed in the covenant event. This integration is not a dispersal, but a concentration of all that has been dispersed upon the unfathomably free and sovereign absolute 'I' that opens up its own sphere of life for its human image in the covenant of grace. This 'I' was as yet abstractly glorious (in power and holiness) in the dialectic, sensuous *kabod*, but it becomes concretely glorious through the fundamental concepts of the covenant reality: as grace, justice, fidelity, mercy and in Deuteronomy as the love that incomprehensibly chooses a people for itself.

But the history of the covenant showed that the chosen people was not capable of existing in the sphere of absolute love: it sent representatives ahead of it who became vicarious sufferers in keeping with the extent of the people's failure, but who nevertheless did not prevent the dissolution of the first covenant: all that they could do was to hold out the prospect of a coming second and eternal covenant on the basis of God's grace. Thus the theme remains unfinished and demands its continuation in a theology of the new covenant that transcends the inherent limitation of the glory of God in the old covenant, viz. death and judgment.

The connection between glory in the biblical sphere of revelation and glory in the sphere of metaphysics (Vols. IV and V) has become clear at many points: where the biblical revelation emerges from the sphere of the mythical religions, where (in the period of Solomon) philosophical wisdom for living penetrates the sphere of revelation as something formed by human thinking and living, and finally where the late wisdom teaching opens up the Semitic thinking of the Bible to Hellenistic thinking.

Finally, the line of thought which we have pursued led back by ever higher spiral paths to fundamental statements of the first Volume: the concept of form was able to be applied in the materially filled contemplation of the glory of God. But it is precisely here that our considerations require completion by a theology of the New Testament: only the entire biblical revelation mediates in a total form what God wanted to communicate to us of his glory.

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THE GLORY OF THE LORD

Hans Urs von Balthasar

THE GLORY OF THE LORD:
A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

By Hans Urs von Balthasar

VOLUMES OF THE COMPLETE WORK

Edited by Joseph Fessio, S.J., and John Riches

1. *SEEING THE FORM*
2. *STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: CLERICAL STYLES*
3. *STUDIES IN THEOLOGICAL STYLE: LAY STYLES*
4. *THE REALM OF METAPHYSICS IN ANTIQUITY*
5. *THE REALM OF METAPHYSICS IN THE MODERN AGE*
6. *THEOLOGY: THE OLD COVENANT*
7. *THEOLOGY: THE NEW COVENANT*

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A THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS

BY

HANS URS VON BALTHASAR

VOLUME VII: THEOLOGY: THE NEW COVENANT

Translated by Brian McNeil C.R.V.
Edited by John Riches

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In a sense which is proper to him alone, God in his relation with the world truly experiences 'fate'. And he is indeed of such a kind that he can experience it. And the fact of this his ability to experience fate is his ultimate glory. It is identical with that glory which consists in his being 'love'. For this reason the Cross is the symbol above all symbols. Whoever impugns it, condemns the world to unintelligibility.

GUARDINI

PREFACE

The previous volume did not seek to offer an approximately complete theology of the Old Testament, but rather to shed light on the essence of this covenant from the viewpoint of 'glory'; in the same way, and *a fortiori*, this volume cannot be rounded theology of the new covenant. Like the previous volume, it opens up only an approach-road to such a theology, passing through the gateway of 'glory'; and because of the disposition of the material here, this volume must accept the necessity of opening up an approach-road to the approach-road in a lengthy first part, for otherwise 'glory' might be understood only to cover what is explicitly so termed in the texts of the New Testament. Nothing complete can be offered on the level of the individual theologies of the biblical authors, nor on the level of a synthesis of biblical theology, nor on any level of what in the post-biblical period is called ecclesiastical or dogmatic theology. One may also fear that the present volume will appear methodologically imprecise to the reader who is a professional theologian—indeed, that it will strike him as hopelessly amateurish, for many dividing-lines that have become customary are not observed (they are frequently a hindrance, when one wishes to have an overview of the whole phenomenon which is being treated), and yet no final synthesis can be constructed. We clear the path for ourselves through the undergrowth, as well as we can; for us, it is more important to get at all costs a point from which we can see the essential matter, than to lay down orderly roads that lead to that point. For this reason, even less of the scholarly literature that abounds on all sides will be quoted in this volume than in the preceding volumes: we shall restrict ourselves to indicating a few useful works, as these present themselves to our notice.

It is considerably harder to clear a path in the new covenant to the prospect we seek, than in the old covenant; the latter unfolds in a history that can be followed clearly through centuries, but the new covenant bunches everything together into the shortest space of time, in the midpoint of which stands the breakdown-point which can be delimited in external chronology as the 'Triduum Mortis', but which internally means that time has come to an end and that there is a new beginning such that all temporal categories of 'end', 'midpoint', and 'beginning' are shattered; and this means that not only the main subject (the theological content of the fate of Jesus), but also the position of the existentially involved observer (the Christian who seeks to understand his faith, in order to live it), slip away at the very point where they ought to be made secure. But it is not our concern to get a secure place to stand, but rather to get sight of what cannot be securely grasped, and this must remain the event of Jesus Christ; woe to the Christian who would not stand daily speechless before this event! If this event truly is what the church believes, then it can be mastered through no methodology; the manner in which this book speaks can be excused only by this axiom.

We shall not 'analyse' a 'concept'—the concept of glory—but rather we shall integrate a cipher for the whole into this totality. Our concern is to make a synthesis; therefore the last theology of the New Testament, the Johannine theology, will always be the vanishing-point, the point towards which we are travelling—though all the theologies of the New Testament remain open both forwards (into the meditation of the church, which can never be brought to its end) and upwards (to God). The future and the final opening-out are important for us, and not the categories which are to be integrated in the phase of development (for in this phase these were as yet only source, material, and presupposition for what comes at the end). There is one single thing that aims through all to express itself: we pursue it, without fancying to ourselves that we have grasped it wholly (Phil 3.12f).

INTRODUCTION

1. We make ready with nervousness to scale the final slope, the ascent which was the goal of all the earlier advances forward. For now everything which could be considered and expressed in isolation hitherto, collapses into a single whole with such decisiveness that in the presence of this unity, all are robbed of breath and speech. As long as God 'spoke in fragmentary and varied fashion' (Heb 1.1), and the 'form' of his revelation stretched out 'in temporal fashion'[1] through the extension of our history, and thus led us forward in a pedagogy by stages (Gal 3.24; 4.2), it was possible to believe that one could follow this; but at the end, all distinctions, aspects, concepts, signs, images, words, and periods subside into one another in a transcending 'fullness', in the One 'in whom the whole fullness of the deity dwells bodily' (Col 1.19), who receives 'the entire inheritance' (Heb 1.2), and in whom accordingly the previous distinction between the archetype of divine glory and its reflection on the human image, and finally the reciprocity between archetype and image in the glory of the covenant of grace,[2] is bypassed and dissolved, so that the One of whom we must now speak becomes in an unheard-of manner the joint founder of all periods, and indeed the 'effulgence of the glory' and 'imprint of the substance' of God himself (Heb 1.3). Nevertheless, God does not destroy the work which he has begun, like a Shiva who destroys the world in his dance: rather, he perfects in the identity of the 'person' of the One the 'distinction without mingling of natures'. It is far more difficult to hold on to this in thought, than to maintain a final commingling of everything or even only a Hegelian progressive 'resolution' of the differences into the synthesis. But the man, who represents God and is God, just as he represents the world and is the world, has his time and then dies; but he rises too, with his history, his time, his death, and his world, into the eternal life of God—everything depends on this, otherwise 'your faith is in vain' (1 Cor 15.14)—and thus what is not

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[1] On the temporal character of forms, cf. Vol IV, p. 33.

[2] *Cf.* the principal chapter headings of Vol. VI and Vol. IV pp. 23f.

identical coincides, and yet is thereby preserved in its particularity. We recognise that in this, the basic laws of that which we have presented as 'transcendental aesthetics' in its history and its substance, fulfil and transcend themselves:[3] we recognise that a 'form' is the more valuable in the degree that it becomes more transparent for the light of absolute being.[4] But this general 'metaphysical' law is so superabundantly fulfilled through the unique event, the initiative of which lies in God's absolute freedom, that it is totally subjected to criticism: the One, whose name is Jesus Christ, must go down into the absolute contradiction of the glory of the Lord, into the night of abandonment by God and the formless chaos of Hell, so that, beyond everything that man can see as form, he may be and establish the imperishable and indivisible form which joins God and the world in the new and eternal covenant.

Here we must describe the ineffable final matter of the definitive meeting which unites God and man (the world), and here least of all can we forgo the concept of 'form',[5] although we are well aware of the fact of its excessive employment. We are confirmed in this by the language of the New Testament.[6] But here most of all do we need the 'vision of the form'[7] with the 'eyes of faith' (Augustine), the *oculata fides* ('faith that has eyes', Thomas Aquinas), the 'enlightened eyes of the heart' (Eph 1.18), because only a 'simple eye' (Mt 6.22 par.) is able to perceive something of the simplicity achieved by all multiplicity in the final form of revelation. It is for this reason that those 'poor in spirit' and the 'pure', emptied 'hearts' are blessed most of all in the new covenant, for only they will see God in this form and possess his kingdom.[8] Such a simplicity of the eye, allowing the decisive perception, presupposes the unity of the act of seeing and the act of living, which Adolf Schlatter lays down as the fundamental postulate of the act of theological recognition, in that the act of living (the obedience to the revelation which is brought about in man through the revelation) is the basis of the act of seeing.[9] This seeing, which by God's grace brings no blinding of the human spirit through an immoderate light, but gives it the capacity to stand firm in the presence of the infinite simplicity, has as its first effect on man a sinking down in adoration before the glory; but at the same time, it is the strongest impulse for the subsequent thinking that converts what is seen into action, for the unity of the form offers a fullness of approaches, doors and possibilities for entry. For the Word has become flesh, and calls men and women to discipleship. The theology of the New Testament develops, without any possibility of being brought to a close, from the final form, and is so determined and held together by this form that it cannot degenerate into what is vague, relative, or contradictory. The subject of theology is not to be 'mastered' gradually by the understanding through a series of approximations that circle round the subject: rather, every approach in thought is continually 'judged' anew by the absolute superiority of the subject. For this subject is the absolute trinitarian love of God, which discloses itself and offers itself in Jesus Christ, which disarms by its humility and simplicity every 'stronghold' of would-be mastering thought that 'rises up' (2 Cor 10.5). Jesus opposes the despised child to that which thought attempts to devise as the 'greatest' (Mk 9.34), and the way that leads to Jesus and to the God who sends him is the acceptance of this 'least one' 'in my name'. Thus the simplicity of God 'judges' all human thoughts that strive upward above themselves to attain the utmost, and requires of them something that they can accomplish only in self-denial: 'to know the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge' (Eph 3.19). 'This knowledge knows something that is finally unknowable, because it is beyond the scope of knowledge in its boundlessness.'[10]

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[3] *Cf.* Vol. IV, pp. 000.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 000.

[5] One may compare the analogous use which Gerhard Koch makes of the same concept in his work *Die Auferstehung Jesu Christi* (2nd edn. 1965), and my discussion of him in *Mysterium Fidei* Vol. III (1969; separately printed as *Theologie der drei Tage*, 1969).

[6] *Cf.* the second section in this Volume.

[7] Vol. I of this work.

[8] *Cf.* my 'Der Glaube der Einfältigen', in: *Spiritus Creator, Skizzen zur Theologie* III (1967), pp. 51–75; *Einfaltungen* (Kosel-Verlag, 1969).

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[9] *Die Entstehung der Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie* (1920, BFChTh 25, 1), p. 58. *Cf.* W. Lütgert, *Adolf Schlatter als Theologe* (BFChTh 37, 1, 1932); U. Luck, *Kerygma und Tradition der Hermeneutik Adolf Schlatters* (1955, AFLNW 45).

2. If this were not so, then the form that offers itself would certainly not be the self-revelation of God. *Si comprehendis, non est Deus*: 'If you understand, it is not God. If, in accordance with Anselm's formula, God is *id quo maius cogitari nequit*, 'that than which nothing greater can be thought', and thus is the horizon of the absolute freedom of love that is a vault rising above every insight into the *necessitates* of the revelation, then this same formula and structure apply also to his final revelation in Christ. This allows us to employ, in what follows, here and there a certain *methodological argumentation a priori*, which is not the same as Anselm's, but analogous to this. This consists in bracketing off provisionally at the start the historical revelation in Christ in its historicity, and taking this as a phenomenological *eidos*, in order to go on to establish whether and how this surpasses and judges every possible human sketch of thought in philosophy and religion; not that the *eidos* wins a narrow, fortuitous victory in this, but that it soars up every time in absolute superiority. To give a decisive example: every endeavour of thought to explain the existence of a contingent world 'alongside' the (by definition) self-sufficient Absolute fails, unless the cosmos is the product of a fundamental goodness that pours itself out without jealousy (Plato, Plotinus), yet the cosmos cannot depend on a determination of God to choose the best possible model of a world (Leibniz), but can depend only on the unfathomable freedom of his love; but it is never truly clear in the Old Testament how this God can be free love, not needing his worldly partner (Israel)—hence man's repeated rebellions against this apparent contradiction in his image of God. The final obscurity disappears only when God discloses his inmost heart, his trinitarian love, in Jesus Christ, his love that raises him above all bracketing-together with the world,

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[10] H. Schlier, *Epheser* (1957), p. 175.

but gives the world its right to existence by taking it up into the eternally flowing dialogue of love. Just as it is an aprioristic insight that outside of being only nothing can exist, so it is an aprioristic 'insight' that it is impossible to think of a deeper justification of being than this, which leaves untouched the essence of God and that of the world (the *analogia entis*), and possesses no capacity to make deductions, but permits everything to open out into the unfathomable freedom of love. The arguments of New Testament theology all have this structure: they point to an unsurpassable *rightness*, without giving reasons for the articulations of the form of revelation in accordance with the style of human logic through 'necessities', for the whole form has its being, fresh in every single one of its articulations, in the element of free love.

The philosophical analogy of the difference between being and what is, between the transcendental and the categorical, can for this reason not be applied to the relationship between the God who reveals himself and the form of his revelation, for it is in the unique form, and *only* in it, that the mystery of the 'super-form' within the Godhead, of the Trinity as absolute love and thereby as the 'essence' of God, is made known. Although God does not need the form of Jesus Christ in order to be the perfect triune God in himself, and thus does not achieve his own full reality through the world, there is nothing accidental attached to his act of making himself known in Jesus Christ: what seems to us to be 'the accidental truth of history' is the revelation of his absolute freedom, as this is *in God himself*, the freedom of eternal self-giving out of unfathomable love. This absolute love is not determined in advance by any 'nature' in the eternal Father which would 'make it necessary' for him to beget the eternal Son; and in both there is no natural compulsion to make their love known to one another in the procession of the Spirit. This absolute freedom of the love within the Godhead is poured out over the entire form of revelation, gives it its being and structure, and is present in it. From this point, we may sense anew—indeed, in reality we may sense for the first time, after all our preliminary labours, what ultimately the divine glory is, what 'the light of knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ' is (2 Cor 4.6). From this, it becomes clear in advance that theological methodology—always presupposing the 'eyes of faith', in which this act of enlightenment takes place—can never be genuinely deductive (for otherwise it subjects the freedom of the form to the laws of human thought), but inductive, in the sense intended by Newman: it shows the 'convergence' of the lines and paths of discernment (what we termed above 'rightnesses') on the single focal point of surpassing brightness, where the glory flares out. This is the methodology which folds inwards in simplicity towards the divine simplicity. It may be that one chiefly sees the unutterable simplicity of the divine glory poured out over the whole form, as Greek theology above all can see this, remaining therefore predominantly, a 'symbolic' theology that looks on every detail in its transparency to the glowing centre-point of the epiphany of God; or it may be that one continually strikes out by the diligence of reasoning along the paths that lead from the separate articulations to the midpoint, as Western theology loves to do, that it itself may understand better and open up more paths of insight to others. The methodologies can and must complement each other. Without the look that carries one off to the midpoint, and away from the midpoint again, nothing on the peripheries will be comprehensible.

Illustre quiddam cernimus,
Quod nesciat finem pati,
Sublime, celsum, interminum,
Antiquius caelo et chao.[11]

3. Accordingly, what we have called in this work 'theological aesthetics',[12] taken by us both to be the criticism and the surpassing fulfilment of the 'philosophical' transcendent

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[11] 'We behold something illustrious
that cannot undergo an end—
lofty, heavenly, infinite,
older than heaven, older than primordial chaos.'
Vespers hymn on the Feast of the Transfiguration of Christ (6 August).

[12] Vol. IV, pp. 000.

aesthetics, must be fulfilled likewise in the final self-disclosure of the glory of God in the New Testament. If for a moment we take the word 'beauty' in a naive ambiguity that leaves open all the possibilities of its employment, then we may say that a ray of beauty has been poured out over the whole New Testament, with all its austerity, sobriety and terrribleness. One will see this beauty only when the core of everything is recognised to be the free love of God that justifies man. It is the beauty of God, in opposition to corruptible and human beauty (Jas 1.10 = 1 Pet 1.24), and so any mythologisation of the beauty of Christ or of the children of God is strictly avoided.[13] But as there is already always an element of joy in ἀγαπᾶν,[14] so *a fortiori* in the frequent verb ἀγαλλιᾶν, 'to exult in joy' in the presence of the hope that lies wide open in the present fulfilment and looks to the 'imperishable, undefiled and unfading inheritance in heaven' (1 Pet 1.4), which is promised and of which indeed the 'first instalment' has already been paid; the phrase of 1 Peter '*suggère une merveilleuse beauté*'.[15] 'Peter' ventures therefore to use two expressions of an unheard-of force, when he says that the believers already now 'rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy' (1 Pet 1.8)[16] in the presence of their hope, and when he says precisely to those who suffer for the name of Christ that 'the Spirit of glory, the Spirit of God rests upon' them (1 Pet 4.14),[17] here again in a proleptic eschatological sense, as 4.13 shows. This presence of what belongs to the future is the true source of beauty in the New Testament; only in a secondary manner, deriving from this, is the contemplation of the harmonious correspondence between 'promise and fulfilment', old covenant and new, a source of beauty. If what is new were not new in itself, then what is old would not be capable of being brought into relation with it.[18]

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[13] *Cf. RSR* 55 (1967), pp. 483, 485, 493f., 503, 506.

[14] C. Spicq, *Les Epîtres de Saint Pierre* (1966); 'Grâce et Beauté', in: *Théologie morale du N.T.* Vol. I (1965), pp. 146–153.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[16] The verse is not to be referred to the future heavenly joy, but to the present which lives in a tension that looks towards this future and is illuminated by it. The light of the heavenly glorification falls from the very beginning into temporal existence.

[17] The text is not wholly secure, but even in this form it corresponds to other New Testament statements. K. H. Schelkle, *Die Petrusbriefe, der Judasbrief* (1961), p. 124.

Let us leave to one side the innumerable passages from Catholic tradition which praise the beauty of the New Testament revelation; an excessive criticism delights in accusing these statements of aestheticism and of falling away from the inexorable quality of the words and deeds of Jesus.[19] Let us leave to one side likewise Romantic theology,[20] which may on occasion fall prey to the judgment of Kierkegaard. There is, however, a path leading back from Kierkegaard, along which even Protestant theology may be able to recognise anew the dimension of beauty in the New Testament. E. W. Gulin[21] holds that for John, the grace that we receive from Jesus has left behind an impression comparable to 'the sights in the world of beauty which, once seen, can never again disappear from the soul'. Johannes Weiss[22] describes the deeply moved and persuasive form in which the Gospels were able to mirror the figure of Jesus, as something 'artistic', which presupposes in those who execute the portrait the same receptivity that belongs 'only to a selfless and pure heart, whose sight is obscured by no vanity nor greed' in the presence of the beautiful. And if the church is formed and wholly determined by the free love of God in Christ, then how significant appears the observation of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his letters from prison: 'Perhaps—it almost seems so, today—it is only the concept of the *church* that will be the source of the rediscovery of the free space for the freedom of art, education, friendship, and play—so that one should not banish the 'aesthetic existence' (Kierkegaard) from the realm of the church, but precisely give it new foundation *in* the church?'[23]

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[18] H. de Lubac, *Histoire et Espirit* (1950), p. 284.

[19] A characteristic example of the filling-out of the concept 'aesthetic' with negative values (or values appraised as negative) is H. Weinel, 'Jesus und die ästhetische Religion' (in: *Bibl. Theol. d. N.T*, 2nd edn. 1913, §8), who equates 'aesthetic' with 1. apocalyptic, 2. organisational, 3. ascetic, 4. sacramental, and 5. mystical.

[20] One can take an example W. M. L. de Wette, for whom belief in the divinity of Christ 'is of ideally aesthetic quality and belongs to pious feeling' (*Dogmatik der ev.-luth. Kirche*, 2nd edn. 1821, p. 129); *cf. Bibl. Dogmatik Alten und Neuen Testaments* (2nd edn. 1818), pp. 18f.

[21] *Die Freude im Neuen Testament*, II (Helsinki 1936), p. 29.

[22] *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (3rd edn. 1917), p. 67.

Such initial steps find their full form in *Karl Barth's* isolated treatise on God's glory and (therein) his beauty, as the appropriate conclusion to the doctrine of God's freedom and love.[24] Speaking generally, God's glory is, first, 'the dignity and justification proper to God, not only to assert that he is who he is, but to demonstrate this and to make it known . . ., in a certain measure, to make it obvious and not to be overlooked'; second, to 'obtain acknowledgment' for himself; and this, third, with divine power. Glory is therefore 'God himself in the truth, in the capacity, in the act in which he makes himself known as God', and he does this by loving. This commences indeed in the various manners of the Old Testament *kabod*, but comes to fulfilment first in Christ, who represents the 'glory of God' because on the one hand he is the perfect image of the glory of the Father (therefore, trinitarian glory), and on the other hand represents 'the archetype of all creaturely participation in the glory of God': 'The *kabod* has received this midpoint, this concrete form, this name.' This is 'what is new in the New Testament', and it stands obviously in the context of the doctrine of the love of God. If one goes on to ask what the essence of God's glory is, then a first correct answer (in the old dogmatic theologians) can run: 'It is the embodiment, become visible, of all divine perfection': '*Gloria Dei est essentialis eius maiestas*' ('The glory of God is the majesty that belongs to his essence', Polanus). It is possible, however, to define this majesty more closely? Should one describe the brilliance of the δόξα indirectly, starting from its reflection, the δοξάζειν that responds to it, the exultant praise of the creatures, as the angels perpetually offer this, and as we too ought to offer it? Barth attempts a more direct reply, by posing the question of the 'form and figure' of the revelation.[25] Thereby, he comes up against the concept of beauty, which he situates theologically against aestheticism, after carefully marking the boundary lines: 'We speak of the beauty of God only to help in the explanation of his glory', which 'in any case also includes, and brings to expression, that which we term beauty'. Taking his starting point from the Augustinian and scholastic concept of the *fruitio Dei*, which is drawn from scripture,[26] he establishes, with Augustine: 'Things are not beautiful because they give delight; they give delight, because they are beautiful' (*Ver. Rel.* 32, 59). Transposed to speak of God, this implies: 'God is not God because he is beautiful; he is beautiful because he is God'. A biblical-theological aesthetics, therefore, cannot orient itself upon any general ('metaphysical') concept of beauty, but must obtain its idea of beauty from God's unique self-disclosure in Christ, whereby this unique event which 'breaks through every system', simultaneously transcends, criticises, and brings to fulfilment general aesthetic concepts.[27] Instead of offering an aesthetics that runs through the entire *Dogmatics*, Barth offers three central examples, which receive their evidential power from the third. First, God's *essence* is beautiful and perfect in its 'form', because in him, in a unique and superabundant manner, 'the wonderful unity—now puzzling, now clear in itself—of identity and not-identity, of simplicity and multiplicity, of inner and outer, of God himself and the fullness of that which he is as God', of 'movement and peace', makes itself known; because, unlike any worldly essence, he is identical in his whole being with this form of his. Second, this becomes more visible at a deeper level, in the Trinity of God, the 'making concrete' of his freedom and love, and thereby also of his 'unity of identity and not-identity'. In God, there are 'sequence and order', there is 'relationship' and 'therefore form', but this form is once again one with his freedom, love and beatitude: 'to this extent, the Trinity of God is the mystery of his beauty'. Third, however, the Trinity first comes into view for us with the Incarnation as the 'centre and goal, and thus also the hidden beginning of all God's ways'; and this is Incarnation

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[23] *Widerstand und Ergebung* (1951), p. 136 (letter of 23.1.1944).

[24] *Kirchliche Dogmatic* II/1 (1940), pp. 722–762.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 733.

[26] Texts on pp. 737–738.
[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 739, 742.

in the man who bears the sins, who has 'neither form nor beauty', in whom God seemingly enters what is the opposite of himself, and yet: 'precisely thus does he set in action and confirm his unity with himself. Along this path he reveals his glory. So deeply does God distinguish himself from himself.' He is 'one, and not imprisoned and bound to be only one; identical with himself, and yet free to be another . . ., not in tension, dialectic, paradox and contradiction', but in 'this beautiful form that awakens joy'. 'The beauty of God' in the 'beauty of Jesus Christ' appears therefore precisely in the crucified, but the crucified, precisely as such, is the one risen: 'in this self-disclosure, God's beauty embraces death as well as life, fear as well as joy, that which we would call ugly, as well as that which we would call beautiful'. And precisely in this highest self-disclosure is seen the truth of the first description of glory: to be the self-demonstration of his love in truth and power in all the works of God, which is then able, in the gift of the Holy Spirit, to bring about the response of *glorificatio* from the creation, in 'looking away from oneself' and looking to Christ, in whom glory and glorification become absolutely one. The place in which such glorification is permitted to give its thanks is 'the form of the church, of the proclamation, the faith, the confession, the theology, the prayer', a genuine and therefore beautiful form, the fullness of which remains in this age as yet hidden from the Church itself: 'That is the limit of this form'. We have sketched here the outline of Karl Barth in our introduction, not only because it agrees with our own overall plan, especially as regards the relationship between glory and beauty, but also because it offers at the beginning an overview that we ourselves can approach only slowly. We must take the path of those *rudes* and *incipientes* who 'at the start are not able to see the light of beauty', as Origen says, and rise up to become 'lovers of his beauty' only when they are 'perfect'.[28] This path can be described by means of a mysteriously obscure utterance of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas: 'The images are revealed to man, but the light that is in them is concealed in the image of the light of the Father. This light will reveal itself, and then will his image be concealed in his light'.[29] The final turn of phrase may be gnostic; the general trend of the logion remains correct. It confirms once again that there is no seeing without being caught up: as Christ (the 'image') is 'caught up' to the Father (in the Resurrection, and proleptically in the Transfiguration), in order to reveal fully the radiance of God through the form of the image, so we must look away from ourselves, in order to be able to 'reflect with unveiled face the glory of the Lord, being changed into his likeness' (2 Cor 3.18).

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[28] *In Matthaeum ser*. 32 (GCS XI, 58).

4. We have already said that no complete theology of the new covenant will be presented here. Everything is ordered around the guiding concept of glory, and has been selected with a view to this; it is only here, as Karl Barth showed, that this concept attains its fullness. No concept ready to hand, whether drawn from metaphysics or from the Old Testament, is, therefore, capable of determining the path of the enquiry. At most, themes broached in the old covenant can point in a certain direction, but in each case a total transposition into the tonality of the new covenant will be required. In the Bible, fulfilment is never attainable through a plurality of promises: it is new creation. This is doubly relevant for our theme, when one recalls the inner gradient that the concept must travel in the old covenant: starting from the experience of the momentum of a presence forcing itself upon the attention both of the spirit and of the senses, the experience of an immense subject making itself known in an immediately physical and elemental manner, with a freedom and vitality in its address and in the claim it makes that obtain for itself a right hearing from the very beginning—then through the many images that branch out to portray such a presence of God, in original prophetic experiences, but also in the adoption of mythological forms of expression in the composition of the poetry of the Psalms, going as far as a

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[29] 'Apokryphe Evangelien', in: Schneemelcher, *Apokr. N.T.*, Vol. I, p. 220; Jean Doresse, *L'Evangile selon Thomas* (1959) Logion 87, p. 107.

certain cultic formalism which, in the historical narratives of the priestly writers, takes what may not be tidily controlled and domesticates it to the very boundary of controllability; until finally, after the exile, the accumulated use of the concept reveals a loss of experience of the reality, but at the same time an increased longing and a need for it. At this point, there is almost an anticipation of Paul's insight: 'All have sinned, and must do without the glory of God' (Rom 3.23). This was the intermediate period between the departure of God's glory from the temple (Ezek 9.3; 10.18; 11.22f.) and its return, awaited for the messianic period (Ezek 43.2ff.; Ps 85.10: 'Surely our salvation is at hand . . . and God's glory will dwell in our land'; cf. Is 40.3–5). And thus, those who must do without the glory do indeed grope in all directions like blind men, seeking to have a share once again in the glory that has vanished—they look to the temporal future, which always means, for the Jew, the imminent expectation of the End, but the promises of the Second and Third Isaiah, for all their urgency, are not fulfilled; they look to the heights of Heaven, torn open by apocalyptic, first in the vision of the Son of Man in Dan 7 and then in an obscure pious literature which promises mystical insights into the glory of Heaven and of the world to come, and thereby underlines yet again the deprivation in the present world. Finally, they look to the breadth of the cosmos, where the teachers of wisdom see God's word and wisdom 'gloriously' at work; but it is characteristic enough that Jesus Sirach modulates from his praise of the glory of God in the Creation into a melancholy look backwards from a period without history to the epoch of the great heroes of God's dealings with Israel, and the final note is sounded in the lost splendour of the high priest Simon, the distinctively Old Testament splendour of figurative sacredness.

Thus the *kabod* of the Old Testament, its *doxa*, displays a downward slope accompanied by a decrease in power, the force and evidentness of its presence decline with the frequency with which it is named and the urgency with which it is demanded. It is true that the broadening of horizons which occurs in the post-exilic period—

messianically, into the future; apocalyptically, into Heaven; sapientially, into the entire cosmos and thereby into the history of the peoples of the world—became a foundation, indispensable in the history of salvation, for the fulfilment in the New Testament;[30] but so far are they from leading over without a break in continuity into the fulfilment, that they themselves tear open the gulf between old and new covenants through their inner exhaustion which brought them to their end. Thus Paul sees more deeply than the usual philological history of concepts, when he puts an adversative πολλῷ μᾶλλον, 'how much the more', a qualitative advance upwards ὑπερβάλλουσα δόξα, as a dividing-line between the glory of the 'dispensation of death, carved in letters on stone' that is indeed a 'dispensation of condemnation', and the glory of the 'dispensation of the Spirit' and 'dispensation of justification' (2 Cor 3.7–11). This radical caesura between the sphere of the promise and the sphere of the fulfilment makes it questionable whether we should simply follow the guiding-line of philology; is it not rather our task first of all to consider the *matter* itself, which may then subsequently draw the old expression to itself, though filled now with new content? Even in the old covenant, there is no doubt that the matter existed before the word was coined. This was a matter that could not be sufficiently contained in any word—for who can ever say what the *kabod* of God is?—but was continually devalued, the more the word became a coin in daily use. On the level of fulfilment, then, we must indeed expect that God's act, in which his aim is to present himself definitively and establish his definitive covenant, will not join on to the end of the old covenant, but will have a new beginning from the origins, and will thereby reveal what he *truly* intended in his first initiative, while everything else remains as if bracketed off ('the law came in addition', Rom 5.20), and must remain in brackets for the sake of true comprehension. This is the theological rationale which makes Paul leap over Moses to unite faith in Christ with the faith of Abraham. More importantly for us, this is the reason why the Synoptic Gospels begin by portraying the event of Jesus without using the concept of 'glory' (in a present sense), by setting the beginning wholly afresh at the point where God's act of making himself present had begun: with the *momentum* of the presence, of the subject that forces its way forward and makes its own impression and expression; they begin with his force and authority, which especially in Mark calls forth anew the elementary terror before God at the foot of Sinai (ἐκπλήσσειν, a stupefied being beside oneself through terror: Mk 1.22; 6.2; 11.18; intensified through περισσῶς at 10.26, through ὑπερπερισσῶς at 7.37). Only after the pause that the Synoptists have thus inserted, can John consider the transposition as fully achieved, and lay claim once more to the word *doxa* wholly for the New Testament glory (Jn 1.14): so much so, that he explains the vision of Isaiah in the Temple (and thus the *doxa* of the old covenant) as a proleptic seeing of the glory of Christ (12.41). Analogously, Luke too has the two great seers of the divine glory in the Old Testament themselves appear 'in glory' on Tabor (Lk 9.31), but then he has them wrapped together with Christ in the cloud of the *kabod*, which identifies him as the Son. With this return to the beginning, however, we are not taken back to Sinai, to the dialectic of fire and smoke, lightning and cloud, light and darkness, but to an origin that lies much further back (ἀρχή, Jn 1.1), to that which was the true purpose of God's disclosure in all the previous revelation of glory: his trinitarian love. The dialectic of the Old Testament signs, accessible to the senses, was not simply a 'concession' by God to man's sensible nature, when considered in this light, but rather a path that led to the Incarnation, where the eternal love will press forward in yet another way, quite differently—by bringing all the fear of God, indeed all the rejecting judgment of God into accomplishment, in order to demonstrate his truest glory in 'having mercy on all' (Rom 11.32).

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[30] III/2,1, pp. 337-345.

The structure of this volume is determined by this insight, that a pause for contemplation is inserted in order to mark out the distance between the glory of the Old Testament and the glory of the New, a pause that requires the return to the original signification. First we must speak of the matter itself, which bears the name not of 'glory', but of Jesus Christ; then we must follow on to speak of the application of the affirmation of glory to him and to all that concerns him; and third, we must speak of the response of the world, as this is changed in the New Testament—the glorification of the glory. In the first part, therefore, where the explicit assertion remains bracketed off, we are nevertheless also centrally in the presence of the theme (philologically speaking, of the original significance of *kabod* as imposing momentum), of the body, so to speak, which will then be clothed in the garments of light (Mk 9.3).

In conclusion, something else will become clear. In the 'teaching on seeing' of the first volume ('seeing the form'), the term 'aesthetics' was taken in the Kantian sense as teaching about perception; whereas we must understand it now, at the conclusion of the 'teaching on rapture', as the self-disclosure of the glory of God (his theological beauty). In this way we see definitively what the first volume stressed in many ways in the teaching on subjective and objective evidence, that the form established by God bears its evidential force in itself and is able of itself to show this to the eyes of faith: but it is precisely this power to assert oneself, to demonstrate oneself, and to achieve acceptance for oneself, that belongs to the most original meaning of the biblical glory of God (as Karl Barth has shown above). Thus, 'seeing' and 'being caught up out of oneself' are not wholly separate, but are most closely involved in each other;[31] fundamentally theology and dogmatics are not separable. If we have truly seen Christ, then we have also, in whatever manner, seen 'his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father' (Jn 1.14).[32]

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[31] Vol. I, pp. 125f.

[32] The first part is based to a large extent on previous works by the author which have prepared the ground: *Theologie der Geschichte* (4th edn. 1959 ET *A Theology of History*, 1963), 'Gott redet als Mensch', in *Verbum Caro* (1960), pp. 73–99 (ET *Essays in Theology I. Word and Revelation*, 1964, pp. 87–119), *Glaubhaft ist nur Liebe* (1963 ET *Love Alone: The Way of Revelation*, 1968), *Zuerst Gottes Reich* (1966), 'Sammlung im Wort', in: *Das Ganze im Fragment* (1963), pp. 245–350 (ET *A Theological Anthropology*, 1967). 'Triduum Mortis et Resurrectionis', in: *Mysterium Salutis* III (1969).

But 'being caught up' must be understood in the sense of the New Testament, as man's being given a home through God's glory—through his love—so that he is no more a looker-on, but a cooperator of glory. Man is brought back from the alienation of sin, and comes in this rapture at once to God and to himself: at once into his own depths (which he alone could never reach) and into the true fellowship of men (which can be endured only in Christ). The third part of this volume, which deals with the existential glorification, will therefore also demonstrate that theology and anthropology are involved in one another. Where man is so 'dispossessed' through God's transcendent love that he himself is empowered to genuine transcendence, he wins access to his own true being, which was intended for him always.

The second and third parts are above all the bringing to a conclusion of what was begun in Vols. I and VI of *The Glory of the Lord*, but they also develop further the ethic which was sketched in the collections entitled *Sponsa Verbi* (1960) and *Spiritus Creator* (1967).

I. VERBUM CARO FACTUM

1. PRELUDE

a. The fragments of the old covenant

Theologically, and therefore also epistemologically, it is and remains the case that it is the old covenant that prepares the way for the understanding of the new. However much the Apostle of the Gentiles may exempt his hearers from the old observances, he nevertheless cannot spare them a panorama of the whole event of salvation. How much Old Testament material Paul imposes on his readers in Rome, who were mostly Gentiles, when he must fight at one and the same time on a Jewish front and on an antinomian front![1] This great rift, right through the centre of Scripture reflects its single and indivisible content: salvation through judgment. At its endpoint, the old covenant is one single cry for its fulfilment—and yet it is unable in the slightest to outline the form of this fulfilment which it postulates through its entire arrangement. Looking backwards from the fulfilment in Christ, it is possible to show that it was precisely this form alone that corresponded to the postulates, but likewise, that this form could never have been rounded out to fullness from the fragments which were available to the old covenant. The fullness was not present in the fragments in the way that the fullness of a jigsaw is present in the pieces, too hard for a child who needs the help of an adult to fit them together; the fullness here came about only through a synthesis possible for God alone, yet absolutely undiscoverable for man. In spite of which the fullness was present in the parts in such a way that man could recognise it subsequently, though in this act of recognition he had to acknowledge it as the sole work of God in history.

At the end of the preceding volume (III/2, 1, pp. 371-382), we offered a new formulation of the *argumentum ex prophetia*: the numerous images of the Old Testament surround and converge upon a midpoint which remains open and not constructible; through the existence of Christ, this midpoint is occupied, without visible struggling to attain the synthesis; as Christians reflect on this after Easter, it is seen that all fragmentary images order themselves as if automatically towards this midpoint, and contribute a clarification to the unity. Since this argument has far-reaching consequences for the theological understanding of the New Testament event, it will be presented here once again in a high degree of formalisation, and with direct reference to our subject. Put in this way, we can say that the arch of the covenant set up by God rests upon two pillars: first on the *dabar* of God, his active Word of Wisdom that carries out what he wills, that seeks to establish his righteousness upon earth in the chosen people and to 'take root' (Sir 24.12) on earth, because though man merely as a creature does possess a certain reflected brilliance of God's glory, he yet remains incapable, by his own strength, of contributing a righteousness other than his own—and in the presence of God's requirements, this righteousness is insufficient, indeed in its depths a righteousness that fails. Accordingly, the other pillar supporting the covenant is not simply man, nor even the chosen people as such, but that form which stands security for the covenant, never fully realised but broken again and again; and it does this in such a way that it mediates between God and the people, bearing the people's guilt and God's punishment. We have seen how this form became clearer and more visible from Hosea, through the Moses of Deuteronomy and the major prophets, up to the 'Servant of Yahweh'. In this purest expression, the form integrates three functions, that of the personal go-between (a function to which Moses, in Ex 3, and many judges, kings and prophets are appointed), that of the priest (which in fact is first separated from the function of Moses through his refusal, in Ex 4.13ff.) who is charged with the cultic sacrifices that bring reconciliation, and the function of the sacrificed animal, whose blood flows in atonement and which is consumed in the whole burnt offering to the glory of God. The way is paved in the Servant

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[1] H. Preisker, 'Das historische Problem des Römerbriefes', in: *Wiss. Zft. der Schiller-Univ. Jena*, B. Gesellsch.- und Sprachwiss. Reihe 2 (1952–1953) pp. 25–30; G. Harder, 'Der konkrete Anlass des Römerbriefes', in: *Theologia Viatorum* 6 (1954), pp. 13–24.

Songs for the integration of the three functions, which becomes a reality only in the new covenant and becomes the dominant theme worked out in the Letter to the Hebrews; only in the new covenant is this possible, because beforehand the impossibility of combining the necessity of dying (as 'beast of sacrifice') and the necessity of living (as reconciling priest, prophet and go-between) stood in the way. The midpoint of the event of the go-between is to be found in his death (in Is 53, his true role is recognised only afterwards by the 'many peoples'), but it was absolutely impossible, from the standpoint of the old covenant, to recognise that the one who died could fulfil his role as an individual rising from death. Further, the covenant which was repeatedly violated by the people was one day accounted by the active Word of God to have been definitively broken off, dissolved, as unable to be restored; sin was too great for the atonement that was possible through men (this is seen in God's dismissal of Jeremiah's intercession); the great harlot Jerusalem was set ablaze and destroyed by fire from the glory of God. Certainly, God had to remain true to himself, and therefore he must reach out over all disasters and promise a new and eternal covenant; but the event of the judgment through the wounded love of God, affected in his inmost heart by sin, was not something that could be made good again. In the presence of this dilemma there emerges (in a directly *aprioristic* manner, from the standpoint of the old covenant) the postulate of such a mediator (first sketched as a concept, then described by the Letter to the Hebrews), who vicariously endures the destroying fire of God's glory—dying, but on account of his proving true under trial (by this, we must understand his obedience), surviving the death he experiences. In order that this may be conceivable, there is a third requirement, the thing that genuinely could not have been thought of: the coming-together of God's *dabar* with the human form of the atoning mediator. (Thereby we have also the coming-together of the two events which we have isolated as the events that close the old covenant, the 'speech event' and the 'blood event', which were hindered hitherto from coming together by the two reserved areas indicated by the command against images and the command against eating blood.) It was impossible for man alone in his intercession and his suffering for others to establish God's own and entire righteousness upon earth: but it was likewise impossible for God's *dabar* alone to take this upon itself, for he cannot bypass or overtrump the God-given freedom of man (the freedom which ennobles him to the image of God): but this could be achieved by a form which was the absolute identity of God's Word and a man who in free obedience took on himself the sin, now not merely of the people, but of the world. In his atoning death, judgment and mercy came together, so that the final judgment that should bring doom became a function of the final mercy that wished to establish God's new and eternal covenant with the world. From the standpoint of the old covenant, this identification of the two pillars remains unthinkable, for it appears to take away the fundamental principle on which everything is built, namely the infinite qualitative difference between God and creature. Even when this identification has taken place, it remains a mystery that is never to be fully laid bare, yet that by the force of its existence casts a wholly new light on God himself and on his relationship to the world: on God, because the mystery of the God-man necessarily discloses the mystery of the Trinity within the Godhead. The light falls on God's relationship to the world, for now, without encroachment upon the difference between God and creature, the world can find in the life of the Trinity its own allotted space.[2]

It is only by looking backwards from the new covenant that any of these considerations became possible. The lines from the old covenant do not converge on a single point. And everything that the Jew might have undertaken in order to force something like a convergence, in his longing for fulfilment, showed itself subsequently to be the opposite of convergence: he was an obstacle in the path of God's plans, merely taking up the place that God wanted empty, in order to fill it himself. So terrible was God's judgment in the destruction of the holy city and the abandonment of the holy land, so decisively had his fist smitten what remained into fragments, that man, for all the energy that he devoted to sacrifices and observance of the law, to looking out for the return of God's glory by examining the future, the heaven, and the creation, was not able to mend the broken pieces, but could only make what was dreadful yet more obvious. The 'kingdom' was no longer, in any real sense, an option—it was only something that had 'come on the scene between-times' and had left behind it a great wasteland when it disappeared: 'Where now is your king, to save you? . . . those of whom you said, "Give me a king and princes"? I gave you a king in my anger, and I have taken him away again in my wrath' (Hos 13.9ff.). A Judaistic kingdom had lost its theological significance. It is for this reason that Jesus, in his speeches of judgment against the Pharisees and legalists, and Paul, showing the tragic dialectic of the law, must begin by opening again the obscured horizon, which permits the view of God's original intention (the faith of Abraham and the prophets) and of his final great act of judgment in the ruining of Jerusalem. This disclosure does not at all signify the wholesale rejection of Judaism; for Jesus knows how to take hold of what is genuine among the debris (*cf.* Mk 12.34), indeed what is perfect (*cf.* Lk 21.1–4), and how to purify it and give new wholeness to the fragments in his person, just as Paul knows of the holiness, righteousness and goodness of the law (Rom 7.12), and, when he deals with the error of his Jewish brothers, speaks with all consideration and caution (Rom 10.2ff.). It is only the human self-righteousness that is rejected, which sets itself in the place of the righteousness that comes through God (in open faith, in the spirit of poverty); it is for this self-righteousness that the judgment passed on Israel half a millennium previously becomes present reality. In the threats uttered against the religious hypocrites (Mt

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[2] On the development of dogmatics from christology, and of christology from the original christological synthesis of the statements 'Jesus Christ is the Lord' (1 Cor 12.3) and 'Jesus is the Son of God' (Acts 8.37; Heb 4.15; 1 Jn 4.14), *cf.* O. Cullmann, 'Die ersten christlichen Glaubensbekenntnisse', in: *Theol. Stud.* 15 (4th edn. 1949). In both formulae, we may note that the christological dualism of both of the 'pillars' which we have identified is reflected: 'Lord' is the divine name itself, 'Son of God' is the fulfilment of the Davidic promise, and thus the designation of God's partner.

23.13–33) and the following lamentation over Jerusalem that murders the prophets, and whose time has now come, it is only the situation of Isaiah and Jeremiah that is rendered present—for it is obvious enough, from the fact that Jesus like all the prophets must die in Jerusalem (Lk 13.33), that he looks on 'Jerusalem' as the midpoint of God's work of salvation and as the midpoint of every adulterous rebellion against God; thus, in the prophecy about the destruction of the Temple, which follows immediately in the text, a prophecy containing eschatological traits, we should not so much look forward to the events in the year A.D. 70, as backward to the events of 587 B.C. What then happened in the course of history, and thus as a type, will be repristinated in God's definitive act and will become truly an event of the end-times.[3] But precisely for this reason, it is not to be separated from the inmost content of the period of exile, the suffering of the Servant of Yahweh, which, likewise across a period of five hundred years' silence, acquires its conclusive truth and efficacy in the eschatological suffering under judgment of Jesus Christ. We may express this in other words: the logia of judgment, expressed still in the language of the Old Testament prophets and partly in the language of apocalyptic, which bring the Synoptic Gospels to a close (however composite these may be, from a literary point of view, in their various aspects), make present the concluding historical act of salvation of God in the old covenant, and make it ready for integration in the synthesis of his eschatological act of salvation in the New Testament in the Cross and Resurrection of Christ. While Jesus exposes more the personal sin and contrariety of legalism, which he will take on himself as the personal bearer of sin, Paul brings to light more the provisional character of the whole order of law, which is the occasion of the temptation to self-righteousness for the sinner, which thereby exposes his concealed lack of redemption, and so can be understood only as an intermediate moment in the history of the covenant-faith (between Abraham and Christ). The theologies of Matthew and James do not contradict this, because even they—in their more positive estimation of the law—see its wholeness only from the New Testament's viewpoint of radical transcendence of the time and the level of its ruins (Mt 5.19f.; Jas 2.10f.).

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[3] Here is the solution to the puzzlement of G. E. Wright, *God Who Acts. Biblical Theology as Recital*, in: Studies in Bibl. Theology 8 (3rd edn. 1958): 'It is curious that the New Testament does not make use of the destruction of Jerusalem, the exile and the restoration, for those events would have completed the typological comparison of God's acts in Israelite history with his work in Christ', p. 69.

Thus, Judaism's three forms of reaching out for the missing glory of God can find a home in the unity of the new covenant only by way of their total dismantling. The image of the coming Messiah must be broken through the image of the suffering Servant of Yahweh (which, for the Jews, could not be united to it); apocalyptic must undergo a complete transformation of signification, and be humbled to the role of a function of the dying and rising of the man Jesus; the sapiential teaching can be utilised only when it lets itself be measured against, and brought into alignment with, the scandal of the Cross and of the 'foolishness of God' that appears therein—for the 'lord of glory' must be crucified (1 Cor 2.8). This threefold failure (and salvation 'as through fire', 1 Cor 3.15) is all part of the process of making present again the great failure of Israel and its loss of God's glory in the past. But, to summarise once again what was said at the beginning, this failure was only the proclamation that God in the covenant foresaw a higher building than was visible in the Old Testament foundations. The Adam created as God's image (the 'first' Adam) could not bear sufficient weight to permit him to be the second pillar that would bear the whole vault of the eternal covenant that God wanted to establish with the world. This was for the simple reason that he was mortal; but the content of the covenant of which he was the partner was divine and therefore immortal. Ruin, death and Hades must be taken up into the act of covenant: this was possible only if God's Word became flesh, if the eternal life took death (as judgment, ruin, Hell) upon himself as man, and made it past in himself: 'I *was* dead, but behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and Hades' (Rev 1.18). Only then is 'the righteousness of God' established on earth as it is in heaven (Mt 6.10); only then does God's Word, sent forth into the world, return to him with its whole harvest and equal resonance (Is 55.10f.); and in this full resonance, the whole fragmented clatter of the broken covenant and of the enacted judgment must sound forth too, must indeed bring into being the highest harmony (as this reigns eternally between Father and Son). In the absolute suffering of judgment and its overcoming in the rising of man to God, the imperfect Old Testament glory of God must display itself in the New Testament as the perfect glory of his love that overcomes all things. And if in the period of the great prophecy the insufficiency of men appeared as a whole—so much so, that even the strongest intercessory prayer of the individual could no longer balance the sinking scales (Jer 7.16; 11.14; 14.11f.)—if that solidarity in insufficiency, from which a doctrine of 'original sin' could develop, became visible, then the atonement of the 'new Adam' will be obliged to effect a deeper solidarity in opposition to this, in accordance with the Pauline principle of superabundance in the establishment of God's universal righteousness (Rom 5.15,17,20). This solidarity, whereby God's righteousness passes from the one to 'all', corresponds on earth to the trinitarian solidarity of love in heaven.

b. Drawing together and handing over: the Baptist

The 'heir of all things' (Heb 1.2) ought not to inherit a lordship over ruins; something unheard-of took place, namely that the original meaning and content of the first covenant rose again intact in a form that brought it to a close so that, restored to its original brightness, it might dispossess itself in favour of the new form: midpoint to midpoint, and above all, person to person. We are not dealing with a 'movement'—the group of John the Baptist's disciples remains shadowy and irrelevant, like the groups of prophets who surrounded the solitary and unique figure of Elijah, and the frictions between this party and the disciples of Jesus remain irrelevant[1]—but rather with an encounter seen in ever new variations of light and shade. Each makes a decision about the other and takes up a position in relation to him with an emphasis, with an amount of detail that is so astonishing when we consider the brevity of the Gospels, that we grasp that the two persons who measure themselves against one another, like all the great persons of salvation history, are not only 'sent on a mission', but are personified missions, embodiments, bodily ideas, who as such bear epochs of salvation history in themselves and dismiss epochs from themselves (*cf.* Heb 7.9f.): it is thus that Moses portrays 'the law' and Elijah 'prophecy' in the scene of transfiguration. Looking ahead from this point, we can recognise immediately that when he is asked who he is, the Baptist, who is to embody in concentrated form the glowing kernel of the first covenant, can identify himself neither with the 'prophet' ('like Moses', Deut 18.15), nor with Elijah (Mal 3.23), nor with the Messiah, in view of whom he is to 'clear the path' (Mal 3.1, following Is 40.3). He, like all those 'sent', does not know who he is—all the more is this true, since his mission is the greatest that anyone born of woman has received (Mt 11.11), and therefore the least surveyable. He knows only his commission, to be a voice that calls (in reality a voice that is called)[2] in the wilderness: 'Clear the path of the Lord', and to effect this clearing of hearts with all the might of his existence: through a word which is given him directly from God with an unprecedented immediacy (Jesus testifies of him, 'Yes, I tell you, he is more than a prophet', Mt 11.9), and through an act that is inspired in him just as directly, and without connecting to anything already existing[3] (Jesus testifies to this too: the baptism of John is 'from heaven', Mt 21.25).

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[1] Jn 3.25: dispute about purification (probably about the respective value of the two baptisms); Mk 2.18ff.: dispute about fasting (in which the

disciples of John are said to maintain the same position as the Pharisees—indeed, at Mt 9.14 they themselves spontaneously make this claim, which is difficult to combine with the position of the Baptist in relation to the Pharisees, Mt 3.7).

[2] Is 40.3 in Hebrew: 'A voice cries: make ready in the wilderness a path for Yahweh'; the Synoptists follow the LXX, 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness'.

[3] It is an 'original deed' of the Baptist, which has no connection with the ritual washings of Qumran which were repeated several times in the course of the day: John's baptism cannot be repeated, for it is a once-for-all eschatological sacrament; it is not restricted to a group of initiates or those

The seemingly disparate characteristics of the Baptist in the Gospels come together to form an impressive figure only when they are considered together in the unity of his mission that goes beyond all boundaries. This mission exceeds not only the comprehension of his disciples, but also the self-understanding possible to the one sent himself. Since his mission on the one hand goes back into the kernel of the old covenant, and on the other hand makes the leap of transcendence in anticipation into the kernel of the new covenant, it can be understood as a form only if it is allowed to remain in this unique and unrepeatable suspension.

The event of the Baptist is above all the fact that salvation history, which had in effect (apart from a meagre postlude) come to an end with the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile,[4] in order to make room for the 'empty period' of five hundred years, suddenly jerks into motion again. Passing over all apocalyptic, it goes back to the centre of the great prophecy, which was always intimately related to the imminent expectation of the Day of the Lord;[5] John's proclamation of judgment and call to repentance have the same quality as those of Amos or Micah, Jeremiah or Ezekiel. They have likewise the same indissoluble two-sidedness: flaming declaration of wrath, and good news (Lk 3.17f.) of forgiveness of sins on the ground of penitent conversion (Mk 1.4),

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to be initiated, but is for the people as a whole; it is not merely ritual, but is the expression of total conversion of the heart and an act of sealing that looks to the approaching Day of God's wrath. Taking up a universal human symbol, this baptism is spiritually a new creation; the early Christians took up John's baptism in order to grasp the idea of new birth at a yet deeper level. E. Lohmeyer, *Das Urchristentum I: Johannes der Täufer* (1932), pp. 67–82; *cf.* Roland Schütz, 'Johannes der Täufer', *Abh. ThANT* 50 (1967), pp. 44ff., opposing all who look for the origin of baptism in Qumran (E. Wilson, Brownlee, Stauffer, O. Betz, *et al.*).

[4] *Cf.* the preceding volume *Old Covenant*, pp. 000.

[5] Of course, late apocalyptic inherited this near expectation from prophecy (P. Volz, *Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde*, 1934, pp. 135ff.), but unlike prophecy, apocalyptic tends towards the calculation of the exact date, which according to circumstances can be advanced or retared, and which is subordinate to a cosmic law of time ('the fullness of time', 'maturing of time', etc.). In the prophets, and once again in John, 'the one to come' is directly God.

addressed to the present, without looking forward like apocalyptic to the separation of two classes in the coming judgment. By contrast with all contemporary messianic movements, the call of the Baptist is wholly apolitical, purely religious. His ethical requirement—of which Luke seeks to give a sketch[6]—is as simple and to the point as the altruistic requirement of the original law and prophecy: namely, to share with the poor and to practise righteousness in self-denial and the placing of limitations on oneself; this teaching prepares the way and slips over into the ethical requirement of Jesus, who at first seems to do nothing more than repeat what is already known (Mt 7.12; 23.23). John requires faithfulness to God, to the original sense of fidelity to truth, which shows the genuineness of its repentant turning to God in 'bearing fruit' (Mt 3.8), and in renouncing all attempts to find 'security' with God by appealing to the law[7] or to the covenant ('We have Abraham as our father', 3.9). With the weight and authority of the earliest prophecy, John pointed to the stones on the bank of the river: 'But I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham'. And when he continues, 'Even now the axe is laid to the root of the tree', this refers not only to the present rottenness, which will fall and tumble into the fire, but extends even to the living root of the covenant, which is thereby exposed: Abraham does not lie still, but he too is caught up into the movement forwards. In the same way, Jesus will reject the Jews' boasting of being Abraham's children (without his works), and will place himself before Abraham (Jn 8.39f., 56f.). If the Baptist works to prepare for the 'stronger one' who comes after him (Mt 3.11 par.), who 'will clear his threshing floor with his winnowing fork in his hand', then he has 'cleared the way' for him not only as far back as Elijah and Moses, but back to the origins in Abraham. Precisely for this reason, the Fourth Gospel interprets rightly when it has John say, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me' (Jn 1.15, 30). Thus in principle a place has already been opened out beyond Israel—non-Jews too come to the Baptist and are taught by him—just as in the old covenant, God always reserved to himself his own ways with the other peoples. But Israel itself must set out afresh, for since the Exile it has existed no more. The messenger, sent out by God before his face in Malachi (3.1) has also the commission to 'turn again' the hearts of the fathers to the sons, and of the sons to the fathers (4.6); this is taken over by the grandson of Ben Sirach and receives explanation and expansion in the 'restoration of the (twelve) tribes of Jacob' (Sir 48.10). The word 'restoration' (*apokatastasis*) is applied to the Baptist by Jesus himself (Mk 9.12 par.; *cf.* Lk 1.17) before it is applied to Jesus (as his own forerunner for the day of the Parousia) in Peter's sermon (Acts 3.21).

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[6] As 3.18 shows.

[7] The simple requirement of works—the fruit which the tree must bear, so that it may avoid being cut down—joined to interior repentance was nothing other than the expression of the double-sidedness of the covenant (which finds its continuance in the new covenant). However, this could easily be misunderstood by a Pharisee such as Josephus (*Ant.* 18, 5.2) as the requirement of the school of holiness by works (*dikaiosyne/zedaka* towards men, *eusebeia* towards God as the interior purity of the disposition of the mind); this was sufficient; thus Josephus could under-evaluate the baptism, which one did not accomplish but received from the baptist, as mere physical (ritual) purification. *Cf.* Roland Schütz, op. cit. pp. 20–26, against A. Schlatter, *Johannes der Täufer* (ed. W. Michaelis, 1936), pp. 56–65. If the Baptist had preached a degenerate form of the religion of law, his hostility to the insurance-religion of the Pharisees would be incomprehensible. It is here (not in Qumran) that this religion of the Pharisees is first criticised by going back to the original understanding of the covenant, and is thereby put an end to, for the Baptist sets himself like Jesus on the side of the truly penitent 'publicans and harlots' (Mt 21.32). The 'disregarding of God's plan of salvation' by the Pharisees and scribes, who did not wish to be baptised (Lk 7.30), would be just as incomprehensible if John had preached a religion of law; so indeed would be their taxing of the Baptist with being a 'demonic ascetic' (Lk 7.33). The 'penance' or 'conversion' to which the Baptist summons, and to which Jesus likewise is to issue the summons (Mt 3.2 = Mt 4.17b), is the 'work' of the abandoning of all righteousness on the basis of works.

God's word comes upon John in the wilderness. He was of priestly descent, but the name which the angel ordered to be given him indicated that he had been chosen out of all the priesthood of the Old Testament.[8] His dwelling in the wilderness was not like that of the men of Qumran, but was in solitude, ascetical clothing and extreme frugality; nor was his message like that of the political messianic movements which mostly started out from the wilderness, for his message was one of pure salvation history. This permits the origins of Israel in the concept of the wilderness to awaken once more. The wilderness is the place to which God wishes to woo back the apostate Israel, as a bridegroom his beloved, so that he may speak to her heart there (Hos 2.16); but not without 'stripping her naked and making her like a wilderness' (Hos 2.5). The wilderness is the dreadful and glorious state of being handed over to God: the greatest temptation (among demons and wild beasts) and the greatest nuptial intimacy (Jer 2.2). The 'journey through the wilderness'[9] is unavoidable for Jesus, but also for Christians (1 Cor 10.6; Heb 3.8–11), for whom it is the place where God's Word like a two-edged sword pierces to the inmost division of joints and marrow, thoughts and intentions, and lays all open before him (Heb 4.12f.). It is the place where one learns to pray and where one can then teach others to pray (Lk 11.1). It is the place where there are no fixed points, but where only a nomadic existence is permitted upon earth (Lk 3.3), such as the existence which Israel once led under God's guidance, and which Jesus too, driven by the Spirit, will lead once more ('nowhere to lay his head', Mt 8.20).

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[8] From Lk 1.76, it is also possible to hear the echo of a commission that is more than prophetic, *viz.* a high-priestly commission, 'for the high priest reconciles the people with God' (Grundmann, *Lukas*, p. 51).

What John does, humanly considered, is foolhardiness: he exposes himself without reserves to the Word of God. In no sense does he establish a 'monastery in the desert', or 'withdraw from the world'; rather he offers himself as the last step at the bottom of the prophetic 'staircase of obedience',[10] before God's descending foot definitively touches the ground. His appearing under the sign of the 'fasting' that weakens him (Mt 11.18), and of a Nazarite life made specially for him is his contribution that permits him to be filled by the 'Holy Spirit', so that he may bring back the later generation to the way of thinking of the earlier, as 'prophet of the Most High' 'in spirit and might', and 'thus make ready for the Lord a willing people' (Lk 1.16f., 76). He is to be only the 'voice' of the true summoner, but a voice that effects what it declares, and thereby makes those addressed vomit out their sins, so that he may then seize them and lay hands on them and dip them under into the cleansing waters (Mt 3.6), and make them once for all proof against the 'inextinguishable fire' (Mt 3.12) that is drawing near. The symbol of his baptism stands already between the Flood[11] or the Red Sea in which men drowned,[12] and the Christian eschatological sacrament of salvation (1 Pet 3.20f.).

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[9] J. Guillet, 'La marche à travers le désert', in: *Thèmes Bibliques, études sur l'expression et le développement de la Révélation* (Théologie 18), 1951, pp. 9–25. On the theology and spirituality of the wilderness: J. Steinmann, *St. Jean-Baptiste et la spiritualité du désert* (Maîtres spirituels 3, 1955), although he brings John into too close relationship to Qumran.

[10] *Cf.* Vol. III/2,1, pp. 209–275.

But this whole 'restoration' of the original context of the covenant is a step forwards for the one who dares to obey,[13] not only in the act of proclaiming the axe that is laid to the roots and the threatening imminence of the destructive wrath, but more specifically in the 'fore-running' of the proclaimer himself. For this sets the whole structure of the covenant in motion, as he is simultaneously propelled by the one who is forcing and pushing behind him (ὀπίσω μου ἐρχουμενος) into an open emptiness that is like a mirror-image of the later 'following' (ὀπίσω μου ἐλθεῖν, Mk 8.34 par.); for he presses on towards the one who is pushing behind him, and in consequence 'does not know' him (Jn 1.30, 33). Is it God, with his 'refiner's fire' and 'fuller's soap' (Mal 3.1f.)? Or the 'angel of the covenant' (*ibid.*)? Or the 'coming one like a son of man' (Dan 7.13a Theodotion)? Or the one announced in Gen 49.10, a text taken to refer to the Messiah in pre-Christian tradition? Or really a man, to whom one can pose the question, 'Are you "he who is to come", or are we to wait for another?' (Mt 11.3)? The form of the eschatological appearing of God has many undefined outlines, and cannot be pinned down;[14] only the coming, which presses forward from behind, is certain, as is the fact that the one who comes will be 'stronger' (Mt 3.11), which in John's gospel will be clarified theologically: stronger, because earlier in his being, and thereby establishing the preliminary stage of the Baptist (Jn 1.30). God comes 'with might' (Is 40.10), and it is to this driving pressure, which suddenly with the coming of the Baptist makes itself known like the pangs of birth, that the no longer explicable logion of Jesus must in some way refer: we may translate, 'Since the days of John the Baptist the kingdom of God pushes its way through with force' (Mt 11.12). But no one, not even the Baptist, could unite the many faces of the God to come, found in the Old Testament, into one single face: wrath and absolute division are coming, the corn and the chaff will be separated in the wind of God—and yet the commission to make a way for God in the wilderness is a call of salvation, the return home from exile with the God who goes ahead through the wilderness to reach the homeland.

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[11] *Cf.* the fresco of the baptism at Mystra (14th century), where Jesus stands naked in the water between drowned men. 'At the basis of the image of the baptism with which Jesus must be baptised, there lies certainly the Old Testament image of suffering as a flood which buries man in itself'. W. Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu im Johannesevangelium*, 1959, p. 84.

[12] It seems that the baptism of proselytes took this episode as its starting point (*cf.* J. Jeremias, 'Der Ursprung der Johannestaufe', *ZNW* 28, 1929, pp. 312–320). But here we must collect all the texts about sea and abysses (such as Ps 18.5; 69.3, 15; 124.4f.; Jon 2.6) and go back to the original cosmic (mythic)/historical event (*cf.* Vol III/2,1, pp. 69–79), in order to see the full dimension in salvation history. *Cf.* Oepke, *TDNT*, I, p. 538, and on the meaning of *baptizein* (to sink, drown, perish), *ibid.* pp. 529f. Objections to this interpretation in W. G. Kümmel, *Verheissung und Erfüllung*, 2nd edn. 1953, p. 62 (ET *Promise and Fulfilment*, 1957, p. 69).

[13] Impressively grasped by Auguste Rodin in his statue of the Baptist.

The step with which the old covenant goes out beyond itself to what is to come, was clearly bound to lead to total puzzlement: 'Are you he?' The cleanser of the Temple might perhaps have fitted the Baptist's idea, but what of the one who replied to the questions of John's disciples with the image of the Saviour (ἔργα, Mt 11.2: the conduct of Jesus) from Is 35.5f. and 61.1, the same image which Luke uses programmatically for the Saviour right at the beginning (Lk

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[14] *Cf.* J. Dupont, 'L'ambassade de Jean-Baptiste', *NRT* (1961), pp. 805.821, 943–959; on ὁ ἐρχόμενος, pp. 814ff.

4.18f.)? Nevertheless, John's question, as he wrestles with his doubts, presupposes a hidden, infinitely mysterious recognition that cannot be clothed in words, an illumination of certainty that the one pressing on from behind has now reached a position *in front of* the Baptist, that the step of transcendence of the 'restored' old covenant has attained to the transcendent, that the discharge and the handing-over of the keys have objectively taken place. And it is impossible to doubt that this turning-point of the ages happened when Jesus was baptised by John, in the event that again shattered all the Baptist's expectations (even the most open, the most obedient), as the later re-writing in Matthew partly hints: 'I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?' (3.14). The Baptist prepares the people for the Lord, clears the path, and Jesus appears on the scene in the midst of this activity—not as its goal, not even in order to relieve John in the work, but in order to let himself be worked upon. Matthew gives this a place in his scheme of fulfilment ('It is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness'), but in reality, Jesus accepts baptism in solidarity with the repentant sinners, the 'stronger' one who is to come becomes the 'weaker' in his coming, and he who is 'the greatest among those born of women', by being obliged to baptise the obedient God in the abyss of the waters, loses the power of his greatness to him who is the smallest: 'Yet he who is the smallest in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he' (Mt 11.11b)—this 'smallest' one is doubtless Jesus himself.[15]

This event 'at the origins of history' can be described only inadequately in the words and images of history, and only in approximations, but it is attested by the words of the Baptist about the increasing of Jesus and his own decreasing, about his joy as 'the friend of the bridegroom' (Jn 3.27–30), which is perhaps the most original description in John's Gospel of the relationship between the Baptist and Jesus.[16] Then too we have the taking over of a popular legend[17] which said that the Messiah could live unknown to others and to himself among the people, and must be anointed by a prophet (Elijah) and revealed to all: it is in this image that John has clothed the encounter in his first chapter. The one who is unknown to the Baptist and to all others, but present in their midst, is to be revealed to the Baptist personally through the descent of the Spirit—so that he may reveal him to others and bear witness to him. In the Synoptic Gospels, this happens at the baptism of Jesus.[18] Nevertheless, this 'recognition' of the 'one who is to come' leaves room for doubts and questions: and since these are not withheld from the Baptist, but are bestowed on him, we see that he is not left static in his encounter with the one who bears the new covenant, but is caught up into the newness. Jesus' words in Lk 16.16, 'The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached', could leave it uncertain whether John stands before or after the boundary that is drawn: it is improbable that he represents the 'boundary line', as has been said, for it would be better to speak of a 'sliding transition'.[19] But even that is inexact. John is himself the old covenant which transcends itself, and in this act of transcendence discovers the new covenant which already lay hidden in it (*Novum in Vetere latet*), and precisely in the act of giving itself up and disappearing and making room is taken over and given an interpretation by the new covenant (*Vetus in Novo patet*). And all this derives from the fact that the imprisoned and beheaded Baptist is finally (together with all the prophets, Lk 13.33; Mt 23.37) one who 'is handed over' like Jesus: παραδοθῆναι (Mk 1.14; *cf.* Mt 4.12) is the word specially reserved for the passion of Jesus. When Jesus does not rescue the Baptist, but (in the Synoptics) takes his handing-over precisely as the prelude and release for his

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[15] Chrysostom, Hilary, Tertullian, cited in Michel, art. μικρός, *TDNT* IV, p. 656, A27.

[16] Thus M.-E. Boismard, 'Les traditions johanniques concernant le Baptiste', *RB* 70 (1963), pp. 5–42, esp. 30ff.

[17] Attested by Justin, *Dial.* 8.4; 49.1. On the whole theme: Erik Sjöberg, *Der verborgene Menschensohn in den Evangelien* (Lund 1955); on Justin, pp. 80ff., 247ff.

[18] Jn 1.31, 'with water', 1.33, 'with water', 1.33, 'he who baptises with the Holy Spirit'. Bultmann takes these for redactional assimilations to the Synoptic Gospels; Wellhausen, following Blass, takes them for glosses of a copyist, and Boismard, *art. cit.* p. 10, thinks this more probable.

[19] R. Schütz, op. cit. p. 71.

own mission, he orientates himself one final time on him and indeed finds solidarity with him precisely in this fate. When he identifies the Baptist with the Elijah who is awaited for the end time, he does this precisely by pointing to the old prophet's destiny of suffering: 'Elijah does come and he is to restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they pleased' (Mark adds, with reference to Jezebel in 1 Kings 19.2–10, 'as it is written of him'). 'So also the Son of man will suffer at their hands' (Mt 17.11f.). The mediator and prophet who suffers in obedience belongs to the 'restoration' (*apokatastasis*) of the central reality of the covenant from Moses to the exile, and it is precisely in this that the inmost solidarity between the old covenant and the new lies: when Jesus gives himself a place in the series of prophetic destinies, he assumes them all at once, in order to give them a fulfilment that lies beyond them (*cf.* Heb 11 and 12.1–3).

Here one can ask whether Jesus, in coming to John, accepts from him nothing further than the act of baptism (since the 'crying voice' in John is one with his sacramental act), or whether it is not rather the case that he really is affected by this voice and awakened to his own mission. Literally, and as is appropriate to his own nature, he puts into practice a following-after (ὀπίσω ἔρχεσθαι) in relation to the Baptist and to the covenant which he embodies, which is analogous to that which he will later claim for himself from his disciples. If that is so, it would be the Fourth Gospel, which does not know of a direct succession of the two missions, but rather of a time of contemporaneity in a loose relationship, that is nearer to the actual historical occurrence: acceptance by Jesus of baptism and the call to repentance, and acknowledgment by the Baptist of the true newness of the one who bears the Spirit as him who is absolutely devoted, the 'Lamb of God, who bears the sin of the world' (Jn 1.29, 36). And his 'disappearing' (3.30), his bearing witness by pointing away from himself (1.7f., 19f.), recognises precisely the limit of the old covenant, but crosses over this limit, because Jesus too in an abundant manner 'does not bear witness to himself' (5.31) and, as the word that cries out (7.37) is the word that is given up (3.16). In accordance with this, the Baptist directs the disciples who follow him that they should follow the one who comes after him (1.36f.).

It is in this dialectic that results from the succession of the testaments that the subordinate motif of the 'return of Elijah', that appears (in Mark and Matthew) and disappears again (in Luke and John), belongs[20] for this dialectic is concentrated on the perspective of the interplay of two persons. It was a short step from the identification of the forerunner of God in the end times in Mal 3.1 with the (returning) Elijah in the appendix to Malachi (3.23) and the further development of this expectation in Sir 48.10f., to the popular spinning-out of the eschatological return of Elijah[21] and to the attempt to apply this to every messianic figure (*cf.* Mk 9.11),[22] to the Baptist (implicit in the identification of Is 40.3 with Mal 3.1 in the synoptics, clear in Lk 1.17), and to Jesus himself (Mk 8.28). It is not external similarities like that of clothing that bring the name of Elijah into play,[23] but his function as forerunner. When Jesus responds to the hesitating questions by identifying the Baptist and Elijah (Mk 9.12f.; Mt 17.11f.), he does this only in the context of the current expectation of the returning Elijah as the 'restorer' before the in-breaking of the final one. The provocative character of this declaration is expressed in the introductory phrase, 'If you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come' (Mt 11.14), whereby he identifies himself, in a hidden manner but unambiguously, as the one who is to come last of all, with whom the Day of God breaks in. But the challenging statement is harsh and pointed, precisely in the unexpected characterising of this Elijah who has already come as the one who has been given up ('They did to him whatever they pleased'), and in Jesus' setting himself thereby in solidarity with him. The nub lies in these two thoughts; the popular expectation as such has no interest for Jesus, for otherwise he could not have elevated the Baptist over the generality of the prophets to be the universal representative of the old dispensation. Just so, the Baptist himself can have no interest in this identification—he is a voice in the wilderness, nothing else. Thus Luke can omit the motif almost entirely, and indeed quietly corrects it in one place: in Mark and Matthew, the disciples of John are sent to Jesus ask him, 'Are you he?', and he replies with an allusion to the text from Isaiah about the wonders of the end time, but in Luke, the text from Isaiah moves back to become the theme of Jesus' first sermon, in which he refers precisely to the wonders of the period of Elijah and Elisha (Lk 4.25ff.); several of the narratives of Jesus' miracles are related as repetitions and fulfilments that surpass those wonders of old. Here, therefore, the old covenant shows a surplus that is not possessed by the Baptist, who works no wonders, but is laid up for the one who is God's wonder become man. The Baptist accomplishes his role in surrendering himself; over him, Elijah and Moses come to the transfigured Jesus as real symbols, so that for their part too they may be absorbed into the fulfilment.[24]

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[20] J. A. T. Robinson, 'Elijah, John and Jesus: an essay in detection', *NTS* 4 (1957/58), pp. 263–281 (too artificial); G. Richter, 'Bist du Elias?' (Jn 1, 21), in: *BZ* NF 6 (1962), pp. 79–92, 238–256; 7 (1963), pp. 63–80.

[21] *Cf.* the testimony of Justin, n. 17 above.

[22] The Elijah-question to the Baptist is probably introduced redactionally from Synoptic material: Mk 8.28f. has the three eschatological figures, Elijah, the Prophet and the Messiah, while Jn 7.40f. has only two, the Messiah and the Prophet. Thus it is not possible to draw any far-reaching conclusions from the fact that the Baptist denies that he is Elijah.

[23] P. Joüon, 'Le costume d'Elie et celui de Jean-Baptiste', *Biblica* 16 (1935), pp. 74–81; P. Vielhauer, 'Tracht und Speise Johannes des Täufers', in *Aufsätze zum NT* (1965), pp. 47–54.

The drama between John and Jesus is the drama between two persons, who are genuinely free to make decisions, and as such contain each a world in himself, and have responsibility for it. It is not only that they *signify* (perhaps indeed signify something manifold), but first of all, that they are indivisibly themselves, and it is as such that they have significance; precisely in their unique personality, they both transcend themselves—John is the voice, Jesus the word.[25]

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[24] 'After the Logos had touched them, the disciples lifted up their eyes and saw Jesus—him alone, and no one with him any longer. Moses (the law) and Elijah (the prophecy) had become One only. They are One only with Jesus, who is the gospel.' Origen, *In Matthaeum* 12.43 (ed. Klostermann, 155).

[25] Origen, *In Johannem* II, 32 (ed. Preuschen, 89–90), and expanding and deepening him, Augustine, *Sermo* 288.4 (PL 38, 1306–1307), 293.3 (*ibid.* 1328–1329), and frequently.

The field is dominated, first materially and finally in a quite formal manner, by the question about the person—not about What, but about Who. 'Are you he?' the Baptist asks Jesus (Mt 11.3). And in the further development in John's Gospel the Baptist is promised, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he!' (Jn 1.33). Jesus replies by defining himself indirectly on the basis of the Baptist, whom he describes under the cipher of Elijah, i.e. the embodiment of prophecy. Jesus himself must repeatedly face the question, 'Who are you?' (Jn 8.25), and indeed he himself provokes the question (Mk 8.27ff. par.), and it is only he who is covered by the definition of the Baptist, when the 'authorities' seek in vain to entice from him a definition ('Who are you?', Jn 1.19, 22) so that they may tie him down to something limited—he himself escapes from them by referring to the voice which originally (in Isaiah) is only a call from God. Augustine grasps the content of this 'Who' in the double-sidedness of his concept of *persona:* 'someone' and (precisely therein) 'one who plays a role': *Collige tanquam in unum omnes voces quae praecesserunt Verbum et eas omnes constitue in persona Joannis. Harum omnium sacramentum ille gestabat, harum omnium persona sacrata et mystica ille unus erat . . . Ergo omnium vocum persona Joannes, Verbi persona Christus.*[26] Thus he is *interiectus limes*, as *persona vetustatis, praeconium novitatis,*[27] but—consecrated and commissioned in his mother's womb by the incarnate Word—simultaneously a boundary that has been crossed, for he does not foretell what is to come, but 'points to it with his finger'.[28] Luke understood how to include the whole interplay of the encounter of the dispensations in the images of his infancy narratives: the marvellous proceeding of the 'voice' from the priestly father who had become dumb (deprived of prophecy) in his unbelief, the commissioning and imparting of the Spirit for the 'voice' from the 'Word' borne in the womb of Mary, so that he who is to be 'the prophet of the Most High' appears as one personally characterised in a unique way: 'What then will this child be?' (Lk 1.66). Here is symbolic theology in a compression that is almost without analogy.

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[26] [Gather as into one all the voices which went before the Word, and constitute them all in the person of John. He bore the sacramental mystery of them all, he as one man was the sacred and mystical person of all these . . . Therefore, John is the person of all the voices, Christ the person of the Word], Augustine, *Sermo* 288.4–5 (PL 38, 1306–1307).

[27] [A line drawn between a boundary, personifying what is old and announcing what is new], *ibid. Sermo* 293, 2 (col. 1328).

[28] Augustine, *Contra duas ep. Pel. lib.*, 3.11 (PL 44, 595). This central piece of scriptural theology, thought through by Augustine with nothing short of passion, is distorted by gnosis into the doctrine of a syzygy, the joining-together of a good principle and an evil principle, in the Pseudo-Clementines H II (Irmscher, in Schneemelcher, *Ntl. Apokryphen* II, 1964, pp. 381ff.; ET, *NT Apocrypha* II, 1965, pp. 545ff.).

c. Jesus makes his appearance: recapitulation

To the 'appearing' (παραγίνεσθαι) of the Baptist corresponds the 'appearing' of Jesus when he draws near to him; in Mark, Jesus' baptism at the hands of John stands without any preceding history as the event in which the prophecy which has been drawn together and the fulfilment of prophecy paradoxically dovetail into one another. This is immediately followed by the brief narrative of the temptation, in which the abyss of the physical water changes into the spiritual abyss that interprets it, the abyss in which the one who brings fulfilment must be submerged. Matthew and Luke construct each an infancy narrative before this diptych, so that the baptism moves into the central position, as the decisive act of the Creator's designation of the one who fulfils, while the preceding narratives remain in the half-shadow of this act to which they point forward, and the temptation is the first general deduction from the act of designation, with which it stands in close relationship still, before the beginning of Jesus' individual activity (which has its own significant prelude in Lk 4.14–21 and Mt 4.12–16).[1] The whole triptych of the appearing of Jesus is governed by an imperious propulsion of necessity, in which (both in Matthew and in Luke) the direct divine will acting efficaciously, the driving 'Spirit', and human obedience that is driven on, are everywhere to be felt. But this force that propels and drives on is such that it can be understood in all three panels of the triptych as the recapitulation of the salvation history that has come anew in the river Jordan: accordingly, it does not merely assume and effortlessly dismiss what had been carried down to the time of the fulfiller, but rather pushes in the opposite direction, back into what is to be fulfilled, and takes on itself the whole of the 'promise' as far back as the origins, so that it may bring it from beneath and from within (not merely from above, as the Baptist surely expected) to 'fulfilment'.[2] Had Jesus not truly come from beneath (from the depths, from the interior of the *filia Sion*), then he would not truly have come from above. Had he not borne the whole history of Israel (and therein of the world) with God in himself, then he could not have been the final word of the history of God with Israel (and therein with the world). We shall consider this from the starting-point of the event of baptism, and then look first back at the infancy narrative, then forward to the temptation narrative.

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[1] At Mt 3.1; 3.13; hitherto only in the magi (2.2) as the official witnesses of the fact that the principal character has appeared.

1. *Baptism*. When Jesus goes to meet the prophetic *kairos* represented by the Baptist—away from his homeland of Galilee into the homeland of the Baptist in wilderness and Jordan—this is a first act of obedience, not yet properly speaking to his Spirit, which he receives first at the baptism, but certainly to the prophetic 'voice of God' which reaches him from John, the voice which had 'come upon John' and to which he submitted himself (in blind obedience): 'a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins' (Lk 3.3). In accordance with this, 'the whole of Judaea and Jerusalem' confess 'their sins' on the occasion of this baptism. Both, the penitent confession in conversion and the baptism of the forgiveness of sins, are two sides of one coin: the 'path of righteousness' (Mt 21.32) on which one may be set through the Baptist in order to go to meet 'the coming one' who is 'greater', and 'to see God's salvation' (Lk 3.6). The incomprehensible thing, which Matthew throws into relief in his portrayal, the thing that turns upside-down the whole

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[2] Lohmeyer(-Schmauch), *Matthäus* (2nd edn. 1958), p. 49 n. 2. *Cf.* A. Nisin, *Histoire de Jésus* (1960), pp. 129–138.

temporal and material order of preparation of the path and coming of the Lord, is the baptism of Jesus: the Baptist himself parries Jesus' request,[3] in consciousness of his own repentance—'I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?' The reply explains—in genuinely Matthaean colouring (*cf.* 5.17f.)—that fulfilment signifies not a rupture, but the fulfilment of all God's ways ('Let it be so, for so it is fitting for us (both) to fulfil all righteousness'). When the Baptist responds by 'letting it happen' (ἀφίησιν αὐτόν), the obedience is converted and becomes directly 'Marian' (Lk 1.38), and the new obedience expresses its form in the old: the 'increasing' of the redeemer to the point of his becoming one with all who confess their sins forces the one who declares the promise to 'decrease' (Jn 3.30) into this inimitable vanishing. Jesus' descent into the river is at one and the same time solidarity with all who confess their guilt and dive into the waters of judgment and salvation, and—as solidarity—obedience to the voice of God which sounds forth from the prophet's voice, and thus obedience incarnated in history. Jesus' initiative attains immediately to its fulfilment, for he 'rises up' out of the waters, and his act of 'coming up from beneath' is answered by the 'coming down from above' of the 'Spirit (of God)': here we see that incarnation is the encounter, to the point of identification, of the Israel who has been made ready and the God of the covenant who descends to Israel. But this event is contained in the interpretation given at the close by the 'voice from heaven': 'You are' (Mark), or as the Baptist too hears it then, 'This is my beloved Son' (Matthew and Luke). This is not to be given an adoptionist explanation,[4] nor a trinitarian explanation in the sense of dogmatic theology, but rather a soteriological explanation, for it is an allusion to the 'beloved',

[3] *Euthus*, Mk 1.10; Mt 3.16.

[4] As the variant at Lk 3.22, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you' (= Ps 2.7), could suggest. If this text refers at Heb 1.5 and 5.5 to the messianic high priest, yet it is precisely he who is essentially one who suffers, so that the psalm text too embraces the text from Isaiah cited by Mk and Mt. O. Cullmann, *Christologie* (1957), p. 65f.; criticism in A. Vögtle, 'Exeg. Erwägungen über das Wissen und Selbstbewußtsein Jesu', in: *Gott in Welt* (Rahner Festschrift) I, 1964, pp. 630f.

'my chosen servant' (Is 42.1), specifically to the Servant of Yahweh who was the concluding image of the old salvation history, and was to become the ransomer of the people as the obedient one, humbled vicariously and therefore raised on high.[5] The dove and the abyss that is to be given life (Gen 1.2), and the dove and the Flood (with the branch of hope, Gen 8.11), are designedly related to each other:[6] in its descent the Spirit makes for Jesus, for whom it is intended in a unique way (Mark: εἰς, without being identical with him (Luke and Matthew: ἐπ' αὐτόν; John adds the clarification of a 'remaining over him' in suspension). From the heavenly voice, we learn that the relationship that comes to be is the designation and installation of the chosen one, as well as his abiding inspiration:[7] the fullness of the Spirit, without limits, distinct from the partial measure of the Spirit given to the prophets,[8] 'for he whom God has sent utters the ῥήματα (deeds-words) of God, for it is not by measure that (God) gives (him) the Spirit' (Jn 3.34). It is precisely as the one who is subjected to the baptism of John that he becomes in his actions the one who baptises in the Holy Spirit (Mk 1.8 par.), and the one who dispenses 'spirit and life' when he speaks (Jn 6.63). He has no need in this himself to baptise (Jn 4.2); if his disciples carry the baptism of John further by baptising too, then this is his name (Jn 3.22, 26; 4.1),[9] i.e. they baptise into the new reality of Jesus that subsumes the prophetic reality of the Old Testament. When the 'baptism in fire' is added to its characterisation by Matthew and Luke as 'baptism in the Spirit', then this may well have referred on John's lips to the Old Testament Day of wrath (Lk 3.16–17, Mt 3.11–12); but for Jesus himself, baptised in the Spirit, it points forward to the end of his own mission: he will be the baptiser in fire, as the one who is baptised in the eschatological fire of God (Lk 12.49–50). Here the mission constituted at the baptism by John is proclaimed: to be burnt as a holocaust in the fire of God's wrath, as the 'Lamb of God' (Jn 1.29, 36: an allusion to the Servant of Yahweh, Is 53.7), coming from the judgment by water and striding towards the judgment by fire (2 Pet 3.6f.). The Baptist's urgent expectation—'Behold, the Day comes, burning like an oven!' (Mal 3.19)—is overtaken by the yet greater urgency which has taken this Day up into the existence of the one delegated. But in our context, the accent lies on the designation at the baptism as an overtaking and recapitulation of the whole proclamation of judgment by the prophets and by the 'law' earlier (Lev 26; Deut 27–28), and thus of the whole situation of God as partner in the covenant.

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[5] On the question whether the divine voice originally said *pais* (Is 42, 1 LXX: servant, but also son) rather than *huios*, *cf.* J. Jeremias, art. *pais Theou*, *TDNT* V, pp. 698ff., bibliography *ibid.* p. 654.—Undoubtedly, the Danielic image of the son of man followed in the steps of the image of the servant of Yahweh; by himself, this Messiah who purely descended from above, judged and conquered could represent (with the theology of hypostases) still but *one* side of the synthesis that had to be attained.

[6] On other forms of the symbolism: W. Bauer, *WNT* (5th edn. 1958), pp. 1292f. Arndt-Gingrich, p. 657; Greeven, *TDNT* VI, pp. 63–72.

[7] *Cf.* the (Horus) sparrow-hawk behind the heads of the Pharaohs to give inspiration.

[8] Billerbeck on Jn 3.34 (II p. 431).

[9] The baptism of John, as parabolic synthesis of the whole reality of the old covenant, finds its goal so unequivocally in Jesus that when his disciples continue the old sign, they can intend as its content objectively only *Jesus*. In himself he is 'sacrament' enough, the unity of 'water and Spirit' (Jn 3.5)

2. *Infancy.* Reflexion shows the addition of the infancy narrative was necessary if the event of the baptism was to have nothing of chance about it, nothing of the character of a late addition (and thus of adoptionism). If what the later formulation in John calls the incarnation of the Word is to take place, then it must have taken place in the event of conception and birth. Things now converge that formerly seemed to exclude each other: birth through God and birth from the people, which is summarised and represented in the real symbol of the *virgo filia Sion*; the encounter of Baptist and Son must be moved forward to the encounter of her who is mother (through God the Spirit) and the child. This

with his gaze directed on 'blood' (Jn 19.34) with an unwavering directness that is based in his mission, so that for the future the three form inseparably '*one* witness' (1 Jn 5.8). In the last analysis it is he, and he alone, who administers baptism in the New Testament (Eph 5.26), it is he who in the church's baptism introduces those purified into his event of the end times (Rom 6.3ff.).

genuinely human ('physical') moving forward in time *must* contain spiritually the whole paradoxical recapitulation in itself; it *can* also draw into this prelude the later encounter of the Baptist and Jesus, and this is what the subtle composition of Luke has achieved, with complete mastery.

Whatever the problems in points of detail may be, the two genealogical tables have the clear intention of establishing Jesus as a true man in his descent from David and Abraham and the promises made to them. Both paths lead, not to Mary (who as a kinswoman of Elizabeth belongs in some way to the descent of Aaron), but first to Joseph, who is of Davidic descent and in accordance with the Biblical perspective counts as the legal father on grounds of the law, not on grounds of physical generation. The family tree is essential as an expression of the recapitulation of Israel, but it gives us only an external connection, however strongly the stylised play of the numbers points to Jesus as the end-point. The inner links are demonstrated by Luke and Matthew, each in his own way.

Luke writes his description of the infancy, which in its kernel doubtless goes back to historical reminiscences long meditated upon (1.66; 2.19, 51) with the stylistic device of allusions which transpose and thereby actualise decisive scenes and utterances in the Old Testament;[10] in this, the old text wholly becomes native soil on which the new event grows, and in which it sends down deep roots. But the soil shows its significance in what grows upon it: this fruit was intended from the outset to grow in this soil, to draw its strength and sweetness from it, and yet to owe the strength and sweetness to itself, not to the soil. Thus the entire manner of presentation takes on the character of being fully in suspense between promise and fulfilment, like a bud which will display its form only when it opens (in the commissioning at the baptism), something that pre-exists almost like a dream, which as a whole is in motion, in which 'already' and 'not yet' are bound into one another and cannot be distinguished. The later relationship of the Baptist and Jesus is anticipated

[10] On what follows, *cf.* above all René Laurentin, *Structure et Théologie de Luc I–II* (1957).

first of all in the two narratives of miraculous annunciations, in which the one that comes later in time surpasses the earlier (which is orientated towards it): first the barren woman bears the child of an aged husband, through the mighty act of God (the situation of Abraham and Sarah, and of the parents of Samson and Samuel), and then the virgin gives birth, not to the child of any man, but directly through the power of God's Spirit. Before the two births are narrated, Luke weaves the events together in the scene of the visitation: through Mary, Elizabeth and her child are filled with the spirit of prophecy, and this picture anticipates the declaration, 'After me comes the one who was before me' (Jn 1.15, 30).

The identity of Mary is clear, if the angel's address to her is composed on the basis of Zeph 3.15ff. (and the texts related to this: Joel 2.21ff., Zech 2.14, 9.9f.): the daughter of Zion is to rejoice, the daughter of Jerusalem is not to fear; Yahweh will be 'in her womb' as 'king', as 'redeemer', whereby doubtless the new realisation of God's presence in the Temple of Zion was intended. 'The daughter of Zion, an abstract personification of Israel, is actualised in the person of Mary, who receives the messianic promise in the name of the people. The dwelling of Yahweh in the daughter of Zion is actualised in the mystery of the virginal conception.'[11] Is 7–11 helps to describe the giving of the child's name, his messianic commissioning, and the descent of the Spirit; Ex 40.35 provides the important word 'overshadowing', there used of the cloud of glory (*kabod*), which makes Mary as the embodied daughter of Zion also the living ark of the covenant, in which the eschatological glory of God definitively comes to dwell. The fact that it is Gabriel who undertakes both acts of annunciation points our thoughts directly back to Daniel (8.16; 9.21f.) and to his great prophecy of the seventy weeks: and as it turns out, the number of the days from the annunciation to Zechariah until the day of the entry of the 'glory of Israel' into the Temple (Lk 2.32) is indeed exactly four hundred and ninety days, or seventy weeks of seven days.[12] The scene of the visitation is formed on the basis of 2 Sam 6.2–11: the leaping of the child corresponds to the leaping dance of King David, the three months' dwelling of the 'Ark' in the house of Obededom corresponds to the three months' dwelling of Mary in the house of her cousin; Elizabeth's cry of wonder is composed in imitation of David's cry of wonder, and her greeting of Mary echoes the greeting of Judith after her victory (Lk 1.42=Judith 13.18f.). The birth is narrated using the material of the two prophecies of Micah, woven into each other (chs. 4 and 5): Bethlehem in Juda, the time of birth for the daughter of Zion, the place of birth outside the city in the fields (4.10), the motif of the shepherds, of the heavenly glory and of peace.[13] For the scene of the presentation in the Temple, apart from the motif of *kabod* and of the redeemer, Is 8.14 and Ez 14.17 are used: the stone of stumbling and the piercing sword that makes Mary, pierced through and divided, once again the real symbol of Israel. Her Magnificat shows how much she stands as the embodiment of the entire people in its believing and hoping 'remnant', for in its vocabulary and concepts it does not go beyond the late spirituality of the 'poor of Yahweh',[14] while in its first, more personal part (Lk 1.46–50) it lets the voice of the personified Israel be heard (the 'humble handmaid', on whose 'lowliness' God has 'looked with favour', is in accordance with tradition the daughter of Zion in her most genuine position), and characterises Israel's God through the unity of power, holiness and reliable mercy towards those who reverently venerate him.[15] The second part of the Magnificat four times describes the basic principle of the working of God's power: the 'overturning of the relationships of power' and the 'relationships of possession',[16] to which the (renewed) acceptance of the servant (Is 41.8ff.) Israel belongs. Finally, the Magnificat gathers all together into the original prophecy to Abraham, in whose person the whole

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[11] *Ibid.* p. 67.

[12] E. Burrows, *The Gospel of the Infancy* (1940), pp. 41ff., taken over and

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expanded by Laurentin, pp. 48ff.: 'Une réalisation en miniature', p. 53.

[13] Established for each individual case in Laurentin, pp. 86ff.

[14] III, 2, 1, pp. 293–97.

[15] *Ibid.* pp. 133–37.

[16] E. Klostermann, *Das Lukas-Evangelium* (2nd edn. 1929), *ad loc.*

of society was united at the beginning, as in the end times it is united once again in Mary. Thus the Magnificat is the expression of the summary of Israel's history (in the purest speech of the piety of the Anawim), as its fulfilment breaks in, in the impulse of the transcendence which God alone can introduce to elevate its whole meaning. In Mary, the faith of the covenant partner finds its embodiment (Lk 1.45; 8.15; 11.27ff.), with its pure hope set on God, for therein is only 'poverty' and 'lowliness', so that this faith is also pure obedience to God's word of instruction: all of this means that the ideal position of Israel can become through God the presupposition for the coming of the Messiah. This is a satisfactory theological explanation for the motif of Mary's virginity: there is no need to refer back to the Hellenistic milieu in which motifs of divine mythology were current, for the virginity of Mary is explicable as the 'eschatological surpassing' of the Old Testament motif of the 'barren woman' who gives birth through God;[17] Israel's hopeful faith and obedience must entirely (in physical form) become concrete and personal, when it is a matter of the realisation of the promise of God, his dwelling with soul and body in the daughter of Zion. Dibelius and those who have repeated his words argue that the unity of Old Testament 'marriage' (with Joseph) and the virginity which is theologically required is historically impossible, and that this must be separated into the narrative of the 'son of the virgin' (without reference to Joseph, 1.27) and the narrative of the 'child in the manger' (born of a normal marriage): but this argument misses the point, that the son of the virgin can inherit the 'throne of his father David' only if he 'is reckoned as the son of Joseph' from a legal point of view (Lk 3.23). Besides, this argument does not recognise the remarkable suspension of the whole of Luke's infancy narrative, for which the disinterested openness of Mary to let herself be used as a handmaiden (either for the old covenant, or for the new) is characteristic. In this twilight, she can be simultaneously the one who considers prudently (1.29), the one who investigates the events and checks them (συμβάλλειν) in her heart (2.19, 51), *and* the one who is tried too far and does not understand (2.50); later too, she must play this double role, as the one who is sometimes paired with the unbelieving relations and is not received by her son, and sometimes praised as *the* believer, the one who stands by him at the cross. But the final mystery goes yet deeper than this. As the real symbol of the daughter of Zion, summarising and surpassing the daughter of Zion in the old covenant, she stands beside the Baptist who is the real symbol that surpasses the prophecy of the old covenant, and indeed the whole of salvation history—and, as mother of the one who comes definitively, it is she who must give the Spirit to the mother of the forerunner, and thus to John himself.

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[17] Thus H. v. Campenhausen, 'Die Jungfrauengeburt in der Theologie der alten Kirche,' *Heid. Ak. Wiss.* (1962), certainly correctly. We may leave here undecided the question whether the LXX was moved to render the '*alma* of Isaiah by *parthenos* through a mythical (Egyptian-hellenistic) schema, or whether this came about through the theological consideration that only an Israel that was untouched and utterly placed at the disposal of God (as the husband of the covenant)—unlike the Israel of Is 1.21, etc.—would be worthy and capable of bearing the Messiah. In the final point, Mary, it is not the allusion to Is 7.14 that is decisive, but the total 'incarnation of faith' in the presence of the Incarnation of the divine Word.

But how does she stand in relation to her son, who as Messiah is the fruit bestowed on her, while she as Zion has significance only for him and through him? The theology of Luke's chapters, full of hints and symbols, with its midrashic character, and its suggestiveness for later typology,[18] is supple enough to leave room for that 'circle' which later dogmatic theology has sought to master by means of the unavoidable concept of the 'prior redemption of Mary': the not merely approximate, but absolutely adequate correspondence of the faith of Mary/Zion, as this was required for the adequate incarnation of the Word of God (since this word stands in relationship to Zion as the physically and spiritually conceived child in relationship to the mother who gives to him likewise physically and spiritually), is thinkable only on the basis of a purity bestowed on Mary, a purity which owes its origin to the source of all purification, which is to flow down from the Cross. If this is correct, then Zion/Mary is already in anticipation the pure essence of the Church that is to come, which is produced from Christ's body and Spirit and is one body and one spirit with him, in the fulfilment of the posture of the faith of the Old Testament, of its hope and its perseverance in poverty, obedience and joy—just as she characterises the people of God that is centred upon Christ, the people of the entire *Civitas Dei* (of Old and New Testaments). The visionary of the Apocalypse saw this threefold nature of Zion/Mary/Church in the oneness of a single form,[19] and expressed besides this the unity between the woman and the ark of the covenant (Rev 11.19–12.1) and between the woman and the holy city (21.9ff.). He saw also in the twenty-four elders the diptych of 2 × 12.

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[18] 'Nous sommes ici aux sources de la typologie' [We are here at the sources of the typology], Laurentin, op. cit. p. 53. 'Un des cas, où la réflexion midrashique . . . donne naissance à la typologie' [one of the cases where the midrashic reflection . . . gives birth to typology], p. 151; cf. pp. 93–94.

This whole theology in the transition from the old covenant of promise to the new covenant of fulfilment is written as a midrash, in the sense of *mashal*, 'in the double sense of comparison (bringing different prophetic texts into relationship with each other) and puzzle (a concealed thought presented to the wise for discovery and meditation)',[20] and this in such a way that 'the theology contained in it' remains 'inseparable from the form in which it is embedded'.[21] For it is one of its special charms that it portrays in the language of images, in a gentle suspension between the Old Testament 'spirituality of the poor' and the later New Testament spirituality of the carrying of the cross behind Jesus, the most tender, childlike way of thinking of the Son; we see the gentleness here, where the meekness (πραΰτης of the gospel is poured out over the whole, even over the punishment of Zechariah and over the words of the twelve-year-old Jesus to his parents, in a manner that is without parallel; it is this way of thinking that the Church will synthesise in the 'evangelical counsels'. Here it is 'incarnated' and lived before our eyes;

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[19] A. Kassing, *Das Verhältnis von Kirche und Maria im 12. Kapitel der Apokalypse*, Dissertation, Louvain 1957 (typewritten).

[20] Laurentin, op. cit. p. 117.

[21] *Ibid.* p. 119.

before the child is able to speak and act, this way of thinking has come with him to the world. The pericope of the annunciation lies under the sign of virginity, the pericope of the birth—whatever objections one may bring—under the sign of poverty, and the pericope of the circumcision and presentation in the Temple lies under the sign of obedience (for 'the law of Moses' and 'the law of God' continuously shade over into each other). Naturally, the three aspects together permeate the whole: Mary's obedience (in sharp contrast to the disobedience of Zechariah, which it surpasses) begins with her *fiat*, echoes through the Magnificat, and characterises the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem; her poverty is declared in the offering of the poor, the 'two doves', but is already present in the lowliness of the handmaiden and in the undistinguished town of Nazareth—Luke further develops the theme of poverty (5.11, 28; 6.20; 7.22; 9.3; 16.20ff.; 18.22; 21.3). Above all, it is the obedience which is emphasised: it bows to the edict of the all-powerful *Soter* and prince of peace Augustus, whose kingdom, excessively highly praised and destined never to be surpassed by any later kingdom,[22] signified the beginning of a new life.[23] Luke has placed the names of the emperor and his representative Quirinius in his history with a deliberate intention: over against the kingdom of power which collects the tax, stands the kingdom of powerlessness which obeys and pays the tax.[24] In the appendix to the infancy narrative,[25] which breaks its symmetry and makes the transition to the adult life of Jesus, in the episode of the twelve-year-old, the obedience is already explicitly christological: 'my Father' (God) is set in hard contrast to 'your father and I', so roughly that the earthly parents 'do not understand' that the once dreamlike light of the *kabod* that shone over the infancy narrative (from the angels who appeared to the shepherds surrounded in glory, to the Gloria of the heavenly hosts, to the 'glory of your people Israel' in the song of Simeon) is suddenly quenched, so that it may make room for the wholly real presence of the *kabod*, of the 'weight' of God. Already the sword of the Word cuts through the soul of Zion/Mary; already, through Jesus' own obedience, it divides in two, just as later, through his summons to follow him, it divides the Ekklesia into two 'classes' that are incomprehensible for themselves (the worldly class in the family, 2.39–40, 51–52; and the class of God in the Temple, 2.45–49), without any previous explanation, as a *fait accompli* that makes visible the cruciform structure of his Church.

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[22] 'The epiphany of the emperor has fulfilled the hopes and prayers of the preceding time, and surpassed them. For not only has he put into the shadow all bringers of blessings who preceded him, but he has also taken away from those yet to come all prospect of doing more than he has done' (from the senatorial resolution to transfer the autumn equinox to the birthday of the emperor, moved by the governor Paulus Fabius Maximus, quoted following E. Stauffer, *Jerusalem und Rom*, 1957, p. 29).

[23] Proposition of the governor (*ibid.* p. 30), with which should be compared the 4th *Eclogue* of Vergil and *Aeneid* VI 791f.

[24] E. Stauffer, 'Die Geschichte vom Zinsgroschen', in *Christus und die Caesaren* (1952), pp. 121–149.

[25] Here the influence of the haggadic description of Samuel's childhood on Luke becomes visible: according to Josephus (*Ant.* V 10.3), Samuel begins to prophesy at the age of twelve, and according to a rabbinic tradition of the third century he is threatened with death because of a

Even more strongly than the Lucan infancy narrative, the infancy narrative of Matthew clothes itself[26] in the images of the haggadic narratives of the childhood and persecution of Old Testament heroes. This means, theologically speaking, the Matthew seeks more deliberately to portray the fate of Jesus as the recapitulation of the preceding salvation history in the persons of its great representatives. An historical kernel

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disputation over questions of the law with his teacher. On the other hand, there are numerous parallels in the narrative of Zechariah especially with the haggadic infancy narratives of Isaac (annunciation of the son, of his name, of his mission, of the visitation by God) and of Samson (voluntary silence of the mother, because she has not believed the angel who announced it), to name only the most important. On questions of detail, P. Winter, 'The Proto-source of Luke', *Nov. T.* 1 (1956), pp. 186–199. On Lk 2.48–50, *cf.* the large monograph of R. Laurentin, *Jésus au Temple*, Et. Bibl. 1966.

[26] On the accusation on the part of Judaism that the Gospels have changed the original logia of the Lord into a narrative of the childhood and life of Jesus, *cf.* Shlomo Pines, *The Jewish-Christians in the Early Centuries of Christianity according to a new source* (Jerusalem 1966); review by Daniélou in *RSR* 55 (1967), pp. 96–99.

(as this is presupposed for every haggadic amplification) can be discerned on the basis of the things held in common with Luke—Davidic descent, birth in Bethlehem, virginal birth, the giving of the name in advance by the angel, his youth spent in Nazareth, allusions to Mic 5 and (this is to be supposed in Luke) to Is 7.14. For the rest, Matthew goes his own way, a way that is above all characterised by the manner in which the four last episodes of his five form an indivisible whole: the star sets in motion the king's will to destroy, and this will sets in motion the flight to Egypt, the murder of the children, and the return to the Holy Land.

The narrative, which is offered as an explanatory appendix to the genealogy,[27] of Joseph's suspicion, his enlightenment, and his consequent taking of his betrothed Mary into his house stands by itself. The motif of suspicion may also be a haggadix interpretation,[28] but the principal concern of the narrator is to establish the Davidic descent through Joseph's taking to his home his wife who has conceived through the Holy Spirit. In the midpoint of the second chapter, we have the narratives concerning the child Moses and concerning the flight to Egypt of Jacob-Israel when he was pursued by

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[27] As has been clearly demonstrated by A. Vögtle, 'Die Genealogie Mt 1, 2–16 und die matthäische Kindheitsgeschichte', *BZ* NF 8 (1964), pp. 45–58, 239–262, 9 (1965), pp. 32–48.

[28] In Slavonic Enoch 23 (ed. Vaillant, 1952), there is the suspicion of the priest Nir (brother of Noah and second son of Lamech), who finds his wife pregnant and wishes to send her away; she dies, but the child is born miraculously, and in a dream the priest is told that the child will be 'my priest of all priests, for ever: Melchizedek'. Nir praises the Lord, 'because your word has created a high priest in . . . my wife'. A new discovery in Qumran suggests that the legend could be pre-Christian: A. S. van der Woude, 'Melchisedek als himmlische Erlösungsgestalt in den neugefundenen eschatologischen Midrashim in der Qumran-Höhle XI', *Oudtest. Studien* 14 (1965), pp. 354–373. It is possible that the idea that God is not only active together with human beings in the conception (through a man) of the great figures of salvation, but also 'models' the child in the mother's womb (e.g., Ps.-Philo, *Lib. Ant. Bib.* 23.7, *plasmavi eum in matre eius* [I have moulded him in his mother]), and indeed in some circumstances makes the child through his word (quite apart from the frequent theme of the conception through good or evil angels), can have been at home on Palestinian soil. *Cf.* C. Perrot, 'Les récits d'enfance dans la Haggada', *RSR* 55 (1967), pp. 481–518, esp. 491f.

Laban.[29] The starting-point of all this is, of course, the mysterious star, which is attested only very scantily in the haggada,[30] but in the Gospel sets at the beginning the strong universalist accent with which it will close, an accent that includes adoration (2.11 = 28.9,17). From now on, Jesus in the fate he lives is first of all the new Moses, as the lively preaching in the synagogue of that period portrayed him. The characteristics overlap: the annunciation of the one who sets free, the announcing of his birth to Pharaoh/Herod, the assembling of all the astrologers to interpret the dream, as a result of which Pharaoh orders that all male children be drowned; Moses' father receives in a dream the annunciation of the son who is to be born without birth-pangs, and he lays the child in the basket among the reeds, entrusting him to providence—Pharaoh's childless daughter goes to bathe because of a dream, finds the child, and has it 'instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians' (as Stephen's speech puts it, Acts 7.22). But Jesus is not only the new Moses: pushing further back into the origins of the covenant, he is to be the new Israel too. As so many of those who have been given great missions received an image of their later experiences in childhood persecution, so Jesus is persecuted, and he is led by providence to Egypt, with the promise that this same providence will lead him back from there into the land of the fathers.[31] 'In the fate of the messianic child, the saving flight of the "Israel" that included in itself the people of God to Egypt, and the Exodus experience of Israel, are repeated.'[32] It is indeed important that Matthew sets on all five episodes the seal of a quotation from the written Bible, but taken together, the quotations stand for the entirety of salvation history, which for Matthew is no less embodied in the oral tradition (interpreted in preaching and haggada).[33] Many traits of the Matthaean infancy narrative point foward to the special destiny of the one who is to be sent later—e.g., it is characteristic that 'all Jerusalem' is confused (instead of rejoicing) at the announcement of the birth of the Messiah, so that his rejection by the people is already portrayed; but only a small quantity of material points to the absolute transcendence of Jesus over against the salvation history that is recapitulated by him.[34] In Matthew, this becomes clear only in the last panel of the preparatory triptych.

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[29] D. Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (1956), pp. 190f. The midrashic text reads, 'What did Laban want to do to our father Jacob? Pharaoh ordered only the killing of the males, but Laban sought to destroy the whole race, as it is written, "The Aramaean sought to destroy my father, and he went down to Egypt . . . driven by the Word of God"' (Deut 26.5: the text quoted here arises from a slight alteration of the text, and gives a substantially more plausible meaning than the usual beginning of the famous 'creed', 'A wandering Aramaean was my father . . .').

[30] In late infancy narratives of Abraham, where the 'wise men and magi of King Nimrod' (who will persecute the child) see the great star on the night of his birth, and at once interpret it as a sign of the birth of the one who 'is to kill all the kings of the earth and inherit their kingdom'. Perrot, art. cit. p. 486; M. Bourke, 'The literary genus of Matthew 1–2', *CBQ* 22 (1960), pp. 160–175.

[31] It is characteristic that Matthew needs two signs in dreams for the return home: the first, as fulfilment of the explicit instruction to Moses at

3. *Temptation.* The profound immersion at the Baptism into salvation history, which was itself actually moving towards this point, is, with the narrative of the childhood of Jesus, an

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Ex 4.19–20, leads (like Israel's wilderness journey) only as far as the 'land of Israel' (Mt 2.20), and a second explicit instruction is necessary, to lead the holy family to the designated place Nazareth (2.22) which henceforth is to be the historical dwelling place of Jesus.

[32] Vögtle, art. cit. (n. 27 above), p. 255.

[33] On the theological understanding of the Midrash, *cf.* especially the fundamental works of Renée Bloch, 'Moïse dans la tradition rabbinique', in *Moïse, l'homme de l'alliance* (1954); *idem*, art. *Midrash* in *DBS* 5 (1955), 1263–1283, with bibliography, and articles in the *Cahiers Sioniens* (1954, 1955). A. G. Wright, 'The literary genus Midrash', *CBQ* 28 (1966), pp. 105–138, 417–457. The fact that the narrative of Cyrus' youth as related by Herodotus (I 104ff.) has so many points of comparison with the Midrashim, makes its influence probable, all the more so as Cyrus was the 'anointed of the Lord' for Deutero-Isaiah (ch. 45).

[34] Considering the clear haggadic parallels, we should avoid bringing the murder of the children at Bethlehem too closely into relationship with the vicarious suffering of the Messiah—as itself the vicarious anticipation of the Cross, and simultaneously making the Cross necessary. Only from the theological reflection on the uniqueness of the suffering of the Cross, does such a relationship receive a meaning and an ecclesiological significance.

allusive[35] recapitulation of the chief stages of this salvation history. Thus the episode of the temptation, which immediately follows the baptism, becomes an interior act of assuming the situation of Israel in the covenant with God; for at the baptism, Jesus is both endowed with the Spirit that commissions him, and designated as the chosen one of the eschatological age (the tempter too addresses him as 'the Son of God', at Mt 4.3). Accordingly, it is fitting, in the deepest sense of the word (πρέπον ἐστίν, Mt 3.15), that the symbolic-sacramental immersion is 'immediately' (Mk 1.12) followed by the spiritual-existential immersion; it is the Spirit who has just been received, who 'drives' Jesus 'out into the wilderness', 'and he was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him' (Mk 1.13). His being in the wilderness[36] corresponds above all to the original situation of Israel, alone with God (a place and situation, in which John has previously lived): this is a nearness to God in prayer, but equally a perilousness, an easiness of temptation that lies in this terrible proximity—an inescapable exposure to the absoluteness of grace, and thus to the requirement of God. It is here above all that the gospel relates πράγματα πεπληροφορήμενα (Lk 1.1), events that were attempted, bungled, abandoned when half-accomplished by Israel, but now are endured, experienced to the finish, and thereby brought to their accomplishment, in a unique act of assuming them and recapitulating them. The scene still belongs to the prelude: it is not an isolated act of Jesus, but the shouldering of a concrete situation.[37] The forty days are a repetition of the forty years of Israel in the wilderness, the forty 'days and nights' (this is made explicit at Mt 4.2) that Moses spends fasting before God (Ex 34.28), and the forty days that Elijah spends alone, nourished only by God, as he makes his way to Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19.8).[38] Jesus too fasts; he does not wish to live from bread, but from the Word of God alone;[39] according to Mark and Luke, the temptation lasts existentially throughout the whole period of fasting, while according to Matthew, the temptation is set at the close, that is to say, at the point of Jesus' greatest weakness. In early texts, but occasionally even in quite late texts,[40] it is God himself who appears as the tempter, i.e. as the one who puts all the righteous most seriously to the test, for he can come to know their hearts only through this experience of being exposed.[41] Pious men who are sure of their purity wish and yearn for such a putting to the proof by God (Ps 139.23), but

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[35] The hint suffices; there is nowhere a systematisation in the modern sense, and hence a typology as mechanical as that of H. Sahlin (*Zur Typologie des Johannes-Evangeliums*, Uppsala and Leipzig 1950) can be constructed only by forcing the texts. It is equally difficult to demonstrate that the three temptations of Jesus in the wilderness are reflected in John's gospel, without being mechanical in the handling of the text (H. Preisker, 'Zum Charakter des Johannesevangeliums', in *Festschrift G. Wobbermin*, pp. 379–384).

[36] On the theology of the wilderness: S. Nyström, *Beduinentum und Jahwismus* (1946); A. Haldar, *The Notion of the Desert in Sumero-Accadian and West-Semitic Religions* (1950); R. W. Funk, 'The Wilderness', *JBL* 78 (1959), pp. 205–214; W. Schmauch, 'In der Wüste', *In memoriam E. Lohmeyer* (1951), pp. 202–223.

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[37] On the history of the individual interpretations, *cf.* especially E. Fascher, *Jesus und der Satan*, Hallische Monographien 11 (1940); R. Schnackenburg, 'Der Sinn der Versuchung Jesu bei den Synoptikern', *ThQ* 132 (1952), pp. 297–326. On baptism and temptation as the recapitulation of Israel, *cf.* N. A. Dahl, *Das Volk Gottes* (1941), p. 166.

[38] The number occurs in the apocrypha also: *Vita Adae* 6; *Apoc. Abr.* 12.1.

[39] The temptation narrative functions 'in Lk like a detailed illustration of a struggle of Jesus with his foe, a struggle that for the rest is hidden, but constant. This is first underlined in the closing statement that now the devil had finished *every* temptation—not only the three that have been related in detail, then, but also the preceding temptations that were only briefly mentioned. But this is not the end of the persecutions by this persistent enemy: he leaves Jesus only *for a period*', Schnackenburg, art. cit. p. 323.

[40] 'God left him (Hezekiah) to himself, in order to try him and to know all that was in his heart', 2 Chr 32.31. Jas 1.13 is an explicit rejection of a possible misuse of this idea, but still in such a way that James (1.2f., like 1 Pet 1.6) understands the temptation to come as an occasion for joy (since the temptation is God's act of taking us seriously). This idea should not disturb Christians, precisely because of Christ himself (1 Pet 4.12f.).

[41] Perhaps also originally in the Book of Job, where Satan appears for the first time as a mediating figure who assumes the role of tempter: G. Fohrer, 'Überlieferung und Wandlung der Hiobslegende', in *Festschrift F. Baumgärtel* (1959), pp. 41–62. On the whole question: art. πεῖρα etc., *ThW* VI (Seesemann), art. *examinatio*, *Dict. Spir.* IV (1961), 1849–1866 (Hasso Jaeger).

Jesus, who knows the depths of this experience, bids his disciples pray, 'Lead us not into temptation'.[42]

With J. Dupont,[43] one may attempt to understand the three temptations of Jesus as the formal recapitulation of Israel's three trials in the wilderness, to which allusion is made by the quotations from Deuteronomy. The first (stones to bread) would be a reference to the episode of the manna (Ex 16, Num 11), the second (to challenge God by means of a miracle) a reference to the episode of Massah (Ex 17.1–7), and the third (adoration of the devil) a reference to the situation that lay ahead in Canaan, an anticipation of which appears in the scene with the golden calf; the very high mountain could be a surpassing of Nebo, from which Moses looks out over the whole of the holy land. 'The three temptations of Israel can therefore be considered as a kind of summary of the history of its path through the wilderness',[44] and Jesus endures them as a new Moses who does not falter. But these references have at most a background role, in the sense of an 'allusive theology'; they do not determine the precise form of the temptations of Jesus. On the other hand, one must not so generalise and moralise them that they are nothing more than the *peirasmos* that awaits every righteous man.[45] H. Riesenfeld is right when he, following many others, labels the temptation narrative as specifically messianic, in opposition to this generalising view.[46] It is that particular putting to the proof which is required, according to the Letter to the Hebrews, in order to make the chosen Son the high priest who 'can help those who are tempted' (2.18): that means, in order to 'teach him obedience through suffering' (5.8). This is the obedience that Israel as servant and son ought to have rendered before the naked immensity of the glory of God, even when 'all the kingdoms of the world with their glory' (δόξα, Mt 4.8) lie in the other pan of the scales. This obedience can become actualised only in the experience of proof which submerges the only one who believes in God and depends on him, in the medium of the spirit that opposes God; he must enter the night of faith, in which no other glory from God remains but the weight of his Self and the nakedness of his Word. Such a night is a shadow cast in advance by the passion.[47] It is the essence of the covenant, stripped of all accretions: on the one side is only God, the 'highest good' with no earthly reward, God to whom one must adhere only because of God himself—on the other side, the pure obedience in faith of the partner, who wagers absolutely everything on the God whose covenant he enters, because God has laid himself bare to him, even to the depths of his heart, and has made known to him, in his loving election of him, the incomprehensible weakness of his condition as one bound to men. For this reason, it is possible for the partner to be tempted to make trial of the extent of his power over this loving weakness of God. The real and final temptation is the temptation to put God to the proof: ἐκπειράζειν τὸν θεόν. This must be the essential temptation of the one who is essentially the chosen servant and son, who *de jure* has all power over the Father's heart. And this is precisely what Israel did in the wilderness, 'at the day of *peirasmos* in the wilderness, when your fathers made trial of me and put me to the test' (Heb 3.8f. = Ps 95.9).

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[42] Thus all MSS. for Mt 6.13 = Lk 11.4; the weakening form, 'Do not allow that we be brought into temptation' is found first in Marcion and Tertullian, *Or.* 8.

[43] J. Dupont, 'L'Arrière-fond biblique de récit des tentations de Jésus', *NTS* 3 (1957), pp. 287–314; *idem*, 'L'origine du récit des tentations de Jésus au désert', *RB* 73 (1966), pp. 30–76. Similarly, Schniewind, *Matthäus* (NTD) ad loc.

[44] Op. cit. p. 292.

[45] J. H. Korn, *Peirasmos. Die Versuchung der Gläubigen in der griechischen Bibel*, BWANT 4F, 20H (1937).

[46] H. Riesenfeld, 'Le caractère messianique de la tentation au désert', in: *La venue du Messie*, Recherches Bibliques 6 (1962), pp. 51–63. Riesenfeld's comment on the second temptation in Matthew is important, the temptation to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple. According to a Jewish speculation on Deut 1.31, the divine glory (*shekinah*) had carried the people as in a cloud, so that there arises a parallel between

We have here not three distinct temptations, but 'only one gradual intensification'[48] of the same temptation: it is a

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this act of being carried and Jesus' act of being caught up by the *shekinah* that dwells in the Temple.

[47] E. Best, *The Temptation and the Passion: the Markan Soteriology* (1965).

[48] R. Schnackenburg, art. cit. p. 318.

question of the absolute obedience of the chosen servant of God, with whom the staircase of the prophetic obedience definitively touches the ground of this earth. For by identifying himself absolutely in his posture of response with the Word of God, the obedient Son destroys any distance that remains between the 'mediator' and the 'Word'. The three scriptural quotations are the intensification of one and the same thing: to live from the Word of God, not to put God to the test, to adore God alone and serve him alone. And thus the one who is chosen makes response to the one who chose him at the baptism.[49] In the existential experience that lasts forty days, ὑπομονή—that which endures through all things—is now taken into the concrete experience of Jesus, and this will guarantee that all that he will do and suffer in the future is the secure expression and continually renewed accomplishment to the full of the covenant.

Accordingly, the unique messianic temptation, in which all the *peirasmoi* of the old people come together and are transcended, can become the basis for the *peirasmoi* of the new people, the Church. It was the Church herself that gave the temptation narratives a formulation that would serve for catechesis.[50] Therefore the fathers were not altogether wrong when they provisionally bracketed off the temptations of Israel and interpreted the narratives in the light of the human situation, presenting Jesus as the figure that contrasts with Adam who was tempted in paradise.[51] And since *peirasmos* belongs to the being of man as such, E. Fascher is not wrong when he lays so much emphasis on the scenes of temptation which continually repeat themselves in the life of Jesus: his struggle with the demons persists through the whole of his life, as he conquers Satan's territory step by step and pushes his forces back, and in this struggle he has begun in the wilderness temptation scene by 'binding first the strong man, so that he may plunder his house' (Mk 3.27). The first act of standing firm in a situation that is opposed to God is the *conditio sine qua non* of the path to which he is sent on earth, a path that has its goal in the decisive struggle in the Garden of Olives and the abandonment on the cross, without anticipating this struggle. Jesus is unceasingly 'put to the test' by his opponents—'stumbling blocks are laid' before him, signs are demanded from him, seemingly impossible interpretations of Scripture are required of him ('Why do you put me to the test?', Mk 12.15), as far even as the great temptation through Peter, who wishes to avert the Passion and who is sent packing with the same words, 'Get behind me, Satan!' (Mt 16.23 = 4.10); and so his life is an abiding act of dividing, of discernment of the spirits.

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[49] G. H. P. Thompson, 'Called-Proved-Obedient. A Study in the Baptism and Temptation Narratives of Matthew and Luke', *JTS* (1960), pp. 1–12.

[50] J. Dupont, art. cit. p. 298.

[51] K. P. Köppen, *Die Auslegung der Versuchungsgeschichte unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der alten Kirche*, Beitr.z.Gesch.d.bibl.Exeg. 4 (1961). Besides the anthropological orientation of the patristic exegesis, their consideration of the nexus of temptation and Passion is also important (especially on the basis of Lk 4.13): Köppen, op. cit. pp. 66–71. Further, *cf.* M. Steiner, *La tentation de Jésus dans l'interpretation patristique de S. Justin à Origène* (1962). H.-G. Leder, 'Sündenfallserzählung und Versuchungsgeschichte. Zur Interpretation von Mk 1, 12f.', *ZNW* 54 (1963), pp. 188–216.

This division of spirit and contrary spirit passes with constant precision and subtlety through the Word of God itself. Since the devil is above all a shrewd scripture-scholar, it is already necessary in the threefold combat of the first temptation to distinguish between true and false faith and confidence in God, between true and false use of the power of the commission, just as it will be necessary in the question of the denarius of tribute-money to distinguish between the emperor's requirement as it affects political power and the emperor's requirement as it affects worship;[52] in the question of the Temple tax, it will be necessary to distinguish between compulsion and appropriateness (Mt 17.25ff.), in the question of the offering, between the command of God and the tradition (Mt 15.3), in the permission for divorce, between a legal concession and the original will of God (Mt 19.7f.), and so on. The scriptural quotations on the lips of Satan and the enemies of Jesus show that the struggle is often enough to be fought out *sub contrario*. Where God's Word appears in the world, such a confusion between God and Satan, Holy Spirit and spirit that opposes God, becomes possible, and so it is absolutely necessary to learn to distinguish between the spirits (Heb 5.14). The debate about Beelzebub, in which Jesus is accused of expelling the devil through the devil's own spirit, and thus of having 'an impure spirit', ends with the discernment of spirits in the form of a sentence of absolute judgment: 'Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven' (Mk 3.29). Anyone 'reading and understanding this should be able to see that this man's life has to end in a violent death'.[53]

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[52] E. Stauffer, *Christus und die Caesaren* (1952), pp. 121–149.

This discernment of spirits continues prominently in the same sense, with the same profound dimensions, in the early Church and indeed in all the history of the Church, for it is always necessary to make the distinction about the meaning of the law—Paul stands on one side, Matthew and James make the discernment on the other side; the meaning of discontinuance must be discerned, as must the meaning of fulfilment to the last iota. What does the summarising of all the commandments in the one commandment of love mean? Does it mean that this act of love (for so we must call it, with John) leaves the law behind it (although the law had already included this commandment of love), or does it take up the law and integrate it with itself, and bring it over into the new wholeness? Who discerns the spirits in that situation, and decides whether they are a blasphemy of God or a worship of him? Who decides what counts against the works, or for them?

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[53] E. Fascher, op. cit. p. 37.

2. ORIENTATION

a. Centre of the Word in what is not a word

Here we must pause and go back a step. The handing-over of the keys by the baptist, who prepares the way, to the one who brings fulfilment, the recapitulation of the way through Jesus, the proclamation of Simeon that he has seen the ***kabod*** of Israel, long missed, not only in an apocalyptic vision (Ez 43.4f) but really entering the Temple (Lk 2.30–32), and indeed the entire introduction of the form of Jesus into his public ministry, might give the impression that the fulfilment he brings is nothing more than the purified synthesis, and thereby the surpassing, of the rudiments that lay to hand. According to Luke, the same spirit that drove him into the wilderness drives him thereafter into Galilee, to preach in the synagogues, and the first programmatic sermon which he gives in Nazareth—visiting the synagogue on the sabbath, as was his custom—is an interpretation of Is 61.1f.: the messianic age, when the good news of the year of God's salvation will be preached to the poor, has 'today' (Lk 4.21) 'been fulfilled' (πεπλήρωται, for the 'Spirit of the Lord' (4.18) rests on the interpreter himself. But this smooth passage on, as it were, level ground from promise to fulfilment in the 'today' is at once thrown into confusion by a rift in the stratification: the final sentence of the text from Isaiah, 'to proclaim the day of vengeance of our God', is left out by the preacher, but reappears immediately afterwards in the interpretation—Jesus refuses to perform the deeds of the prophets (which he had performed in Capernaum) in his home-town, and he refuses to work as a physician among those who know him.[1] This is the reply to the refusal of his own people to acknowledge him in his prophetic mission; indeed, he causes 'offence' (cf. Mk 6.1–5). He sets himself against them in solidarity with the prophetic fates of Elijah and Elisha, and now suddenly the 'day of vengeance' which had been left out of the reading is accomplished by the hearers: they become furious, rise up and drive him out of the town, so that they may hurl him down from the clifftop on which their town was built. It is as if Jerusalem suddenly stood, geographically and theologically, in the place of Nazareth: from the very beginning of the sermon, the vista opens up through the fate of the prophets on to the final drama.

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[1] P. Oxy.I,1 attests that the two logia belong together: 'A prophet is not welcome in his fatherland, and no doctor works healings on his neighbour.' Similarly in the Coptic Gospel of Thomas: 'Jesus said, "No prophet is welcome in his city. No doctor heals those who know him."' (Quoted from Grundmann, *Lukas*, p. 122)

In Mark too, the preaching of the kingdom has scarcely begun, when they begin to take counsel about the death of Jesus (Mk 3.6). Matthew introduces the life of proclamation with the prophecy of salvation (Is 9.1f.), the prophecy of the great light for the land by the sea-coast (Mt 4.12–16), and the programmatic speech appears likewise to pass smoothly from promise to fulfilment—all the more so, since no iota of the law is to pass away, and it seems that nothing more is involved than an 'exceeding' of the existing righteousness (Mt 5.17–20). The beatitudes and the Lord's prayer are the purified quintessence of the piety of the 'poor of Yahweh'. But once again, a foreign element is woven into the great structure: from the very start, the hearers and followers are taken up into the prophetic fate—persecution and disgrace—'for my sake', so that Jesus silently reckons *a fortiori* with this fate for himself (5.11–12). Then—with special explicitness in Matthew—he opposes his 'I say to you' to the traditional word of the law, i.e. the word of Moses. Finally, he appoints this 'I' of his as judge of the end-times: the eternal salvation and damnation of the hearers will be decided, not only on the basis of their putting his teaching into practice, but on their judgment of his person (7.22f.).

This means that for the evangelists, the understanding of promise-fulfilment which we have here cannot be grasped on the level of the 'prophetic'. It is an aspect of the essential character of Jesus that this level is not passed over: it belongs to the recapitulation, without which there would be no 'fulfilment' of what was promised. But the evangelists do not characterise Jesus as a prophet (they express thereby only the opinion of the crowd about the words and deeds of Jesus),[2]

[2] The people hold him to be a prophet: Mt 21.11, 46; as a rumour or

nor does Jesus characterise himself as a prophet, but rather places himself with his particular fate in the succession of the martyred prophets: this is true both as regards his failures (Mt 13.57 par.; Jn 4.44) and his murder at the hands of the Jerusalem that kills the prophets (Lk 13.33).[3] His way and his person stand on a different level from that of 'Jonah' (the prophet) or 'Solomon' (the wisdom) (Mt 12.41f. par.), or even David (the kingdom) (Mt 22.41ff.) or the Temple ordering (Mt 12.6).[4] Even if his speech corresponds to the sayings of the prophets,[5] especially when he interprets Scripture by referring to what is to come (and distinguishes between what is to come through him, and what is to come with him);[6] even if his miracles resemble the miracles of the

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supposition: Mt 16.14 (Lk 9.19: Mk 8.28), Mk 6.15; Lk 9.8; the people acclaim Jesus as a great prophet who guarantees the visitation of God: Lk 7.16. The disciples on the road to Emmaus describe him as 'a prophet mighty in word and deed before God and all the people' (Lk 24.19; *cf.* what is said about Moses at Acts 7.22); similarly, the Samaritan woman and the man born blind address him as prophet (Jn 4.19; 9.17).—Distinct from this is the identification of Jesus by the people with 'the' prophet, the one prophesied by Moses in Deut 18; this only in Jn (with reference to the baptist, 1.21, 25; to Jesus, 6.14; 7.40, 52). At Acts 3.22f. there is an allusion to the text from Deut 18, in order to raise it immediately into its higher messianic significance.

[3] Indirectly, Mk 13.22 and Mt 24.24 could be added to the list. In the sequence of logia at Mt 10.40–42, the prophet is the intermediary stage between Jesus and the 'righteous man'. The assuming of the 'sign of Jonas' only allows a comparison to be made: Mt 12.39.

[4] On the whole theme: F. Gils, *Jésus Prophète d'après les évangiles synoptiques* (1967), with bibliography.

[5] Of course, liberal theology liked to interpret Jesus on the level of a prophet. J. Weiss (*Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, 3rd edn. 1964) describes him as 'the greatest prophet' (p. 155); even if Jesus 'held himself to be the one specifically chosen, who was more than a prophet' (p. 64), 'still the fundamental character of the preaching of Jesus is precisely prophecy' (p. 71), at least in his 'rare moments of prophetic enthusiasm', 'of pneumatic ecstasy' (p. 90), etc. *Cf.* also Weinel, *Neutestamentliche Theologie* (2nd edn. 1913), who emphasises the non-apocalyptic (because simple and uncalculating) character of Jesus' statements about the future: 'All this sets Jesus in the line of the prophets, and not in the line of the apocalypticists' (p. 61).

[6] His relationship to the Old Testament 'can be deduced only from a special consciousness of his mission in Jesus, more precisely from the

prophets in many ways;[7] even if the harshness of the words of his summons itself picks up the callings to the prophets;[8] yet the evangelists have no central interest in showing that Jesus is a prophet,[9] even if they depict him as one who consciously fulfils the Scripture[10] that is 'his natural element'.[11]

Although prophets committed their lives to the service of God's Word in such a way that they threw life with him into the balance and—as Jesus understood it—normally had to pay for their ministry with their life, yet no prophet prophesied his own death. But this, at least in the understanding of the first community, is what the One who is more than a prophet did. The one who appointed himself as the standard gauge of the law by raising himself above the law and above Moses—as Jesus indubitably repeatedly did, directly and indirectly—brought the claim which was made thereby directly into relation with his own death. He paid for such effrontery in advance, by consciously taking death upon himself, and if he did this in no foolhardy gamble, but in a mission justified precisely on the basis of Scripture, then he expressly displaced the emphasis of his acts and words on to this death, the baptism which he yearns to endure once and for all (Lk 12.50). And if miracles are described as being linked to 'loss of power' (Mk 5.30), then this is no primitive magical understanding, but an indicator of the readiness to pay with the total loss of power for the true miracle that is to be

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certainty of possessing the power of the divine Spirit which makes prophetic activity possible . . . The Gospels relate the consciousness of being sent, but they speak exceedingly seldom of the inspiration of Jesus, although the historian, knowing himself to be on safe ground here, ought to be truly astonished at this': E. Käsemann, *Der Ruf der Freiheit* (1968), p. 39.

[7] E.g. in the multiplication of loaves (2 Kg 5.42ff.) or the raising of the young man from Nain (1 Kg 17.8–24).

[8] 1 Kg 19.19ff.

[9] Thus correctly H. Riesenfeld, 'Jesus als Prophet', in: *Spiritus et Veritas* (Eutin, 1953), pp. 135–148. Bibliography on the whole question in *ThW* VI, 781–783.

[10] J. Haenel, 'Der Schriftbegriff Jesus', in: BFChTH 1, 24, 5–6 (1919), pp. 197ff.

[11] P. Feine, *Theologie des NT* (8th edn. 1950), p. 21.

worked. Only so is it possible to explain how bodily healing and the forgiveness of sins can be unabashedly set beside each other as 'equally easy' (Mk 2.9), where of course the visible is but the indicator of the essential thing that is invisible. In Israel, payment must be made for the forgiveness of sins: who is ready to pay here?

Now for the first time we catch sight of the decisive matter that makes it so hard to speak of what is Christian, so hard to get a view of it at all. Inasmuch as the dimension of promise and fulfilment promises us a relationship that may be surveyed, it is absolutely secondary. Both are 'words'—even if God's words are always aimed at deeds and result from deeds—but the death of Christ is no longer a word; it is silence, the silence and death of God as the fulfilment of the speaking, promising, living God. What we call Resurrection is not at all the continuation (after three days) of what was spoken or done beforehand. Death is death, with a definitive quality; the life that came to an end in time is finished, and does not return again. No matter how calmly a dying man comes to his end, no matter how deeply he is reconciled to it, his death writes the final word. This is what it is to be human, even if the God with whom these mortal men had made their covenant was 'not a God of the dead, but of the living' in the Old Testament (and Jesus supposes that this is known, Mt 22.32), and even if the promise that came from this God incomprehensibly broke through the boundaries of earthly existence, as 'the promise, that they should be heirs of the world' (Rom 4.13). Here we can see at once the inner impossibility of the entire old covenant: how can a covenant of the immortal with mortals have any meaning? Man rebels at the barrier that cannot be broken down, he accuses God of unrighteousness and takes up a stronger position over against him.[12] And with the unfinished problem of death, the unfinished problem of judgment over man's life projects itself back in distorted form into the image of God, so that the phantom of double predestination—congealing and absolutising the harrowing question about God's justice (Ps

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[12] III/2,1, pp. 306–313.

88)—is the only answer that late Judaism has to offer.[13] 'With regard to our subject, this means that in the old covenant a clear, impassable boundary-line is drawn before the appearing of God's glory: the fact that death has not been overcome.'[14] But, formulated more radically, this means the fact that *man*'s radical problem has not been overcome, even in the presence of God. Abraham's hope is hope 'against all hope' in a far deeper sense than he himself could realise: for him it was a question of descendants who should fill the world, but in itself the hope required the bursting of the boundaries of death which as such belong constitutively to man.[15] This means not-death in death, word in what is not word, fulfilment in failure. In the old covenant, God's power and the abyss of chaos stood mythologically over against each other,[16] and although the abyss endured in its state of opposition to God, God had power over it and could lead down into it and bring up out of it again; there existed a 'mobility of God' in relationship to the chaos, a puzzling 'conniving with what was lower',[17] that could scarcely be expressed while remaining within the categories of the Old Testament. There were indeed yet further possibilities, even though this was to be expressed only in image and parable: Jonah had the possibility in the belly of the sea-monster of striking up a psalm of praise (Jon 2.3–11), and Daniel's three companions had the possibility of walking about in the raging fire, praising God (Dan 3.24–90). And yet these are submerged in the death of water and fire only as living men: death itself is a problem that remains unsolved. We should find a full seriousness only when the unthinkable happened: when the dead lived as one *dead*, *truly* dead and buried, and more yet—

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[13] *Ibid*, pp. 313-316 On the problematic developed there, *cf*. Bousset-Gressmann, *Religion des Judentums* (3rd edn. 1927), pp. 257f., 275f.; P. Volz, *Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde im ntl. Zeitalter* (1934), pp. 272–419; on double predestination at Qumran: K. G. Kuhn, in *ZkTh* 47 (1950), pp. 162f; 49 (1952), pp. 296f.

[14] III/2,1, p. 373.

[15] The consequence is drawn, albeit mysteriously enough, in John at 8.53.

[16] III/2,1, pp. 69-79.

[17] *Ibid*., p. 208.

as one judged. For this, Jonah had to become identical with the monster, and the three companions identical with the fire. This is not something to be resolved philosophically by means of a universal law of a dialectic of transferral, whereby God ought to turn into his opposite so that through this he may become himself, and life should become death so that resurrection may come forth thence. That which is specifically Christian is neither a philosophy, nor an isolated historical event at a determined point of the world's history such that a universal dialectical law of history could be read out of the event subsequently. That which is Christian on the one hand presupposes the positive character of the old covenant with its 'God, not of the dead, but of the living' and with its (humanly speaking, absurd) promise for man in this covenant; on the other hand, it presupposes what is universally human—Israel necessarily makes the act of self-transcendence into this sphere of the universally human. That which is Christian is anthropologically significant (in relation, that is to what is already given in Israel), or it is nothing at all. It solves the unbearable contradiction that runs right through the very form of man: that he, knowing and touching what is immortal, yet dies; if it does not solve this then it solves nothing at all.[18] Therefore its truth does not lie primarily on the level of what may be looked at, the comparison between the form of the promise and the form of the fulfilment, but on the level of an invisible collision of the absolute weight of God with what is other, with that which has nothing in common with God. Only when this unconceivable event takes place, is the world of images liberated—what the old covenant still owed us, is possible only on the basis of what is unimaginable, so that the images (what Pascal calls *figures*) which surrounded the unconstructible midpoint, and which could not bring themselves together to make a credible whole form, suddenly crystallise and become thereby comprehensible both in themselves (as images of the Old Testament) and in their transcendence to the New Testament unity that gives them meaning.[19] But the paradox remains,

[18] See my *Das Ganze im Fragment* (1963), pp. 61–123.

[19] III/2,1, p. 372.

and is indeed insoluble: if the images of the old covenant have form as images, then the point on which they converge, the death of Jesus Christ, is what is formless; for how could a corpse bestow on the living forms their inner definitive meaning? But if the images of the old covenant are formless as a whole (since they cannot complement themselves mutually), then their act of becoming form in the presence of the *triduum mortis* shows the incomprehensible power of the *triduum mortis* to bestow form, a power which precisely on the philosophical level cannot be grasped. Thereby in advance we have passed beyond the whole historical-critical problematic concerning the application to Christ of Old Testament parables and titles of sovereignty in the post-Easter reflection of the community, though without dismissing the problematic thereby as insignificant. It is only from what is permanently incomprehensible that so much light can spread forth, and that so much can take on form in crystallisation and in this form be adduced precisely as 'proof'.

No one will be able to overlook the central difficulty that opens up here, in giving man his centre-point by locating him beyond himself, in his death. It might be possible to avoid the difficulty by insisting on the idea of vicariousness: one man surrenders himself to death, so that all the rest may at last have true life. One is chosen (says Karl Barth) in order to be rejected, so that all the rejected may be chosen. But in this case the fate of this one remains the paradoxical and disturbing exception, and one no longer sees how it can be anthropologically significant, or how indeed 'imitation' can be possible. If such an imitation is taken seriously, is that not something inhuman? And if the real thing has been accomplished by the one (who alone is God-man), is not imitation in any case superfluous and essentially defective? In the old covenant, within the conditions of mortal life, there was always something like a response (always defective) that correponded to the prescription of God's covenant, a prescription of the immortal one for mortals ('I am holy, and therefore you also shall be holy'), and thus having always a provisional character; what is to happen when this inexact word is replaced by the exact Word, which is uttered precisely where the word passes over into silence, where nothing more is audible and the living one who listens for instruction is placed before the absolute breakdown in communication?

At the outer edge, the cry, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' rang out, then the mighty scream, then the death and the tearing of the temple curtain from top to bottom (Mk 15.34ff.). John describes another tearing, solemnly and in detail: 'One of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth—that you also may believe' (Jn 19.34ff.). And he reminds us of the passage in Zechariah, which he will cite once more in Revelation: 'They look on him whom they have pierced'. The spoken word is 'compressed together and shortened'[20] as it moves towards death, for God's voice throughout the old covenant and up to the baptist 'had become continuously louder, until the great voice finally took on human form, and at the end of a long succession of intonations, consisting of instructions and wonders that were to show us that the most horrible of all horrible things, the death of man, must be chosen by love, gave a loud cry and passed away'.[21] But the word that has reached its highest point in the cry, and so is no longer articulated, breaks through and demolishes the last wall of separation, the heart of Jesus himself, and—as in a parable—externally, the curtain between God and man: blood and water flow outwards, God himself pours himself out, pours outwards the covenant that presupposes a two-sidedness. The mediator is superseded when it is a question of only one (Gal 3.20; Jn 16.26). Where the word falls silent, the true message is proclaimed loudly: the message of the heart of God, broken open. And if the real 'place' of the Christian event at first lets man hear no word, since the place lies in man's death, yet it more importantly makes visible an event of God (in the most literal sense of the word: 'they look on him whom they have pierced'). In this death, the σπλάγχνα θεοῦ[22] break open, the last realities in God's heart, beyond which there is nothing more, so that in death, and only in death, that which remains unutterable in life becomes speech—for in life, the heart must preserve itself intact, in order that speech may be possible. For the present, it is not asked what man becomes in the presence of this event: we see only that the heart of God, pierced open, flows out towards him. This is attested with utter solemnity as something seen, something that truly happened.

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[20] Quoted at Rom 9.28, following LXX Is 10.23: λόγον γάρ συντελῶν καί συντέμνων ποιήσει κύριος ἐπι τῆς γῆς; Vulgate *Verbum consummans et abbrevians (in aequitate) faciet Dominus super terram*. In context, this translation which gets the original text wrong can mean only the 'short shrift' which God's word of judgment will make, in that it will save only the 'remnant'; but the fathers of the Church will speak of the 'abbreviated Logos' of God, 'shortened' to fit Incarnation and death (Origen, *Peri Archon* 1, 2, 8), the 'condensed Logos' (Gregory Nazianzen, *Or. in Epiph.*, PG 36, 313B; commented upon by Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, PG 91, 1285C–1288A, and *Cent. Gnost.* 2, 37, PG 90, 1141C).

[21] Nicholas of Cusa, *Excitationum lib.* 3 (Paris 1514), fol. 412.

It should be noted that, if God is essentially invisible (Jn 1.18; 1 Tim 6.16), yet it is no transcendental interpretation of what is specifically Christian that is undertaken here; such an interpretation ends in Hegelian gnosticism. Here, on the contrary, in the categorial experience and contemplation of the pierced heart pouring forth, one should see 'as one involved' that in the death of this man God's heart was immediately 'affected' The time will come when this no longer utterable word will once again be set out in utterable words of proclamation, words indeed that *must* be uttered, in the commissioning at Easter. But everything would be misplaced and masked, if the breakdown of communication in the silence that is no word, that is greater than all words, did not remain through all words present and dominant as the only thing that is essentially to be kept in mind: 'knowledge of the love that surpasses all knowledge' (Eph 3.19).

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[22] On the expression in the Old Testament (*rachamim*, normally rendered by the LXX as οἰκτιρμοί), *cf.* III/2,1, pp. 149f. In Test. Zabulun 8.2, a revelation of this kind is expected as messianic: 'In the last days, God will send τά σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ upon the earth'. *Cf.* Test. Nephtali 4.5; Test. Levi 4.4. In accordance with this, the Benedictus speaks of the opening of the σπλάγχνα ἐλέους of our God, in the radiant visit among us of the 'dayspring from on high', which can refer equally to the promised 'scion' and to the rising 'light', or to both at once (Schlier, art. ἀνατολή, *TDNT* I, 352; *cf.* Köster, art. σπλάγχνα, *ibid.* VII, 548ff.).

There are passages in the gospel where Jesus' word seems to be nothing else than the purified synthesis of the old covenant, as for example where he expresses its embodiment in the three words 'justice' (*mishpat*, which derives from God and is to have its effect in men's deeds; Amos 5.24; *cf.* Mt 5.6; 6.33), 'mercy' (*chesed*, *rachamim*, δχεος, Mic 6.8; as embodiment of justice, Mt 12.7), and 'loyalty and faith' (*emeth*, πίστις, the fundamental attitude of the covenant God, which should pass over to man in his relationship to God and to his neighbour: Mt 23.23). This can be simplified yet again in the practical rule of thumb: Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets' (Mt 7.12). Such abbreviations of the 'old word' are materially identical to the explicit synthesis of all commandments in love that Paul makes (Rom 13.8; Gal 5.14; 1 Tim 1.5). But the synthesis placed on the lips of Jesus is true only in him: he *is* the synthesis, in that he brings the whole multiplicity of the laws and the moments of life regulated by the laws into the unifying impetus of his death, which is their 'goal' and 'end' (τέλος, Jn 13.1); and only thus is he the primordial Word, from which the 'multiple, knowable contents' of the Scriptures are each only 'a part', and often indeed 'divided parts that fight against each other', declining in the loss of their unity into 'numberless numbers'.[23]

Here we are confronted anew with the central difficulty of the New Testament. At the time of Jesus, there is not only a full complement of motifs that transcend themselves and make for a convergence, seeming indeed to wish to be brought into congruence with one another; there is also something like an eschatological *kairos* that hangs in the air, both for a time of salvation in this world ('become flesh') and in an apocalyptic salvation beyond this world, as though a dividing-point of the ages were drawing near, which could count as the end and the 'fulfilment of the times',[24] and which will be seized upon by Paul (Gal 4.4) and by the Markan Jesus (Mk 1.15). It seems that all is so far formed in advance, that the synthesis that must make Jesus the 'subject and object of the gospel'[25] follows almost automatically: and then suddenly, this synthesis seems so foolhardy, so mistaken in its displacing of the midpoint away from everything that could be awaited and hoped for, that it seems a synthesis that could never be found, a synthesis that makes nonsense of its component elements (the great promises of the old covenant) in an extremely provocative and irritating manner. It can be recognised and maintained as a synthesis only if the midpoint, which integrates and disturbs everything, becomes a wholly unhoped-for light for those who make the synthesis (first of all, the post-Easter community), a direct hit that is attained not through calculation but with the effect of pure luck; one begins only gradually to grasp that its depth and fullness are reality, and no dream.

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[23] Origen, *In Johannem* V, 4–5 (ed. Preuschen, 102–103).

Hereby, the difficulty becomes twofold. First, as was said in the introduction, in New Testament theology everything is interlinked. The time which gave order to the Old Testament is in effect ended: from the first word of the first Gospel onwards, 'Jesus is Messiah, the Son of God' (Mk 1.1), or he is nothing at all; either one understands him thus, or one understands nothing at all. It is indeed possible to distinguish a few stages in the progress of the early community's unfolding of the content of that which it had discovered in a first primordial intuition: the fact that 'Jesus', 'Messiah', and 'Son of God' had become identical. But this discovery was no 'finding' that was to be justified and proved later through reflection; rather, just as in a game of chance there is an element of incalculable luck, so here there is unaccountable grace. The synthesis was not 'discovered', but was wholly given, and this character of the love given gratis becomes even clearer in the Church's reflection, the more the central point, round which everything crystallises, proves itself to be the right point. A theological truth that did not show itself ever more clearly to be the incomprehensible breaking-in and breaking-through of the eternal (trinitarian) love would be no truth; such a truth would be a worthy victim of the rational deductions of Hegel, or (as the case might be) of the reconstructions of historical-critical exegesis. The latter maintains its theological justification as long as it lets itself be understood, and understands itself, as a moment in the process whereby the intuition of faith comes to itself. Historical-critical exegesis is substantially incapable of explaining the absolute newness that comes into being through the synthesis, and casts its rays back from it upon all the elements of the synthesis; it is incapable with its own methods of seeing the synthesis at all, for this act of seeing presupposes the eye of faith. This newness is something more than can be explained, something that Jesus the Christ (as the crucified and risen one) in his oneness *is*: 'He brought all newness, by bringing himself, for he was foretold' (Irenaeus).[26] But who could have had an inkling that, by bringing himself as newness, he would make a breakthrough to a wholly new image of God—to its true glory, of which the *kabod* of old was only a shadowy prefiguring—and to a wholly new image of man—and the gleam of glory of old (Ps 8) was likewise only a 'reflection of the coming' image of man? But this always-greater element in the first gift of the synthesis could not yet be seen in its entirety, since in all later reflections it showed itself to be the correct midpoint only because it remained always-greater than what could be discovered and imagined: therefore there arises the second difficulty of New Testament theology, alongside the first—a difficulty which lies in the question about the subject on which the eschatological *kabod* of God breaks in because the revelation of the ultimate love is intended for it.

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[24] *Cf.* the late Jewish formulae for this fullness of the times in P. Volz, op. cit., p.139.

[25] W. Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus* (2nd edn. 1959), p. 88 (ET *Mark the Evangelist*, 1969, p. 131)

b. The subject who receives

In the midpoint of all God's words to men stands the one

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[26] *Adv. Haer.* 4, 34 (PG 8, 1083).

Son, in whom 'at the end of days' all words become one (Heb 1.2); but in the midpoint of this one word stands death, in which his word becomes a cry and falls silent. Thus it seems that the fullness of the approximating words finds its goal in this 'not-word' which is above words, and that the renewed fullness of the approximating words which derives from this is irremediably delivered over to the chance of the epochs of history, to the various presuppositions of human understanding, to the difficulties of comprehension, and to the systems of logic which exist at different times. Time and again, new attempts to find words circle about this unutterable density and fullness that hold within themselves God's final and most mysterious turning to man, but which will never be exhausted 'by all the books of the world, that would be written' (Jn 21.25).

In the old covenant, since the Word was not yet flesh, but rather instruction and promise, the receiving subject was a historical people, which in the course of its history and of ever deeper reflection on this history understood itself as chosen, addressed, and led by God: and in this understanding, it offered itself as the living vessels in which God's Word should pour itself out and find expression, so that as far as possible Israel might respond to this Word in the same process. In the preceding volume, it was shown how Israel at its highest moments opened up into a praise and thanksgiving that were a 'giving back of the Word' to God, into a perpetual meditation of the Word with the understanding, a full humble transparence to the Word, a holding ready of the heart, in order to find the pure harmony between word and response in the act of praise—and this in openness to the world, in the presence of all peoples, representing the entire cosmos: this was the 'aesthetic of the Old Testament'.[1] This then led to the introduction of the international Wisdom literature of the ancient orient, then of the hellenistic Koine (in thinking and in speech), into the biblical semitic sphere. Without being profaned, the intimacy of the dialogue of love between God as husband and Israel as chosen bride was continually and increasingly made use of to speak of the world: the 'pilgrimage of the peoples' to Jerusalem in the end-times was awaited as the making visible of the principle that the meaning of world and history should be disclosed in the act of crystallisation round the magnetic core (Is 2.2–5).[2] But for all its historicity, this remained an event of the Word: in the purity of an obedient 'giving back of the Word', Israel reached its highest point. But nothing was further from Israel than the thought that the lordly Word spoken to him could become identical with one of the 'servants' and 'mediators' who tried to recall Israel into obedience to the Word—no scheme of thought, neither that of the 'servant of God', nor that of the 'Messiah', nor even the Danielic 'Son of man', would have seriously dared to think of the uniting of the Lord with the servant. The breakthrough into this identity is the new covenant. In the power of this identity, the Lord sides with the servants, and 'is not ashamed to call them his brethren': 'since the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage' (Heb 2.11, 14f.). Through this crossing-over, the higher dignity of Jesus as the 'one set (by God) and high priest' above the highest representative of the old covenant becomes visible: 'He has been counted worthy of as much more glory δόξα than Moses as the builder of a house has more honour than the house. (For every house is built by some one, but the builder of all things is God.) Moses was faithful in all God's house (assigned to him) as a servant, to testify to the things that were to spoken later (in the 'tent of testimony', Num 12.5, as a word from God), but Christ was faithful as Son over his own house. And we are his house' (Heb 3.3–6). If God is the builder of the whole, so that the old and the new house belong to him and form in him a planned unity, yet this house has a different interior structure; if first the servant is in charge of it, then the Son—and this, for the paradoxical reason that the servant has charge *inside* the house, and transmits and interprets the words that come from above, while the Son who is sent from above (who, according to Heb 1.1–3, is the synthesis of all God's words, the heir of all the house, and shares the burden of all things as 'all-powerful Word') has charge *over* the house, precisely because he entered into the fellowship of flesh and blood with the children of God (something that Moses could not do), that so he might conquer death and lay low the barrier formed by the fear of death. Because Christ, as the Word of God (and simultaneously high priest), has become *immanent* in the people of God, this people receives a *transcendent* head that stands above it: this it did not possess in the old covenant. This very close analysis of the Letter to the Hebrews brings us next by an interior logic to Paul's image of the body, which defines the altered structure of the receiving subject in the new covenant, over against the receiving subject in the old: it is from the exalted head that the body exists at all (derived from him, given its form and recapitulated by him). In the identity of the one organism (ἐξ ἑνός πάντες, Heb 2.11; κεκοινώνηκεν, 2.14), Christ is distinct from the brethren (as the 'holy one' over against 'those made holy', as the 'redeemer' over against 'those redeemed', *ibid.*), and is thereby the one exalted above them, the one who gives them existence in their identification as his partner. Paul draws as close as possible to this mystery when he illuminates it by means of the 'being one flesh' of man and woman, the mystery that sets husband and wife in a distinct personal relationship to each other.[3] What was predominantly understood in the Old Testament as 'people' and 'house', needs a substantial corrective after the breakthrough into the

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[1] III/2,1, pp. 189-195.

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[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 317-336.

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[3] In order to encompass the mystery of Christ and the Church, he needs both biblical aspects of the sexual relationship: 1. that the woman (Eve) comes bodily from the bodily Adam (1 Cor 11.8; presupposed in the background at Eph 5.28, 32), so that two persons proceed from one flesh, and 2. that 'the man leaves father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two become one flesh' (Gen 2.24 = Eph 5.31), so that out of two persons there is one flesh. If one drops the first aspect as 'mythological', then one no longer understands the theological signficance of the expressions of Paul in the new covenant.

New Testament, through the two inseparable concepts of 'body (bodily unity)' and 'bride'. Only with this new qualification is it possible to continue using the image of 'people' and 'house' analogically, after the dividing-line drawn by the Incarnation.[4] The characterisation in the Old Testament of Israel as 'bride' remained principally an ethical and juridical image, determined by the personal relationship of the partners and the faithfulness (promised or awaited) of the covenant-parties, but in the New Testament this characterisation is radically altered by the Incarnation of the Word: the character of 'bride' is now based wholly in the 'being one flesh', drawing its origin from this and oriented towards this, and thus the nuptial character of the subject that receives the revelation must necessarily accomplish an incarnation that is analogous to the Incarnation of God's Word.

If this is thought through logically to the end, it leads to the requirement of a 'glorious bride without spot or wrinkle', 'made holy' by Christ the 'sanctifier' (Eph 5.27). It is indeed true that in his becoming man, Christ accomplished the full 'righteousness of God' on both sides of the covenant. But on the human side, he appears as the 'sanctifier' (and thus as the representative of the divine husband) who creates out of himself the unity of 'those sanctified' (his brethren, who are to form the 'bride'). But Jesus as Word and Son of the Father is one, and so this unity must likewise be personal in its centre: it cannot be the mere 'physical' unity of a collective,[5] as in the old covenant, all the more so because the delimitation to one people (as 'collective individual') has in any case been broken through by the Incarnation of God to make way for the whole of mankind, and is thereby rendered obsolete. Further, this unity cannot be (as in the old covenant) a receiving subject that is able existentially to give God a response that always remains only approximate, and is mostly very defective: for now that the righteousness of God has become man in Christ, the exact response (*justesse*) that corresponds to the incarnate righteousness of God (*justice*) is required also, from the bride that is his body. These two postulates converge unhesitatingly on the solution that became visible in its outlines first of all in the infancy narrative: in Mary, Israel must both become personalised and transcend itself in this synthesis, in order to utter the perfect *fiat* of the handmaid to the Incarnation. This *fiat*, made possible by the Incarnation and cross of the Son (in the 'anticipated redemption'),[6] is at one and the same time one of the presuppositions of the Incarnation, accomplishing the 'being one flesh' and yet establishing, precisely here, the radical opposition between head and body, lord and handmaid, bridegroom and bride. Without this centre (almost invisible and undiscoverable from 'outside'), the subject which was destined for the final revelation would remain substantially approximate and collective, corresponding only to the 'many and various words of God to the prophets and fathers' (Heb 1.1). Somewhere, in the name of all mankind, a *fiat* with no internal boundaries must exist in response to the final word of God that continually transcends all understanding, a *fiat* that goes all the way to the end with God's Word in unreserved agreement, in the meditative attempt to understand (Lk 2.19, 51) and to keep company with God's Word: and this sets in motion an endless historical process.

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[4] This analogy is insufficiently clearly expressed in the Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, inasmuch as the expressions 'body' and 'bride' are given a place among the 'images' (Nn 6–7, necessarily separated from each other at the end of N 7), whereas from the 2nd chapter onwards, the characterisation of the Church as 'people of God' no longer appears as an image, but as a literally real expression (Nn 9f.).

[5] This is called a 'collective personality' (unless this meaning should be mythological) only in a metaphorical sense, and this certainly does not call into question the solidarity in guilt and salvation which is based on this. *Cf.* J. de Fraine, *Adam und seine Nachkommen* (German 1962) and the discussion of the concept in H. Mühlen, *Una Mystica Persona* (2nd edn. 1967).

Round the core of the 'bride without spot and wrinkle' is formed, layer upon layer, the structure that must serve as the subject that receives the revelation. This can be described statically, as the 'Church of Christ', but it can exist only in a dynamic crossing-over from the nationhood of the Israel of old to the entirety of mankind (and therein of the cosmos); God's address in Jesus Christ is of course directed finally to this entirety. The personal core prevents us from understanding the subject simply as an 'objective spirit' that is subjective only in part; on the contrary, we must speak rather of a universalisation of the subject, for if in the old covenant 'the holy city' and 'the holy land' could be described symbolically as 'daughter Zion' and 'bride', now it is 'the bride, the wife of the Lamb' that can show herself eschatologically universalised as the 'holy city' descending from Heaven (Rev 21.9f.). It is this city that shows on its twelve foundation stones 'the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb' (21.14), in an equality of form in the end time: the hierarchy of service, the primacy, levels itself to form this unity. This visible Church is constituted in its kernel by the summons to follow Jesus, and thereby is both a training by Jesus in the perfection of the faith of the Old Testament, and a training which is so much by *Jesus* that he is the one who has authority as custodian and mediator of this faith: and thus obedience to God modulates unnoticed into obedience to him, and the proclaimer Jesus modulates unnoticed[7] into the proclaimed Christ. The *semper magis* of God, to faith in whom Jesus directs his followers or likewise those healed miraculously or those reached by the preaching, appears to them to be made present in the one who 'teaches as one with authority' (Mk 1.22) and only in this respect proclaims 'a teaching that is new' (1.27). The transition which has been mentioned does not, however, lead to an alienation—there one who commands, and here those who obey—but gradually reveals the parodox that lies deeper: that Jesus possesses the Word because the Spirit possesses him, that he can command in such a unique way because he obeys uniquely, all-sufficiently. And when they join him, leaving everything in order to follow him alone, men learn to satisfy the intolerable multiplicity of the commandments (Acts 15.10) through the single act of the obedient love that says yes; they learn to have no longer any other place than Jesus (Jn 6.68), who himself has no place and no food other than the will of the Father (Mt 8.20; 4.4; Jn 4.34). In order to arrive truly at this point, the hiatus of Cross and Resurrection will be necessary, the hiatus that fulfils everything so completely only because it radically calls everything into question. We shall consider this in detail later.

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[6] Thus, in accordance with the circle of thought indicated in n. 3, which repeats on a higher level the circle of thought contained in the Pauline image of Adam and Eve. *Cf.* F. Mussner, 'Der Glaube Mariens im Lichte des Römerbriefs', in: *Praesentia Salutis* (1967), pp. 284ff.

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[7] Of course there exists the seemingly rough transition from the pre-Easter faith to the post-Easter faith; but, as Heinz Schürmann has demonstrated, this would have been quite impossible without 'the pre-Easter beginnings of the logia-tradition' ('Die vorösterlichen Anfänge der Logientradition', now in: *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu den synoptischen Evangelien*, 1968, pp. 39–65). 'Without a confessing foreknowledge, the encounter with the risen one could not have led to any kind of formulated "messianic" confession . . . Before Easter, there must at least have been a messianic "supposition", so that the event of Easter could be understood as "fulfilment"' (*ibid.*, p. 49).

But whatever we make of the deadly paradox of the Cross—which puts an end to the following of Jesus and the fellowship in faith and obedience—in any case, the fellowship of followers which is called together by Jesus has an internal structure that is designed to go out beyond itself to mankind as a whole. The principle of its life is a growing mission (Mt 10) that finally embraces the whole world (Mt 28), and it can be a city on the hill and a light on the lampstand only if at the same time it disappears into the flour as yeast, and falls into the ground and dies like a grain of wheat. For them at least, the Cross was the demonstration of a law that was already established in the Incarnation as such: not only because the promises to Israel were universalist, but more yet—because the Incarnation of God affected every man in his very being, and because (here we make leaps in thought that are guaranteed by the slow, marvelling reflection on such implications) God was now approachable and lovable for us in a man; for this God, dying for our guilt, loved us all, and therefore now the reflection of this God shines in all men.

If the Church found itself after Easter, at Pentecost, filled with the Holy Spirit of God and of Christ, this means that it grasped precisely the spirit of the universal mission of Christ based on his universal love to all (and therein to me), that it felt that this had been given to it and said yes to the gift. Paul calls this no longer 'following', but 'being in Christ', and this is quite explicitly a being grasped by his love to me (Gal 2.20) and a being surrounded by his love (2 Cor 5.14). 'Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love undying' (Eph 6.24). 'If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed' (1 Cor 16.22). The Church loved the one of whom she had learned to understand that, in his death, he had taken on himself the whole of the Father's will as this stood in the law, and the whole of the Father's judgment on the unfulfilled commandment. The Church loved him as the one who fulfilled God's will, but loved him—as John repeatedly instructs—precisely by fulfilling his will, his command of love. Thereby, in the daily living-out of love to him and to the neighbour, the Church after Easter brings to its goal the logic which had begun before Easter in the act of 'leaving all things (for his sake)'. This, and nothing else, is the Church, whether considered statically or dynamically.

If one realises this, and follows the guiding line of the logic, one can see how this logic had necessarily to lead the Church after Easter, as it began to think out its faith, into a veritable labyrinth of connections—on the one hand, of the relationships of the history and scriptural texts of Israel to the key-figure of Jesus, and on the other hand, of the relationships between the logia, parables, deeds and perhaps puzzling behaviour of the man Jesus and the light into which all of this came through the experience of Easter. Thousands of rivulets of meaning followed their separated course, until they flowed into one another, thousands of paths crossed one another and seemed to part from each other again, until they united definitively to form one highway; the historical-critical method, with its patient unravelling of the material backwards to the origins, gives us some glimpses of strata where material that was later to be united lies as yet without any coordinating unity. Nevertheless, these glimpses are not decisively important, because the thread of Ariadne—love as the solution of all intellectual questions—leads unambiguously forwards to the unifying of the different points of view.

It is from this point that everything must be considered and classified, when it is a question of the transition from the apostolic period to the post-apostolic period, of the formation of Scripture and canon, of the translation of biblical material into hellenistic thought, of the formulation of a *regula fidei*, of a creed, and finally of the dogmatic definitions of councils with the drawing of boundaries between orthodoxy and heresy. The apostolic period becomes the model of the relationship between the Lord and his immediate successors: it is a model of the love between Christ (as the one who makes visible the divine love for the world) and the core of the Church which defines itself through believing and obedient self-surrender to this love that has appeared in Jesus. Paul places the accent on a succession of 'behaviour': the archetype of this cast of mind is the self-denying love of the Lord (Phil 2.2–8), to which Paul seeks to respond in his loving self-offering 'for your faith' (2.17), since he regards everything as refuse, in order to win Christ and be formed in the pattern of his dying and rising (3.4ff.). Then he writes, 'Brethren, join in imitating me, and mark those who so live as you have an example (τύπος) in us' (3.17). 'The apostle is not only a representative, but also the mediator of the norm,' and thereby stands as one raised above those who imitate him, but those who imitate him receive 'a characteristic position in the middle between the "apostle" and the "brethren"'.[8] This model is handed on in the Deutero-Pauline writings as in the testamentary speech at Miletus,[9] as the decisive contents of tradition.

On the part of the Church, the exemplary person is the reminder that makes present the force of God's love, the love that discloses itself to us in the death and Resurrection of Christ and dispossesses itself for us. 'Authority' in the Church has its roots in the driving force of this new *kabod*: the force of love itself is, and can be, nothing else than the presence of the *semper magis* of love over all knowledge that would tidily dispose of things—and so, knowledge may have no other activity than the making present of the central mystery of love: only so can it be recognised for what it is. On the other hand, this authority transmits itself into every Christian life that is a testimony to the impact of the force of God's love, and thus itself becomes a binding and demanding pointer, a *tupos* to this authority.[10]

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[8] E. Lohmeyer, *Der Brief an die Philipper* (9th edn. 1953), pp. 151–152.

[9] J. Dupont, *Paulus an die Seelsorger. Das vermächtnis von Milet* (*Apg 20, 18 bis 36*) (1966).

Thus, in the New Testament, the dogmatic truth never appears in abstraction from its ecclesiological wrapping and reflection; in the letters of Paul, the 'dogmatic' part and the 'paraenetic' part challenge each other so much that the 'dogmatic' teaching about the 'justification' through faith in Christ discloses the deepest core of its meaning only when the paraenetic part about the mutual love of the members of the body begins to speak—for that faith is the radical 'catching-up' of the existence of man into the state of being snatched away out of its lostness, which has already been accomplished through the love of Christ on the Cross. It is faith only as an obedient handing over of oneself, an act of making oneself dependent on the 'incredible' force of the love of God in Christ: and this obedience in faith to love directly obliges the existence of man to become itself a *tupos* of others, a sign that points to the absolute love.[11] In their own way, the Gospels reflect the fundamental figure: their subject, more exclusively than in the Epistles, is the force of the love that presses forward in the person of Christ, in his work and in his dying—and indeed this is so much so, that at the beginning (in Mark) the burden of the pressure is felt to be so heavy that its verbalisation as love (in the way that John will later definitively undertake this verbalisation) seems almost secondary—but nevertheless, the Gospels show Jesus always only in the circle of the disciples, of enemies and adherents, and they hint, in a hidden manner or more openly, that this situation is an anticipation of the situation of the Christian community. In the Gospels too, 'christology' occurs only in the framework of 'ecclesiology', however much it is true that this variegated 'Church' of men around Jesus is gathered, held together, and determined in its behaviour *only* through his person and presence.

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[10] On the question of the grounding of authority and of its expression, *cf.* N. A. Dahl, 'Formgeschichtliche Beobachtungen zur Christusverkündigung in der Gemeindepredigt', in: *Ntl. Studien für R. Bultmann*, *BZNW* 2nd edn. 1957. pp. 3ff.

[11] 1 John and 1 Peter weave dogma and paraenesis even more closely together: thereby they bolt the door against a (Lutheran) setting of tension between the acts of faith (towards God) and love (towards the neighbour), but they could lend support to the opposite evil of no longer seeing these acts in their hierarchic order, so that—at least in 1 Peter—the archetype of the suffering love of Christ rather too quickly changes into a model for the suffering Christian (1 Pet 2.18–24; 4.12–19).

The Church, which allows the Christ-event to govern it in faith, love and (because this is its goal) hope, produced the scriptures of the new covenant within itself as if unintentionally, as the spontaneous expression of its experience of the in-breaking of absolute love. In the following generations, the Church will try to live up to this model which was given by the Holy Spirit who bestows the first correct understanding; the Church will do this by opening up for itself the riches of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col 2.2–3) hidden in Christ who is the mystery of God, to make these the subject of the prayer of praise and thanksgiving, and of preaching, and by protecting these riches at the same time from the mistaken interpretations which lurk everywhere (as the Apostles had done already). At this point, theology develops; we shall speak of this in the next section. To close this section, we must only show how the historical structure of the Church perseveres through the fluctuations of the epochs as the subject that receives revelation. This the Church does only by building up and maintaining its visible unity (which is strictly required as the form of expression by the mystery of the love in its midst) around the incomprehensible presence of the event of the Cross and Resurrection of Christ as the self-attestation of the trinitarian love of God. This is a unity which permits the unity of the bride, which is hidden but really incarnated through the Spirit, to appear outwardly in the Church's act of celebrating the Eucharist, which as the presence and the proclamation of God's loving death institutes the midpoint which gives form to the Church, and at the same time demands that love be made effective. Thereby community is gathered around the Apostle or his follower and representative, and in this the force of the 'authority' of Christ makes itself present; the centring of the episcopal 'authorities' in the Petrine summit is a consequence of the realisation of the inner principle of unity in each of the particular churches, but on the other hand, it finds its confirmation in the indubitable designation in the Gospels of Peter as the *primus inter pares* among the Apostles. As we said above when speaking of the relationship between 'the woman' and 'the city', the Petrine principle is the transparence outwardly of the inner character of the Church as bride, wife and mother, and this in its turn is a testimony to the incarnated, eucharistic presence in her womb of the love of God in Christ which creates the Church. In this paradoxical visibility and invisibility, the Church lives only from love for the love which creates her as the body and the bride of love: that is her consistence, her identity through the ages, her credibility.

As she ponders her own mystery, a mystery that can never be at her own disposal, the Church can never come to an end of her meditation on the mystery of love. In 'Scripture' she has a model of the mystery of love and of her relationship to it, but nothing more; in the theological tradition which finds its embodiment down through the ages, the Church has a continuous enrichment of this meditation. But this meditation must always adjust itself and correct itself afresh by means of the first model, and must maintain itself in an oscillating balance over against displacements of emphasis, disturbances of equilibrium, and damaging exaggerations of one aspect; yet it always holds on to the infallible guiding-line through the labyrinth of the epochs, of the changes in formulation, of the accommodations to various situations—this guiding-line, this Ariadne's thread, is the undiminished pressure of the ever-greater love of God in the Church, and the requirement to respond through visible unity to this principle which wholly determines and gives form to the Church. Naturally, the mystery of love finds countless, ever new expressions in the Church, which shade off into one another down through the ages; at one time, the love of the Father stands in the foreground, and the whole work of Christ remains transparently open to this love as its instruments; another time, this eternal love will be adored in a reverent tenderness towards the incarnate love that suffers in the heart of Jesus; another time again, the eternal love is adored predominantly as the Spirit of Father and Son, in the encounter between redeemed brethren. But each aspect always requires the others, and none will ever be dispensable. It is in the continuity of her looking to the mystery of the trinitarian, incarnate love of God that the Church has her ontic, historic, theological and existential unity: this is instituted in her depths as 'immaculate' and 'infallible', but in the empirical form of the Church it can experience threats and distortions which disfigure it so that it is unrecognisable. Every reform that strives to recover the unity of the subject that receives revelation must hold fast to what has been instituted in the Church (once for all in Cross and Resurrection, and ever new in the event of the Eucharist), which belongs immediately to the event 'than which nothing greater can be thought'. The Church in her being has a future, for the reason that what is instituted in her can neither be intellectually exhausted nor existentially used up by any age of the Church. The more it is thought about and lived (especially by those whom one calls 'saints'), the more inexhaustible—and hence the more belonging to the future—does it rise before the eyes of the faithful.[12]

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[12] Henri de Lubac has discussed in an incomparable manner the way in which ecclesiastical tradition distinguishes itself from secular tradition, because in the former, beyond all the strangenesses and barriers caused by forms of thought and views of the world that have since disappeared, an immediate communication is brought about by the fresh love, always remaining the same, for the unique mystery: 'To give one example, how far away from us lie . . . the Alexandrians of the third century, or the Africans of the fifth century. What a change in our thinking we must make, when we cross over from our world into theirs! . . . How unreal and disappointing most of their questions seem to us! . . . But as we turn over the pages, a NAME suddenly appears, and like a flash of lightning it parts the clouds that hang overhead . . . Life penetrates the limbs . . . In his love for Jesus, an Origen, an Augustine, is truly a contemporary. They are

Thereby is it clear that the subject who receives the Word can never be the isolated individual as he reads or studies or prays. The 'key of knowledge' (Lk 11.52) is handed over by the key-bearer (Rev 1.18) and seal-opener (Rev 5.5) to the one who symbolises the Church (Mt 16.19). The individual as individual has his significance too, when he is inserted into her in the Spirit, for we have seen that the Church in her hidden core is an individual person—*anima* mea, *spiritus* meus, *beatam* me *dicent omnes* (Lk 1.47f.) (*my* soul, *my* spirit, all will call *me* blessed)—and thereby universally justifies the individual (but never in isolation) in his decision of faith and love.

c. On the form of theology

It has already become clear that theology in the Bible can have no fundamentally different form from later theology in the Church: each is an interpretative act of standing and circling around a midpoint that can indeed be interpreted, but is always in need of interpretation and has never been exhaustively interpreted. Having established this, we first of all leave the theology of the New Testament by itself, and will come back to it at the end of this section. It would be senseless to object to its multiple character both in its growth by stages in time and in its end-product of theologies that remain standing beside each other; it is precisely this form that is the sign of its genuineness. If it were possible to produce a 'harmony of the Gospels' and, correspondingly, a harmony of all the New Testament theologies in the sense of

our fathers, our brothers. And however far our researches reach, in whatever direction they stretch out, the experience which is made becomes broader. The single fundamental intention pulls everything in order around itself like a magnet' (*L'Eglise*, cited in 2nd German edn. 1968, pp. 47–48). Through the millennia, therefore, all theological understanding is one in that it is an understanding, in ever new and different ways, of the same love of God in Christ, arising out of the same subject, the loving Church which seeks to comprehend what has been bestowed on it. There is no theology otherwise than this.

a system, then gnosis would have won the victory over agape, and anthropology would have swallowed up theology into itself. On the other hand, the incomprehensibility of love is always interpreted in speech, and thus points to theology (God-speech), whether the word 'prophetically' gives an interpretation that looks to the coming act of God, or 'kerygmatically' contains the act within itself, or, highest of all, the act itself breaks forth as 'the hermeneutic of God' (Jn 1.18). And so, anyone wishing to look for acts and events 'behind' the interpretative Word would necessarily push forward into emptiness. In all this, the new covenant only brings the structure of the old covenant to a conclusion. Naturally, we must reserve for a later section the consideration of the not-word of Jesus' death, which is the midpoint, never exhaustively interpreted, of the New Testament; the unfathomable character of the Christian paradox is left in the meantime to one side, in its utter questionableness.

Nevertheless, with this continuing reservation, we shall begin by looking ahead into history. From the second century onwards, two factors dominate the coming-to-be of Christian theology. First, there is the offer made within the Bible, to interpret the fullness of Christ as fulfilment of the promise in the Old Testament (this is only to continue the New Testament writers' method of understanding), in order to find ever new and different ways, in the 'leap' from old to new covenant, of measuring the distance of the fulfilment from everything promised, while yet upholding the unity of the work. Second, there is the necessity to take the definitive step from the thinking of the Bible out into the (hellenistic) thinking of mankind, because it is necessary to preach to the Gentiles and to reveal to them 'apologetically'—but also, on a deeper level, in a genuinely 'theological' way—the relationship between philosophy (human speech about God) and theology (as a word from God). Fortunately, both factors were bound together by the deepest internal logic. On the one hand, the Bible already contained within itself the supranational and ecumenical horizon, through its third sector (beside the law and the prophets), the Wisdom literature. The translations which Paul, the Gospels, Clement of Rome, and the apologists undertook were no μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος; this all the less, because (unlike the case of Philo, for example) they were authorised to do this through the event of the Incarnation itself; as the Alexandrians above all, following the apologists, recognised, the Incarnation of the Logos is an event which affects mankind as a whole, and therefore can legitimately be proclaimed to all peoples in the language of their thought, and made internally understandable. This was what Luke intended, when he expressly brought the *oikumene* of Augustus and that of Christ into direct confrontation with one another (Lk 2.1f.). On the other hand, the religious philosophies of late Antiquity were ready, waiting to get to work on the new 'mystery', which apparently was merely another of many contemporary 'mysteries', to transform it into a gnosis and understand it at a glance as a cosmic 'drama of salvation'. The means whereby to assimilate the Christ event into pagan categories was the changing of the transcendence within the Bible (promise—fulfilment) into a dividing dialectic: the element of Jewish particularity appeared as that which was set in hostile contradiction to the universal insight of man. But this dialectic was merely the polemically sharpened original contradiction between God and the world in extra-biblical thought, a contradiction which could be solved there only by a negative interpretation of the reality of the world and by its absorption into the fullness of God. Thus, in Irenaeus and in part in Tertullian, the intra-biblical gnosis, viz. the understanding of the transcendence of the fulfilment over all promise, becomes the saving counter-argument against the extra-biblical gnosis that corrodes the mystery. Christian theology was kindled within the New Testament by this scheme and began to develop, but it was with the same weapons that it won the decisive first victory over Hellenism: it was precisely when the continuity between old covenant (and thereby world of creation, and Father-God) and new covenant (as mystery of the love of the triune God in Christ) was guaranteed, that the importance for all men of the specifically Christian was demonstrated. The 'jolt' from the old covenant to the new became the normative step, by which it became possible to see (not arbitrarily, but as in an archetype) how God deals with mankind as its teacher, 'by evolution'.

This first passage of arms was somewhat external: true gnosis (as recognition of the mystery of love, that is not to be mastered by philosophical thought) was matched against false gnosis. A second passage was necessary, in order not merely to defeat philosophical thinking on its own ground, but rather to bring it into service of the mystery itself. This was the achievement of the ecumenical councils, which in their own way and their own period extended the sketches established in the New Testament into the concepts of Greek thought. Their success lay in using precisely the means of metaphysics to ward off the danger of the absorption of what was decisively biblical and Christian into a universal metaphysical schema. With the concept of οὐσία, Nicaea smashes the Neoplatonic subordinationist schema, seemingly the only acceptable one for Greek thinkers, with which they sought to think of the production of the multiplicity ('world') from the unity ('God'); moreover with the ὁμο(ούσιον) concept, it carries the quality of relationship ('God from God, light from light') into the absolute being, as this is uniquely but necessarily required by the implications of the theology of the New Testament, when these are thought through to the end; and there Nicaea revolutionises the concept of God: in his 'personal relationships', God is eternal, absolute love, something that could never have been thought of metaphysically. And it is precisely this revelation of God that alone explains the possibility of the world, viz. as a 'creation out of love': no system of emanations could ever have explained the world thus. Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon complete the work, making additions, protecting against dangers on different sides, so that the distance (recognised only with help of the Bible) between the living God and his creature can be decisively (ἀσυγχύτως) ensured, and can be recognised in the final christological unifying (ἕνωσις ἀδιαιρέτως) in the reason for its existence—as the indispensable presupposition for the unifying work of absolute love, which can share itself and mark its name on what is other, what is not love, only on this basis: the 'immanent' Trinity is recognised in the 'economic' Trinity. No matter how defective philosophical concepts may always remain in the attempt to come close to this mystery and describe it—φύσις, ὑπόστασις, etc., the limited expressive potential of which is clearly demonstrated by the alternating statements of the councils—still the translation of the conceptuality of the (predominantly semitic) Bible which serves predominantly to speak of events in history, into a conceptuality of the fully open horizon of being, behind which our questioning cannot penetrate, was a valid expression of the fact that, with Christ's death and Resurrection and with the outpouring over Church and world of the Spirit who is within the Godhead, the highest self-disclosure of absolute being (inaccessible to philosophy) has taken place. This by no means excludes the possibility that other metaphysical thought-forms, in other periods or cultures, may offer themselves afresh as vehicles of the translation of the mystery; indeed, this is suggested by the flexibility of the terminology from council to council.[1] These acts of formulation brought an undeniable gain, but there was an equivalent loss which threatened and which derived from a certain kind of thoughtlessness that could no longer distinguish between the level of the living revelation of the old and the new covenants, and the level of the theological expression of this revelation, as though any theology, even a conciliar theology or (above all) a theology of 'definition', could ever be anything other than a pointer to the reality which, by definition, will always elude every conceptual formulation. This loss, which is to be reckoned to the account of human sluggishness in thought, early on gave the impression that Christianity is above all a doctrine, nothing short of a system of 'propositions to be held as true'. This is a defective way of expressing the fact that Christianity is faith in an act of God's trinitarian love, an act which he has taken the initiative in accomplishing, in a manner unattainable to all yearning and expectation of man; one can and should reflect subsequently on this act, and give it stammering expression in propositions, but it will be recognised (in the self-giving of faith) for what it is, only when it remains, in all its articulations (or individual dogmas), the act—behind which our thinking cannot penetrate—by which absolute love takes on the character of an event *pro nobis*.

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[1] With the interpretation of the chief utterances of the biblical revelation, the teaching on Incarnation and Trinity, within an ecclesiology that is implied in the thinking but is not yet dogmatically explicit, we find in the great councils of the patristic age—still in the framework of undivided Christianity—a second model for all subsequent theology (after the model of Holy Scripture) set up. To this we must appropriately add the great utterances of patristic theology, which lead to these definitions and subsequently think out their consequences. Here is the great model of every 'accommodation' of biblical thought forms to a world horizon broadened to take in the *oikumene*. As Christians of today, we are substantially bound to the biblical revelation-event *also* through the historical continuity of the Church's faith, and therefore cannot do without looking towards that first model (which remains normative, in all its relativity), when we undertake the accommodations and translations required of us. *Cf.* J. Ratzinger, 'Die Bedeutung der Väter für die gegenwärtige Theologie', *TQ* 148 (1968), pp. 257–282.

Parallel to the dogmatic theology of the councils, making additions and corrections to it, runs the theology of Holy Scripture, its foundations spaciously laid down by Origen above all,[2] then taken over by the entirety of the fathers[3] and by scholasticism, with ever new elaborations of the structures. Externally, the basic form of the hellenistic exegesis of the ancient myths of poetry, which gave them concrete application by means of cosmological and anthropological actualisation (an exegesis begun by the Stoic and Platonic philosophers, and modified by Philo), is taken over, in order to fill it internally with a wholly different content which is directly opposite: the relationship between the 'literal' and the 'spiritual' (allegorical) senses becomes a means of expressing the relationship between the old covenant and the new, between the whole 'historical' salvation history of Israel and the new, personal and 'pneumatic' sense towards which this history aims, but which transcends it and rests wholly in the objective Christ event. But this event opens itself further into two interpretative dimensions: the 'tropological' sense, which we today would call the existential sense which affects me in my existence in faith, and the 'anagogical' (leading upwards) sense, which we today would term the eschatological and futurist sense—since the Christ event is indeed proleptically the Omega of the world, but the total content of this event will be disclosed only through the historical bringing of the fullness of the world into the heavenly Jerusalem, the whole of Scripture, both old and new covenants, remains (though in a differentiated manner) a *promise* that looks to the unveiling of its entire meaning in the future. The threefold transcendence which opens out from the biblical-historical event—opening out upon Christ as the presence of the triune God in the world, upon the receiving subject Israel-Church-myself(-cosmos), and upon the consummation of Christ in his total body or kingdom—indicates quite different paths of development for Christian theology than was possible for conciliar dogmatic theology; and it remains the lasting corrective of the conciliar dogmatic theology, even in the transformations and not infrequent narrownesses of modern biblical thinking.

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[2] H. de Lubac, *Geist aus der Geschichte. Das Schriftverständnis des Origenes* (German trans. 1968).

[3] H. de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale*, 4 vols. (1959–1963).

This biblical theology has at its heart the leap first from promise to fulfilment, but more deeply, from death to resurrection, and draws its life from the constantly renewed accomplishing of this leap; this theology can and must dare to offer itself to dogmatic systematics as its inner form. Besides this, the biblical theology (in the 'tropology') does not forget that all historical theology, like dogmatic theology, has to serve the Christian proclamation and the Christian life of witness; as 'anagogy', it does not forget that the Christ event, which has taken place once for all, is never left behind us, but always in the highest pitch of reality stands *before* us as our future and the future of the world, as the grace which is never graspable, but, precisely in this, makes a challenge that presses ever anew onwards, determining the history of the Church and the world. Once again, we come up against the facts of the matter, which were sketched at the end of the preceding section: namely, that the Christ event exists only in correlation to the event of the Church and can be thought and expressed only so, and that it is only within this situation of reciprocity that the individual can appropriately situate himself in his believing and in his theologising. Outside the circulation of love between bridegroom and bride, between head and body, no one will ever know what theology signifies, and still less, what is the momentum of the glory of the divine love.

We must look back again from this abiding double form of theology through the centuries, to its foundation in Scripture itself. To speak aprioristically, if the history of Jesus of Nazareth was correctly understood and interpreted by the post-Easter community as the superabundant fulfilment of the covenantal love and fidelity established by God in the old covenant, then it was absolutely impossible to comprehend this history, to meditate on it and put it into words, otherwise than as actually happened, otherwise than as the sacred writers in their naive openness set it out and, indeed, practically force it upon us. For them, the following of Jesus before Easter was at best a dawning understanding (corresponding to the condition of the Word of God itself in its 'lowliness' which affects both the form and the content of the Word).[4] But the disclosure by the brilliant light of Easter of the sense of Jesus' past life (and especially of his Passion, of the meaning of the old covenant as a whole, of the reality of the Church under the Holy Spirit) must of necessity take place by stages; it was not necessary that they should turn to Is 53 on the very first day—although this has happened by the time the pre-Pauline texts (1 Cor 15.3; Rom 4.24f) were compressed. As a whole, the theology of the New Testament is in a process of coming-to-be; it is a 'period of discovery' that has not come to an end. Thus, the method of type and antitype is tested out by Paul on only a few examples, as if fortuitously, and these are certainly not intended as an exhaustive treatment, but rather as models to be followed (*cf.* 1 Cor 10.6–10). *A*

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[4] On the analogy between the kenosis of Jesus and the kenosis of the word of Scripture, *cf.* the Constitution *Dei Verbum* 3, ch.13, and what we shall say below about the parables of Jesus. Similarly, the chapter on Hamann in Vol. III of this work, above, pp. 239ff., and W. Leibrecht, 'Philologia Crucis', *KuD* 1 (1955), pp. 226–242.

priori, we should expect nothing else than the transpositions of pre-Easter words and events into the Church's sphere of understanding (opened up through the Spirit), and corresponding transpositions of the narrow historical situation of Jesus into the widened situation of the Church, which itself can be emphasised in very diverse ways—as the situation of the end-times in a new sense (later to be determined), as the situation in contemporary history (e.g., determined by the first persecutions), or finally as the situation of church history as such (first of all in the Lucan sense). This already shows that as the understanding widens out illimitably, it contains not only a succession of degrees of understanding which are separated from each other as they go more deeply, but also from the beginning a coexistence of theologies with different centres of understanding, which bring the same fundamental elements into different crystallisation around themselves. But these diverging theologies, which contain indeed quite contradictory emphases—as with the Pauline theology of justification by faith and the theology in Matthew and James of the superabundant fulfilment of the law—are all related to each other, and form in their roots a mesh that cannot be unravelled; it can be demonstrated (though seldom in a manner that can be taken in at a glance) that there are also literary influences from the one to the other, and that they acknowledge one another even when they seek to balance one-sided accents, that apparently were open to misunderstanding, by setting opposite accents (Jas 2.20ff. with Rom 4; 2 Pet 3.15ff., Mt 5.17ff. etc.). With all the personal and material tension between the tendencies represented by the 'pillars' (Peter, James, John, Paul), there reigns unity—not primarily on the level of 'brotherliness', but in their common looking upwards to the one personal centre of all theologies, to Jesus the Christ of God, the appearing and exposition of the love of the Father. Only so can one understand the fact that Paul, when the unity of the Church is put to the decisive test (Acts 21.17ff.), is ready to relativise his own point of view, which he has very emphatically stated (Letters to the Galatians and to the Romans), by obeying the counsel of James and submitting himself to the Jewish observances. This is an act of well-nigh blind obedience, but one that is carried out by a man who knows and sees that the entire theology of the Church transcends every individual aspect, however necessary and profound it may be; and that this theology is no gnosis that makes progress towards a system by means of inevitable dialectical steps, but the agape of God in Christ, displayed in his body as a body composed of the loving unity of many serving members. The New Testament, inspired by the same Holy Spirit who inspires the Church, could therefore have no other structure than the Church: in the multiplicity, a unity; and the living principle of this unity dwells in it only because it first of all (as head) transcends it.[5]

The true act of birth of the new Scripture is found in the first spontaneous generations of dogma, and in the first syntheses which were made by faith under the impression of the risen Jesus and of the Spirit who was experienced: 'Jesus is the Christ', 'he is the Son of God', 'he is the Lord', etc. Everything that follows is only a making explicit of these syntheses; the whole of the Old Testament is drawn upon and laid claim to, and incorporated into the synthesis as the property of the Church. And even if it is an ineffable marvel that is expressed in these syntheses, yet they are, as such, quite adequate, just as the *fiat* by which Mary gave permission was adequate. It is around this verbalisation of the mystery—no stammering or approximate formulation, but an exact verbalisation—that the theologies of the New Testament crystallise, and likewise the entire biblical and dogmatic theology of the Church, which is their continuation. Everything that remains to be said subsequently, is the justification of the first dogmatic act of generation, or theological '*a priori* synthesis'. The term '*a priori*' bears here a particular, unique meaning: it refers to the inner logic of love in the covenant which achieves its fulfilment between the God who discloses himself as love and the man who receives him (through God's grace in faith). This logic of love will not be grasped by any observer who stands outside, any more than an act between husband and wife will be experienced by anyone other than the two who accomplish it. Only, the logic of the divine intimacy has become so open and universal in the synthesis 'Jesus is the Christ', that anyone who wills can enter its heart and, by participating in faith, can experience and understand its urgency.

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[5] Therefore there can be substantially more in a text of Scripture than the sacred writer consciously willed to express in the text. The research into first the literary form, second the situations in which the text was produced, and third the pre-existing forms of thinking, speech and narration influenced by the contemporary world, is undoubtedly an indispensable means to acquire the correct understanding, and achieves the 'scientific preparatory work, on the basis of which the judgment of the Church matures'. Nevertheless, this judgment is influenced also by taking into consideration first the content and unity of the whole of Scripture, second the living tradition of the universal Church, and third the analogy of faith (which in the last analysis is the one faith of the Church in its articulations). *Cf. Dei Verbum* 3, ch. 12.

If the momentum of the glory of the divine love is experienced in the reciprocity of Christ and the Church, and if this experience is reflected upon as theology, then the *kabod* (in its definitive New Testament understanding) moves methodologically also into the midpoint of theology. The momentum of God's act in the existence of Jesus, an existence which on the basis of its unique claim offers an interpretation of itself that points ever more unambiguously to the momentum of the Cross, and which on the basis of the resurrection of Jesus is experienced and explained in the Church definitively as the *kabod* of the eternal love that is present and radiant in the Christ event, brings the theology of the Old Testament to its accomplishment; for now the synthesis between the pressing Word of God and the mediator who bears it (prophet, high priest, lamb of sacrifice, servant of God, and Messiah) has been brought about and transcended in the New Testament in the paradox of the righteous one who is 'made to be sin' and is 'condemned', and who 'justifies' the condemned sinners—the paradox which is the unsurpassable momentum of divine love, that can never be constrained into any system of human reasoning. A theology that understands itself on the basis of this centre distinguishes itself from a mere 'fundamentalism' of facts of salvation, strung together 'to be believed', inasmuch as in advance of any stringing together, the immediate encounter of the self-giving love of God in Christ with the (bride-) Church, who receives and therein gives herself again, takes place—an encounter in which the 'facts of salvation' have importance only as moments that light up, and at once are reintegrated into the whole. On the other hand, this theology distinguishes itself also from a liberal existentialism, for which the objective *kabod* of the love of God that presses forwards is watered down to an 'impulse' that encounters the individual from the historical Jesus and his example and model, or (if this is unattainable) from the kerygma that is proclaimed. Nevertheless, the Church's continually actual meeting with the glory of God remains bound to the historical meeting of Jesus with his first disciples, or with his first community; this encounter is not to be interpreted in its momentum through all time as timeless nor as exclusively futuristic—it is futuristic because in the present it is never wholly graspable, never to be finished off, and therefore contains within itself the promise of an 'exceedingly great measure of the weight of the momentum of glory' (2 Cor 4.17). Theology takes place, therefore, centrally in the making-over of this momentum of God's love to the Church, as this gives itself expression and the Church tries to respond to God in her existence and in the reply of her understanding. The encounter itself is a presence that is empirically never fully comprehensible—for example, in the existential or liturgical situation of an individual such as a theologian, or of a community: all that is empirical must transcend itself anew and transfer itself into the greater, 'transcendent', but absolutely concrete reality of the universal church. That is the true meaning of the adage, *per Mariam ad Jesum, per Jesum ad Patrem*, 'through Mary to Jesus, through Jesus to the Father'. For this reason, empirical theology can never be completed and self-contained.

3. WORD—FLESH

a. The claim

The beginning of the history of Jesus appeared as a concentrated, transcending summary of the history of Israel. After the methodological consideration which has now been introduced, one would expect that the entire unfolding of his history would be depicted, in its details, in the hues of the 'promise' (for his history is the fulfilment of the promise),[1] and likewise that his history would be given its place within the indissoluble nexus between event (Christ) and interpretation (Church). The second nexus assumes the first into itself, and determines it, but thereby acknowledges that it itself is determined by the first nexus. This circularity has an internal necessity, *if* the truth of the event of Jesus, in order to be known in its authentic character, presupposes faith as the vessel which alone is capable of accommodating its interpretation. The decision of faith is the presupposition, not only for the act of seeing the event of Jesus correctly, but also for the act whereby the event *lets itself* be seen correctly.[2] Thus, it is not a matter of excavating the 'supposed historical *bruta facta*' that lie behind the Church's faith, but of encountering the truth that conceals and discloses itself here, in its ever-new transition between the act of self-disclosure and the act of believing comprehension, understanding and interpretation of what is revealed; and in this, it is necessary to note how precisely the interpretation stands in continuity with what is interpreted, even when for the sake of this continuity it must make use of other concepts and thought-forms. What for Jesus was most urgent, can be so for the interpreting Church only if she lets it assume this character of supreme urgency *for herself*: and this is possible only when the Jesus who proclaims becomes the Jesus who is proclaimed.[3] The following chapters will demonstrate that this transposition is not only legitimate, but absolutely necessary. The right approach does not consist in asking what Jesus said and did, and what he did not say and do, or which 'titles of sovereignty' he applied to himself and which not; it consists in asking what was the necessary presupposition of the act whereby his community formed his words, deeds and titles in the way it did. Naturally, this requires a continuity, which we can leave formulated in as formal, as seemingly empty a way as we like: it is precisely this *formal* matter, viz. Jesus' claim to authority, that is the foundation that maintains itself through all the formulations that give it content, the foundation that generates the formulations from itself. And this foundation is not concealed in the interpretations, but rather shines through along with them; for this, there is no more apt name than that of the original *kabod*, the unique momentum here of the one who is present, whether he utters the ἐγώ εἰμι explicitly or not.

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[1] *Cf.* not so much the quotations which offer a reflection, as some miracle narratives, and especially the Passion narrative. On this, *cf.* E. Hoskyns and N. Davey, *The Riddle of the New Testament* (1931).

[2] For this reason, theology is the unique science across the methods of which the decision of faith cuts, and divides it into two halves that cannot be united to each other: a genuine theology, which presupposes faith and does its thinking within the nexus of Christ and the Church; and a false theology, which rejects faith as methodologically dubious and irresponsible, and subsumes the truth of the phenomenon which discloses itself, under an anthropological truth (however this may be understood).

The first question, therefore, will not at all be, 'What was the chief concern of Jesus in his preaching?',[4] but, 'What was the chief impression that remained from his earthly existence?' It is historically certain that he was crucified because of a presumptuous claim that could be given a political interpretation, and brought him the inscription on the cross, 'The king of the Jews'. But this 'presumption' is the formal thread that runs consistently through all the Gospels and marks off his activity so strongly from that of the Baptist. It is not, therefore, the prophetic-apocalyptic message of the nearness of the kingdom of heaven that distinguishes the appearing of the two—Matthew can clothe the call to repentance of both John and Jesus in exactly the same words, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near!' (3.2 = 4.17). One could free both calls from the historical clothing of apocalyptic imminent expectation, and one would then have an identical appeal to men to repent in the face of the eschatological situation. But the evangelists have elaborated very precisely the difference between the two calls: the Baptist points to the one who is coming after him (whether this is God, or his 'messenger' or 'angel', Mal 3.1, but Jesus points to no one who should come after him. After him comes no one else,[5] and he is identical with the content of his call. It is not correct to say that he summons man to make man's own decision: he himself in every case makes the decision about the man.

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[3] 'The problematic of our problem consists in the fact that the exalted Lord has almost completely absorbed the image of the earthly Lord, and yet the community asserts the identity of the exalted one with the earthly one. There is however no hope of solving this problematic . . . by taking hold of supposed historical *bruta facta*, but only by taking hold of the unity and tension between the preaching of Jesus and that of his community. The question about the historical Jesus is legitimately the question about the continuity of the gospel in the discontinuity of the periods of time and in the variation of the kerygma': E. Käsemann, *Das Problem des historischen Jesus* (1954), in: *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen*, Vol. I (4th edn. 1969), p. 213 (ET 'The Problem of the historical Jesus', in *Essays on New Testament Themes*, 1964, pp. 15–47).

[4] 'Is it the proclamation of the Father-God and of love to all brother-men? Is it an apocalyptic message, explainable on the basis of the contemporary situation and inner disposition of Judaism, with a glowing-hot near expectation, which became a lasting and definitive religion only

The fourth evangelist, on the basis of the old covenant, summarises this in the theological abbreviation: 'the Word became flesh'. What 'Word'? The word in Jeremiah: 'Is not my Word like fire, and like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces?' (23.29); the word in the Book of Wisdom: 'Thy all-powerful Word leaped from heaven, a stern warrior carrying the sharp sword of thy authentic command . . . and touched heaven while standing on the earth' (18.15f.);[6] the word of the Letter to the Hebrews, which in itself describes

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through the early Church? Is it a prophetic-eschatological summons to each man to make the existential decision?': R. Schnackenburg, *Neutestamentliche Theologie* (1963), pp. 59f.

[5] In the meantime, we leave to one side the problem of Lk 12.8 par.

[6] The context is an Old Testament context, the slaughter of the Egyptians. Lest they should die in sleep, with no understanding of the well-earned judgment that is to come upon them, they are put in the picture

not Jesus,[7] but the Word of God: 'For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning (κριτικός) the thoughts and intentions of the heart' (4.12). Such texts give us the perspective from which to look at Pauline theology, which was indeed first on the scene ('We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ', 2 Cor 5.10), at the Synoptic Gospels and then at John (Jesus as judge, Jn 5.19–47; 7.15–24; 8.13–20), and at Revelation ('From his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword', 1.16; 'I will war against them with the sword of my mouth', 2.16; 'He who sat upon the cloud swung his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped', 14.16).

Jesus' claim to decide about men is certain, on the ground of his death; it is the formal *Leitmotiv* of all the Gospels. It is only for this reason that Jesus is very quickly denounced as crazy or possessed (Mk 3.22ff. par., emphatically underlined by John at 8.48f.). Whatever his position on the law of Moses may have been in points of detail and as a whole—rejecting it, agreeing with it, or discriminating within it[8]—it is certain that he took it upon himself to make a judgment about the whole law, and thereby set his own authority alongside (and thus above) that of Moses.[9] We must not overlook the fact that the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount—'You have

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through 'dreams which disturbed them and forewarned them of this, so that they might not perish without knowing why they suffered' (18.19).

[7] C. Spicq, commentary on Hebrews, ad loc. (Vol. II, p. 87).

[8] *Cf.* the summary of the question by W. Trilling, *Fragen zur Geschichtlichkeit Jesu* (2nd edn. 1967), pp. 82–96.

[9] 'All exegetes agree that it is not possible to doubt the authenticity of the first, second and fourth antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount. It is a fact that these words belong to what is most astonishing in the Gospels. They go beyond the literal wording of the Torah in the same way that any rabbi could do when interpreting the sense of the Scripture; yet it is decisive that with the phrase ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω an authority is claimed alongside and opposed to the authority of Moses. But anyone who claims authority alongside and opposed to Moses has as a matter of fact set himself above Moses, and has ceased to be a rabbi, for a rabbi's authority is only one derived from Moses . . . There exist, and can exist, no parallels to this within Judaism . . . The unheard-of character of the logion attests its genuineness': E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 206 (ET pp. 37f.).

heard . . . but I say to you'—are spoken by the man who comes fresh from the great temptation in the wilderness, in which he has engaged in scriptural disputation with the devil and has strained out the Word of God until he has obtained its most interior, most formal significance, and has done this in the power of the Holy Spirit who was bestowed on him at the baptism. There is no doubt that 'he understood himself to be inspired'.[10] By virtue of his discernment of the whole law, he can distinguish its details too, and can on occasion appeal back from 'your traditions' to the original intention of the law (Mt 15.3–9), but can also, as in the case of divorce, appeal back from the concessions of Moses to the original intention of God (Mt 19.3–9). He can justify this original intention, in its superior position to the holiest commandment, that of the sabbath, with a logion so bold that only Mark dares quote it: 'The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath' (2.27).[11] He seems to have repeatedly shown openly this superiority of his to the sabbath, or, better, the greater urgency of his commission when compared with that of the sabbath.[12] The urgent demands of the Pharisees for a 'sign' that will give confirmation are a sufficient indication that Jesus' claim far exceeded the normal authority of an interpreter of the law who spoke in the name of God.

Just as his gaze pierces through in judgment and decision right to the very heart of the law,[13] so he sees with 'eyes like a flame of fire' (Rev 1.14; 2.18) into the hearts of men, which lie uncovered before him. The motif is constant: Jesus knows the hidden thoughts of the hearts of the disciples (Lk 9.47), of those who put him to the test (Lk 11.17), of the Pharisees

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[10] *Ibid.*, p. 209 (ET p. 41).

[11] Mt and Lk have only the theological consequence appended by Mk: 'So the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath', Mt 12.8; Lk 6.5.

[12] Mk 2.23ff. par.; 3.2ff. par; Mt 12.11ff.; Lk 13.10–16; 14.3–5; Jn 5.10, 16; 9.14, 16.

[13] One cannot, therefore, apply to him what the Letter of James says: 'If you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but its judge' (4.11). Now Jesus is both, one who keeps the law (Mt 5.17), and judge: thus what follows in James can be applied to him, 'There is one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy' (Jas 4.12).

(Mt 12.25), of the man who invites him to a meal (Lk 7.39ff.); he 'at once' sees through the thoughts of the scribes (Mk 2.8), he 'sees through their hypocrisy' (Mk 12.15); but he also sees at once the faith of those who stand before him (Mt 9.2; Mk 2.5; Lk 5.20), or their lack of faith (Lk 8.25), and he knows his betrayer (Mt 26.20ff.; Jn 13.21f.).[14] In John, he measures with his glance Simon who appears before him, and tells him who he really is (1.40ff.); not only does he see through Nathanael when he is presented to him, but he has already seen the one who looks at him now ('Come and see', 1.46)[15] when he was hidden (1.48); he knows all about the Samaritan woman's past and present, and discloses this to her, judging her, but bringing her salvation (4.16ff.). He hears her confession, just as he indeed hears the confessions of all who come before him in their reality which is revealed only to his gaze. 'The people to whom he speaks, and with whom he has anything to do, are there in undisguised reality. They all bring something with them into their encounter with him: the righteous bring their righteousness, the scribes the weight of their learning and arguments, the tax-collectors and sinners their guilt, those who seek help their sickness, the demoniacs the fetters of their possession, and the poor the burden of their poverty. All this is not wiped out and a matter of indifference: but in this encounter, it no longer counts. For in this encounter, each one is required to leave what he was before. In all the narratives about Jesus, the moment occurs when people have to stand forth as the people they really are.'[16] This takes place in virtue of the light that falls on them from Jesus. The isolated logion, which fits in nowhere, is a self-utterance of Jesus for this state of affairs which is brought about through his presence: 'Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known' (Lk 12.2; 8.17; Mk 4.22). Since his seeing into men's hearts is one with his seeing into the heart of the law, it would be quite inadequate to speak of a 'charism of cardiognosis': the act of seeing through contains decision and judgment about what is laid bare. And this is definitive judgment, 'final' judgment—the claim made here makes no distinction between this and the judgment of God.

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[14] Mk 14.18f. is less clear.

[15] 'One ought to bring together once the passages in the Gospels which speak about this seeing, looking, seeing through by Jesus, without immediately being anxious that this is a sentimental request. In reality, we are dealing here with a very characteristic trait of the historical Jesus, one that is confirmed as exactly as possible by the type of his preaching': G. Bornkamm, *Jesus von Nazareth* (1956), p. 54 (ET *Jesus of Nazareth*, 1960, p. 60). In order to satisfy this request, it would be necessary to gather yet further individual aspects, e.g. Jesus' looking and acting at a distance (Lk 7.10; Jn 4.50), his looking into the future (to his coming suffering, Lk 9.51), his seeing Satan fall from heaven (Lk 10.18), and much else.

[16] G. Bornkamm, op. cit., p. 55 (ET p. 61).

It is decisively important to see here how the theological development of these notions in Paul, John, and the rest of the New Testament follows with no break in continuity from the 'confessional situation' of the narratives about Jesus. Even supposing that christology must let itself be voided of content till it is reduced to this formal point,[17] even supposing that the eschatological Son of Man who is coming to judge (at Lk 12.8) was distinguished by Jesus himself from the 'I' of whom men are ashamed on earth, or whom they confess—even so, the relationship between the two remains, because 'the coming Son of Man will judge and plead according to the present attitude of men to Jesus'.[18] 'Man is anxious to stand firm in the judgment and to enter the kingdom of God, and now he is told that this decision about his future is anticipated; it is made ... according to man's attitude to Jesus.' W. Marxsen can say at this point, with a certain right, 'that *this* (implicit) christology always expresses more than any so-called explicit christology',[19] and this because the momentum of this claim can never be equalled by any formulation of it in words.

At the same time, however, one must grant that the theological formulation exactly meets the 'confessional situation' of the narratives about Jesus and interprets this without deviation. We can continue to bracket off the question of the subjective 'messianic self-consciousness of Jesus', and still maintain that the transposition which Matthew effects on the logion we have quoted from Luke must be objectively correct: 'Whoever denies *me* before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven' (10.33). Then the fundamental idea of the fourth evangelist, that the judgment of God is present in Jesus, has its immediate correctness, in all its contradictory aspects. As the presence of the Word, he is God's judgment: that is, he is 'true light, that (in judgment) gives light to (or illuminates, makes visible) every man' (1.9), and draws the 'works' of every man to the light (3.19–21); here, it depends on the individual man whether he 'hates' this act of becoming disclosed in the light and then comes into judgment, or in faith willingly lets himself be 'led over' and enters the salvation of the light. It is therefore wholly exact when the Johannine Jesus says both: he has come into this world for judgment (9.39), but the judgment which takes place through his presence is not the aim (but only the consequence) of his coming and of his being the Word (3.17f.; 5.24–30); it is equally exact when he says that the whole of God's judgment has been 'committed' to himself (5.22ff.), but without saying thereby that God (the Father) had given up his function as judge, for 'God accomplishes his function as judge precisely *through* the Son' (as can be seen from 5.23).[20] But the penetrating Word, 'living, active, piercing, judging' (Heb 4.12), is something so definitively final that it is correctly described as the hour now present, 'when the dead (will) hear the voice of the Son of God' (Jn 5.25). Paul says the same when he directs his own existence and that of every Christian towards the moment when 'we must all be laid bare before the judgment seat of Christ' (2 Cor 5.10); for him too, this judgment of God (2 Tim 4.1, 8) is identical with the judgment of God (Rom 14.10ff.). And because the original situation of *being seen through* by Jesus (in a gaze that penetrates to faith or hypocrisy) is wholly integrated with Jesus' commission to salvation (about which we shall later speak thematically), the theological explication of the eschatological (or last, 'final') judgment of Christ as a sovereign act of decision and division is unavoidable and sets a limit to all questioning. Whatever the literary prehistory of the Matthaean parable of world judgment may be—the frame which has been built out round the kernel of logia about the criterion of judgment points back to the thinking within late Judaism about judgment—it is the conclusion of the whole preaching life of Jesus before the Passion, just as the final logion about the fullness of authority of the risen one (28.18–20) is the conclusion of the Gospel of Matthew as a whole. As this parable replaces the expression 'Son of Man' (25.31) subsequently by the title 'king' (25.34, 40), so Matthew replaces the 'man' who invites to his banquet in Luke (Lk 14.16ff.) by a 'king' (Mt 22.2) and closes the parable with this king's inspection of the guests as judge (22.11–13). And if to begin with, the parables are Jesus' hidden presentation of himself, in that they describe the attitude to the kingdom as, in the final analysis, an attitude to him or to his message,[21] then it is precisely Matthew who tends to carry over the immanent judgment in the parables into a judgment at the end of time.[22] Out of a parable about the big fish, for the sake of which the just fisherman throws all the little fish into the water (Gospel of Thomas 8),[23] Matthew constructs, in the material peculiar to his Gospel, a parable of judgment, in which the fish which at the end of time are good and rotten are sorted out (13.47ff.). Matthew projects into the definitive and final judgment the trajectory that comes from the judging attitude of the earthly Jesus, before which belief and unbelief do not merely part company, but are themselves judged by this very attitude of Jesus. The transition between the deciding Jesus and the judging Christ (or lord or king) is formed by the sermons of the Acts of the

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[17] As, for example, Willi Marxsen attempts to do in his *Anfangsprobleme der Christologie* (1960).

[18] Op. cit., p. 26.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

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[20] R. Bultmann, commentary on John, p. 192 (ET *The Gospel of John*, 1971, p. 256).

[21] E. Fuchs, 'Bemerkungen zur Gleichnisauslegung', *ThLZ* 79 (1954), pp. 345–348, also printed in: *Zur Frage nach dem historischen Jesus* (1960), pp. 136–142; J. J. Vincent, 'The Parables of Jesus as Self-Revelation', in: *Studia Evangelica 1957* (Berlin 1959), pp. 79–99.

[22] Mt 13.30; 13.40f.; 18.32f.; 21.40ff.; 22.11ff.; 25.12; 25.26ff.; 25.31ff.

[23] Translation in K. Aland, *Synopsis quattuor Evangeliorum* (4th edn. 1967), p. 518.

Apostles, where the 'holy and righteous' 'servant' (3.13f.) is glorified and made 'Lord and Messiah' (2.36), 'exalted' by God 'to his right hand as Leader and Saviour' (5.31). This is not simply a reversal, so that the one crushed becomes 'the corner-stone that crushes' (Lk 20.18), but is equally a continuity: what happened within the time of Jesus, in every encounter with him, is so definitive that it remains before every human existence as the final situation. According to Heb 6.2, the doctrine of the final judgment belongs to the elementary teachings of Christianity, and it goes without saying that it is present in all the writings of the New Testament.

This, however, is not the theme with which we are concerned here: we are concerned rather with its postulates in the life of Jesus. The '*authority*' (ἐξουσία) which is peculiar to him makes it possible for him to be the present Word of God. This authority appears in his sovereign acts, such as the cleansing of the Temple, in connection with which he is naturally questioned about his warrant for doing such a thing (Mk 11.28 par.). The authority appears in yet higher degree, when he makes his reply dependent on the answering of his own question, but receives no reply to this (Mk 11.29–33). This belongs to his entire preaching as a special quality: 'What is this? A new teaching with authority!' (Mk 1.27); here, it is not the content of what is said that is new, but precisely the quality of power, as the people frequently observe, when they compare him with their other teachers, in amazement, wonder, and shock (Mt 7.28f., and frequently). More decisively than in his words, the authority expresses itself in his pushing back the domain of the demons: 'With authority and power (δύναμις) he commands the unclean spirits' (Lk 4.36). This authority finds its expression in the same way in the healing of sicknesses and in the forgiving of sins (Mk 2.10 par.). Jesus possesses and exercises this authority 'in the Spirit of God' (Mt 12.28), or, as Luke more archaically puts it, 'in the finger of God' (11.20), and thus shows himself—in all the weakness of the Incarnation—to be fundamentally stronger than the 'strength' that opposes God, for he overpowers this strength in its own house and takes away its weapons. His deeds and words, his whole giving of himself and his being, would be impossible without the presence and indwelling of the entire power of God in him.

We may make one further point: in order that everything in man, the external and the internal, and indeed the demonic, may lie before him fully transparent, it is necessary that Jesus, who is the bearer of authority, be himself fully transparent before God. Here it is John who develops all the lines: the perpetual accomplishing of the Father's will by the Son (4.34; 8.29), his perpetual looking to the Father, who shows him all things (5.19f.), his proclaiming of the truth which he has heard from God (8.40). It is only on these grounds that he himself can be for John 'the truth' (14.16; *cf.* 1.14). But this concept is already presupposed at Mk 12.14 in the words of the Pharisees and Herodians, as a well-known characteristic of Jesus: 'Master, we know that you are true'; in the Old Testament, this is a property of God (*'emeth*), very close in meaning to the reliability, the proven dependability of Yahweh and of his pledge in his covenant.[24] John explains Jesus' truth on the grounds of his sinlessness (8.46f.), of his selflessness that seeks only the Father's glory (5.41), of his transparence to the Father, which makes his testimony to the Father and the Father's testimony to him inseparably two-in-one (8.14ff.). One may wish to see in this already a theology of the risen Christ: in the same way, Paul links the dogmatic truth about Christ with what Jesus was in reality, by means of the concept of truth: 'You did not so learn Christ!' (i.e., in such a way that you could continue to lead a pagan life), 'assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus' (Eph 4.20ff.), which means, 'as this Christ in truth appears in Jesus, and makes his claim in Jesus'.[25] Here too there reigns continuity.

The truth of Jesus as transparence to God passes over in an unbroken continuity, when considered in Old Testament categories of thought, into concepts such as holiness and righteousness, which are likewise applied to him (Mk 1.24 par.; Mt 27.19; Lk 23.47; Acts 3.14; 4.27, 30; 1 Pet 3.18, etc.).

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[24] III/2,1, pp. 160–162. *Cf.* Rom 3.4.

[25] H. Schlier, commentary on Ephesians, pp. 216f.

From here, there is but a single step to Paul's idea that in Jesus the righteousness of God is present and accessible to us. The titles 'the faithful one', 'the true one', 'the one who judges in righteousness' (*cf.* Rev 19.11), when applied to Christ, overlap one another in the same way as the attributes of God in the old covenant.

On the basis of this fundamental characteristic of Jesus, who is the one who has authority, who 'sees through', and who judges, there follows the double requirement, seemingly contradictory, that Christians imitate Jesus—whose Holy Spirit they have received—in the ability to discern and in the *de facto* active work of discerning the spirits (1 Cor 12.10; 14.29; Heb 5.14), and indeed in the basic ability to make a decisive judgment (Mt 16.3; Lk 12.57; 1 Cor 2.14f.), but, on the other hand, that Christians leave the final judgment and final sentence to the competent Judge (Mt 7.1 par.; Jn 8.11; 1 Cor 4.5; Rom 2.1–3). But this dialectic is only an echo of the dialectic of Jesus, who both judges and does not judge, because he judges only as he hears (Jn 5.30). In the same way, he gives his own a share in his authority (Mk 3.15 etc.), without thereby giving up his 'authority over all flesh' (Jn 17.2). Only in the end-time will the believers be capable of being included in the final act of judgment of the exalted Lord (Mt 19.28 par.; 1 Cor 6.2f.), because only then will they have attained full transparence to God (*cf.* Jn 16.26). But even now, their ideal must already be the 'simplicity' and 'transparence of their whole being' (Mt 6.22 par.), in opposition to the *dipsychia*, 'having two souls', which makes man disunited in himself, opaque for others, and ineffective before God in his prayer (Jas 1.8; 4.8).

Let us return from the ecclesiological ramifications to the original phenomenon, the judging transparence of Jesus himself, which makes him the incarnate Word of God. We saw that from this point both a futurist and a realised eschatology can branch off, which however, when considered more deeply, mutually determine each other: the seven letters of Revelation show that the exalted Christ always judges his

Church in the present, but each of them ends with a futurist promise; for Paul too, the judgment of the Lord is a present reality (1 Cor 11.32, 34), and is futurist only inasmuch as the existence of man and the world is oriented towards its complete laying-bare by the Judge. Because the Judge retains his kingly freedom, he draws to himself the whole character of wrath and salvation belonging to the 'Day of Yahweh' in the Old Testament, and thus his judgment remains likewise a 'judgment in accordance with works' (Rom 2.6; 1 Tim 5.24); nevertheless, it is *his* judgment, the judgment of the redeemer who has made satisfaction for the sins of all men. The dilemma of Christian eschatology cannot be resolved within time, because of the freedom of the Judge. We are not left with certainty, but with hope; naturally, this is a Christian hope, based on the grace of the Cross, and therefore a unique kind of hope. It is strengthened through all the ways in which it is conformed to Christ, which may be interpreted as an anticipation of his judging in grace (1 Pet 4.17). Through God's love, we may 'have confidence for the day of judgment' (1 Jn 4.17).

Because of his presumption, Jesus was condemned. In the last analysis, it is immaterial whether he explicitly used 'the absolute "I am"'[26] or not. Its earliest occurrence is not in John, 'If you do not believe that I am' (8.24), 'Then you will know that I am' (8.28), 'So that, when it takes place, you may believe that I am' (13.19), and in the pericope of the storm on the sea, 'It is I; do not be afraid' (6.20); it occurs already in the Markan apocalypse, 'Many will come in my name, saying, "I am"' (13.6). Ἐγώ εἰμι renders in various ways the formula of revelation in the Old Testament (alternating with 'I am Yahweh'), where a man is confronted quite directly with the 'I' of God, or where a word of God is to be guaranteed, or where someone expresses his acknowledgment that he has found God in his activity within history, or where the uniqueness and incomparability of Yahweh are to be highlighted. The formula is alive in the great period of revelation to Israel, and when the word of revelation ceases, the formula disappears along with it. How is Jesus' reference to his 'I' related to Yahweh's reference of old to his 'I'? It does not at all express a direct identity with God; and yet the content which he indicates by means of the utterance goes beyond everything that could be contained within contemporary messianic categories. Jesus does not employ the formula like a prophet, through whose mouth God declares his own identity and the fact that he lives; nor does he employ it to indicate the 'I' of a distinguished man who could be defined by means of a title, such as the Messiah or the awaited prophet like Moses, etc. His employment of the formula is absolute, and thereby refers back to the old formula of revelation, yet with a difference from this.[27] The only solution to the mystery hidden here is the trinitarian solution. The numerous metaphors in John ('I am the light, the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth', etc.) refer all these abstractions back to the infinite concreteness and uniqueness of the 'I' which gives expression to itself in its existence, and is 'logically prior' to the images.[28] 'The ἐγώ of Christ is the metaphysical point of coincidence of the Johannine concepts of salvation in the single reality of salvation.'[29] In the same way, the 'I' of Yahweh too gave itself concrete utterance in each of the great divine attributes, and thus concretised his glory.[30]

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[26] H. Zimmermann, 'Das absolute "Ich bin" in der Redeweise Jesu', *Trierer Th. Ztschr.* 69 (1960), pp. 1–20; *idem*, 'Das absolute Ego eimi als die neutestamentliche Offenbarungsformel', *BZ* NF 4 (1960), pp. 54–69, 266–276, with discussion of the older secondary literature. E. Stauffer, *TDNT* II, cols. 349–354.

If Jesus' claim poses a limit to all questionings, then in him there is not only the fulfilment of all the promises of Yahweh in salvation history, but also, quite naturally, of all the words of promise that the creator had implanted in his Creation—in the cosmos and in man. A 'redeemer' who did not make the claim to be the one who fulfilled God's intentions in creation, would be unworthy of belief; such a schizophrenia between cosmos and salvation (which every gnosis, up to Ernst Bloch, has attempted) has been decisively rejected in the name of theology since Justin, Irenaeus and Tertullian. Jesus' message has therefore authority over all commissions given to men in relation to the Creation too—the establishment of a just order upon earth that is worthy of man, the struggle against injustice and inhumanity—and it is he who will utter the definitive word to bring in the harvest of the endeavours of the world, which will be laid at his feet. Jesus' authority does not relieve mankind of the exertion required of it, but rather permits this exertion to assume full concreteness: now that his word and example have been among us, active human love—individual and social, personal and acting through structures—cannot be postponed. He has only removed the obstacles that prevented us from taking on our creaturely responsibility without excuses, and he has opened up for us the eschatological space that lets us dare to do the one thing necessary 'at his word' (Lk 5.5). It is not only the Word of promise of Yahweh that has become man, but also 'his Word of power, through which he upholds the world' (Heb 1.3): therefore Jesus' claim can ring out with the sound of the Creator's voice, summoning man precisely to what is most human in himself.[31]

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[27] It is therefore impossible to agree with Zimmermann ('Das absolute Ego eimi . . .', p. 270) that Jesus reveals therewith not himself, but the Father. Zimmermann says later on, more correctly, that he bears witness to God and to his absolute unity with God (p. 271).

[28] E. Schweizer, *Ego eimi* (2nd edn. 1965), p. 9.

[29] F. Mussner, 'ΖΩΗ, Die Anschauung vom "Leben" im vierten Evangelium', *MThStud* I, Abt. 5 (1952), p. 187.

[30] On the quality of momentum in the epiphanies of the Old Testament, in which *kabod* first of all expresses the presence of God's being, *cf.* E. Pax, *Epiphaneia* (1955), pp. 107f., 114f.

b. Poverty

What has been said so far has allowed us to see the formal element that runs through the life of Jesus on earth and the kerygma of the early Church, as a constant that seemingly crosses over the hiatus of the death of Jesus. It is as if the 'not-word' of this death were taken up in advance in his universal claim to be the present Word of God. Such a jumping across death would not be human, and would

[31] *Cf.* the third part of this volume: *In Laudem Gloriae*.

therefore make the Verbum-*Caro* unbelievable, unless it were more closely determined by the second element, namely, the behaviour of the man Jesus within this claim. The prophet was ordered to cry aloud: 'And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass . . . the grass withers, the flower fades . . . but the word of our God will stand for ever' (Is 40.6ff.). The distinction between flesh and word remained evident to all the prophets who were ordered to cry aloud the Word of God for a certain time: even in their almost superhuman existence in obedience, where they had to show forth God's dealings with Israel as a whole, the distance remained, as between the actor and the role.[1] They lived out, in the present, what God wished to accomplish in the near future. And even when the same God in his dealings forced them into the obedience which thereby signified that his act was near, at the very doors, yet these men who proleptically made the future present were never themselves God's Word. They were vessels for the Word, taken up and then allowed to go on their way once more.[2] But through prophecy, and the great judgments of destruction which were proclaimed and accomplished in prophecy, Israel was educated into an attitude that covered all of existence—into that poverty, which, being absolutely robbed and deprived of rights through God's judgment, can hope for any right and any good thing only from God.

This is not to suggest that Jesus' attitude could be historically derived from the attitude of the groups of the *anawim*,[3] for how would a 'poor one of Yahweh' come to make a claim such as Jesus made, to be more than a prophet? But right from the start, he goes to those 'poor ones', as the beatitudes show, and if he requires men to imitate him in the programme for life that is developed there, then this requires that he paradoxically combine the claim to be more than a prophet with the complete attitude of poverty. Imminent expectation of the End is characteristic of both: the expectation that God will do very soon what the prophet announces, or what the poor man longs for; but neither can change this 'very soon' into a 'now'. We might formulate it aprioristically thus: if the word that the prophet possesses and the attitude of poverty of the *anaw* can become identical in their orientation towards the same 'soon' of God's action, then we would possess a model (the content of which could not be filled out) for what the Incarnation of the Word is; the existence of Jesus himself shows that this is inconceivable, for in his existence the Word (precisely in its divine claim to authority and to be judge) is present, and yet the accomplishment of the Word (the kingdom of God which has drawn near) remains future.

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[1] G. Fohrer, *Die symbolischen Handlungen der Propheten* (1953).

[2] III/2,1, pp. 293-297.

[3] As E. Käsemann rightly says: *Das Problem des historischen Jesus*, op. cit., p. 208 (ET p. 39).

The paradox of Jesus becomes visible where he makes his absolute claim in equally absolute poverty and in the vulnerability which belongs to poverty, in the renunciation of all earthly power and every earthly possession. An authority such as Jesus has and bestows is not something that the one who bears it can delight in, as if it were his private possession (Lk 10.20). Jesus is the bringer of salvation, equipped only to pass on what he has to others; for himself, he has nothing. Those who receive the gifts, as in the Old Testament, are the poor of every sort, as they are listed in the beatitudes: those who have become poor in their inmost attitude ('in spirit'), the 'lowly and small' (πραεῖς), those who have been interiorly emptied and cleansed (καθαροί), those who live in mourning over the present and in hunger and thirst for what ought to be, while doing what they can in their powerlessness—having mercy, indeed making peace between the embittered through their own state of being reconciled; and all this in the powerlessness that brings them persecution for the sake of what they do not have and cannot force to come about (Mt 5.3–10). Sinners are not named here, as though the poverty of their souls would make them poor before God; but, continuing and bringing to its fulfilment the old covenant, Jesus goes to them too—indeed, to them especially, the genuine sick who need the physician (Mt 9.12), 'For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost' (Lk 19.10). The poor and the sinners sit together in the same darkness (Mt 4.16); and when the sinner sees and accepts that he is helpless in his poverty, this joins him to the *anawim*, as far as Jesus is concerned (the tax collector in the Temple, Lk 18.9ff.; the lost son, 15.11ff.). Jesus knows that, when he takes the side of 'Lazarus' against the glutton ('Woe to you that are rich! . . . to you that are full . . . to you that laugh!', Lk 6.24f.), he brings the old covenant to its fulfilment: Moses and the prophets suffice for anyone to realise this (16.31), especially when Jesus lays emphasis grotesquely on the malpractice: 'They devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers' (20.47). Mk and Lk close the instructions of Jesus, before the apocalypse which makes the transition into his Passion, with his comment on the poor widow's gesture, which stands as the perfect accomplishment of his demand for poverty: 'They all contributed out of their abundance to the treasury, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living' (two lepta = one penny) (Mk 12.44 par.). The commandment concerning 'hidden almsgiving' (Mt 6.2ff.) is here fulfilled.

The requirement Jesus makes is two-fold: in the Sermon on the Mount, the requirement to be poor; to the disciples, the requirement to leave everything. The Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain emphasise the essential *poverty* of human existence, its dependence on God (Mt 6.25ff.): God cares for tomorrow, and if man cares about God, then his tomorrow is also taken care of. The rebuke to Martha makes this very clear (Lk 10.41). The lack of care goes so far that one must not only avoid amassing possessions which God will anyhow require tomorrow of us 'fools' (Lk 12.20), and must avoid gathering on earth rusting treasures that hold fast the heart in what passes away (Mt 6.19ff.); one must willingly let oneself be robbed, without striking back (Mt 5.39–42; 1 Cor 6.7), without anxiety, because we are kept safe in God (Lk 12.6f.), and we will lack nothing when we are sent out by Christ (Lk 22.35). Luke weaves together from the very beginning this general directive about the attitude of poverty with the particular instruction to those who 'follow' to *sell all* 12.33f.). For these, perfect poverty is one with perfect obedience: at the call of Christ, they must leave everything (Lk 5.11, 28), must 'renounce all that they have' (14.33), 'sell all that they have and distribute to the poor' (18.22), without taking farewells, without burying a father (9.59ff.); Jesus himself takes the place of the family bond that is cut, as the unity which binds together, just as he himself relocates his own family in the fellowship of those who believe and follow (8.21). This unconditional leaving of all things is the presupposition of the necessary readiness for all things on the part of the disciple ('Master, I will follow you wherever you go', Mt 8.19): not only the general readiness 'with loins girt' for the approaching kingdom of God (Lk 12.35ff.), but already in the present the readiness to let oneself be sent out by Jesus 'like sheep among wolves' (Mt 10.16) in the service of the coming kingdom 'without pay' and without means of support (10.8–10), and indeed unprepared spiritually, because the Spirit will inspire what is needed (10.19f.).

These unheard-of requirements, seemingly inhuman, can be based upon only one presupposition—that Jesus himself is the one who is *absolutely poor*. How could he make such demands, unless he had first accomplished this archetypally, representatively and inclusively. When he thus sharpens the requirement of the Old Testament, he can appear as the simple claim of the Word made flesh only if he is the one who goes ahead on the way (ἀρχηγός, Heb 12.2), the one who completely accomplishes the requirement. As Irenaeus insists to the gnostics, he cannot require of his disciples achievements that he himself did not accomplish,[4] for otherwise the disciple would 'stand above the master' (Lk 6.40), and otherwise the fullness of his heart would not flow over on to his lips (Lk 6.45). How could he say to his disciples, 'Why do you call me "Lord, Lord," and not do what I tell you?' (6.46), if he himself did not do it, and thus show himself to be their Lord? It is for this reason that he warns those who wish to follow him, 'The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head' (Lk 9.58). He has entrusted his cause so exclusively to the future which belongs to God that he can dare to do what is humanly speaking irresponsible: he can make others exclusively dependent upon himself, and thereby expose them to complete poverty, in order to give them in return the absolute promise of God as responding gift and guarantee (Mt 19.29 par.).

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[4] *Adv. Haer.* III 18.5–6.

Jesus' poverty that looks to God can be characterised in more detail by means of three concepts: prayer, faith, and Spirit. *Prayer*, essentially as the attitude of a beggar, as the parables about prayer dramatically describe this: one must keep on dinning into God's ears, indeed one must become a nuisance to him, begging for the 'minimum for existence', i.e. for him himself (Lk 11.5–8; 18.1–7).[5] The prayer which Jesus gave as a model of prayer, the Our Father, is a beggar's prayer from start to finish. It demands God's coming, placing at its beginning the address of intimacy, 'Abba',[6] which was reserved for Jesus alone; it demands that his name be hallowed, that his kingdom come, that his will be done on earth as in heaven—three petitions which express the same thing in three different ways, the prayer that God's power prevail where men are powerless. Then the prayer begs for the bread that is necessary for life, not for a store to be laid up, but from day to day; then it begs for the forgiveness of sins, displaying its own poverty as far as righteousness is concerned (for the one who forgives his debtor waives justice); and finally, the prayer begs to be borne through temptation, for only God's power permits us to stand fast in temptation. Total dependence on God means that the one who knocks is sure of being heard (Lk 11.9; developed christologically at Jn 14.13f.; 15.16c). Jesus himself lives from the prayer in which the Father gives him the nourishment which he needs (Mt 4.4; Jn 4.32, 34). Luke has all the great events of his mission take place in prayer: the baptism and the pouring out of the Spirit (3.21), the questioning of Peter (9.18), the transfiguration (9.28), the teaching about prayer (11.1), the Mount of Olives (22.42), the Cross (23.34); in between lie the moments of withdrawal to 'desert places' (4.42; 5.16; Mt 14.13; Mk 6.31), into lonely mountains (Mt 14.23; Mk 6.46; Jn 6.15), so that here too he may pray (Lk 5.16; Mk 1.35). However unique the intimacy of Jesus with the Father may be, he does not teach the disciples to pray otherwise than he himself does, praying for the self-giving of the Father, who gives himself to Jesus as the food that is completely satisfying.

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[5] We may leave aside here the question of whether these parables were originally instructions about prayer. *Cf.* Joachim Jeremias, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* (7th edn. 1965), pp. 157f., 153f. (*The Parables of Jesus*, 1963, pp. 157f., 153f.).

[6] J. Jeremias, 'Kennzeichen der ipsissima vox Jesu', in: *Festschrift A. Wikenhauser* (1954), pp. 88f. It is in this form of address that the distance between the prayer of the New Testament and the prayer of the Old Testament lies. As far as the content is concerned, especially in the first petitions of the Lord's Prayer, Old Testament prayer could sound essentially the same: 'May his great name be magnified and hallowed in the world which he made according to his will. And may he establish his kingdom in our lifetimes and in our days, soon and in time near at hand' (beginning of the Qaddush prayer): I. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (3rd edn. 1931), pp. 92ff.

Another word for poverty is *faith*, as this is used in the Synoptic Gospels: the faith that Jesus presupposes as the active element in his miracles,[7] the faith in which he summarises the attitude of God as covenant-partner. But here Jesus is no waiting onlooker, but through his own attitude he conveys and inspires faith (πίστευσον, Lk 8.50), and indeed he helps the one who is weak in faith in such a way that he gives him a share in his own attitude and confers the power of faith that is lacking (Mk 9.24). Since Jesus himself fulfils in himself the Old Testament attitude of full confidence in God, what he imparts can be called archetypical faith.[8] Jesus is 'leader and perfecter of faith' (Heb 12.2), as the Letter to the Hebrews describes him, in unbroken continuity from the old covenant to the new (ch. 11, describing faith in the old covenant as looking proleptically to the attitude of Christ, and in the new covenant as deriving from this attitude). Considered from such a height, the Synoptic faith automatically becomes, after Easter, faith in Christ, who does not merely synthesise in himself the Old Testament attitude, by his total giving of himself to the Father,[9] but transcends this and indeed establishes its foundations (*cf.* Heb 11.26; 1 Pet 1.11). Jesus trains the one who believes imperfectly, in what he himself possesses perfectly; only so can he demand that one not merely 'hear and follow the word of God' (Lk 11.28), but 'hear and follow my word' and thus build one's house upon the rock (6.47f.). For his word is not only a word that comes from God in authority, but a word that is directed to God in complete poverty.

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[7] 'Your faith has made you well', Mt 9.22 par.; 15.28; Mk 10.52; Lk 17.19; 18.42. Unbelief prevents him from working wonders: Mt 13.58; Mk 6.6.

[8] This is especially emphasised by F. Gogarten (*Was ist Christentum* (1956), p. 36; *Verhängnis und Hoffnung der Neuzeit* (1953), pp. 49–64), by E. Fuchs ('Jesus und der Glaube', in: *Zur Frage nach dem historischen Jesus* (1960), pp. 238–257), and by G. Ebeling ('Der Zeuge des Glaubens', in: *Das Wesen des christlichen Glaubens* (1959), pp. 48–65; ET *The Nature of Faith*, 1961, pp. 44–57). On the tradition of this idea, *cf.* my essay, 'Fides Christi', in: *Sponsa Verbi. Skizzen zur Theologie* II (1960), pp. 45–79.

Finally, *Spirit*. It is God's breath and wind that 'drives' the one who is poor and obedient into the direction and on to the paths of the divine will and commission (Mk 1.12; Lk 4.14; Acts 16.6; Rom 8.14). It is the presence of God in him, blowing him in divine freedom to meet the future that belongs to God (Jn 3.8). This is what the poor man needs above all, this is what he must ask for; and if parents do not give their children a stone instead of bread, a serpent instead of a fish, or a scorpion instead of an egg, still less will God withhold from him the divine Holy Spirit (Lk 11.11–13).[10] When poverty asks, it receives unfailingly—not what is earthly (that will be 'given as well'), but the good things of God. It is possible to blaspheme against Jesus in his powerlessness; but to blaspheme 'against the Holy Spirit' who drives him, who is the definitive bond between man and God, is to exclude oneself definitively from salvation (Mk 3.29 par.).

Jesus' poverty is not only requirement and instruction, but also, since he is the bringer of salvation, above all an act of

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[9] See the next section of this chapter.

[10] Luke makes clearer the general expression in Mt ('How much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!', 7.11), on the basis of his post-Easter faith, by interpreting the logion to refer to the embodiment of all good gifts, the Holy Spirit.

solidarity. It is necessary to take a panoramic view of all the various groups of men with whom he is in solidarity, in order to understand the unity of his conduct. Most noticeably, we have his fellowship of house and table with 'all the tax collectors and sinners' (Lk 15.1f.), and his entering the house of the tax collector Zacchaeus who thereby changes from one who is 'rich' and 'lost' to become one who 'gives' (Lk 19.1–10); but no less important is his taking the side of those who are spiritually unsheltered, the 'little ones' who are open to scandal (17.2), his taking the side of the 'simple ones' to whom (in opposition to the wise and clever) the mysteries of God are revealed, and above all his taking the side of the 'children', when he puts forward physical childhood as a concrete image and parable of the inner attitude of the child (18.15ff.; 9.47ff.); finally, he takes the side of those who are persecuted, cast out, belittled, those who are robbed of their good name (6.22f.). In the case of the last group, we see that God's solidarity in the Old Testament with those persecuted for his sake (the prophets: Lk 6.23; 11.49ff.) now passes over into the new solidarity of Jesus with those who are persecuted 'for the sake of the Son of Man' (Lk 6.22), 'for my sake' (Mt 5.11); how indeed could Jesus fail to be in solidarity in a wholly new way with such people, who comprehend him not only as the embodied Word of God, but as the model of the poverty that looks to God, and are therefore ready to follow him on a humanly impossible path into the complete nakedness of the 'cross', where only one thing is certain, that they will 'lose their life' (Lk 9.23f.)? The three parables which have their starting point in the scandal of his solidarity with the sinners, that of the lost sheep, that of the lost drachma and that of the lost son (Lk 15), are thus first of all illustrations of the grace of God which is united with the poor against the rich, grace that is already present in the Old Testament but takes on here such a clarity and definitiveness of form that it is impossible to overlook the appearing in Jesus of the Father's love for 'those who have lost their way'. The 'weakness' of the love in the heart of God, as this had been revealed since the prophecy of Hosea,[11] becomes definitively visible in the figure of the father who runs to meet his lost son as he comes home, falls on his neck and kisses him, for the simple reason that he has been found again. There is no trace in Old or New Testament of a sympathising of God or of Jesus with the sinner *qua* sinner; but there does exist a bond of sympathy with the one who knows that he is a 'poor wretch', one whose tears flow much more quickly than those of the hard, righteous Pharisee (Lk 7.44f.), and whose melting heart makes directly for the melting heart of God.

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[11] III/2,1, p. 227.

This incarnation of God's solidarity with the poor (in every form) has, however, a catastrophic logic: if he takes this seriously, it will bring him to the cross—not most deeply for the external reason that he has appropriated to himself an authority that does not belong to him, but for an internal reason, because he now must really 'be reckoned among those who have broken the law' (Lk 22.37). The transition from the historical crucifixion to its interpretation after Easter, even before Paul, as 'for us', 'for our sins', a transition that at first sight is difficult to comprehend, is the logical result of taking the solidarity seriously. Whoever puts himself at the head of the poor, in order to lead them along an unmarked path into the kingdom of God which is 'near' and coming towards them, puts himself also at the head of the sinners, in order to lead them, as the first of the 'lost sons', to the Father who is drawing near and hastening to meet them. If one wished to plot out the trajectory of a New Testament constant in the same way as this was done in the preceding section, from the Jesus who 'sees through' men to the 'judge over the living and the dead', then this trajectory would lead from the poor Jesus to the 'Lamb slain before the foundation of the world' upon the throne of God (Rev 5.6, 9, 12; 13.8).

In this solidarity, we see in Jesus' existence the form that has been termed *proleptic*.[12] Here we may leave on one side the problem of the apocalyptic thought-form that it is said provides the explanation, because the question of Jesus' time will be discussed later. Here we need only observe that the so-called apocalyptic imminent expectation has its roots in prophetic imminent expectation; but at the beginning of our presentation of Jesus, it was shown to be an essential aspect that genuine prophecy once more came on the scene, after a long interval of time that was in part filled by the apocalyptic writings; and Jesus is nowhere compared in the Gospels with an apocalyptic figure, but repeatedly with a new prophet, a great prophet, or a prophet of old reborn. Now, it can be an aspect of prophetic discourse that it must await a coming deed of God and thus a coming verification by God (Deut 18.21f.); the truth of what Elijah declares on Mount Carmel is brought about when God's fire descends and consumes the sacrifice that has been prepared, and in Deutero-Isaiah God shows that he is the lord of history by establishing the truth of the past and the present by means of the future new thing that he is creating.[13] But whereas in the case of the prophet, the fulfilment of the Word that is uttered through him lies with God and remains independent of the person of the prophet himself, the claim that Jesus makes, to be the present Word of God in judgment, refuses to permit such a distancing: the future of God, into which Jesus leads the poor and the sinners, must finally lie in him himself. And what other absolute future has a man to offer than his own death?

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[12] W. Pannenberg, *Grundzüge der Christologie* (1964), pp. 47–61.

He possesses something like a verification in advance: 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is he who takes no offence at me' (Mt 11.4ff.). But the 'noticeable reluctance to confer on the miracles the status of a direct eschatological legitimation of Jesus'[14] is clear in all the Gospels. They place the accent on the final fate of Jesus, and they become a narrative river when they must begin to narrate this final fate. But the unheard-of words, both the requirement made and the promise pledged, and the unheard-of deeds of the public life of Jesus were, taken together, 'proleptic' to the extent that they could have been spoken and performed only by one who was prepared from the outset to give in payment for them everything that a man can pay: the hard currency that backed up his words and deeds was his blood, his death. But how could a death go far enough to satisfy these requirements and claims and promises? Here there is no further answer, if one reckons the price of this death to be the price of an ordinary human death—the price of such a death would not cover one single claim. In this 'criminal's death', God's kingdom must come, otherwise the claim is pure madness. The claim therefore entails in itself the absolute overcharging of this human life, the exorbitant demand that this human life pay for all failure and all sin with what is of worth in a life (in living and in dying).

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[13] III/2,1, pp. 271f.

[14] U. Wilckens, 'Das Offenbarungsverständnis in der Geschichte des Urchristentums', in: W. Pannenberg (ed.), *Offenbarung als Geschichte* (2nd edn. 1963), p. 59.

The *exorbitant demand* made upon what lies within human proportions is, therefore, a fundamental trait of the life of Christ and—at a distance—of the life of a Christian. There is disproportion between the greatness of the harvest and the scarceness of the workers (Lk 10.2), and therefore exorbitant demands are made upon the worker, who is not invited, after bearing the burden of work in the fields, to sit down at table for a well-earned meal, but must first serve food to his master—without being expressly asked or thanked—and who is never perfect in his serving: 'When you have done *all* that is commanded you'—and when have we done so?—'say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty"' (Lk 17.7–10). An excessive demand is made of the fig-tree, when it is absolutely required to produce fruit because the Lord needs it, although it is not the season for fruit (Mk 11.12f.). What is specifically Christian begins at the point where necessity, justice, and the thought of balanced settlement cease. Thus, the feast is made ready for the prodigal son, but the good son who stayed at home does not receive it; thus, 'Do good and lend, expecting nothing in return' (Lk 6.35), and 'When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your kinsmen or rich neighbours, lest they also invite you in return, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you' (Lk 14.12ff.). Thus, the Samaritan pays for the man left half-dead, without awaiting anything in return (Lk 10.35). In the parable of the 'steward', this goes as far as open 'injustice': the man who has squandered the goods of his master is excused and helps himself by lowering the sums on the debtors' bills (Lk 16.1–7): he practises in an odd manner the logic of the petition in the Lord's Prayer, 'forgiving' in his master's name the debt of his neighbour, on the presupposition that what is crooked will become straight for the master. This logic makes sense to the master, for he praises the steward for it (16.8). He who loses gains, but he who wishes to gain loses (Mk 8.35 par.); this law too is in force with the addition 'for my sake'. He who gives out the master's money, to make it work for him, gains double: but what is sterile will be taken away from the one who buries his talent in a napkin, and given to the other, who grasped the law of fruitfulness (Lk 19.11–26). Therefore there is no limit for the forgiveness of offences (Mt 18.21f.; Lk 17.3f.), and indeed ultimately there is no limit between friend and foe in the love of neighbour (Mt 5.43–48). 'Thus you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the selfish. Be merciful, even as your father is merciful' (Lk 6.35–36).

The more Jesus proclaims such an 'unrighteousness' of love, the more responsibility he loads on himself; and since he, the poor man, has nothing with which to pay, he can only offer 'himself as ransom for the many' to God (Mk 10.45; Mt 20.28). He, who was to baptise 'with Spirit and fire' (in the Baptist's words), who himself came 'to cast fire upon the earth' (naturally, a fire other than the Baptist imagined), longs 'to be baptised with a baptism' (Lk 12.49–50) which is unambiguously his death (Mk 10.38), the reality of the dipping down into the abyss and the chaos which stood behind the sacramental act of John the Baptist. Here, the reality of the Word made flesh as poverty flows into the third aspect: into total self-abandonment.

Before we speak of this, a glance at John can show how much the two first aspects, authority and poverty (or, as we more properly say in his case, obedience), are one for him.

The unity lies in the transparence of the one sent, who does not his own will, but the will only of the one who sent him (Jn 6.38), who does not speak from himself, and accordingly does not seek his own glory, and precisely for this reason is 'true' (7.18), i.e. a word that is transparent to the one who is speaking: 'My teaching is not mine, but the teaching of him who sent me' (7.16; 14.10, 24). But the synthesis which is before John's eyes comes about in the already present death of Jesus, in his 'being given up', 'falling into the earth', 'being raised up'. Everything points to 'the hour', and is already outlined on this basis.

c. Self-abandonment

The distinguishing marks of Jesus' existence, 'authority' and 'poverty', are *prima facie* irreconcilable: as the one with authority, he acts and speaks with a power in which God makes himself present, and as the one who is poor, he is wholly lacking in power and means of defence—at most, he can evade the powers of the world; and he trains those who are his in the same poverty that looks to God. But even if both distinguishing marks could be comprehended in one view (as is the case in the Johannine transparency to the Father), and could persist through everything as formal characteristics at the basis of Jesus' existence, where then would 'what is not a word' (as we have termed it above, when setting the scene) remain as the midpoint of the Word? It will be shown that the third and final implication of the Word made flesh, in which alone the first two distinguishing marks really come together, leads to this midpoint, to the word as not-word, as a word that abandons itself and dissolves itself.

The first meaning of 'The Word became flesh' is quite straightforward: word, this particular form of personal utterance, known to everyone, takes on a form of being which, as such, is foreign to the word, for flesh as such does not speak. Even if 'flesh' here stands for 'man', speaking is only one of the forms of activity of the being 'man'; the birth is preceded by nine months of existence in deepest silence, so that, in so far as the event whereby 'the Word becomes flesh' occurs precisely at the conception, the act of the Word's becoming man means an act of becoming silent. Human existence is finite, an existence that moves towards death; in death, human utterance ends once for all, and what was spoken as word in the course of the mortal life, whether significant or insignificant, is in any case bound to the form of temporality and thus to transitoriness, and thereby inescapably to futility. Words from past moments, if they are to live again, must always be reincarnated in a present moment. And even though a man were able to incorporate into his uttered word much of his experience of life, indeed much of the truth of his life, he would precisely *then* be unable to bracket off the fleetingness and futility of his existence so that this found no place in his utterance—or else, he would have to renounce precisely the (approximate) synthesis of existence and word that seemed worth striving for, by anchoring the possible supratemporal significance of what was said somewhere else than in his own existence. The idea that a mortal being ('flesh') could give itself utterance as immortal 'word' is a contradiction that would seem necessarily to burst open and destroy human existence. But if the divine and eternal word wished to give itself adequate expression in mortal flesh—however mysterious the manner of this might be—this could not happen through man himself, unless he were to place his entire existence in the flesh, mortal and futile, at the disposal of the divine Word in such a self-exposition, by *handing himself over* like an alphabet or a keyboard, for the act of formulation in words, handing over himself as a whole; birth and death, speaking and silence, waking and sleeping, success and failure, and everything else that belongs to the substance of human existence.

Only now does the full paradox become visible. For if God's *Word* has become flesh, then everything that is to be disclosed—despite every seeming impossibility—must become present in this 'flesh', in this finite and transitory existence. It is from it that everything must be drawn forth. No supratemporal contents, nor contents from another period of time, may be put into it (although they might suggest themselves in the case of this existence), for this would mean that at most a fraction of the divine Word would have become flesh. Rather, the human life in which God's Word was flesh must be capable of being interpreted to an extent that is immeasurable, indeed infinite. On the other hand, if this human life is at all to be a genuine and normal life and not that of a semigod, it cannot be burdened with the duty of transmuting everything that as such is temporal into what is supratemporal, or everything that comes to nothing and so is futile into something that is lasting and filled to the brim: this would mean that this human life would be robbed of the fundamental, genuinely human act of trusting self-abandonment to a future that is not at one's own disposal, a future that can bear the name of death or of God. Such a man would be obliged to accomplish through his own disposition and exertion the synthesis between his existence and its meaning, between flesh and word; such an extreme thought, that could never be realised, shows clearly that in such a case the meaning and the immanent word of his life would be destroyed at its root. This is true also, *a fortiori*, in the case of the man in whose human existence God willed to proceed to his final act of self-utterance. Then, assuming that this man is conscious of the commission to live in such a way that he remains for God one capable of infinite interpretation, the paradox here is that he must bring into the narrowness of his time everything that God needs for his self-interpretation. Here lies the momentum of Jesus' existence, the originality of which can be traced even through the interpretation after Easter and through every interpretation by the Church; here too is that strangely pressing haste that somehow numbers its days for itself: 'Are there not twelve hours in the day?' (Jn 11.9); 'I must go on my way today and tomorrow . . . and the third day I finish my course' (Lk 13.33, 32); and this haste urges the others to make use of the time: 'The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, lest the darkness overtake you' (Jn 12.35).[1] Yet there is nothing precipitate about this haste, which anticipates nothing and does not force the decisive 'hour' to come, but knows about the time that is qualitative,[2] and maintains the distances that are set: 'My *kairos* has not yet come, but your *kairos* is always here' (Jn 7.6). The momentum of Jesus' self-consciousness and of his claim is not restricted by this tranquillity which waits upon events, and is not incompatible with it, but rather receives precisely through this tranquillity the room to spread itself out in its majestic self-possession, far from any constraining haste. This happens in the most emphatic way possible, for Jesus makes no temporal ordering for the superhuman programme that he is to accomplish in the space allotted to his human life, but abides tranquilly in the attitude, common to man (Mt 6.27), of readiness for the 'hour' that is known only to God (Mk 13.32). And if we must assume a growth in the clear self-conscious comprehension of his mission, as must be the case in a genuine human being—although, since this mission is unique, it is naturally impossible for us to trace the individual stages of this growth—and an ever deeper initiation into the unique dimensions of the whole commission, this intensification (*a priori* to be reckoned with) displays no corresponding taking over of the control by Jesus, but precisely the opposite: an increasing self-abandonment to the control by the one who alone can draw out of the whole lived existence the definitive word that God needs to complete his new and eternal covenant.

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[1] On the element of urgent haste in the proclamation of Jesus and his sending-out of the disciples, *cf.* A. Vögtle, 'Exegetische Erwägungen über

It is not possible, further, to approach the direction of the journey towards Jerusalem and the Passion, which comes into the life of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels after Peter's confession, as an act of assuming the direction of his own fate, for it is rather the opposite: a more conscious going towards the hour which 'only the Father knows'. In this hour, there is no doubt that the principal meaning of this existence will condense itself, but in such a manner that this meaning will be loaded on to the Servant of God in a way that is for him passive and blind. When the 'momentum' of the claim

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das Wissen und Selbstbewußtsein Jesu', in: *Festschrift Karl Rahner*, I (1964), pp. 616f.

[2] A. Vögtle, 'Zeit und Zeitüberlegenheit im biblischen Verständnis', *Freiburger Dies Universitatis* 8 (1960/61), pp. 99–116.

receives this completely open space for its working-out, it is possible to speak in a first sense that lies quite close to the original sense, of the radiance of the glory (ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης, Heb 1.3).

And this occurs in the elementary sense of the renunciation of one's own δόξα. The early Christian hymn coined for this the concept of emptying out or making-vain (κένωσις) (Phil 2.7), and John expressed the same fact in the words of Jesus, that he does not look for δόξα before men (Jn 5.41) but for the δόξα of the only God (5.44), and that therein lies his truth (7.18). The hymn understands the emptying out as the renunciation of the μορφὴ θεοῦ, the 'form of God', but then goes on to present the Incarnation, not as the assuming of the corresponding 'form of a man', but explicitly as the assuming of the μορφὴ δούλου, the 'form of a slave'. But the slave has no form of his own, but has to take on, in pure obedience, the form that his lord imposes on him; thus this 'effulgence of the glory' of God is in itself without any glory of its own; as Justin declares, it is ἄτιμος καὶ ἄδοξος.[3]

In its outward lack of form, his existence has something of the wastefulness that runs as a leitmotiv through so many of his parables: the wastefulness of the seed sown carelessly, that falls on the path, on rock and on thorns, and only to a small extent on good soil (Mt 13.4ff.), of the unweeded field (Mt 13.24ff.), of the unemployed worker (Mt 20.1ff.), of the banquet made ready but scorned (Mt 22.1ff.), a wastefulness that is dominant also in the miracles of the multiplication of the loaves and the changing of the water into wine. Not only so, but as Jesus' involvement in his mission increases so too does the resistance on the part of men, so that, from a human point of view, the prospect of success, of accomplishment of the commission, continually dwindles, and Jesus in his activity sees that he too has his place under the general law that 'no prophet can perish away from Jerusalem' (Lk 13.33). This general law, under which his followers too have their place (Jn 16.1ff.), is called futility. 'They hate me without a cause'

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[3] [Without honour and without glory], *Dialogue* 32 and 89 (ed. Otto, I, 2, 106, 326).

(Jn 15.25). The hatred has no cause: correspondingly, the one that the world cannot bear has no form, for he has emptied himself out, so that he may be formed and filled by God alone.

The hymn at Phil 2.6–11 speaks of Jesus, after his renunciation of the form of God, as becoming obedient unto the death on the Cross, and then, 'therefore', being exalted as the Kyrios to the right hand of the Father. The one who was 'emptied out' received a share in the δόξα of God the Father, through the bestowal of the divine title 'Kyrios'; it is not this δόξα, however, which is of course presupposed, that the hymn wishes to glorify, but the thing that was inconceivable in the Old Testament, the reason for his exaltation—his opening-up of the empty space through which the δόξα can send its rays. In this very early text, we apprehend something like the replacing of one ideal by another: of the ideal of a divine glory that is so much the property of the only God that he can and may never rid himself of it by a new ideal which as such cannot yet bear the name δόξα, because it consists precisely in ridding oneself of what bore this name in the Old Testament, in order to make ready the space of complete poverty, indeed more than this, of full abandonment of self, which holds itself open for this new splendour and glory alone. The first concept is closely tied to 'power' (δύναμις),[4] the second to an utter powerlessness that will prove to be that which is genuinely glorious in its final attitude, and will perhaps absorb the first concept of glory into itself. We shall return to this theme later.

Now we must see how Jesus translates his claim and commission into poverty (or into obedience) in such a way that he lets his entire formless and therefore wordless existence (as 'flesh') be yielded up in an ultimate gesture, so that it may become something that God's hand can form in its entirety, including his mother's womb and his burial, into 'the Word of God'. John underlines the genuine difference between such a final gesture and the normal state of man as one 'thrown in to the world' from the womb until his death: Jesus has 'authority' to 'give himself up' (Jn 10.18). Here, the 'giving up of self' certainly means in the first place death, but it is quite essentially a phrase that includes the whole existence in itself, as the directive that the believers must 'give themselves up' for their brethren shows (1 Jn 3.16). The 'authority' to 'take back' what has been given up is not the revocation of the self-abandonment, but its inner completion, inasmuch as the going out into the final dispossession of self-abandonment belongs to the original 'authority', which thereby distinguishes itself from every other human authority, even that of a prophet.

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[4] *Cf.* Rom 1.16 with 2 Cor 4.4; Rom 1.20 with 1.23; Rev 19.1, *doxa* together with other concepts of power: Col 1.11; 2 Thess 1.9, Rev 1.6; 1 Pet 4.11; Jude 25. On the Old Testament, *cf. ThW* II 293 (Grundmann).

There are two moments, which can be distinguished from each other but belong together, in which the event of the abandonment is 'accomplished', in the double sense that it goes 'to the end' (Jn 13.1) with no possibility of revocation, and that it now succeeds therein in attaining the form that is Jesus' own, bestowed by God, on the far side of himself. These are the Eucharist and the verbalising of Jesus' life in the sphere of the early Church. Both are the work of the *paradosis*: which is now understood not as the act of God who gives up the Son, nor as the act of the Church which hands on further what has been handed on to her, but as Jesus' handing over of himself (*cf.* 1 Pet 2.23; Heb 9.14), so that by the power of this handing over, he may become what he should be for God and men.

In their various nuances, the words that explain the *Eucharist* point to numerous conceptions of sacrifice in the Old Testament, but have at their heart a simple and unambiguous meaning. It is decisive that Jesus in his gesture of giving his flesh gives something that is itself in a state of 'having been handed over', whether this is explicitly said (1 Cor 11.24; Lk 22.19; *cf.* Jn 6.51c) or not (Mk 14.22; Mt 26.26); likewise, that the blood should be in a state of 'having been poured out', whether this is mentioned as something taken for granted (Mk 14.24; Mt 26.28; Lk 22.20) or not (1 Cor 11.25). Gesture and state are one; with the unique gesture, Jesus gives the gift from his hand, gives himself in the state of abandonment into the hand of the Father who permits this state to take on definitive character (it is for this that Jesus 'gives thanks' to the Father), gives himself into the hand of the Spirit who brings about the sacrament as he has brought about the Incarnation in Mary, and gives himself into the hand of the Church, which through the ages 'performs' (*hoc facite*) actively what Jesus' gesture of self-giving has placed in her hands. One must not play off the eucharistic powerlessness of the Church's existence under the deepest concealment of a piece of bread and a cup of wine, against the 'authority' that lies in such a gesture of self-giving (Jn 10.18); nor may one pose a tension between the 'omnipotence' (Mt 28.18) and sovereign power of control (Eph 4.10ff. etc.) of the one exalted to the right hand of God on the one hand, and his state of powerlessness in the Eucharist on the other hand. For the victorious lion from the tribe of Judah (Rev 5.5) is none other than the 'lamb' upon the throne 'as if slain' (5.6,9,12) in timelessness ('before the foundation of the world', 13.8). The concepts of vicarious action (ὑπέρ),[5] ransom ('ransom money', 'redemption'), 'expiation', and 'sacrifice', concepts not rigidly separable from each other, permeate all the strata of the New Testament, essentially bound to the Cross that is anticipated in the Eucharist; the Cross is not considered in isolation, but as the embodiment and summing up of the entire lifework of Jesus. For the act of self-giving 'is the last and greatest act of his service',[6] held up by Jesus before his disciples repeatedly and urgently as an example, and impressed upon them. In the light of this incomparable self-abandonment, the full significance of the requirements Jesus makes of hatred of self, of denial of self, of the abandoning of all things, of the daily bearing of the cross, and of the losing of one's soul in order to gain it, becomes clear. Further, the self-abandonment of the whole existence, taken as the gesture that sums up this existence, makes it impossible for Jesus to control in advance what God will form out of this one who abandons himself: the much-discussed disjunction between the 'I' of the mortal Jesus (whom one confesses, or of whom one is ashamed) and the judging Son of Man (who will confess before the angels of God those who confess, and will be ashamed before them of those who are ashamed: Lk 12.8f.; Mk 8.38) is the adequate expression for the abandonment of self, just as the 'archaic' christology of the first sermons of the Apostles, with their exaltation by God for the 'servant Jesus' to 'Kyrios and Christos' (Acts 2.36), adequately expresses the caesura that is determined by the renunciation of all power over oneself. It is idle to speculate over the sense in which Jesus was aware of his identity with the Son of Man who was to come in judgment, for between the two stands the fundamental act of the eucharistic self-abandonment, which prevents every neutral identification that would leap over it, not because it is a barrier that blocks the path, but because it is Jesus' own uttermost act of renunciation of any definitive (i.e., eschatological) power to determine his own form.

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[5] 'For the many' (Mk 14.24), 'for every one' (Heb 2.9), 'for all' (Rom 8.32; 2 Cor 5.14f.; 1 Tim 2.6), 'for the people' (Jn 11.50; 18.14), 'for the brother' (Rom 14.15), 'for me' (Gal 2.20), 'for you' (Lk 22.19f., 1 Cor 11.24, etc.), 'for us' (Rom 5.8; 2 Cor 5.21; Gal 3.13, etc.), 'for the Church' (Eph 5.25), 'for the sheep' (Jn 10.11–15). Besides ὑπέρ there are other relational words that express the vicariousness: ἀντί (Mk 10.45 par.), διά (1 Cor 8.11), and περί (Mt 26.28; 1 Thess 5.10).

[6] K. H. Schelkle, *Die Passion Jesu* (1949), p. 136; *ibid.*, pp. 131–149, bringing together and analysing all the fundamental concepts mentioned. This is not the place for an inquiry into the entire range of meaning of the concepts παραδιδόναι and παράδοσις; *cf.* Wiard Popkes, *Christus traditus. Eine Untersuchung zum Begriff der Dahingabe im Neuen Testament*, Abh. ThANT 49 (1967). *Cf.* my *Theologie der Drei Tage* (1969), pp. 74f.

In this, Jesus is once again Word-*flesh*, Word that enters and vanishes in flesh that is utterly dependent upon God, in order to be awakened by God to life and to stand before him as his full, truly embodied Word. Thus, Jesus seeks to direct the earthly 'endeavour' (ἐργάζεσθαι) of his hearers to labour 'for the food that remains for eternal life' (Jn 6.27), by allowing their 'work' to merge into God's work on them (the faith in Jesus as 'the bread of life'; 6.29); this change from working to allowing oneself to be worked upon (this is the meaning of faith here) is in a context which does not yet speak explicitly of the sacramental Eucharist, but presents the whole Jesus—whose food is the will of the Father (Jn 4.34)—who does not allow those who come to him to hunger any more, nor those who believe in him to thirst any more (4.14). But already, Jesus is the one who no longer has any control over himself, but accepts those who come to him as men drawn by the Father (6.44) and given to him by the Father; in his self-abandonment, he cannot repel anything that the Father gives him (6.37).[7]

The handing over of the fruit of Jesus' Passion and Resurrection to the Church belongs in the most intimate manner to the distribution by Jesus of his flesh and blood as the Eucharist. John rightly transposes this to Easter day: '"As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained"' (Jn 20.21–23). To understand this passage correctly, the sending must be understood as already christological, in its unity of authority and poverty; it is no mere commission, but is to be an existential participation in Jesus' self-abandonment, in which the Holy Spirit 'blows' (Jn 3.8) or 'is' (Jn 7.39). The one who makes this bequest is so 'liquefied' in his self-abandonment that his reality surpasses that of a mediator (at least according to the understanding of this concept hitherto); in the same 'liquefaction', he wills to them the kingdom, as his Father has bestowed it on him (Lk 22.29; *cf.* 12.32 with the command in the following verse to 'sell all'), and bestows on them the ever new actualisation of this kingdom in the forgiveness of sins, which has become available in the blowing of the Holy Spirit on the definitive basis of the Cross and the Resurrection. It is not only that he has 'merited' the forgiveness of sins (all juridical and mercantile concepts, like that of

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[7] In Jesus' reply to the questioners at Jn 6.28, 'the faith in the one sent by God is paradoxically characterised as "work", and thus the concept of ἐργάζεσθαι is dissolved: he fulfils God's demand, not through what he works, but through the obedience to what God works. But inasmuch as man's work is not the accomplishing of some individual thing, but in its true sense, is the attitude in which the man genuinely *is*, we may also say that Jesus' word actually radicalises the concept of ἐργάζεσθαι man exists truly not in what he himself brings about, but in his making over of himself to what God works, i.e., in what he allows to happen to himself in faith': R. Bultmann, *Johannes*, p. 164 (ET *Gospel of John*, p. 222).

'ransoming', fall short of the reality); he himself is the forgiveness of sins, with his whole authority as judge—but in the condition of self-abandonment, of his distribution in the Eucharist. It is not so much that on Easter day he forgives the disciples who betrayed him and fled; rather, he is bestowed on them as an Easter gift, the act of forgiveness which has been given the form of the sacrament of pardon. The handing over of self goes beyond the domain of ethics (e.g., the duty of mutual brotherly pardoning in the Church), without abolishing it. Therefore everything to do with the sacraments is handed over without defences to human misuse, and was indeed in its essence constituted in the Passion where this human misuse was a factor.

Alongside the sacrament stands *the Word*, or more precisely the *reverbalisation* of the Word of God that had become in the flesh wordless and ever more wordless,[8] so that it might take its dwelling in a human word and become expressible in kerygma and gospel, capable of summary as dogma and of development in its depths as theology. This is essentially the work of the Holy Spirit, who brings to light the 'whole treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden' in Christ (Col 2.3), interprets them exegetically (drawing out their contents), and thus 'leading into all truth' (Jn 16.13). To do this, 'he will take what is mine', as this is handed over and lies at the disposal of the Spirit to be given whatever form he desires; and this 'what is mine' is so little the possession of Jesus that he adds immediately, 'All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine' (Jn 16.15). That which is his, is the eucharistic liquefying of the goods of the Father, now to be formed by the Spirit to be the definitive utterance concerning the love of Father and Son. In this process, which establishes the continuity between the 'Jesus of history' and the 'historic Christ', that 'which is mine' is not to be overlooked. It is he himself who comes through the wordless death of the flesh and rises both as body and as word. The evangelists and prophets of the new covenant, who undertake in the Spirit the verbalisation of the event, know this and confess it. It would not be possible for them to say with greater clarity that they experienced it beforehand but did not understand it; that it remained hidden from their eyes, that it was obscure to them, that they could not grasp it and even were ashamed to ask him about it (Lk 9.45, etc.), but remembered it after his Resurrection (Jn 2.22; 12.16; 16.4), or first understood it then (Jn 13.7). When the memory understands, the implicit becomes explicit, the christology lived by Jesus becomes the christology taught by the Church,[9] however much it remains true in this teaching also that its content is the person of Jesus in its authority, poverty and self-abandonment.

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[8] It is clear that with this statement we mark off the boundary between ourselves and a theology (like that of Bultmann) for which the existence of Jesus is an irrelevant fact that disappears behind the kerygmatic speech-event of the early Church; we distance ourselves equally from a theology for which the relevance of the historical Jesus lies only in the 'speech-event' which occurs in his speech to others, or in his faith as this makes itself known in words (Ebeling, Fuchs), or in his self-expression in parabolic discourse (E. Jüngel, *Jesus und Paulus*, 2nd edn. 1963, pp. 173f.).

Anyone who has caught sight, through the Church's teaching, of the full paradox of this person must admit that it is not to be classified in the categories of the history of religions, nor of psychology, nor of history;[10] indeed, honest exegesis will recognise a problematic that hovers between what is said and the one about whom it is said, 'which is to be resolved neither by the recourse to the so-called "Jesus of history" nor by flight to the so-called "historic biblical Christ"'.[11] This problematic was intended to be set openly before our eyes, in that the Spirit offers us four different Gospels, which the Church has not attempted to reduce to a single Gospel because, in its consciousness, no single Gospel 'has reproduced the Christ event of the one become flesh in its whole richness'.[12] Since the person of Jesus, alive in the

[9] R. Bultmann, *Glauben und Verstehen* I (1933), pp. 204f.; for Paul: O. Michel, 'Der Christus des Paulus', *ZNW* 32 (1933), pp. 6–31.

[10] E. Käsemann, 'Das Problem des historischen Jesus' (1954), in: *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* I (4th edn. 1965), p. 213 (ET p. 46).

[11] P. Vielhauer, 'Gottesreich und Menschensohn in der Verkündigung Jesu', in: *Aufsätze zum NT* (1965), p. 91.

[12] O. Cullmann, 'Die Pluralität der Evangelien', in: *Vorträge und Aufsätze 1925 bis 1962* (1966), p. 556. For Cullmann, this is the 'theologically

Holy Spirit, was the centre of the Church's life, the fullness of the verbalisations must be experienced as approximate and a source of joy. Because in the New Testament the faith was a unity taken for granted in love, it was possible for such a fullness of writings to come into being, without any anxiety that thereby the dogmatic unity could be endangered.[13] Looked at from the outside, the unity of the New Testament appears to be 'syncretistic',[14] but from the inside, all the writings with their distinct theologies are so closely and inextricably bound together that they form a single testimony to the same faith in Jesus, the Son of God, the bringer of salvation for Israel and the world in his life, dying, and rising.

An essential aspect of this phenomenon is the inseparable whole formed in the reverbalisation of what Jesus lived (a part of which is also what he said) by memory and by the light that shines backwards from Easter; and further, there is a genuine backward-looking prophecy in this dawning understanding (1 Cor 12.28; 13.8; Eph 2.20; 3.5), receiving in the Holy Spirit the correct formulation of what was intended in the horizon of the eschatological revelation. And obedience to the Spirit requires, in order to preserve the identity of the person of the historical Jesus and the historic Christ present in the Church, an inevitable transposition at various points from the situation of Jesus into the situation of the community after Easter. This transposition seems to bring an element of

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legitimate concern' which is seen historically in the double, contradictory tendency of the early Church to write new, 'better' Gospels—which do not indeed suppress the earlier Gospels available, but aim to be more complete and relevant—and on the other hand, to reduce the production of apocryphal Gospels, the luxuriant growth of which threatened to have no end—without taking the step of replacing the other Gospels by a Gospel harmony. With these contradictory tendencies, the whole 'remained so to speak at the half-way point of having a plurality of four Gospels'.

[13] A. Schlatter, *Die Theologie der Apostel* (2nd edn. 1922), p. 525. 'Belief was in Christ, not in christology', p. 524. Thus 'there was no attempt to achieve an external uniformity of the teaching', p. 525, *cf.* p. 530.

[14] H. Köster, 'Häretiker im Neuen Testament als theologisches Problem', in: *Zeit und Geschichte, Dankesgabe an Rudolf Bultmann* (1964), pp. 65f.

historical uncertainty into the proclamation, but on a deeper level, it obeys the law of theological truth. The Spirit permits such a transposition, recognising as it does so the 'danger' that the translation from the situation of Jesus into that of the community is again a transition into an historically-determined situation: the risk can be borne because with this transposition, the horizon of the pneumatic-eschatological understanding is 'once for all' opened: within this horizon, all later accommodations to the contemporary understanding of present reality imply only slight displacements that are theologically easily made, which moreover retain their model in the decisive first verbalisation. The next chapter will show that the period of the Church has another structure than that of the period of Jesus, and that therefore a word of Jesus *must* be translated from the unique horizon of his period (which fundamentally was only *his* period) into the horizon of the period of the Church, in order to remain valid for the Church. This applies to the form of the (imminent) expectation, as well as to the judging interpretation of the present: thus, the 'allegorisation' of certain parables of the Lord, although often sneered at, is legitimate and not to be relativised.

It is certain that there existed in the early Church a prophecy, distinct from other offices, which held fast to the imminent expectation and was aware of its authority to speak in the name of Jesus.[15] However easy it may have been for such a charism to degenerate (as the facts show), it was in great measure the presupposition for the coming into existence of the scripture of the New Testament through the working of the Spirit; this scripture then set a norm for all wandering prophets. Prophecy also lay behind the origins of sacred (canon) law, which is essentially a law that comes from the authority of Jesus, the one crucified and exalted to be judge, and has an eschatological character that shares in his judging. 'Separating spirit and law from one another is one of the most grave errors of liberalism', says E. Käsemann, against R. Sohm. 'There are truly decrees that come from the Holy Spirit. The insight of the hearers is neither the presupposition nor limit of the obedience . . . God . . . binds hearts more sternly than any teacher of the law has ever done. But . . . his kingdom decrees the total self-giving of those who are free, and is law and decree in that it sets opposition under the curse; it is spirit, in that it empowers the obedience that sees.'[16] Here too, degeneration threatens, but the creation of a tradition with its roots in such a law (seen already in the Pastoral Epistles) is unavoidable, and points legitimately to the legal character of the original apostolic church-order. The various logia of Jesus which declare that his own authority is handed over to the Apostles, and in them to the Church, are an adequate theological expression for his self-abandonment, governed by the Holy Spirit.

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[15] R. Pesch, *Naherwartungen* (1968), p. 220.

This is not at all to say that the Gospels are free poetical-pneumatic creations of the early Church;[17] we see how strong was the will to make a historically correct presentation both in the prologue to Luke (which expresses the spirit of all the Gospels) and in the care with which Paul aligns his proclamation with the earliest tradition, as well as in the effort the evangelists make to hand on scattered logia of Jesus, which perhaps were no longer wholly comprehensible to the evangelists themselves, or were uncomfortable. In general, one may say that the interest in making present the historical life, work and words of Jesus remained alive and renewed itself on the basis of the mystery of his final self-abandonment, as this came to its fulfilment in Cross and Resurrection; but also that this interest was at the same time the remembrance of the mystery of the pre-Easter unity of authority and poverty, to which now the Spirit handed over the key, on the basis of the self-abandonment of Jesus. The light shed by the Spirit was so bright that when its dazzling rays turned back on to the hiddenness of Jesus, it bathed him proleptically in the light of Easter, and proleptically transfigured his *kabod* as pure momentum, into a *doxa* as brilliance, in some passages. As the Word become flesh, Jesus was more hidden than he is shown to be by the light of the Gospels, just as without any doubt God's deeds of salvation in the redeeming of Israel were more hidden and inconspicuous than the transfiguring images in Exodus or Joshua portray them. Such a lighting-up may take place for purposes of catechesis, if it is a means for the catechete to guide the hearers to the authority of the poor, obedient, self-abandoning Jesus. Like the Eucharist and all the sacraments, the Gospels conceal by revealing: how could it be otherwise, when God's humility, descending beneath all that may be uttered, can be fully grasped in no act of reverbalisation? The eucharistic signs of the broken bread and the poured-out wine separated from the bread speak out loud; but they cannot be anything more than signs that point. The words of the Holy Spirit, giving their guarantee, speak more loudly, but how should they give expression in words to what 'speaks' most of all—the silence of the Word? 'God's restraint constitutes his glory, just as silence is more eloquent when a word would be of necessity inappropriate.'[18] This is not in any way to agree with the superiority of a gnostic Σιγή and the debasement, known from the history of religions, of the word to a 'stammering' about what is ineffable; for, as the one who fulfils the 'word'-revelation of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ remains '*the*' Word (Jn 1.1; Heb 1.3), which precisely as Word-flesh remains a word that is superior even to all the inspired speech that concerns him. Therefore all the New Testament theologies, as though gathered around him in a circle, look up to him as their common centre that gives meaning,[19] yet a centre that wills to exist only in the pouring out of itself towards the entire periphery.

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[16] E. Käsemann, 'Sätze heiligen Rechts im Neuen Testament' (1954), in: *Exegetische Besinnungen und Aufsätze* II, pp. 69–82, quotation from pp. 78–79. 'Sentences of Holy Law in the New Testament' in: *New Testament Questions of Today*, 1969, pp. 66–81, quotation, p. 75.

[17] Against the over-estimation of the prophets' role: F. Neugebauer, 'Geistsprüche und Jesuslogien', *ZNW* 53 (1962), pp. 218–228.

It goes without saying that the already-existent contemporary thought forms are employed in the verbalisation, for otherwise there is no possibility of understanding—neither by the disciples themselves in their act of handing on the tradition, nor by those who hear their instruction. It is, however, no less self-evident that no ready-made thought form can suffice to verbalise what is unheard-of and unique; and therefore, from the very beginning we must expect a shading-off of various thought forms into one another, an impossibility of defining by means of one particular thought form (e.g., apocalyptic), and thereby the appearance of syncretism. As receptacles and elucidating pointers, 'mythical ciphers' can be recruited, uprooted from their native soil of origin and thus 'formalised',[20] for example, in the image of descent and ascent of the saviour in the liturgical hymn at Phil 2.6–11, or in John: in each case, however, this occurs with such decisive 'correctives' (in the hymn, through the motif of obedience; in John, through a great many contrary motifs that run counter to the myth that the 'mythical' demythologises itself. It was perhaps impossible to express the advantage of the New Testament in the 'physical' unity of the Church with Christ in the sacrament, over the predominantly 'moral-juridical' relationship to God in the old covenant, otherwise than by means of certain analogies to the mystery cults. The corrective lies here self-evidently in the relatedness of the Church's act to the historical event of the death of Christ in its salvific significance. All this shows once again how far it is true that in this unique instance the obtainable adequacy of the verbalisation can be attained only through an inadequacy of the means of thought, concept and speech employed—the inadequacy can be constantly demonstrated on the historical-critical level.[21] The inadequacy is obvious where through necessity individual events, handed on as such and indeed capable only of being handed on as such, are strung on the thread of a redactor;[22] but it is yet more obvious when a form of panorama is chosen that attempts to portray a horizon, as for example in the hymns in Jn 1, Phil 2.6–11, Col 1.15–20, 1 Tim 3.16; Rom 11.33–36, and the hymns of Revelation; or, on mid-way between these two extremes, when methods of presentation that can be identified by form criticism are chosen as pre-existent frameworks for a content that is finally, when seen as a whole, unique.

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[18] R. Thibaut, *Le Sens de l'Homme-Dieu*, *Mus. Less.*, sect. théol., 37 (1942), p. 74.

[19] *Cf.* my article, 'Einigung in Christus. Gedanken über die Vielheit der biblischen Theologien und den Geist der Einheit in der Kirche', *Freib. Zft. f. Phil. u. Theol.* 15 (1968), pp. 171–189.

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[20] H. Schlier, 'Das Neue Testament und der Mythus' (1956), in: *Besinnung auf das Neue Testament* (1964), pp. 85, 87.

[21] It is not purely fortuitous that research establishes the presence in all the layers of the New Testament of fragments or entire passages from early Christian liturgical hymnody, or formulae of liturgical doxologies and acclamations (*cf.*, e.g., G. Bornkamm, 'Das Anathema in der urchristlichen Abendmahlsliturgie', *Th. Lit. Ztg.* 1950), whether these can be defined precisely and isolated from the surrounding commentary or not. Much of

To close, we look from the self-abandonment of Jesus to the 'ethics of discipleship', because at this point the whole problem of the transposition of the one who is unique and inimitable into an object of imitation—indeed, an object to be imitated in all circumstances—becomes once more acutely

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what today is characterised as 'mythological' is to be attributed, in analogous character to the Old Testament, to the creative imagination of poetry, for as A. Schlatter rightly observes, 'Even with the most austere attention to veracity, no one can relate once more what is past without the co-operation of the imagination'. He continues, 'The coming into existence of a poetry which is concerned about the image of Christ is as old as evangelisation itself, and we find in many passages of the Gospels brilliant achievements of early Christian poetry, through the clarity of the graphic power contained in the narratives and simultaneously through the delicacy of the drawing, which knows how to direct the eye to the aspect of the event which has value for its beholder. In some cases, there are no precise boundaries to mark off the point at which remembrance became poetry and the graphic forming and narrative became remote from the real course of events. But the greatness of early Christian poetry is essentially due to the fact that its imagination . . . remains subjected to a powerful discipline, which has its *raison d'être* in the fact that the presentation of Christ never separated itself from the faith, and for this reason never forgot the difference between myth and reality', op. cit., p. 529.

[22] It is no misfortune that the Gospels offer us no possibility of writing a biographical 'life of Jesus'. 'If something like a chronological annal existed, then in all probability it would in its nature have nothing else to relate than what is presented in the first part of the Gospel of Mark as a collection of many individual events . . . It is obvious that what is essential has come down to us too: Jesus went about in Galilee—until he decided to go up to Jerusalem, a decision that in fact implied the journey to his death': U. Wilckens, 'Das Offenbarungsverständnis in der Geschichte des Urchristentums', in: W. Pannenberg (ed.), *Offenbarung als Geschichte* (2nd edn. 1963), p. 60.

visible. Jesus alone possesses the possibility of making out of his whole existence including his death, with full authority and in accordance with his mission, something handed over for God and men, out of which God is able to form his final word to the world through the Holy Spirit. The questionable character of the so-called 'transcendental christology'[23] becomes clear here; for, if we follow this christology, what is to prevent the wholly and immaculately transcendent human being Mary from becoming likewise a 'God-human being' (*Gottmensch*)? But if the Christian cannot make any progress along this path, then the relationship of the believing man to Christ must fork off into two paths: first, the obedience of faith, allowing what is possible only to Christ to be bestowed and impressed on the believer by God, and second, the attempt at an 'ethical' obedience of imitation, which in the confidence of faith in Christ ('for my sake', Mt 5.11; 19.29; etc.) 'abandons' or 'hates' everything and one's own self. This obedience of imitation too has its goal in the 'poverty' of a complete readiness for Jesus and for the needs of the kingdom proclaimed by him, and indeed goes beyond human limits in the love of enemies and shares in the mercy of the Father (Lk 6.36). And because this poverty was also the form that Jesus' life had (in fulfilment of the Old Testament faith), God's condescendence bends down therein to what is humanly possible, indeed to what is humanly perfect, in order to empower and legitimate such obedience of imitation from above, without promoting the imitators to the position of the God-man.

This composite structure finds its resolution only in the trinitarian mystery, which lies deeper. The paradox of Christ, an absolute authority (occupying even the Father's position in judgment) in absolute poverty that goes as far as total-self-giving, reveals the essence of the pure 'relationality' ('fluidity') of the second divine person (and conceals it at the same time in the Cross on which he is no longer word). This points to a self-giving so divine and absolute that it can be answered from the side of the creature only with the perfect *fiat* of the 'handmaid of the Lord' (as the basic attitude of the Church), whereby man *lets God be* what he wills to be, and allows himself to receive from God and be formed by him, as God wills and as much as he wills.

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[23] As this was proposed first by B. Welte (in: Grillmeier and Bacht, eds., *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* III, 1954, pp. 51–80), then by Karl Rahner, 'Zur Theologie der Menschwerdung' (reprinted in his *Schriften zur Theologie* IV, 1960, pp. 137–155), and, among many others, also by J. Ratzinger, *Einführung in das Christentum* (1968), pp. 189f.

In this chapter 'Word-Flesh', we have gone along a path that seemed at first to take us ever further from the momentum of an absolute claim in the person of Jesus, through his poverty and self-abandonment, into a preponderance of 'flesh', which as such is not Word, but is the form of the Word in emptiness and silence. In the claim made with his seeing through men in judgment, the emphasis lay not on the verbal address (for speech is only one of the forms of utterance of the person of Jesus), nor on the 'calling' of those addressed 'to make the decision', but on a quality of his person that was well recognised by the people: his 'prestige', *kabod*. This, however, is not *the* word that was to be uttered through the destiny of Jesus, but at most its notification. Only the form that God gives to Jesus' increasing poverty and self-abandonment in the Passion and Resurrection, when Jesus submits his destiny to the Father, allows the Word that has disappeared into the flesh to become truly *the* Word that 'was in the beginning with God', and that as the Alpha is now to be also the Omega-word that fills the creation (Eph 1.10). At that point, the momentum of the claim becomes the brilliance of the glory.

4. MOMENTUM OF TIME

a. The time of Jesus

One of the most difficult themes of New Testament exegesis is the theme of time; the texts offer a skein of conceptions of time that overlay and intersect and contradict each other in a mesh that is scarcely any more to be disentangled. It depends on views which they bring with them to the texts, whether or not scholars attribute to Jesus the logia concerning time; how the stratifications are variously determined, either asserting the precedence of this or that thought-form—prophetic, apocalyptic, hellenistic; by some a wholly futurist conception of the kingdom of God is attributed to Jesus (A. Schweitzer and his school), or a wholly realised conception (Dodd and his school), or else a mixed conception (W. G. Kümmel, O. Cullmann), which often enough looks like a compromise; or else (as with R. Bultmann and with the majority of his school) the core, which alone is relevant, is distilled from the irrelevant apocalyptic ('mythological') rind which is to be discarded.

We should not need to enter this much fought-over field, except that it is of central importance for the theme of '*kabod* as momentum'. This has been already shown implicitly by the preceding chapter, the contents of which would be quite unthinkable without the form of time; in the present chapter, therefore, our task is only to expose the temporal presuppositions of those contents. It ought to be immediately obvious that the presence is in the 'claim' and in the 'authority', but that, inseparable from these, there is a future in the 'poverty' and yet more in the 'self-abandonment'.

In order to unravel this further, we have to think back to what was said by way of 'setting the scene' about the subject who receives revelation. The point that gives perspective, gathering the traditions together and finally interpreting them, lies in the Church: for she makes explicit the meaning that has lain in earlier strata, mostly discoverable only in the traces they have left behind; from this starting point, it is a secondary question, how far, for example, Jesus attributed to himself the Old Testament titles of the (Danielic) Son of

Man and the (Isaianic) Servant of the Lord, how far he was explicitly aware of himself—if it should be the case that these titles were only later attributed to him—as the one who fulfilled these prophetic figures, and understood himself thus, and whether or not he achieved such consciousness in a deepening and clarification that came by stages. For one thing is clear: the momentum of his claim and of his authority before Easter, attested unanimously by the whole tradition, cannot be made sense of except by saying that Jesus was aware that he was God's final Word of salvation to mankind. The interpretation which points to the most important embodiments in prophecy of God's salvation is therefore at least justified; but beyond this, it would be strange and indeed contradictory if Jesus, who knew Scripture exactly, had announced his claim to finality without any reference to those models of salvation—for he himself brings his own destiny into the succession of the destinies of the prophets.

This then further gives us the right to approach the problem of the time of Jesus (and the times of the Church and of imitation, which functionally depend on the time of Jesus) from a theologically meditative distance, and to draw conclusions from the conclusion, so to speak, and apply them to the content of the premisses. We begin with an assertion which will perhaps be sufficient, by virtue of its formal character, to take account of the justified concerns of the most diverse directions of research, which seem to be irreconcilably opposed to each other. It is widely recognised that neither Jews nor Greeks knew of a purely abstract quantitative time, into which the events of history could be plotted as if into an already existing system of coordinates; they experienced a time determined and filled by events; nevertheless, the Greek writers aim for a historiography of the world determined by chronology,[1] while the Jews, who understand their own history not as world history but as salvation history, are appropriately unconcerned with the continuous description of events in the presentation of their religious history—or, more precisely, of the history of God's dealings with them—for

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[1] G. Delling, *Das Zeitverständnis des Neuen Testaments* (1940), pp. 54ff., *cf.* esp. what is said about ἱστορεῖν in the case of Arrian.

'salvation history' must hold fast to the *debarim* (word-deeds) of God which are not to be fitted into a chronological scheme, but fall vertically and unforeseen into the horizontal existence in time; and in this, gaps of centuries may well have to be reckoned with. The chronological time of Israel in history is 'filled' with the 'moments' (καιροί) of divine activity and speaking that give it its character; in the intervals—one thinks above all of the long period after the exile, almost wholly without prophecy—Israel must pass the 'empty time'[2] in carrying out and meditating upon what has been given, hoping for what has been promised. A period that lies between the events of revelation, which as such always contain promises, can never be completely empty; and the moments of new fulfilment are always at the same time a recapitulation that actualises and offers a new interpretation of what has been before, and thereby intensifies the promise. Thus, to use the language of Oscar Cullmann, there are in 'salvation history' constants as well as contingency.[3] There is a tension between the time (the καιροί) of God and the time of man, and the latter, for the Old Testament, is essentially—and once again, wholly appropriately—the finite time of the individual, which has its end in death. A conception of time that would trivialise death as something irrelevant, would be anthropologically and biblically unreal.

If this means that the time of the Old Testament is no rigidly determined time, but, because of this tension, is 'time set in motion',[4] then we can go on to speak of a time which is filled in yet another way, a time which is itself qualitatively different through its different contents, without for this reason causing a dissolution of the quantitative substratum which must unconsciously accompany it. It is possible to speak of an analogy[5] between the periods, and this will be especially significant in the relationship of the period of Jesus to the period of the Old Testament and to the period of the Church. We may say at the outset that the period of Jesus is an absolutely unique period—the divine-human period, into which indeed the time of the Old Testament flows, and in which the time of the Church can in a certain way participate, but which can never be identified with these. If the period of Jesus was characterised by an 'imminent expectation', then this must have been of a unique kind; it is, that is to say, a theological postulate that it must have been qualitatively distinguished from the merely analogous imminent expectations of prophecy or apocalyptic, or those of the early community and the later Church. What Jesus so emphatically terms 'my time' (in opposition to 'your time', Jn 7.6ff.) is characterised by a momentum that is strictly incomparable, something to which the momentum of the other imminent expectations only remotely approximate. This must now be argued in detail by theological reflection on the biblical data.

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[2] III/2,1, pp. 337-365.

[3] *Heil als Geschichte* (1965), pp. 104ff. (ET *Salvation in History*, 1967, pp. 122ff.). The book offers the mature and balanced summing up of Cullmann's long endeavours concerning the problem of time in the Bible and especially in the New Testament, in which he keeps the entire theological horizon open against all the abridgements of the fashionable theological trends.

[4] E. Jüngel, *Paulus und Jesus* (2nd edn. 1963), p. 141.

The time of Jesus is the time of a single mortal man, a time that unhesitatingly runs towards death—and a death the time of which can be known (if this is genuinely to be the time of a man) only to God, and can be determined only by him (Mt 6.27 following Job 14.5; Sir 17.2). It is part of the nature of such a human period that it is also somehow embedded in a surrounding human period; others existed before Jesus, and others will exist after him. He makes the 'now' of his presence stand out clearly against these surroundings: now the bridegroom is here, and one may fast afterwards (Mk 2.19f.); now they have him, whereas they always have the poor (Mt 26.11); now, in the 'short period' in which they have the light, they are to walk in it (Jn 12.35). The finitude and limitation of his life force him, like any other man, to limit his plans and his undertakings; thus, from a human point of view, his mission is limited exclusively to Israel (Mt 15.24). But this limited period is to be the sphere within which God's definitive dealing with the world is to take place, the definitive act that the old covenant called the Day of the Lord: the final division, the final justification of God and man, the final salvation. This must take place in this unique 'existence that goes towards death'; precisely for this reason, the 'kingdom of God', which Jesus proclaims as 'near' and 'at the very door', is both already come, in so far as it is indeed present, and yet also 'in process of coming', in so far as it is heading towards its own public and decisive end, its own 'hour' ('my hour', Jn 2.4). 'When he goes, the kingdom comes.'[6] One can also say: in that he goes his way, he is 'the way' (Jn 14.6). More precisely, this means—and the entire paradox of this assertion must be maintained—that 'if the eternal Word of God, who can say of himself, 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away' (Mk 13.31), has seriously become man', then for this man, 'his going towards death must coincide with his going towards the end of 'heaven and earth',[7] or more exactly, that the free design of himself which this man makes through his death, in complete self-abandonment that looks towards God, just coincide with the continuance of God's Word of salvation beyond all passing-away of the world, in the past and in the future. And since this Word of salvation cannot occur otherwise than as an accompanying judgment on everything that opposes God, then in the 'theological' consciousness of the man Jesus Christ (not in his 'psychological' self-awareness) there must be present also the assumption of the definitive judgment. This is more than Is 53 prophesies, and therefore it is basically irrelevant to what extent Jesus identified himself with the Servant of Yahweh, and to what extent a development (always unprovable)[8] in his consciousness may have taken place. It is certain that if one robs Jesus of the consciousness of being a proxy for the whole of mankind in the judgment of God—although this is something that Paul continuously attributes to him—then one brings down at a single stroke the whole edifice of the Church's proclamation of faith in Jesus Christ and the portrayal of his earthly life. There is a deep-lying distinction between the task that the Father has given Jesus, the cup that he must drink (Mt 20.22)—which can only be the cup of God's wrath—and the 'baptism' which he must undergo, and for which he yearns (Lk 12.50), and every destiny that is only that of a prophet.[9] The temptation which he withstood at the beginning of his ministry has given him the strength to dispense with the possibility of acting with superhuman means and powers (which might perhaps be magically available) in the presence of this destiny, which contains the absolute demands of God's will; rather, as is required by a genuine Incarnation, he must act only with the means and powers granted by God, while from the human side, he must act only with poverty, prayer, docility and self-abandonment. But this implies 'that the presence characterised by the activity and proclamation of Jesus stands in a particular relationship to the coming day of judgment', the threatening character and imminence of which it includes and expresses.[10]

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[5] Cullmann (op. cit., p. 59) too employs the term 'analogy', but only in order to characterise the relationship between salvation history and history. Our use will depart slightly from Cullmann's when we speak of the analogies *within* salvation history.

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[6] 'Glaube und Naherwartung', in my *Zuerst Gottes Reich* (1966), p. 10, with my whole detailed exposition there.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[8] W. G. Kümmel, *Verheissung und Erfüllung. Untersuchungen zur eschatologischen Verkündigung Jesu* (2nd edn. 1953), p. 134.

If we take all this seriously, then we find that we have suddenly moved beyond the dilemma of a purely future imminent expectation (A. Schweitzer) and a present interpretation like that launched by Dodd's 'realised eschatology', in a manner that inevitably brings him close to Platonism: the eternal being present in the transient moment. In fact, the eternal is present in this human life and in each of its moments, in a manner never realised before or afterwards, not as what is timelessly valid (the 'idea'), but as that which occurs here and now, that which must and will impose itself at any price (the price will be the abandonment by God on the Cross), not in a moment that is a 'point of time' (of decision, as the existential interpretation says in its reductionism), but in the going and passing away in time of this one life. This is new and unique, and bestows on the time of Jesus a momentum in the revelation of God that can exist neither in the prophetic-apocalyptic understanding of time nor in the Greek-Platonic understanding of time.[11] The Greek understanding may be able to contribute the idea of the καιρός as the qualitatively right moment (of the god with the forelock that is to be grasped), and the Jewish understanding may be able to contribute the idea of the near and inescapable immanence of the coming of God; but a unifying of the elements is impossible, on grounds of internal logic, apart from the existence of Christ.[12] If the pre-existence of Jesus is deduced from this unique indwelling of the God who is present in his saving activity in Jesus, then this is indeed a correct conclusion; but this is not the matter we are discussing here, which can almost be termed the correlative reversion of the pre-existence. Only when the 'self-realising eschatology' (J. Jeremias) will be able to be termed fully realised with the death and Resurrection of Jesus, will the correlation to an identity have come about, and then will the exalted Lord be able to term himself the one who absolutely includes all things, the Alpha and Omega, or (with Origen) the *autobasileia*; in the meantime, in temporality, he is the one seized and wholly contained in God's destiny for him.

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[9] *Cf.* Kümmel, p. 63: Jesus reckons with the certainty and with the necessity of his dying.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

He lives under the 'chiming of the hours', in God's 'timetable', step by step. Through the 'already' of his earthly presence (and only of *his* presence), the 'not yet' of the end that is drawing near receives its inexorability. The αὐτομάτη ('of itself', Mk 4.27) of the parable of the seed that grows automatically declares that the matter is on its way, and cannot be checked.[13] The same thing is meant by the warning at Jn 12.35 that the time of the light is short, and the hour of darkness stands at the door. This is more than prophetical, more even than the threatening announcement in Jeremiah, because the prophet himself is not the light that is departing, and the darkness of God is not bound up with his departure. It is also far more than apocalyptic, although it is by no means beyond question that Jesus could have made use of apocalyptic images and phrases to express the momentum of his own time.[14] It was only to be expected that Jesus would have to unite in his temporal horizon both the prophetic imminent expectation, which directs itself to events of earthly history, and the apocalyptic imminent expectation, which looks forward to a complete changeover from the old age to the new, to an opening of the heavenly world (often, of course, imagined in very earthly terms).[15]

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[11] 'It is clear that the manner in which the New Testament, in what is proper to it, experiences time represents something fully new', that is different both from what is Greek and from what is Jewish. 'Everything indicates that this new feeling of time is no invention of the writers or of Paul—this would be quite inexplicable, even approximately—but has its secure place within the preaching of Jesus, and finds already in his deeds a realisation that accomplishes it.' Delling, op. cit. (n. 1 above), p. 73.

[12] 'The understanding of the *kairos* proper to the New Testament is in its essence neither Greek nor Jewish, but precisely Christian', *ibid.*, p. 87.

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[13] J. Weiss, *Reich Gottes* (new edn. 1964), pp. 84f., says in his own way that draws close to the mystery and yet misses the mark: 'As the countryman after finishing the sowing can only wait and must leave the development of the corn to itself . . ., so no one, not even Jesus, can bring about the coming of the kingdom of God by himself actively grabbing hold of it.' Similarly J. Jeremias, *Gleichnisse* (7th edn. 1965), p. 151 (*cf.* ET *Parables of Jesus*, p. 151f.): 'Just as surely as the harvest comes for the farmer after long waiting, so God brings surely the final judgment and the lordship of God when the eschatological measure is filled up.' One must, however, add that this certainty is achieved within the being of Jesus. On the interpretation of the parable that takes it as speaking of Jesus: F. Mussner, 'Gleichnisauslegung und Heilsgeschichte', *Trierer Theol. Zt.* 64 (1955), pp. 257–262.

[14] Again and again the attempt has been made to separate the proclamation of Jesus from all apocalyptic. Thus, e.g., M. Goguel, *Das Leben Jesu* (1934), pp. 390–393; R. Otto, *Reich Gottes und Menschensohn* (2nd edn. 1940), p. 169 (ET *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man*, 1938, p. 155); *cf.* G. Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu* I (1930), pp. 110 (ET *The Words of Jesus*, 1902, pp. 135f.); in detail, W. G. Kümmel, op. cit. (n. 8 above), pp. 81ff.: 'The teaching of Jesus is prophetical, eschatological, evangelical – but antiapocalyptic, antipharisaic, antisadducaic': *ibid.*, p. 97, citing J. W. Bowman, *The intention of Jesus* (1934), p. 52.

Then there is always a substantial difference between those who see the whole horizon of Jesus' conceptual world as determined by the late Jewish apocalyptic (as A. Schweitzer and his pupils M. Werner, F. Buri and Neuenschwander wish to do), and those who wish to see in apocalyptic only one element in the background of his understanding, perhaps an indispensable element (like W. Pannenberg and those associated with him). *Cf.*, e.g., U. Wilckens: 'If one wishes to understand historically the personal claim of Jesus that is made efficacious through words and deeds, then one must at the very least point to the claim of proleptic-eschatological 'revelation' made in apocalyptic theology as the general historical presupposition for his claim': 'Das Offenbarungsverständnis in der Geschichte des Urchristentums', in: *Offenbarung als Geschichte* (2nd edn.

With all of this, we have not yet touched the question of how this temporal horizon of Jesus must be considered theologically; the reason for the difficulty of this question is that two seemingly incompatible lists of statements stand alongside one another. The first has the inbreaking of the end as something that is about to happen immediately, so immediately indeed that 'in this generation' the inbreaking of the end, the coming of the Son of Man in glory to judgment,

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1963), p. 50; *cf.* also W. Pannenberg, *Christologie*: 'The claim of Jesus to authority corresponds through its proleptic structure to the relatedness of apocalyptic vision to history, which for its part goes back to the concern of the prophetic word of God for the future' (p. 55). This always leaves room for E. Käsemann's view 'that Jesus' point of departure was the apocalyptically determined announcement of the Baptist, but his own preaching was not constitutively characterised by apocalyptic' ('Die Anfänge christlicher Theologie', 1960, in: *Exeg. Vers. u. Aufs.* II, p. 99 ET 'The Beginnings of Christian Theology', in: *New Testament Questions for Today*, p. 101). For Käsemann, it is only after Easter that real apocalyptic is brought in again; for him, Jesus is pre-apocalyptic, or better, above apocalyptic (*cf. ibid.*, II, pp. 109f.). O. Cullmann has rightly taken up arms against the 'properly exaggerated anxiety' about apocalyptic, an anxiety that exists in schools most strongly opposed to one another (*Heil als Geschichte*, p. 207 ET *Salvation in History*, 1967, p. 229). As long as one sees in apocalyptic only an inherited thought form (certainly brought providentially), which has opened and made ready an indispensable dimension for New Testament experience and theology (*cf.* III/2,1, pp. 298ff.), its use by the Apostles and even by Jesus himself can create no problem. How far he made use of it, and how far the Synoptic apocalypse is a construction of the community, is a second question that is to be decided by the exegetes. *Cf.* R. Pesch, *Naherwartungen, Tradition und Redaktion in Mk 13* (1968), with detailed bibliography.

[15] Delling (op. cit., n. 1 above, p. 103) states this by saying that for Jesus the law of the ages (with a present age and an age to come) is *de facto* annulled. E. Käsemann (op. cit., n. 14 above, pp. 109, 117f.) comes in effect to the same conclusion, since for him the period in which Jesus lives is unique and cannot be comprehended within any conceptual scheme.

is reckoned with; the second seems categorically to require a span of time between Cross and Resurrection on the one side and parousia on the other side, a span in which the time of the world, that has existed hitherto, continues. One can seek the solution of this aporia by saying that in the temporal horizon of Jesus the period between Resurrection and parousia must have been quite short;[16] there is then no necessity to posit, like Kümmel, a clear, if harmless, error of Jesus in the question of the date of the end,[17] for one can point to a 'tension' in the thinking of Jesus that permits the temporal widening of the period that occurred in the first community and later in the Church as it established itself in time. Against such unsatisfactory attempts at compromise, the more difficult hypothesis seems theologically required: that one attributes to Jesus as it were a double temporal horizon,[18] because, in accordance with his mission, he must in the time of his own finite existence complete what has to be done with the 'world' as a whole (and that includes its temporal future), so that he attains the end of time in the fullest truth with his death and his Resurrection; and because, equally in accordance with the truth, he can foresee a continuing period of chronological time for the others, for the disciples and for their commission, and with this chronological time also a continuation of the time of salvation that has been transformed in the coming of the Spirit. In virtue of a theological postulate, this must be absolutely possible and necessary, because Jesus' own time, which ('psychologically') becomes timeless through his bearing the sin of the world on the Cross, and again and in a different way more timeless still in the descent into the condition of Hades, in order to issue with the suddenness of the Resurrection from death into the eternal and perpetual, contains and shelters the 'time of the others', which will continue on earth, in itself. It is not possible to achieve this quite simple and unique insight from outside; therefore the logia, their revision and redactional classification, must give an impression of contradictoriness. Nevertheless they are all correct, each in its own perspective. One only has to make the effort of holding two things together:that in the first perspective, that of the unique time of Jesus, the end of time is reached in all truth with the bearing of the sin of the world and the descent into the death of all, and therefore it is absurd to distinguish the 'point of time' of the Resurrection (or Ascension) and the 'point of time of the parousia', for here there are no 'points of time' any longer. These exist only in the 'time of the others', in 'our time', in respect of which Jesus can also make objectively justified interventions. It must not be forgotten, moreover, that it is not until the Passion that Jesus experiences what it means to bear the sin of the world, and that before this, he sees its fearsome 'timelessness' as it were threatening in outline, from the outside; it threatens as an endless end, that sinks into the eternal timelessness; it is objectively impossible and theologically false to allot this endless end a place in the 'chronology of salvation history', and to situate in a temporal succession the radical change of the Resurrection which, seen from Hades, is impossible, the unthinkable, unlocatable moment when 'death is swallowed up in victory' (1 Cor 15.54) in divine 'suddenness' and the perpetuity of eternal life 'begins' (but this 'beginning' too must be cancelled, for despite the character of event which belongs to the Resurrection, Jesus soars up into the glory which 'he had before the world was made', (Jn 17.5). The formula of Jesus' Resurrection 'after three days' or 'on the third day' can be formulated only from a standpoint that lies utterly outside, a standpoint that projects on to the continuing time of the world that which is timeless, or at any rate has a qualitatively different time; the time of the world is no longer the proper time of what is endless, and although it can be continuously present to it (Mt 28.20), this does not mean that for it itself Resurrection, Ascension, and parousia are separated by distances in time. In all this, we have not yet touched on the other theological question (above all a question of Pauline and Johannine theology), how the Christian in the transitory time of the world can share in the time of Jesus' earthly life, in the non-time of the Cross and Hell, and in the perpetuity of the exalted Lord. All this is so paradoxical that every one-sided solution is false from the outset. 'Therefore the same evangelist is able to reproduce the formally contradictory statements of Jesus about the future, without bringing them forcibly into harmony with each other.'[19]

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[16] This is the solution of O. Cullmann, *Heil als Geschichte*, p. 201 (ET pp. 222f.). For him, the remaining intervening period has for Jesus 'an especial significance in salvation history, despite its brevity' (p. 197, ET p. 218).

[17] 'Die Naherwartung in der Verkündigung Jesu', in: *Zeit und Geschichte. Dankesgabe an R. Bultmann* (1964), p. 45 and n. 76.

[18] With J. Weiss (op. cit., n. 13 above, p. 96), one can point to the 'double platform' of the apocalyptic image of the world; but this is at best a remote analogy, that can contribute a form of expression for what is christologically unique.

It is therefore absolutely incorrect to suppose that all the sayings about the period of the Church remaining after Jesus' 'assumption' (Lk 9.51), or about the 'interim period', are to be denied him; as has been seen already, to speak otherwise would not be human; and these 'days to come' can be coloured in simple human colours (as at Mk 2.20), or apocalyptically (Mk 13.19), or eschatologically (Mk 14.25), or specifically christologically (in all predictions of persecutions 'for his sake', Mk 13.9 par.).[20] John writes so much from the standpoint of the Lord, who is at once the one who comes and the one who goes, the one on the Cross and the one exalted to the Father, that the non-time of the Cross is called 'a little while'—an absolutely qualitative, non-chronological designation—and the 'coming again', 'seeing again', and 'taking to the place where he is' refer equally to the Easter appearances and to the 'later' parousia, events which are to be situated within the unique time of Jesus and do not need to be chronologically distinguished there; for this reason, it is unnecessary to excise as redactional additions all the futurist utterances about the judgment and the rising of the dead on the last day (5.28; 6.39, 40, 44, 54; 11.24; 12.48).[21] For why should John have neutralised the terrible tension of the New Testament utterances about time, and impoverished them so that they indicate only a 'presence' 'at a point in time'? The Johannine presence is only the radicalisation of the time of Christ as the all-determinative form of the time of the Church—a thought that has its basis in the Synoptic Gospels, when they have Jesus' working begin with an overpowering of Satan, when for them too the kingdom is *present* inasmuch as the stronger one has forced his way into the house of the strong man and bound him (Mt 12.28 par.), and when Jesus sees Satan falling like a bolt of lightning from Heaven (Lk 10.18). Nevertheless, the 'vertical' event has not only its 'horizontal' correspondance; rather, it becomes reality and something present for us, only when 'what has happened once for all' takes a firm place in human time as this goes on its course. It is in accord with this that the believing man lives towards this event, which for him too will be something unforeseeable (Mt 24.44), breaking in like a flash of lightning (Mt 24.27; Lk 17.24).

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[19] G. Delling, *Zeitverständnis* (n. 1 above), p. 115.

[20] R. Schnackenburg, *Gottes Herrschaft und Reich* (1959), p. 146.

[21] A. Vögtle, 'Exegetische Erwägungen über das Wissen und Selbstbewusstsein Jesu', in: *Festgabe K. Rahner* I (1964), pp. 608–667.

The unique time of Jesus is the one that the prophets awaited; 'they inquired εἰς τίνα καὶ ποῖον καιρόν what quantitative and qualitative time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them, when predicting the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory' (1 Pet 1.11). Here is both the internal difference of the time of Jesus from that of the Old Testament, and the reason for the difference, in terms of its contents—the eschatological sufferings and glorifications—laid clear before our eyes. 1 Peter goes on to say that even the angels longed to look into these finally decisive events (1.12), and this agrees with the statement of Paul that only now, in the time of the Incarnation, has the manifold Wisdom of God (in the dispensation of salvation) been made known through the Church to the authorities and powers in heaven (Eph 4.10f.),[22] and that thus the time of Christ becomes the time that is inclusive of the 'times' of the worldly powers and heavenly powers also (*cf.* 1 Pet 3.22; Heb 1.4; 2.5; Col 2.10, 15). The inclusive character of the time of Jesus lies in his 'having been chosen in advance before the foundation of the world' (1 Pet 1.20) to appear in the last times as the 'lamb without spot or stain', so that the earthly time of Jesus is from the outset already taken up into the plan and the disposition of the created world, and belongs to the eternal contents of the providence that governs the world (*cf.* Rev 13.8).

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[22] *Cf.* the important excursus of H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Epheser* (1957), pp. 159–166, *ad loc.*

b. The time of the Church

We have identified the subject who receives revelation as the Church; anyone who accepts this must speak of a time of the Church as such, a time which for this reason cannot be equated with the 'punctiliar' determination of individuals at those moments when they are addressed by God's Word and reply to it. But the time of Jesus must be as much determinative for the time of the Church as the Word is determinative for the reply. If the Word in its inmost logic categorically requires a reply (Is 55.10f.), and indeed goes forth for the sake of the reply, then the time of Jesus too intends to imprint itself on the Church in such a manner that a time of the Church is produced, through grace and yet in a free response. Because the Church can never identify herself with her Lord, not even as his 'body' and his 'bride' ('one flesh'), then this is no more than an analogy which always also implies difference. But on the other hand, since Church is wholly determined by her origin from the Lord and her going towards him, her time can be made comprehensible only through the *analogatum princeps*, the time of Jesus.

This can be seen most clearly by considering the insight that the time of the Church has no momentum of its own, but is in its entirety determined by the momentum of the time of Christ. The momentum of his time was conditioned by the inclusion of the whole will of God to save and judge within his finite mortal existence. This is unique and unrepeatable; but it can become the measure under which the Church sets herself in her temporality. In the appearances of the Risen One, the disciples do not in the least experience themselves as 'risen with him': they remain within the chronologically on-going time, in an existence that outwardly, despite the fundamental breaking-through the ban of death by the Lord, is characterised as an existence that goes towards death. If a ray from the victory falls upon it, if a hidden overturning of values results, this comes only from him.

In order to understand this, it is necessary first to establish that the Easter appearances, which give the disciples a perfect certainty of the Resurrection of Jesus, do not present themselves as the glory, now revealed openly, which had lain hidden, though ready to break forth, in the momentum of the claim of Jesus of Nazareth (in poverty and self-abandonment). The disciples are not 'stunned' or 'cast to the ground' by these appearances, as in the epiphany of the glory on Mount Tabor, or at the beginning of Revelation. There remains a place for failure to recognise, for discussion and questioning, indeed for doubt; a place for the practicality of the instruction and of the commission imparted. Not even the closing scene of the Ascension is distinguished by the glory of an epiphany; it emphasises only a certain definitiveness of the disappearing. From the Easter appearances, the whole light of comprehension falls backwards upon the momentum of Jesus' 'existence towards the Cross', but these appearances retain something suspended, something of a transitional character, that expressly forbids holding fast (Jn 20.17) and makes understandable and almost necessary the further reference that the interpreting angels make to the return at the end of time (Acts 1.11). In Mark, this is so strong that the reference to the Resurrection that has taken place, and to the seeing which will take place, suffices as conclusion; in Luke, the theme of the instruction first of the Emmaus disciples, then of the Apostles (24.44f.), stands at the centre of interest; in John, the interest is above all in the constitution of the Church (symbolism of the episodes of Peter and John) and in the sacraments (forgiveness of sins, 'breakfast'), in the faith that does not see, yet sees (20.29), or sees only through signs (20.8–9), and in the letting-go of the Lord so that he may go the Father (20.17) in order to accomplish his work on earth both through the ministry and existentially (21.18f.). Only in Matthew do we see a tendency to draw Resurrection and parousia closer together as the one definitive reality for the Church too: Matthew draws close to giving a picture of the glory of the Resurrection event (but without actually doing so, as do the apocryphal gospels, 28.2–4; in accordance with this, he had already described the crucifixion at 27.51–53 with apocalyptic images as the presence of the final judgment); he underlines the *proskynêsis* before the risen Jesus (28.9,17), and shows Christ appearing as the *pantokrator* of all times and places in the closing words (which are in fact spoken from Heaven, 28.18–20). Yet he leaves place for the doubt, precisely in the presence of this final appearance of power (28.17); he leaves room too for the 'ambiguous report' that perhaps Jesus was not risen at all (28.11–15). Thus it is clear that even in Matthew, the eschatological brilliance which he spreads over the Resurrection is an anticipation of the 'liturgical' faith of the congregation.

As a whole, the character of the Easter appearances confirms the double horizon of Jesus' time, which has been described above: for himself, he reaches out in the Cross and Resurrection over all chronologically future time to the end of time and of the world, and thereby includes in his grasp also the continuing chronological time of the Church (and through her, of the world as a whole). By virtue of this being included in his grasp, the time of the Church comes to lie objectively between 'Resurrection' (as divine summing up of the earthly life in its journey to the Cross) and parousia: it is a *time within these brackets*, determined from both sides, from the certainty of the end that has been reached in Jesus as well as from the certainty of the running on towards precisely this end (his 'return').

The unity of this double certainty is given to the Church through the Holy Spirit, who bears her through the paradox (and thereby the apparent incomprehensibility) of this 'interim period', consoling her, defending her, illuminating and strengthening her, training her to attain the unity and diversity of the missions and charisms. The Pauline and Johannine theologies, like the Acts of the Apostles, are full of the reality and power of this gift of Father and Son. He, the Spirit, is the indubitable present tense, identifying himself as the synthesis of past tense (the history of Jesus) and future tense (his return), and making both believable by virtue of this synthesis.

But this synthesis in the present tense, which in addition makes known the present tense of the exalted Christ which has become perpetual (Mt 28.18f.; Jn 14.19,23; Acts 7.56;

9.4ff., etc.), cannot allow past and future to disappear into itself like moments that have become antiquated; Paul has to emphasise this against the gnostics of Corinth,[1] just as much as John must against other gnostics. The true Spirit of Christ refers back to the Cross of Jesus (1 Cor 1.17ff.; 12.3; Jn 16.14) and forward to his coming again (1 Cor 13.8ff.; Phil 3.12f.; Jn 16.13), and it will be repeatedly necessary, from Montanus and on through Joachim to Hegel, to struggle against the misunderstanding of the gnostic spirit-synthesis. The present tense of the Spirit is neither timeless (as the present tense of a timeless 'idea' that determines every temporal present) nor the autonomous synthesis of the periods of time; rather, as Paul with profound insight says, it is a 'deposit' (2 Cor 1.22; 5.5; Eph 1.14) that looks to the final synthesis, and therefore kindles a unique hope that cannot be compared with anything that is inner-worldly. It is a hope that is distinct both from the hope of the Old Testament that was based on mere 'promise', and from the definitive possession (and the form of fulfilment of hope that remains in possession),[2] and allows that indescribable anticipation, both confident and reverently cautious, that is proper to the chosen bride who has received from the bridegroom the 'deposit' that looks to the marriage ceremony. Seen from the standpoint of the world, this penultimate hope is so ultimate that the time given its form by it can be termed only the 'end time' (Acts 2.17; 1 Cor 10.11; 1 Jn 2.18).

The end time is qualitatively such that in it the power of *chronos* as 'present' and 'future' (which belongs also to the powers and authorities, Rom 8.38) is fundamentally broken.[3] It is qualitatively 'shortened time' (1 Cor 7.29),[4] inasmuch as the new immediate nearness to what is definitive brings about this 'concentration' of 'compactness' (the obverse side is that Satan too ὀλίγον καιρὸν ἔχει, 'has a short time', after Christ's victory, Rev 12.12). It is understandable that this qualitative character, an essential aspect of which is the anticipation of hope in the end, was first understood as a chronological (quantitative) imminent expectation; indeed, it was inevitable that this should be so, because Jesus spoke above all on the basis of his own time, in which Resurrection and parousia are included together in the same act, and because before Easter he urgently introduced the disciples into his own attitude of waiting confidently for his 'hour'. The texts which speak of watching and attentively waiting for the coming belong absolutely to the original proclamation of Jesus.[5] But the imminent expectation, in its most original sense, had its foundation for the early Church so deeply in the qualitative aspect of the interim time, that, contrary to what modern theologians like to suppose, the delay of the parousia[6] did not pose for them a problem that touched the centre.[7] It is only in a few peripheral passages that the lengthening of the time is felt as a theological question.[8] The modern constructions necessarily think from the outside and primarily in a chronological manner, and therefore they get the essence of the hope in the end time wrong, since this can be understood only theologically; then they turn to the equally misleading existential interpretation with its use of the present tense, which logically leads away from the Jesus of the gospel to a Platonism of the eschatological 'taking leave of the world'.

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[1] U. Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit. Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu 1 Kor 1 und 2*, BHTh 26 (1959).

[2] On this, *cf.* my 'Fides Christi', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (1960), pp. 45–79.

[3] Delling, op. cit. (n. 1 of previous section), p. 106.

[4] Delling (op. cit., p. 89) rightly points to the qualitative character of this shortened time, but he overplays his hand when he wishes to exclude from this the element of chronological ('horizontal') time: for such things as marrying, buying, etc., there is to be 'no more time' in the Christian's life. But if one takes the expression literally, it still remains a play on words.

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[5] B. Rigaux, 'La seconde venue de Jésus', in: *La venue du Messie*, Rech. bibl. VI (1962), p. 185.

[6] Bibliography on the delay of the parousia in: R. Schnackenburg, *Neutestamentliche Theologie* (1963), p. 61; E. Grässer, 'Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte', in: *Beiheft zur ZNW* 22 (1957); A. Strobel, *Untersuchungen zum eschatologischen Verzögerungsproblem* (1961).

[7] On this, O. Cullmann has written very tellingly in various polemical articles, collected in: *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (1966), pp. 337–465, esp. 414ff., and in his work *Heil als Geschichte* (1965), esp. pp. 218ff. (ET pp. 240ff.).

[8] 2 Pet 3.3f., one of the latest writings of the canon; and Jn 21.23, where it is a case only of an individual instance, since the beloved disciple should have been spared death before the return of Christ, and his death therefore raises a question. It is noticeable how little the original expectation of Paul, that he would experience the return of Jesus (1 Thess 4.17), became for him a problem with the later prospect of his own death; for he himself, like Jesus, had already spoken at 1 Thess 5.1ff. of ignorance of the hour and of the coming of the Day 'like a thief in the night'.

Here, however, it is decisive that the exalted Lord, who apparently stands timelessly above the end time between Resurrection and parousia, is no atemporal Platonic idea—he becomes this in the application of a merely ecclesiastical kerygma that is separated from Jesus—but precisely the Jesus who willed to have a temporal existence together with men on the earth. Here we see a theme that was not yet fully visible in the preceding section on the time of Jesus. Seen theologically, Jesus may indeed have had a time that was genuinely his own (Jn 7.6,8); but he received this only by sharing in universal human time. He declared himself to be in solidarity with the temporal destiny of the prophets of Israel and of John the Baptist. He played a game on a common field of time, on which he had those who played with him and those who played against him. He himself chose those who played more closely with him, in order that he might go along his own path, not alone but accompanied by others both externally and, as far as possible, internally. The reason for the emergence of those who played against him was their refusal to accept the role of players with him, the role which was to have been theirs. In the next section, we shall consider how radically Jesus intended this going with him, the 'following after' Jesus, to be—he intended it so seriously that he felt able to take those who were his with him into the last phases of his own path, although here he could only go alone, because of the breakdown caused by men's sins. He asks them if they can drink his cup; he promises them a share in the judgment of the twelve tribes of Israel, i.e., an active role in the decisive act of God's judgment. Paul seconds these indubitably authentic words of Jesus, when he assures the community of this role in the final judgment once again (1 Cor 6.2–4).[9] This contemporaneity of Jesus with our time establishes a communication that allows the time of the Church to share in his eschatological perpetuity and supratemporality.

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[9] G. Schrenk, *Die Weissagung über Israel im Neuen Testament* (1951), pp. 17f.; Kümmel, op. cit. (n. 8 of previous section), p. 41.

The Jesus who was with us imprints on the time of the Church his own form, the form of the one who became the lord of all times through the perfecting of his temporality. This perfecting is his total poverty and self-abandonment, which made possible the event of the Cross in which God's love was able to go to the limit and carry out what it designed. By virtue of Jesus' Resurrection, this 'going to the limit' is set up as the norm of all fulfilment in transitory time: 'If one has died for all, therefore all have died. And he died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised' (2 Cor 5.14f.). The imprint of the time of Jesus implies therefore an objective dispossession of one's own life, eliminating in advance every act of the will or of resistance: it implies a being taken into the end of time accomplished by Jesus, which includes death, judgment and Resurrection—the 'reconciliation of God with the world' (2 Cor 5.18)—as an event brought about 'for us' and 'for me'. Because the fact has already been brought about, and gives its character to the remaining time of the Church, there is a distance between the two forms of time that is not to be removed; if the time of Christ contains in itself the whole momentum of the eschatological act of God, then the time of the Church can give a response to this momentum only in so far as it projects itself wholly, in believing and loving hope, towards this perfected time as towards its own goal—the existence of the one who bears the impress of this form must shape itself into a flying bullet: 'forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize . . . to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own' (Phil 3.13f.,12). The believer has been made Christ's own, and therefore the absoluteness of this forward movement which results transcends every other absoluteness, however utopian, of human hope or of the programming of the future. Simply by being lived, this absoluteness can take its place at the spearhead of all worldly hopes for the future, and can preserve them from stagnation and from acquiescing in the established present. In this sense, it can indirectly exercise by itself functions of 'social criticism', but without letting itself be led astray from the straight line of its own flight-path by such criticism or by preoccupation with worldly projects of evolution. For this reason, it will 'keep awake and be sober', because it has already been bathed in the light and does not need to search for light (1 Thess 5.5ff.). It knows that its 'home is in Heaven' (Phil 3.20), and that we are 'pilgrims and strangers in this world' (Heb 11.13; 1 Pet 2.11).

The element of the sacramental on the one hand, and of the institutional, the official which is bound with it on the other, has an interior appropriateness for this pilgrim state of the Church. *The sacramental* is seen with special clarity in the three forms of baptism, Eucharist, and forgiveness of sins, as the once-for-all (Rom 6.3ff.) and then ever new receiving of the imprint of the form of the dying and rising Lord. This takes place because the Eucharist is the proclamation of the death of Christ (1 Cor 11.26), as a participation in 'Christ, the paschal lamb slain' for us (1 Cor 5.7), 'sharing in the blood of Christ' (1 Cor 10.16), 'until he comes again', i.e., a memory that looks both backwards and forwards, both to what has been fulfilled and to what is promised,[10] with its gaze set on the judgment which is escaped by the one who 'discerns' the body of Christ, examining himself (1 Cor 11.29). This takes place then in the forgiveness of sins, because this is imparted to the individual sinner out of the treasury of the total forgiveness on the Cross, in a judging and pronouncing of sentence that belong to the eschatological act of judgment by God on the Cross (1 Cor 5.1ff.; Mt 16.19; 18.18; Jn 20.22f.). But the dispensation of judgment from the eschatological grace presupposes an *office* that is to say, a participation in the authority of Jesus, which (as has been seen) is not separable from poverty and self-abandonment. If ministerial authority is to be credible for Christians, it must therefore attest itself by bearing in a special way the imprint of the sufferings of Christ on the Cross; this is archetypically represented in Peter (Jn 21.18f.) and Paul (2 Cor 4.10–15; 6.1–10), so that it is possible to say, pointedly, 'The time of the event of the death of love is sumultaneously the time of the apostolic existence'.[11] By going back to the Cross of Christ, Paul can justify his discernment of what is truly Christian, as well as his own apostolic ministry, against the Corinthian gnosis which thought it could leave behind the earthly Jesus and understand the risen Jesus as an idea with exclusive reference to the present tense, so doing without any hope in a future Resurrection. There is an authority in the Church, which establishes order over against mere enthusiasm (1 Cor 14.33, 40), but authority is exercised only in the humiliation that is caused by one's own weakness (as 2 Corinthians shows).

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[10] N. A. Dahl, 'Anamnesis, Mémoire et commémoration dans le christianisme primitif', in *Stud. theol.* (1947).

What is true of the ministry, whose weapons can be only spiritual (2 Cor 10.4), is true also of the Church as a people that receives the impress of ministry and sacrament: the 'nearness of the Lord' requires from his people the ἐπιεικές of Christians before all men (Phil 4.5): 'Your forbearance, that is to say, the joyful calmness that is able to bear all suffering and injustice. "Forbearance" is the exact opposite of the attitude that insists on its rights . . . Thus it is only another word for "meekness", which Jesus avows of himself, for the "humility" which Christ demonstrated in his earthly life . . . It is a struggle of patient enduring against injustice, of powerlessness against force'.[12] Paul goes on, like the Sermon on the Mount, to forbid 'cares'; rather, all concerns should be borne before the God of peace in a prayer that is at once petition and thanksgiving (Phil 4.6f.). These concerns will be those of all mankind too, and of mankind's future: concerns that in worldly terms are enormous, but which nevertheless are to be borne in a final pacification to the point where 'the peace of God, which passes all understanding', rules anterior to all present and future strife.[13]

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[11] E. Güttgemanns, *Der leidende Apostel und sein Herr. Studien zur paulinischen Christologie* (1966), p. 316.

[12] E. Lohmeyer, *Philipper* (9th edn. 1953), p. 168.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

This much may be said of the imprint stamped by the time of Christ on the time of the Church;[14] there is yet one final aspect to be considered. The momentum of the definitive act of God in the Cross and Resurrection of Christ is so strong that its impact on mankind bursts through the time of the Church, making this no longer one particular, circumscribed time. Unlike the particular time of Israel, which had boundaries separating it from the Gentiles, the time of the Church in its manifest character can be only what the *time of mankind* is through Christ, in a truth that lies hidden. The apparent brackets—between Cross and parousia—that surround the time of the Church are in reality the opening of all brackets, since God has acted in Christ 'once for all' ἐφάπαξ and thus for all times and places before and after Christ, and not as the redeemer of a little group or of one single people, but as the creator of the world, accomplishing his original plan 'to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth, as the Head' (Eph 1.10), his plan 'as the one saving God' to bring 'all men to salvation and to knowledge of the truth' through 'the one mediator Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all' (1 Tim 2.4ff.). Thus he planned to overcome the dangerous two-sidedness of the Sinai covenant, which in the last analysis could serve only to demonstrate man's incapacity; so he would show the righteousness of God, on earth as in Heaven (Gal 3.19f.). This bursting through of the special time of Israel into the time of Christ and of his Church which embraces all times is a theme on which Paul never tires of ringing the changes; and if he gives such strong emphasis to the negative aspects of the law and thereby seems to erect a wall between law and gospel, where hitherto none had existed—for in the old covenant, law and promise (prophecy) were one—then this serves only to dispose more definitively of what was finite and limited. It serves, further, to overcome the dreadful twilight into which the old covenant had ever more deeply entered, and which had become so definitive with the destruction of the Temple and the Exile that, since then, the continuing existence of the original covenant had become an open question, and the law and its observance had become a kind of abstract substitute for the living intercourse of God with his people. Paul brings this ambiguity to light when he sets a temporal and therefore material distance between the promise to Abraham and the event on Sinai (Gal 3.17), and indeed between the promise and circumcision (which exists since Abraham, Rom 4.10ff.), and when, from the viewpoint of the definitive dispensation, he shows that the final purpose of the law was to make obvious the sin that lay latent, in individual transgressions that could not be denied (Gal 3.19; Rom 4.15). Thus the Jews would be brought to the same level as the Gentiles, who in any case were shown to be 'without the law', so that no one might be able to boast, but every mouth would be silent and the whole world confess its guilt before God (Rom 3.19). The apparent dialectic of law and gospel set up by Paul is in reality the abolition of every dialectic, as is clear in the simpler pattern of the Letter to the Hebrews, where the old sacrifices stand in place of the old law, in their temporally-conditioned necessity and simultaneously in their uselessness in the presence of the one and unique self-offering of Christ, in whom finally priest and sacrifice become one, just as in him finally the promise (and thereby also the law, Mt 5.17) is fulfilled, and God brings about his own righteousness of salvation (*tzedek*) on earth as in Heaven.

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[14] We do not need to enter upon the question of how far Christ foresaw and willed a Church in the interim period, how far he founded a Church through specific instructions. His being with mankind, his will to call men to follow him and to instruct them and send them out, is sufficient reason to give a fundamentally positive answer, if we accept the double temporal horizon of Jesus that has been described. The decisive link between the two temporal levels is the institution of the Eucharist: what was done eschatologically once for all on the Cross, is to be many times repeated in the Church. Bibliography on the question in Trilling, *Fragen zur Geschichtlichkeit Jesu* (2nd edn. 1967), p. 114.

By excluding such ambiguity, Paul implies inclusion in what has only one meaning, in the promise of God, who alone is able to accomplish with full power what is his own (his righteousness) in what is other than himself. Therefore the recognition of this act of God has first place in the new covenant, and Paul can identify the original attitude of

Abraham, faith, as the origin of the attitude that has final validity before God. Faith is meant in the fully inclusive sense that is shown in Heb 11 and can include at the margin even the acknowledgement of God by the pagans (11.3), just as for Paul the Gentiles will be judged by their conscience as the law that has been inspired within them (Rom 2.14f.); already in Abraham, faith meant a total lived obedience *to* God's promise, that went as far as blindness and scandal (as far as Mount Moriah, *cf.* Jas 2.21), and in the New Testament still, faith finds expression as lived obedience *to* God's fulfilment of his promise, so that there are not two kinds of faith, but only one.[15] This is not to say that the one form is limited in the New Testament, being changed from an attitude of mere confidence in the ('unconcrete') God of the Old Testament to a dogmatic-categorical holding the truth of propositions, on the contrary it experiences a breakthrough into the depths where all limits are abolished: for the righteousness of God is no longer, as in the old covenant, an earthly rescuing of Israel through the condemnation of its enemies, but the eschatological rescuing of all sinners that takes place through the *krisis* of the one Cross. For this reason, there is an inner continuity of faith in the time of promise and in the time of filfilment, but 'apart from us, they were not to be made perfect' (Heb 11.40). This is only to bring to fulfilment the Old Testament's attempt to open the limited time of Israel's covenant (from Abraham to the Messiah) out to a time of salvation of all mankind, by going back from the covenant with Abraham to the covenant with Noah which was made with the whole of mankind and indeed with the whole of creation,[16] and in the opening forwards in the prophets, where the Gentiles are to stream to the eschatological Jerusalem, and in the opening sidewards in the Wisdom literature which supposes a certain contact between God and all peoples through his power, expressed in creation and in providence, which penetrates all things and is immanent in the world. The concentration of God's definitive act in Christ is a flash of lightning, to which there answers a roll of thunder that expands through all the times of the world from beginning to end. This double movement does not destroy the work of salvation in the Old Testament, since God's world-wide act always retains a basis and midpoint in Israel, just as the Wisdom that holds sway over all the world likewise pitched her 'tent' in Israel (Sir 24.4–10). Indeed, this double movement corresponds to the very being of God, who is both unique and infinitely determined in himself, and the one who includes all things in his embrace.

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[15] M. Buber, *Zwei Glaubensweisen*, in: *Werke* I (1962), pp. 651ff.

[16] III/2,1, pp. 178ff.

If we say that the Church then simply cannot be an entity closed in on itself, but must understand itself as a moment of the time of mankind that has become visible, this does not however mean that we have thereby already adequately characterised the time of mankind in its particular structure in the world. The question of the evolution from matter to spirit, of the evolution of culture and technology towards a final goal, has not yet been touched upon. Our aim was only to speak of the self-understanding of the time of the Church, which defines itself qualitatively as time between (Cross-) Resurrection and parousia, without consideration of any self-understanding of the time of the history of the world, which may well interpret itself as evolution towards a Day Omega. It is true that the time of the Church gives this time of world history a home within itself, and thus receives a 'double temporal horizon' analogous to that applied to Christ: as, for him, the continuing chronological time could be comprehended within his eschatological time, so it is possible for the time of world history, as it stretches out chronologically, to take its place as a subordinate material element under the time of the Church. But formally, the time of the Church is not determined by the time of world history. Therefore it is irrelevant for the qualitative 'imminent expectation' of the Church, how long or short the extension of the chronological time of the world is. At this point, the chronological imminent expectation of the early Church had to be changed to a qualitative imminent expectation; far from being the breakdown of Christianity (so Overbeck, Schweitzer, Werner), this change rather brought Christianity to a better self-understanding. The qualitative immanent expectation of the Church remains a matter of a decision about values: 'Seek first the kingdom of God' (Mt 6.33). The eye looks first to the *eschaton*, to the Lord of the Church, and it is within this perspective that the inner-worldly tasks find their place. Because the Lord, who always stands already at the end of history, is also 'with you all days, until the end of the world' and thus is immanent with the Church in history, her act of looking ahead to the end does not need to be hostile to the world and history, taking flight eschatologically from the world; it can be just as much a look *through* the worldly tasks to the *eschaton*. And if the heart proleptically dwells with its definitive treasure in heaven, the things of earth can be lit up for it in the light of its definitive love. The imminence of the Church's near imminent expectation is determined in no other manner than by the precedence of love.

c. The time of discipleship

The momentum of the time of Jesus expresses itself in the time of the Church as the momentum of imminent expectation: the next thing to happen to her temporally will in every case be her Lord himself, and she draws her life from her yearning for him and for his revealing. In the life of the disciple, however, the momentum of the time of Jesus expresses itself as the momentum of the call to unconditional discipleship. The four gospels set the pattern for this in their many call narratives: if anyone wants to be involved with Jesus, or if Jesus takes the initiative to involve himself with anyone, this means for the disciple a choice of all or nothing. Discipleship is an indivisible adherence which demands the whole existence, and is marked with the brand of his ownership not only in one place, but in all places.

But here there arises a bewildering dialectic, which seems to call everything into question, indeed seems to explode everything. The end of Jesus' earthly path is the Cross: this is the aim of his life, the vocation that is properly his. He can endure it only alone, bearing the burden of all. If he knew from the beginning that his path would lead to this end—and this must be supposed, in a general form that does not fill in any details of the picture in advance—how can he commit men to go along a path on which they must necessarily fail? Can he truly lead them to this abyss? For it is a vocation that is most genuinely his *alone* to fall into this abyss, while the others will be forcibly left behind, helpless, stripped of everything, and with the awareness that they have broken their fidelity by betraying him, by denying him, and by fleeing. Do we not have here a tragic intensification of what Jesus says to his brothers: 'My time is not your time' (*cf.* Jn 7.6)? The Synoptic evangelists try to solve this tormenting puzzle of a discipleship that is ultimately impossible, when they adduce the 'must' of prophecy as the reason: 'You will all fall away, for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered"' (Mk 14.27, quoting Zech 13.7). John sees it more kindly, when, in place of the disciples' flight he introduces a scene where Jesus explicitly dismisses them: 'Let these men go' (Jn 18.8), and further, promises to Peter the fulfilment of following: 'Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you shall follow afterward' (13.36). And all four Gospels bring at this point, after Peter's protestations of fidelity, the prediction of his betrayal. Are these in fact post-Easter attempts at explanation and toning-down, made at a period when following Jesus in the proper sense was no longer a possibility?

The Church was aware that this could no longer be, as we see from the fact that Paul never describes his own existence as a following (ἀκολουθεῖν), nor ever uses it to describe Christian existence in the Church: after Easter, the distinguishing form of having been there with Jesus, which empowers the first disciples to be eyewitnesses, exists no longer. It is not that Paul did not have the certainty, in an outstanding way in his own case but for all believers too, that they now have the possibility, in the grace of the risen and exalted Lord, to go with him in some manner along the way that led Jesus to the Cross and into the Resurrection from the dead; for Paul's whole teaching has as its central concern the placing of the believers in the midst of this event of salvation, that they may live on the basis of it. The evangelists all write after Paul: how is it then that they can ascribe such significance to the 'following' which is *de facto* no longer accessible for the second generation, building so much community theology and ethics on to the call to follow, and on to the promises of Jesus which are joined to this call, that what Kierkegaard calls the 'contemporaneity' appears to be absolutely actual? Is this not a romanticism that spreads a smoke-screen in its effort to cover up a contradiction—and precisely in this, sets man before the hiatus of the Cross, which he cannot leap over? For in the case of those who were really contemporaries, it is declared openly that they failed in the presence of the Cross. Is it, then, that the later Christians are seduced by the idea of 'contemporaneity'—led to this, however, by the Gospels themselves—and think that they can do better than the Twelve? There is not the slightest indication in the whole of the New Testament that any such idea was at the back of their minds.

Should one therefore say that the re-presentation of discipleship in the Gospels is only an image that depicts the same thing that Paul's theology intends when he speaks of life on the basis of faith and of 'being in Christ', always presupposing the accomplished work of redemption by the Cross and Resurrection of Christ? But would it not be better, then, to abandon such images, which inevitably focus attention on the failure of such 'contemporaneous' discipleship? Or was precisely *this* re-presentation of the failure necessary, in order to dam the virtually uncheckable trend that slipped over from the idea of following to the idea of the imitation of an ethical-religious 'model'?[1] For in those passages of the New Testament where there is a clear tendency to claim the concept of following for the later Christians too—as at 1 Pet 2.21, when the slaves who suffer injustly are told that they are 'called' to this, 'because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example (ὑπογραμμόν, to be copied), that you should follow in his steps'—then it appears that a levelling down of the unique Cross to the level of something that all can accomplish is at least perilously near. But is this danger not already present, albeit in a more concealed fashion, in Paul, when he presents himself in his apostolic existence as a model for the community: 'Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ' (1 Cor 11.1)? When compared with this idea of the model, the descriptions of the Gospels have the effect of deliberately holding back, an effect that is intensified by their radicalising of Jesus' requirements to follow him, in the expressions they employ for the Church's preaching and catechesis (we shall shortly speak of this): the effect of this is to make the failure of the disciples at the decisive moment all the more blatant. Indeed, Schulz can speak of an involuntary play on words,[2] since the introductory scenes of calling almost all include the phrase, 'they left everything and followed him' (Lk 5.11; *cf.* Mk 1.18; 1.20 par.), while the final sentence in Mark concerning following runs, 'they all left him and fled' (Mk 14.50 par.). Nevertheless, it would be going too far to say that the evangelists understood their logia about following Jesus as a corrective over against the community theology (clearly formulated in Paul). Rather, their logia are intended as the conformation of this theology, when they take the true radicality that lay hidden in Jesus' demand to follow him, and, looking at the Cross after Easter, make this radicality visible and bring it as a claim in the most serious manner before the eyes of the young Christian communities. This ultimately unintended situation, precisely by its endeavour to achieve an equilibrium, creates such a paradox, as far as the time of following Jesus is concerned, that it appears to be theoretically incapable of disentanglement, and discloses in a nearly unique manner the true situation of the believer in this world: a situation characterised by the impossibility of situating himself either over against Christ or over against the world. He must be there, and he was not there. Over against the καιρός of Christ, he comes irrevocably too late (Rom 5.6), but over against the world, he must behave—not only in appearance, but in truth—as one who takes as the measure of his own time the time of Christ and of his Cross.

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[1] On what follows, *cf.* A. Schulz, *Nachfolgen und Nachahmen. Studien über das Verhältnis der neutestamentlichen Jüngerschaft zur urchristlichen Vorbildethik* (1962), with bibliography; K. H. Rengstorf, art. διδάσκαλος, μανθάνω, μαθητής in: *TDNT* II 152–163, IV 390–415, and 415–461; K. H. Schelkle, *Jüngerschaft und Apostelamt* (1957); M. Hengel, *Nachfolge und Charisma* (1968 ET *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers*, 1981); R. Pesch, 'Berufung und Sendung, eine Studie zu Mk 1, 16–20', *ZKT* (1969), pp. 1–31.

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[2] Schulz, op. cit. (n. 1 above), p. 131.

Taking into account the results of the enquiry into the text, it will be necessary to say, on the one hand, that when the evangelists undertake the radicalisation of Jesus' demands to follow him, with the corresponding idealisation of what happened to the disciples, especially to the Twelve who were called by name, they do so in the light of their reflection after Easter on the radicality of Jesus' requirement and of the situation of those called. One must also say, on the other hand, that this reflection only makes explicit what lay already, more or less implicitly, in the existence of Jesus and in his claim to authority. Certainly, Jesus apparently did no more, in gathering 'disciples' (μαθητής) around himself, than the contemporary rabbis, outwardly speaking—he himself is addressed, indeed, with the title 'Rabbi' (in Greek διδάσκαλος), and he preaches like the rabbis at the public worship on the sabbath. The disciples had to be at the service of the teacher like slaves (*cf.* Mk 6.35 par.; 8.1ff.; 11.1ff.; 14.12ff.), and had to enter into a life shared with him (even though only temporarily; *cf.* Mk 3.14; 4.10, etc.). In return, they received from him special instruction: in the case of the rabbis, this was the interpretation of the will of God which stood in the Torah. In John, we see two former disciples of the Baptist directed by him to cross over into the circle of Jesus' disciples, and at the beginning there is a kind of free advertisement from one man to the next (Andrew and Peter, Philip and Nathanael), inviting him, at least for a trial period, to enter the circle of Jesus' disciples, the size of which, even according to the Synoptics, seems to have been greatly fluctuating.[3] But even if the framework was contemporary, it was filled with a new and unique content, which in its origin is determined by Jesus' claim to authority. He sets himself above Moses as interpreter of God's will, and breaks the holiest commandment, that concerning the sabbath. He is habitually in the company of 'tax collectors', 'harlots', and 'sinners'—something out of the question for any rabbi—and he even calls a tax collector into the inner circle of his disciples (Mk 2.14). And when he accepts his disciples into a life shared with him, they necessarily receive a share in the quality of his task that makes it different from that of others; from the beginning he explicitly gives them authority, not only to preach, but also to drive out evil spirits (Mk 3.15), that is, to bear witness in deeds to the coming of the kingdom of God. In his own deeds of power, he demands faith always, as the summing up of the right covenantal attitude towards God; yet always in practice in such a way that he himself appears as the trustworthy mediator of this right attitude.[4]

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[3] *Cf.* the seventy (-two) at Lk 10.1, 17, who are all sent out by Jesus on a trial mission of proclamation.

De facto—even without the explicit demands to leave all, to sell all, to take no farewells from those at home, to leave the dead father unburied, etc.—this means that the existence of the disciples is set in a quite unique manner at an outer limit, which is rightly expressed by Peter, when he reacts to the idea that he could or must leave the master: 'To whom shall we go?' (Jn 6.68). *De facto*, through the being of this master, the existence of the disciple is wholly laid claim to; this following is a full-time 'calling' as a co-worker in the proclamation of the imminent kingdom of God. And as Jesus himself does everything in anticipation of the hour of God which is unknown to him, and in self-abandonment to the sole disposition of God, so a shared life with him can expect as 'reward' nothing other than coming of the kingdom itself (as 'eternal reward', Mk 10.30).[5] Whether the original demands were more absolute or less so, in any case Jesus leads his disciples to the place of the precipice, beyond which they cannot go. But there is likewise no returning for them to the world in which they were earlier at home. And it is precisely this experience of the inability to go either forwards or backwards—which of course finds a resolution with the Easter experience—which is put into words in the radical logia of following, which are set up right at the beginning of the disciples' path as warning notices. Apostleship as a 'calling' is appointed absolutely for service of the kingdom of God, and this is made clear in the 'ideal scenes' in which Jesus 'calls' his disciples with the suddenness of a 'Follow me!', that is answered by those summoned with an equally abrupt and absolute obedience, just as if (as in John) they could already have known at the first encounter that they stood before the 'Messiah' (Jn 1.41, 45), the 'Son of God' and 'king of Israel' (1.49), and upon such a summons (as in Luke especially) have

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[4] Not only explicitly at Mk 9.24 ('I believe, help my unbelief!'), but also precisely at the point where Jesus is astonished to find 'greater faith' outside Israel than within Israel (Mt 8.10; 15.28), for it is each time faith in *his* authority. Even if the Gospels do not speak of an explicit obligation of faith on the part of the disciples when they are accepted into the shared life with Jesus, this is unquestionably involved, in an implicit manner—both as faith in the God who now fulfils his promises of old in the coming of his kingdom (*cf.* Mt 17.20), and as faith in Jesus, whose claim and authority are the support on which that faith rests, and in whose name the disciple undertakes the preaching of the kingdom. It is necessary to take due account of this element of the 'Synoptic faith' when passing from the idea of following in the Synoptics to the Johannine interpretation of following as (explicit, post-Easter) faith (Schulz, op. cit., n. 1 above, p. 172f.); Schulz takes this too little into consideration. Martin Hengel's excellent book (n. 1 above) offers here, as elsewhere, the critical counterbalance to Schulz. Here 'sharing the Master's destiny' (*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*, 80; ET, pp. 72), with the goal of the proclamation of the kingdom of God before and after the death of Jesus (pp. 82ff. ET pp. 73ff.), is the true meaning of the summons to follow Jesus, a summons addressed to the one who is expressly chosen; this, however, leaves the uniqueness of the Cross of Jesus as an open problem.

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[5] On the inauthenticity of the words which promise an earthly reward, *cf.* Schulz, op. cit. (n. 1 above), pp. 117–125). The question of the disciples, posed by Peter at Mk 10.28 and clarified by Matthew through the addition, 'What then shall we have in return?' (19.27), is redactional, and Jesus' reply undergoes much adaptation by the evangelists (each in his own way). When the Twelve are told that they will 'sit on twelve thrones' for judgment, this is originally not a promise of reward, but a piece of instruction; but already in Luke, through the linking of the logia, the theme of reward for having stood firm in the trials of Jesus (22.28) is clear. The other goods of salvation which are promised, such as table-fellowship with the Messiah, award the disciples, who 'have left everything', no special distinction apart from the many others who will have a share in the kingdom (Mt 8.11). Besides this, Jesus rejected the request of the sons of Zebedee for places of honour in the kingdom; if such do exist, it is the Father alone who assigns them (Mk 10.35–40). All the less, therefore, will Jesus promise a 'reward' other than the kingdom itself.

'left everything (earthly) at once' (Lk 5.11, 28; 18.22).[6] It is not possible to decide here whether the logion about bearing the Cross (in Luke, bearing the Cross 'every day', 9.23) can have been spoken by Jesus, and if so, whether he meant thereby his own Cross that was to come (this seems impossible), or used a metaphor for the total exposure of one's self. It is certain that, behind all Jesus' demands for renunciation and self-denial, there stands the single radicality which he himself embodies in his existence: whoever wishes to be with him must give the coming kingdom (which is present in Jesus) the unconditional predominance over everything earthly, over worldly profession, family, and material and spiritual goods (to which self-assessment belongs). And because in every case—whether a spontaneous summons goes forth from Jesus, or he admits someone who offers himself spontaneously—it is Jesus who decides the vital question whether someone shall be with him or not (he can also deny this, Lk 8.38); he bears the responsibility for the one who is accepted into the group of disciples, even and precisely when the shared life externally comes to an end with his necessary dying.

This obvious responsibility is one reason why Jesus certainly prepared his disciples for his coming Passion, even if the precise details of the predictions have been filled out after Easter. There are characteristics that it is not possible to suppress from the picture of the historical Jesus: when he labels Peter a Satan who tempts him and tries to entice him away from his essential mission (Mk 8.33), when he challenges the leaders of the people, taking all the consequences upon himself, and when he anticipates his offering-up in the institution of the Eucharist. As he considers his calling as the bearer of sins, then he knows at the same time that in this event his disciples must stand, not on the side of the one who bears, but on the side of those who are borne, and he tells them this in advance, especially when he says to Peter, 'You will all fall away on my account'. With Jesus' arrest, those who accompany Jesus are no more called 'disciples' (μαθηταί) in Luke's double work; other terms are used for them later, and in the Acts of the Apostles the expression μαθητής signifies one who belongs to the Church; thus the instruction of the exalted Lord at Mt 28.19 to the apostles, that they are to 'make disciples' (μαθητεύειν) of all peoples, betrays the explicitly post-Easter use of the word.

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[6] On the other hand, it is precisely Luke who warns against sudden and unconsidered decisions: Lk 14.26–33. R. Pesch demonstrates that even the 'ideal scenes' have their historical background (*cf.* n. 1).

The breaking-off of discipleship at the Passion is so decisively important because it remains one presupposition for the possibility that the Christian, out of the grace of the risen Christ, can in his own time be set under the total eschatological destiny of the Lord—that, as Paul says, he may be 'crucified together with him' (Gal 2.19; 6.14), in order to share in advance in the Resurrection from the dead (Eph 2.6) for which he hopes (Phil 3.11, 21), a share that is received sacramentally in baptism and existentially in the New Christian life. Such bold formulations would at once lose all their distance, were it not that the description of the Passion in the gospel brought the necessary corrective. Naturally, Paul's theology also has this corrective in itself, in that here the whole fellowship of the Apostle and of the Christians with the destiny of the crucified and risen Jesus rests on the *faith* that is the ground of everything, i.e., on the fact that this fellowship is received as a pure gift that one must accept as given out of pure grace. For Paul's Christianity begins in Damascus: he is the one who was not there, the one who was in the camp of the enemies, for whom 'Christ died at the right time, while we were still sinners' (Rom 5.8). Paul can never forget this, in all his 'Christ mysticism' that bestows on him the same form as the suffering Lord, so that the life of Jesus may manifest itself in his mortal flesh (2 Cor 4.11). His time is not identical with the time of Christ.

Only John has dared to cast a bridge over the distance that is held open in the Gospels by the flight of the disciples, and in Paul by faith. He lives so much in the love of the Lord that he knows himself to stand at the place where he is borne away by the Lord over the abyss of the Cross. In the Synoptic

Gospels too, women stand far off and see the crucifixion. These women represent and hint at something that becomes full reality in Mary the mother: accompaniment into the absolute forsakenness, in which, in order to be truly present, she herself must be forsaken by the son: 'Behold your son' (Jn 19.26). John too, who must receive the forsaken mother, represents the Church whose centre is Mary—the Church as second Eve, as the loving bride, springing forth from the slumber of the loneliness on the Cross and from the opened heart, out of which flows what is uttermost; John is nowhere more solemn than in his testimony to this event at the extremity. But because the sacraments have their source here, and because the disciples who fled have received communion before the Passion, they too are present, whether they will or not, under the Cross and at the Cross, since they belong to the one body of Christ. John suppresses also the cry of abandonment and the sinking down of the sacrificed Lamb of God into the night; for him, the love that performs everything is so visible that there can never be any doubt of its identity: it is precisely at the point where it goes 'to the end' (13.1) that it becomes most clearly visible as love. But the response of redeemed mankind—Mary and John—is already always taken up into this identity that belongs to love, and has already always flowed out from it: here, in a unique manner, the time of following is determined by the time of Christ. There is no intention to posit a simple identity between the time of Christ and the time of the Church, as is shown in the farewell discourses when they speak of the 'little while' of the intermission in which 'you will weep and lament' (16.18, 20), when Peter is told that he cannot now follow, but will follow later (13.36), and especially in the great prayer that commends to the Father the disciples who remain in the world, while the Son sets out on his journey home (17.11). Thus the continuity remains, and does not break down even in spite of a greater difference.

The grace that radiates forth from the Logos when he is 'raised up'—but raised up on the Cross, as much as raised up into glory—allows the Church characterised by Mary and John to accomplish the accompanying through the hiatus to the other side. Because for John this form of following has the essential character of loving self-giving in faith, the distance between the first generation and the later generations too becomes blurred for him (without being completely dissolved). All later disciples find a kind of archetype for their following in the fact that the first disciples followed: the faith of the later disciples can be a following because, according to John, the following of the first was already faith.[7] The door opens out from John for Ignatius of Loyola and the *Spiritual Exercises*, where Christian existence is interpreted as essentially a placing of oneself at the disposal of the call and as a following of Christ through all the episodes of his life to the Cross, but also beyond it to the Resurrection (as his appearing in the Church). John himself pronounces blessed 'those who do not see' but only believe, together with 'those who see' (20.29), and he stretches out a hand to those who follow, by transmitting to them 'what we have seen, and touched with our hands, of the Word of life' (1 Jn 1.2f.), in order to establish 'fellowship'. But he makes completely clear the fellowship that those who love and believe have in the destiny of the Lord, in Jesus' prophecies of suffering for the Church (Jn 15.18–16.4); this was already established in the predictions of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels, likewise precisely as a fellowship in destiny that he had instituted. The promise of such a following, that will go as far as suffering, does not eliminate the distance between master and disciples in any of the four Gospels (*cf.* the floating logion found at Mt 10.24f.; Lk 6.40; Jn 13.16; 15.20); the grace that permits them to be there with him far exceeds the idea of an imitation in the ethical-ascetic realm, and there is nowhere any hint that the disciples ought to strive after, or provoke, persecution and suffering (for the sake of a closer resemblance to the Lord). Once again, Ignatius finds the centre-point, when he sees the ultimate attitude of the disciple, despite all his yearning for the grace to be made like the Lord in suffering too, to lie in an entrusting of the distribution of the properly christological graces of suffering to the free disposition of God (*Exercises*

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[7] Schulz, op. cit. (n. 1 above), pp. 137–144.

Nos. 98, 147, 167). As long as this 'detachment' is there, preferring the will of the Lord to one's own programme of perfection, Christian 'following' will not be absorbed into a general ethical 'imitation', however clearly the terminology—of Paul, for example, or of the fathers who were influenced by Greek philosophy—betrays the concept of imitation.[8]

Yet is the great distance between Christ and the Church within the fellowship of suffering sufficiently made visible in Paul and John? In Paul, we have said, everything rests on the faith which creates the distance; this faith means that God has reconciled the world to himself once for all in the Cross of Christ, without the cooperation of any believing human being. But the same faith unites the Apostle—who is called precisely to suffering (Acts 9.16)—to the Lord, so that he can suffer in his own flesh for the Church 'what still remains of the sufferings of Christ' (Col 1.24).[9] Should we refer here to 1 Cor 1.13, 'Or was Paul crucified for you?', and posit a strict dividing-line between suffering that makes satisfaction, which only Christ could perform, and 'edificatory' sufferings, such as necessarily happen to those Christ sends out as his instruments in the continuing world mission?[10] Or is the weakness of such a dividing-line indicated by the ontic unity between head and body (Augustine), or by the real dynamic presence of the Jesus who sends, in those whom he sends?[11] Even here, however, the division is maintained through the consideration that an Apostle or any other Christian who takes the place of Christ performs an act that has validity *only* on the basis of the act of sending by Christ; and that, further, a participation in the satisfactory suffering of Christ, which is thereby possible, cannot be based upon a lack in the fullness of the suffering of the historical Jesus, but only upon an unfathomable admittance through grace to a share in this fullness. The more intimately a Christian is invited to share in the work of the Lord, the more does he also know that this participation is nothing but incomprehensible grace. For this reason, it is impossible to add head to body in the manner of the parts that make up a complex organism.

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[8] Schulz is right to observe, 'An explicit identification of the following of Christ with the *imitatio* of the Lord is, for the entire New Testament, something as yet unknown' (op. cit., n. 1 above, p. 179). One can certainly note a slight transposition in Ignatius of Antioch, when he exults that now, when he is on the way to martyrdom, he begins to be a true disciple (*Romans* 4.2; 5.3). But he himself did not choose this path, but was set upon it by the Lord. The limitation of the theology of martyrdom in the second century consists rather in a too one-sided equation of the following of the sufferings of Jesus with physical martrydom. This is certainly 'total self-offering' in the old Testament sense of the 'whole burnt-offering', but it does not take account of what is most characteristic of the New Testament, viz. the bearing of the sin of the world. On this theme, *cf.* N. Brox, *Zeuge und Märtyrer* [1961].

[9] J. Kremer, *Was an den Leiden Christi noch mangelt* (Bonner bibl. Beitr. 12, 1956), with bibliography.

[10] Thomas, *S.Th.* III 48, 5 *ad* 3: *Dicendum quod passiones Sanctorum proficiunt Ecclesiae non quidem per modum redemptionis, sed per modum exhortationis et exempli, secundum illud 2 Cor 1,6: 'sive tribulamur pro vestra exhortatione et salute'* (it is to be said that the sufferings of the Saints benefit the church, not indeed in the sense of redemption, but in the sense of

The whole Johannine corpus too proclaims this distance in nearness, as far as is imaginable from a mystical-enthusiastic delirium of the unity in love. Jesus remains the 'lord and master' (Jn 13.14), the only 'king' (18.37); none other than the lamb that was slain stands upon the throne of the Father (Rev 5.6), the lamb who alone accomplishes 'the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world' (1 Jn 2.2). Therefore Mary too remains only the handmaid of the Lord, the handmaid to whom everything happens as God disposes.

The dialectic of the beginning of this section remains, therefore: for there is indeed a 'contemporaneity', but only out of the grace of the unique Cross. It is not only the failure of those who historically followed Christ that creates the distance, but the grace of the Cross itself. John is right to conceal the flight of the disciples under a dismissal by Jesus, for he proceeds on the basis of an insight into the ultimate depth, and discloses on the far side of this flight a possibility of being present in faith and love. This is not in the least in

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exhortation and example, as is said at 2 Cor 1.6, 'if we are afflicted, it is for your exhortation and salvation').

[11] *Cf.* 4 *dist.* 20 *a* 3 *qla* 1, and *Quodl.* II a 16; Kremer, op. cit. (n. 9 above), pp. 63f., 187f.

dependence on the gnostic concept of an eternal 'syzygy' (of Christ-man and Church-woman), but comes from the contemplation of the glory of the *Verbum caro factum*, whose 'grace and truth' it is to make those who believe in him children born of God and thus 'co-heirs' (Rom 8.17). The grace of following belongs to the 'glory' of the momentum of the sole Cross.

5. MOMENTUM OF THE CROSS

a. The collision

From the outset, every path that we took directed us to this goal: to the hiatus of the Cross, and to the plumbing of the depths of this hiatus when Hell gapes open. The paths that led from the old covenant demanded an intersection which they were unable to reach by themselves; mere recapitulation of what had already been was insufficient for this. What appeared as 'form' and 'image' in the old covenant must first find its justification on the basis of what was itself not form, but yet was the source of the absolute power to give form.[1] Thus, the form of theology too was predestined: since something that is not a word stands in the midpoint of the Word, theology can never be more than a reflection in words and concepts, never capable of being brought to a close, that concerns itself with this midpoint that can never be completely pinned down; a reflection that takes place in the bosom of the Church, the transcending subject that receives in the Eucharist the Word that expires on the Cross. The fundamental character of this Word itself became visible in the triad of claim, poverty and self-abandonment, since the authority that comes from God was to take effect strictly in the sphere of powerlessness, and more radically still in the handing-over of the entire existence, including its death, into the disposition of God who was to give it form. So deeply was this the fundamental character of Jesus' existence, that it determines the form of its duration: it could only be an existence that was oriented towards the hour of the absolute commission, the hour of his death; every moment of Jesus' existence received its meaning, as he lived it, by looking towards this hour which bestowed the meaning. On a secondary level, the form of this time gave its character to the form of the time both of the Church (with its imminent expectation) and of the individual follower, for whom the time which Jesus accomplished becomes in faith determinative of his existence.

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[1] See above, pp. 83f.

These four chapters, accordingly, always presupposed the fifth and looked towards it.[2] In this chapter, we must see what *kabod*, as the momentum of God, means in the New Testament in its most original sense. The material-dialectic images of the *kabod* of Sinai must reveal their spiritual content here—the core of fire covered in a darkness of clouds or smoke, the menace of the gathering storm, lightning flashes out of the darkness, the earth that rocked. But the rungs of the spiritual 'ladder of obedience' in the Old Testament must likewise make their contribution to the interpretation, by pointing ahead to their goal.

This is to raise the question of where to look for a key to the interpretation of the event of the Cross, whether indeed such a key can exist at all. It is clear from the start that the purely historical narrative of the crucifixion of a man—and one can put together a narrative of the crucifixion that is as objective and cinematically exact as one wills—is *a priori* never capable of laying down the path that leads to the inner event that is hidden therein. Therefore one is grateful to realise that the Passion narratives of the four Gospels, though beyond doubt *also* intending to describe an historical event, do this from the start by means of concepts and images that lay out a wide horizon of Old Testament theology, and that they thereby open a path for the history that leads to the only sphere from which a light of understanding can break in.[3] Nevertheless, the concepts and images from the Old Testament cannot be drawn into a synthesis on their own level, and can offer only starting-points and indications of direction for the understanding of the reality which altogether transcends them. These hints are to be considered seriously; they have enough power to encircle the mystery of the Cross in such a way that the lines coming from the Old Testament genuinely intersect each other in the midpoint of this mystery. A lowering and weakening of the momentum that is present in the theology of the old covenant is doomed from the outset to error. The earliest Christian faith grasped this, and sought to interpret the Cross as the point of unity of the converging lines of power, while at the same time showing its transcendence that makes the Cross the starting-point of a new Christian reflexion that can never be finished, because here 'unsearchable riches' (Eph 3.8) lie 'hidden' (Col 2.3). In this earliest reflection of Christian faith, the insight of the Church as the subject which receives the revelation finds an expression which is inchoative, but binding upon those who come later; accordingly, our interpretation of the Cross today is even less at liberty to lower and weaken this normative early Christian understanding than it is to dispense with the Old Testament hints.

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[2] I repeat here in a shorter form certain matters that I have exposed in more detail in my 'Triduum Paschale' (in: *Mysterium Salutis* III 2, 1969, printed separately as *Theologie der drei Tage*, 1969). For the individual points and for a more complete bibliography, *cf.* this work.

[3] E. Hoskyns and N. Davey, *The Riddle of the New Testament* (1931) (with bibliography). Art. σταυρός by J. Schneider, *TDNT* VII, n. 27; K. H. Schelkle, *Die Passion Jesu in der Verküdigung des Neuen Testaments* (1949), pp. 81ff.

The *interpretandum* lies securely positioned between these two poles of understanding; if one detaches it from this spiritual force-field, one robs oneself of every approach to understanding it. Here least of all may one 'demythologise', for this would imply abandoning the expressive power of the Old Testament hints and of their rethinking by Paul and in the rest of the New Testament. That which needs the purification of a 'demythologisation' receives it sufficiently in the transcending of the literalness of the Old Testament images, limited to the material sphere, into the higher unity of the event of the Cross which gives them a home. This applies above all to the concepts of sacrifice that come from the Old Testament, which can never attain the identity (of the passiveness of being handed over with the free act of self-giving for the guilty) which is made possible on the Cross, because in the Old Testament what is offered is not human and consequently there remains externally (juridically) a reckoning of guilt. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the Old Testament perceptions of the divine 'wrath' (Rom 5.9 and frequently), 'curse' (Gal 3.13), and '(punitive) judgment' (Rom 8.3), which are taken up by Paul and the whole of the New Testament in speaking of the Cross, are to be represented as superseded, anthropomorphic, and incompatible with the

God of love who wills reconciliation (2 Cor 5.18; Col 1.20), for this reconciliation is to take place precisely 'through the death of his son' (Rom 5.10), 'in his blood' (Rom 3.25), in his 'offering for sin' (2 Cor 5.21). The only right approach to the mystery is to see the whole momentum of 'God's wrath' in the Old Testament over the broken covenant as taken up into the far greater momentum of the love of God in the New Testament—the love of the Father, as well as of the Son—and therefore to guard against both extremes, that of interpreting the suffering of Christ as a punitive raging of divine anger against the innocent victim (as the Reformers tended to do), and that of seeing this suffering as merely the manifestation of the superabundance of divine love.

Two things are established in the Old Testament: that God's wrath or displeasure at human sin is never equated with his righteousness. His righteousness, like his holiness, is an enduring predicate of Yahweh and declares his will to accept man into fellowship with him; the 'wrath' is reserved for individual acts of judgment, which exercise a function of this covental will; the punishment passes away, but the blessing endures.[4] For this reason, the revelation of God's righteousness of which Paul speaks may never be interpreted as 'penal righteousness' (as the young Luther thought, laying claim erroneously to the theological tradition to support this); this was rather what Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, following Origen, called δικαιοσύνη σωστική, 'saving righteousness', a description used likewise by Anselm and by Thomas after him.[5] This goodness of God is revealed in the new covenant as inscrutable love: the love of God the Father, which shows itself in the event of the Cross to be stronger than all the powers of the world (Rom 5.8; 8.32–39; Jn 3.16), and the love of Christ (Rom 8.35; 2 Cor 5.14; Gal 2.20; Eph 5.2), which proves itself in his giving-up of himself for us. This double love is, so to speak, a bracket that includes everything that takes place within it as the event of reconciliation; but this is not to be neutralised and transfigured because of the bracket of love that surrounds it.

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[4] W. Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* I (4th edn. 1950), pp. 124–131 (ET *Theology of the Old Testament*, I, 1961, pp. 258–269).

[5] Texts in S. Lyonnet, *Exegesis Ep. ad Rom. 1–4* (3rd edn. 1963, Rome, Biblical Institute), pp. 88f., 107cd.

In order to see it at its true depth, it is necessary to look back to the further development of the history of the covenant in the Old Testament. In the prophets, there is a vigilant awareness that the day of God's wrathful judgment is drawing near: this takes place in actual fact with the disintegration of the people as a unity of twelve tribes and with the destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah and Ezekiel must experience and proclaim the inevitability of the punitive judgment; and Lamentations call in the devastated sanctuary to the God who has vanished and is absent; Job experiences in his own body, during the exile, how the righteousness of God has been withdrawn—without his understanding the sufferings he must endure, his existence symbolises the broken covenant. Judaism never shakes off the suspicion that God did not truly reestablish the covenant after the return of the people from exile: the prophetic proclamation of disaster spreads itself like a gloom over the whole 'old aeon'; all the faithfulness to the law, including Pharisaism, was perhaps only a new and more dangerous kind of breaking of the covenant. Jesus and Paul confirm this suspicion, and draw away the veil: this religion is 'hypocrisy' and a 'whited sepulcre' (Mt 23.27f.), and 'the anger of God from heaven' is 'revealed' against it (Rom 1.18) just as much as against the godlessness of the Gentiles. Indeed, as in Ezekiel the fallen prostitute Jerusalem is worse than her sisters and will be justified as the last of all, after Sodom and Samaria (Ezek 16.44ff.), so will Israel, through whose conduct God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles (Rom 2.24), have to remain hardened until the full number of the Gentiles has come in (Rom 11.25). Matthew and John have described in dark hues the presence of God's wrath over the faithless people.

This wrath is no 'pretence', but fully real: the categorical 'No' of God's reaction to the attitude that the world takes up over against him. God owes it to himself and to his loving covenantal righteousness to utter this 'No' and to maintain it as long as his will is not done on earth as in Heaven. What could 'the blood of bulls and goats' accomplish here? What could be accomplished by ceremonies of reconciliation that serve only to keep awake periodically the remembrance of sin (Heb 10.4,3)? Already in the old covenant, God had proclaimed that he had no desire for these (Hos 6.6; Amos 5.25 = Acts 7.42f.; Ps 51.18f.), but only for the 'broken spirit, the broken and crushed heart'. But who could submit himself to this wrath, so that it would be quieted? Not the sinner, for he only arouses the wrath, as long as he is a sinner. There remains no other answer than that given by the scripture of the old covenant and the new: the sinless one, who 'had done no violence, and in whose mouth there was no deceit. Yet it was the will of the Lord to bruise him; he has put him to grief; when he makes his soul an offering for sin . . .' (Is 53.9–10). The objectionable element in this idea is that of vicariousness. This is not skirted around in the fulfilment of the new covenant: Jesus is this sinless one (2 Cor 5.21a; Jn 8.46; 1 Pet 2.22), who offers his own soul, i.e. his entire existence ('his blood') as a complete and spotless sacrifice (Heb 7.27; 9.12, 14, 26; 10.10, 12, 14; Eph 5.2).

But why should this be efficacious for all the rest? There is no real help to be had here from a juridical doctrine of imputation (the merits of the pure one are credited to the sinners), nor from a doctrine of physical solidarity (by virtue of the Incarnation, Jesus represents the entirety of human nature before God). The only help is to be had from the New Testament's idea of the divine love that *out of love* takes upon itself the sins of the world; and this love *must* have a double character, as the love of God the Father, who allows God the Son to go into the absolute obedience of poverty and self-abandonment where he can be nothing else than the total object that receives the divine 'wrath', and as the love of God the Son, who identifies himself out of love with us sinners (Heb 2.13), and thereby fulfils the will of the Father in free obedience (Heb 10.7). It is clear from the final interpretations in Paul and John that only this double love gives the key to the understanding: it is no juridical or physical law of vicariousness that compels them to faith in what is incomprehensible, but solely the sight of this love and its attractiveness: 'the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died' (2 Cor 5.14). They have died in accordance with the power of love; in accordance with the logic of love, they must let it happen and ratify it for themselves. 'By this we know love, that he (vicariously) laid down his life for us; therefore (in accordance with the logic of the same love) we too must lay down our lives for the brethren' (1 Jn 3.16). Imputation and physical solidarity are subordinate individual aspects that are taken up into the synthesis of the unique work of love, which encompasses them and makes use of them. This is possible because God's whole relationship to the world he created—inasmuch as this consists of beings that are physically interconnected, and at the same time stands in a spiritual relationship to the creator—is always included within the brackets of that love which is both double and single.

Within these brackets, as we have said, the aspect of the voluntary self-offering of the guiltless one, indeed his self-sacrificing (Heb 7.28) in the role of a high priest who is simultaneously the lamb of sacrifice (1 Cor 5.7), is not at all sufficient: the 'paschal lamb' is indeed 'slain' (*ibid.*), but *not* by himself. When the slaughtering is going on, the lamb can only endure, without opening its mouth (Is 53.7). The poverty that has no means of exercising control over oneself is one with Jesus' obedience in total self-abandonment. That is what the hymn at Phil 2.7 calls kenosis. In this, the one who has abandoned himself can be utterly and completely determined by the will of the Father, who loads on him the burden of the reality that is 'the sin of the world', or the reality that is 'the wrath of God', made concrete in everything that arouses this 'wrath'. 'God . . . had made him to be sin for us' (2 Cor 5.21) can also be translated, seen from the standpoint of Jesus Christ: 'God . . . has made him a (voluntary) sin-offering';[6] but considered from the standpoint of the Father, the other translation, 'has made him to be sin', is nevertheless correct.

Here lies the 'unfathomable' (Eph 3.8) mystery of the Cross, in the momentum of the collision of the entire burden of sin with the total powerlessness of the kenotic existence. No simile in Old or New Testament, drawn from the rituals of sacrifice, can remotely apply to this event. It does not suffice to add on to one another in a list the images for that which God loads on to him, in order to acquire a conception of what the burden is—according to Is 53, these are: scorn, abandonment by men, pains, acquaintance with sickness, being pierced and battered, being mishandled, being led to the slaughter, death in tribulation and judgment, a burial devoid of honour. What matters is that all this is 'loaded on' to him by God. It is not only the alienation from God that is involved in what is taken on, that produces absolute nausea in the one who loves God, who is nourished by God (Mt 4.4; Jn 4.34); the fact that it is *God* who prescribes what is absolutely opposed to God, awakes absolute dread in him. The experience of Job points in this direction: he experiences both at once, God's utter absence in everything that is loaded on to him, and the yet more terrifying presence of a God who 'hedges him in' (Job 3.23), who 'hunts' him (10.16) and 'hounds' him (10.17); and because the sufferer is in a state of complete powerlessness, he is 'oppressed' by God and 'robbed of his dignity' (10.3). The inconceivable unity of the world's sin and God's will—the world's sin that has turned in on itself in what is the object of God's absolute displeasure, God's wrath that has embodied itself in the world's sin and shown itself to be entirely justified—makes impossible any relationship either to God or to the world. The one who has been abandoned is in utter isolation. But in this solitude, he is *not* left alone, for 'terrors are turned' actively and aggressively upon him (Job 30.15).

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[6] R. de Vaux, *Les Institutions de l'Ancien Testament* II (1960), p. 297; K. Prümm, *Diakonia Pneumatos* I (1967), pp. 356f.

The true subject who acts on the Cross is therefore God, and the instrument he employs in acting is sin. But the one who was God's Word in the world is dumb. The prophet could still paraphrase his experiences that were the prelude to Jesus' suffering: 'My loins are filled with anguish; pangs have seized me, like the pangs of a woman in travail; I am bowed down so that I cannot hear, I am dismayed so that I cannot see. My mind reels, horror has appalled me; the twilight that I longed for has been turned for me into trembling' (Is 21.3–

4). The crucified is beyond such words; in Mark and Matthew, he forces out only the cry of abandonment and expires with a loud shout (Mk 15.34, 37 par.). The other words from the Cross must be for the greater part interpretations of the situation as the meditating Church recognised this in the illumination love gives.

The momentum of the collision lies beyond the sound-barrier: just as the love of God in creation and election is unfathomable, so is sin, the hate of the world (Jn 15.25). But the abyss of the unfathomable love has entered the abyss of the meaningless hatred and hidden itself there. 'Outside of God, he tasted death for everyone' (Heb 2.9).[7] Here is the truth that fulfils the dreadful image of Ezek 10, where God sends an angel, who has been given a piece of glowing coal from the fire of God's glory, to set fire to the beloved city that is nevertheless abandoned and marked down for destruction. This is the fulfilment likewise of the other image of literal casting away, when Jeremiah instructs Seraiah to utter all the words of cursing against Babylon, and then to tie the book to a stone and to throw it into the midst of the Euphrates with the words, 'Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more, because of the evil that I am bringing upon her' (Jer 51.59–64), the image that is found also in Revelation when the angel takes a stone, mighty like a great millstone, and flings it into the sea with the words, 'So shall Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and shall be found no more' (Rev 18.21). Here is fulfilled every hint given in the images of obedience in the Old Testament, from the obedience of Abraham on Mount Moriah, who receives the impact of a command that flies in the face of reason and is so obedient that he takes his place on the side of the Father who accomplishes the act, and becomes the archetype of all those who obey utterly and thus receive the authority to command; through the acts of obedience of Moses and the prophets, who see themselves designated and condemned to play the role of a double representation, representing God among men and men before God; to the obedience of the 'voice in the wilderness' and of the handmaid of the Lord, who may be nothing more than thoroughfares along which God's Word and light can travel.

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[7] On the reading χωρὶς (outside of), rather than χάριτι (by the grace of) θεοῦ (God, *cf.* Schelkle, op. cit. (n. 3 above), p. 54.

Only in the Cross is the true fulfilment of the paradox that the Son who bears authority, whom God sends to take on flesh as his Word, ceases to be word at the point where he takes on total identity with 'the flesh of sin' (Rom 8.3), in order to be only a free space against which the will of the Father may make its colliding impact. This will 'happens to the Word', but is not itself word. Nevertheless it is precisely now that the Word who has been reduced to silence receives his absolute transparency to the Father, who expresses himself in him in a way without precedent. The whole Johannine understanding of the Logos is marked by this starting-point, and rightly: for the one who bears such extreme suffering cannot be 'the flesh of sin', nor even be human sinlessness, but must be a uniquely suitable medium for this power of the Father as he gives himself expression, a medium that shows itself, in its capacity to bear the burden, to be itself divine. Only God himself can go right to the end of the abandonment by God. Only he has the freedom to do this. The Father shows that this is so, when he raises the Son and elevates him to be the *Kyrios* over all; but one who receives the dignity that belongs to God must already have possessed this (Jn 17.5), and only renounced the enjoyment of it (Phil 2.6; Heb 12.2). Precisely by disclaiming any word of its own, God's Word demonstrates that it is the 'word of power' of the Father, the 'effulgence of his majesty and expression of his being' (Heb 1.3).

b. Kenosis

If then the collision of God's will in the form of the sin of the world requires not just any subject, but a unique subject that cannot subsequently become God at his 'exaltation', but must always have been God in order to 'become' this, then the decision of a pre-existent divine person, as this is described in the hymn at Phil 2.6–11, is the necessary presupposition of the constituting of this subject. It is certainly correct to observe that the 'doctrine of the two natures' is not the theme that is expressed here, but rather the 'succession of different phases in the continuity of the one drama of salvation',[1] or, as P. Henry says, the temporal succession of 'conditions'.[2] Nevertheless, the subject of the kenosis that is described there, is not the Son who has already become man, but the pre-existent Son. To explain the possibility of such an act, it is not enough to point merely to the content of what is chosen in the 'self-emptying', however much this content is one of the determinative factors of the kenosis: the tradition of the West, like that of the East, has characterised the meaning of the Incarnation unambiguously, and in accordance with Scripture, not as the assuming of creatureliness *in se*, but as the assuming of the concrete human destiny, that stands under the 'curse' of sin and of the first and the second death. The Incarnation has accordingly no other ultimate purpose than the Cross: *in nostra descendit, ut non solum substantiam, sed conditionem naturae peccatricis assumeret; nec alia fuit Dei Filio causa nascendi quam ut cruci posset affigi* (Leo the Great).[3] To speak of Incarnation is already to speak of the Cross, as a daring formulation of Bernard shows: 'It is perhaps we ourselves who are Christ's Cross, to which he is fastened: "I am held fast in the miry clay of the abyss" (Ps 69.3), and it is of this that we are formed'.[4] This is true, but does not go far enough. The modern form of this ancient idea, which seeks to explain the genuine obedience of the Son of God through his taking on solidarity with the men whose 'fate' stands under the curse of death,[5] is likewise insufficient, because Jesus is not merely one of those who bear the general destiny, but is the unique bearer of the world's sin, and because the source of his obedience is his unique relation to the Father, not the fact that man is given over to the power of death.

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[1] E. Käsemann, 'Kritische Analyse von Phil 2, 5–11', in: *ZThK* 47 (1950), pp. 313–360; quoted from his *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen* I (4th edn. 1965), pp. 51–95, at p. 80.

[2] P. Henry, art. *Kénose*, *Dict. Bib.* Suppl. V (1957), 7–161 (with bibliography).

[3] [He descended into what was ours, that he might assume not only the substance, but also the condition of the sinful nature; and the Son of God had no other cause of his birth than that he might be able to be fastened to the Cross.] *Sermo* 71, 2 (PL 54, 387). Further texts in my *Theologie der drei TagC* (n. 2 of previous section), pp. 17ff.

[4] *In vig. nat. sermo* 4 (PL 183, 103B). On the theme, *cf.* J. P. Jossua, *Le Salut. Incarnation ou Mystère Pascal chez les Pères de l'Eglise de S. Irénée à S. Léon le Grand* (Cogitatio Fidei 28, 1968), where the thesis of a one-sided 'incarnationism' of the Greek fathers, opposed to the Latin fathers' doctrine of the cross, is refuted.

For such obedience, a divine decision must truly be required, a decision that as such implies the 'surrender' of the *forma Dei*, and therefore we must at least attempt to consider how such a surrender can be possible for the God of whom we cannot postulate any alteration as this is found in creatures, nor any suffering and obeying in the manner proper to creatures. In order to undertake the attempt of such a consideration, it will be necessary to posit an incomprehensible freedom in God that allows him to do more, and to be other, than the creature would suppose of him on the ground of its concepts of 'God'.

Among the fathers, Hilary undertook to ascribe to the divine Son a power to make himself powerless in himself (*intra suam ipse vacuefactus potestatem*),[6] without forfeiture of his own power, and in freedom. But Hilary's reflections focus too much on the divine 'nature' and its inherent powerfulness; deeper illumination, however, can be awaited only from the starting-point of the personal relationships in God.[7] It is therefore preferable to be guided by some of Bulgakov's fundamental ideas (while avoiding his sophiological excesses), and to take the 'selflessness' of the divine persons, as of pure relations in the love within the Godhead, as the basis of everything: this selflessness is the basis of a first form of kenosis, that lies in creation (especially in the creation of man who is free), for the creator here gives up a part of his freedom to the creature, in the act of creating; but this he can dare to do only in virtue of his foreseeing and taking into account the second and truest kenosis, that of the Cross, in which he makes good the uttermost consequences of creation's freedom, and goes beyond them. In this, kenosis—as the surrender of the 'form of God'—becomes the decisive act of the love of the Son, who translates his being begotten by the Father (and in this, his dependence on him) into the expressive form of creaturely obedience; but the whole Trinity remains involved in this act, the Father by sending out the Son and abandoning him on the Cross, and the Spirit by uniting them now only in the expressive form of the separation.[8] Thus 'the Cross of Christ is inscribed in the creation of the world from the beginning', as this is shown in the Johannine theology of the 'Lamb of God' (Jn 1.29, 36): the Lamb, 'slain before the foundation of the world' (Rev 13.8), stands upon the throne of the Father (5.6), giving pasture to those washed in its blood (7.17), and laying down its life for its sheep as the Lamb-Shepherd (Jn 10.15),[9] and will also become the judge of his own, and of the whole world, in the 'wrath of the Lamb' (Rev 6.16).

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[5] P. Galtier, 'Obéissant jusqu'à la mort', *RAM* 1 (1920), pp. 113–145. One remains still within the framework of a contemplation of the condition which is achieved by the act of self-emptying, if one argues that a god could win nothing through the assumption of a human nature, because the created being cannot be added on to the divine being as something extra: as Athanasius says, God 'does not become something better through this act of assumption, but abases himself' (*Adv. Arium* I 40–41; PG 26, 93CD).

[6] [He himself is made empty, within his own power] *De Trin.* 9, 41 (PL 10, 314B).

[7] If Hilary's starting-point is thought out to the end, it leads necessarily to almost docetic formulations, which go beyond even John and make the powerlessness of the Cross appear as the proclamation of the divine power and glory. *De Trin.* 1C, 10 (PL 10, 350AB), *cf.* Thomas, *S.Th.* III *q* 15 *a* 5 *ad* 1.

But no necessity, no philosophical law of the structure of the created world, empowers us either to deduce the sovereign freedom of the decision of grace that is the kenosis of God, or to extend it to become a universal law. Again and again the attempt has been made to universalise it in a gnostic sense or an idealistic sense, and to deduce from it the structure of existence, or the alienation of the self and of its overcoming, or the 'die and live' of all life; or else to argue from the laws of human love and the selflessness and poverty that belong to love, to the necessary conduct of God.[10] But only his utterly free love can cause God to create a world and to redeem this world in the most wonderful manner. And even if it is true that the coming to light of the inner-trinitarian mystery in the dispensation of salvation lets us see something of the law of the immanent Trinity, it is nevertheless impossible to deduce from the inner law that this going-forth was necessary. But if the mystery of the divine love is once disclosed in Jesus Christ, then we may argue that God could do what he did in reality do, and that his self-abasement and self-emptying were no contradiction of his own essence, but corresponded precisely to this essence, in a way that could never have been thought of.

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[8] Bulgakov, *Du Verbe Incarné. Angus Dei* (French, Paris 1943). On this, *cf.* P. Henry, op. cit. (n. 2 above), 144–158.

[9] Paul has another panorama: before the foundation of the world (and as one of the determinative factors in this), the work of redemption is proleptically present in the plan, decision and intention of the creator: Eph 1.4–10; *cf.* Col 1.13–23.

God confirms that he is God 'by entering into the circumscription and the misery of the human creature; he who is lord becomes a servant, and in this he abases himself, unlike the false gods; and the man in Christ Jesus, himself, without loss or limitation of his humanity, is . . . not deified . . . but, in the power of his deity and therefore in the power of God and thanks to the self-abasement of God . . . is the man exalted by God'. In all this, there is 'no paradox, no antinomy, no division' in God; by 'doing such a thing, he proves to us that he *can* do it, that it is absolutely in his *nature* to do such a thing. He demonstrates himself then precisely to be more sovereign, greater, and richer than we had thought before'. Everything depends on God's triune love, which alone can explain 'that an act of obedience' need 'not be foreign to God himself'. 'The relationship within the Godhead between the one who rules and commands on high, and the one who obeys in humility, becomes, in the work of the reconciliation of the world with God, identical with the wholly different kind of relationship between God and one of his creatures, a man' (Karl Barth).[11]

[10] *Cf.* the chapter 'Kreuz und Philosophie' [Cross and Philosophy] in my *Theologie der drei Tage* (n. 2 of previous section), pp. 40ff., and S. Breton, *La Passion du Christ et les Philosophes* (Edizioni Eco, Teramo 1954).

[11] *Kirchliche Dogmatik* IV/1 (1953), pp. 202ff. (ET *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1,

We may form a notion from this of how God can make good the nothingness into which creaturely freedom sinks and is lost, and how he can penetrate yet further down, through a still deeper 'annihilation' that is deeper precisely because it is divine: the emptiness of love's absolute obedience for the unconditional command, for every use and 'misuse'. But we see at the same time why the humanity of the man Jesus does not need to be identical as such with the absolute suffering of the Cross: for although his existence as a whole is determined by the kenosis of God (as is clearly said at Phil 2.7, and at least indicated at Rom 8.3), he does not himself load on to himself the burden that is destined for this existence—for that would be a flat contradiction of the kenotic condition—but is only ready to let this burden be loaded on to himself in the 'hour' that the Father has determined. It is therefore theologically incorrect to interpret Jesus' life from conception to the Cross as a single maximal suffering[12]—quite apart from the fact that this would not correspond to a true human life, which is a mixture of joy and suffering and, as a Christian life, is carried by faith, love and hope. One must go further: the deepest experience of abandonment by God, which is to be vicariously real in the Passion, presupposes an equally deep experience of being united to God and of life derived from the Father—an experience that the Son must have had, not only in Heaven, but also as a man, even if this does not mean that his spirit must already enjoy a perpetual *visio beatifica*. Only one who has known the genuine intimacy of love, can be genuinely abandoned (not merely lonely). Nevertheless,

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pp. 185ff. On the historical doctrine of kenosis, *cf. ibid.* pp. 196–199, and my *Theologie der drei Tage* (n. 2 of previous section), pp. 19ff.

[12] Thus Thomas Leonardi OP, *Christus crucifixus, sive de perpetua cruce Jesu Christi a primo instanti suae conceptionis usque ad extremum vitae* [Christ crucified, or Concerning the perpetual Cross of Jesus Christ from the first instant of his conception to the end of his life] (1648), and also Louis Chardon, *La Croix de Jésus* (1647). On the whole movement in spirituality, *cf.* F. Florian's introduction to his new edition of Chardon (Paris 1937). Kierkegaard tends towards the same exaggeration in his *Einübung im Christentum* (1850): the existence of Christ as a whole is uninterrupted suffering, because he is the word of love that *must* conceal itself, *must* arouse scandal. (Edn. Hirsch 1955, pp. 131f.).

the kenotic existence of Jesus (as opposed to any other human life which is merely jetsam that makes towards death) was an existence of expectation and of readiness for the 'hour', condensed in the unity of claim, poverty, and self-abandonment. And if it is first in the 'hour' that he becomes a 'martyr', when he 'makes a good confession under Pontius Pilate' (1 Tim 6.13), yet he lives a life that is directed only towards this hour, and is always already *martys*, 'a witness', through the absolute momentum of his whole existence that is gathered together and directed towards the hour.[13] This is the source of his life in perfect truth, this indeed gives him the power to be himself the truth as a man. This is the source that gives him the power to fulfil the will of the Father all his life, and to represent and interpret this will as it appears in God himself and in history and tradition. This is the source that permits him truly to have a 'teaching' that is yet, at the same time, not his own, for in the immanent Trinity he is the Word of the Father; this teaching will prove itself to be the truth when others put him to the test as he exercises his obedient readiness: 'whoever does the will of the Father will know whether my teaching comes from God, or whether I speak on my own account' (Jn 7.16–17).

It is possible to carry this out, because obedience to God and waiting upon his will belong to the fundamental structure of the creature. Yet this is possible only through Jesus—'without me, you can do nothing' (Jn 15.5)—because Christian fruitfulness comes only from the kenotic readiness of the Son as he looks to the Father who is for him 'the vine-dresser' (15.1). In the communication that is the gift of grace, and goes as far as making the disciples Jesus' brothers (Jn 20.17; Rom 8.29; Heb 2.12), the distance between the one 'master and lord' (Jn 13.13) and the disciples and followers is unrelentingly maintained through all the texts of the new covenant. This would not be necessary, were the kenotic readiness for the will of the Father not of a qualitatively different kind than the readiness of all free creatures; were there no such difference, then the Cross of Christ would be nothing more than the realisation of the purely creaturely attitude to God (as this is seen in Adam, for example) as he assumes the existential conditions of fallen man, who is conscious above all in his dying of 'emptiness, with no way out, that dissolves to nothing, and is devoid of substance'. Jesus could then perhaps 'institute a new existential condition' in the world, but that would still be a very different thing from the vicarious bearing of the collective sin of the world by the single one, from the turning-point of the ages—'the old has passed away, behold, something new has come about!' (2 Cor 5.17).[14] The Incarnation of the Son of God involves his assuming of this pure 'Adamic' act into his own readiness for the Father's will, accomplishing this act more decisively and spotlessly than any other; but this act can institute what God intends *only* because it is carried and transmuted by the act of the kenotic readiness of the Son for the Father's will, the act that penetrates deeper than every created state and is the foundation of the whole existence of Jesus. Mary's *fiat* too, uttered vicariously for all and founding the Church as the bride of Christ, is empowered to institute this only by this kenotic *fiat* of the Son (in the 'pre-redemption' of Mary).

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[13] *Cf.* the frequent use of μαρτυρεῖν and μαρτυρία, especially in John.

It is this that determines the Passion, and likewise its prehistory and 'extended introduction' (to use Martin Kähler's term), the life of Jesus, in a qualitative manner. The evangelists may embellish this life in a very distinctive way with unforgettable deeds and words: its fundamental character nevertheless remains its *hiddenness*.[15] It may be true that the early Church perhaps had recourse to certain ideas of contemporary apocalyptic, in order to 'understand' this hiddenness—e.g., the idea that eschatological secrets, including the Messiah himself, are laid up with God for the end time, to be 'revealed' at the decisive moment. Later (certainly only after the destruction of Jerusalem), there appears the idea that the Messiah lives somewhere on earth unknown—perhaps unknown even to himself—and is to be discovered by someone else at the appropriate time, and installed in his office as Messiah. But neither version can sufficiently encompass the existence of Jesus: for he is not hidden in Heaven, but is on earth; and he is not hidden on earth (to say nothing of his being unknown to himself) in such a way that he should become publicly known to the world later on. It is true that Paul makes abundant use, of the category of the revelation (ἀποκάλυψις) in the end time, through the Church, of heavenly secrets that were hitherto hidden with God.[16] But neither in the Passion nor in the Resurrection did Jesus himself emerge from his essential hiddenness: he leaves the ἀποκάλυψις of his enduring hiddenness to the Spirit and the Church, who can 'reveal' him, interpret him and make him known to the world later on only as the one who is hidden. Thus every recourse to the 'prior understanding' of a hidden Messiah breaks down at the decisive point.[17]

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[14] Here it cannot be said that K. Rahner's *Theologie des Todes* (Q. Disp. 2, 1958) reaches sufficient christological depth.

[15] On what follows, *cf.* E. Sjöberg, *Der verborgene Menschensohn* (Lund 1955), and the section on hiddenness, below, pp. 318ff.

It was extraordinarily difficult for the evangelists to make it clear that the essential hiddenness of the earthly Jesus was the uninterrupted existential condition precisely of his public life as well. For here he preached in a unique manner, he worked many miracles, including sensational wonders; people discussed the puzzling personality and mission of Jesus, and accused him of making claims that were presumptuous; finally, his case was drawn into the realm of politics, and he was executed during the Passover solemnities. All of this had to be portrayed, and yet the hiddenness must be perceptible, for it is theologically fundamental and therefore essential to the portrait. Mark found the motif of the hiddenness of Jesus, which appears also in the material of the Q source, already present in his sources, and gave it sharper emphasis through his theory of the 'messianic secret';[18] through the commands to silence which Jesus issues to the demons[19] and to the men who confess him (although the acclamations remain without consequences, and the prohibitions are violated), through a massive underlining of the disciples' lack of understanding, and finally through the theory that Jesus taught the people in parables so that they should not understand—a theory that directly contradicts the original meaning of the parabolic discourse. In Matthew and Luke, the three motifs which are distinctive in Mark continue to have an effect, but they are diluted by motifs that work in the opposite sense: the authors of the longer Gospels have lost Mark's vital interest in this. It is more important for Matthew that the disciples should understand something of Jesus' teaching; and especially in Luke, the parables are so lucid that it is impossible to speak of a concealing of the truth. Only John takes up Mark's concern, and goes back to the origins in order to express this concern in an interior and enduring fashion. The harsh and immediate dialectic of hiddenness and openness in Mark becomes in the last Gospel a unified insight that is carried through to the end: the one who is revealed remains the hidden one even in his revelation; the light and the life of the Logos are present, but are not recognised by the world; only the disciples, who in John take on the stylised function of the believers from the very beginning, recognise in the hidden Lord the glory that blazes through, even if they grasp something of this only after the resurrection. Only when Jesus' death is imminent is the veil of the parabolic discourse removed for them too (16.29); the path to the exaltation—Cross and Resurrection are both included in this term—is completely hidden as far as the world is concerned ('The world sees me no more'), but is open for the disciples ('You will see me', 14.19). For the world, therefore, nothing at all can be apart from this dialectic; the hiddenness of the Incarnation, of the Cross, and of the Resurrection is maintained, even though the light shines with no covering, and Jesus has 'spoken openly before all the world' (Jn 18.20).

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[16] Sjöberg, op. cit. pp. 14–27; for the other New Testament writings, *ibid*. pp. 28–40. Sjöberg is correct to say that the understanding of the gospel as a 'mystery' hitherto hidden and now 'revealed' presupposes the Jewish apocalyptic of Palestine, and does not need to be traced back to hellenistic or gnostic influences.

[17] Sjöberg sees this, when he declares (on the level of historical-critical philology), 'Apocalyptic created the milieu, but in giving form to his own outlook and message, he did not only make use of the apocalyptic ideas, but at the same time gave them a change of form' (p. 189).

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[18] The fundamental study is W. Wrede's *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (ET *The Messianic Secret*, 1971). *Cf.* M. Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (4th edn. 1961), p. 232 (ET *From Tradition to Gospel*, 1934, pp. 223f.); H. J. Ebeling, *Das Messiasgeheimnis und die Botschaft des Markusevangelisten*, Beihefte to ZNW 19 (1939).

[19] The cries of the demons are not confessions, but cries that ward Jesus off. O. Bauernfeind, *Die Worte der Dämonen im Markusevangelium*, in: BWANT III 8 (1927).

The kenosis which forms the unique character of Jesus' existence, cannot therefore be traced back to anything that is already known and could explain it; because this is so difficult to discover, he becomes continually a *skandalon*, a 'stumbling-stone'.[20] In Old Testament terms, this is the 'snare' (originally the wood that is laid over snares for animals), the occasion of falling, the contradiction over which one stumbles: the cause of falling in the ethical-religious realm, and parallel to this, the cause of corruption. Because the sole aim of Jesus' existence is obedience, everything that seeks to deter him from obedience is a *skandalon* for him (Mt 16.23): Peter no less than Satan who tempts him. But Jesus' exposed existence has also the character of a stumbling-block and a snare: 'Blessed is he who takes no offence at me' (Mt 11.6). His preaching arouses scandal (Mt 13.57; 15.12), and far from being able to spare his disciples the decision ('Do you too take offence at this?', Jn 6.61), he must become for them all the occasion of stumbling ('You will all take offence at me', Mt 26.31), as long as nothing more is seen than his kenosis. A crucified Messiah is a contradiction in terms for the Jews (1 Cor 1.23), and therefore he himself provokes them to reject him. But because for Jesus absolutely everything is built upon this one stone, Paul and, after him, the first Letter of Peter can interweave the two passages of Isaiah which call God 'a stone of offence and a rock of stumbling, a trap and a snare' for Israel (8.14), but also, in his Messiah, 'a testing stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation' (28.16), yet the stone at which 'the builders' took offence, and 'rejected it' (Ps 118.22; *cf.* Rom 9.33; 1 Pet 2.6–8).[21] Precisely because this stone is unique in its quality as a precious foundation, it becomes a testing-stone—one must decide whether or not to dare to build upon it alone—and thereby a stone of stumbling.[22] The enormity of the situation of scandal is exposed completely by Luke in his proverbial expansion: 'Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken in pieces; but when it falls on anyone, it will crush him' (20.18).[23] Here, the 'horizontal' stumbling is replaced by the momentum of the 'vertical' collision, for the testing-stone retains all the weight. And because Jesus himself is set upon the uttermost consequences of the decision to accept the divine will, he can set those who believe in him only on this path that goes without any protection towards the uttermost; but for this reason, he places himself as a protection before 'these little ones' who have cast their lives upon him: 'Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea (Mt 18.6). Paul lets this zeal of Jesus echo forth in himself: 'Who is made to stumble, and I am not indignant?' (2 Cor 11.29).

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[20] G. Stählin, *Skandalon. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte eines biblischen Begriffs*, Beitr. z. Förd. chr. Theol., 2nd series 24 (1930). A Humbert, 'Essai d'une théologie du scandale dans les synoptiques', *Biblica* (1954), pp. 1–28.

[21] It is possible that the Old Testament passages were joined before Paul as *testimonia* that formed a '(messianic) theology of the "stone"' (Stählin, op. cit., n. 20 above, p. 196).

But it is at the point where the goal and aim of all his previous hiddenness are attained, in the Passion and the death, that the whole scandal offered by the essential hiddenness of Jesus' earthly existence must be condensed and finally become visible. The aim was recognised, even before Paul, to lie in the *pro nobis* of the crucifixion, and this was chosen by Paul as the midpoint of theology: the 'word of the Cross' (1 Cor 1.18) is essentially a scandalous word (1.23), for it is the 'stumbling block of the Cross' (Gal 5.11) that actually provokes contradiction and yet displays God's 'mysterious hidden wisdom' (1 Cor 2.7) in its seeming folly and powerlessness, the wisdom that in its folly is 'wiser than men' (1.25).

It is on the basis of the Pauline interpretation, therefore, with its exposition of the theological content of the event of the Passion, that the Passion narratives of the Gospels are to be read.[24] They are all projected against the theological background of the Old Testament, and are increasingly subordinate to the reflection after Easter, which sees the redemptive character of the event already shimmering through its judicial character. But one must still be guided by the harshest expressions because Jesus willed out of love to experience only the judicial character, and therefore to renounce everything that would have comforted him and strengthened him, everything that would have made it lighter, so that he might be in kenosis merely a free space for the collision of the sin of the world.

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[22] The evangelists take over this 'theology of the "stone"' in the summary of Ps 118.22f.: Mk 12.10f.; Mt 21.42; Lk 2.34 (dependent on Is 8.15); 20.17.

[23] Echoing Dan 2.34 (Theodotion), 44; *cf.* Billerbeck I 877.

The 'hour' of the 'judgment' lies with the Father, not with Jesus (Jn 12.27f., 31), and so the hour of the darkness begins internally, with the 'horror' (ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι) and the 'isolating dread' (ἀδημονεῖν, Mk 14.33) that 'knock down to the earth' on the Mount of Olives the one who goes forward into his suffering (Mk 14.35; Matthew weakens this to a prostration in adoration, Luke to a kneeling). In this place, John has the 'consternation', the 'being utterly troubled' (11.33,38; 12.27; 13.21), i.e. the transposition into the condition in which the guilt, so wholly foreign to Jesus, can be assumed by him. Naturally, John interprets this in such a manner that the ultimate anxiety and loneliness are always already illuminated by the fellowship with the Father (16.32), and the majesty remains, capable of controlling things (18.8; 19.26f.), conscious of itself (18.37), and indeed expressed in the fulfilment of the mission (19.30). The 'power of darkness' (Lk 22.53) is a power that is apportioned from above (Jn 19.11).

Against this, the Synoptic Gospels portray on the Mount of Olives the impasse in which there is contained no breadth any longer, but all is concerned with the formal 'my will—thy will'. Everything is reduced to absolute obedience (Phil 2.8; Rom 5.19), which is activated precisely in this formalisation: Jesus is 'the Son', but in 'prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears', he must 'learn obedience through what he suffered' (Heb 5.7–8), and (if Harnack's textual proposal is correct), 'he was not saved from his dread'. Since what is loaded on to him is, for God, absolutely useless, he himself becomes the one who can no longer be used by anyone or for anything (ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι, 'to be declared useless': Mk 8.31; Lk 9.22; 17.25). Since he bears what is absolutely disgraceful, his death becomes a death in disgrace (1 Pet 2.23; *cf.* 1 Cor 4.10ff.; Heb 12.2; 11.26).

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[24] On what follows, *cf.* my *Theologie der drei Tage* (n. 3 above), pp. 61ff. Here we give only a summary of the more important aspects.

Thereby he becomes the one *abandoned* on all sides. The word is found in the prophecies of the Passion (Mk 9.31 par.; 10.33a par.; 10.33b par.; 10.45 par.); he is abandoned 'into the hands of men', or 'of sinners', or 'of the Gentiles'. From the old covenant, the real one who abandons is God, and his abandoning (above all, of Israel) is 'in each case an act of judgment, or an act of the divine wrath'.[25] The one who is handed over in this way is 'abandoned by God', in the truest sense of this phrase; it is no longer God who holds sway over him, but the enemy (*cf.* 1 Sam 24.5).[26] The human instrument of the abandoning is the *traditor* Judas, who initiates the earthly game of the betrayals and abandonments that ends with Jesus' condemnation—the delivering by the Christians to the Jews, by the Jews to the Gentiles, by Pilate back to Herod, and finally by Herod to Pilate, who tries a final time vainly to deliver him back to the Jews, but under pressure and threat utters the sentence, but rejects the responsibility that is his own. Even Judas wants to free himself from the noose by giving back the money, but the Jews will no longer accept this for the Temple treasury, and use it for another purpose. No one wants to have been the one responsible, because no one wants to have anything to do with this Jesus. And so Christians, Jews, and Gentiles are in this way 'handed over to disobedience, so that he might have mercy upon them all' (Rom 11.32).

First and foremost, Jesus is the one abandoned by God, and then by all men, acting as instruments within God's act; it is only the later theological reflection that emphasises Jesus' own self-abandonment (a supplement that is correct). This can be seen where the causal διά of the pre-Pauline formula with its parallelism: 'He was given up because of (διά) our sins and raised because of (διά) our justification' (Rom 4.25), is replaced by final clauses, first of all at Mk 10.45b, 'The Son of Man has come . . . to give his life as a ransom for (ἀντί) all' (*cf.* the use of ὑπέρ: 1 Cor 11.24; Lk 22.19; 1 Cor 15.3; the use of περί at Rom 8.3); and finally the *self*-giving of Jesus is spoken of (Gal 2.20; Eph 5.2, 25). But this is a 'deed' only in that it is the consent to being handed over. The whole idea can be contained only within the trinitarian context, so that the entire act of judgment remains contained within the love of the Father who gives up (Jn 3.16) and the love of the Son who places himself at his disposal: within the brackets of this love lies the whole momentum of the curse of the sin of the world, which crashes against the one who bears it (Gal 3.13).[27] Inasmuch as this curse leads to death, it is nothing transient, but definitive; no faith or hope can ward off the lethal momentum of the blow; and for this reason, within the unique form of Jesus' time, the experience of such an abandonment can be only an experience in timelessness and definitiveness.

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[25] Wiard Popkes, *Christus traditus. Eine Untersuchung zum Begriff der Dahingabe im NT, AThANT* 49 (1967), pp. 23f.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 41. *Cf.* the triple use of the word at the beginning of Romans: 1.24, 26, 28.

There are indeed still words before the human courts, on the way to the Cross, and on the Cross; yet the predominant element is the ever-deepening silence—a silence that brings astonishment (Mk 15.5) and scorn (Lk 23.9ff.), but is based

[27] That God gives up his Son 'belongs to the most unheard-of statements of the New Testament; we must understand this giving-up in the full sense, and not weaken it to a "sending" or "gift". What Abraham did not need to do, has now taken place: Christ was abandoned to the destiny of death by the Father, with full intention; God has cast him out, beneath the powers of destruction, whether these are called man or death . . . Christ is the one cursed by God; as sinners are cast into abandonment by God (Rom 1.24ff.), so is Christ . . . Here speaks a *theologia crucis* in utmost radicality; it is truly a rejection that takes place . . . "Christus traditus" means first of all "Christus finitus", an absolute zero point'. Only when this has taken place, can the other pole be emphasised: the self-giving of the Son that goes to the very end. Popkes, op. cit. (n. 25), pp. 286–287.

on the pointlessness of further talking (Lk 22.67f.). Jesus becomes the lamb that does not open its mouth on the way to be slaughtered (Is 53.7; Acts 8.32). *The* great word on the Cross, which is the only word narrated in Mark and Matthew, is the cry to the lost God, whose authenticity is shown by the misunderstanding of those who stand near: 'He is calling on Elijah' (Mt 27.47ff.). The originality of the words, 'I thirst' (Jn 19.28), is probable, because they offer a better motive for the drink of vinegar that is given Jesus than is found in the Synoptic Gospels. It is specifically Johannine: the spring of living water that wells up to eternal life, who wills to give all drink from himself (Jn 4.10,13f.; 7.37f.), is poured out to such an extent that he himself is dying of thirst. The same paradox is expressed in the mockery about the doctor who helped others but cannot help himself (Mt 27.42). The earthly close, which John terms the 'fulfilment' that has been attained, is the giving forth of all that still lies most deeply within Jesus, the central point of this Eucharist of the Cross: the giving forth of the Spirit on the one hand, and of the open and liquefied heart on the other. At Mk 15.37, the Spirit is simply breathed forth (ἐξέπνευσεν; Mt 27.50: ἀφῆκεν); Luke underlines this, when the dying Son accomplishes his deed in the prayer, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit' (Lk 23.46a, following Ps 31.5); John is more explicit still: 'he bowed his head and gave up the Spirit' (παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα, 19.30). This is perhaps more a giving to the world than to the Father, as is indicated by the bowed head and by the immediate inbreathing of the Spirit into the Church on Easter day: in Jesus' death, his Spirit is set 'free' (Jn 7.39). At the same time, 'blood and water' are set free in his pierced heart; in John, this is without any doubt understood sacramentally, and is joined with the Spirit to form a triad (1 Jn 5.6,8) that bears witness both to Christ and to the Church that has its birth from him. The place of his heart is open, empty, for all to enter; in this self-emptying, the kenosis has reached its fulfilment. Christ's body is Ezekiel's new Temple, from which the spring of life streams forth (Ezek 47; *cf.* Zech 13.1; Rev 22.1); and the lifeblood of the slaughtered lamb, hitherto reserved for God alone, will for the future become the nourishment of the new Israel, as distinct from the flesh that is handed over in sacrifice.

It is still true that the evangelists understand the Cross as *judgment*—from different angles, but converging upon the centre of the eschatological judgment—not only as the establishment of God's righteousness (of salvation: δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ), but as *krisis*. 'Now is the judgment' (Jn 12.31), 'as a judgment that brings to light, convicts and annihilates, through which "this world", the old age, truly ceases to exist and comes to its end—and this is absolutely decisive—at the point of Jesus Christ himself'.[28] It is here that the definitive condemnation of sin (κατακρίνειν, Rom 8.3) takes place. While Matthew shows the solidarity of Jesus with the condemned sinners by depicting him as crucified with the two criminals, Luke shows that the crucified is the one who administers the final judgment, when he separates those on the right from those on the left (23.39ff.). The Synoptic evangelists, especially Matthew, unfold an apocalyptic scenery in cosmic images: in the tearing of the Temple curtain, which (especially in Matthew) can imply in a cryptic manner the end of the old world, since constellations of the stars were woven into the Temple curtain and it was accounted as an image of the cosmos (Philo, Josephus),[29] and in the darkening of the sun, which portrays the world-wide effects of the interior 'hour of darkness', and indeed expresses the mourning of God himself, according to Amos 8.9–10: 'I will darken the earth in broad daylight . . . I will make it like the mourning for an only son'. The other signs too are unambiguously events of the end time: the earthquake, the splitting open of the rocks which follows, then the opening of the graves (i.e., the laying bare of Sheol), and then after the Resurrection of Christ as the 'first-fruits' (1 Cor 15.20) the resurrection of many, who show themselves in the heavenly city, in the new heavenly Jerusalem above (Mt 27.51–53). For John (as already for Paul), the Resurrection of Jesus is indeed a new act of God the Father, but one demanded by the inner logic of the act of judgment on the Cross and to this extent contained within it: so much is this so, that in John the raising up upon the Cross and the raising up into glory are one single event, just as for Paul no one is raised up apart from the one who was crucified.[30]

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[28] J. Blank, *Krisis. Untersuchungen zur johanneischen Christologie und Eschatologie* (1964), p. 282.

[29] A. Pelletier, 'La Tradition synoptique du "Voile Déchiré" etc.', *RSR* 46 (1958), pp. 161–180.

c. Hell

The step from the old covenant to the new, from the temporary to the definitive, from the prophetic to the eschatological, is taken in the 'annihilation' of 'the last enemy, death' (1 Cor 15.26), or, as Paul says with a significant alteration of the LXX text of Is 25.8, when 'death is swallowed up in victory' (1 Cor 15.54; *cf.* 2 Cor 5.4). The barrier of death—and this means ultimately, the adjustment of the final judgment in accordance with the situation of this life in those judged, the eschatological projection (in the apocalyptic literature) of the prophetical separation of goats and sheep (which, however, could not count as definitive, because of the prophecies dealing with salvation and with the remnant)—was for the theology of the Old Testament, the boundary that could not be crossed over, the boundary that gave occasion for the perpetual rebellion against this living.[1]

The Old Testament 'God of the living' was, of course, not limited by the world of the lifeless, for he possessed the power to lead down to Sheol and to lead up again, and retained a mobility over against all that was opposed to him that could not be held down, but pressed always forward.[2] But this mobility could find its conclusion only in the 'descent' of God, under the form of the dead man Jesus, to the lowest rung of the 'ladder of obedience'.

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[30] J. Blank, op. cit. (n 28), pp. 289f. Criticism of W. Thüsing, *Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung im Johannesevangelium*, in: NTAbh 21, 1–2 (1960), who too strongly distinguishes two phases (first exaltation, then glorification).

[1] *Cf.* III/2,1, pp. 313-316. On the basis of this closing situation of the old covenant, a theology of double predestination is understandable. For Qumran, *cf.* 1QS 3.18; 4.18; on this, K. G. Kuhn, *ZThK* 47 (1950) pp. 192f.; 49 (1952), pp. 296f; also Bousset and Gressmann, *Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter* (3rd edn. 1926), pp. 257f.; P. Volz, *Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde* (2nd edn. 1934), pp. 272–319.

[2] III/2,1, pp. 204-208.

Every man who sins dies, and falls into the power of death. The classic theology of the Old Testament[3] characterises this death as the loss of the living relationship to God; it is this basic perception that sharpens the images, widespread in the history of religions, that portray the realm of the dead ('Tartarus', 2 Pet 2.4; 'Hades', Rev 1.18; a prison, Jude 6) as a realm of (eternal) darkness, as 'dust', 'silence', an existence without strength,[4] without activity, without enjoyment, without knowledge of what takes place on earth, without praise of God, without return, an existence in nothingness and oblivion.[5] Paul summarises this definitive lot of guilty mankind in the statement (which is endebted to Jewish theology), 'All have sinned, and have lost the glory of God' (Rom 3.23).

If the kenosis, and the form of Jesus' existence in claim, poverty, and self-abandonment that is based upon the kenosis, made possible the bearing of the sin of the world, this act of bearing can be accomplished only in solidarity with the death that is the lot of all. In the Cross, as the consequence of the Incarnation, the 'journey to the dead' already lay implicit, as the burial of the body and the going of the dead soul to the other dead: *ut per utrumque fratribus suis similaretur* (Thomas).[6]

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[3] And it is on the basis of this theology that we must approach our consideration of the New Testament at the decisive point. The speculations which forced their way into late Judaism under Persian and hellenistic influences, concerning a differentiation of Sheol according to punishment and reward for behaviour on earth, are significant in their place, and can be traced on the margins of the New Testament too; it is significant that this should be so in Luke, in the parable about Lazarus (16.19–31) and in the word of the good thief (23.43). But both 'paradise' and 'Gehenna' remain polyvalent, and receive their theological unequivocalness only through the event of Holy Saturday. The Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, and Kings know of no differentiation of destinies after this life.

[4] The dead are called *refā'īm*, the 'powerless', Is 14.10.

[5] Documentation of the various characteristics named in J. Nelis, art. *Totenreich*, in Haag, *Bibellexicon* (2nd end. 1966), 1773f., with bibliography.

[6] [That through both, he might be made like his brethren], *In* 3 *Sent d* 22 *p* 3 *a* 1; cf. *Expos. symb. a* 5 (Spiazzi Nr. 926, 930). For everything that

Since the momentum of the Father's will, which loaded the world's guilt on to Jesus' kenotic *fiat*, in the truest sense 'crushed' the sufferer (Is 53.10), we have here no active descent—far less, a triumphant descent to take possession, or even only a descent that is a struggle in battle; we have only, in this 'sinking down' into the abyss of death, a passive 'being removed'.[7]. This is indicated also by the sign of Jonah, when this is interpreted of the *triduum mortis*.[8] The complete disarming of the principalities and powers (Col 2.14f.), the finally effective breaking into the house of the strong man, in order to bind him in chains (Mk 3.24f.), the robbing of the 'gates of hell' of their power (Mt 16.18)—all this can take place only from within, in participation in the absolute passivity of being dead; it is only thus that the one who is exalted could attain possession of the 'keys of death and of the underworld' (Rev 1.18). The obscure text 1 Pet 3.18–20 also truly speaks of a being of the dead Christ with the dead (physical death and spiritual death are inseparable here), and the 'proclamation' (ἐκήρυξεν) of salvation there is nothing other than the gospel which becomes objectively present in the world of the dead through the event itself, and thereby is made known.[9]

When he takes on this solidarity with sinners, in their most extreme condition, Jesus carries the Father's saving will out to the end. It is an absolute obedience that reaches out beyond life and stands the test precisely in the place where otherwise

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follows, I refer here once for all to my *Theologie der drei Tage* (n. 2 of section 1 of this chapter), where the theme is discussed in detail, with evidence, in the section of the 'journey to the dead'.

[7] Although 1 Pet 3.19 employs an active phase, πορευθεὶς.

[8] The logion was originally without interpretation (Mt 16.4); its interpretation in the light not only of the preaching of the prophet in Nineveh (Mt 12.41; Lk 11.30, 32) but also of his three days in the belly of the monster (Mt 12.40) may be due to reflection, but is appropriate, for the decisive matter about Jonah is not his preaching (which makes him like the other prophets), but his unique fate. The genuine logion of Jesus, 'And something greater than Jonah is here' (Mt 12.41 = Lk 11.32), can refer only to this.

[9] For a closer analysis of the text and a marking of the boundaries separating this from other interpretations, *cf. Theologie der drei Tage*, op. cit. (n. 6 above), pp. 110f.

only coercion and servitude reign. If we use our earlier terminology, we may say that on the far side of the boundaries of earthly existence, Jesus' authority and poverty, but also his self-abandonment, exist no more, but are comprised within his obedience; but this is possible only if the whole structure of his being and his time is built upon the foundation of the free act of obedience that is his kenosis. In this deeper sense (not in a psychological sense), he is *inter mortuos liber*, 'free among the dead' (Ps 87.6 LXX). He is bound, in powerlessness: but this is due to his own free obedience, the only obedience that deserves to be called 'the obedience of a corpse' in the theological sense. Thereby, with the removal of the whole superstructure of the Incarnation, the eternal will of the Son within the Trinity to obedience is exposed, as the substructure that is the basis of the entire event of the Incarnation: and this is set face-to-face with the hidden substructure of sinful existence, exposed in Sheol, as the state of separation from God, the 'loss of his glory'.

Now it is precisely this face-to-face confrontation between the 'naked' God and 'naked' sin that shows that Jesus' solidarity even with the utter lostness of sinners presupposes the uniqueness of his condition: the 'inclusive quality' of his being with the dead rests upon something 'exclusive' that he alone possesses.[10] This is recognised most easily if one reflects on the fact that the condition of Sheol is theologically indeterminable. A distinction between Hades and Hell, i.e. between a 'temporary *poena damni*'[11] and a 'definitive *poena damni*', has no meaning, because the first leaves room for hope (and thereby for faith and love), and so cannot in the least be termed *poena damni*. But if the spiritual light of faith, hope and love can exist in Hades (something unknown to the classic theology of the Old Testament), then this light can be shed only by the future, by the redemption brought by Christ; this light can then have proleptically softened the true lostness to something else, and can have redeemed it. This dialectic leads to a merely 'conditional' state of Sheol: *tenebantur debito damnationis aeternae, non quod eis aeterna fuerit, sed quod eis aeterna* fuisset, nisi *mors Christi eos ab hoc debito absolveret* Richard of St Victor).[12] And in that case Nicholas of Cusa is correct to deduce that Jesus was the only one who suffered the complete *poena damni* for all, just as he expiated alone all sin on the Cross; and as the eschatological abandonment by God passed over already on the Cross into what is timeless, so on Holy Saturday this abandonment by God becomes definitively timeless in Jesus' being truly dead, in the loss of all the spiritual lights of faith, hope and love.

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[10] On this terminology, *cf.* P. Althaus, 'Das Kreuz Christi', in: *Theologische Aufsätze* I (1929), p. 41.

[11] [punishment of loss] Pohle-Gierens, *Dogmatik* III (3rd edn. 1937), p. 660.

Nicholas of Cusa speaks of an 'interior view of death' (*visio mortis*) 'by force of immediate experience' (*via cognoscentiae*), and he sees in this the 'most complete punishment'. Thus 'the suffering of Christ is the greatest that can be thought of; it was like the suffering of the damned who cannot be damned any further, that is to say, it went as far as the punishment of Hell' (*usque ad poenam infernalem*). Jesus went to this point, 'in order to show that one must obey the Father to the uttermost torment. This means to praise and glorify God in every way possible, for our justification'.[13] Luther, and especially Calvin, followed Nicholas of Cusa in this interpretation; it was in particular Calvin who underlined the theme of obedience, and drew together the entire abandonment by God in the Passion, from the Mount of Olives through Calvary to Holy Saturday, into a single (if insufficiently differentiated) event. In Calvin, moreover, the 'brackets' of the trinitarian love are lost to sight, so that the idea of the 'severe vengeance of God' (*divinae ultionis severitas*) takes on one-sided prominence.[14] Nicholas of Cusa's keyword is better: obedience; naturally, this is an obedience that lies beyond the limits of what is possible to man upon earth, as the most absolute proclamation to the world of God's disposition of love.

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[12] [They were held fast by the debt of eternal death, not because it was eternal for them, but because it *would have been* eternal for them *had not* Christ's death absolved them from this debt] *De potestate ligandi atque solvendi* 19 (PL 196, 1171).

[13] *Excitationes*, Book 10 (Basel edn. 1565), p. 659.

[14] Texts in my *Theologie der drei Tage* (n. 6), p. 120.

Here, and only here, does the New Testament concept of 'Hell' emerge from the Hades of the Old Testament. In various ways, it is a christological concept; first, inasmuch as only the dead redeemer, by virtue of his kenosis, has experienced the full seriousness of what Sheol must be; second, inasmuch—again by virtue of his kenosis—as his abandonment to death by the Father was a unique abandonment that was determined upon within the Trinity; third, inasmuch as in this *visio (secundae) mortis* the whole fruit of the redeeming Cross was seen together. That is to say, sin in its 'pure state' separated from man, 'sin in itself' in the whole formless, chaotic momentum of its reality, was seen by Jesus; and with it, the 'remainder' that could not be absorbed into the Father's work of creation, because he had left man freedom to decide for or against God—the unfinished part of the creation, that it was left to the incarnate Son to finish; and the Son, obedient to his mission, is led by the Father now into the state of existence of this sin that 'remains'. *Descendit ad inferiora terrae, id quod erat inoperatum conditionis visurus oculis* (Irenaeus).[15]

In this sense, the Son therefore contemplates his own work too in what is absolutely opposed to God, in an objective 'triumphal procession' (Col 2.15) that is as far remote as possible from any sentiment of victory. It is 'glory' in the uttermost opposite of 'glory', because it is at the same time blind obedience, that must obey the Father at the point where the last trace of God seems lost (in pure sin), together with every other communication (in pure solitariness). Fourth, then, Jesus becomes the true possessor, through his own experience, of what 'Hell' means in the New Testament; he becomes the judge who has measured out all the dimensions of man in his own experience, and now can assign to each his lot eschatologically. And thus it is from this point that we see the emergence of concepts of Hell, purgatory and Heaven, which for the first time are theologically meaningful.

Hell was necessarily the fate of man, where he had recognised this vicarious deed of God but consciously rejected it; anyone who has received the fullness of the goods of the end time and 'tasted them', yet 'falls away again', 'cannot possibly again attain repentance', and 'his end is to be burned' (Heb 6.4–8; *cf.* 12.25f.). Purgatory must be a possibility for man, inasmuch as, through the vicarious suffering of lostness, an impulse of mercy has been commingled with the eschatological 'fire' of God that tests men (1 Cor 3.12f.); Origen rightly stresses this again and again.[16] Heaven must be a possibility for man, in that precisely this uttermost separation of the incarnate Son from the Father also immediately implies his return (as John saw), viz. the laying bare of the immediacy between them in the dispensation of salvation; so great is this immediacy that the journey into the furthest depths of Hell can change timelessly in the absolute instant of the Resurrection into the uttermost intimacy of Heaven. The breakthrough of which the Letter to the Hebrews continually speaks (9.11f., 24; 10.10, 12, 20) is the breakthrough both into the absolute depth (the death of the one who leaves the inheritance, 9.16) and into the absolute height ('life without end', 7.3, 28). It is by this that principalities and powers of fate, which keep man subordinate, are absorbed into the realm of grace and freedom, and 'made ineffective' (1 Cor 2.6; 15.24ff.; Heb 2.14).

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[15] [He descended to the lower parts of the earth, to see with his eyes that part of creation which was inactive] *Adv. Haer.* IV 22, 1 (PG 7, 1047A).

Yet this act of seizing fate and destiny, and wrenching them out of their axes, takes place in the deepest silence of death. The Word of God has become unheard, and no message forces its way upwards to speak of its journey through the darkness: for it can do this only as not-word, as not-form, through a not-land, behind a sealed stone. And this 'doing' itself is no longer active, but is only something that is done. So all the traces that the living Word of God left behind on earth are as it were wiped out; the soul that comes back from the untraceable land, the body that rises from the sealed grave, is 'no longer Christ according to the flesh', but 'a new creature'. The old is past: behold, the new has come!' (2 Cor 5.16f.).

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[16] Texts in my selection, *Origenes, Geist und Feuer* (2nd edn. 1952), pp. 452–493. It has been shown in my *Theologie der drei Tage* (n. 6 above), what contradictions result from the supposition of a pre-Christian purgatory (op. cit., pp. 127f.).

II VIDIMUS GLORIAM EIUS

1. THE REQUEST FOR GLORIFICATION

In what follows, we shall be principally concerned with the use in the New Testament of the terms 'glory' (116 times) and 'to glorify' (more than 60 times).[1] There is a certain kind

[1] On the Old Testament, see III/2,1, p. 33, and (for the LXX) p. 50. Additionally, see: G. R. Berry, 'The Glory of Jahve and the Temple', *JBL* 56 (1937), pp. 115–117; E. F. Harrison, *The Use of Doxa in Greek Literature with special reference to the NT*, University of Pennsylvania 1950; L. H. Brockington, 'The Greek translator of Isaiah and his interest in ΔΟΞΑ', *VT* 1 (1950/1), pp. 23–32; R. Duplacy, 'L'Esperance de la gloire de Dieu dans l'AT', *Bible et Vie Chrét.* 8 (1954/55). pp. 40–53; L. H. Brockington, 'The Septuagintal Background of the NT use of Doxa', in: *Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot* (1955), pp. 1–8.
On the Synoptics:
See the bibliography given below for the section on the transfiguration.
On Paul:
C. Corssen, 'Paulus and Porphyrios. Zur Erklärung von 2 Kor 3,18', *ZNW* (1920) pp. 2–10; J. Goettsberger, 'Die Hülle des Moses nach Ex 34 und 2 Kor 3,' *Bibl.Zt.* (1924), pp. 1–17; M. Morgenstern, 'Moses with the Shining Face', *HUCA* 2 (1925), pp. 1–28; G. H. Boobyer, *Thanksgiving and the Glory of God in Paul*, Heidelberg 1929; L. Champions, *Benedictions and Doxologies in the Epistles of Paul* (1935); J. Dupont, 'Le chrétien, miroir de la gloire de Dieu d'après 2 Cor 3', *RB* 56 (1949); M. Carrez, 'Souffrance et Gloire dans les épîtres pauliniennes', *RHPh* 31 (1951), pp. 343–353; R. Bavalcado, 'La gloria de Dios seg. S.P.', *Virtud y Letras* 12 (1953); R. Bavalcado, 'El Segnor de la gloria', *Virtud y Letras* 13 (1954); O. Kuss, *Der Römerbrief* II (1959), excursus on *doxa*, pp. 608–618; H. Schlier, 'Doxa bei Paulus als heilsgeschichtlicher Begriff', *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus cath. 1961* (Rome 1963), pp. 43–56, also in *Besinnung auf das NT* (1964), pp. 307–318; M. Carrez, *De la souffrance à la Gloire. La* ΔΟΞΑ dans la pensée paulinienne (Neuchâtel 1964); H. Schlier, 'Das, worauf alles wartet. Eine Auslegung von Römer 8, 18–30', in *Interpretation der Welt* (Festschrift for Romano Guardini, 1965), pp. 599–616.
On John:
G. P. Wetter, 'Die Verherrlichung im JoEv', *Beitr.z.Rel. Wiss.* 2 (1914/15), pp. 32–113; B. Botte, 'La gloire du Christ dans l'Ev. de S. Jean'. *Quest. liturgiques* 12 (1927), pp. 65–76; R. B. Lloyd, 'The Word "Glory" in the Fourth Gospel', *Exp.T.* 43 (1931/32). pp. 546–8; H. L. Pass, *The Glory of the Father. A Study in S. John 13–17* (1935); A. Charme, 'Vie, Lumière et Gloire chez S. Jean', *Collat. Namurcenses* (1935), pp. 65–77, 229–241; E. Percy, *Untersuchung über den Ursprung der joh. Theologie* (1939); T. Jänike, *Die Herrlichkeit des Gottessohnes. Eine Einführung in das JoEv.* (1949); J. Dupont, *Essais sur la christologie de S. Jean* (1951), IV: La gloire du Christ, pp. 235–293; T. Crisan, *De notione Doxa in Ev.*

of detached exegesis which is keen to understand the astonishingly broad diffusion of this word through all the writings and layers of the New Testament from a syncretistic standpoint, or as the mechanical adoption of various meanings drawn from the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic;[2] we, however, will seek to understand it by relating it to the centre of the New Testament event of salvation itself. To put this in other words: 'glory' here has a meaning, distinctive and unique yet at the same time transforming and integrating everything that went before, and bringing it to completion, a

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St. Johannis in luce VT (Rome 1953); W. Groussow, 'La Glorification du Christ dans le 4^{e} évangile', Ev. Jean', *Etudes Bibl.* III (1958), pp. 131–145; W. Thüsing, 'Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu im JoEv.' *NtAbh* 21, 1–2 (1960), with bibliography; W. Thüsing, 'Herrlichkeit und Einheit. Eine Auslegung des Hohenpriesterlichen Gebetes', *Die Welt der Bibel* (1962); F-M. Braun, *Jean le Théologien* III (1966), pp. 195–240.
On 1 Peter:
J. Stimpfle, *Das christliche Leben als Verherrlichung Gottes nach dem 1. Brief des hl. Petrus*, Diss. Rome (1951).
On Revelation:
F. van der Meer, *Maiestas Domini. Théophanies de l'Apocalypse dans l'art chrétien* (Rome 1938).
General:
H. G. Mecham, 'Old Words with New Meanings. A NT Study', *Bible Translator* 4 (1954), pp. 4–7, 71–74; Z. Alszegy and M. Flick, 'Gloria Dei', *Gregorianum* 36 (1955), pp. 361–390; R. Duplacy, 'La gloire de Dieu et du Seigneur Jésus dans le NT', *Bible et Vie chrét.* 9 (1955), pp. 7–21; *Bibeltheologisches Wörterbuch* ed. J. B. Bauer, art. 'Herrlichkeit' (G. Molin); *Theol. Begriffslexikon* ed. L. Coenen, art. 'Ehre'/δόξα, τιμή (Aalen); TWNT art. δόξα (von Rad, G. Kittel); *RGG* 3rd edn., art. 'Herrlichkeit Gottes' (Fascher, Hesse).
On history of word, liturgy and theology:
W. Matzkow, *De vocabulis quibusdam Italae et Vulgatae christianis* (Berlin 1933), pp. 47f.; L. Turrado, *Doxa en el Evangelio de S. Juan según S. Cirilo de Alejandria*, Diss. Rome (1939); C. Gombos, *Theologia Claritatis apund S. Augustinum*. I, *De claritate Christi*, Diss. (typewritten) Rome (1940); M. Steinheimer, '*Die* Δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ in der röm. Liturgie', *Münch. theol. St.* II, 4 Systemat. Abt. 4 (1951); A. J. Vermeulen, *The semantic development of Gloria in early Christian Latin* (1956); M. Heghmans, *Gloria Dei. Ein biblisch-theologischer Begriff nach den Schriftkommentaren des hl. Thomas von Aquin*, Diss. Rome (1958).

[2] An example of this is the article 'Ehre' in the *Theol. Begriffslexikon zum NT*, I (1965f.), 204–210, by Aalen. *Cf.* L. Toussaint, art. 'Gloire', *DTC* VI/2, col. 1392: 'mêmes sens et mêmes acceptations' (in both the old and new covenants).

meaning that must disclose itself immediately out of the momentum shown in God's act in Jesus, a meaning that must be nothing else than the self-interpretation of this momentum. Our path goes from the centre out to the periphery: if one takes the path in the opposite direction, establishing statistically everything in the New Testament that receives the title 'glory', one will never find the true centre, and the individual traits will never unite to form a face. Yet all these traits hang together, and are indeed 'only artificially to be delimited from each other'.[3]

Three things must be borne in mind here. First, the already existing meaning of the concept, and its application to God.[4] Every living being, and above all the free person, achieves for itself a sphere of power in its own environment, so that in this it may exercise control, may make itself known and appear; this powerfulness or importance (*gravitas*) merges in the physical-moral sphere into esteem, acknowledgement and praise, and, in a world of beings that are both intellectual and sensual, this radiance is always both intellectual and perceptible to the senses. If the concept is transferred to the absolute and unique 'I' of God in his free manifestation in the world, this importance, this praise and its intellectual-cum-sensuous manifestation become absolute majesty; this demonstrates itself in God's creation as a whole (thus, following the Old Testament, Rom 1.20,23), and likewise in God's personal self-utterance in his deeds of salvation, which find their unsurpassable height in Jesus Christ (hence the 'δόξα of the gospel', 2 Cor 4.4, which is based ultimately in the δόξα of Christ, 2 Cor 3.18, the 'Lord of glory', 1 Cor 2.8; just like Christ himself, this glory can appear in its fullness only eschatologically). If one wished to fix approximate labels to the stages of the manifestation of the one indivisible glory of God, one could term the proclamation of the divine δόξα in the creation his 'character as ruler', the proclamation in Christ and in the gospel his 'majesty' or 'sublimity', and the eschatological proclamation his 'glory' in the truest sense of the word. But these nuances cannot be kept separate from each other, either in matter of fact or on the conceptual level, for God is one in all that he does, and, as this one, he is always incomprehensible.

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[3] G. Kittel, art. δόξα (TDNT II 247). W. Groussow says appositely of the fundamental concepts in John (including δόξα, 'They seem to possess a kind of elasticity that makes possible a sliding of thought.' 'It would be false to think one could establish their meaning on the basis of one or two texts': 'La glorification du Christ dans le 4ᵉ Evangile', in *L'Evangile de Jean*, Rech. Bibl. III (1958), p. 133.

[4] III/2,1, pp. 31-36.

This is the second consideration that must be borne in mind. We have seen how, philosophically, the 'beautiful' presented itself as a transcendent property of being that governs all that exists;[5] now, on the level of theology, the 'ruling, sublime, glorious' demonstrates itself to be a property of the ground of being—God—present in everything that exists and necessarily transcending every definition in categories. '*Doxa*' as a statement about God is therefore 'in fact more than a concept: it is an original cipher',[6] 'because the *doxa* transcends all speech and every word'.[7] On the one hand, it can hold sway over all the works of God, while shining out more brightly at certain points than at others, (*cf.*, for example, what is said about the stars at 1 Cor 15.40f., or about man and woman at 1 Cor 11.7); On the other hand, *doxa* can encircle God's self-revelation and make its voice heard in very many different ways, for it would not be a statement about God unless it were the expression of his hiddenness just as much as the expression of his manifestation, possessing dimensions enough to make itself known in Cross and death just as much as in Resurrection and 'return in glory'. The message of the New Testament, transcending all the statements about glory in the Old Testament, is precisely that God's glory can embrace 'transcendentally' even these uttermost contradictions, and so need not be brought to a halt before Sheol. In so far as *doxa* is a theological *transcendentale*, it necessarily has something in common with the philosophical *transcendentalia* of being (the one, the true, the good, the beautiful): namely, that it exists in an indissoluble perichoresis with these, such that everything that is theologically true is also good and glorious, and everything that is glorious is so to the extent that it is also good and true; for God himself is the original One, and all his self-manifestations bear the seal of this unity. Therefore too all dogmas are only aspects of the one, indivisible, good and beautiful truth of God.[8]

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[5] See Vol. IV, pp. 19ff.

[6] H. Schlier, 'Das, worauf alles wartet', Festschrift for Guardini (1965), p. 600.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 611.

It is, however, the third consideration that is genuinely decisive. What God's glory in its good truth is, was to be revealed in Jesus Christ, and ultimately in his absolute obedience of Cross and Hell. The unique ray of the divine majesty of love is to become visible from the unique momentum of this event, establishing the norm for everything that can lay claim to the predicate 'glorious', at whatever distance and periphery it may be. From here sentence and judgment are passed on everything that calls itself δόξα in the sphere of creation and in the sphere of revelation, whether it be in the Old Testament, or Jewish, or hellenistic. Inasmuch as the central event, Christ's obedience unto death, is no myth but the final self-revelation of God in history, all other glory is 'demythologised' by it, as far as this is necessary. But on the other hand, inasmuch as this event, which reveals the depths of the divine love, must be named a mystery, it cannot be reduced to a one-dimensional concept: therefore, the most various nuances of 'glory' can *integrate* even contradictions into the statement as a whole, as with the contradictions between Paul, for whom the earthly time of Jesus (as σάρξ displays no 'glory', and John for whom this is certainly already 'glorious', as the depiction of the eternal love of the Father. In the same way, it is possible to hold together from the theologically unified point of reference the nuances of meaning in John (which 'split apart from each other in an almost intolerable manner'),[9] which resist the attempt to render them by a single term.

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[8] Rom 1 can show this as an example in advance (for we shall come back to this later on): the revelation of God in the creation is described here equally as the 'recognisable openness' of his 'power and divinity' (1.19–20), as 'recognised righteousness' (1.32), and as similarly recognisable 'glory' (1.23). It is always the same God as he is revealed, who is contemplated first from the gnoseological point of view, then from the ethical point of view, and finally from the aesthetic point of view.

Accordingly, in what follows we must look first to this centre, to the event in which the absolute momentum interprets itself as absolute glory, as the appearing of the divinity of God.[10] From the mid-point, we shall then obtain the breadth and thereby understand what Christianity truly is. Everything that appears radiates from the mid-point of absolute inconspicuousness—as Augustine says, it is *radix de terra sitienti.*[11] It is precisely the 'powerfulness' in the *doxa* of God that shines forth from the complete powerlessness. In order to see this, we begin with the final interpretation of *doxa* in the New Testament, that of John, which gives us the key for the theological unity of the 'cipher'.[12]

a. Father, glorify me

Hitherto we have seen the Son as the one sent by the Father (hence the claim he makes upon men, 7.28; 8.42), who however carried out his mission in poverty and in a self-abandonment that included death, and thus in a unique obedience that is described in Phil 2 as kenosis, and in John as the fulfilling of the ἐντολή, (command: 10.18; 12.49–50; 15.10), as total renunciation of his own will (5.30; 6.38), renunciation of acting in his own power (5.19; 8.28) and of speaking and proclaiming on his own authority (12.49; 14.10); hence this is termed a unique and incomparable 'descent' (3.13).[1] This event comes to 'fulfilment' (19.28, 30) in 'his hour' (7.30; 8.20; 13.1) of 'drinking the cup' (18.11) in 'agitation of soul' (12.27), and thereby discloses its full truth: at this point, the one who has been handed over 'to the end' (13.1) is least able to 'do anything of himself' (5.19). In order to reveal what his absolute powerlessness truly is, Jesus, as the one crushed by the momentum of obedience, depends on another revealer. Christ did not 'snatch' his dignity 'for himself', did not glorify himself (Heb 5.5); this is true even when the obedience unto death—as the 'glorification of the Father'—is one with the glorification of the Son by the Father in an interior, indissoluble unity; that is to say, the statement of Hebrews remains true even though there exists an *a priori* synthesis between the two 'glorifications' that is based ultimately on the unity of the trinitarian act and being. The 'claim'[2] that lies in the obedience is made by the Son in no other form than that of petitionary prayer.[3] One may, however, say that it is the inner nexus binding his obedience with his glorification—a nexus the necessity of which is the

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[9] G. Kittel, art.cit. (n. 3 above), 248.

[10] 'For St. Paul the most sovereign thing in God, divinest in the Divine is the sacrificial sin-bearing love revealed in the Cross. God's glory is displayed in His mercy.' R. Law, art. 'Glory' in Hastings, *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church* I 452.

[11] [A root out of dry ground] *Sermo* 44, 1–2 (PL 38, 258–259).

[12] According to R. Schnackenburg (*LThK* 2nd edn., V, 1104), the Johannine writings are 'the most mature witness to Christ in the Early Church'.

[1] For the establishing of parallels between Paul and John, *cf.* W. Thüsing,

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Die Erhöhung und Verherrlichung Jesu im JoEv, NtAbh 21, 1/2 (1959), pp. 222f. E. Käsemann's criticism ('The decisive mistake of Thüsing's interpretation must be his total orientation on the scheme of Phil 2.6ff.', *Jesu Letzter Wille nach Johannes 17*, 1966, p. 25, n. 13) ET *The Testament of Jesus*, 1968, p. 10, n. 13) is itself dictated by his gnosticising interpretation of John's Gospel. The two interpretations of the event of Jesus as the obedience of the pre-existent one—given expression in different categories in Paul and in John—guarantee the deepest theological unity (to be presupposed in the case of every New Testament theology) of the Church's understanding of this event.

[2] The 'I will' at Jn 17.24 is uttered within a prayer, and besides this, concerns not directly the glorification of the Son, but the participation of the believers, whom the Father has given him, in the glory which the Father gave him before time began.

[3] This is not contradicted by 10.18 (nor by 10.16), where Jesus speaks of an authority (ἐξουσία) 'to lay down my life and to take it again', for in the first place, the voluntariness of the laying down of his life (as opposed to 'snatching') is given prominence; and immediately after these words, this 'authority' is characterised as the commission' (ἐντολή) of the Father. Thereby the trinitarian aspect (including pre-existence) of the work of the salvation in John is clearly set out, as is the inner nexus between laying down and taking again, which here appears as the 'power' of the freedom of love to take on the freedom of obedience—a power bestowed by the Father (7.19ff.), which can be exercised only as the Father intends.

necessity of the trinitarian love itself—that gives this prayer its unique christological παρρησία and infallibility. The decisively New Testament character of the teaching about prayer in all the Gospels derives from this christological nexus between the perfect obedience and the fact that the prayer will infallibly be heard; only on this basis can the instruction be understood. When the Synoptic Gospels speak of the unerring character of petitionary prayer, this is based in the work and prayer of Christ: one must pray in his name (with his disposition and intention) and he himself will see that the prayer is fulfilled (Jn 14.13f.); thus the prayer will infallibly be heard (15.16). He knows that the Father always hears him (11.42), and from this knowledge he can shape the prayer of those who are his, and take it up into his own prayer (17.9ff.).

John draws the nexus even closer than this, through the trinitarian mutuality in giving honour, in bringing to recognition, in 'glorifying'. The request for glorification that the obedient Son makes to the Father is born of an understanding of the obedience of the Son as the 'glorification' of the Father. This is John's transcription of the idea, common to the whole New Testament, that the 'majesty' and 'ruling authority' of the Father takes effect in the 'lowliness' of the obedient and serving Son. John introduces this idea in a readily comprehensible anthropological setting, starting from the human drive to 'make oneself respected' by others, and from the social convention to 'give honour' mutually (5.44), because each partner is concerned 'with his own honour' (7.18), i.e., acts and speaks in the last resort on the basis of his own ego ('in his own name', 5.43; 'from himself', 7.18). One may give the name of (self-)glorification (δόξα) to this lustre that the ego seeks in its presentation of itself, and demands for itself, it is precisely this that Jesus rejects: 'I do not seek my own δόξα' (8.50), in words that express, not merely one attitude among others, but his innermost self-understanding.[4] He *is* the one who in his entire existence seeks only the δόξα of the Father, the one who identifies himself with the execution of the mission, of the 'commandment' and 'commission' of the Father (10.18; 12.49, 50), with 'hearing' (8.47) and 'keeping his word' (8.55), to such an extent that the entire 'majesty' of the Father can appear localised in him. Like the 'teaching', the 'authority' which appears there, and has effect in the 'works', is not the property of the one who obeys, but of the one who sends him (12.49). Authority (the majesty of the Father in him) and poverty (as the refusal to seek his own glory) coincide. But all the utterances concerning this have a 'dynamic' that presses forwards to the decisive 'hour' that alone will justify everything that went earlier and govern it from an 'exalted' standpoint: in the 'hour', the unity of authority and poverty will become self-abandonment. The death on the Cross is a genuine dying, just as 'the grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies' (12.24), but a dying that is carried by the 'commission' and by the 'authority to lay down his life' and that goes as far as 'taking it again' (10.17), thereby 'accomplishing' the 'work' of the Father (4.34; 17.4); thus, in this final work, the dying 'gives glory' to the Father, in the ultimate and truest sense (13.31; 17.4f.). The uttermost end that the Son enters is the revelation of a beginning that could not otherwise have been made known; that is, it reveals that the whole obedience upon earth of the Son has its source, not in a spontaneous decision of his human ego to offer himself for a commission that comes from outside himself, but in a decision made absolutely in advance, which is the basis of his entire earthly existence. He is always already the one in whom 'the Father does *his* works' (14.10); and 'My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to accomplish *his* work' (4.34). This means 'accomplishing' in the strong sense of the word: not merely finishing the work, but accompanying it right to the end envisaged by the

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[4] John emphasises very strongly, not only that Jesus 'interprets' his ego thus, but that his ego is identical with his self-understanding as the one sent and proceeding from the Father: 'I know where I come from' (8.14), 'I

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know him; if I were to say, "I do not know him", I should be a liar like you; but I know him and keep his word' (8.55). 'I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me' (7.29). From the same standpoint, his knowledge about his origin can be termed both a testimony to what he has seen and as justified speech ('We speak of what we know') and acting (3.11).

absolute divine will (13.1). This end (19.28) is attained in the self-offering on the cross, in the opening of the heart and in the breathing-forth of the Spirit (19.30,34), all in the voluntariness of a going forth in obedience (14.31). At the uttermost point where the Son makes way, the majesty of the Father is to be brought into effect ('For this reason I have come to this hour: Father, glorify your name', 12.27f.). This majesty has of course already announced itself in Jesus' claim to be the word of the Father in the world, and the Father has authenticated this claim through the 'signs'—the miracles—in which it was possible to check the correctness of the paradox that the majesty of the one who commanded appeared in the lowliness of the obedience ('If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me', 10.37). The 'signs' point to the direction in which the correct interpretation lies, but at the end, signs and what is signified must come together: the final sign, to which John solemnly bears witness, is the opened heart (19.34f.), the end of the momentum of the Father's commission and of the Son's making way, the end of the distance between the highest majesty and the deepest descent (3.13,31; 6.38), but thereby also proof that the space opened up by the utterly obedient Son *suffices* to make known the whole 'name' of the Father and to make completely efficacious his sovereign power.

At this point, accordingly, the reversal occurs: 'If God is glorified in him (the Son of Man), God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once' (13.32). This is set at the beginning of the farewell discourses, like a law of the logic within the Godhead, and it is represented at the end of the discourses in the form of a prayer: 'I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work which you gave me to do; and now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory which I had with you before the world was made' (17.4–5). The request can possess the infallibility of a statement; but the statement can be made only in the intratrinitarian dialogic form of a request. This identity is based upon the fact that the obedient making way of the Son for the Father is always the expression of the eternal love of the Son, who makes way for no one other than the eternally loving Father. The uttermost distance[5]—the dimensions of which go to the extreme on both sides—proves for John the identity of obedience and love in the Son, and likewise the substantial identity of the personal love of the Son and the personal love of the Father. But since the Son has 'accomplished' his work of love in the work of obedience, it belongs, not to him, but to the Father to adduce the proof of this double identity, at a single stroke, in the glorification of the Son. The 'at once' εὐθύς, 13.32) underlines the urgency of this trinitarian logic. And the reply of the voice from above, when Jesus requests glorification in the Temple, assures the fulfilment: 'I have glorified, and I will glorify' (12.28).

Here, however, we must now simultaneously see and follow two lines, that of the dispensation (in the work of salvation) and that of the Trinity (in the unity of Father and Son). The first considers that which is expressed in the Johannine metaphor of fruitfulness, of bearing fruit, of the harvest: it shows the inner coming to an end of the will for salvation of the Father who sends and of the salvation that dwells in the obedience of the Son—and both in unity. The second line follows this unity back to its final origin, into the eternal, supramundane, and substantial unity of love between Father and Son. Along the second line lie the statements about the mutual indwelling (17.10,21; 10.30; 16.15), and hence also the supramundane participation of the Son in the glory of the Father (17.5,24); these statements become fully clear only when the glory that is common to Father and Son is understood as the radiance of their eternal love (love of the Father for the Son: 5.20; 17.24,26; love of the Son for the Father: 14.31). But these statements are in their turn only the ultimate background against which the first line, that of the dispensation of salvation, comes into light: it is precisely through his obedience that the love of the Son for the Father is to become visible for the world (14.31), and this law—obedience as the sole and sufficient proof of love—is continually impressed on the disciples (14.21, 23, and frequently). Thereby, the sphere of the Father's sovereignty over Jesus is broadened out into the world, and this broadening—finally to be universal—is the goal of Jesus' work of obedience. This means that it is 'fruitful' in accordance with its own innermost law. As the act of love, Jesus' obedience is anything but 'passive'; his making way for the Father's will is not merely temporarily a joint act with the Father (in the proclamation and the working of miracles; 5.19), but remains active even during the Passion, in that he 'draws everything to himself' on the Cross (12.32) and 'gathers' it (11.52); indeed, only on the Cross does he truly begin to produce fruit (12.24) beyond himself, in those who are his, who are his 'branches' (15.1–8). This does not take place in the manner of an anonymous law of nature; the fruit borne by the Son remains in the care and at the disposal of the Father (as the 'husbandman' who 'cuts off' and 'prunes', 15.2). Accordingly, it is not as though the 'passive action' of the incarnate Son became an 'active action' from his death onwards, as a kind of 'reward' for his having been obedient upon earth, so that he would now be installed in joint sovereignty with the Father. This (Synoptic) conception is elucidated by John so that it becomes clear that even in the 'return', in the 'going home', in the 'ascent once more' of the Son to the Father, and in his 'being with the Father'—i.e., in the removal of the distance of obedience—the dependence of the Son upon the Father is never superseded. This becomes clear, where the glorification of the Son by the Father is understood as the proof brought by the Father that every glorious fruit that has resulted from the mission of the Son has its final foundation in the perfect, absolute obedience, and gives glory to this obedience too as the perfected revelation of the eternal love of the Son. The ray of the supramundane love (17.5) does not only fall upon the obedience of the Cross to transfigure it: it breaks forth from within this obedience too.

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[5] We choose this word to express the process described by John, which is indeed materially identical with the 'kenosis' mentioned in the Philippians hymn, but presupposes an explicit trinitarian thinking and therefore merits a terminology that makes this distinction plain.

b. The Spirit will glorify me

The Father is asked to give proof that the obedience of the

Son is his eternal love for the Father, a love that itself was nothing but the act of making space for the eternal love of the Father for the Son. But the distance between the glory of love and the obedience unto death came into existence because of the world's darkness; and the identity that persisted in this distance must be exhibited to the world, so that 'the world may believe' (17.21), 'so that the world may recognise' (17.23). This work of exhibiting that identity, however, cannot be the work of the Son, who has done all that lay in his power (13.1) in his obedience; nor can it be the work of the Father, who likewise has displayed his utmost love by giving up the Son for the world (3.16; 1 Jn 4.10). Rather, the mutual love, which in both is so to speak 'exhausted', must itself open up and demonstrate itself as that which is absolutely living, creative, independently getting its own way, as the eternal fruit in God and the endless fruitfulness in the world. The 'Spirit' is this result of the mutual love, apparently an end but in truth the creative new beginning. As Spirit of the mutual love, he proceeds, like everything, like the Son himself, from the Father: the Father sends him into the world (14.16, 26). Thus the Son does not independently control the Spirit who is of both, but asks the Father to send him as the counsel and comforter of those who are his in the world. But the obedience of the Son is itself eternal love, and thus the Spirit is no less fruit of this love. He was in the Son during his earthly life (1.32; 3.34; 6.63; 7.39), and the Son breathes him back to the Father in the final act of his obedience, as the 'accomplished' mission (19.30). This breathing forth is passive in Jesus' dying. Accordingly, when Jesus asks the Father to send the Spirit, the granting lies once more already in the request (in an a priori synthesis), for in his accomplished obedience, the Son is wholly one with the Father as the possessor of the Father's love—'all that the Father has is mine' (16.15), 'all that is mine is yours, and all that is yours is mine' (17.10). So he himself can send the Spirit and cause him with authority to emanate from his perfected love (15.26; 16.7). It is explicitly stated that, for this, he must first die (7.39; 16.7; *cf.* 20.22): the Spirit of love is set free for the world where the love of the Father in the handing-over of the Son for the world has become free, where the love of the Son in his 'self-consecration' (17.19) as 'sin-offering' (1 Jn 2.2; 4.10) has reached its completion in the opening of his heart.

The Spirit is the fruitfulness of the love of Father and Son; the fruitfulness that he is, does not take effect 'of itself', but is bestowed by the Father and the Son, and also bestows itself as free gift. That which is at the sovereign disposal of Father and Son disposes also sovereignly of itself. If this is considered at a deeper level, there is no reason to wonder why in Jn 1–12 the Spirit appears as the seemingly impersonal gift that is given, but in the farewell discourses (Jn 13–16) as the personal gift that gives and acts. Precisely in his free working, the Spirit is dependent on the autonomy of the eternal love between Father and Son, and, inasmuch as he is the Spirit who is sent out into the world, he is dependent on the eternal love of Son and Father that has appeared in the obedience of the Son upon the Cross. It is only when the Spirit is understood personally that a meaning can be found in the statement that, in the revelation of the love between Father and Son, he will 'not speak from himself, but whatever he hears he will speak . . . he will take what is mine and declare it to you' (16.13–14). Therefore, when he makes this interpretative proclamation, he will 'glorify me' (16.14), and not be simply the self-glorifying absolute love of God. Jesus adds in explanation that 'that which is mine', to be interpreted by the Spirit, has been given him by the Father, so that once again the source of all love, the Father, will be glorified together with the Son through the Spirit (*cf.* 13.31).

Considered as a whole, the interpretation of the Son through the Spirit forms part of a complex embracing the 'leading' (ὁδηγεῖν) the speech and proclamation (16.13; 14.25), the 'instruction' (14.26), 'bearing witness' (15.26), and, in a deep sense, the 'remembering' (14.26)—remembering the words and deeds of Jesus that the disciples experienced, but which only now are disclosed to them in their inner depth. In this whole process lies that which Jesus calls his glorification through the Spirit (16.14), which is nothing other than the bringing to light of the love that lies in obedience, of the identity with the loving Father that lies in the distance. This is 'all truth' (16.13); outside this truth, there can be no truth for John, but only falsehood and darkness. The Spirit leads into what always 'lies ahead' (16.13), inasmuch as it lies beyond the death of Jesus; for the believer, this is the *semper magis* of the 'whole truth' or the whole love, the understanding of which can never be pure present reality for him. It is also that which is ever anew carried forth from the concealment of image and 'parable' (παροιμία) into the open (παρρησία 16.25), throughout the whole of the Church's history.

The Johannine symbolism of Spirit, water and blood shows that the truth is love, and that the one who is glorified is the one who was crucified. The Spirit *is* the 'water that wells up to eternal life' (4.14), proffered by Jesus as the spring that flows from the new temple of Ezekiel, his own body (2.21), his κοιλία (7.38), his heart that is broken open (19.34), as 'my blood' for the life of the world' (6.54, 51). To 'take what is mine' means therefore not only an external interpretation of words and deeds of the past, but the pouring out of the substance itself (which is inseparably 'word' *and* 'flesh', proclamation *and* sacrament), that is to say, the revelation of the fruitfulness that dwells within this substance. Therefore Jesus can indeed link the salvific coming of the Spirit to his own departure (16.7), but at the same time promise that he will return to the believers (in the coming of the Spirit, 14.18), together with his Father (14.23), because the distance has now been taken up into the identity and dissolved: 'Then you will grasp that I am in my Father' (14.20). He returns in his own fruitfulness, in his 'harvest' and 'fruit for eternal life' (4.35f.), in the 'plentiful fruit' brought forth by the one who hates his own life and loses it in death (12.24), in the 'fruit' that the vine bears abidingly (μένειν, 15.4) in its branches. Here, a new distance in identity opens up: between the vine and its branches, between Christ and his Church; and as the Father is glorified in the Son, so is Christ through the working of the Spirit in his Church.

The Spirit however gives the interpretation of Christ (and, in him, the Father) through the Church to 'the world', in a twofold manner that corresponds to the double nature of 'world' in John: as the world that is turned away from God and unreasonably hates the love of God (15.25), and as the world that despite everything is destined for faith and knowledge (17.21,23) through the shining of the light in the darkness (1.5). Faced with the dark world, the Spirit is the 'advocate' of Christ, who triumphantly wins his lawsuit (brought by the world). The world has lost its case in the journey that the Son makes to the Father in the Resurrection, to which it is precisely the sending of the Spirit by the Father that bears witness; the world is convicted of its sin, God's righteousness has won the victory, and the ruler of this world is condemned (16.8–11). In this lawsuit, the Spirit is simultaneously both witness and advocate, and in this unity that lays low every opposing argument he is the one who 'convicts' (ἐλέγχειν), in a fashion so objective that it is quite irrelevant whether or not the world allows itself to be persuaded of this; yet all the time his work is done with the world in view, so that it is thereby directed 'from sin to repentance', and that the 'chastisement' that is undertaken is 'educative'.[6]

In that Jesus has already brought a group of disciples before his death to a certain degree of faith, so that here darkness was already lifted to make way for light, the work of the Spirit begins with this dawning light. His witness is borne within the group of disciples: 'He will bear witness to me; and you also are witnesses, because you are (*not*: were) with me from the beginning' (15.26f.). This is not meant paratactically: when the obedience of Jesus bears fruit, there is no question of yet another external act of witnessing on the part of God (as Jesus indeed preached to his disciples as a separate person). Rather, here we have the fruit of God, which now dwells in the fruit of the world—the Church—and bears witness; hence the inseparably close link between the fraternal love within the Church and the testimony of the Spirit. The fraternal love is continually described as obedience to the new commandment of Jesus (13.34; 14.15, 24; 15.10–

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[6] F. Büchsel, art. ἐλέγχω *TNDT* II 47. J. Blank, *Krisis* (1964), pp. 101f. On the whole section: F. Mussner, 'Die joh. Parakletsprüche und die apostol. Tradition' (1961), in: *Praesentia Salutis* (1967), pp. 146–158.

17), because it takes on then the form of his own love; thus and only thus does it become for the world the testimony that cannot be refuted ('so that all may recognise', 13.35), not in virtue of its own power, but as nourished and borne by the testimony of the Spirit, in remembrance and interpretation. Thus when the Spirit 'leads' and 'shows the way' and 'teaches', this, in accordance with his own character, is initiation into love and announcement of love. When later the Holy Scripture of the new covenant becomes the document of the self-understanding of the Church in her obedience to Jesus' word, commandment and example, then it will necessarily be the 'announcement that brings to mind' what happened in divine truth under the cover of historical phenomena; the gospel of the Spirit is an 'eternal gospel' (Rev 14.6) and the 'gospel of glory' (2 Cor 4.4; 1 Tim 1.11), but again, not as letter but as 'written on the tables of hearts', 'comprehensible and legible for anyone' (2 Cor 3.3,2). Therefore the Spirit is freedom too, for the 'children of God' can stand under no 'necessity' to love out of the love of God, but can know only a 'glorious' permission to love (Rom 8.21).

c. I am glorified in them

The third aspect of Jesus' glorification has thereby already been revealed. His personal characteristic is that he has never 'sought' his own glory: so he himself cannot secure his own recognition (on the ground of what he has achieved in his obedience) in the Father or through the Spirit, nor can he himself display before the world the inner power and fullness of his loving obedience. The Father does this, by accomplishing and revealing the identity of obedience and eternal love, of Cross and Resurrection; the Spirit does this, by instituting in the Church, and so making known before the world, the unity of the love between Father and Son that was lived out in the distance of the Passion for the sake of the world—for he himself *is* this unity of love. Thus a 'dwelling' (Jn 14.23) is prepared for the Father and the Son even in the Church (and thereby in the cosmos); ultimately, this means that a dwelling is prepared for the Church (and thereby for the world) by the Son in the Father (14.2).

The 'radiance' of the trinitarian love, which has disclosed itself in the New Testament as the truth of the *kabod* of God, is a radiance that has its source only in the momentum of the obedience on the Cross. Therefore the only way for the crucified Christ to be 'glorified' in the Church (17.10) is for the *eternity* of glory to be instituted in the Church by the Spirit of Father and Son: a love that is decisively Christian (and ultimately divine and trinitarian) if it is love out of obedience to Christ, and so love as a participation in the accomplishing of the obedience of Christ. Therefore it is first of all a love that is enjoined, an ἐντολή (13.34: 15.12) that is exactly parallel to the ἐντολή that Jesus has received from the Father (15.10). Because the commission of the Father was accepted by the Son in freedom (before the world existed), because this freedom is identical with the sonship of the one whose food is to do the Father's will (4.34), Jesus expects from the disciples, in the power of the Holy Spirit that will be bestowed on them, that they cross over from the compulsion of slavery into the freedom of sonship (8.33f.) by accepting his obedience, and so attain the common knowledge and fullness of information that is proper to friends (15.14f.). 'I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father' (15.15): this unlimited revelation has its source in the free separation of the Son from the Father, in his 'descent' into the world and his making known what he has 'seen' in the presence of God (3.11f.). We have to do here with an obedience out of love for love, with an 'ought' and a 'must' that lie beyond the natural 'ought' and 'must' and that are formulated in the Johannine law as a divine necessity: 'Since I, your lord and master, have washed your feet, so you too must (ὀφείλετε) wash one another's feet' (13.14). 'By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and so we too must (ὀφείλομεν) lay down our lives for the brethren' (1 Jn 3.16). Here is the second point: the momentum of the Church's love has its origin in the momentum of the ἐντολή given to the Son by the Father, and has its goal and end in the analogous momentum of 'laying down one's life' for the brethren. How far this 'laying down' must go, is shown symbolically in the washing of the feet, and in reality on the Cross. Jesus, who 'consecrates' himself as a sacrifice for those who are his (and through them, for the world; Jn 17.19), does this so that those who belong to him may also 'be consecrated in truth' (17.17), i.e., so that through the Spirit they may share in the fullness of Jesus' disposition of sacrifice. The same thing is expressed by the requirement of losing one's life with the grain of wheat that dies, in Jesus' 'service' and 'following him' (12.25f.); and as the Son, who offers himself up thus, is glorified by the Father, so will the one who serves him 'be honoured' by the Father (τιμᾶν 12.26).

The 'laying down of one's life for the brethren' is wholly in accordance with the law of the self-giving of the Son: this means that, by virtue of its nearness to the Son, it is also placed at a distance from the 'lord and master' who has imposed the commandment. This self-giving can and must include martyrdom as the limit of the confession; Peter's martyrdom is promised to him as the way in which he will 'glorify God' (21.19). But this limit is not the central point of what is said. This centre is the participation in the destiny of the Lord; the 'hatred by the world', the expulsion from its fellowships of worship, persecution 'for the sake of my name' (15.18ff.; 16.2), because those who obey the commandment to love are 'not of the world', but are chosen out of it (15.19; 17.14, 16). This is the appropriate, normal lot, which should cause surprise to no believer, for the law that governs his life is opposed to the law of the 'world'. Here belongs too the qualitative difference of the love and the brethren from that which in the world receives this name or a similar name: this is the opening of the inmost heart for the brother, not in words but in deeds (1 Jn 3.17), and thus the attempt at total self-renunciation, at dying to all self-will.[7] It is this that is the principle of Christian fruitfulness, because this is what it is to abide in the being and the thinking of the Lord. Nothing is fruitful in the Christian sense, unless it derives from christological obedience.

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[7] On this, and on all of these analyses, *cf.* W. Thüsing, *Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, pp. 123–141; *idem*, *Herrlichkeit und Einheit. Eine Auslegung des Hohenpriesterlichen Gebets Joh 17* (1962), pp. 70–98 esp. pp. 93f. *Cf.* the note on p. 96 concerning Paul's employment of Jesus' obedience unto death in the ethics of Christian living ('Have the same disposition as Christ Jesus . . .', Phil

This obedience again and again passes over the boundary—indeed, the abyss—that opens up in John's Gospel between the kingdoms of light and darkness, love and hate, God and 'world'. When John represents the love of the brethren (and not love of neighbour in general) as the embodiment of discipleship, he does not intend a narrowing-down of the earliest Christian understanding of love, as it may be found, for example, in the Sermon on the Mount;[8] he intends to show the Church's love as the continuing existence of Christ's self-giving in love—if it is this, as it should be, it will share in the salvific fruitfulness of Christ, and indeed reveal the fruitfulness of this, in the 'greater works' (14.12) which the Church will be able to perform because the Son has returned to the Father. These works are the apostolic fruitfulness of Christ's love in the love of the Church. The fruitfulness of love twice throws a bridge that spans the abyss: 'There is no link, no transition from the fellowship of the Father and Jesus on the one side and the not yet redeemed world on the other side. Nevertheless, God redeems the world . . . because the Son stands in complete unity with (the Father), because he accepts the mission in total obedience and accomplishes it by laying down his life. Likewise, there is no link between the fellowship of Jesus' disciples . . . and those who stand outside this—yet Jesus sends his Apostles into this cosmos. Once again, this is possible only when and if these men who are sent out assent in full obedience to the unity in love of the vine of which they form a part, i.e., if they commit their life to the service of those for whom Jesus laid

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2.1–8), and also 'more radically still' by John. This parallel justifies the parallel that Thüsing has drawn earlier between the Pauline kenosis and what we have called the Johannine 'distancing'. In both, total selflessness is required for Christian living and loving ('in humility, let each one consider the other as higher than himself', Phil 2.3; 'let each one look not to his own interests', 2.4), but in such a way that 'faith' (for Paul) and the fulfilment of the commandment (for John) clearly maintain the distinction between the Lord and the disciple.

[8] So A. Nygren, *Eros und Agape*, I (1930), pp. 130ff.; see below pp. 454-458.

down his life . . . The full intensity of the fellowship which is made effective in obedience is therefore in both cases the presupposition for love's emerging beyond the respective fellowship.'[9] The disciples are promised that their prayer will be heard by the Father (14.13) on the basis of this law which applies both to Jesus and to them; naturally, this presupposes that their requests are made 'in the name' of Jesus, that is to say, in his apostolic intention that has as its aim the salvation of the world. They receive a share in the laws of the life within the Trinity, laws that lie beyond any arbitrary freedom and natural necessity, in the infallibility of love's granting their requests. The fruitfulness of the love of the brethren and the hearing of the prayer are therefore brought into the closest association with each other (15.16bc). Indeed, the high-priestly prayer in its third section (17.20–24) anticipates the fruitful transcendence of the love of the brethren out beyond into the world, but in such a way that it makes this fruitfulness dependent more strongly than ever on the embodiment within the Church of the unity in love of the Trinity ('so that they may be one, as we are one').

When Jesus says that he is 'glorified' in the Church (17.10), he sees that he has succeeded in revealing the Father's love in such a way that men have accepted it (17.6–8). The divine love has taken root on earth. And when he takes this as yet imperfect faith and consecrates it through his own sacrifice so that it too receives the same character of being sacrificed (17.17,19), his intention is not to boast in their suffering and dying, but only to bring to full effect in the world the love of the Father that consumes him.[10] Therefore all praise is referred back to the Father: 'In this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and (so) will be my disciples' (15.8). For the trinitarian love is indivisible, just as the obedience of Christ is indivisible. It is always a matter of 'everything': 'All that the Father has, is mine' (16.15); 'He has given everything into the hand of the Son' (3.35). 'The Father shows the Son all that he himself does' (5.20) and the Spirit too must lead the Church, not into some truth, but 'into all truth' (16.13).

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[9] W. Thüsing, *Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, p. 138

[10] *Cf.* Thüsing's important discussion, *ibid.* pp. 206–219.

With this threefold setting-forth of the *kabod*-momentum of the Cross of Jesus—through the Father, through the Spirit, through the Church—as *kabod*-glory, the entire horizon of the meaning of the cipher δόξα in the New Testament has been staked out. Δόξα signifies, not various realities, but one single reality in different aspects. This single reality is disclosed, in the final interpretation by John, as the eternal trinitarian love that has come into the world. It is true that one passage speaks of the eternal glory of the Son with the Father before the world was made, when the Son asks the Father that he may receive this once again (17.5); but the context of John's Gospel as a whole shows that this is no mere restoration of an original state, but rather the integration of the obedient love, lived out in the separation undertaken for the sake of bringing salvation, into the original intimacy and 'perfect joy' of the dwelling with one another of Father and Son. And the final request, drawing the Church and the redeemed world too into the light of the trinitarian love, belongs essentially to this integration: 'Father, I desire that those whom you have given me may be where I am, to see the glory which you have given me, *for* you loved me before the foundation of the world' (17.24). The conjunction 'for' shows that the glory lay in the love of the Father, and those who belong to the Son are to see him consumed by the love of the Father, which is possible only if they themselves are consumed by the love of the Son. The individual aspects shade off from this ultimate point: something of this ultimacy shines already through the earthly existence of Jesus, and can be recognised by the eyes of faith in a genuine objective perception (αἴσθησις): 'We have seen his glory' (1.14); 'he revealed his glory (at Cana)' (2.11), 'the glory of God' is 'seen' in the miracle of Lazarus (11.4, 40); yet during this period, Jesus is 'not yet glorified' (7.39). Thus the δόξα remains eschatological, yet is present proleptically in the lowliness and hiddenness. And just as there is an objective anticipation of δόξα as glory, in the momentum of the obedience of Jesus and in the sublimity of his whole manifestation, so there is a subjective casting back of the light of the publicly revealed glory, from the Easter faith of the Church, on to the hiddenness of the one who humbled himself. 'The hour is coming, and is already here' (4.23; 5.25; 16.32), speaks of both at once, looking forward with the earthly Jesus and backwards from the period of the Church. At the beginning of this chapter we pointed to the various gradations to be found within one fundamental meaning, from lordliness in power (in the creation) through sublimity (in the work of reconciliation) to glory (in the definitive breaking-through of redemption), and similarly to the gradation (with various transitions, but a definite gradation that must not be flattened) between momentum ('power') and radiance ('light'). Thus δόξα remains a 'transcendental' of the divine revelation, present in all phases and layers. As was done for the theology of the old covenant, however, we must now draw out the concept from its formal abstract significance and fill it out with the content of the event of revelation that concretises 'glory' in the New Testament.

To do this, we have to leave again the exclusively Johannine finishing point, which we have chosen as our starting point, and to bring into the discussion the full range of the theologies of the New Testament.[11]

One final point becomes clear from this present chapter: the glorification of Christ is at the deepest level a question of the *truth* of Christianity. The threefold glorification by the Father, the Spirit, and the Church of his obedience that went as far as the Cross is each time the proof of what this obedience truly was. If the crucified is not risen, then 'your faith is in vain' (ματαία 1 Cor 15.17). From this point, one may say that the central concern of a theological aesthetics must be the correspondence between obedience and love, between self-emptying into hiddenness and being raised up into manifestness ('justified in the Spirit, seen by the angels, proclaimed to the peoples, believed on in the world, exalted in glory', 1 Tim 3.16); for in this way theological aesthetics would be based in the last resort on the perfect proportion which Christ, through his obedience, has established once for all between heaven and earth and between the will of the Father in Heaven and his own will on earth, a proportion which is continually shown forth in the interpretative vindication by the Father, the Spirit, and the Church. The centre and the proper object of a doctrine concerning what is theologically beautiful would then lie in this equilibrium, brought about through creative obedience, between God and the world and thereby between the (Old Testament) archetype (God) and the creaturely image and likeness (man); the theologically beautiful would itself include both the theological truth (in the sense of the Old Testament and of John) and hence also the goodness (which lies in the justification of God in man and of man in God). Such an aesthetics would be explicitly christocentric.—Against this, it must be said that Christ himself nowhere *controls* his own glorification, that is to say, the relationship between his obedience to the Father and his own glory, but once for all entrusts himself, in what concerns his glorification, in prayer to the Father, from whom the Spirit goes forth into Church and world to accomplish conviction, vindication and glorification. One may say moreover that the obedience of Christ never reflects on its own value nor on its appropriate outcome; this does not mean that Christ on earth had no consciousness of his coming exaltation, but rather that his concern was not for the relationship between the two stages of obedience and exaltation, but only for his transparency, to the Father and for the Father. This transparency realises itself both in his claim and in his authority, which are the authorised representation of the Father, and in his whole poverty and in his self-abandonment, which free the whole space for the Father to act in him. Both are one: but only the second can show that the first is genuine, as love. The glory of the Father can make itself 'substantially' present through both in the incarnate Son.[12] In this way theological aesthetics is transposed from christocentrism into a final (trinitarian) theocentrism, in which of course the Holy Spirit too receives a central place as the one who effects the mutual indwelling in love between Christ and the Father: the Holy Spirit is the personal identity of the personal distinction in the Godhead.

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[11] III/2,1, pp. 133ff., 189ff.

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[12] *Cf.* Casel, *Das christliche Kultmysterium* (4th edn. 1960), pp. 178f.

As we now go on to describe the contents of the cipher 'glory' in the New Testament, it is necessary to take the path from theocentrism to christocentrism: this is the best guarantee of the theological character of this aesthetics, which would run the risk of sticking fast in a quasiphilosophical teaching on proportion, if we took the opposite path.[13]

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[13] From this starting point, it would be possible to offer a summary criticism of the various theologies of glory that were presented in Vols. II–IV. But in so doing one must bear in mind that it is frequently the case that a philosophical (cosmological-musical) teaching on proportion has its final yard-stick in a christological teaching on proportion, and that this (together with themes from the philosophical teaching on transcendentals) undergoes self-transcendence into a trinitarian-theocentric teaching on revelation, as e.g. in Boethius, Bonaventure, Thomas, Nicholas of Cusa, Pascal.

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2. THE SUBSTANCE OF GLORY

a. Essence and word

In John's unfolding of the trinitarian kernel of the New Testament δόξα Christ is revealed as the one who holds the keys of this δόξα, as the 'lord of glory' (κύριος τῆς δόξης, 1 Cor 2.8). In order to understand how this centre *is* the centre, however, it is necessary for us to measure off the periphery: hence, in what follows, we attempt to encompass the fullness of the contents of the cipher δόξα—Paul likes to speak of the 'fullness of glory' (Rom 9.23; Eph 3.16; Phil 4.19; Col 1.27)—and to concentrate our attention upon the midpoint. In all this we need to show that even for us in our own period this cipher remains a living, comprehensible, and indeed indispensable reality, which in no sense has to be demythologised. Because John both includes and interprets the whole event of salvation in this cipher, many aspects are integrated into it which are not explicitly termed δόξα or δοξάζειν in the rest of the New Testament; the light hidden in them is thereby brought to shine forth. It is no less true that the increasingly diverse interpretations of δόξα in the age of Judaism, which—as heavenly glory, cosmic glory, and eschatological messianic glory—fall into place around a new centre. The centring in the New Testament of all δόξα in creation and salvation history upon the inmost focus can be seen at 2 Cor 4.6: 'It is the same God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts, to give us the knowledge of the glory of God upon the *face* of Christ.' Here at the end, there stands no longer 'word', no longer 'image', but 'face': a face that is absolutely certainly a human face (as indeed before this, a ray of God's glory lay upon Moses' face; 2 Cor 3.13,15), but the face of the Kyrios (3.18), that is substantially his as the pre-existent (2 Cor 8.9) Son.[1]

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[1] 'This concept characterises the element in Christ that truly makes him Christ, his divinity': H. Kittel, *Die Herrlichkeit Gottes. Studie zu Geschichte und Wesen eines neutest. Begriffs* (1934), p. 236.

1. But how can we get a nearer understanding of what is said to appear upon his face? Before we begin, we must remember that the Son, who reveals the Father as his 'word', is essentially a word that prays to the Father, making requests of him only in adoration, and thanking him. He is not 'word' in the sense that he substantially controls the object of his utterance, for 'the Father is greater than I' (Jn 14.28). The 'prayer without ceasing' (1 Thess 5.17) of Christians is an attempt to imitate the attitude of the Word. It is necessary first to clear away all words about God's glory that merely make dispassionate statements, in order to make space for the unique word that, through absolute obedience, makes itself the place where the glory may give utterance to itself. Everything else, whether word or deed or miracle, is sign (σημεῖον) and parable (παροιμία). H. Kittel is correct to say that the employment of the cipher in Paul is 'purchased at the cost of a degree of unclarity never before attained'; Paul 'grasps so boldly at what is ineffable, that it is for him not only a central concept, but at the same time a boundary concept'. He transmits, as the concrete experience of the grace of God that has been bestowed on us, 'the most striking impression of the infinitude of the Omnipotent'; and thus, when compared with all the earlier uses of the concept, the expression 'the glory of God' here becomes 'at once the most rich in content, and something that transcends all content'.[2] Δόξα is the divinity of God as it is freely made known. The fact that it is *made known* means that it has placed itself within an expressive form; but the fact that *it* is made known means that in the same act it bursts through every form. This act of breaking-through such finite bonds makes God, in all religion and mysticism other than those of the Bible, the ineffable, before whom words can only stammer and must in the end (in a finally apophatic theology) be silent. The paradox of Biblical revelation is that the ineffable *as such* has placed itself in the word: this proclaims its sublime freedom and power, but also the terrifying danger that the word, where it ceases to be a word of prayer, may forget the ineffability of

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[2] *Ibid.*, p. 238.

God and absolutise itself as a human *logos* in philosophical logic or philology.[3] At the same time, the intellectual creature (upon whom a ray of the eternal glory rests: Ps 8.6) bears in itself something of this structure of absolute being: its free self-expression and self-giving is able to reveal itself and bestow itself, but always in such a manner that the coastlines of what is shown and expressed remains untouched—the inalienability of freedom, and thereby the inexhaustibility of the personal mystery. We must follow the path of this creaturely 'image' in order to reach the archetype. The Bible is wholly a word from God, a word that is determined, that encounters and challenges; yet the Bible is a word from the ineffable, a word that endlessly revolves around its subject in periphrases. No one has ever seen God (Jn 1.18; 6.46; 1 Jn 4.12; 1 Tim 6.16), apart from the Son who is in the bosom of the Father; it is always the radiance of the unutterable that we shall see upon the face of the Son (Jn 17.24; Rev 22.4) and *thus* see the ineffable 'as he is' (1 Jn 3.2), 'face to face' (1 Cor 13.12). The spoken words of Jesus fall silent long before he has uttered what matters most to him (Jn 16.12); with what 'words' will the Spirit interpret this to the disciples? Paul receives at the origin of revelation 'unutterable words, that a man is forbidden to utter' (2 Cor 12.4), not because of a cultic prohibition, but because of a law of being. The thanksgiving that the Apostle makes to God for his 'unutterable gifts' ἀνεκδιήγητος δωρεά, 2 Cor 9.15) will cover the entirety of the revelation of Christ. Thus there exist even in the New Testament analogies to the cultic 'initiation' (Phil 3.12,15; Heb

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[3] This makes it possible to understand the *cultic* character of the verbal form of the entire New Testament. If Jesus himself is the praying Word, then the narrative about him must also be received in the prayer (of the community) and understood, mediated, and made one's own in the attitude of prayer. The letters of the Apostles are through and through the expression of the word of prayer—they spring from prayer, are saturated with prayer, and are spoken into the situation of the prayer of the communities that receive them. The Acts of the Apostles is evidence for the Spirit, who is present only in the praying Church, and the Revelation of John is shot through with prayers throughout: even the eschatological event of judgment is accompanied, commented upon and received by the eternal prayer of Heaven.

2.10; 5.9, etc.), but the mystery into which one is initiated is a single mystery, that of the love between Father and Son (Jn 17.23).[4] So one must not pay attention one-sidedly to the form of the Bible as word, but rather above all to the 'approach-roads' to God indicated by the Bible: childlikeness (which, in its angels, 'always sees the face of God', Mt 18.10), simplicity (to which alone God's indivisible simplicity is revealed, Mt 11.25), peace ('that transcends all concepts', Phil 4.7; *cf.* 1 Jn 3.20; Lk 19.38; Rom 2.10), prayer (that yearns in the Spirit 'with unutterable groanings' for the glory of God, Rom 8.26), joy (which already now is 'unutterable' and 'glorified', as it looks to the definitive gift of God, 1 Pet 1.8; *cf.* 1 Thess 2.20), thanksgiving for God's 'unutterable gift of grace' (2 Cor 9.15), insight (but an insight that understands that God's love will 'always lie beyond every insight' of man, Eph 3.20). Here is the 'superabundant' fulfilment of what was in the Old Testament: 'Can *you* find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty? It is higher than heaven—what can you do? Deeper than Sheol—what can you know? Its measure is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea' (Job 11.7–9). One can never afford to forget that the Bible continually passes over into poetic diction, and comes to its close, in the last book, entirely in images: in the praise of Heaven sung 'without break, day and night', to the accompaniment of 'harps of God' (Rev 15.3, 2), in streams of grace, trees of life, 'smoke of the divine glory and power' (15.8), 'golden vessels full of incense' (5.8), the radiance of all the precious stones of the world and the perfect geometry of the 'holy city' (21.15ff.), and also in frescos of battles and disasters, in one of the most grandiose laments of world literature, the lament over the overthrow of Babylon (18.9–24). And in the first books, the world of images created by Jesus in his parables spreads forth, along with the images that clothe the narrative of his infancy and much of his work and suffering, as the most adequate expression for these. There will never be a theology that gives a fully valid translation into abstract concepts of the dimensions of poetry and image in

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[4] J. Huby, *Mystiques johannique et paulinienne* (1946).

Scripture; not because God's word is exclusively poetry and pictorial language, but above all because the verbal form of the Bible is the only proper form for all that is said by God's Son and Word concerning God the Father, and for all that is indwelt by God's divinity (or glory); it lies beyond both prose and poetry and all the 'literary genres' of which it makes use as human speech.

2. The God of the Bible is neither a *tremendum* nor a *fascinosum*, but first of all an *adorandum*.[5] He is and remains the unutterable first origin from which everything that exists, everything that is good and full of grace, comes forth—he is the Father who gives only good gifts (Lk 11.13). But, as the one who lives and is free, he is present in his creatures and gifts in such a way that he distances himself from them in order to leave them a space of freedom. Therefore his power, divinity, wisdom and radiant majesty fill the universe, and can be perceived by intellectual beings (Rom 1.19,20,23; 1 Cor 1.21); yet, at the same time, they permit the freedom to recognise God's majestic freedom or not (Rom 1.21). As the 'holy one', God makes known especially his divinity in its supramundane character separated from the world; as the 'glorious one', he makes known both his 'being present' in the world and, united to this, his sovereign superiority to the world. It is precisely this interplay of the immanence of God's power and wisdom in all that exists in the world, and his transcendence over the creatures (as the free creator who remains free), who thereby receive a space for their own existence and freedom, that is the foundation of the biblical δόξα; and precisely this free elevation above what is not God gives God again the freedom to reveal himself in his free divinity personally—in the 'Word'—to what is not God. Thus the distinction here is not one between a ground and what it grounds (for a ground can express itself completely in what is based upon it), but rather one between free creation (as the setting-free of existence that is other than God) and the free gift of God (who is the foundation of its being) to the free

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[5] Rev 3.9; 4.10; 5.14; 7.11; 11.16; 14.7; 15.4; 19.4; *cf.* 19.10; 22.8, 9.

creature. Theology has termed this the distinction between the 'natural' and the 'supernatural'; it is never wholly reducible. As was suggested above,[6] one may call the immanence of God's divinity in the world his 'sovereignty' or 'majesty'; one may term his permanent free elevation above the world his 'sublimity' or 'dignity', to which 'honour' and adoration are due; and one may finally term the free turning of his personal divinity to the creature his 'glory' in the strongest sense. This glory can further take on ascending stages in the dispensation of salvation, from God's address, which in him will always be creatively active (*dabar* as word and deed), through the creation of his image (εἰκών, ὁμοίωμα) which takes root in the created order, to the definitive expression (χαρακτήρ) of his invisible 'face' (*panim*) in the visible face of Christ.

There is a succession of variations between the majesty of the creator in the circle of his creatures, and the sublimity of his elevation above them which leaves him fully free to express himself to them; this makes it possible to subsume everything under the same cipher of δόξα. Besides this, at every stage there is an interpenetration (*circumincessio*) of the various aspects or 'properties' of God, which are not separable but can certainly be distinguished from one another, and must be so separated. We have already seen how God's *holiness* is distinct from his glory, although this too (in his free 'sublimity') points to God's inability to be mingled with the created world. Glory and *power* are close to each other;[7] and not only the 'eternal power' (Rom 1.20) that displays itself in the corruptible creatures of time, but also—and much more so—God's far more astonishing power to give comprehensible and appropriate expression to the utter otherness of his being in his supernatural 'word'-revelation for the world. This means that, without ceasing to be the one who is unfathomable, he can cross over the boundaries of the human 'search' for God 'in the hope that they might feel after him and find him' (Acts 17.27), and can establish a valid and finally definitive word concerning himself. This power that dwells in the glory is most clearly seen where God's revelation takes account of, and overcomes, man's guilty turning-away, which had led to the 'loss of δόξα' for all sinners' (Rom 3.23): this he does through the superior power of his grace (Rom 5.15, 17,20f.), but in such a way that this power of grace is displayed in the event of the Cross as the sheer momentum of the judgment over sin. God shows that this sheer momentum is at the same time the absolute power of glory, when he, as 'the Father of glory', through 'the power of the force of his might' raises Jesus, who has died for all sinners, from the dead, so that thus he makes known to us 'the immeasurable greatness of his power' (Eph 1.17–20).[8] And if 'God's wisdom and God's power' reveal themselves as united in the Cross and Resurrection (1 Cor 1.24), then glory and *wisdom* too stand together and interpenetrate one another (as the tradition coming from the 'Book of Wisdom' already said), especially when it is a question of growing in wisdom to the knowledge of glory (Col 1.27f.; Eph 1.18f.; *cf.* Rev 7.12). The 'manifold wisdom of God' (Eph 3.10) in his plan of salvation is materially one with the manifold forms in which his glory is present. Finally, glory and *righteousness* (or being justified by God) must also penetrate one another, because God shows himself in his genuine sovereignty in the truest sense only when through his righteousness he frees those destined by nature and *a fortiori* by sin to be slaves, who had in fact been reduced to servitude, so that they might obtain 'the freedom of the glory of the children of God' (Rom 8.21): 'those whom he (God) justified, he also glorified' (Rom 8.30).[9]—This survey of the forms taken by the expression of God's divinity only confirms what was to be expected from the start: God is seen in his uniqueness only through the revelation of his free grace—not only in the presence of the creatures, but for them and in them. This uniqueness is demonstrated especially by leading the free creatures to a free response to his glory, to the 'glorification' (δοξάζειν) of the 'glory' of God in the same limitless self-giving with which God has held nothing back in giving a share in what is most utterly his own (what is most 'divine').

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[6] *Cf.* above, p. 242.

[7] δύναμις (κράτος) and δόξα: Jude 24f.; 1 Pet 4.11; 5.11; Rev 1.6; 4.11; 5.12, 13.

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[8] The 'gospel of the glory of Christ' (2 Cor 4.4) which proclaims this salvific deed of God's power is itself as such filled with the same victorious power that is proper to God (Rom 1.16). On this, *cf.* H. Schlier, 'Doxa bei Paulus als heilsgeschichtlicher Begriff', in: *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus intern. cath. 1961* (Rome 1963), p. 51.

[9] On the close relationship between 'glory' and 'righteousness', cf. J. Jervell, *Imago Dei. Gen 1,26f im Spätjudentum, in der Gnosis und in den paulinischen Briefen* (1960), pp. 180ff. 'In the Kabod of Yahveh radiance, power and righteous character are inextricably blended', A. M. Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ* (1948), p. 14.

3. Nevertheless, in conclusion we must maintain that God who reveals himself in all the properties of his being, God who in his revelation is beyond human thought and utterance, has in his absolute and sovereign freedom always the freedom to utter a word. The fact that this word finally demonstrates itself in Jesus Christ to be a word of prayer and dialogue does not alter anything in this fundamental statement, which guards against a double misunderstanding of the divine ineffability: against the *replacement* of the word, as self-expression of the divine being, by a mere reflection, a merely surrounding glory, that would have the same kind of relation to God as the Nous to the One (Τὸ Ἕν) in Plotinus; and against the *identification* of the word with an ultimately wordless *presence* of the ineffable in the world, as the Judaism of late Antiquity more and more tended to do with the theology of the *shekina*, by replacing the genuine word with the 'name' of God, and the name, which likewise was no longer utterable, with the presence. Finally even the *shekina*, which no longer dwelt in the new Temple, became an eschatological-messianic concept. The first version, which neutralises the word (λόγος) to a secondary reflection (δόξα) of the ineffable, can be found in Philo, in dependence on the hellenistic idea of emanation. Here Moses says to God, 'I take your glory to be the powers that stand around you as your bodyguard'.[10] This breathes fresh life into the archaic Greek meaning of the word δόξα as 'opinion' and mere 'mental conception': the 'glory' is the crown of the speculations that stand around the divine

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[10] *De Monarchia* 45 (ed. Cohn V II, 17, quoted following H. Kittel, op. cit., p. 175).

essence;[11] the dialectical character of the glory on Sinai can be exhibited anew in its questionable nature.[12] The Neo-Platonic way of emphasising God's unfathomability is able to persist from Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Dionysius into Palamitism with its separation between the essence and the properties or forms of expression of God.

But both replacements of the biblical Word underestimate God's freedom to create for himself a valid expression of his incomprehensibility. The starting-point of their thinking is in extra-biblical models, which have a validity when applied to the relationship to God of the natural man (Acts 17.27), and perhaps for the stage of the 'glory in creation', but fall quite short of the greater incomprehensibility of a making-known of himself by God. 'Word' expresses God's power to disclose what is within himself for others—this is free, and thus it was hitherto concealed—and to make it accessible to them as a gift. In this comprehensive (analogous) and not univocally philological sense, God's salvation history and its writing-down is God's word.[13] And it therefore follows that God does not ask first for sight, but for (listening) faith, from one person from another—hence the prohibition of images in the Old Testament; but that, at the same time, he attests the credibility of his words in deeds (the *magnalia Dei*, above all the freeing of the people 'with mighty arm' from the servitude of Egypt). In this active word, God discloses himself far more deeply than in any image that he might have sketched or constructed, for such images can offer only an intramundane glory as the symbol of the glory of God that is depicted. If God has achieved for himself his fundamental praise through his Word, then human 'images' (for example, in 'religious art') can take their place in the chorus of God's praise, but they remain in the truth only as long as they take their direction from the primary image of the divine self-expression. In this sense, the Wisdom literature can place σοφία and λόγος in the closest relationship to the δόξα of God, without so hypostatising one of them that it would no longer be the free self-expression of the God who acts and offers himself (for the covenant). It is only from this point that the bridge leads across to the New Testament's expression that God's Word becomes, in Jesus Christ, man and thereby 'image': the prohibition of images in the Old Testament had passed over the sphere of images and left them out, in order that God might of himself set up his valid image in the world.[14]

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[11] *In Exod.* II 45 (=24, 16a), Loeb, Suppl. Vol. II, p. 89.

[12] The 'appearance of the glory of the Lord' (εἶδος τῆς δόξης τοῦ κυρίου) is like the fire, but is not itself fire. In the epiphany, God indicates only how he wills to offer himself to the power of the one who sees to perceive him, and not how he is in himself (τοῦ θεοῦ δεικνύντος δσπερ ἐβούλετο δοκεῖν εἶναι, *In Exod.* II 47 (=24, 17), Loeb, Suppl. Vol. II, p. 93). *Cf.* De Somn. 232: God indeed appears as he is to the soul bound to the body, but by presenting himself to its imagination under foreign forms, which however are seen not as an εἰκών, but as the ἀρχέτυπος (Loeb, V 419f.).

[13] In order to maintain the full breadth of this concept, one need only recall the fundamental idea of W. von Humboldt that the individual word cannot be understood as an isolated semantic construction, but only in a context of expression. *A fortiori*, God's word requires the context both of his creation and of his salvation history and finally his synthesising in the ultimate incarnate word Jesus Christ, in his theandric person, his historical life, death and rising. This at once multiple and unified context of expression is the presupposition of the theological understanding of any single biblical word. It is not, accordingly, a question of reducing the context of expression to the horizon of understanding of 'modern man', although it is essential that this be taken into account. This horizon of understanding cannot absolutise itself and pose ultimate ('demythologising') demands to

b. Appearing and image

1. The fact that God's Word became flesh, thus changing from a predominantly audible word that required the ear of

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God's word, but must rather seek the approach to his 'living ineffability' in the whole word-form which God has chosen and established for self-expression.

[14] On the questions of the present chapter, *cf.* in Vol. II the presentations of Denys (pp. 144–210, for the revelation of the God who remains mystery), of Anselm (pp. 211–259, for the freedom of the revelation and for the form of the word as prayer), and of Bonaventure (pp. 260–362 for the christological-trinitarian interpretation of the word); in Vol. III/1, what is said about Plato and Plotinus, and especially what is said about the problematic of immanence and transcendence in Nicholas of Cusa (pp. 552–592).

obedience to a visible word, is not without preparation in the Old Testament, inasmuch as the invisible 'I' of God spoke and established for himself a quasi-form in the perceptibility of his *kabod*, wherever and however this appeared or was conceptualised. Israel never confused this quasi-form with a mythical self-presentation on the natural level of the God who was exalted above the world; always, it remained a signal that pointed to the decisive thing, the sovereign Word of the all-holy God.[1] If the Old Testament position was to be left behind, without thereby in any way being sold short, then the 'appearing' of the Word, its 'becoming an image' in the visibility of human 'flesh' (i.e., of human existence), must comprise within itself the full freedom and the full personality of the active Word of Yahweh. In the last analysis, it is only the mystery of the Trinity that makes it possible to conceive of such an act of transcending without loss: the Word of God (the Father) is so personal that it itself is a person; but as God it is so essentially one with the Father, and as man so transparent to the Father in obedience, that it becomes the visible presence of God's acting and speaking in the world.

If it is necessary to draw on new, hellenistic categories to express this act of transcending, this can happen only by their being uprooted from their own native soil and prepared in such a way that they may express what is unique in the Christ event. In themselves, categories such as 'appearing' and 'image' do not have the potency necessary to express a personal act that is most intimately a free act. There are of course 'appearances', theophanies or epiphanies of gods, within paganism, whether unique and unexpected or regulated within the cult;[2] the latter may take the form of symbolic signs, or else be total.[3] But these nowhere have the momentum of a divine word that demands the repentance of the heart and faith. In a derivative usage, characteristics and titles that belong to epiphanies pass over to rulers.[4] If the concept of image (εἰκών) receives a central significance through Plato's doctrine of ideas, the dominant idea in late Platonism[5] (first of all in Iamblichus' book about the Mysteries) is that the various kinds and grades of gods can present themselves bodily in clear and shining images; in Proclus, the god retains the freedom to embody himself in this form or that according to the mystic's capacity to perceive it, for in these final, post-Christian types of Platonism it is principally a magical mysticism that is the subject. And here everywhere there are elements of brilliance and light in the foreground. The word 'epiphany' and related words (φάσις, rising of the stars; φαντασία, φάντασμα, appearance; φανερόν, visible; φανερόω I appear; etc.) belong to the Indogermanic root *bhā*: to shine, sparkle.

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[1] III/2,1, pp. 34f.

[2] On what follows, see E. Pax, *EPIPHANEIA. Ein religionsgeschichtlicher Beitrag zur biblischen Theologie*, in: Münch. theol. St. I, 10 (1955), with bibliography.

[3] The tragedians know of this, and we find it again later in the Alexandrian lyric poets, and yet later in the hellenistic diviners of Egypt; on the last, see Vol. IV, pp. 235ff.

In the New Testament, the word 'epiphany' is used exceedingly seldom. Paul uses it once, to characterise the return of Christ more intensely (Christ will destroy Satan 'through the epiphany of his parousia', 2 Thess 2.8), and the Pastorals take up this creative use of language that comes from Paul's happy inspiration,[6] using the word five times—predominantly for the second coming of Christ (1 Tim 6.14; 2 Tim 4.1, 8; Tit 2.13), but also for his first coming (2 Tim 1.10)—until finally the language of worship differentiated between 'epiphany' for the first coming and 'parousia' for the second. But the word does not stand in isolation: it is set in a wide net of verbs and nouns of appearing, showing, (self-) disclosure, seeing, which in part have the same root (e.g., the frequent φανεροῦν especially in its Johannine use as the staple expression for God's appearing on earth; Tit 2.11,

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[4] Bibliography in E. Pax, op. cit. (n. 2 above), p. 50 n. 122, p. 51 n. 128. The word was 'consciously borrowed from the language of the cult' for these purposes, and thereby underwent 'a lowering of its register . . . thus, in the cult of the rulers, the term *epiphanes* has not at all the significance that is often attributed to it. It is not possible to speak of 'an eschatological tension and cosmological breadth' as inherent in . . . the cult of the rulers and its epiphanies and parousias' (*ibid.*, pp. 56–57).

[5] For Philo, see above, pp. 270ff., nn. 9–11.

[6] Thus E. Pax, op. cit., pp. 260, 267.

'God's grace' has 'appeared', ἐπεφάνη), and in part have other roots (such as the words for 'revelation', ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι, γνωρίζειν, and δηλοῦν, or the word for showing, δεικνύναι, which always refers back to God when used with 'works' or 'signs'; finally, the expression of becoming visible, ὤφθη).

The central point around which these words revolve is the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word; in Paul, this is expressed, using the apocalyptic word-group, more as a revealing of the final mystery, which was hitherto kept hidden in God, while in John it is set forth, using the word-group proper to epiphanies, more as an appearing of the divine life and light. For none of the New Testament writers does this involve an isolated emphasis on those events in Jesus' life that could possibly be compared in terms of the history of religions with the epiphanies of the gods—the baptism and the transfiguration—that would separate them from the other historical events; they are never termed epiphanies, and it is only at a secondary stage[7] that they are brought into relation with the theophanies of the Old Testament. When the Incarnation brings a new emphasis on 'seeing',[8] this does not relegate 'hearing' to the background; the reason for this can be given neither in purely philological nor psychological terms, but only theologically, for what appears and becomes visible is in its entirety[9] 'word': everything in the one who appears is an intensified address, as grace and as demand. If the theophany in the *kabod* in the old covenant was the prelude and signal of the coming revelation of the Word, then in the new covenant 'the epiphany itself' demands 'the decision',[10] because appearing and word fundamentally coincide. Even in the presence of the appearances of the risen Jesus, doubts are possible,[11] and this is a sign that they require

[7] Only Luke gives a role to the Old Testament *doxa* in the transfiguration of Christ.

[8] *Cf.* high points such as Lk 10.24 par. (Jn 8.56; 1 Pet 1.10f.); Jn 1.14, 39; 19.35; 1 Cor 9.1; 1 Jn 1.1, etc.

[9] *Cf.* my 'Gott redet als Mensch', in: *Verbum Caro, Skizzen zur Theologie* I (1960), pp. 73–99.

[10] E. Pax, op. cit., p. 197.

[11] Mt 28.17; Mk 16.11, 13f.; Lk 24.11, 41.

faith in the very act of seeing; and this is why John can demand an act of faith (for the second generation) even in the condition of not seeing—for ultimately the acceptance of the word who appears is more (for all generations) than a physical act of looking at an object, but is rather a 'knowing' in which hearing and seeing are integrated to form an inseparable unity.[12]

The 'epiphanies' of the Word become man, precisely because they generally place men before the decision of faith, almost never take on the character of the 'superhuman' which was proper to the *kabod* of Sinai (or the epiphany in the storm) in the old covenant, with its overwhelming momentum. This momentum can be felt at the transfiguration, where the aim is not the decision of the witnesses, but the revelation of the hidden personality of the one who now goes forward to his suffering; at Damascus, where it is a case of the absolute act of grace in the choice of Saul, who is chosen without being asked (cf. 1 Cor 9.16f.); and at the overwhelming of Antichrist through the eschatological epiphany of the Lord (2 Thess 2.8–10). When the *kabod* of Sinai is called to mind—the 'blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers entreat that no further words be spoken to them', 'so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear"' (Heb 12.18–21)—this is not in order to outline the image of a corresponding fulfilment in the New Testament. This image is rather transposed completely into the spiritual realm, into what lies beyond this world: instead of Sinai, the new *kabod* is the 'heavenly Jerusalem' as the 'city of the living God', inhabited by the angels, the souls of the righteous who have been made perfect, and by Jesus, the mediator who brings the new covenant and the sprinkling (of the whole city) with his blood (*ibid.*, 12.22–24). The final epiphany and δόξα of God's Word spreads forth from the event of the Cross.[13]

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[12] Jn 16.30; 1 Jn 5.20. There lies here undoubtedly the problem of the relationship between the 'eyewitnesses' and those who believe through their word (on this, *cf.* Vol. I, pp. 308ff., 343ff.). But even this difference must finally be relativised (though not removed), as has been shown in Vol. I.

[13] See below, pp. 292, 368f., concerning what is said in Hebrews about 'seeing'.

In the whole of the New Testament, the chief accent lies on the inter-relation of revelation and love. The revelation may be termed epiphany, or receive some other name, but it is the perfect self-gift of the 'goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour' (Tit 3.4): this alone is the content of the audible and visible Word, to which man replies with the gift of himself in loving faith. Here it is the first epiphany, as yet hidden, which kindles in the believers the active love which is also a yearning for the second epiphany. To name only the passages which speak explicitly of 'epiphany': already in 2 Thess 2.10 we read that those who have not made their own 'the love of the truth', which would have saved them, will 'perish' at the return of the Lord; 1 Tim 6.11ff. urges on the disciple a life in 'righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness and gentleness' that looks to the epiphany of the Lord. At 2 Tim 1.7ff., God's summons to a life of testimony in divine power, love and self-control is revealed simultaneously with the first appearing of Jesus: on the basis of the work of redemption which he has achieved, this life of testimony can develop in the security of hope in 'that Day', the second coming (1.12). 'Epiphany' means here the historical appearance of Jesus, but 'this does not belong only to the past: it is essentially orientated upon the second appearing, which it requires for its own disclosure',[14] and the time that lies between the two appearings is filled by the Christian struggle for the gospel. 2 Tim 4.1–8 clearly understands the Apostle's life of testimony as a life that has its goal in 'being offered up' (4.5), based on a 'love' of Jesus' epiphany (4.8). According to Tit 2.13f., it is a yearning waiting (προσδεχόμενοι) for the 'blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us'.[15] It would seem that the purpose of the first appearing with God's self-giving on the

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[14] E. Pax. op. cit., p. 234.

[15] *Cf.* in this connection the 'longing expectation' of the creation that looks to the definitive glorification (ἀπεκδέχεσθαι), Rom 8.19, 23, 25, and 1 Cor 1.7; Gal 5.5; Phil 3.20; Heb 9.28.

Cross was to change the existence of those who have 'seen' this into a flame that burns for the final appearing: 'Maranatha! Come, Lord!' (1 Cor 16.22; Rev 22.17).

In the new Testament as a whole, it is the Johannine understanding of the epiphany (whatever may be the modifications in the terminology) that has the final word: it is the 'Word' and the act of God's love for the world (Jn 3.16; 1 Jn 3.16) that has entered the visibility of the existence of Jesus from the 'unapproachable light' of God the Father (1 Tim 6.16). Nothing else has become visible in this epiphany. This understanding is unique to Christianity; it stands alone over against the contents of the mythological and philosophical concepts of epiphany in the ancient world, and indeed against the idea of a universally theophanous character of the world's existence; but it fulfils the promises of the old covenant, which gave the prospect of the revelation of God's glory in the end time.

The six-line early Christian hymn at 1 Tim 3.16 seeks to bear witness explicitly to the unanimous (ὁμολογουμένως) faith of the 'church of the living God', inasmuch as this is the 'pillar and bulwark of the truth', in the 'great mystery of our religion', the mystery that is Jesus Christ alone, and is embraced between the two terms 'appearing' and 'glory'. The dimensions of the mystery are developed in three antitheses: 1. 'manifested in the flesh—vindicated in the Spirit', referring to the tension between the historical man Jesus and his attestation as Word and Son of God not only in miracles, but above all through the Resurrection (cf. Rom 1.4; 1 Pet 3.18; Jn 16.10; *cf.* Mt 11.19; Lk 7.35); in the midpoint of this tension lies the Cross, but the whole path undertaken in the flesh is reckoned as 'manifestation' (ultimately, a manifestation of the love of God). 2. 'Seen by angels—preached among the nations' introduces into the tension between Heaven and earth the objective result of the first tension: the 'justification' of the path that led to the flesh and the Cross is seen in Heaven, and is proclaimed universally on earth. 3. 'Believed on in the world—taken up in glory' goes beyond this to show the subjective result (of both previous tensions together): the proclamation enters the hearts as faith, and the self-justification of the (triune) love through the Spirit takes up the humanity of Jesus (and with it the whole dispensation of salvation, which depends on this humanity) into God's essential glory. Synoptic theology, Pauline theology and Johannine theology flow into one another here.

2. The expressions which speak of epiphany refer more to the act of appearing; the expressions which speak of *image* (εἰκών) and the more or less synonymous words used thereby speak more of the result of appearing.[1] Such synonyms are ὁμοίωμα, ὁμοίωσις (similarity, likeness; used together with εἰκών at Rom 1.23; Phil 2.7, 'having been given the same form as men'), σχῆμα (shape, form of appearance; used at Phil 2.7 of Christ as man, and at 1 Cor 7.31 of the world), χαρακτήρ (imprint, then more generally, impression, particular character, outward appearance: at Heb 1.3, Christ is described as the imprint of the substance of God), μορφή (form, appearance, but also more generally, manner of being: used at Phil 2.7 of the divine and human form and manner of being of Christ; *cf.* Mk 16.12); ἀπαύγασμα too (radiance: used of Christ at Heb 1.3) belongs to this group. When it is said that Christ is the (epiphanous) image of the invisible God, the allusion is not so much to Gen 1.26f. (man as God's likeness), but rather to statements in the Book of Wisdom; this book certainly has a background in Platonism and Stoicism in its description of Sophia, but this background—like other extra-biblical preliminary stages—has no decisive weight in the statements of the New Testament. Here, if anywhere, one must not interpret the texts in a direction contrary to their flow, but must follow the current as it makes for the Christ event. Even granted that there were a pre-Christian pattern behind the hymn at Col 1.15–20, Paul has given this a decisive interpretation

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[1] On this, *cf.* especially H. Willms, *Eikon. Eine begriffsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Platonismus*, I (1935); F. W. Eltester, 'Eikon im Neuen Testament', *ZNW*, Beiheft 23 (1958); J. Jervell, *Imago Dei. Gen 1,26f im Spätjudentum, in der Gnosis und in den paulinischen Briefen*, FRLANT 58 (1960); von Rad, Kittel, and Kleinknecht, art. εἰκών, *TDNT* II 381ff. Bibliography in all these.

by canalising the statements in an ecclesiological and soteriological direction; more than this, he has assumed everything (in 1.13) under the description of Christ as 'the Son of his love'.[2]

In order to see the extensive overlapping of these concepts in late Antiquity, one need only consider the list of statements at Wis 7.25f. about God's pre-existent Wisdom that is immanent in the world: she is 'exhalation (ἀτμίς) of the divine power, pure emanation (ἀπόρροια) of the omnipotent glory (δόξα), . . . radiance (ἀπαύγασμα) of the eternal light, undefiled mirror (ἔσοπτρον) of the divine working, and image (εἰκών) of his goodness'. Elsewhere she is called the ἀρχή (beginning) of God's ways in his works (Prov 8.22) and the craftswoman of all the works (τεχνῖτις, Wis 8.21). It is certain that the Book of Wisdom has its place in a whole current of Jewish-hellenistic speculations about (quasi-) hypostases that mediate between God and the world; Philo names, in addition to Wisdom, the Logos, the Pneuma, and the heavenly man too. And behind these speculations stands the eventful course taken in the history of ideas by the concept of 'image' after Plato: at first it is 'copy', but when, for example, in the *Republic* (and later in Plutarch and elsewhere) the sun becomes the image of the highest invisible good, then the copy for its part acquires so powerful a creative radiance (hence the proximity of εἰκών and δόξα: Wis 7.25f.; *cf.* 1 Cor 11.7; Rom 8.29; Heb 1.3; *cf.* 2 Cor 4.4 with 4.6 and 3.18)[3] that it in turn becomes the archetype of what is within the world. Finally, at *Timaeus* 92c, the cosmos as a whole becomes the most perfect 'image of the spiritual', becomes 'a god that may be perceived . . . as only-begotten'. In Plato, this image is predominantly a technically 'finished' image, the work of a 'creator' who (in the myth) is free, but the relationship becomes one of a natural dynamism above all in Stoicism and later in Neoplatonism: the 'image' is at the same time a natural emanation, with the possibility either of a subordination (so that the 'image' is poorer than the archetype, and serves above all to mediate between the invisible, wholly other God and the world) or of an identity of substance (so that the 'image' is above all a 'ray sent out', or better still a 'mirror' that is naturally 'transparent'). We find also a blending or equiparation of both aspects, as when Philo takes over these intellectual starting-points; his 'existential philosophy' collects ciphers that may make comprehensible to his hellenistic milieu his Old Testament understanding of God—an understanding, however, that is substantially dehistoricised and ethicised, and indeed threatens to become depersonalised through the preponderance of the intermediary stages.

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[2] G. Kittel, art. cit, 397. *Cf.* the analysis from the standpoint of the history of religions by E. Käsemann, 'Eine urchristliche Taufliturgie' (1949), in: *Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen*, I (4th edn. 1965), pp. 34–51 (ET 'A Primitive Christian Baptismal Liturgy' in: *Essays on New Testament Themes*, 1964, pp. 149–168).

[3] On the hellenistic character of this drawing-together of image and radiance, *cf.* Eltester, op. cit., p. 155.

The cosmological speculations about the imageless God's becoming an image—through *tekhnê* or through *physis*, in the world of ideas or in the cosmos, in Sophia or in the Logos—produced a surprisingly fruitful harvest for Christian thinking, by making ready a schema of thought that offered at one and the same time the consubstantiality of the image with the archetype and the 'personal' distinction of the two: this comes about when, for the first time, on the basis of the personality of the historical Jesus and his personal relationship to the Father, it is seen that the (quasi-)hypostases of the outgoing old covenant and their relationship to the God who is the source of all may be understood in the sense of a 'personal standing-over-against' one another. But this step can be taken only when the relationship between Father and Son is disclosed from the point of view of soteriology as the act of the Father's love in the Son: this act is ultimately accessible only to a loving faith,[4] and if it is to embrace effectively and completely the world that is to be saved, it presupposes the 'cosmological' status of Christ as the archetypal image standing over against the whole creation (Jn 1.1–3; Heb 1.3; Col 1.15ff.; Eph 1.10). It is not as though the soteriology had taken hold of an originally cosmological speculation about the 'image' in a merely external manner, in order to give it a different meaning through violent interpolations and thus make it its own; rather, the whole εἰκών-cosmology is brought to a transcendent transparency that goes beyond itself in reflection upon the love of God that has appeared in Christ and has carried its act of self-giving as far as Cross and Hell. Thus this cosmology is brought to its final, and now unequivocal, fulfilment; only so is it given its secure place in Christian theology. In this process, the idea that the 'image' makes visible the invisible fundamental being is retained—'Philip, he who sees me, sees the Son' (Jn 14.9). But any idea of a concealment of God behind an iconostasis of hypostases is abandoned, because the Son offers no technical copy or physical emanation or static icon of the Father—it is in the boundless obedience of the Son that the boundless self-giving love of the Father 'appears'. In this, the whole level of image is once again transcended, because from an earthly point of view the boundlessness of the imaging love in Cross and Hell is absolutely withheld from sight—and in being absolutely withheld from sight, it makes the incomprehensibility of the divine love of the Father 'visible'.

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[4] In Philo, the Logos (which to a great extent occupies the position taken by Sophia in the Book of Wisdom, in closer dependence on Stoicism) can stand as the objective spirit which is determinative of the things in the world; but it is also partly subjective, inasmuch as it is the best part of man, and is portrayed as the practical norm of acting and endeavour, indeed as the ideal which will be realised 'eschatologically'. In this, it possesses both proximity to God (as 'God's world of ideas') and distance from him

Only now may one understand more deeply the closeness of the relation between εἰκών and δόξα in the New Testament. For now it can be seen not in terms of the

(in the objectifying of what cannot be objectified). Seen as a whole, therefore, the 'image' in Philo remains only half-real. 'The oscillation between 'distinction', which can start at any moment, and 'confusion', which has its origin in the consciousness of the one Pneuma (or Logos, as the case may be) and brings together all the discharges as emanations to a single stream, is not to be explained merely as eclecticism; it attests the beginning of a particular endeavour in late Antiquity to make comprehensible God in his relationship to man and world, to acquire a conceptual grasp of the representation of God (in our case = θεία εἰκών, 'divine image')—God's presence and absence simultaneously—in its various nuances and degrees of strength' (Willms, op. cit., p. 85).

hellenistic Jewish prehistory of the concepts, where the chief image of God was at once the radiance and the representation of his own divinity (most clearly in the symbol of the sun as θεὸς αἰσθητός,[5] but in a decisively New Testament manner.[6] Why is it that the 'glory' of Christ, who as such is not merely an 'anticipatory shadow' (Heb 8.5; 10.1) but is the 'true image' (Heb 10.1; 2 Cor 4.4), is so much greater than the glory of the old law (2 Cor 3.9f.); why is it that instead of 'image', we can just as well speak of the 'glory of Christ' (4.4), 'the glory of God on the face of Christ' (4.6)? Is this not because 'all the promises of God have found their Yes in him' (2 Cor 1.20), because God has reconciled the world to himself by 'making' Christ 'to be sin for our sake' (5.18, 21)? What Paul here calls 'glory' has its final New Testament measure in what John sees as the glory of the divine love that has appeared in Christ. The prehistory of the concept of εἰκών has 'not the least speculative interest' for Paul;[7] hence, when it is said that Christ is the image of God, no doubt is cast upon his own personality, nor upon that of the Father who makes his personal utterance in the Word become flesh.

Here it is appropriate to say a word about '*light*' in the New Testament. The central statements consciously direct attention away from the light of creation to the light of revelation, which alone matters (2 Cor 4.6). All the statements are to be oriented in this direction; here too, the analogies and preliminary stages in the history of religions are of no importance. When Jesus terms himself 'the light of the world' (Jn 8.12; 3.19; 12.36,46), with an absoluteness that excludes other lights, this is because he is 'sent', and is therefore utterly obedient to the one who sent him—the 'God, who is light,

[5] When Paul emphasises in many passages the 'cognitive' elements in connection with the configuration of man to the archetype Christ (or to God himself, at Col 3.10), and John does likewise (cf., e.g., 2 Cor 3.18; 4.6; Eph 1.17; 3.17f.; Col 1.9,10; 3.10f. etc.; 1 Jn 2.27 and frequently), this knowledge stands for both Paul and John in the closest connection with love, aiming at love and proceeding from love: 'may your love abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment . . .' (Phil 1.9).

[6] On this, *cf.* also Wis 13.1–9.

[7] G. Kittel, op. cit., 397.

and in whom there is no darkness at all' (1 Jn 1.5). The complete openness of obedience has already made the one sent an 'image', and now it makes him 'light'; thus, the two concepts are not opposed to one another, like the formless and the formed, for in the Trinity (in the diastasis of the Incarnation) they are elevated above this opposition.[8] The formula 'light from light' touches the essence,[9] and is analoguous in structure to the statement at Jn 5.26 about the communication of life from the Father to the Son; John brings 'light' and 'life' close to one another (1.4b; 8.12b). From men's attitude to this light, it becomes clear what its nature is. If one loved the light, one would come into the light (cf. 3.19): this would mean following Jesus (8.12), walking in the light (12.35), and believing in the light that Jesus is (12.36, 46). 'To walk in the light, as he (God) too is in the light', and thus 'to have fellowship with him', means also 'to have fellowship with one another' (1 Jn 1.6–7), i.e., 'to love one's brother': 'he who loves his brother abides in the light' (1 Jn 2.10), while hatred leaves one stumbling in the dark. In order to come out of the darkness, one must moreover give up one's own darkness, one must become true and transparent by confessing one's sins (1 Jn 1.8–10; Jn 3.19–21; *cf.* 1 Cor 4.5). The old expression (cf. Qumran), 'children (or sons) of the light', which always has an ethical colouring in the Gospels and in Paul (Lk 16.8; Eph 5,8; 1 Thess 5.5), acquires its ultimate depths in the Johannine transparency of the Son to the Father, the transparency that reveals the whole freedom of his obedience as love and makes him the uniquely valid light for the whole cosmos (Jn 1.4). What in him is fulfilled, is for us still coming to be, in the day that dawns (Rom 13.12; 1 Jn 2.8) to herald our final entry into the 'inheritance of his holy ones in light' (Col 1.12). This rising upwards towards the light is helped in advance by 'the good gifts and perfect gifts that come down from the Father of lights' (Jas 1.17), gifts that cannot be anything else than gifts of love (cf. Lk 11.11ff.). In the New Testament, all the talk of light is purely a metaphor for the divine love that is communicated; the metaphor, which seeks to bring understanding of this love, starts from the realm of ethics but deepens this ontologically, since the Son is proleptically light and life for all creatures that do not turn away from him; the Father 'draws' them to him (Jn 6.44), just as the Son too 'draws' all 'to himself', as the one who is 'lifted up' (12.32), and makes them know that 'I am he' (8.28). Only so can he institute them in their turn in their mission to be 'the light of the world' (Mt 5.14).[10] Light is the salvation of the world. The Johannine 'light', as the silence of this salvation, can 'say' more than even the cipher of glory with its predetermined Old Testament character; the light takes the glory up into itself and stills its lightning and thunder by assuming them into the peace of the bottomless love (cf. 1 Jn 3.19f.).

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[8] It is here that we may find what is valid in a mysticism like that of Eckhart: 'There, where time never entered, where images never shed their light . . . God creates the whole world' (*Pr.* 66, Pfeiffer, 207, 9f.). It is certainly not fortuitous that John avoids the word εἰκών, just as he avoids γνῶσις: this avoidance expresses his radically anti-gnostic position, despite all the formal closeness to gnosis.

[9] E. R. Goodenough, *By Light, Light* (1935). Further literature on 'light' in R. Schnackenburg, *Johanneische Briefe* (1953), p. 66, n. 1.

In the Old Testament, towards the end of the period of the prophets, the immediate momentum of the *kabod* threatened to reduce itself to the level of a more superficial light. In the new covenant, everything that is termed light remains firmly set, without the possibility of being removed, in the original momentum of the event of Cross and Resurrection.

3. God's epiphany in the word and the image of his essence receives a final illumination when we ask about the manner (and thereby the contents) of *the way it is seen*. At this point, the reason for this section's title should become clear: *vidimus gloriam* (Jn 1.14). Since the first volume dealt in detail (even if only in an introductory fashion) with the seeing, we can

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[10] *Cf.* F. Mussner, ΖΩΗ, *Die Anschauung vom 'Leben' im vierten Evangelium*, in: Münch. theol. St. I, 5 (1952), pp. 164–71. As in his work as a whole, Mussner exposes here the opposition of the Johannine thinking to the gnostic thinking, and sketches at pp. 170f. a parallel to the concept of light in Isaiah.

concentrate and synthesise what has to be said here.[1] Three aspects are to be developed: (a) the essence and the dimensions of seeing as catching sight of things; (b) the 'rapture' (already contained within this) of the one who sees into the specific object of revelation;[2] (c) ultimately, this being caught up in rapture (in faith) is not the act of the one who sees, but of the one who 'is seen'. It is God himself who illuminates us, who indeed marks us with his word and places his image in us, and it is only in this grammatical reversal (in which the object becomes the active subject) that Christian seeing is attained. *What* is finally perceived depends on the initiative of the object.

(a) It is only on the basis of the understanding he already has of interpersonal relationships that the human person can grasp the meaning of a way of 'seeing' God through his word and his image that transcends all the affirmations of God's invisibility (Jn 1.18; 5.37f.; 6.46). This understanding is double, although the aspects are mutually linked. Human seeing is more than a sensory physiological act; it is capable of seeing intellectual connections (in space and time) in what the senses perceive, and of taking an overview of these connections that gives them a unity. This is especially the case when human seeing perceives visible or audible statements of a person who is (above all) expressing himself freely, and thereby 'responds' positively or negatively to the address of this person and the claim he makes.[3] In Christian terms, this prior understanding is not abandoned as if it were an irrelevant preliminary stage; rather it is in this understanding that the divine word-image will portray itself (without thereby dissolving itself), for 'He who does not love his brother, whom he sees, cannot love God, whom he does not see' (1 Jn 4.20). The rapture into the act of seeing is an indivisible unity both of the faith that loves Jesus and God in him (Jn 14.1) and of the fulfilment of his command of love of neighbour (14.15). Human personal seeing sees truly when it is prepared to receive (perceive) what spontaneously offers itself: here, the personal seeing is first of all a becoming aware, a hearing, which then—step by step—penetrates the sphere of understanding. Accordingly, for the Bible and especially for John, seeing has many stages which lead from the outside to the inside, from the inchoative to the perfect. It is possible to see Jesus externally, as a human being, without recognising what he personally wishes to say—and his 'saying' (12.50) embraces everything that one can hear from him, and everything that one can see and experience in him and in his working. The insight that can be had through him is 'progressive', 'dynamic';[4] if it is true that the sum of a person's utterances never exhaust this person, and moreover force one to take up positions with respect to this person which reveal the person subsequently in a different light (in a more closed or a more open way), how much more will this be true of the self-utterance of God in Jesus. Besides this, God's self-revelation in the Incarnation of his Word has become visible once and for all historically in space and time, not only as a human form, but as the salvific action that is bound to this historical form, and therefore every 'seeing' of the depths of his salvific activity is always bound to the historically literal 'seeing' of the eyewitnesses; the foundation of all later perception of the Church—a perception that goes deeper in faith and recognition!—is the fact, in its historicity, that the eyewitnesses 'saw, heard and touched'. But just as this perception—a not-seeing in the earthly sense (Jn 20.29) and a seeing as the total experience of faith (14.19)—is always based anew on the archetypal seeing of the eyewitnesses (1 Jn 1.1–3),[5] so the sensory seeing of the first disciples points beyond itself (Jn 1.50f.) to the interpretation and the understanding of the one who is seen, and the presupposition for this is his returning to the Father and his being seen no longer (16.7). Just as, for Augustine, a sentence must have died away in our ears in order for its whole meaning to be grasped, so the salvific event of Cross and Resurrection must be over so that it can be seen for the very first time (through the interpreting Spirit) in its true significance. Here, the seeing of the risen Jesus by the disciples is a mediation between 'seeing him again' (16.16) and seeing him no longer (in an earthly manner), or between a definitive and self-manifesting presence of Father and Son (14.21–23) and an absence for 'a little while' (16.16–23) which is both the *triduum mortis* and, for the Church, the duration of this age of the world. If one looks at the question here to the exclusion of other questions, then to speak of presence in absence is not in the least a dialectic that dissolves every image and form,[6] but is a deep mystery of love that does not lack its counterpart in the antecedent understanding of human persons.[7] But this mystery lies beyond the alternative of 'direct' or 'indirect' seeing. It is indirect inasmuch as a free person can never be seen other than in his giving of self, and indeed the person will be seen all the more directly as the gaze turns from the 'signs' (σῆμεια) to what is signified in them. This is the reason for the ambiguity of the (miraculous) signs in John: they can fascinate the gaze and then prevent it from seeing what is manifesting itself truly in the signs.[8] One must be able to read the glory that appears in the signs as transparent to the definitive 'sign' (the Cross), which shows nothing any longer of its glory, but nevertheless contains the whole of the glory to which the signs are pointing.[9] The words that are formed likewise remain, although in a different manner, 'signs', an indication, a 'parable' (16.25). And yet, in all this indirectness, the seeing is direct, because in everything that the Son is, in his talking, acting and suffering, and indeed further in the very person that reveals itself in all this, nothing else is visible than his absolute obedient love to the Father, or more precisely: in the sphere of this love, there is seen directly the absolute love

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[1] On what follows, *cf.* especially C. Traets, 'Voir Jésus et le Père en lui selon l'Evangile de S. Jean': *Anal. Gregoriana* 159 (1967), with bibliography; F. Mussner, *Die johanneische Sehweise*, Questiones Disputatae 28 (1965); O. Cullmann, 'εἶδεν καὶ ἐπίστευσεν', in: *Mél. Goguel* (1950), pp. 52–61; I. de la Potterie, 'Οἶδα et γιγνώσκω. Les deux modes de la connaissance dans le 4e évangile', in: *Bibl.* 40 (1959), pp. 709–725; M. Michaelis, art. ὁράω, *TDNT* V 315–382; H. Wenz, 'Sehen und Erkennen bei Johannes', in: *ThZ* 17 (1961), pp. 17–25; H. Schlier, 'Glauben, Erkennen, Lieben nach dem JoEv' (1962), also in: *Besinnung auf das NT* (1964), pp. 279–293 (bibliography).

[2] We recall our original distinction between a theory of vision and a theory of rapture (Vol. I, p. 125), which however cannot ultimately be separated from each other. While Vol. I was predominantly doctrine of seeing, Vols. VI and VII are predominantly doctrine of rapture, theo-logy in the narrower sense: the determination of the human person who hears, sees and believes, by God's word, image and life: *cf.* III/2,1, p. 11.

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[3] M. Scheler has made us newly aware that the basic human phenomenon is present here (and not a 'conclusion' that is drawn from the reception of sensory impressions made on an alien person who is in the 'outside world'). *Cf.* also the works of G. Siewerth, especially *Philosophie der Sprache* (1962).—'If one looks in faith at the person of Jesus and especially at the events of his life, one grasps with one's eyes the mystery that offers itself to him . . . Seeing is more than a mere registration of visual images: it is essentially an act of understanding, supported by faith': Traets, op. cit., p. 219.

[4] Traets, p. 31. The four verbs in John differentiate the distinct (though mutually compenetrating) sides of the act of seeing: 'In fact, it is necessary to have eyes in order to see (βλέπεῖν in its absolute use). In order to see really, it is necessary to observe (θεωρεῖν), i.e. to bring one's eyes to bear upon the object (what Dodd calls a 'discerning vision'). In order to discern, the gaze must be penetrated by respect, characterised by receptivity with relation to the dimensions of the object (θεᾶσθαι), which are necessary conditions if one is to grasp the mystery (βλέπειν—ὁρᾶν) by committing oneself in faith' (*ibid.*, p. 52).

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[5] The legitimate transitions from the 'indissoluble' base of the quality of being an eyewitness into the later seeing of the Church is the chief theme of F. Mussner *Die johanneische Sehweise*; but this was already validly defended before him by Traets. *Cf.* also M. Barth, *Der Augenzeuge* (1946), as well as the section about 'archetypal experience' in Vol. I, pp. 301–365.

[6] As those (mostly Protestant) authors maintain, holding that the

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(Johannine) 'seeing' (and 'knowing') is identical with the decision of faith. M. Michaelis: art. ὁράω, *TDNT* V, 362f. Thüsing too speaks in one passage of the 'closeness, indeed the identity of meaning that 'believing' and 'seeing' can have in the gospel of John' (*Erhöhung und Verherrlichung*, p. 15) On this theme: C. Charlier, 'La présence dans l'absence: Jean 13.31–14.31', *Bible et Vie Chrét.* 2 (1955), pp. 61–75.

[7] On the one hand, a 'silent presence' (mutual understanding without words), on the other hand, mutual understanding precisely through absence or beyond death. But none of these human experiences fully embraces the mystery of Jn 14.19ff.

[8] Bibliography on σημεῖον: *TDNT* VII 200f. (Rengstorf); also: L. Cerfaux, 'Les miracles, signes messianiques' (1954), in: *Recueil Cerfaux*, II (1954), pp. 41–50. R. Formesyn, 'Le semeion johannique et le semeion hellénistique', in: *Eph. theol. Lov.* 38 (1962), pp. 856–894.

[9] 'This close progressive connection between the various signs'—from Cana, to the multiplication of the loaves, to the opening of the eyes of the blind man and the raising of Lazarus, etc.—'and the Hour is probably based on the common reality of glory. The signs have their total dimension in glory, in that they anticipate this glory in a way that is at once veiled and revelatory—a way proper to the reality of the sign. The glory will manifest itself in its full efficacy in the 'sign' of the cross': Traets, op. cit., p. 137.

of the Father—for the Son and for the world. By making space for the Father, the Son becomes his Word in the exactness of the one who only reproduces what has been said to him. 'I have not spoken from myself. The Father, who sent me, has given me the command what to say and make known . . . Therefore I say what I say, as the Father has commanded me' (12.49f.; 7.16; 8.26, 28; 15.15). The same is true of the works and miracles: the Father accomplishes them in the Son (14.10).[10] In the one who makes space, in his whole conduct, one can *see* what fills him: the love of the Father. And the act of making space can itself be seen as love for the Father. These flow into each other in such a way that one ultimately sees that here it is not two independent persons who get together to form a working fellowship: rather, both exist, from their uttermost origin, in a substantial fellowship of love.[11] 'Seeing' therefore means, taken as a whole, the ability to interpret a person and a destiny as the epiphany of absolute love.

(b) This love, however, is not an object that one could contemplate (thereby 'objectivising' it) from an impartial stance; it is seen to be what it is, only when one is oneself seized by it. It may be the case that the natural eye has 'something of the sun' in itself, so that it can see the sun; but it is only absolute love itself that can empower one to see absolute love. In the Son who offers himself to our gaze, the Father 'draws' those who believe in him—who perceive the love in him—to the Son (Jn 6.44). In the Son who is 'raised on high' defenceless, the Son himself draws all persons to himself (12.32), and all eyes will be fixed in fascination on the one who had been pierced, whether they wish this or not (19.37), so that sooner or later—early enough or too late—all will 'recognise that I am he' (8.28). But in the empowering of sight, since it is a question of the power to love, and love can be given only in a free decision, the freedom to say yes and no, the freedom for belief and for unbelief, is operative.

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[10] A. Vanhoye, 'Opera Jesu, donum Patris', in: *Verb. Dom.* 36 (1958), pp. 83–92; *idem*, 'L'oeuvre du Christ, don du Père', in: *RSR* 48 (1960), pp. 377–419.

[11] On this, and on the formulae of mutual indwelling, *cf.* F. Mussner, ZΩH, op. cit., pp. 151ff.

The decision to accept what is brought about by the divine love that meets one in Jesus is identical with the seeing of this love through the love that answers in faith; the decision against this fails to recognise the light that comes towards one and thus misses it, and remains accordingly without any inner light of its own in the darkness of unbelief, failure to love and failure to recognise (1.5; 3.19; 12.35). The one who does not recognise the love of God in Jesus has never heard God's voice and never seen his face (5.37). It follows from this that the close connection in the farewell discourses between faith (and love) for Jesus and his commandment of love of one's brother is a simple necessity, and the First Letter of John draws the consequences of this by making the love of one's brother (as a participation in carrying out the loving obedience of Jesus, who 'gave' his life 'for us') the criterion of being in the light, while the one who hates his brother goes into the darkness 'and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes' (2.11).[12] But at the outset stands the light which pours forth its own light in favour of men (Jn 1.5, 9) with the power to make those who do not resist it—i.e., those who believe in it—children of God (1.12) and thus 'children of the light' (Jn 12.36). This enrapturing power goes so far that it not only draws to itself those who believe and love, but lets them share in its own birth from its origin, from God (1.13). Every symbolic word that transcends a mere subject-object schema (of the one who sees and the one who is seen) is pressed into service: light, life, fullness, grace, truth, glory (1.14,16), way to the Father (14.6), resurrection from death to the life of God (11.25); that which is seen, Jesus, is not only the perfect dynamic transparence to the Father, but, beyond this, the perfect immanence in us of what has been shown, so that his departure to the Father—which removes the *diastasis* between the one who obeys and the one who is 'greater' (14.28) and who commands him—becomes his perfect coming and indwelling together with the Father (14.23).

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[12] On the difference between the Gospel of John and 1 John with regard to the concept of light, *cf.* R. Schnackenburg, *Johannesbriefe* (1953), pp. 100f.

(c) In a final reversal, the rapture of the one who sees into what he sees is thereby superseded. What is seen (the Word-image-light of the Father) not only determines the power of sight in the one who sees, but determines him as a whole and imprints himself on him. What is seen not only gives illumination, but also gives form and transforms by configuring to itself. The Word-image of God which has form and shows itself as light and life in a manner that transcends form (and thereby demands faith) has precisely in this the highest power to give form; the quality of form (μορφή) proper to absolute love displays itself in the transformation (μεταμορφόω).[13] In the '*meta*' of the *morphosis* (Rom 12.2; 2 Cor 3.18) lies the element of turning away (from the 'present world', from the transient glory of the old Law, more and more to the glory of Christ), especially since Rom 12.2 warns at the same time against conformity (συσχηματίζεσθαι) to the world. At Phil 3.21 Paul speaks of the yearning for the Lord who will return and 'will transform (μετασχηματίσει) the body of our lowliness into the configuration (σύμμορφον) of the body of his glory, in accordance with (form-giving) power (ἐνέργεια) with which he is able to submit all things to himself'. The transforming μέτα goes from the σύν with the world to the σύν with Christ. Thus it is possible finally to speak without any prefix of a 'shaping (μορφωθῇ) of Christ' in the Christians (with the help of the labour pains of the apostle: Gal 4.19), and this means nothing else than the self-realisation of the innermost disposition of Christ (the σπλάγχνα Χριστοῦ, Phil 1.8; the φρονεῖν Χριστοῦ Phil 2.5) and thus of his life in them (Gal 2.20; 2 Cor 13.3,5; Col 1.27; 3.11). this is not a question of the (gnostic) recovery of one's own form, once possessed and then lost, because according to Col 3.10 the 'new man' (who has been put on, in principle, in baptism) must renew himself until the inmost point of the realisation of the archetype Christ who creates him is attained,[14] and it is only thus that he himself is to become a new form, a new creation (2 Cor 5.17; Gal 6.15). Nor is the process of giving shape, in which the transformation is brought about, primarily the result of one's own endeavours, but the result of permitting the actively shaping power of God in Christ to work. This is present in the passive form, 'letting oneself be renewed' (Eph 4.23; 2 Cor 4.16; Col 3.10). For the new image is not at all formed into the 'image of the man of earth' (1 Cor 15.49): the change in its radicality is expressed through the metaphor of an act of stripping and clothing (or putting off and putting on), with the point of transition in a nakedness without images.[15] The Synoptic faith and the Johannine believing love are ultimately the same act of permitting God to work, of letting God 'teach' oneself (Jn 6.45–46). The 'turning' of Mary Magdalene on Easter morning takes place explicitly[16] in response to the call by which Jesus turns her round. Paul's endeavour as he makes for his goal has always been overtaken in advance by the fact that he has been grasped by his goal (Phil 3.12; *cf.* 3.20f.). The *kenosis* and *diastasis* of Christ cannot be imitated, but a possible configuration to them lies in making oneself empty of oneself (cf. Matt 5.8) in order to be filled by the active 'image' of the love of God in Christ which imprints itself on one.

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[13] *TDNT* IV 758f.; bibliography, *ibid.*, 742.

[14] 3.11 (where Christ is named) and 3.12f. (where it is the specifically soteriological qualities of Christ that are to be imitated) show that the εἰκών to be created at Col 3.10 is Christ.

As a whole, seeing the New Testament remains originally and definitively based in the perception of the form of God's appearing in Christ, and it is this basis that lets it remain open for every form of deeper and more total grasping of the one who lets himself be seen.[17] Apart from John, it is above all the Letter to the Hebrews that lets the eye rest contemplatively on the depths of the one who shows himself. Although we do not yet see (ὁρῶμεν) the eschatological submission of all things to Christ, we 'see, discern, discover with the eyes of the Spirit' (βλέπομεν) his humiliation, but also already the glorious exaltation which followed this (2.8f.) as the 'exact reality'.[18] The gaze that looks to Christ is a gaze of reflective contemplation (κατανοήσατε, 3.1), looking up (ἀφορῶντες, 12.2) to the perfecter and founder of our faith. Even on the basis of the old covenant there is more than a mere 'prior exploration' (1 Pet 1.10f.): there is a seeing beforehand (Heb 11.13, 26, 27), although this is not the same as the seeing of the community with 'faith that sees' and pierces the hiddenness of the world of Heaven.[19] It is the 'grasping' (καταλαμβάνεσθαι) on the basis of faith and love which Paul too requires: 'the full comprehension in the sense of the experience that becomes aware'.[20] John denotes the substance of what can be seen on earth as δόξα (1.14); but even for him, 'seeing' nowhere reaches out beyond faith.[21] All seeing retains an eschatological dynamic. Jesus invites the disciples to raise their eyes together with him and contemplate the fields that are already golden for harvest (Jn 4.35): it is a messianic seeing, in the light of the end, that is required here (Cf. Lk 17.37; 21.30). For us, it remains a 'seeing in a mirror and an enigma' that only begins to press on towards the perfect accomplishment of what Paul has previously described as the reversal of the imprinting of the image and thus of the act of seeing: 'But then I will grasp fully, just as I have been fully grasped' (1 Cor 13.12).[22]

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[15] Rom 13.12; Eph 4.25; 6.11ff.; Col 3.8ff.; 1 Thess 5.8; Heb 12.1; Jas 1.21; 1 Pet 2.1.

[16] Indeed, twice: 20.14, 16. On this, *cf.* Bertram, *TDNT* VII 715 n. 6.

[17] On this: H. Schlier, art. δείκνυμι, TDNT II 25ff.

[18] C. Spicq, *Hébreux* II, p. 33.

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[19] F. J. Schierse, *Verheissung und Vollendung. Zur theol. Grundfrage des Hebräerbriefes* (1955), pp. 160f.

[20] On the nuances of meaning: Schlier, *Epheser*, p. 171.

[21] *Cf.* Jn 19.35: 'so that you *too* may believe'.

[22] On this, *cf.* the significant exposition by Paul Schütz of the biblical 'image-word' in: *Parusia, Hoffnung und Prophetie* (1960), pp. 541–563. 'The figures give structure to the history. They speak in it. The Bible knows no other history than that which has been understood as a history orientated towards the figures. To see the figures means to see the history as a history that brings salvation ... When God speaks the word, the word in the image gives a form to things. It is not speech that 'puts in the picture' here. Here, it is the word that inserts itself into things through the word' (p. 546). One should assuredly lay to heart what Schütz says here, in his defence of the word of the Bible, about the 'failure of historical exegesis to deal with the Bible as linguistic event', about the self-exegesis of Scripture, about the inability of any form of scholarship to touch it, about the 'form of the text which repulses attacks', etc. But he understands the biblical word univocally as prophecy, and therefore the distinction between the image-word of the Old Testament and the Incarnation (and making visible) of the Word in Jesus Christ is not seen with sufficient clarity. The triple distinction introduced by Origen (OT as shadow, NT as image, eternity as

c. Correspondence

We expound the contents of glory as the contents of the revelation of God as he is in his divinity. But these contents are only half disclosed with the self-revelation of God in his Word which at a profounder level becomes an image; they are truly seen only where, through the response to the Word, the complete correspondence between God in himself and God in his world, the perfect harmony between archetype and copy, is attained, where the perfect sovereignty of God in creation is established, and his right(ness) and righteousness come into force in the whole realm of his lordship.

1. This goes beyond the sphere of the image and of its imprinting upon the human person, as can be seen from the fact that, although man was originally created in the image of God, it was not his own quality of being an image that he lost through his sin, but the glory of God (Rom 3.23), and that he is reintroduced through Christ, who becomes God's 'image' and 'glory', not into an original glory of the human person as such,[1] but—through the continuous transcendental

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truth) cannot be superseded. On this, *cf.* Henri de Lubac, *Geist aus der Geschichte. Das Schriftverständnis des Origenes* (German trans., 1968), pp. 257ff.; *idem*, *Corpus Mysticum* (2nd edn. 1949), pp. 217ff.

[1] It seems to me impossible to hold (with J. Jervell, *Imago Dei*, op. cit., pp. 180f.) that Rom 3.23 alludes to the tradition in Judaism of late Antiquity that man had possessed the original righteousness of paradise as an original glory, and that he had lost both together. As evidence for this, the words of Eve in the *Vita Adae* 20f. are adduced: 'At the same time, my eyes were opened and I knew that I had been stripped of my righteousness, with which I had been clothed. Then I wept and said, "Why have you done this to me, so that I have been alienated from my glory, with which I was clothed?"' The devil, who seduces Eve, has fallen from *his* glory, because he was unwilling to venerate the image of God in Adam; he expresses to Adam his lamentation at this (12; 16). Eve reproaches him that she, who had not robbed him of his glory (11), has been robbed by him of her glory; Adam asks God that the devil be removed, 'and give me his glory, which he has lost' (17). (Following Riessler, *Altjüdisches Schrifttum ausserhalb der Bibel*, 1928.) One cannot say (with P. Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus*, in: FRLANT 87 (1966), p. 87, *cf.* p. 187) that here 'the human δόξα is the gift and the correspondence of the δόξα τοῦ θεοῦ. It is precisely not this δόξα which is in question here, but the δόξα which was originally proper both to the angel and to man.

relationship to Christ—into a far higher 'quality of being an image' and 'glory' (2 Cor 3.18), that of God in Christ. The New Testament nowhere speaks of the recovery of a lost glory of the original state, but rather of the eschatological achieving of the righteousness and glory of God in his cosmos, in which ultimately no other 'word' and 'image' speaks of God and gives light, than the eternal Son of the Father.

Thereby, a new and final level in the contents of δόξα comes to light, a level characterised by the kinship between *glory and righteousness* (*sedek*, δικαιοσύνη). For under this title, God's glory is not only displayed (as word and image) to the world, but is brought into force within the realm of the world in such a way that God is not only vindicated '*vis-à-vis*' the world in his lawsuit with it, but the world is subjected to him and becomes his property, so that he establishes his law 'in it' and justifies it in God.

When the question is posed in this way, the central theme of Paul's theology takes its place in our theological aesthetics: and this is itself the central place, because with it, the presentation of the contents of glory attains its highest point. When God, by establishing the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ through Christ, establishes his lordship and glory eschatologically in the world and at present in the Church, this means that the covenant attains its fulfilment, always promised but never reached, on a path that goes beyond every analogy in creation between archetype and image, as well as every covenantal reality in the Old Testament between Yahweh and Israel with all its legal precepts, sacrifices and mediations, and even beyond the great judgment of exile and the departure of the glory of God from the Temple. It has frequently been pointed out that the establishment of the 'righteousness of God' is closely linked in Paul to the re-appearing of God's glory (not the glory of man).[2] But is it methodologically justifiable for us to take the clearly outlined teaching which provides Pauline theology with its centre, and set it here in a context that is predetermined by Johannine interpretation of christology from the point of view of δόξα/δοξάζειν? This can be affirmed for three reasons. First, 'from the Old Testament onwards, Yahweh's glory and righteousness are clearly parallel', and indeed are often 'interchangeable terms'.[3] Second, the Johannine concept of the glorification of the Jesus who is obedient to the end by the Father (in the Resurrection) and by the Spirit (with the Church), as he fights out his lawsuit against the world, is dominated by a notion of justification that includes in itself the believers too, to such an extent 'that John, with different terminology and in a different period, defends precisely the central concern of the Pauline theology of justification'.[4] But finally, the whole of Paul's teaching about justification—about God's reconciliation with the world through Christ as the only instrument of atonement (Rom 3.25), through his absolute, eschatologically adequate act of taking the place of all (Rom 8.3; Gal 3.13; 2 Cor 5.21 etc.)—the assertion which supports the entire structure of his thought, is set down so abruptly that, if it is to be understood and accepted, it must be able at least to be related to the kind of christological explanation that is presupposed as understood in the liturgical hymn in Phil 2 and will be further developed in the Gospels, especially in John. No matter how true it may be that the word of the proclamation has a divine power of its own, and that the Spirit is bestowed on those who hear, the 'proclamation' and public announcement (Gal 3.1) that the crucified Jesus was and remains the decisive event of salvation in the entire cosmos can be accepted in faith only if a context in which it can be understood is given at the same time: besides the

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[2] Detailed discussion of this: H. Kittel, *Die Herrlichkeit Gottes* (1934): 'The δόξα θεοῦ in the context of the doctrine of justification', pp. 191–221. One should compare also Rom 3.23 (where the loss of the divine glory appears in context clearly as the loss of the divine righteousness) with Rom 5.2 where justification (5.1) gives us the right to boast in hope of the divine glory; *cf.* also the (pre-Pauline, like Rom 3.23f.) combination of justification

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and (present-tense) glorification of those who are predestined at Rom 8.30. Finally, at 2 Cor 3.10 the New Testament 'ministry of justification will have a much greater glory' when contrasted with the Old Testament 'ministry of condemnation'. On the connection between glory and righteousness, *cf.* further: W. Thüsing, *Per Christum in Deum*, NT Abh. NF 1 (1965), pp. 124–134.

[3] Stuhlmacher, op. cit., p. 196, see above, p. 270, n. 8

[4] *Ibid.*

christology of obedience in Phil 2, it is above all the (likewise pre-Pauline) idea of substitution in the light of Is 53 and thence the idea of the ascent of the Christ who is experienced and attested as risen, to take the place of a mediator of the whole cosmos (1 Cor 8.6) and lord in the place of Sophia or of the Logos (Col 1.15ff.). This is why it remains a task of decisive importance to bring Paul's concern—'the righteousness of God' and 'faith'—into a connection with the christology of the New Testament as a whole that makes sense, i.e. to demonstrate that the righteousness of God reaches perfection only in christology, and that the only basis of faith is derived from christology.

When this starting point is accepted, Paul's contribution to the completion of christology orientated towards an all-inclusive theology of the history of creation and of salvation becomes indispensable, since this theology is able to balance against each other, with the utmost precision, the continuity of God's plan for the world from the creation of the world (Adam) and the promise of salvation (Abraham) until the eschatological fulfilment in Christ on the one hand, and the discontinuity between the old covenant (Moses, law) and the new covenant (the Cross and Resurrection of Christ, the gospel) on the other hand. The point of departure for the extraordinary higher valuation of the Cross of Christ and for the corresponding devaluation of the law in the context of the definitive coming into force of the justice of God in the world is to be found unmistakably in the raising of Jesus from the dead: 'the one who raises Jesus Christ from the dead' becomes a standard predicate of God (Rom 4.24; 8.11; 10.9; 1 Cor 6.14; 15.15; 2 Cor 4.14; Gal 1.1; 1 Thess 1.10), and it is precisely in this way that God shows himself to be the one who is righteous and makes righteous. Indeed, the original faith of Abraham which (proleptically) justified him, was related (in a futurist present tense, because Abraham's body was as good as dead!) to such a God of the promise, who 'gives life to the dead and calls into being what does not exist' (cf. Rom 4.5 with 4.17, 24f.). In other words, Abraham's faith, which justified him before God, had as its object something that not only transcended the parenthesis of the law which had entered as a barrier (Rom 5.20; 4.10f.; Gal 3.17), but also transcended the barrier of death which was placed in front of everything that was 'flesh', the barrier which even the purest veneration of God in the Old Testament did not dare to touch and to shake in any way other than that of an eschatological hope: in Johannine terminology, Abraham's faith looked in advance to the day of Christ (Jn 8.56). It has been sufficiently demonstrated in the preceding volume that, even according to the understanding of the Old Testament, Yahweh's covenant on Sinai—and God's benevolent and righteous governance in this covenant and, on the basis of the covenant, in his whole creation—rested on the unilateral gracious initiative of his promise to the fathers.[5] Nevertheless, three things must be remembered in the transition to Paul: first, the fact that God's covenantal righteousness, which always refused to overwhelm his weak covenant-partner and, when Israel become utterly poor and helpless in the exile, took his part, always showed itself to be essentially a gracious divine governance but still—inasmuch as it was a governance that brought about justice—contained within itself its 'reverse side' in a judgment over the enemies of Israel (and over the mockers and the godless in Israel). No matter how much a truly sovereign governance intends to bring about salvation, no matter how much it may have goodness and mercy as its essential characteristics, it must possess the power to bring about its justice in the lawless sphere that is foreign to itself, and, both in the Old Testament and in Paul, the manifestation of this righteous governance which aims to destroy injustice is called 'wrath' (Rom 1.18; 2.5 etc.). In the Old Testament, the believing people was repeatedly confronted with the prospect of the 'day of the Lord' as both the day of redemption and the day of 'wrath';[6]

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[5] III/2,1, pp. 138f., 147f.

[6] For the Bible, God's 'wrath' or his 'judging according to works' is not the expression of his righteousness, inasmuch as the latter (as *sedek*) denotes for the Bible his divine creation of right. Rather, his 'wrath' is a concept antithetical to his righteousness: 'One could perhaps say: its reverse side' (Stuhlmacher, op. cit., p. 84). Thus 'God's ὀργή' is 'a mode of the divine activity that has a subordinate place behind his δικαιοσύνη' (*ibid.*, p. 98).

and the more the individual became aware of his own questionable state *vis-à-vis* God's requirement, the more the eschatological breakthrough of God's justice became for him the perfect expression of this: the promise and the law (which always failed to be carried out) contradicted each other.—Second, for Paul, the eschatological act of reconciliation has been done by God alone, in the sacrifice of Christ (Rom 3.25), who was made 'sin' in the place of all (2 Cor 5.21, 14f.), and was made a 'curse' (Gal 3.13), who indeed freely made himself a curse (Gal 2.20), and this has been attested in the whole world through the Resurrection (which for a Jew was likewise conceivable only in eschatological terms) and through the official proclamation of this. This is why Paul speaks of the 'righteousness of God' which has dawned in Christ, in the language of Jewish apocalyptic, which looked forward to this eschatological justification, and indeed (in the Hodayoth of Qumran) could already proleptically pray for it in advance, and consider that it had received it. But when the event of the resurrection of Christ has taken place and marches with the power of God through the world in the apostolic kerygma, the eschatological event of the righteousness of God which raises the dead takes on a presence quite different from its presence for Jewish apocalyptic, a presence which has become a proleptic participation ('down payment') in the 'kingdom of God' (Rom 14.17 and frequently) through the incorporation of the believer in the Church once for all through baptism and ever anew through the experience of the Holy Spirit who is bestowed. Nevertheless, for Paul (unlike the enthusiasts of Corinth), this is not an incorporation into the (Jewish) eschaton of the Resurrection (of Christ), but incorporation into the (Christian) eschaton of God's salvific *act* in Christ, i.e. into the *event* of his dying and rising. Faith and baptism incorporate into this event (Rom 6.3ff.; 1 Cor 11.26),[7] and it is in this event that the Christian plays his role in the eschatological struggle for the righteousness of God in the world; and yet, since he is only *in via*, one who has *been* seized but has not *himself* yet seized

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[7] Also the passages drawn from sacramental contexts: Rom 3.23ff. (eucharist); 5.8f.; 1 Cor 6.11.

(Phil 3.12, 9), he works out his salvation in fear and trembling (Phil 2.12), refrains from judging himself, and leaves to the Lord alone the judgment about his fidelity in being with Christ the Lord and being configured to him (1 Cor 4.2–4). Precisely because the believer (as one who has been justified) is conformed to the 'sufferings of Christ' (2 Cor 1.5), he remains tied to the 'suffering of this age of the world' (Rom 8.18) and to the mortality of all that is of the flesh (Rom 8.10); he is not yet as a whole person in the eternal life where he proleptically lives in spirit. The almost dialectical formulae of Paul, which allow the 'judgment in accordance with works'[8] (and thus the possible ὀργή) to remain a real possibility for those who have been taken hold of by God's definitive act of righteousness, are best illuminated by the Johannine affirmation that the Father has handed over all judgment to the Son (Jn 5.22), and that the believers are not freed automatically and passively through the Cross from the judgment of wrath, but are much more positively given the dignity and the requirement of configuration to Christ, and that the free Lord of the judgment remains free to judge the manner in which this configuration has been lived.[9]—Third, it must be noted along the line of the continuity from the Old Testament to Paul that the *sedaka* of God, the establishing of his justice in the covenant and in the cosmos as a whole, is (as has been demonstrated)[10] absolutely a real, existing mastery that is immanent in the world, which as such does not exclude his free exaltation above the world but is rather the specifically Israelite characteristic of the concept (going beyond, without contradicting, the general oriental concept of the 'immanent righteousness').[11] When Paul speaks of God's act in Christ to bring about justification, it is on the basis of the same unity of justice that both has its own existence and is laid down in sovereign freedom; indeed, the reality of the man Jesus Christ, who bears the real sin of the world and, as the one who is risen, inaugurates the real new aeon, transplants from the outset the human person who is 'declared righteous' into a sphere that has its existence and brings about its own effects.[12] We must add that God's justifying Word, within which the Christ-event is set, comes upon the human person with the entire power of the divine activity, and the Spirit of God begins at baptism to dwell in him as an equally real divine power. The act whereby God's justifying act in Christ takes possession of man is therefore at the same time also the *sanctification* of the man (Rom 6.19), and both are carried out through Christ (1 Cor 1.30). Thereby God's activity has given the human person within himself the correspondence to his activity, but the question remains open how human freedom will relate to this free and gracious deed of God.

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[8] Rom 3.5; 11.20ff.; 14.10ff.; 1 Cor 1.8; 3.8, 12ff.; 4.4f.; 5.5; 9.23ff.; 10.11f.; 2 Cor 1.14; 5.10; 6.1; 11.15; Gal 6.7ff.; 1 Thess 3.13.

[9] At the point where the apparent dialectic of Paul's statements about the righteousness of God (as pure governance of salvation and nevertheless as a discerning act of judging that cannot be bribed) places the Protestants in an ever new dilemma (*cf.* W. Joest, *Gesetz und Freiheit*, 3rd edn. 1961, p. 176), stands for the Catholics the doctrine of purgatory, which can be said to formulate the abiding dimension of sternness within the judgment of the grace of Christ. Fundamentally (despite all exegetical reservations) this doctrine is expressed at 1 Cor 3.12–15, *cf.* especially v. 15: 'If his work is burnt up, he will suffer loss; although he himself will be saved, it will only be as through fire'.

[10] III/2,1, p. 152.

2. This is the question of *faith*. In order to answer it, one

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[11] 'Fundamental for the Old Testament understanding of justice . . . is the correspondence between concepts of being and of justice, as one can easily recognise in the broad spectrum of meaning of *sdk*(*h*) and *mspt*': Stuhlmacher, op. cit., p. 217. H. Gese attempts to show that the concept of a 'sphere of action' of God in the world 'accomplishing destiny' is a notion commonly held in the near east: *Lehre und Wirklichkeit in der alten Weisheit. Studien zu den Sprüchen Salomos und zu dem Buche Hiob* (1958). The historical freedom of the covenant God who establishes justice is clothed by the prophets in the concept of a 'lawsuit' (E. von Waldow: 'Der traditionsgeschichtliche Hintergrund der prophetischen Gerichtsreden', in: *BZAW* 85, 1963), but this does not mean that a purely forensic act of administering justice was arrived at: the background remains the 'reliable' covenantal fidelity of Yahweh to Israel, a fidelity which includes the entire cosmos (*cf.* Pss 96–98). On the world-historical dimension of the righteousness of God, *cf.* C. Müller, *Gottes Gerechtigkeit und Gottes Volk. Eine Untersuchung zu Rö 9–11*, in: FRLANT 86 (1964).

[12] Stuhlmacher insists on this point: op. cit., pp. 217–220.

cannot for a moment presuppose (as in the Old Testament) that the archetypal law-giving freedom of the covenant God and its image in the freedom of the creaturely partner stand in a direct relationship over against each other; the supremely decisive fact is that the free initiative of the grace of God, who reconciles the world with himself, includes the free self-giving of the incarnate Son of God, who 'loved me and gave himself for me' (Gal 2.20) and 'became a curse for our sake' (Gal 3.13). Paul without any doubt holds that these words denote a real, existent event: 'For the love of Christ embraces us on all sides. We must judge thus: if one has died for all, then all have died, and he died for all in order that the living may no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised' (2 Cor 5.14f.). Naturally, this 'judgment' presupposes that the one who died was not just anyone who happened to have the idea of dying out of love for the others, but the pre-existent one who 'although rich, became poor for your sake, so that through his poverty you might become rich' (2 Cor 8.9); this means that this love, which practised renunciation and was obedient even to death on the Cross (Phil 2.6ff.), had the power to take upon itself for God sin and curse, antecedent to our awareness and consent (Rom 5.8), and to 'embrace' us all in his love 'on every side' (συνέχειν) through this effective act. On the basis of this state of affairs, Paul's 'judgment' affirms first what is the case, and then what ought to be the case: in the Cross of Christ, we *have* died, and since this is so, we must also ratify it: we have been deprived of our egoistic and sinful self; when we acknowedge this act of God in Christ and submit to it, 'giving God the glory' (Rom 4.20), we do not make any further 'contribution' to God's act but merely accord it its own space and give it the right that it already has (as God's right over us). This acceptance of God's action is called faith. When this right is announced by the Christ who speaks (and gives proof of himself in his sign), then faith (as in John) is the obedience that hands oneself over to him; if this right is proclaimed in the word of preaching (which bears the power of God in itself and gives proof of itself in the signs of the Spirit), then faith (as in Paul) is obedience to the gospel:

ὑπακοή πίστεως (Rom 1.5; 16.26). But this obedience does not take its measure against the power of the human person who makes space, nor against his willingness to work: its measure is the power of God's act of reconciliation, which takes as the 'means of atonement' (Rom 3.25) the hypostatic obedience of the Son of God, his *kenosis* or *diastasis*—what we have called in the first part his yielding-up of himself. It is only this fact—that faith, as the acceptance (brought about by God himself) that God works in us, has christological measurements and dimensions—that brings about the correspondence which God had established in the new covenant between his righteousness in him and in us, and truly sets in motion our configuration to God's image, which is the Son.

One can pose the question of the ultimate nature of the might and power with which God arms the word of proclamation and its sacramental seal in baptism, so that it will have in itself the force to bring about the obedience and the abandonment of self on the part of the one who hears it. Paul and John reply without any concealment. It is the might and power of the love of God (Rom 8.39), which has proleptically reconciled us with himself in Christ's vicarious sacrifice and which bears down upon us in the apostolic demand that we let ourselves be reconciled to God (2 Cor 5.20), not with the force of a logical conclusion that the hearer is to draw, but with the insistency of a conclusion that has already been truly drawn and established by God. Nevertheless, this force does not work from outside to overwhelm the hearer, but works from within to give light and conviction, because it is the force of the absolute love of God, behind which there is no higher logical court of appeal, and which accordingly is pure freedom and transposes into pure freedom the one who is convinced (and obeys). But in order for this liberation of the human person whom God loves to be accomplished perfectly, his own obedient *fiat* of faith, allowing God to act, is needed: it is here that justification attains its goal. If the human person wishes to come into the truth that is his own, he must acknowledge what God once and for all and irrevocably has 'laid down' καθιστάναι, Rom 5.19) for man to be. This truth encounters him in the proclamation of the absolute power of God in the absolute powerlessness of the crucified—the power of love together with its proof—and this requires first of all, not a 'work' of answering love, but the pure submission ὑποτάσσεσθαι, Rom 10.3) of faith, no matter how true it is that it is always the absolute love itself that brings about this act of obedience in man and motivates him. This is why, in the parable of marriage in Eph 5, the Church as bride is required to 'submit' (5.24) to the measurelessness of the love that is shown her, just as the *fiat* of the handmaiden (Lk 1.38) is required of Mary who is the true believer (11.28), and this is why, for Paul, the 'faith that moves mountains' is 'nothing' without love (1 Cor 13.2); for this surely means that this faith could never begin to come into being at all without love (which responds to the absolute love in seeing and 'judging': 2 Cor 5.14).

With the love of God 'faith comes' (Gal 3.23, 25) as an eschatological event into the world,[13] objectively present beforehand and embedded in God's activity in Christ and in his word of proclamation to such a degree that the act of faith in the word is nothing other than the acceptance of what his 'fashioning power'[14] brings with it. The 'once for all' of this fashioning power, which cannot be expressed either in the transient word of an Apostle's proclamation or in the transient word of obedience of a hearer who is ready to believe, is held fast by the unrepeatable act of baptism into the existence of faith, an act that bestows a character: this act is a participation in the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, bestowal in him of the quality of a child of God, and bestowal of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6.11). The eucharist perfects the movement of faith, not as a 'work' whereby one conforms oneself to Christ, but as an act of abandonment whereby one lets oneself be configured into the form of Christ (1 Cor 10.16f.).

Paul (and the letter to the Hebrews following him) now dares to base the whole dispensation of the old covenant proleptically on the eschatological faith: by believing in a God who can awaken to life what is dead (his mortified body) and give being to what does not exist, he anticipates faith in Christ. Hebrews prolongs the line through the entire old covenant from Abel, Enoch and Noah to the prophets and the Maccabees (ch. 11): it is always faith in God (who establishes his definitive salvation in Christ), and Christ himself appears here as 'pioneer and perfecter of faith' (12.2), underlining once again the christological dimension[15] (which for Paul and John is to be required) and the integration within christology of the biblical act of faith. The term (first used by Deissman)[16] 'genitivus mysticus' applied to the πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is correct as regards the intentionality of the phrase, because the act of faith, for all its freedom, is only the admission of what God has accomplished and established in Christ (and therefore continues to work powerfully). But it is precisely the antecedent character of God's activity that justifies the objective form of faith as word, and indeed as teaching:[17] this activity of God in Christ is so rich and has so many aspects that it can legitimately be put into ever new theological propositions.

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[13] O. Michel, *Römer*, p. 41.

[14] H. Schlier, *Galater*, p. 90.

3. The door through which faith leads opens on to such a superabundance of realities, all of which express in mutual compenetration the ultimate goal of justifying grace and of faith—(eternal) life, existence as a sharing in God, the pouring-out of the Holy Spirit, knowledge of the revealed

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[15] I repeat once again that the 'obedience of faith' (Rom 1.5) in Christian terms (as opposed to the Jewish 'work') exists only because it has its first objective presupposition in the absolute (kenotic) obedience of the Son of God, and because the second objective presupposition follows immediately from the first: thanks to his kenotic obedience, the Son of God is capable of letting his existence be determined by the Father as the bearing of 'our' ('my') utterly real guilt and unrighteousness. No matter how great the human limitations of the unconditional acknowledgment by the hearer of the word of this prior event may seem 'psychologically', the centre of gravity of this acknowledgment lies outside itself and it knows that it is both determined and brought about by this centre of gravity.

[16] *Paulus* (2nd edn. 1925), p. 125.

[17] O. Kuss, op. cit. p. 135, has emphasised that the Christian faith is *also* (though not only) 'faith *that* something is the case'.

depths of God, etc.—that we are obliged here to make a strict selection of the texts in accordance with our guiding idea of a theological aesthetics. Although it is certainly true that everything that is to be said here is governed by the 'eschatological reservation', which never permits us, as persons showered with the riches of God, to do more than 'go towards' complete possession, nevertheless it is equally true that we are required to 'stand fast', to 'persevere', to 'remain' in what is given us as an 'abiding' (because eschatological) good.[1] Then will 'the God of all grace, who has called you in Christ to eternal glory, after you have suffered a little, also restore, establish, strengthen and settle you' (1 Pet 5.10). The one who goes onward and remains does not establish himself in his steadfastness: he is established by the steadfastness that is God himself. For all is *grace*: being called, being addressed by the gospel, coming to faith and entering upon the goods of faith through the baptism that confers stability and through the ever greater stabilising of the Christian life. But if faith was the act of making space for the gift of God, the Son who has been given up, then he is it who entered into the believer with the dimensions of his being as one who has been given up and with his own self-yielding. The language about 'remaining', and correspondingly about 'indwelling', is reversed: the believer remains and dwells in Christ and in God only because Christ and God dwell in him and remain in him,[2] the formulae of indwelling become reciprocal,[3] and to this extent they are unique, especially in John,[4] because they presuppose the trinitarian revelation of the inmost depth of God for the believer who makes space in himself: more precisely, they presuppose the identity of the love between Father and Son both in the separation (which allows the obedience of faith to be conformed to the obedience of Christ) and in the abolition of this separation. It is only thus that the double formulae of immanence can be set up: 'I in them, you in me' (Jn 17.23): 'as the Father has loved me, I have loved you. Remain in my love: if you keep my commandments, you remain in my love, as I too remain in the love of my Father, since I have kept his commandments' (15.9f.).

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[1] Jesus himself is the 'way' (Jn 14.6; *cf.* G. Söhngen, *Der Weg der abendländischen Theologie*, 1959), and the way along which he walks is prepared for him by the Baptist. Thus, the Christian too must '*walk*': in love (Eph 5.2; 1 Jn 2.6), in wisdom (Col 4.5), in newness of life (Rom 6.4), in the Spirit (Rom 8.4), in a manner worthy of God (1 Thess 2.12), of the Lord (Col 1.10), of his vocation (Eph 4.1), etc.

But one also *stands* in firmness and constancy in the reality that has been received: in the gospel that has been received (1 Cor 15.1–2); one 'perseveres' in the grace of God (Acts 13.43; 11.23) and 'is given a place in the true grace of God' (1 Pet 5.12), and remains 'standing firm' in it (Rom 5.2). It is, of course, also possible to 'fall out of grace' (Gal 5.4), and one must therefore take care to 'persevere' in it (Acts 14.22), one must examine whether one is still in it (2 Cor 13.5), one must hold fast to it (Rom 11.20; 1 Cor 16.13; 2 Cor 1.24), and above all *remain*: in the light (1 Jn 2.10), in Jesus' word (Jn 8.31), in the love of Jesus (Jn 15.9, 10), in the vine (15.4f.), in the teaching (2 Jn 9), in faith and love (1 Tim 2.15), etc.

The indwelling of Father and Son in the believers is the direct result of the love (Jn 14.23) to which faith provided access, by knowing, acknowledging and accepting this love, this indwelling is the fulfilment of what was only externally accomplished in the old covenant in the indwelling of God's glory in the tent of the covenant and in the Temple. Now, the believers have become the true temple of God, both as the Church[5] and as individuals;[6] but this image is less prominent than images of what is living and spiritual: the images of water that wells up and flows,[7] of growth and bearing fruit,[8] of the gift of the divine Spirit himself to the believers,[9] and ultimately the image of being born of God.[10] The sources of the images run into one another in Paul's exuberant language: the words that express the 'superabundance' (ὑπερπερισσεύειν, Rom 5.20; ὑπερπλεονάζειν, 1 Tim 1.14) merge the ideas of 'springing up' and 'growing' into one another, and in the antithesis of the old and the new Adam (Rom 5) the latter can be expressed only in ever new expressions of profusion, of preponderance, of the priority that can no longer be measured and that shatters all proportion. The word 'fullness', 'full', 'being filled' πληροφορία, 1 Thess 1.5; Col 2.2; Heb 10.22) is frequently used to denote this superabundance. The images from nature (flowing water and light, growing life) transcend themselves into the two definitive descriptions of the perfected justification of God in his covenant with the world: the communication of his Spirit to the hearts of the believers, and their being born of the Father together with the Son. Since the creature (as 'nature') is completely indwelt there in its inmost depth by God's triune divinity ('supernature'), so that the image becomes the space in which the archetype dwells and develops its power as grace (δύναμις—χάρις),[11] it is meaningless to attempt to exclude carefully every collaboration of the creature's freedom within the indwelling divine freedom, in order to avoid any appearance of synergism. For God's affirmation of his creature in the accomplishment of his covenant does not in the least aim at bringing the powers of the creature to silence and replacing

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[2] The Word of God *remains* in you (1 Jn 2.14; Jn 8.31; 15.7); what has been heard from the beginning (1 Jn 2.24), the anointing (2.27), the seed of God (3.9), the love of God (4.18), God (4.12, 15, 16), the truth (2 Jn 2), the God of Christ (2 Jn 9).

[3] Jn 6.56; 15.4,5,7; 1 Jn 3.24; 4.13,15,16.

[4] R. Schnackenburg, *Johannesbriefe* p. 93.

[5] 2 Cor 6.16; 1 Pet 2.5.

[6] 1 Cor 3.16f.; 6.19; Rom 8.9; 2 Tim 1.14; *cf.* Gal 4.6.

[7] Jn 4.10,13f.; 7.38; 19.34; 1 Jn 5.6ff. The image of pouring out is found in the prophets (Is 32.15; 44.3; 55.1; 58.11; Joel 3.1f.; Ezek 36.25; 37.5,14; 39.29; Zech 12.10; 13.1; 14.8); it is taken over for the gift of Pentecost (Acts 2.33; *cf.* 10.45) and is used decisively for the pouring out of the love of God in our hearts through the communication of the Holy Spirit: Rom 5.5.

[8] Beginning with the Synoptic evangelists' parables of growth, and including the image of the vine in John and the numerous mentions of

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growth and abundance in the Christian life: grace must grow (Rom 5.15, 17, 20; 6.1; 15.13; 2 Cor 4.15; 8.7; 9.8; Eph 1.8; 1 Tim 1.14); likewise faith (2 Cor 8.7; 2 Thess 1.3), love (2 Thess 1.3), justice (Mt 5.20; *cf.* 13.12), knowledge (Phil 1.9), and joy (2 Cor 7.4; 8.2; *cf.* further: 10.15; Eph 2.21; 4.15; Col 1.6,10; 2.19; 1 Pet 2.2; 2 Pet 3.18).

[9] Rom 5.5; 1 Thess 4.8; 1 Cor 2.16; 3.16.

[10] Jn 1.13; 3.5f.; Tit 3.5; and on this basis, all the passages that call Christians the children (sons) of God.

[11] Both are often mentioned together: 2 Thess 1.11f.; 2 Tim 1.8f.; 2.1; Stephen is 'full of χάρις δυνάμις and (Acts 6.8). Paul is a servant of the gospel 'in accordance with the gift of the grace of God' which was 'given' him 'in keeping with the power of his might': Eph 3.7. Paul prays that the thorn in his flesh may be taken away; the Lord replies, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is revealed in weakness' (2 Cor 12.9).

them: rather, his aim is to empower them through the indwelling of his own working to an activity that lies beyond any capacity of their own for working.[12] For the 'new man created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness' (Eph 4.24), God at the same time 'prepares in advance good works in which we are to make progress' (Eph 2.10).

The full accomplishment of the covenant, and thus the full correspondence, becomes possible only when the immanent Trinity becomes the economic Trinity: when, therefore, the righteousness (*sedek*) of the Old Testament, as a relatedness affecting the whole of man's being, is transcendended and deepened to a communication to the creature of the relationality of the triune life which affects the whole of being within the Godhead. For, in God, the relationship of the Father and the Son in the Spirit of God is his very being. If—through the kenotic obedience of the Son which went to the point of breathing out his Spirit—faith is given access to God to the point of being born with the Son from the Father and of participation in the Spirit of the Father and the Son (Rom 8.9f.), then grace too rises up above the antithesis between relationship and being. The condition for this unheard-of process is that it should take place while one is walking: viz., while one walks along the way of the Son together with him: the Spirit confirms to us, when we cry 'Abba', that we are children of the Father and fellow-heirs with the Son, and so it is necessary only 'to share in his sufferings, in order to be glorified together with him' (Rom 8.15ff.). Since, in God, being (φύσις, 2 Pet 1.4) and being spirit (consciousness, personal life) are one, the element of knowledge, as experience in which appropriation is made (γνῶσις, ἐπίγνωσις and correspondingly of responsibility for the gift of grace, plays a major role in the communication of the divine life through grace. This does not take the form of a gnostic particular knowledge, but occurs as the self-actualisation in prayer and existence of the ever wider dimensions of the gift that has been received (Eph 3.18f.), and this is possible only in the Holy Spirit (1 Jn 3.24; 4.13), who knows the depths of the Godhead (1 Cor 2.16,11; 12.8), but must be related essentially to the dimensions of the separation within God, to the Cross and Resurrection (Phil 3.10f.). This knowledge thus always remains bound to the act of faith: both proceed together (Jn 6.69; 8.31f.; 10.38; 16.30; 17.7f., etc.).

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[12] The fact that Paul is weak in Christ and in his crucifixion, while God's word shows itself to be vigorously alive in his proclamation (2 Cor 13.4), does not exclude, but rather includes the fact that he has committed all his powers in carrying out his ministry and has worn himself out as parents do for their children (2 Cor 12.15).

Viewed from the point of knowledge, the unutterable transcendence of boundaries by which God enters the creature, the ineffable dialogue within our spirit between divine Spirit and human spirit (Rom 8.16; 1 Jn 5.9ff.), is once again seen to contain an element of distance (in the midst of profusion that goes beyond all measure) which in turn sets down a certain measure. The primary reason for this is not that the creature, feeling itself to be unworthy of the greatness of the gift, would distance itself (*cf.* Lk 5.8; Jn 13.8), but that the one who makes the gift makes an appropriate—measured—allocation precisely in the act of communication. Here we see the essence of the New Testament Church in its particularity, as distinct from the people of the Old Testament which was God's partner. The individual believer, who is so utterly overwhelmed by the gift of God's grace, never experiences this overwhelming in a private manner, but as an act by which he is expropriated and given a new relationship, out beyond his own sphere, to the Church as a whole. But since, thanks to baptism and the eucharist, the Church is the 'body of Christ', what takes place is both the expropriation of the original faith itself, which is now seen in a social context, and the expropriation of love in favour of the brothers, an expropriation which is simultaneously vertical and horizontal. The Church, which is at once both the body of Christ and the people of God, is the unity—always existing *a priori* and indissoluble—of both expropriations and hence of both ministries. The Greek aesthetical concept of measure μέτρον and rule κανών take on a meaning in the New Testament that is coined afresh from the innermost trinitarian-ecclesiological depths.—Whereas the mission of the Son (and therein his Spirit bestowed on him by the Father) is 'without measure' (Jn 3.34),[13] the mission is measured out to the individual as 'grace in accordance with the measure of the gift of Christ' (Eph 4.7), thus expressing both Christ's free sovereignty over the body and the allocation of the member to its role in the building-up of the body as a whole. Accordingly, 'no one is to have thoughts above what is appropriate (δεῖ), each one in keeping with the measure of faith which God has assigned to him' (Rom 12.3): this cannot mean an internal limitation of faith, but must rather indicate its personal specification by the freedom of the God who distributes it and by the aim of the ecclesial ministry. But all ministerial graces (χαρίσματα) are subsumed together by the 'analogy of faith' (12.6), in terms of which the one and indivisible entire faith of the Church shades off by analogy in the individuals,[14] in favour of the very unity which exists and is coming into being (εις τὴν ἑνότητα, Eph 4.13). The eschatological integration as the 'fullness of Christ' itself receives a measurement (μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ χριστοῦ, Eph 4.13) from the apportionings that are made of what is in itself measureless, and this permits us to understand the images in Old and New Testaments of the measuring of the holy eschatological city (Rev 11.1; 21.15–17; following Ezek 40.3,5ff.). One understands, too, precisely the correspondance between the heavenly (angelic) unit of measurement and the human unit of measurement (Rev 21.17), which produces in the act of measuring a completely equal measure in length, breadth and height (v. 16; *cf.* Eph 3.18). The correspondence between the heavenly and the earthly unit of measurement ultimately explains Lk 6.36–38, where we are promised a 'measure that is shaken down, flowing over', but in such a way that we shall be measured at the judgment with the same measure which we have employed for measuring: 'Do not judge, and so you will not be judged . . . forgive, and so you will be forgiven'. This depends on the foregoing requirement of lending without expecting anything in return, in keeping with the way in which 'your Father is merciful': the measureless abundance of the grace of God becomes the measure for the Christian; charisms are not mentioned here, but rather the entire allocation of the love of God in Christ, which however contains within the gift the requirement which corresponds to it.[15]

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[13] Unlike the missions of the prophets, to whom God had imparted his *ruach* in a measured manner: Billerbeck ad loc.; Deissner, *TDNT* IV 634, n. 11.

[14] It is at this point that the limitation of Paul's 'boasting' is to be drawn. Unlike the self-praising of his adversaries, Paul's 'boasting' may not go beyond measure, but must be 'in accordance with the measure of the area allotted to me' (κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τοῦ κανόνος), to which however the Corinthians belong: 2 Cor 10.13. If their faith increases in Paul's κανών (v. 15), he will be able to carry the gospel out even beyond the present area, without wishing to boast in the new field (κανών) of the works that have already been performed there (v. 16). There is thus no other possibility of Christian self-estimation that the mission, which discloses itself, *not* in a comparison with itself (v. 12), but becomes tangible on the one hand in the grace allotted by God, and on the other hand in the course it takes within the field of work. *Cf.* K. Prümm, *Diakonia Pneumatos*, I (1967), pp. 588f.—At Gal 6.16, however, κανών is the universal Christian (and thereby 'blessed') guiding principle that the pre-Christian territorial divisions between Judaism and paganism have fallen away, and that in the area thus opened up nothing now rules other than 'faith made effective through love' (Gal 5.6).

This whole possibility of combining the measureless profusion of grace on the one hand and allocation and measure on the other hand is the decisively Christian element in a theological aesthetics, because its essential basis is the inner Trinity of God and the coming-forth of this Trinity in the Incarnation.[16] Thereby, all the religious concepts of measure contained in the Old Testament are taken up and superseded: the idea that the world, which God 'has ordered according to number, weight and measure' (Wis 11.20), and whose measurements only God knows (Is 40.12; Job 28.25; 38.5), already depends on a condescension of his omnipotence and superior power, i.e. determines a background of grace and mercy;[17] further, the idea that God insists on the use of the right measure and weight, precisely *vis-à-vis* the poor (Amos 8.4ff.; Mic 6.10f.; Lev 19.35f.; Deut 25.14f.; Prov 11.1; 20.10), because his truthfulness is fundamentally one with his mercy; and finally, the precise prescriptions of measure for the cult: the numbers that are imparted bear in themselves something of the order of God, for they correspond to the archetype of the divine sanctuary seen by Moses in Heaven (Ex 35ff.) and to the eschatological temple seen by Ezekiel (Ezek 40ff.); only, in the New Testament, these numbers become the expression of the living missions of the saints, and the measurements of the heavenly Jerusalem are the measurements of the living eschatological bride of the Lamb.

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[15] There are some rabbinic parallels to the retributive measurement in accordance with works (*cf.* Billerbeck, I, pp. 444f.), but the relationship of this 'measuring judgment' to the absolute mercy of God in Christ is new.

[16] On this, *cf.* the remarks of Karl Barth, quoted at the beginning, about the beauty of God in his Trinity and his Incarnation: *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, II/1, pp. 741ff. (ET *Church Dogmatics*, II/1, pp. 657ff.); C. Spicq, 'Grâce et Beauté', in: *Théologie Morale du NT*, I (1965), pp. 146–153.

At the end of this unfolding of the concept of glory, starting from word and image and arriving at righteousness, the concepts of the *beauty* of revelation inherent in this concept have come clearly into view. God's capacity for expression communicated itself both as a measurelessness of life welling up and light sparkling from the depths, and also as a fullness of order and measure. These are the concepts which were our original point of departure[18] and which have accompanied us through all the historical transformations of theological and philosophical aesthetics. The two poles of tension of the beautiful—the inner light and the outer form—are best embraced by the biblical concept of appropriateness: πρέπει, πρέπον ἐστίν reinforced in δεῖ, δέον ἐστίν to take on an inner rightness which bears its evident character in itself and can be and can appear in no other form because of its own law and being. We know and remember how Anselm made this 'free necessity' the supporting pillar of his theological aesthetics, but also how Hegel removed it from the biblical sphere and gave it a new, purely philosophical meaning. At his baptism, Jesus wants what is 'seemly' to take place (Mt 3.15). But God too brings about what is 'seemly', when he wills to lead Jesus, as the author of the salvation of all God's sons, to perfection through the Passion (Heb 2.10), and again he held it to be 'fitting' that this high priest should not come from the number of sinners, but should be holy, guiltless and pure (Heb 7.26). Likewise, however, it is 'fitting' for the 'saints', the Christians, that things like fornication and impurity or greed should not even be named among them (Eph 5.3).[19] Δεῖ is stronger because in most cases it explicitly includes the hard law of the necessity of suffering even to the point of the Cross and Hell as the centre of God's free salvific will.[20] In the background stands the 'eschatological-apocalyptic' element determined by God, which must take place, not because of a necessity within history, but because of the ultimate intention of God which gives all history its finality in view of its goal. 'The Son of Man must suffer much' (Mk 8.31 par., Lk 17.25). With this 'must', Jesus draws his little flock with him along his way, as far as this is possible. At Easter, he explains the meaning of what has happened on the basis of this 'must' (Lk 24.7, 26f., 44f.). For John, who sees everything from the viewpoint of the 'hour', everything disposes itself around the 'hour' with this kind of free necessity.[21] Nothing can be more free than the Logos of God, since God is his own freely ruling norm both in himself and in his self-revelation. But likewise, no logic can be more necessary than the absolute Logos, since every logic has its origin in him. Therefore God's self-revelation, precisely at the point where it goes into the Cross and Hell, must knock down before itself all innerworldly concepts of the beautiful, and then, by transcending them in a sovereign manner, give them norm and fulfilment.

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[17] *Cf.* the context of Wis 11.20!

[18] Vol. I, pp. 20f.

'Beauty' means here that God succeeds in his revelation in justifying both himself and his creatures in one and the same act: and this, not *ab extra*, but in such a way that he can 'set' his law 'in the depth of the being' of these creatures and 'write it on their heart' (Jer 31.33). Through the obedience of the Son and the obedience of faith which was brought about thereby, through this double total self-yielding to God, it became possible for God to insert his law of eternal life in the heart of the realm of death and desolation, and to make out of death the resurrection of the dead. Only then is God's lawsuit with the world decided in his favour, only then do his righteousness and his will reign on earth as in Heaven. Only then can God's lordship over the world be not only the sublimity of his self-portrayal (in the gospel), but his eschatological glory.

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[19] On what is especially appropriate for women, *cf.* 1 Tim 2.10; 1 Cor 1.13.

[20] E. Fascher, 'Theologische Betrachtungen über δεῖ': Festschrift R. Bultmann, *ZNW Beiheft* 21 (1954). K. H. Schelkle, *Die Passion Jesu* (1949), pp. 109ff. Further bibiliography: *ibid.*, p. 111, n. 65.

[21] 3.7,14,30; 4.4,20; 9.4; 10.16; 12.34; 20.9. In Acts: 1.16; 3.21 (Peter); 17.3 (Paul).

But this chapter, whose purpose is to unfold the content of 'glory', has not yet brought us to this point; otherwise, we should be at the end of our investigation. We have only reached the point at which, through the establishing of God's righteousness in the Cross and Resurrection of Christ, *his* victory has been won in principle and can be proclaimed. We ourselves, however, are still *in via* towards this definitive victory of God. The eschatological glory shines on us proleptically, but we only walk towards it—in tribulation, threatened from without and within. Therefore the image of the hidden Son of Man, going towards his Cross, remains just as relevant for us as the image of the glorified Son of Man. In our exegesis, we have portrayed the impact of the Cross as the appearing of the glory of God by means of an anticipatory move: we have contemplated the Cross from the standpoint of the final interpreter, John, and we have given Paul's doctrine of salvation its place within the framework of this exegesis. If the entire picture of the New Testament is not to be falsified, we must complete this in two directions. First, we must take the step back to the Synoptic Jesus, precisely to the extent that he is the Jesus before Easter, not yet glorified, in order to look forwards from that standpoint through Paul to John. Then, in the third part of this investigation, we must consider the Christian response of man to God, in its appropriateness to the whole kerygma: the way in which man has to glorify the glory of the love of God in his existence, without himself being in the glory of God for the present.

3. HIDDENNESS

We must go back to the beginning. In order to grasp the impact of the representation of God in the Cross of Jesus, we were concerned there with the first origin of the *kabod* of Yahweh. It was only the impact that met the Son; no mighty splendour shone out from the event itself. Then we leapt over to the end, which is the opposite of this: the Johannine interpretation of the entire event of the Incarnation as the trinitarian δόξα that surpasses and rounds off all splendour. In the light of this uttermost point, the content of the cipher 'glory' in the New Testament was unfolded: divine self-expression (word), self-representation (image), self-realisation in the other (righteousness as grace). But a gulf yawns between the impact of the naked Cross and this developed theology, and we must now turn our attention to this, in order to follow the historical process of what is absolutely inglorious in the 'form of a slave' (Phil 2.7), so that we can see that this lack of glory is what the 'form of a slave' wishes to make present, displaying it only through its absolute hiddenness. And what discloses itself more and more here—to the point where John describes it as vision—loses nothing of its hiddenness thereby. God is incomprehensible, and the more he offers himself to our understanding mind, the more his incomprehensibility grows. *Comprehendit incomprehensibile esse.*[1] This is true, no longer as a theorem of negative theology in general, but of the most concrete theology of all, which Paul calls the 'folly of God' in the Cross of Christ (1 Cor 1.25).

a. Hidden life

1. Just as the concept of *kabod*/δόξα runs through the Old Testament, so the concept of δόξα runs through all strata of the New Testament, and both have the characteristic of

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[1] [He understands that it is incomprehensible]: Anselm, *Monologion* 64 (Schmitt I, 75, 11–12). *Cf.* Vol. II, p. 231.

eluding every direct representation.[2] Even the Jewish replacement of δόξα by the *shekinah* (presence dwelling near at hand), and the replacement of this term, which seemed to be still too concrete, by 'word' (*memra*) and 'name', bears witness to the increasing certainty that God's glory, which in Ezekiel left the Temple, had not come back into the new buildings: the presence of the δόξα will be messianic-apocalyptic. In Daniel, the Son of Man is given 'glory and kingdom' (7.14 Th) and 'authority' (7.14 LXX), and in the Similitudes of Enoch he sits as judge on the throne of glory.[3] There can be no doubt that the oldest Synoptic logia about glory, linking δόξα with the Son of Man in a wholly future-eschatological manner, have their starting-point here: Mk 8.38; 13.26; (14.62 par.), and, with the same conception, Mk 10.37; Mt 25.31; 19.28. Jesus did not claim *doxa* for his earthly life—especially as he even makes a distinction at Mk 8.38 between his present self and the coming Son of Man—nor did his disciples attribute this to him. But in Luke we see God's glory breaking in on all sides up to and even beyond the limits of Jesus' earthly life, and we must ask whether Luke is stating something objectively new in this, or is merely making explicit something that was present without being mentioned in Mark (and Matthew) too. The visible *kabod* of God shines around the shepherds by means of the Christmas angel (2.9), and the heavenly hosts give glory to God on high (2.13f.). At the royal entry of the Messiah into Jerusalem, the crowd once again praises this divine glory in the highest (19.38). And certainly, when Luke has Mary 'overshadowed' by the Holy Spirit, he is thinking of the cloud of the *kabod* over the tent of the covenant and over the Temple; and when Jesus is presented in the Temple, there takes place for Luke the eschatological re-entry of the divine glory of Ezekiel's vision into the sanctuary, for Simeon sings: 'My eyes have seen your glory: light for the illumination of the Gentiles, and glory of your people Israel' (2.30ff.). Further, on the mountain of the transfiguration, not only do Moses and Elijah appear 'in glory' (9.31)—that would be understandable, since they come from the region of Heaven—but the three disciples see explicitly '*his* glory', the glory of Jesus himself (9.32), a phrase that Luke has inserted with unusual emphasis in the earlier eschatological declaration too (Lk 9.26, as compared to Mk 8.38), and that will be repeated by the Risen Jesus in the conversation with the disciples on the way to Emmaus: 'Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things, and thus to enter into *his* glory? (24.26). There is but a single step from here to John. Nevertheless, Luke remains essentially at the stage of the Old Testament figure: the glory is essentially the divine sphere that breaks in and clothes round, even when Mary becomes the living tent of the covenant and Jesus the personal Temple; the boundary is crossed only at the transfiguration, which somehow seems to break forth from the interior of Jesus when he is at prayer; but this was already true in the case of Matthew, where the shining garments of Mark are amplified by means of the face shining like the sun. This small and yet significant change alerts us to the question whether Luke does not simply put a name to something that is implicitly present in all the Synoptists.

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[2] For the Old Testament, *cf.* III/2.1: Das Heute ohne Herrlichkeit, pp. 337ff., esp. p. 340.

[3] Ethiopic Enoch 45.3; 51.3; 55.4; 61.8; 62.2ff.; 69.27ff.

A. M. Ramsey points out that, for the old covenant, the start of the messianic age was thought of as indissolubly bound to the coming of the divine glory (*cf.* Is 35.1–6; 60.1, 13 etc.), and since, with Jesus, the kingdom of God is truly 'coming', indeed 'has come' (Mk 1.15; Mt 12.28 par.; 11.4–6 par.), then the status of the one as 'coming' or 'having come' must imply the same status for the other. And if Jesus saw the coming of the kingdom as bound to the necessity of his suffering, then it is fundamentally impossible to exclude the suffering from the glory of the kingdom.[4] Nevertheless there is here an element of reserve (indeed, one that is remarkable in Luke):[5] glory, as the old covenant understands and awaits it, is absolutely not an appropriate word to characterise the earthly life of Jesus. But is the reservation of the Synoptics then strong enough? Do they not, in spite of everything, look backwards from Easter and give a retrospective interpretation that pours too much paschal splendour over the life of Jesus?

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[4] A. M. Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ*: 'The synthesis of the messianic work of Christ and the Passion of Christ goes back to Christ's own teaching. If "glory" is rightly ascribed to the former, it cannot ultimately be withheld from the latter' (p. 38).

[5] Ramsey points out that while Luke expands the quotation from Is 40.3–5 beyond Mark and Matthew in order to characterise the mission of

Even if one rejects the expression 'demythologisation'—since, if one presupposes the reality of the Resurrection and of the disciples' experience of it, the interpretation of what went before in the light of the Resurrection was legitimate and necessary—there could still remain the question of a 'depaschalisation' of the accounts of Jesus' life. As we know, this is a very delicate question that can be approached only with the greatest theological tact. It is delicate because it would be necessary to carry out an exhaustively detailed examination of the extent to which, perhaps through necessity, the '*sovereignty*' of the Son of God in his lowly state—a sovereignty that was certainly present, but scarcely to be grasped in words and concepts—had to be described with the hues and forms of expression of the '*glory*' of the Old Testament and eschatology. One can think of a boundary case like Jn 18.6: is not the visible (!) sovereignty expressed here through an image of eschatological power and splendour (2 Thess 2.8)? But how can one give expression to this powerless sovereignty, that refuses to take up weapons and yet cuts down its opponents in its very powerlessness—a sovereignty that is something quite different from the Greek 'noble simplicity' or the romantic 'childlikeness'? The experience of Jesus' sovereignty in his refusal to make any display of himself or advertise himself (Jn 7.4) must have seemed so central to the disciples that they used every means at their disposal, when they began their interpretation from the starting point of the event of Cross and Resurrection, in order to make this sovereignty perceptible; they were sometimes tempted, while doing this, to trespass over the boundaries of the strict hiddenness, of the incognito. But one should always bear in mind that God's incognito in Jesus was simultaneously his appearing in Jesus' mission and task, and

the Baptist, he 'strangely omits the words: "and the glory of God shall be seen"' (op. cit., p. 37, n.).

that this unity of disclosure and concealment was absolutely unique, without any point of comparison in this world. Jesus' words were truly the words of omnipotence (Mk 13.31), of the definitive demand for decision, of the bestowal of grace and promise—concealed beneath a quite unremarkable human situation. His miracles were the true signs of the fulfilment of what had been prophesied; and yet those who saw them had to have this explicitly pointed out to them (Mt 12.27ff.); even the Baptist, with another image of fulfilment before his eyes, cannot interpret them aright because they are so ordinary (Mt 11.2–6). They will generally have been quiet miracles: their effect caused a ripple of rumours, such that people came running to see Jesus. But in this they were open to being misunderstood and were indeed wrongly interpreted, so that Jesus reacted by escaping from the place or by hushing them up (the so-called commands to be silent). Since the evangelists take different paths in their expression of the relationship between intentional hiddenness and forced disclosure, it becomes possible to distinguish cautiously between the form of expression and the content; but this also shows that the evangelists all aim at the same paradox, each in his own way. Further, when they all set the deeds and words of Jesus in the structures already provided by the Old Testament—since they subsequently came to see these as the 'fulfilment' of the Old Testament structures, which then offered the background to their understanding and the means to express them (e.g. 2 Kings 4.42ff.)—they make it clear at the same time that they discovered these connections only after Easter. Nevertheless, this does not mean that one can speak of free invention of the miracles of Jesus (which in part are found in quite different settings and intellectual contexts from the models); at most, one can speak of light stylistic touches in the presentation. The radiance of the Easter understanding has the strongest effect: it is possible for the disciples to say that they did not understand then what they understand now, but it is only with difficulty that they can give a description of it (and of themselves) in the phase in which they did not understand it—although they had seen or sensed the sovereignty, for they had indeed become disciples, had listened to Jesus as the master and had received instructions of their own over and above the general sermons to the people. They speak in approximate terms, as best they can, of the incomprehensible phenomenon of the hiddenness of Jesus that is at the heart of his openness. A literarily satisfactory restrospective formulation of the paradox was impossible a priori. It is necessary to look, from the heart of the theological mystery—which is trinitarian—at the necessity of this hiddenness, if we are to recognise that the literary reproduction is the best approximation possible.

2. Jesus' sovereignty is the appearing of the free abasement (*kenosis*) of God's glory in the lack of freedom (obedience) of the form of a slave. This lack of freedom ('not my will', throughout: Jn 6.38) must be made recognisable in the seriousness that leads to the Cross, and likewise as the consequence of the freedom of love (Jn 10.18). It was impossible to perceive and understand this unique unity (which presupposes the Trinity), and yet more impossible to slot it into categories that lay ready to hand; for this reason, it was not possible for Jesus to attribute to himself, or to accept the attribution by others as a title, of the Messiah (in the Jewish sense, even with its fullest meaning), without giving it a wholly new interpretation and amplifying it by means of completely different approximating concepts, some of which seem to say 'more'—such as that of the Danielic Son of Man who descends from heaven—and some apparently 'less', such as Isaiah's Servant of God, without form and despised, who suffers vicariously. When, after Easter, the Apostles preach to the Jews that the crucified Jesus who has appeared to them alive is the Messiah, this is 'in a quite unique sense that does not agree with the messianic understanding of late Judaism, . . . for it is obvious that Jesus himself understood his messianic condition in an unmessianic manner'. They pick up an understanding of the Messiah 'that was communicated to them in the school of Jesus only against their own resistance (*cf.* Mk 8.29, 31f. par.)'.[6] A gulf yawns

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[6] F. Mussner, 'Der "historische Jesus" (1960), in: *Praesentia Salutis. Gesammelte Studien zu Fragen und Themen des NT* (1967), pp. 74–75. *Cf.* in the

between Jesus' claim ('But I say to you') and his 'messianic condition': a necessity existed, like the necessary link between promise and fulfilment, but there was also a sovereign freedom that was obedient to the Father alone, and not to the historical structures of the prophecies. It was precisely this freedom—as the superiority to all the forms (or figures) made ready by the old covenant—that allowed him to be at one and the same time the 'superior form' that embraces all 'forms' in itself and 'the lack of form' that disappoints on the basis of the conceptions previously shaped; but Jesus is not here something that is formless and dissolving, but rather the mystery that must necessarily appear from the outside to be *contradiction* and *paradox* (how could the one who is absolutely free bear the form of a slave?), yet presents itself to faith (that is, faith in his trinitarian sonship) as a unity that cannot be broken up: as the sovereignty of the love that serves, lets itself be given away, and gives itself away.[7] But this is not enough. Jesus' task is not to present God by means of an image, but to be the synthesis of salvation history: by displaying on the one hand the Father's will to save without subtracting anything from his justice as judge—and this is why he stands forth as the *krisis*: the foundation-stone that is chosen, the corner-stone that is rejected—and on the other hand by personifying humankind (with Israel at the head as its recapitulation) before God: in that he bears its guilt and allows himself to be judged on the Cross, it is humankind cast out, but in that he trains it for the Cross and 'leads all the sons to glory' (Heb 2.10) on the basis of the Cross, it is humankind redeemed and believing. If one bears in mind the

same volume: 'Der historische Jesus und der Christus des Glaubens', pp. 42–66.

[7] Here the uniqueness of a theological (christological) aesthetic becomes obvious once more. It is possible for 'hidden works of art' to exist, secret works that reveal their form only to a particular inward vision, but these are only works of art to the extent that their form is truly pressed into this very inaccessible form. It is also possible for sculpted portraits to exist that are able simultaneously to project the various sides of the character of one individual and the different situations of his life and therefore seem to show more than one single view can offer: but even such works remain the synthetic expression of the one personality. Jesus, however, is himself by being the expression of the Father in the Holy Spirit.

multiplicity of these connections, one cannot give an account of hiddenness and epiphany on one level alone; thus, there are some things that must be clear to Jesus as the divine revealer of the Father himself, which he must conceal because only so can he show the essential hiddenness of God; there are other things known to him that he conceals, because, although he is 'Lord and Master', he must display the form of a slave; and finally there are some which he must do without knowing, because otherwise the form of a slave and 'being like man' (Phil 2.7) would not be genuine. It is impossible to reproduce in words the essential simultaneity of these aspects in the life of Jesus, even when he was able, in accordance with each particular situation, to make one aspect dominant rather than the others. In the retrospective formulation of the evangelists, it was possible to express this simultaneity in Jesus' existence only through a circumlocutory approximation; it is important, therefore, that we always see the teachings, parables, miracles, discussions, etc., in the perspective of their mutual interaction, and that we do not permit the language used to lose its transparency. It is, for example, obvious that the historical portrayal of the condemnation and crucifixion can never display the theological *pro nobis*, which is hidden at the deepest level and comes to light only when it is given its place in the movement that goes from the life of Jesus (just as it was) to the Resurrection. No single situation, taken on its own, shows forth the whole, but has to be interpreted on the basis of the whole—one cannot have the logia without the suffering, nor the miracles without the logia, nor anything without the Resurrection. But it is likewise true that there is no passage that, taken on its own, would fall back into custom and ordinariness: the sovereignty provides the unifying atmosphere to such an extent that it makes itself felt at each individual point. It cannot be determined by literary or psychological means, but is clearly demarcated negatively from each of these.[8] It is the unique (theological) exaltation of God in the freedom of his form as a slave, above the constraint of every innerworldly determination; as such, this freedom is not open to direct and neutral perception, but requires faith in order to be seen: it requires the sensitivity to the sovereignty in the abasement, and this can only come as a gift, as *connaturalitas* to it, as the *interior instinctus*, which establishes a *proportio* to this unique object.[9]

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[8] The oscillations between more or less 'sublimity' in the literary expression, or between a more or less heavy emphasis on Jesus' lips of his own commission and his own separateness (compared with parables or

Kierkegaard (surely the only one to follow Anselm in this) dared to attempt the portrayal of the Christian paradox with the inclusion of its historical given as an 'intellectual project'.[10] How can 'the God'—who must be 'love', if he is

sayings that seem to be well-nigh 'universal wisdom teaching': Mt 7.12), are normal and can be demonstrated; they have no effect on the phenomenon of sovereignty that is our concern here. Since this phenomenon cannot be grasped philologically, it must always be silently bracketed off in the exact philological examinations (of the 'historical-critical method'); this, more clearly than anything else, shows the limits of the method. For the sovereignty of Jesus and of the whole of the New Testament which deals with him is not at all identical with his 'messianic claim' or with the making of this claim about him by the writers after Easter; it cannot be limited materially in this way. But equally, it is not an irrelevant atmospheric detail that serious research, deciding to employ its surgical instruments, could excise from the matter itself without penalties. Rather, it is something that possesses in the condition of the abasement of God in Christ the same unmistakable, indeed perceptible and 'quasi-physical' (Ramsey) presence as the *kabod* of Yahweh in the Old Testament.

[9] On these concepts of Thomas, and other similar concepts, see Vol. I, pp. 156–71.

[10] On what follows, *cf.* the edition of Kierkegaard by E. Hirsch.—Vol. 10: *Philosophische Brocken*, p. 7: 'Denkprojekt'. On this, *cf.* on p. 168, n. 20, the sentence that has been crossed out: 'However, we wish to forget what has been said here (about the historical reality of the question of Christianity) . . . as if Christianity had never existed.' Here we can see the same approach as in Anselm. After Kierkegaard has started from the presupposition that the disciple (as opposed to the Socratic pupil) is not already secretly in the truth, but does not seek the truth and is therefore guilty and needs grace, redemption, conversion, etc., he asks once again: 'But is it possible to think what has been developed here?' (Vol. 10, p. 18). And whereas Anselm arrives at the definition of God as *id quo maius cogitari non potest*, Kierkegaard seeks 'the highest paradox of thought: to wish to discover something that cannot think of itself' (Vol. 10, p. 35), corresponding to the paradox of being in love, where the (self-)love 'wishes its own destruction' (Vol. 10, p. 36). But since Kierkegaard strictly rejects the Anselmian ontological proof of the existence of God (which had

to have a reason for 'coming forth'—make himself comprehensible to a human being who is in untruth, in guilt, in the lack of love? A direct revelation of the divine glory in its condescension (like that of a king stooping down to a poor beggar maid in order to raise her up in love and make her queen) would indeed 'catch up' the beloved human being above himself to 'loving amazement' and 'thankfulness', but (as in the case of the maid) would not bring him to his own truth. Man hungers for glory, and it is precisely this glory that God must refuse him, out of love. 'Who can understand this contradiction in suffering: not to reveal oneself is the death of the beloved'.[11] God takes on the form of a slave, in order to set up the indirectness which alone can lead to the growth of loving confidence in the sinner; indeed, he must himself become the double paradox of the crucified one in order to remove the sinful embarrassment of the guilty one: it is not possible for the hidden sovereignty of love to become at this point anything other than the absolute 'scandal'. This is indeed 'the indirect test of the correctness of the paradox', but in itself it is a 'deception of the ear', because 'the paradox echoes in it', without its being able to interpret the sound (which is the sound of endless love in the form of the slave and the Cross).[12] Nevertheless, in faith, the paradox (since it is God himself) offers the possibility of an interpretation to the disciple: and there is no fundamental difference between the disciple contemporary with Jesus and the later disciple, who is brought by the proclamation into contemporaneity with him. For even for the contemporaries, God's glory is hidden in the form of a slave, 'so that, if it is not possible to see it directly, there is no point in being a contemporary; mere temporal contemporaneity does not make one a contemporary of the glory'.[13]

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become Hegelian in the meantime) (*ibid.*, p. 37), and is indeed uninterested in any proof of the existence of God ('*via negationis* or *via eminentiae*'), he forms his intellectual project in a purely soteriological manner: the inability to conceive of absolute love in thought comes, not from creatureliness (for, as a creature, man is 'related' to God: Vol. 10, p. 45), but from sin.

[11] Vol. 10, p. 28.

[12] Vol. 10, pp. 46ff.

[13] Vol. 10, p. 63. Kierkegaard deals later with the judgments of the

Kierkegaard's 'intellectual project' lacks several dimensions, above all the trinitarian (in his abasement, Jesus reveals the sovereignty of the Father) and the genuinely staurological (substitution).[14] In our present context, only the fundamental reasoning and the almost a priori method are important, in order to demonstrate the indispensable indirectness of the revelation. Given that Jesus was the Son of God, i.e. God in the condition of abasement as obedience unto death, then his relinquishment of the interpretation of himself (to the Father, the Spirit and the Church) corresponds to this; and this interpretation is possible only if it is the illumination (coming from God) of the sovereignty that had truly existed, and the

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'autopsy of faith'. It will be above all 'the occasion for the contemporary to receive the condition required from God, so that he now sees the glory with the eyes of faith' (Vol. 10, p. 67). But this again is the same as what the disciple at second hand receives through the sermon; for the sermon cannot deal with a 'simple historical fact' (Vol. 10, p. 89): 'the historical fact that God has been in human form, is the chief matter, and the other historical details are simply not so important . . . Disagreements that would otherwise disturb do not disturb here, and do no harm to the matter' (Vol. 10, pp. 100–101); indeed, the sermon in itself would be 'foolish, were it to seek to pin a proof of probability to what is improbable', seeking to serve mankind 'by assisting it to enter what is improbable with a proof of probability' (Vol. 10, p. 91). The account by the contemporary can only be a narrative testimony 'that he himself has believed that fact' (Vol. 10, p. 99). In the *Unwissenschaftliche Nachschrift* (Vol. 16, p. 90), Kierkegaard shows that through this 'intellectual project' Lessing's proposition that necessary truths of reason cannot be based on contingent truths of history is challenged and superseded. The theme is brought to its conclusion in the *Einübung im Christentum* (1850), without essentially superseding the 'Brocken': 'If the glory were immediately visible . . . then it is an untruth that Christ abased himself and took on the form of a slave, and it is superfluous to warn about the scandal . . . No, there was 'nothing in him for the eye to see, no radiance so that we should have looked at him, no form that we should have delighted in' (Is 53.2); there was nothing *immediately* to be seen except a small man who at once raised the possibility of scandal with signs and wonders and by saying that he was God. A small man, who thereby expressed, first of all, what God understands as compassion . . . and second, what God understands as man's wretchedness—and this in each case is utterly different from what men understand these to be, in every generation until the end of time . . .' (Vol. 26, p. 65).

[14] On this, *cf.* E. Hirsch in n. 151 to the 'Brocken' (Vol. 10, p. 179). In the *Einübung* (Vol. 26, p. 63), there appears the Pauline-Lutheran *pro te*.

'noticing' and 'remembering' (on the part of the Church) of what the Church had truly experienced and yet—in an incomprehensible forgetfulness, or rather obstinacy—had not realised. This is the intensification of a thoroughly human situation that is repeated again and again: it is only after the departure of what was noble, genial and holy that the survivors become aware of what had truly been the case. Words, gestures and miraculous deeds are collected and proclaimed; but they would all miss the real point, were it not that in this one case the past became a hidden and living present, the letter became transparent to the spirit, the lowliness pointed to the inconceivable nobility, with the sovereignty of the face (*p^enim*) of Yahweh shining forth in the face that is twisted with pain, bloody and spat upon, the sovereignty of Yahweh mirrored in the sovereignty of the sufferer himself.[15] Nowhere is there the slightest false note—unlike the apocryphal writings, which teem with them—to disturb the harmony of simplicity and depth of insight, of straightforwardness and profundity; this harmony is so perfect that we can easily and without offence recognise the secondary character of some of the literary methods employed in the portrait—e.g., the Marcan commands to be silent—without thereby being able to dispense with them as means of expression.

3. In order to approach the hiddenness of Jesus' sovereignty, we possess the literary road, along which we come to see how the post-Easter community drew aspects of the risen Lord into its account of what happened before Easter, and indeed how it had to do so, because the risen one is the 'truth' of the mortal one who died, and it is only this truth, which integrates in itself all that went before, that concerned and still concerns believers on the existential level. But then a theological road opens up behind the literary road: for if the community is correct to see in the risen one the 'truth' of the mortal one who was finally crucified, then this perspective is necessarily valid for the historical Jesus too: his life is orientated towards 'the hour', and all that he is, says and does

[15] *Cf.* the article '(Sainte) Face' by J. A. Robillard, in *Dict. Spir.*

is confirmed on the basis of the 'hour' and is demonstrated by God to be true. It is only when the crucified one is raised up that he is exalted to be 'Lord' (Acts 2.36; Phil 2.9ff.) and has demonstrably the right to bear his titles ('Messiah', 'Son of God', 'Danielic Son of Man', etc.) and thereby require that one believes in him (something that only God can require). Although we can accept the presence of anticipations of this matter by the evangelists, since the hidden Jesus is the same one as the Christ who is openly proclaimed, we should nevertheless remove them from the picture of the historical Jesus, who did not at all anticipate his glorification by the Father. One can indicate, with the necessary brevity, the 'depaschalisation' that is theologically required, at three points of the Synoptic accounts: the miracles of Jesus, his parables, and his transfiguration.

The miracles[16] or 'signs of power' (δυνάμεις) are beyond any doubt characteristic of the historical Jesus, as they were for Paul too, who speaks of his miracles as if they were the most obvious thing in the world.[17] Some of Jesus' miracles were directed against the Pharisees (healings on the sabbath, and perhaps also the touching of the leper at Mk 1.40ff.), led to the certainly genuine 'discussion about Beelzebul' (Mk 3.22 par.), and were finally one of the reasons for his condemnation.[18] Like Paul, Jesus points to his miracles as proofs of his commission to initiate the coming of the

[16] On the immense literature, *cf.* above all H. van der Loos, *The Miracles of Jesus* (Leiden 1965); *LThK* 2nd edn. X, 1251–1265. On what follows, *cf.* especially: H. J. Held, 'Matthäus als Interpret der Wundergeschichten', in: *Überlieferung und Auslegung im Mt-Evangelium* (5th edn. 1968), pp. 155–287.

[17] Rom 15.18: 'For I shall not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought in me to bring the Gentiles to obedience, in word and deed, through the power of signs and wonders and through the might of the Holy Spirit'. 2 Cor 12.12: 'The proofs (σημεῖα) of my apostleship were brought to you in all patience, through signs (σημείοις) and miracles (τέρασιν) and deeds of power (δυνάμεσιν)'. On the basis of these texts, it is inappropriate to doubt the historicity of the accounts of miracles in Acts in their kernel (individual miracles like 20.7ff. and summary accounts like 5.15ff.; 19.11ff.). But why should something that is in order for Paul and the early Church, not be permitted to Jesus?

[18] According to the Babylonian Talmud (*Sanh.* 43a), Jesus was

kingdom of God (Mt 11.4ff.). 'Deeds of power'—i.e. salvific acts which by their very nature can be carried out only by God—are, within Judaism, first of all a reactualisation of the original salvific activity of Jahweh for the people (just as the prophetic Spirit took on a new presence with the Baptist and with Jesus). They are acts of *God* in the one he sends (like Moses or Elijah, and now Jesus). What is new is the thoroughgoing personalisation of the situation: it is always an individual sick person or one seeking help who stands before the individual Jesus, because the Word has become flesh and now encounters the neighbour as the one who stands closest of all to him. And most of the miracles are bound to faith: this is the central point, and is needed,[19] sometimes found to exist already and sometimes 'attributed'[20] in virtue of a silent 'substitution',[21] but always in such a way that Jesus does not require faith in himself,[22] but actively mediates faith between the human person and God, making himself the source of the faith that is indispensable for the human person and letting it well up from the heart of this person. One could put it as follows: he is, in his wholeness, the verb in the sentence and it is only through the Resurrection that he becomes the noun that was always present in the verb—capable of being formulated, but concealed. This noun cannot yet come forth, because it is precisely only through the completion of the sentence through the Cross and Resurrection that Jesus truly becomes the object of faith, the one in whom God has definitively accomplished his 'mighty works' and who has himself—acting and suffering to the uttermost point—become this personified mighty work. When Matthew sets the themes of personal encounter and faith (in a sense that is already

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condemned 'because he practised sorcery and turned Israel away'. F. Mussner, *Die Wunder Jesu. Eine Hinführung* (1967), p. 29.

[19] Mk 6.5 par.

[20] G. Ebeling, 'Jesus und Glaube', in: *Wort und Glaube* (1960), pp. 241f., 245 (ET *Word and Faith*, 1963, pp. 234ff., 238).

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 244 (ET p. 237).

[22] The only text, Mt 18.6 (from which point onwards Jesus speaks of those 'who believe in me', unlike Mk 9.42), is certainly a later addition. For other texts that presuppose a post-Easter concept of faith, *cf.* Ebeling, op. cit., pp. 231–232 (ET p. 226).

ecclesiastical) at the centre of the miracles of healing, and thereby pushes the miraculous event into the background (often through severe abbreviations and through retouches of the colourful narratives in Mark), it is easy to distinguish his ecclesiastical intention from the theological correctness with which he lays bare the decisive point: Jesus goes back to the simplest, most primitive and most concrete situation of all, to what Paul calls the faith of Abraham, which unhesitatingly accepts that God is in the right, without doubts and without guarantees. Such a faith entrusts itself to God and therefore 'infallibly' touches God's heart (Jesus' teaching about prayer belongs here) and is heard through the obedience of a child (Mk 10.13–15). It is not disclosed how this wonderful direct contact between the believing heart and God's heart ultimately came into being through the spark of the mighty deed that bridged the gap, nor whose faith and initiatory action brought it about.[23] The 'smallest' seed, the mustard seed, is both true faith (Mt 17.20) and the kingdom of God (Mt 13.31f.): Jesus is the ἐνέργεια that brings about the mutual compenetration of faith, kingdom and covenant in the act by which they come into existence. It is true that the concrete healing by which the 'strong man' is driven back and bound in the 'deed of power' is an anticipation of the Cross and the Resurrection, and as such is in danger of being separated from these and of being misinterpreted—especially in the hellenistic milieu, in which the worker of miracles himself came to be the object of attention. But against this, there is the refusal to perform any spectacular miracle in Israel (Mt 12.38ff.; 16.1ff. par.), and *a fortiori* outside Israel, unless a completely genuine faith in Jesus wrests a miracle from him (Mt 15.21–28; Mt 8.5–13 with Jn 4.48), as well as the act of taking the sick man aside (Mk 7.33; 8.23) and the commands

[23] 'At one time it is the faith of the sick person himself, who then experiences healing; at another time it is the faith of another person, who concerns himself with the sick person and to a certain extent mediates the healing to him; at still another time it is clearly the faith of Jesus himself on which everything in the history of salvation depends. It would not do justice to the understanding of faith that is operative here, if one sought to harmonise it and make it amenable to classification': G. Ebeling, op. cit., pp. 252–253 (ET p. 245).

to be silent. Some of the miracles belong to the instruction of the disciples as a concretely perceptible initiation into the attitude of Christian and especially apostolic faith, confidence, prayer, and fasting (as a state of being empty for God and for the communication of his will and his power; Mt 17.14–21: 'Nothing will be impossible for you'). Thus, miracles belong closely together with the teaching on prayer and with the parables (as 'acted parables'). It is significant that the disciples, who have only the rudiments of faith before the Cross and the Resurrection, do receive 'authority' to heal and to cast out demons (Mt 10.1), but do not yet accomplish any miracle; afterwards, however, the charism of miracles will be a part of the regular existence of the Church (1 Cor 12.10). More important is the fact, exceedingly strongly underlined by Mark, that the disciples do not understand the real meaning of the miracles. The 'choral conclusions' (with universal astonishment, praise of God, etc.), which are a part of the ancient miracle accounts and are especially prominent in Luke (2.20; 4.22; 5.26; 13.17; 18.43) but are also structured by Matthew as scenes of the 'adoration' of the 'Son of God' (Mt 14.33; *cf.* 8.2; 9.18; 15.25), show themselves to be a mere extrinsic addition by comparison with the simple 'astonishment' in Mark (Mk 1.27; 2.12; 5.20; 12.17),[24] the hardness of heart of the spectators (3.5), the anxiety of the people (5.15), the lack of faith of the disciples (4.40), their amazement not only during the apparition on the lake, but even more so after the stilling of the storm (6.51), and their 'lack of understanding even now' (8.17). The same lack of understanding and astonishment is revealed when Jesus speaks of his future suffering and rising. Neither the visible miraculous signs nor the verbal teachings and parables can be understood in their truth before this truth of theirs has made itself known in the Cross and Resurrection. Through his repeated commands to silence, Jesus dampens the flame of false admiration that is kindled everywhere, but this is in vain: 'For it is impossible a priori to prevent the misunderstanding that goes by the name of admiration, for in a certain sense this is necessary, in order to attract people. But then, if the truth—remaining true to itself in this, since it is the truth—unfolds itself ever more clearly as the truth, the moment comes when no admirer can keep up with it: for the truth shakes off its admirers as the storm shakes off the worm-eaten fruit from the tree.'[25] The so-called 'spectacular miracles' (the walking on the lake and the stilling of the storm, the multiplication of the loaves, the changing of water into wine, and the raisings of the dead) are often surrounded by an atmosphere of calm (especially the miracles of giving food and drink) or of intimacy in the circle of disciples, where the spiritual symbolism has more importance than the miraculous (*cf.* the miracles on the lake);[26] but above all, they are portrayed as a concretisation of the 'compassion' of Yahweh with the distress of his people.[27]

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[24] The 'choral conclusions' with praise of God are much more seldom found in Mark: 2.12; 7.37.

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[25] Kierkegaard, *Einübung im Christentum* III, 6 (Hirsch, Vol. 26, pp. 237f.).

[26] At this point, especially for Matthew, the account of the miracle makes the transition into the 'parable' which is always valid for the Church: this is seen most clearly in his addition of the scene of Peter walking on the water (Mt 14.28–31), to which Jn 21.7 looks like a silent correction. Jn 21.4 could be a similar correction to the story of the walking on the water. Whatever the kernel of the epiphany may be—in other words, to what extent it may be the literary trumping of the miracles of Moses and Elijah and Elisha in the Old Testament (G. Hartmann, 'Der Aufbau des Mk-Evangeliums', *NTA* VIII 2/3 (1936), pp. 148f.; A. Heising, 'Die Botschaft der Brotvermehrung', *St. Bibl. Stud.* 15 (1966)—the understanding of the worker of miracles in his mediatory function within the covenant is indispensable in both Old and New Testament, if he is to be understood correctly; if this is taken away from him, he becomes the θεῖος ἀνήρ, the object of attention in a way that is unbiblical and un-Christian.

[27] The 'miracles at a distance' (Mk 7.24ff.; Lk 7.10; Jn 4.53) exclude the element of the spectacular. *Cf.* also the ways in which Jesus 'withdraws from the crowd' at Jn 5.13; sends the sick man away to wash himself (Jn 9.7; *cf.* 2 Kings 5.10), to show himself to the priests and offer the sacrifice prescribed in the case of healing (Mt 8.4; Lk 17.14); moves on from the place (Mt 11.1 and frequently), and escapes to lonely places (Mk 1.35; 1.45; Jn 11.54). The 'miracles at a distance' also show that there is no magic involved in the touching of the body, smearing on spittle, touching the fringes of Jesus' garment, or indeed in the 'power' that he feels going forth from him (Lk 6.19; Mk 5.30) or in the 'words of power' that he utters. All of this belongs to the concreteness of the presence of God in Jesus, and is a

There remains only a partial aspect of the processes and themes employed for the explicit approval of the messianic mission of Jesus by God: the Johannine theme of the 'sign' (σημεῖον). However, precisely as such, this is once again dialectical in a double sense. On the one hand, compared with the lack of ambiguity of the 'word', it is secondary and on a lower level because it is less unambiguous (*cf.* Jn 10.38); on the other hand, the 'signs' point to the Father who works them, and they point to the Son only to the extent that one recognises that he does not seek his own glory and hence conceals and reveals himself to an equal extent in the revelatory sign. When John speaks in the case of Jesus' first miracle of the 'revelation of his glory' and immediately adds that 'his disciples believed in him' (2.11), he gives an interpretation in both phrases of what was inchoative from the standpoint of the full accomplishment: this was truly present in the inchoative stage, but was concealed. Finally, the miracles of Jesus belong essentially to his itinerant state: the new covenant is only beginning, and this is why the physical and perceptible 'mighty deeds' carried out in this world have an Old Testament and prophetic form that looks to the *single* miracle of death and Resurrection, in which the 'binding of the strong man' and his 'plundering' take place definitively. But there is no point at which the confusion of the sign with what it signifies is easier and more dangerous: there is no point at which concealment is more strongly required. And yet, the new covenant is already present in the sign. This means that all the miracles are but a reference and a pointer to the one who is concealed, who is deciphering himself (as an active verb, not as a noun) in the symbols.

The parables contain precisely the same dialectic: the parables are words in the format of pictures which both clarify and conceal; as they are words *en route* to their own realisation: hence, although the parable presents itself as an open word, it is in need of interpretation (on the basis of its realisation). Any form that the word takes before the Cross and

prelude to the sacramental dimension, as the Church fathers have emphatically stated.

Resurrection is essentially a parable (Mt 13.34; Jn 16.25, after Easter: 16.29f.), and thereby is both a normal (though original) contemporary manner of speaking and teaching[1] and at the same time a continuation, and a surpassing, of the Old Testament oracles of God, especially when it deals with the imminence of God's judgment and with his mercy that overturns all human standards of value; but, over and above these two, the parable is the form of the entire incarnate Word of God himself. This is the source of the quality found in each parabolic word (which ultimately resists being catalogued in philological terms): the word comes down vertically from above, in the greatest compactness possible, without extension, and it cannot be refuted. Each of the parables goes to the heart of the matter from a particular side, just as Jesus is always the entire Word of God and cannot be parcelled up into segments. In this respect, all the parables share in the original impact of the *kabod*: their form indicates what impact the Word will attain at the end of its journey, on the Cross. On the basis of the Cross and Resurrection, 'Jesus' expounds to the disciples, the early Church, what is 'hidden' (Mt 13.35): this is shown by the post-Easter character of the interpretations (especially Mt 13.36–43; 13.49f.; Mk 4.13–20). From this point of the outcome, it can also be seen that Jesus' word, which demanded a decision, became a proof of their obduracy (*cf.* Mk 4.10–12 par., in apparent contradiction to the intention to make a disclosure at Mt 13.35) to the 'deaf' who had no 'ears to hear' (Mk 4.9 and frequently). But the impact of the divine Word, though fully present, is hidden, first, because the event of the Cross (and thereby the coming of the kingdom) lies in the future, so that it is not yet possible to hand over the key to the whole; second, because for Jesus himself the coming Cross will be absolute salvation and absolute judgment, but in a manner other than was the case with the coming Day of Yahweh for the Old Testament prophets, because Jesus himself will embrace the totality of judgment in himself, in order to be total salvation; and third, because he nevertheless must commit the people of the covenant with him to this Day, by means of an ultimate judgment based on a knowledge of how God truly is and how he acts—and here, although the possibility is left open for the hearers, according to the evangelists (Mk 3.6) the decision was taken very early on.

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[1] Joachim Jeremias, *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* (7th edn. 1965 ET *The Parables of Jesus*): not only does Jesus allude to the most widepsread secular images and scenes, but also to the commonest Old Testament images (p.87; ET p. 88), or to existing parabolic discourses which it is sometimes decisively necessary to know, if one is to understand the parables of the Gospel. For the parable of the fig-tree at Lk 13.6–9 *cf.* an ancient Ahikar story (p. 170; ET pp. 170f.), for both parables about the great feast (Mt 22.1–10; Lk 14.15–24) and for the parable about the rich man and Lazarus, *cf.* a story that came from Egypt and was reshaped in Palestine (pp. 178, 182f; ET pp. 176ff.); *cf.* p. 199 (ET pp. 198f.) for the parables of the pearl and the treasure in the field. This does not however prevent 'Jesus' parables . . . from being something completely new': 'not a single parable is transmitted to us in the entire rabbinic literature before Jesus' (p. 8).

If one looks for *ipsissima verba* of Jesus in the parables, one must take into account, not only the merely historical situation, but also an all-embracing theological situation which can be summarised a priori in the simple phrase '(futurist-present) expectation of the kingdom'. All the theology of the early Church, of Paul and of John, will try to put into words what is compressed in this expectation. This is why it is difficult to define the relationship between the original parabolic word and its meditation, transposition and expansive interpretation in the Church. It emerged that the Church cannot take up a situation over against the hiatus between Cross and Resurrection: at one and the same time, the Church comes after this hiatus (as the product of redemption) and stands before it because she is always called afresh to take the decision that leads to the Cross. Accordingly, the parabolic word must undergo an ecclesiastical transformation in order to preserve its vitality and relevance (for it *is* the same Jesus who, as the crucified and risen one, each time gives anew the summons to follow him). It is therefore correct for the Church to represent the *krisis* that Jesus' presence was in and for Israel as a *krisis* that belongs to the *past*—and thus the 'sketches of salvation history' that Matthew builds out of many parables are not 'allegories'[2]—but equally, it is correct for the Church to bring the *krisis* up to date within itself: here, the horizon of the Cross which stood before Jesus as the end of the world becomes for the Church the horizon of the second coming of Christ (for only so can she enter Jesus' horizon), and Jesus' words to the scribes and Pharisees become an address to Christians, whether to all or more precisely to the leaders who have responsibility for the community. In this process, a text with an eschatological emphasis (e.g. Lk 12.58f.) can change into a text with a paranaetic emphasis (Mt 5.25f.); practical applications for the Church, which are frequently not entirely to the point, can be added to the text of the parables—often whole collections of such reflections as in the case of the story of the unjust steward whom 'the master' (=Jesus) praises because of his shrewdness (Lk 16.8b,9,10,11,12,13).[3] This can mean that the main thrust that a parable must have had originally can be more or less displaced by one or more evangelists.[4] Such alterations remain contingent facts in themselves; the fundamental point here is that Jesus' parables—almost always calls and challenges uttered with the utmost urgency—could be freed from the terrible isolation of their unique historical situation, in which they were essentially not understood and therefore had to remain *hidden*, only by being changed (in a transformation wrought by his dying and rising) into ecclesiastical 'teaching', which brought them into the sphere within which they could be grasped in the Holy Spirit.

This is seen most clearly when one asks about the position of Jesus himself in his parables (here excluding the 'I am' logia of John). Once again, one will have to say that Jesus appears in them as a verb, not as a noun; they are an implicitly christological self-attestation.[5] He speaks of the accomplishment of the event that comes to be what it is, and to receive its name, with him, with his Cross and his Resurrection. For the moment, all that can be felt in him is the impact, the tremendous urgency, the haste and radicality, the presence and atmosphere that cannot be overlooked, while yet remaining invisible: in him, one must see the *kairos* (Lk 12.54ff.; 17.37; Mk 13.28), the great chance that is offered (the 'pearl' and the 'treasure', Mt 13.44ff.), the command to take the total risk, which—precisely for this reason—must be taken with due consideration (Lk14.28–33). But Jesus does not speak, like the prophets, simply of the proximity of the 'Day' on which the single event of the judgment of punishment and of salvation will take place: the whole accent lies on the choice made by God of tax-collectors and sinners instead of the 'righteous' (Mt 21.31)—and Jesus offends the righteous by embodying this choice of God (Mt 11.19). The prodigal son is embraced and given a feast when he returns, while the other son, who had always been there, must not envy him this (Lk 15.11–32); those who had worked only a short time are given their wages, and those who have worked a long time must not look askance at God's goodness (Mt 20.1–15); the one lost sheep is sought by God, and the ninety-nine must be content that they are left alone and that God's joy over the one that was found again is greater (Mt 18.12ff.)—just as greater joy and thankfulness echo each other where there was more to forgive (Lk 7.41ff.). The parables look directly to the heart of God, to the greater love which is better sensed by the poor, the merciful, those who yearn, and the others praised in the beatitudes (Mt 5.3ff.); the Samaritan senses it more than the priest and the levite (Lk 10.30ff.), the one who invites beggars, the lame and the blind to his feast senses it more than the one who invites rich people who will invite him in return (Lk 14.12ff.). They look directly to the heart of God, who cannot do other than hear a cry addressed to him (18.1–8), even at the most inappropriate hour (11.5–8); to God who lets one off paying even the greatest sums, but expects that man's heart will be led thereby to do the same in small matters (Mt 18.23–35). It is from this vantage point that the parables look to this human heart to see whether the little flame glows within it, the flame that one can call faith or love and hope and that can be kindled to a divine fire—or whether this flame has died in the cold ashes of self-justification. This living spark is the smallest of all things, the least noticeable on earth, but it is precisely this that receives the promise of growing to become the greatest of all (Mk 4.30ff. par.; Mt 13.33); it is sown, but must find a willing heart, in order that it may spring up (Mk 4.3ff. par.); it bears in itself the law of its growth (Mk 4.26ff.), but it demands that man too must be living, and not tie up in a handkerchief what wants to live (Lk 19.12–27 par.). It is important to have oil in one's lamp (Mt 25.1–13), to have a wedding garment (Mt 22.11–13). God has one final hope that he will receive some fruit from me (Lk 13.6–9). And then, at a moment that is not determined, he must be always awaited, the full stop is written. The door is closed (Lk 13.24–30), for it is too late, and no more knocking on the door will help. This moment is certainly coming, sudden and incalculable—perhaps quite close at hand (Lk 12.15ff.)—and one must be awake to look out for it (Lk 12.39, and frequently), coming to a full reconciliation without delay (Lk 12.58f.). In worldly terms, all this is hidden and cannot be disentangled (from the darnel that grows alongside: Mt 13.24ff.; from the net that contains both good and bad fish: Mt 13.47f.). It is intentionally hidden like the yeast in the meal, and can be recognised only indirectly, through its effects (Lk 13.20f.; *cf.* 17.20f.). Nothing here indicates the tendency to reveal oneself gradually within history: the harvest will come 'all at once' (Mk 4.29), the cry will ring out 'at midnight' (Mt 25.6). Then will hearts be laid bare, and the outer cover will part to reveal who had said 'yes' but done 'no' (Mt 21.28ff.), and who had turned to his fellow men in their need, in solidarity with the attitude of God (Mt 25.31–46), who had dared to forgive his neighbour his debt even to the point of 'injustice' (Lk 16.1–8).—It follows from this that the parabolic word is a word with a supreme impact, which is powerless when it begins to speak of itself—as of the one who has become incarnate. Although it is the exultant fulfilment—'today!'—of the highest promise, it sets 'all in a rage', and people want 'to throw it down' (Lk 4.16–30). If it presents itself as the physician for the sick (Mk 2.17 par.), then they counter, at first in jest (Lk 4.23) and then jeeringly, with the parabolic word about the doctor who cannot help himself (Lk 23.35). If he presents himself as a king who makes a solemn entry into his holy city, then he is killed precisely because of this claim, and his Cross is given the corresponding inscription (Mk 15.26). If he presents himself as the embodiment of the Father's mercy, by eating with the outcasts and the rejected and welcoming them into his house, he is called a glutton and a drunkard (Mt 11.19). If he casts out the demons, then this must be through the power of the devil (Mt 12.24). He cannot at all possess the 'wisdom and mighty power' that he displays, for 'is he not the son of the carpenter? Where does he get all this from?' (Mt 13.55f.). The parable is a word that is disclosed, but that conceals itself at a deeper level in its powerlessness:[6]

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[2] This characterisation, introduced by Jülicher (*Die Gleichnisse Jesu* I, 2nd edn. 1910) and rather too summarily taken over by J. Jeremias (pp. 64ff.; ET pp. 66ff.), is inappropriate, because it is not something else that is being spoken of (ἀλλα-αγορεύω), but the same thing at a different phase.

[3] Jeremias is correct to resist a wrenching-apart of the two poles: 'It would, however, be false to conclude that the early Church introduces a wholly alien notion into the parable through the paraenetic application. Its paraenesis is included implicitly in the original parable'. It is only a case of the 'modulation of the tone' (op. cit., pp. 44f.; ET p. 48). For examples of concluding applications that do not harmonise perfectly with the fundamental tone of the parable, *cf.* Jeremias, pp. 105f.

[4] An example: Lk 18.2–8 and 18.9–14 are placed by Luke under the heading of teaching on prayer (18.1).

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[5] E. Fuchs, 'Bemerkungen zur Gleichnisauslegung' (1954), in: *Zur Frage nach dem historischen Jesus* (1960), pp. 136–142.

Jesus' transfiguration[1] is likewise, in its indissoluble tension between old covenant and parousia, and because of its increasingly clear reference to the coming Passion, ultimately to be seen as testimony to the hiddenness of the glory. The numerous riddles and seams that are present already in the text of Mark are not removed satisfactorily by any analysis of the sources that would go behind Mark. It must be accepted that the kernel is an epiphany in a sublime event which has itself generated the development of the references back to the old covenant—to apocalyptic, to Elijah, and to Sinai—and the prospect of the end-time (both to the suffering and to the parousia, seen in unity with the Resurrection). The attempt to disentangle from this husk the event that has been formulated in this way with reference to the whole of the Bible and to explain it on its own—as an historical psychological experience of Jesus,[2] or as a visionary experience of the disciples[3]—leads nowhere.[4] The strong Old Testament colouring, and the lack of references to a perceptible δόξα in the accounts of the appearances of the risen Lord, exclude the possibility that what we have is an original Easter narrative projected back into a time before Easter.[5] One can identify the immediacy and what we might call the vertical character of the event most precisely because it is expressed from the beginning in an apocalyptic scheme of expression that was first prepared by the visions of Daniel and then utilised further, as M. Sabbe has shown.[6] The apparition of light in heaven, shining garments, falling to the ground in fear, hearing the heavenly voice, being touched by a hand that comforts and strengthens, the command to keep silence: all these elements are found in Daniel and are taken up in Rev 1.12–16 together with other details of apocalyptic.[7] However, the apocalyptic framework provides nothing more than the form of a vertical penetration of temporality into what lies 'above', into the timeless and true world of God that has become open for a moment; at most, it has also provided the reference to the (imminent) eschatological future that is anticipated in the apocalypses. However, nothing in the scene of the transfiguration entitles us to speak of an 'enthronement' of Jesus as the coming (Danielic) Son of Man.[8] Rather, the reference to the future that the transfiguration possesses now, appropriately, directs our gaze to Jesus' 'departure' (ἔξοδος, Lk 9.31) with a freshness of vision in which the suffering, the Resurrection and the second coming are interwoven and not yet differentiated: together, they are the apocalyptic breaking-in of the new age, which is now—vertically—present in Heaven. Nevertheless, the apocalyptic imagery remains only a framework: the decisive contents are provided by the original Mosaic tradition of the *kabod*. The cloud of the *kabod*, from which God's voice resounds, comes down as a tent already in Mark (ἐπισκιάζειν, Mk 9.7 = Mt 17.5 = Lk 9.34), and is appropriately made clearer in Matthew as a 'cloud of light', because the light of the glory was within the cloud;[9] at Ex 40.35, ἐπισκιάζειν is the translation of *šakan*, to 'dwell in a tent'; further references to Sinai are the ascent of a 'high mountain' and the descent (Mark, Matthew; 2 Pet 1.18: 'holy mountain'), with three disciples identified by their names (*cf.* Ex 24.1,9); the radiance of Christ's face (Matthew, *cf.* 2 Cor 4.6) can be a reminiscence of Moses' face which shone with the reflection of the glory as he descended, while the huts that Peter wishes to build echo the feast of tabernacles and its memorial of the giving of the covenant; and perhaps the six days, which Mark mentions in a puzzling way when he dates the transfiguration, may be an allusion to Ex 24.16. Should one therefore posit as the original kernel a repetition of the epiphany on Sinai, in which Jesus is proclaimed as the new Moses and the Messiah?[10] But nothing permits us to detach such a kernel from the apocalyptic formulation. Rather, the original *kabod* tradition appears from the beginning as taken up into its late prophetic-apocalyptic form, and it may be significant here that Mark will speak of the appearance of 'Elijah with Moses'.[11] The path leads up from Sinai, by way of Elijah, to Daniel and thus to an imminent future that is already present in a hidden manner; thus (presumably in the course of redaction) the event of the transfiguration can be linked as closely as possible to the coming suffering. There certainly exists (especially in Mark) a close link between Peter's confession at Mk 8.29 and the proclamation made by the heavenly voice at 9.7; Matthew clarifies this with the statement that Peter's confession too was inspired by the Father in Heaven (16.17). But the disciple's profession of faith

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[6] J. Jeremias concludes his analysis of the parables with this sentence: 'For there has appeared the one whose hidden glory shines behind every word and every parable' (op. cit., p. 227; ET p. 230).

[1] Literature in J. Höller, *Die Verklärung Jesu* (1937), J. Blinzler, *Die ntl. Berichte über die Verklärung Jesu* (1937), H. Riesenfeld, *Jésus transfiguré* (Lund 1947), H. Baltensweiler, *Die Verklärung Jesu* (Abh. ThANT 33, 1959); *LThK* 2nd edn. 1965 (Blinzler), *Bibellexikon* 2nd edn. 1968 (G. Schneider).

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[2] Baltensweiler.

[3] C. v. Weizsäcker, E. Meyer, A. v. Harnack: for the last two, Peter's visionary experience is the model and cause of the Easter visions.

[4] So that D. F. Strauss's thesis of a myth dependent on Ex 24 (likewise Dibelius, *Formgeschichte*, 4th edn. 1961, p. 275, ET *From Tradition to Gospel*, 1934, pp. 275f.), or of a legend (Lohmeyer, 'Die Verklärung Jesu nach dem MkEv', *ZNW* 21, 1922, pp. 181f.; F. Hahn, *Christologische Hoheitstitel*, 3rd edn. 1966, p. 340; ET *The Titles of Jesus in Christology* 1969, pp. 334f.), or of a graphically narrated doublet to Peter's profession is ultimately consistent.

[5] J. Wellhausen, R. Bultmann, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (1957), pp. 278–288 (ET *History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 1963, pp. 259–261). On this, *cf.* above all the critical remarks of G. H. Boobyer, *St Mark and the Transfiguration Story* (1942), pp. 11ff. C. E. Carlston, 'Transfiguration and Resurrection', *JBL* 80 (1961), pp. 233–240, has taken up this thesis again.

[6] 'La rédaction du récit de la Transfiguration', in: *La Venue du Messie, Rech. Bibl.* VI (1962), pp. 65–100. On the historicity of the kernel, *cf. idem*, 'De transfiguratie van Jezus', in: *Collat. Brug. et Gand.* 4 (1958), pp. 467–503.

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[7] One should also note Sabbe's references (suggested by J. T. Milik) to the localities (the sources of the Jordan, Hermon) as a place of apocalyptic vision.—The concept of 'transformation' need not come from hellenistic stories of metamorphoses (as Lohmeyer at first supposed); rather, it is at home in Jewish apocalyptic, as Syr. Apoc. Bar. 51.10 shows, when it is said of the righteous after their resurrection: 'They will be like the angels and the stars, and they will be able to change themselves into whatever form they wish, from beauty to splendour, from light to the majesty of glory'. 2 Cor 3.18 is conceptually close to this. The motif of sleep (which is explicit in Luke, but already hinted at by Mark and Matthew) is likewise apocalyptic: Enoch (13.7, 10; 14.2; Test. Levi 2.5; 5.7).

[8] *Cf.* Sabbe, 'Rédaction' p. 83, and above all Riesenfeld. The emphasis of the heavenly voice lies not (as at the baptism) on the first part ('This is my beloved (chosen) Son'), but on the second part: 'You must listen to him' (= Deut 18.15).

[9] *Cf.* III/2,1, pp. 42–43.

[10] Thus H. P. Müller, 'Die Verklärung Jesu. Eine motivgeschichtliche Studie', *ZNW* 51 (1960), pp. 56–64.

[11] H. Baltensweiler (pp. 69ff.) seems to give the best explanation of this inversion in the oldest account available to us, when he discards all other suggestions and points to the role of Elijah—as this was understood by contemporaries on the basis of Mal 4.4–6 (= 3.22f.)—as the one who would 're-establish' the Law of Moses (p. 81). This does not mean acceptance of the speculations which Baltensweiler goes on to make about the 'peaceful Elijah' as the model set up for the suffering Jesus. But neither the traditional interpretation as 'law and prophets', nor the interpretation of both figures as 'forerunners of the Messiah' (an interpretation that scarcely can claim a biblical basis, except possibly Rev 11.3ff.?) is satisfactory. It is not relevant here to point out that Jesus is characterised in various ways as the 'new Moses' and the definitive lawgiver, since the inversion in Mark is older than this.

becomes the occasion for the first prophecy of suffering, which is immediately followed by a second prediction after the descent from the mountain (and the healing of the epileptic boy); between Peter's profession and the transfiguration comes the discourse about discipleship with two logia about the coming of the Son of Man 'in the glory of his Father' (Mt 16.27) and the coming 'in his kingdom' that is soon to be *seen* by some of those present (16.28). The second logion will have been given this position because of the transfiguration which comes next; the first speaks of the Danielic Son of Man, who will be seen proleptically in the vision of the transfiguration. Mark and Matthew place the discussion about Elijah (who is to return, or has already come as the Baptist) during the descent from the mountain: here Elijah becomes completely the precursor of the suffering Jesus. Matthew develops the open statement of this form from the somewhat obscure statement in Mark (Mt 17.12).

This movement of thought is present in all the narratives, and Luke does no more than expose it clearly when he defines the Old Testament theophany evoked here by means of the expression δόξα (glory). The two men who belong to the divine sphere appear 'in glory', and Jesus is not merely lit up by this glory from outside himself, nor introduced into it: it is his own glory ('when they awoke, they saw his glory': Lk 9.32). This had been prepared by Matthew, where it is not only the garments of Jesus that are radiant (as at Mk 9.3), but his face that shines like the sun (Mt 17.2); but the Lucan clarification is fundamentally present already in the concept of transfiguration, which he—unlike Mark and Matthew—does not employ. The second clarification in Luke points towards the suffering, which now forms the contents of the 'conversation', already mentioned by Mark and Matthew, between Jesus and the heavenly figures. And the cloud of the *kabod*, which finally encloses the three and withdraws them from sight, is a darkness that bears a coming night in its womb, since it is the same three disciples who will be witnesses on the Mount of Olives of the object of the conversation on the mountains of transfiguration. The formulation of the voice of God follows schematic patterns;

quotations from the Bible obviously cannot reproduce what the voice of the Father actually said. It is probably put together from Is 42.1[12] and Deut 18.15, like the voice at the baptism; but here, it is clearly the disciples who are addressed, and in the redactional context it is unmistakable that the reference is to the Son as the one chosen to suffer, the one whose life is orientated towards his coming suffering. From this perspective, it is not easy to interpret the command, found in all the Synoptists, to silence: is it only three of the disciples who are to profit from the divine confirmation of the coming suffering?[13] Is it the Marcan 'messianic secret' at work here in shaping the narrative, or (more probably) the older Danielic scheme of the sealing of the secret (Dan 8.26; 12.4)? But the reference forward to the Mount of Olives also shows the validity in the New Testament of an understanding of the mysteries of the Passion, and an initiation into these, that go by stages. These stages run from the confirmatory voice of the Father, via Moses and Elijah who give the explanation that points to the Passion ('they told' him 'about his departure in Jerusalem', Lk 9.31), to Jesus himself, who knows about 'what has to be fulfilled', to the three who are witnesses to the prophecy but do not understand adequately, and finally to the rest, who here are waiting at the foot of the mountain and later will wait outside the garden.

The astonishing thing about the transfiguration is that, in this night on the high mountain,[14] the ever elusive *doxa* of the Old Testament becomes present for a moment in all its stages and forms, and attains its immediate fulfilment in its Old Testament form in Jesus and at the heart of his prayer to the Father—not as in John, where the glory as it were goes beyond itself and is dissolved into this relationship so that the entire existence of Jesus is a more or less concealed or open glory; and an individual transfiguration scene becomes superfluous; but in such a way that the intermediary stage becomes visible, the moment in which the Old Testament glory concentrates itself in a single point, so that it may enter and cross over into the glory of the New Testament. But this gathering together of scattered elements from Sinai via Elijah to Daniel is at the same time their concentration to form an arrow that now points straight at the final goal: the unity of the Cross and the parousia. What was said above about the double temporal horizon of Jesus must be kept in view here: the Cross is the end of the world, and what lies beyond it is the parousia. The transfiguration of the earthly Jesus, of his earthly clothes and in some manner of the world upon which he shines, is the promise and first instalment of the eschatological transformation of the world as a whole,[15] and for Paul this truly begins with the living of the Christian life—as a reflection of the glory of Christ—in a way that is both invisible and visible (2 Cor 3). But all this takes place in the deepest concealment—in Luke, in a scenario that is strangely close to that of the temptation on the Mount of Olives[16]—far from men, before three witnesses who are half asleep and who must seal up in strict silence what they have seen. It is only right at the end of the apostolic period that, drawing on two allusions of the First Letter of Peter (1 Pet 5.1; 1.11), the Second Letter will draw the event forth from its concealment and make of it ocular testimony to the eschatological glory that is still to come (2 Pet 1.16–18);[17] but this account of a pseudonymous 'eye-witness' has somehow gone back into apocalyptic in its 'disclosure', and is *en route* to the gnostic uses of the event that are found in the apocryphal literature.[18]

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[12] We shall not discuss here the problematic relationship of υἱός and παῖς. *Cf.* J. Jeremias, *TDNT* V 701.

[13] The Apocalypse of Peter has all twelve disciples present on the mountain (Akhim fragment 5; Schneemelcher II, p. 481; ET p. 680).

[14] It is above all Lk 9.37 that indicates that this is a nocturnal scene: the descent is made on the following morning. The sleep of the disciples could be an indication of this, as could Jesus' prayer (*cf.* Lk 6.12; 22.39). 'The night discloses the mystery of the day' (Grundmann, *Lukas*, p. 193).

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[15] S. Bulgakov, *Du Verbe incarné* (Paris 1943), quoted by A. M. Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ* (1948), p. 139.

[16] Here, however, one cannot go as far as H. Baltensweiler, for whom the historical kernel of the transfiguration scene is a decisive struggle in prayer by Jesus about his messianic function, involving the renunciation of the earthly image of the Messiah held by the Zealots and the acceptance of the Father's will, which points the way to suffering. This cannot be demonstrated. But one can say that the prayer of the transfiguration lies along the trajectory that goes from the prayer during the temptation on a 'very high mountain' (with the rejection of the 'glory of all the kingdoms of the world', Mt 4.8) to the Mount of Olives (where preference is given to the unique lordship of the Father). The only scene in John which simultaneously corresponds both to the transfiguration scene and to the scene on the Mount of Olives is Jn 12.27–33.

4. Miracles, parables and the transfiguration are each, in their kernel, historical data in which the paradox of sovereignty in concealment makes itself known, thus reflecting what the chosen witnesses experienced in the whole existence of Jesus. In the attempt to draw nearer to this unique paradox with a great variety of *literary methods*—which, as such, can only identify a particular facet—attention is directed concentrically to something indescribable that lies in the mid-point.

Mark begins with the systematic exploitation of the 'messianic secret' as a means of making his portrait; this leaves unresolved an open dialectic of lightning-flashes of disclosure and violent suppressions that are often plainly ineffective; we may leave aside the question of the extent to which this is the outcome of his considered intention or of his literary clumsiness. There is also the dialectic of disclosure and concealment in the 'theory of obduracy' in the case of the parables, and the repeated emphases on the disciples' lack of understanding in the presence of the theophanies of the Son of God.[19] In a theological 'composition' which blends into each other things that are historically irreconcilable, being

[17] There is no need to doubt (as does Cullmann, *Petrus*, 1952, p. 64; ET *Peter*, 1953, p. 61) that it is the transfiguration that is meant here.

[18] Acts of John, chs. 90–91; Acts of Peter, ch. 20 (Schneemelcher, Vol. II, pp. 151f.; 207; ET, pp. 226f.; 301f.), and Apocalypse of Peter (n. 13 above). The way to the Jewish Merkabah mysticism is likewise open, as can be seen from W. Gerber, 'Die Metamorphose Jesu Mk 9.2 par.', *ThZ* 23 (1967), pp. 385–395. Nevertheless, it is clear here that all the 'metamorphoses', whether hellenistic or Jewish apocalyptic, are the presupposition of an entry into the heavenly world, i.e. they display the theme of 'verticality' of which we have spoken; but this does not suffice to account for the oscillating and complex reality of the transfiguration of Jesus.

[19] See above, p. 153, 218f.. W. Wrede, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (1901, 3rd edn. 1965; ET *The Messianic* Secret, 1973); H. J. Ebeling, *Das Messiasgeheimnis und die Botschaft des Marcus-Evangelisten* (1939). E. Sjöberg, *Der verborgene Menschensohn* (Lund 1959).

(Jesus as the Son of God who is known and knowable) and becoming (Jesus as the hidden Messiah who is not yet knowable) are identified; Jesus is himself both the subject and the object of the gospel as Mark understands it.[20]

The central paradoxes in Mark are taken over by Matthew and Luke as individual themes which are incorporated into a new way of describing the hiddenness of what is open.[21] *Matthew* both increases the distance between the two poles, by raising Jesus' sovereignty to the majesty of the pantocrator, and making his lowliness more comprehensible in principle and in practice, and more accessible to the Church. He pays the price of the possibility of this greater tension accompanied by a greater comprehensibility, through a loss of concreteness and a transition from narrative as action to narrative as instruction. The majesty is shown in the scenes of adoration (the Magi, 2.2ff.; the leper, 8.2; the ruler of the synagogue, 9.18; the Canaanite woman, 15.25; the mother of the sons of Zebedee, 20.20; above all, the disciples in the boat after the stilling of the storm, 14.33; after the Resurrection, the women, 28.9, and the eleven, 28.17). In all the blocks of teaching, Jesus is revealed at the close as the judge of the world.[22] Jesus' human emotions, which are prominent in Mark, are toned down or omitted.[23] The disciples address him as κύριε, and one of the things this implies, at least in the background, is the title of sovereignty given after Easter[24]. And now it is this exalted one who takes the path of lowliness, foreshadowed in the old covenant (especially in the piety of the *anawim*, which prepared the way for Jesus' understanding: *cf.* the beatitudes): he is the servant of God, who 'does not quarrel, nor make a noise, whose voice no one hears in the street' (12.19, after Jesus has twice withdrawn from a conflict with the Pharisees), who 'takes on our weaknesses and bears our sicknesses' (8.17, as the final interpretation of the meaning of the first miracles). He is 'meek and humble of heart' (11.29), the humble king (21.4f. = Zech 9.9 + Is 62.11), who is acclaimed by children and babes (21.15), just as God's truth is revealed only to children and babes (11.25). But all this is a lived interpretation of the old covenant, which receives its condensed embodiment in the existence of Jesus. Matthew repeatedly summarises the covenant with Israel in such embodiments: in the 'golden rule' (7.12), in the formulation of the double commandment (22.40), and in the three fundamental concepts of 'justice, mercy and (covenantal) truth' (23.23): clearly, he sees in this summary the filfilment of the whole law down to the last jot and tittle (5.18), because it is only thus that the threshold to the new covenant is crossed (5.20). It is the criterion of judgment ('what you have done to the least of my brothers . . .', 25.40,45) that shows the unity of these various concepts: to give justice (to those suffering unjustly) and to show mercy to the least (in imitation of God) is the existential realisation of covenantal fidelity. Everything is summarised in the unity of love of God and of neighbour, love for the highest and for the least, and Jesus Christ both makes this unity possible (as the *kurios* and servant of God) and realises it, since he existentially—in an act of obedience to the whole law (3.15)—'fulfils all righteousness' and thereby opens the path of imitation both ontologically and ethically, a path that is pure service (20.20ff.), childlikeness and abasement (18.1ff.), poverty, non-violence, and thus readiness to suffer and surrender of oneself to God (5.39ff.; 6.25ff.; 7.1ff.; 10.17ff.; 16.24ff.; 19.23ff.). The contradictory titles of Jesus, which Matthew yokes together, indicate the theological unity at

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[20] W. Marxsen, *Der Evangelist Markus* (2nd edn. 1959), pp. 86ff. (ET *Mark the Evangelist*, 1969, pp. 129ff.).

[21] Marxsen shows at the end of each of his chapters the toning-down of the Marcan paradox in the longer Gospels, but does not show how the paradox that is fundamental for all of them takes on a new form in the longer texts.

[22] Sermon on the Mount, 7.21ff: missionary discourse, 10.34ff., esp. 41; parabolic discourse, 13.49f.; address to the community, 18.21ff. (conclusion of the parables); address to the Pharisees, 24.34ff., making the transition to the apocalyptic discourse, 24.27ff. (return of the Son of Man), final parable which ends in the great judgment of the world and the statement of the criterion which will be applied there, 25.31ff.

[23] Anger (Mk 1.41; 3.5), sharp reprimand (1.43), deep sighing (8.12), indignation (10.14), tender embracing (9.36; 10.16), loving (10.21).

[24] G. Bornkamm, 'Enderwartung und Kirche im Mt. Ev.', in: G.

Bornkamm, G. Barth, H. J. Held, *Überlieferung und Auslegung im MtEv* (3rd edn., 1968), pp. 38f. (ET *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, 1963, pp. 41f.).

which he aims.[25] The limit and the danger of his literary devices come at the point where the uniqueness of Jesus' synthesis—more precisely, the uniqueness of his self-surrender (kenosis, detachment) to the Father—threatens to become a path of imitation that is accessible to all: and here, the Pauline corrective of the abolition of the law (beside its fulfilment) becomes indispensable. But Matthew shows from the outset that the filfilment of the law is so closely bound to the person and existence of Jesus—so strongly does the uniqueness of his sovereignty light up the uniqueness of his lowliness—that in his case too there is never the possibility that ethics can be separated from christology and become independent. In the unity of sovereignty and lowliness, Christ is truly the one who fulfils the covenant, and as servant of God it is he who widens out the human column which supports the arch, in the Church, to the ethics of imitation. For this reason, in Matthew the disciples must from the start have understanding.

In *Luke* too, while the Marcan paradox is taken over, it is reduced in importance and becomes a lesser theme (the formulae speaking of the disciples' lack of understanding are rare, but compact: 9.45; 18.34).[26] Neither does he choose Matthew's method of developing theologically the themes of majesty and lowliness, but seeks to grasp, from within the disposition of Jesus and God, the 'pull' from sovereignty to lowliness and to suffering. He knows of a yearning on Jesus' part for the baptism of suffering (12.50). And he sacrifices all geographical detours and distractions to the 'ascent to Jerusalem with resolute countenance' (9.51). Jerusalem is the starting-point and the goal of all that is narrated, the place (with the Temple at its midpoint) which Jesus as a child already entered as 'the salvation of Israel' and the 'light of the Gentiles' (2.22ff.), which he took in possession as a boy, since it was the place of his Father (2.49), and the place towards which he marches, since it is necessarily the place of his 'departure' (9.31) and of his 'assumption' (9.51):[27] the place of the suffering, and of the Easter appearances and the ascension into Heaven, and here there is already an echo of the Johannine double meaning of 'exaltation' (one always goes 'up' to Jerusalem: (18.31; 19.28). When he sees the city, after his long journey towards it, Jesus begins to weep (19.41) because the offer of salvation will be made in vain. Here we can see what is specifically Lucan: the boundless love of God, as Jesus discloses this and portrays it, is poor. It is not only meek and humble (as in Matthew), but powerless. The father in the parable 'must' let the younger son go, and the feast of the great forgiveness can be celebrated only when this son has followed his own paths to their end (15.11–32). It is only the man who has been robbed of everything and lies half dead at the wayside, who can truly be helped by the Samaritan (10.25–37). It is only when those who cannot make any return are invited, that the blessed love comes into its own (14.12–14). It is only to the sinful woman whose life is shattered, and who prostrates herself in confession, that 'much' can 'be forgiven' (7.36–50). The love of God discloses its hiddenness only for the one who sits 'in the lowest place' (14.10), for it is not only a love that is 'friendly to men' and 'is merciful', but a 'poor love', and hence truly an incarnate love. This is the reason for two complementary and apparently contradictory elements in Luke: on the one hand the extreme requirement of literal poverty and total renunciation, which seems exaggerated if taken at face value;[28] and on the other hand, the unique atmosphere, found throughout this Gospel but only in it, of praise, thanksgiving, joy, exultation, happiness in peace, all enclosed in a world of prayer, which is mentioned much more frequently than elsewhere:[29] prayer is in the air, and as it were the protective covering, in which the 'poor love' can live in its defencelessness. This love can already be called 'glorified' (δοξαζόμενος, 4.15) in its gift of self—here the Lucan theology borders on John[30]—but this glorification does not yet embrace the whole phenomenon, but only the half of it: this love reaps a harvest of 'amazement and applause' (4.22), but the 'rage' which breaks out soon afterwards destroys any glorification through men and leaves visible only the sovereignty with which Jesus 'went through the midst of them and departed' (4.30). And finally, it is characteristic for Luke that it is in his Gospel that women first become prominent: Mary the mother, Elizabeth who receives grace, the prophetess Anna, the widow of Nain, the sinful woman to whom much is forgiven, Magdalene who is freed from the evil one, the other helpers Joanna and Susanna; Mary and Martha of Bethany; the woman bent double who walks upright; the woman in the crowd who shouts out the blessing over Jesus' mother; the widow who gives away her last possession; the women on the way to the Cross; the faithful women who are present under the Cross and at the burial, and are the first to receive the news of the Resurrection at the tomb. The love of God, made flesh, meets in a hidden nuptial embrace the 'daughter of Sion' who has become flesh in woman. The basis of the covenant is not, as in Matthew, Jesus alone—as God and human being—but Jesus as a man, who from the outset takes up his fellow human beings with their feminine, handmaid's *fiat* into his own work. Paul had already recognised this (Eph 5), and John will establish it at a yet deeper level. If woman is the 'glory' of man in the order of creation (1 Cor 11.7), then the Church is the 'glory' of Christ (Eph 5.27), and is given by him the possibility of shining in the radiance that is proper to the poverty that serves in love: but in this, he himself makes use of the poverty of her love, in order to descend into the ultimate poverty.

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[25] For examples, *cf. ibid.*, pp. 30f. (ET pp. 32f.). From this point, the presentation of Jesus in Matthew's structure as an object of scandal and decision becomes clear. After the programmatic discourse (5–7) and the programmatic deeds (8–9) and the appointment of the fellow-workers (10), the scenes and logia of the *krisis* are collected in chs. 11 and 12: the question of John (with the logia referring to him), the lamentation over the cities that did not pay heed to the signs, the praise of the Father who conceals from the wise and discloses to the simple, the scandal of breaking the sabbath, the great quotation from the Servant Song, the discourse about Beelzebub with the discernment of spirits (but with eschatological definitiveness), the paradox of the sign of Jonah, and the rejection of Jesus' blood relations. Ch. 13 closes with the seven parables of the kingdom of God, which all aim at discernment and decision. Finally, there is the lack of faith in Jesus' home town. Here there is the definitive New Testament 'wisdom' (11.19; 12.42), 'prophecy' (13.17, 57), and 'Spirit' (12.28,31f.).

[26] The theme of the messianic secret is reduced to a few texts: 4.35,41; 5.14; 8.56; 9.21; but *cf.*, e.g., 9.36.

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[27] 'Jesus' consciousness of suffering is expressed as a journey': H. Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit* (4th edn. 1964), p. 57; *cf.* pp. 66ff. (ET *The Theology of Luke*, 1960, p. 63; *cf.* pp. 73ff.). R. Laurentin, 'Jésus au Temple', *Et. Bibl.* (1966), pp. 94ff.

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[28] Here too there is a clear dependence on the Old Testament law of reversal: 1.52–53. But the cries of woe against the rich, the well fed, those who laugh and those who are praised are peculiar to Luke (6.24ff.). The chain of logia about mammon (16.9–13) is assembled by Luke himself and closes with the theme of the irreconcilability of the service of God and the service of mammon; the Pharisees are then characterised as 'lovers of money' (16.14). Mammon is 'unrighteous'. Greed is both folly and godlessness (12.15ff.). It follows that one must sell everything (12.33). Luke makes it quite clear: 'Whoever does not renounce all his goods cannot be my disciple' (14.26,33), At 5.11; 5.28; and 18.22 (as opposed to Mt 19.21), he adds a radicalising 'everything'.

[29] Texts collected in X. Léon-Dufour, 'Les Evangiles synoptiques', in: Robert Feuillet, *Introduction à la Bible* II (1959), pp. 244ff.

[30] 'Saint Luke is not far from the final Johannine interpretation of the life of Christ as a manifestation of glory from first to last': Ramsey, op. cit., p. 40.

b. Hidden Easter

1. The inauguration of the kingdom and the dawning of glory are one and the same thing in Jewish hopes. It was therefore inevitable that the Resurrection of the dead Lord into immortal life and the parousia should coincide; in Jesus' eschatological horizon, they had to. But it is striking that the word 'glory' never occurs in the context of the accounts of the risen Lord: it is only subsequent theological reflection that comes to see that the elemental impact of the *kabod* in God's action in the crucified one must imply a correspondingly elemental impact of the *kabod* in his action in the one who is raised up. If Rom 6.4 says that the Son was raised up 'through the δόξα of the Father', 1 Cor 6.14 goes on to say that 'his δύναμις' raised him up.[1] Eph 1.20 cannot find sufficiently exalted expressions to say what the 'Father of glory' has done in the event of the Resurrection. The reflection understands

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[1] *Cf.* the closeness of both terms at Eph 1.18; 3.16; Col 1.11. They are 'interchangeable concepts for Paul ... The splendour of God is the splendour of his power, and the power of God is the power of his splendour': H: Schlier, *Epheserbrief* p. 77.—*Cf.* Däubler's verse: 'Before I shine forth in the splendour of my brilliant power ...' (*Nordlicht* II, Inselverlag 1922, p. 253).

that the Resurrection is the 'fulfilment' of the promise, made a long time before, that the barriers of death would be broken through; this fulfilment makes present the 'fullness' (πλήρωμα) of the riches (πλοῦτος) which, since it is God's property, is a 'wealth of glory' (Rom 9.23; Eph 1.18; Phil 4.19; 3.16; Col 1.27). Thus the sermons of the Acts of the Apostles speak unabashedly and without distinction of the Resurrection of Jesus as 'exaltation to God's right hand' (2.33) and the 'glorification' of Jesus (3.13; both terms are found together at Is 52.13). 1 Pet 1.21 speaks of the God who has 'raised' Jesus 'from the dead and given him glory' (*cf.* 1 Pet 1.11). Indeed, the Lucan Christ gives the disciples on the road to Emmaus theological instruction: 'Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things, and thus to enter his glory?' (24.26).[2] The liturgical hymn at 1 Tim 3.16 speaks of him in the last line as 'having been taken up in glory', and the Letter to the Hebrews goes so far as to say that 'we *see* him crowned with glory and honour' because he suffered unto death (2.9), with 'a far greater glory' than Moses once received, in that Jesus is invited to sit at the right hand of the Father (1.13; 8.1; 10.12).

This ingenuous theological language contrasts with the simplicity of the Easter narratives. Although Jesus appears several times 'in unwonted form' (Mk 16.12; Lk 24.16; Jn 20.15; 21.4), this metamorphosis bears no quality of transfiguration. It is pure concealment, a transitory desire not to be recognised. There is neither brilliant light nor overwhelming impact in the Gospel recognition scenes. On the contrary, the close of Matthew already betrays a stylised character, as the pantocrator speaks timelessly from Heaven on high. It is only the resurrection angels with their shining garments who indicate—though virtually only in a symbolic way—the atmosphere of δόξα (Mk 16.5; Lk 24.4; Jn 20.12), but this is less defined than with the Christmas angel in Luke, with whom 'the glory of God' shines forth (2.9). At Easter, this symbolic light shines only where Jesus is absent: where he is present, there is 'joy' (Jn 20.21). In Luke's account, there is first 'anxiety and terror' in the presence of what is incomprehensible (24.37; *cf.* Mk 16.8), but then 'they were unable to believe for very joy and astonishment' (24.41).[3] Nothing indicates that the Apostles had experienced the 'many proofs that Jesus gave them that he was alive' (Acts 1.3) as experiences of being overwhelmed by the divine eschatological impact, as did Paul outside Damascus; what they are permitted to experience is not the majesty of the Master, but his intimacy and love, together with a consciousness of the seriousness of their definitive ecclesiastical mission to the world. Luke makes the lack of glory of the period of forty days obvious by means of the disciples' question: 'Lord, is it at this time that you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' (Acts 1.6). The promised glory has not yet come; between Easter and the parousia there stretches the period of the Church, and when the Lord disappears as he ascends to Heaven, the cloud that withdraws him from sight is no '*kabod* cloud' (as at the transfiguration); the same reservation about the external visibility of the divine, which is characteristic of the story of Jesus' life,[4] continues up to his Ascension. No human being saw the Resurrection; it is only attested, 'not indeed to all the people, but to the witnesses whom God had designated beforehand' (Acts 10.41): it is perceived only through their testimony, which, like the event to which they bear witness itself, conceals itself invisibly and powerlessly in the confusion of the history of the world. When Paul quotes the tradition, he gives powerful testimony to the fact and to its significance (1 Cor 15.3–5), without delaying over the mechanism of what happened. Mark gives only the angel's allusion to the encounter that still lies in the future. Matthew knows a little more: a short 'encounter *en route*' of the women and Jesus, the indirect publicity spread through rumours, which he links to the story of the bribing of the soldiers, and the stylised missionary discourse of the one who is exalted to Heaven. Luke and John relate encounters in the intimate circle of Jesus' close friends: Luke's emphasis is on the fulfilment of the whole of Scripture through Easter, and John emphasises the foundation of the Church (bestowal of the Spirit, 'blessed are those who do not see', the office of Peter, the relationship between the official Church and the Church of love). There is, accordingly, the deepest reserve which points to the glory, of which Jesus had often spoken, as lying in the future (Mk 8.38 par.; 10.37 par.; 13.26 par.; Mt 19.28; 25.31; 2 Thess 1.10); there is a new 'hope of glory' (Col 1.27), but the 'revelation' (1 Pet 4.13) and 'appearing' (Tit 2.13) of this glory is still to come. The martyr Stephen can see what lies in the future, the reality that is at present 'laid up' in Heaven (Acts 3.21), and even before the restoration of all things he can see the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7.55f.); but such a glimpse of the eschaton is reserved for the witness at the fatal close of his testimony—for the rest, both Christ and their life of faith in him remain 'hidden in God', and it is only at the end that both together 'will appear in glory' (Col 3.3f.).

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[2] As has been mentioned already, Luke is the only one of the Synoptists to speak of a glory that belongs to Christ as his own: 9.26, 32.

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[3] On the stylisation of Mt 28.2f., *cf.* my 'Triduum Paschale', in: *Mysterium Salutis* III (1969).

[4] E. Pax, *Epiphaneia*, op. cit., pp. 194–195.

2. The question thus arises, what could be the meaning of the numerous statements about glory that refer to the new covenant, to the gospel, and to the Christian life. We have indeed established that, both for the Old[5] and for the New Testaments,[6] 'glory' includes in itself the great names and styles of conduct of God in salvation history, or that this term is intimately related to these. And yet, it was not possible to separate the concept of 'glory' from an idea of the visibility—visible indeed, to the senses—of the divinity of God. This began at Sinai with a dialectical coded discourse, which is partly continued (up to the Johannine Apocalypse),[7] and is partly converted to a discourse of light and splendour in the latest prophetic writings and in apocalyptic—for John, God is light without any darkness (1 Jn 1.5). The angels of the New Testament radiate this pure heavenly light, as does, in an

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[5] III/2,1, pp. 133ff., 189ff.

[6] See above, pp. 260ff., 264ff.

[7] 'The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his might (δύναμις), and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues . . . were ended', Rev 15.8, corresponding to Ex 40.34f.

overwhelming manner, the heavenly Christ who appears to *Paul*. The extreme quality in the visible apparition of God is no longer (as is still the case, in a toned-down way, at the transfiguration of Christ) the mutual merging of light and darkness, but is now a light of such a quality that it blinds the human being who is unprepared and unable to grasp it, and casts him down into darkness (Acts 9.8). It is through the Church, embodied in Ananias, that 'the eyes of the heart are enlightened' for him once more (Eph 1.18), so that he himself may be able 'to shed light upon the dispensation of the mystery' out of 'grace' (Eph 3.9). The word 'light' occurs again three times, when Paul relates his conversion before Festus and Agrippa, first as the 'light from heaven, brighter than the sun' that casts Paul and his companions to the ground, then as the mission to the Gentiles: 'You are to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God'; and finally as the whole proclamation of the mystery of the death and Resurrection of Christ in the gospel as a light both for Jews and for Gentiles (Acts 26.13,18,23). One can discuss whether the light at Damascus is a traditional literary motif introduced by Luke (it is not mentioned at Gal 1.15f.),[8] and further, whether the experience of light—if it was perceptible to the senses—came to influence Paul's theology, for example the great statement at 2 Cor 4.4ff. about the blindness of the unbelievers, 'so that the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ should not give them light . . . for it is the God who said, 'Out of the darkness the light shall shine', who has shone in our hearts to give the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Christ'. But even if both of these can be questioned, it is clear from the whole of Paul's theology—for which 2 Cor 3–4 can be taken as representative here—that, for him, God's glory in light and power possesses a *visible* component: this glory is objectively visible on the face of Christ, i.e. in the whole event of his death and Resurrection, although of course this is the case only when the objective call of God, 'Let there be light!', finds an answering creative call in the subjective depth of the hearts that are given the power to see. One cannot therefore say that the perceptible glory of the Old Testament is 'spiritualised' in Paul, since—however one estimates the influence of the theme of the perceptible light on his theology—God's glory can be perceived on the face of the incarnate Son in a human (i.e. sensory-intellectual) way. However, one cannot take the opposite line and maintain that Paul remains essentially within the sphere of the Old Testament *kabod*: it is precisely in the long expositions of the fundamental discrepancy between the 'perishable' glory of God on the face of Moses (3.7), which also had to be concealed, and the imperishable and open glory on the face of Christ (though this is visible only to the one who believes), that Paul makes the transition from this sphere. This exposes the wholly different dialectic of the New Testament glory between openness and concealment, a dialectic which is both fundamental and conclusive. For Paul, the δόξα *is* objectively visible already in the creation as a whole for anyone who is willing to acknowledge what can be known and does not darken his heart by turning away from the truth (Rom 1.19–23); and it becomes newly objectively visible, at a much deeper level yet, through the act by which God's grace brings justification for anyone who lets himself be touched inwardly by the grace of God that dawns in the gospel, so that he may become able to see.

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[8] Discussion in: G. Lohfink, *Paulus vor Damaskus*, St.B.St. 4 (1965).

But it is at this point that, once again, the hiddenness of the glory of God that is revealed in Christ becomes most precisely obvious. We shall meet the section 2 Cor 3–4, which is important for the discussion of 'glory', many times later on; here, we select only the relevant themes. The statement that God's glory has dawned on the face of Christ (4.6) is central. But this glory becomes accessible only within the 'enlightenment of the knowledge' of this glory;[9] its brilliant visibility is not something it possesses *per se*, but is something only for particular persons to know. But what is realised in this knowledge? Or in what way does the face of Christ reflect the glory of God? The answer lies in the 'gospel of the glory of Christ, who is in the image of the Father', in the gospel which, while it certainly obtains its whole light from this, which is its central contents, still has therein a light of its own which shines (αὐγάσαι τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου . . .) because its contents are God's salvific act in the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus to justify sinners. The gospel therefore contains the 'evidence' of the highest 'love of God' (Rom 5.8; 8.32), which has revealed itself in the highest 'love of Christ' (Rom 8.35). The logic of 2 Cor 5.14–15 is a pure logic of love, and 'faith' (as 'obedience to the gospel', Rom 10.16) is acceptance of the truth of the love of God (Gal 2.19–20); only on the basis of such a love can one explain how Paul finds that the prospect of 'dying and being with Christ' is 'much better' than living on here (Phil 1.23). Now it is impossible for us to come to the unheard-of contents of the gospel other than through its being preached (Rom 10.14ff.); but this preaching contains the gospel's own light, in a way that is visible to men, essentially through the 'openness' and 'transparency' of those who preach (2 Cor 4.1–2). Their service (appointed and made possible through 'God's merciful grace') has renounced all 'shameful concealment', all 'tricks', and all 'falsifications of the word' and thus 'commends itself' before God 'to every human discernment'. But this 'openness' in the preacher is not something that he himself has brought about or chosen for himself: it is strict obedience to an inexorable and unconditional calling to the office (Gal 1.15f.); thanks to the obedience of the one who obeys, the glory of the one proclaimed, whom he serves, shines through his office (διακονία) . . . ἐν δόξῃ, 2 Cor 3.8; 'for it is not ourselves that we preach', 4.5), and this existence as one carrying out an office becomes automatically, without any emphasis, the

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[9] On this expression, *cf.* J. Dupont, *Gnosis. La connaissance religieuse dans les épîtres de S. Paul* (1949), pp. 36–39. For the connection of these passages with Paul's Damascus experience, *cf.* H. A. A. Kennedy, *Saint Paul's Conception of the Last Things*, pp. 90–92; against this, A. Schlatter, *Paulus als Bote Jesu* (1934): Paul does not speak of himself alone, but of his fellow workers too. Schlatter wishes to see in the shining of God upon the face of Christ an echo of the image of the radiant face of Moses (2 Cor 3.7).

According to H. Schlier, 'Die Erkenntnis Gottes nach den Briefen des Apostels Paulus' (1964, in: *Besinnung auf das NT*, 1964, pp. 319–339, at p. 327), Paul thinks 'of his own heart, but in such a way that he sees himself standing in line with many others'.

existence of one who bears witness: service is expropriation, and expropriation (in the case of these contents) is love. Paul's expropriation outside Damascus had its own impact and visibility for his entire Jewish, Christian and pagan milieu (whether or not his companions saw the light that turned him from a Jew to a Christian), and *this* visibility is one of the factors taken into account in the whole process here. Here the general public receives the criterion by which to judge whether the evangelist 'is proclaiming himself', or remains solely a servant of the proclamation of Christ (4.5). The concealment of the splendour of the Father on the human face of Christ is concealed in the office and the kerygma, which in its turn is concealed in the existence of the Apostle; but this existence, in order to be 'open' for all to judge, must once again conceal itself in the dialectic of the existence of Christ: 'always we bear the dying of Jesus on our body, so that the life of Jesus too may be manifest on our body. For although we are living, for Jesus' sake we are always being handed over to the power of death . . .' (4.10–11). The vessel which bears the precious 'treasure' (the evidence of the love of the Father in the dying and rising of the Son) in itself is 'earthen', inconspicuous and fragile, in order precisely *so* to be appropriate for its contents: the contents and the vessel stand and fall together, and refer to each other: the one to whom witness is borne appears in the existence of the witness; and the weakness (Cross) of the one to whom witness is borne has the power (Resurrection) to make the witness credible; the witness must be weak, 'in order that the superabundant power may be attributed to God and not to us' (4.7). Thus there is built up a system of ever deeper concealments and almost alienations of the glory—but precisely at its most hidden point (that of the bare existence of the bare witness) the glory brings everything all at once into the open (τῇ φανερώσει τῆς ἀληθείας, 4.2).

If one asks whether anything at all appears and is visible in so precarious a system—in which what is disclosed conceals itself ever afresh, in order to achieve openness, and indeed ultimately everything seems to be left up to human decision and human evaluation—or whether the balance comes out on the side of the revelation of God, then Paul's reply is unambiguous: *Pneuma*. In his Resurrection Christ becomes πνεῦμα ζωοποιοῦν ('a life-giving spirit', 1 Cor 15.45), after he had taken on himself a 'flesh of sin' (σάρξ ἁμαρτίας, Rom 8.3), i.e. a flesh doomed to mortality and destruction, and had died in this flesh. But precisely this flesh becomes in the Resurrection σῶμα πνευματικόν (a 'spiritual body', 1 Cor 15.44), the bodiliness that is exalted into the divine sphere of life and of the giving of life, and thus of glory (σῶμα τῆς δόξης, Phil 3.21). The whole risen Christ is 'the Spirit', which means for us the concrete accessibility of the divine sphere of eternal life and the powerful communication of this life to our mortal life. The Spirit is 'the Spirit of Jesus Christ' (Phil 1.19; Rom 8.9), Christ is 'the Lord of the Spirit' (2 Cor 3.18). The synthesis between what the mortal flesh of the Jesus who was once obedient unto the death on the Cross, and what he now is as the 'life-giving Spirit', has become indissoluble in the Spirit, and this explains for us why the mortal existence of the man Jesus before the event of the Cross remains so much in the shadows for Paul, and why it receives *as such* no emphasis, no divine light, no δόξα. One can and must see in Paul a strong polemical quality in the one-sided emphasis on the Cross and Resurrection as the one relevant substance of the Christ-event—against people who held fast to the traditions of logia and miracles and saw in Jesus of Nazareth the last rabbi of Israel and the promised Messiah who would finally, after a short delay, restore the kingdom; and also against people who understood the Christian life above all as an imitation of the Jesus who 'did good deeds' and perhaps also of the Jesus who suffered injustly. There are sufficient hints that Paul knew and valued the traditional material that was later brought together in the Gospels; and he too had himself been a διδάσκαλος (teacher) in Antioch (Acts 13.1).[10] But none of this raises Christianity significantly above the level of an improved Jewish ethics and apocalyptic and of a Greek wisdom teaching; and so it must give up any independent significance and be subordinated to the one, all-decisive paradox of the Cross/curse and Resurrection/salvation, in the synthesis of the *Pneuma* which is accomplished by the powerful splendour of the Father: 'From now on, we know no one any longer according to the flesh; and even if we knew Christ according to the flesh, we know him thus no more' (2 Cor 5.16). It is only the Cross that reveals what Jesus' life truly was; and it is only the Resurrection that reveals what the Cross was—the redemption of the cosmos. It is precisely what is absolutely inglorious, the 'curse' (Gal 3.13) and the 'embodiment of sin' (2 Cor 5.21) of the Cross, that is the presupposition that makes it possible for the omnipotent synthesis that is brought about in the Resurrection to be purely divine glory. But this synthesis is at the same time the central, indeed the exclusive subject of the gospel and thus of faith (as obedient acceptance of the gospel) and of the Christian life both of the expropriated Apostle and of every Christian, who is expropriated through baptism and brought into the death and Resurrection of Christ. If the risen one is the Lord of the Spirit, then the new covenant sealed in him is also 'a covenant of the Spirit' (2 Cor 3.6), the 'gospel is the power of God' (Rom 1.16), the apostolic service is 'service of the Spirit' (2 Cor 3.8), and the acceptance of the proclamation in faith and baptism is a 'new creation' (2 Cor 5.17).

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[10] L. Cerfaux, *Le Christ dans la théologie de S. Paul* (2nd edn. 1954), pp. 136–146, shows (against Bultmann) how much the earthly Jesus enters for Paul into the mystery of the Cross, and is not the *mere* presupposition for the occurrence of this event.

This confirms that the christology developed in the first part of this work is central to the New Testament. What is decisively Christian is brought to light only when Paul locates the main thrust of the redemptive event outside the (prophetical) claim and the (ethical-ascetic) poverty of Jesus, in the theme of his *relinquishing* the whole exploitation and interpretation of his absolute obedience that encompassed his life and his death, and his entrusting this to the Father and the Spirit: at this point, no merely human christology can be satisfactory, and the idea of pre-existence is demanded. Pre-Pauline hymnody and liturgy had gone a long way in preparing this concentration, but the interpolations Paul makes (in Phil 2.8 and Col 1.20) are indispensable, if the Christian accentuation is to be made with precision.

Accordingly, the acceptance of the gospel cannot be a simple continuation on a higher level of the Old Testament faith (including the faith of apocalyptic), nor of a Greek 'philosophical faith' in universal providence (as Paul's first scheme of preaching had perhaps attempted to present it: 1 Thess 1.9–10; Acts 14.15ff.; 17.22ff.): it can only be an obedience so radical that it undergirds the whole of human existence and places it under the pure truth of the gospel and of its subject-matter: he who was crucified (for all) is the one who is risen (for all). Abraham's faith can be the model of all faith—and precisely of Christian faith too—because it is faith in the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being what does not exist (Rom 4.17). But this faith is wholly based on the christological (or more properly trinitarian) event, from which it derives its essence and its consciousness,[11] and to which it continuously refers. And just as the divine power of the *Pneuma* has established the indissoluble synthesis, 'Jesus is the Christ', 'the one who was crucified is the one who is risen', so it presents to the world the synthesis of the Christian existence in faith, as an existence that shares in indivisible unity (transmitted through the unity of the gospel) in the unity of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, dead and living.

The paradox of Christian existence is therefore no more of a contradiction than the paradox of Jesus Christ, although it seems to be more paradoxical still than this latter. For while the earthly Jesus was inglorious 'flesh' that came through the Cross to be a 'spiritual, glorious body', the earthly existence of the Christian after Easter, thanks to the unity of the gospel and of its subject, shares both in the Cross and in the Resurrection (in the future: Rom 6.7ff.; in the present: Eph 2.6); the glory of Christ shines over this existence as a whole, and it stands in the splendour of his light (2 Cor 3.18) even—and precisely—where the Christian takes up 'the last place' as 'refuse' (1 Cor 4.9ff.) and is 'publicly exposed to view through insult and persecution' (Heb 10.33). This happens to him 'with

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[11] We are speaking of the open act of faith of Christians, not of the deficient and perhaps implicit act of faith which can be hidden in the enduring awareness of God on the part of the sinful pagan: Acts 17.27; Rom 2.15f.

Christ' and 'in Christ' in the place where he as a Christian truly stands, and despite the ordinariness and lack of splendour of what takes place, it becomes 'somehow visible',[12] as the 'generous condescension of God to us in Christ Jesus' (Eph 2.7). The logic that holds everything together—the Resurrection of the crucified one, the gospel and the Church (founded on the Apostles), Christian faith and Christian existence—is so consistent and indivisible that the divinity (glory) of God—his generous condescension, indeed the folly of his absolute love—takes on genuine visibility in it.

This visibility of the New Testament glory of God includes in itself, but transforms and spiritualises, the visibility of the Old Testament *kabod* of Yahweh. The raising-up into the *pneuma*, into the divine sphere, thanks to the Resurrection, does not mean an 'etherialisation'. Nothing in the creation and the history of the world is analogous to this New Testament visibility of the δόξα. It breaks through the law of the old age precisely by signifying a genuine proleptic presence of the coming world in the old world. This cannot be expressed in the terms of Jewish apocalyptic (as a preview of the last things), because the coming Son of Man is the Jesus who has already died and risen; nor can it be expressed in the terms of hellenistic Platonism, because the eternal that is present is in no sense timeless, and the risen Lord works and rules as one who is present because he is the one who was and the one who is to come: 'the same yesterday, today and for ever' (Heb 13.8). This does not mean that this incomparable visibility of the glory of God in the gospel and in the Church is itself one of the last things; rather, according to Paul, it is dynamically orientated to an eschatological openness that is still to come both in the 'children of God' and in the creation as a whole, and this must still remain hidden for a time (Rom 8.24; Col 3.3). The hiddenness of the δόξα in its openness remains for the Christian as mysterious as the presence of the definitive inheritance in the 'down-payment' of the Holy Spirit and in the special Christian hope that does not deceive.

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[12] H. Schlier, *Epheserbrief*, p. 112.

Although Paul clearly retains the old formulation of glory—which sees this together with the parousia and the Resurrection of Christ as a concept of salvation history and therefore sees the Cross, as the ultimate 'renunciation of the form of God', as also without glory—his very emphasis on the identity of the risen one with the crucified one prompts the question of the extent to which his reasoning implies that the shame and curse of the Cross have their part in the shining out of God's glorious love in Christ. It is only where both Cross and Resurrection are kept in view together that Christ can be called the 'εἰκών of the hidden God' (Col 1.15) and that Paul's gospel can be called a gospel 'of the δόξα of Christ, who is the εἰκών of God' (2 Cor 4.4). 'Εἰκών implies visibility; but must not the visibility of what is essentially invisible also bear in itself an element of invisibility and hiddenness?[13] One may add, with K. H. Rengstorf, that Christ is the 'image of God' precisely by returning to the δόξα of God—'this at once clothes him in the mystery of his hiddenness'—and leaves it to the Father who raises him to 'see to' the relationship between the openness and the hiddenness of God in the Son.[14] K. L. Schmidt has maintained that, for Paul, Christ in his abasement also belongs to the idea of Chirst as the εἰκών of God.[15] In the concealment

[13] Thus Chrysostom, *Hom. in Col.* 3.1 (PG 62, 318). The question is the subject of debate among the Nicene and post-Nicene fathers. Detailed discussion in: Lightfoot, *St Paul's Epistle to the Colossians* (8th edn. 1886), p. 142; *cf.* Eltester, *Eikon*, op. cit., p. 148.

[14] *Die Auferstehung Jesu* (5th edn. 1967), pp. 102f.

[15] 'Homo imago Dei', *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 15 (1947), p. 190. W. G. Kümmel agrees with him in the additions to Lietzmann's commentary on Corinthians (4th edn. 1949), p. 201. Eltester argues against this (p. 133), but incorrectly, if one distinguishes between *eikôn*—as God's appearing in Christ—and the concept of *doxa* used in a more particular way, which Paul cannot employ directly to specify the Cross. On the other hand, K. Prümm, *Diakonia Pneumatos* I (1967), pp. 172f., points out that at 1 Cor 2.8b Christ is called the 'Lord of glory' and is not exalted, nor recognised by the rulers of the world. For Paul, the earthly Jesus is already 'the unconditional possessor of *doxa*', although this did not (Prümm says: scarcely) appear in his earthly life. Prümm sees *doxa* here (in the extension of this term by the LXX) primarily as 'an interior possession' and, in the case of Christ, as a 'designation of the dignity of the divine being', the 'exaltation of his being on the same level as God'. At p. 173, n. 1, Prümm draws attention to the closeness between Paul and John.

of all δόξα in the one abandoned by God on the Cross, he enters the most immediate relationship to the concealed δόξα of the Father, and when at Easter he rises into this divine, hidden δόξα, he is presented by the triune God to the world, in the 'gospel of the glory of Christ', as the one he is—through the few eyewitnesses who have experienced him as the living one. The gospel, the proclamation of Jesus the Christ, is fully open, unconcealed and free of dialectic: it proclaims the openness of God and of his love in the event of Jesus, and summons the proclaimer to the risk of speaking freely (παρρησία) and the hearer to the risk of faith. Here, every cover is withdrawn, and this openness is effected by the *pneuma*; thus the one who proclaims can 'stand forth with great παρρησία (2 Cor 3.12) and, together with the believing hearers, 'see' (or: 'reflect') 'with uncovered face the glory of the Lord' (2 Cor 3.18), although both the exalted crucified one and the Christian who suffers on earth live in hiddenness. When the 'gospel of the glory of Christ' is disclosed like this, however, it places man—the whole of humanity after Christ—before the ever new choice and decision: one must become aware of the 'good odour' that leads to life, or of the 'foul odour' that leads to death, since the 'fragrance of the knowledge of Christ is spread abroad everywhere' by God himself through the Apostles (2 Cor 2.14).[16] This uniquely penetrating quality of the gospel—here transferred from the imagery of hearing and seeing to that of the sense of smell—belongs for the New Testament to the pneumatological fulfilment of the sensory components of the old *kabod* of Yahweh, although the centre of the image has long since shifted to the sphere of salvation history.[17]

Nevertheless, the salvation-historical dimension of δόξα always remains a cosmological dimension: since the creation came into existence, something of God's glory has been perceptible in it (Rom 1.20.23) and everything that happens in the history of the world and in salvation history is *en route* to the perfect revelation of this primal event (Rom 8.18–39); we shall speak of this in the third section, because here we are considering the theme of glory only under the heading of 'hiddenness'. But at this point it is already possible to sum up what has been said as follows: for Paul, δόξα has a consistently trinitarian dimension. The 'glory of God' that 'shines on the face of Christ' (2 Cor 4.6) belongs to the 'Father of glory' (Eph 1.17), although the Son too can be called 'the Lord of glory' while still in the condition of his abasement (*cf.* the context: 1 Cor 2.8), who 'has welcomed us into the glory of God' (Rom 15.7); but the taking up and transformation 'from glory to glory' which begins already now is brought about by the Spirit, who proceeds from the Lord and communicates to the Church of those who believe the glory of his love, which is visible only to the eyes of faith (2 Cor 3.18).

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[16] On the criterion of decision, *cf.* also 2 Cor 11.14: Satan can appear also as an angel of light.

[17] H. Schlier, 'Doxa bei Paulus als heilsgeschichtlicher Begriff' (1961, also in: *Besinnung auf das NT*, 1964, pp. 307–318).

3. Where the hiddenness of Christ's glory is concerned, it is but a step from Paul to John. There is a distance—for Paul, the earthly life of Jesus is without glory, while John lets the glory shine through everything, Incarnation, miracles and Passion—but this distance is not great, because, as has been shown, the life of Jesus makes sense and comes to light in his Cross, which however takes on its inner meaning only from the light of the Resurrection. And even if Paul at first understands δόξα (on the basis of the Old Testament) eschatologically and apocalyptically, the eschaton takes on a proleptic presence in the Holy Spirit through the Resurrection of Jesus, in the gospel and in the life of Christians, and the gospel itself is the definitive apocalypse.[18] This means that an almost Platonic/Philonic light falls from the eschatological glory of Christ on to the Christian present. Faith stands at the point of transition to knowledge, and the

[18] On ἀποκάλυψις in Paul, *cf.* J. Dupont, *Gnosis*, pp. 187–201; art. ἀποκαλύπτω etc., *TDNT* III, 563–592 (Oepke, with bibliography), art. μυστήριον *TDNT* IV, 802–828 (G. Bornkamm). N. A. Dahl shows the use (through reshaping) of the apocalyptic concepts of revelation in Paul and in the whole of early Christian literature: 'Formgeschichtliche Beobachtungen zur Christusverkündigung in der Gemeindepredigt', *Ntl. Studien für R. Bultmann* (2nd edn. 1957), pp. 3ff.

old age is proleptically lit up by the light of the new age; the dialectic that cuts right through human existence (Rom 8.10) is neutralised (Rom 7.25) because it has already been lived and overcome in Christ (Rom 4.25), and it is brought by the dynamic of hope towards the promised unity that is establishing itself (Rom 8.18ff.).[19] Now it is necessary only for the light that lights up the Christian life from the Resurrection of Christ to fall on the life of the earthly Jesus, for this too—though in a different manner—to be understood as hidden glory. The path back from John, from whom this section began, can be opened up by means of a look at Hebrews and 1 Peter.

The *Letter to the Hebrews* begins with five statements about the glory of Christ. The first (1.3), recalling Wis 7.26, calls him the 'reflected splendour' of God's 'glory, the imprint of his being', in a 'solemn liturgical formula' which, while it derives from the Wisdom literature (and Philo), indicates—in an anticipatory summary of the later passages in the Letter about salvation history—the Son who is high priest and forerunner, the historical Jesus in the uniqueness and definitiveness of his suffering. Protologically, he is the creator of the world together with God, and eschatologically he is the 'heir of all' the world: between the beginning and the end comes the 'abasement' (2.9) in which he accomplishes 'redemption from sins' (1.3). If δόξα, like the 'majesty' (μεγαλοσύνη) which immediately follows, is 'a paraphrase for the divine being',[20] then the one so described, the pre-existent Son who has gone through abasement, is characterised as *the* appearing of the divinity of God in the cosmos as a whole. He is neither before

[19] *Cf.* the dense article by H. Schlier, 'Die Erkenntnis Gottes nach den Briefen des Apostels Paulus' (1964, in: *Besinnung auf das NT*, pp. 319–339), where it is shown in the second and third sections how the gospel about the crucified and risen one demands faith, but at the same time takes on the development of a true wisdom discourse (against U. Wilckens, *Weisheit und Torheit*, 1959), how the believing community (for example in Ephesians) has to grow into the knowledge of the revealed mystery, but the subject of this knowledge is the love of God and being known by God, growth through brotherly love and inner spiritual experience into the boundlessness and 'ineffability' of the mystery of the 'suffering God'.

[20] O. Michel, *Der Hebräerbrief* (12th edn. 1966), p. 98.

the world nor above the world, nor can one speak of adoptionism (e.g., because of 2.5ff.); rather, 'here we have reached the unity of thought that includes in itself every individual stage of the development of christology'. This is 'bound to the word and work of an historical person, who cannot be understood on his own terms, but only on God's terms'.[21] It is true that, as with Paul, the emphasis of the human life of this unique person is consistently on his suffering—and a suffering that is described more concretely and has the accounts of the Passion in view[22]—but unlike Paul, the Letter makes a closer link between this suffering and the glory. This takes place through an applicationh of Ps 8.6 to Christ: 'What is man, that you think of him, the Son of Man, that you pay heed to him? You have abased him only a little lower than the angels, you have crowned him with glory and honour'. This puzzling transposition of an anthropological statement to a christological statement raises many questions,[23] but what interests us here is not the stages, now lost to view, which produced this text, but the great dogmatic result: the Old Testament's theological image of the free worldly partner of God, whom he raises to the dignity of the covenant,[24] is transposed into the christological key and is therein fulfilled, superseded and set free from its problematic. The glory that belongs to the human person as God's image cannot be denied here, but remains unemphasised; in the foreground we find, first God's will 'to lead all his sons to glory' (2.10)—an eschatological glory which is without doubt greater than the likeness to God which his nature gives him—and second, the abasement of Jesus 'a little lower than the angels': in the suffering of abandonment by God (2.9),[25] he 'learns obedience' (5.8) and 'tastes death for everyone' (2.9), in order to free all from the curse of the devil and from fear of death (2.14). Because of this obedience, God has made him leader of the holy people and definitive ruler. This is the christological understanding of the subjection of the universe to the power of man. Here there follows the dialectic, which we have already mentioned, between seeing and not seeing: 'Now we do not yet see that everything has been subjected to him. But we do see Jesus, who was abased a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour because he suffered death' (2.9). What we see is not that the suffering of death is itself glory and honour,[26] but that this was the reason for Jesus' being crowned with glory and honour. The believers, accordingly, see through the Cross the glory of the exalted one, even although it is not yet plainly seen that everything is subjected to him. 'The death on the Cross too is a heavenly event and cannot be separated from the exaltation. The community sees not the suffering and dying Jesus, but the one who has been exalted through and in the suffering of death to become high priest' (F. J. Schierse).[27] This vision of faith is a theme that often recurs in the Letter to the Hebrews (3.1; 12.2; for the Old Testament: 11.13,26,27). For the author, in the experience of Christian existence 'the powers of the age to come can already be tasted inwardly (6.4f.; 10.19ff.), so that Christian faith already looks into the hiddenness of the heavenly world', and 'a visibility of what is invisible somehow belongs to the essence of faith'.[28] And this is not on the basis of the Easter narratives (the theme of the Resurrection occurs nowhere in the whole Letter), but comes about through an ability to discern the inner meaning of Jesus' abasement, in which the entire salvific action of the old covenant comes to fulfilment. Therefore the quotation from the psalm about the glorious image of the Son of Man is applied first of all to the history of the covenant, since the theme of intensification, which runs through the whole epistle, is applied at 3.3 to Moses and Jesus: Jesus 'was counted worthy of greater glory (δόξα) than Moses, just as the architect deserves more honour (τιμή) than the house'. The architect who created both the world and the covenant is God, and Jesus as Son belongs on the side of God and stands above the whole house of God. The covenant motif occurs again in the description of the old and the new cult: the ark of the covenant with its contents belonged originally to the holy of holies of the old Temple, and 'above it were the cherubim of glory, overshadowing the mercy seat' (9.5). Once again, 'glory' is the paraphrase for the divine presence, which was represented as dwelling (in the *shekinah*) between the cherubim over the ark. But all of this had disappeared after the exile, and on the Day of Atonement the high priest no longer sprinkled the blood of sacrifice on the mercy seat, but before the 'foundation stone' or against the curtain.[29] The author turns from this extinguished glory to the event (which could be described only in a paradoxical way in the categories of the old covenant) whereby Jesus, as 'high priest of the good things to come', 'offered himself as a spotless sacrifice to God through his Spirit' not once a year, but 'once for all' and 'entered with his own blood into the holy of holies', so that he might become—precisely thus, as the one who had died, the one who was sacrificed, the blood that was shed—the living high priest for us before God (9.11f.). The incompatibility of the old images—no one can be at one and the same time priest and sacrificial victim, no one can enter his priestly office in Heaven in virtue of his being sacrificed upon earth—is the proof that the new covenant is a completely new creation. It is indeed possible to catch a 'Platonic' sight of the archetype (which lacks glory on the level of the image) through 'shadowy images' (8.5) and 'copies' (9.23), but the historicisation of world affairs involved in the transition from the old covenant to the new assigns what is 'Platonic' to obsolescence and employs it only as a bridge to the uniqueness of the eschatological Christ-event. Both the cosmos of the Old Testament and that of Platonism are shattered by the Son's absolute will to obey (10.5–10), the Son who all at once breaks the barrier of death by opening for all (as ἀρχηγός) the way into the Father's eternity, and the barrier of our sinful and obstinate hearts, by purifying them in such a way that he can introduce into these hearts his own will to obey (10.16f.). It is on this basis that Christ can be portrayed as a model in suffering for the oppressed Jewish Christians, without losing his quality as archetype.

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[21] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 80: 'The image of Jesus is marked by suffering': Heb 2.9; 5.7–10; 7.27; 10.5–7; 12.2–3.

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 135f.

[24] III/2,1, pp. 81–131.

[25] Following the reading χωρὶς θεοῦ (2.9), which is 'textually preferable': O. Michel, p. 141; above, p. 210, n. 7.

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[26] As A. M. Ramsey, with Holmes, Bruce, Nairne and others would have it: 'while it is a humiliation to die, it is glorious to taste death for others' (Bruce, quoted by Ramsey, op. cit., p. 44). Spicq quotes Chrysostom, John Damascene, and Oecumenius too in favour of this view: 'The Cross is the glory and the honour'; but he refutes this view with the reference to verse 10: *Hébreux*, Vol. II, p. 33.

[27] 'Verheißung und Heilsvollendung. Zur theologischen Grundfrage des Hebräerbriefes', *M.Th.St.* I/9 (1955), p. 160.

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 159–161.

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[29] O. Michel, p. 303.

In the *First Letter of Peter*, the oppressed situation of the community is not only, as in the Letter to the Hebrews, the occasion of the great christological statements, in which the glory is put into words, but has almost become the *locus* that serves to illuminate these statements. This was already foreshadowed in Paul, in that the 'earthen vessels' of the suffering existence of the Apostle belonged essentially to the authentication of Christ who was the subject of this existence: only in the weakness of Christ can the Apostle count on the strength of Christ (2 Cor 12.10). In 1 Peter, this theme becomes dominant: the author looks, from the hard experience of Christians' being unjustly reviled (2.19f.; 3.14ff.; 4.15ff.), in order to interpret this, both backwards to the ignominious suffering of Christ and forwards to the glory which he received and which is promised to Christians. As in the Synoptists and Paul, glory is primarily eschatological (1.7; 4.13; 5.4), and for the time being it is hidden. But when the Christian experience of suffering is lived in its pure state (4.15), it can be located only along the direct path between these two points of the suffering of Christ and the future glory. It is along this path that the author situates himself, when he calls himself both a 'witness of the sufferings of Christ' and a 'partaker in the glory that is one day to be revealed' (5.1); it is possible that part of what is referred to in the second phrase is Peter's experience of the transfiguration—this at any rate is how it will be interpreted later at 2 Pet 1.16–18. Once more, as in Paul though somewhat differently, the one who bears the gospel in the

Church, in unity with this gospel, is a mediator between the experience of the Passion and the hope of future glory. And once more a strong light falls from the eschaton on the present, on those Christians of the second generation who 'love' Christ 'without having seen him, and believe in him, without seeing him now', and go towards him 'with unutterable and glorified (δεδοξασμένη) joy' (1.8)—a word that gives a particularly illuminating expression to the proleptic and eschatological character of joy in the whole of the New Testament. The same can be said of the beatitude speaking of those who are reviled for the sake of Christ (4.14), because on them τὸ τῆς δόξης καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ πνεῦμα, 'the Spirit of glory and of God', rests; assuming the correctness of the text which speaks of 'the Spirit of glory, who is also the Spirit of God'.[30] But both of these, the joy and the Spirit have already been promised to Christians by Jesus.[31] And thus the sufferings, lit up by an invisible glory, become for the world a strange illustration of what is concealed (3.16).

Paul, Hebrews and 1 Peter prepare the path for the conclusive Johannine synthesis.

c. Hidden love

1. We shall now consider the Johannine 'glory' for the last time, and here, specifically, from the point of view of its hiddenness. Precisely in taking the step beyond Paul and drawing the σάρξ of the historical Jesus into his synthesis of glory—'the Logos became flesh . . . and we have seen his glory' (1.14)—John already points fundamentally to this hiddenness: for, in Old Testament terms, 'flesh' characterises that element in the human person which decisively distinguishes him from God, his weakness when compared to the one who is mighty. Man's 'magnificence' is essentially a bloom that withers,

[30] The Vulgate makes the first phrase independent and thereby gives a threefold exposition of *doxa: quod est honoris, gloriæ et virtutis Dei, et qui est eius Spiritus*. On the formation of the text, *cf.* E. G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of Saint Peter* (2nd edn. 1955), *ad loc.*; C. Spicq, *Les épîtres de S. Pierre* (1966), p. 156.

[31] Texts in: K. H. Schelkle, *Die Petrusbriefe. Der Judasbrief* (1961), p. 124.

compared to the eternal sovereignty of the Word of God (Is 40.6ff.).[1] The 'dwelling (as in a tent) among us' in this Johannine affirmation is not only the coming down of the divine presence (in the cloud of the *kabod*) above our earth, so that this is lit up by the glory and 'reflects' it (Ezek 43.2), but an interior entry into the 'earth', which is indeed 'his property' (1.11), and a shining in the earth and out from within it. But the reference here is not to the Old Testament analogy, as in the Letter to the Hebrews, whereby the human person, as the image of God, is endowed with a glory which is now assumed by the heir of all things. Rather, all human 'glory'—as a 'dignity of one's own', and correspondingly as 'giving glory to one another'—is rejected, so that space is made for the 'search for the δόξα that comes from the only God' (5.44). The emphatic emphasis in John on love of neighbour, because of the Incarnation (the horizontal pole is stressed so heavily by the evangelist because of the vertical pole) is not based in the analogy 'in the order of creation' between the dignity of God and the dignity of man, between the freedom of God and the freedom of man, because here the order of creation is subsumed by the Logos and by the event of his becoming flesh: everything has come into being through him, and it is on the basis of the Logos and of his relationship to God that everything is to be 'illuminated' (1.9), interpreted and judged.

Thus, one can of course maintain that the Johannine concept of δόξα has two roots, one in the Old Testament *kabod* of Yahweh (this is certainly the case at 12.41) and the other in the hellenistic concept of 'opinion, praise, glory' which, however, is in continuity with Ps 8 and its later influence in Wisdom literature; and one can therefore hold that John 'slides' from one pole to the other,[2] or 'seems to play with the word δόξα'.[3] Nevertheless, O. Cullmann is right not to include the Johannine δόξα among the 'ambiguous expressions in John,'[4] because the tremendous brackets (so to speak) which John sets around both poles of the concept—'glory' and 'honour'—bring them to a unity in his theological vision in which the New Testament is, as it were, concluded. The Son of God, who alone 'honours and glorifies' the Father (and in the Father honour and glory are one), and who alone asks and receives honour and glory from the Father, becomes at this point the criterion and judgment of all horizontal human relationships. This is still true of the Letters of John, in which the expression δόξα/δοξάζειν is not found, but in which there is no less emphasis on the basis of all love between human persons in the initiative taken by God's love in Christ to us and in the acceptance of this love in faith. In order to recognise the full power of the Johannine 'brackets', which bring together both the concept of *kabod* (which always has a dimension perceptible to the senses) and the seemingly purely intellectual concept of 'glory' and 'praise', one must go back to the heart of the christology (or christological ontology) of the Fourth Gospel, in which already the 'glory' that the Son has with the Father before the world was made (17.5), the glory that Isaiah sees as already existing (and not only future;[5] 12.41), is always understood as the mutual relationship of love between Father and Son, as this will appear in the Incarnation: i.e., the understanding is at every stage already a New Testament, trinitarian understanding which supersedes the Old Testament idea of the *kabod*. The Jews, boasting of the static and apparently obvious image of God which they enjoy, 'come in their own name' and 'receive glory from one another' (5.43f.), but they have never seen Yahweh's true face, nor heard his voice, for the face and voice of God—which Abraham longed for (8.56), which Moses proclaimed (5.46), and which Isaiah saw in a proleptic vision (12.41)—is he alone who reveals the Father's glory by not seeking his own (8.50; 7.18); and this, not accidentally (by means of one particular kind of conduct on his part), but personally and substantially: he *is* the one who, by not seeking himself, permits the will, the love and the glory of the Other to pass through him. It is not in the created δόξα that he reflects the uncreated δόξα: it is in the relational being of the (eternal, incarnate) Son/Person that he manifests the glory of the Father. And this is not a Father who is in himself the tranquil *kabod*-glory, but fundamentally the Father who utters himself lovingly in the Son, represents himself in him, and makes known to the world his self-utterance in the Son's gift of himself to the world (3.16). Jesus, accordingly—in a way wholly separate from all the images of God that shed light upon themselves (i.e. his fellow-men), is—*as the revealer*—the one who is concealed, without splendour, *unknown*, hidden. As the presence of absolute love, he is taken for someone else; in the act of communication, he is essentially alone and speaks without a partner.

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[1] Although it is not necessary, with Bultmann, to see here only 'offence and paradox' (*Johannes* p. 43; ET *The Gospel of John*, p. 66), as if flesh were identical to darkness. All that is meant here is Incarnation. *Cf.* J. Blank, *Krisis* (1964), p. 79 and frequently. For bibliography, see p. 221f. above; also E. Stauffer, 'Agnostos Christos', in: *The Background of the NT and its Eschatology. Studies in honour of C. H. Dodd* (1956), pp. 281–299.

[2] W. Groussow, op. cit., p. 133, speaks of 'glissements'.

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[3] F.-M. Braun, *Jean le Théologien*, Vol. III (1966), p. 201.

[4] 1948, in: *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (1966), pp. 176–186.

[5] Against J. Dupont, 'La Gloire du Christ', in: *Essais sur la Christologie de S. Jean* (1951), pp. 269–273. Implicitly, the author distances himself thereby from an Old Testament vision of God on the part of Moses (Jn 1.18, 14): there is no other glory of God to be seen than the glory of Christ.

First, he is unknown. The legend of the unknown Messiah offers only a remote analogy to this, and one that is far surpassed.[6] The people think that they know 'where' Jesus 'comes from' (7.27; *cf.* 8.14; 9.29f.; 19.9); but if they really knew his provenance (8.14), they would also know the Father (8.19) and would see the Father in him (14.9). But that would mean believing, entering into the life-blood of the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son. This circulation is the light that has come into the world, but cannot radiate outside the circle of love, even when it draws the passage through the world into itself (16.28). It remains a 'closed' circuit which—only for this reason—is more open than everything else that ties itself down statically, because it is the widest and absolute circle.

The faith that entrusts itself to the reality and the possibility of absolute love permits one to see and know it. In John, this does not happen abruptly, but gradually, just as Jesus' life in the flesh is continually making itself accessible in new ways in his various words, situations and miraculous signs. There exists an inchoative faith which begins to see God's glory in Jesus at his first sign in Cana (2.11),[7] although this does not prevent the true understanding from arising only *after* the 'glorification' of Jesus, in the act of 'remembering' (12.16; 2.22); there exists a faith that does not dare to make public profession (12.42; 19.38) and that visits Jesus by night (3.2); a faith to which Jesus does not entrust himself (2.24), a faith that believes in the truth of what lies in the future, but cannot yet understand what is in the present (4.9ff.; 11.24), a faith that does not know its own object (9.36), a faith that demands signs and 'becomes believing' when the sign is given by grace (4.48,53), a faith that at least asks what ought to be done (6.28), which springs up in the course of discussion and does not get beyond this point (7.40ff.), a faith that is ready (8.31) but then continues to discuss (8.33ff.). This awakening of faith, surrounding the incarnate one who demands faith (8.46), shows how much the greatest circuit of all, the closed trinitarian circuit which embraces all things, prepares access-roads to the narrower circles.

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[6] See above, pp. 48f.

It is also true that for John, as for Paul, Jesus' whole life can be understood only in its orientation to the 'hour' of the Cross.[8] One can penetrate truly into the inner sphere between the Father and the Son only if one drinks the water of life, eats the bread of life, 'is born in wind and water from above': all this is possible only through Jesus' death. The path to this death makes all the basic words appear to have double meanings; but this is not as if the words were being played with. Rather, the end-point which alone truly discloses the all-embracing trinitarian circuit includes in itself the end-point towards which the narrower, unbelieving circuit is driving. Thus, the 'end' (τέλος, 13.1) itself is (in worldly terms) death, but (in divine terms) is the endless radiance of life and of love. In keeping with this, the water of life is drunk from the pierced side (19.34) of the 'dried-up spring' ('I thirst', 19.28), but as an inexhaustible spring that rises up into eternal life (4.14; 7.37ff.). The Spirit that is breathed out (19.30) becomes the Spirit that is eternally breathed in (20.22). And above all, the one 'raised up' on the Cross by men (8.28) is the one raised up, at a deeper level, from the earth in God's salvific plan (12.32f.) as the true 'serpent in the wilderness' in whom the curse of all the sick is really portrayed, becoming for them salvation from God (3.14f.). The wider circuit has so much dominance over the narrower circuit that it categorically applies its own law to it: the flesh of the Son of Man must be eaten and his blood must be drunk if one wishes to have eternal life in oneself (6.53ff.), irrespective of whether this becomes possible only through the fact that those who eat and drink must first slaughter this flesh and pour out this blood. Finally, it is only the 'giving away' of the Son by the Father and of the Father by the Son that counts: the word 'give' occurs fifteen times in the high-priestly prayer, antecedent to everything that men can acquire in violence and self-seeking. Until this final act of giving and being given, everything in Jesus' life that John calls the vision of 'glory' and 'glorification' is inchoative: essentially, it is to be read as a premonitory sign—i.e., it is to be understood in faith—of the definitive exaltation and glorification of the love of God in the self-giving of the Cross. Although the Cross, as men's deed and as God's self-utterance, is the lowest point of the 'descent' (3.13; 6.33ff.) from Heaven, it is the 'exaltation' and thereby the glorification of love as God's free act and as men's unconscious literal contribution: the glorification both of the Son's love (12.23; 13.31) and of the Father's love in him (*ibid.*).

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[7] R. Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium*, p. 340 (ET *The Gospel according to St John*, I, 1965, p. 337).

[8] 'We can hardly fail to see that the motives of a whole series of σημεῖα are gathered up to this supreme σημεῖον' (the Cross): E. Hoskyns, *The Fourth Gospel* (1940), pp. 438f.

This glory of love has a visibility of its own which runs through the whole of Jesus' life from its very beginning (1.14); and, precisely because this is the deepest 'exposition' of God to the world (1.18), this visibility requires the eyes of faith—a faith that must let itself be taken into the 'hour' together with the Son whose life is orientated towards this. But this visibility is equally a hiddenness, since all that can be seen in the Son is his relatedness to the Father; but the Father is seen by no one (1.18; 1 Jn 4.12), except in the emptiness of the Son that is ready for him and in his own self-attestation in this emptied-out space (5.36f.; 7.16, etc.). Thus, in worldly terms, there is nothing convincing to be seen, unless one were to be taken up into the original begetting of the Son from the Father, so that one could understand therein that the innermost poverty of self-giving love is absolute wealth.

Since it is of the essence of the Johannine 'world' to oppose this expropriation, its opposition grows in exact proportion to the growth of love's offer and proof of itself: the gratuitousness of love is answered by the gratuitousness of hatred (15.25) and of blindness (12.40f.). The public character of the great signs—above all, of the multiplication of the loaves, of the healing of the man born blind, and of the raising of Lazarus—are not contrary to this law, because these deeds are through and through 'signs' that refer to something hidden, and in the act of referring, they compel decision. The Jews complain about the bread, as do the disciples themselves (6.61). In the case of the blind man whom he heals, Jesus says: 'I came into the world for judgment; those who do not see are to receive their sight, and those who see are to become blind', and some of the Pharisees ask, 'Are we too blind?' (9.39f.). The raising of Lazarus, a deed that lies between two hiddennesses (10.40f.; 11.54), has a transparent inner reference to Jesus' own dying and rising,[9] and becomes the immediate occasion of his condemnation (11.45ff.). The more that love reveals itself in its signs—as the bread of life (for the hungry), as the light of the world (for the blind), as the resurrection and the life (for the dead)—the more hidden it becomes for those who do not love. They are not merely people who do not see, but people who can see but turn decisively away from seeing: 'If you were blind, you would be without sin. But now you say, "We see". And so your sin remains' (9.41). In the confrontation with Jesus' love, there takes place what John calls judgment; this is the fundamental principle of all his kerygma, and it presupposes that this love, which has come with Jesus into the world, is interpreted in a strictly trinitarian manner: it is only because the highest personality (ἐγώ εἰμι) and the highest quality of relationship to the Father are one in Jesus, that he, the hidden one, can be made the eschatological criterion for all human persons.

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[9] Jesus stays away for two days and comes on the third day to raise Lazarus. His weeping and inner turmoil show his inner participation in the event.

2. Since the whole of Jesus' life with his words and signs makes for the 'hour', and indeed the 'hour', which is 'coming', already 'is' (ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ νῦν ἐστιν: 4.23; 5.25; 16.32) because it determines in advance the meaning of each step that is taken towards it, it becomes clear in the 'hour' what salvation and judgment is—as love. The 'world' is created in its entirety by the Logos who is light and life (1.3f.); the fact that already 1.5 speaks of the 'darkness' into which this light shines, but which is not able to take hold of the light, is not explained at first, but only gradually: 'not knowing' him (1.10) is shown to mean 'not receiving him' (1.11), and at 3.19f. this is specified as preferring the darkness to the light which is coming, indeed hating the light which discloses and convicts (*cf.* 7.7), refusing faith in the absoluteness of love which has appeared in Jesus alone. In that the world—with man as the mid-point that gives it meaning—'was created' by the Logos who is its light and life (1.10), it belongs completely to him: 'he came to what was his own', to 'those who were his own' (1.11), he has 'power over all flesh' (17.2). But in that he comes as absolute love—in the form of the absolute obedience that gives δόξα to the Father alone—he brings to light the decision of men for or against the love that is personally present in him. This is the reason for the statements about judgment, with their rigorous precision: the Son 'did not come to judge the world, but to save the world' (12.47; 3.17), but the effect of his presence for those who despise his word (which is love) is judgment (12.48; 3.19). It is not a word of verdict and judgment, and yet, since it is the word of the Father (and thereby the 'testimony of two persons', 8.17), the conviction it speaks is valid. But this does not mean that one can oppose the 'power over all flesh' to the powerlessness on the Cross of the love of Jesus who

'gives himself up freely', and is loved by the Father for this reason (10.17f.). This is why John is unable to portray the unfolding of a drama in several acts, with first the redemption of the 'darkness' through the self-giving on the Cross, and then the result of this act of redemption (perhaps through the power of the Father) in the raising of Jesus, in the justification of sinners and finally in the eschatological resurrection to life and to judgment: for John, all these essentially interlock. For the Father has yielded everything to the Son: he has given him the power 'to have life in himself', and therefore to be the one who raises the dead in freedom and holds all judgment (5.21ff.), because of his absolutely obedient love for the Father (5.19,30). The great work of interpretation and conviction that will be the task of the Paraclete is situated therefore precisely at the unique nodal point of the Cross and Resurrection, which is the ultimate concealment and the ultimate revelation of love. The Gospel of John takes on an unheard-of static quality through the concentration of salvation history (as this develops in Luke) into one single christological nodal point: there is, and will always be, only one situation which is the judge of everything: the triune love which is nailed to the Cross in Jesus and, precisely therein, is 'exalted' and 'glorified', and, confronting this directly, 'the entire and complete world, and each individual in this taken particularly by himself'.[10] But within this static quality, which explicitly includes also the eschatological situation, the 'last day' (5.28f.; 6.39,40,44,54), there nevertheless lies the highest dynamic possible, as is already clear from the plain statement: 'I judge no one' (8.15); the judgment takes place of its own accord, through the establishment of absolute salvation.[11] It is true that love reveals the depths of hatred, and indeed in a certain sense even generates hatred (15.24), but, precisely for this reason, it is impossible to speak of any original dualism in John; rather, there is a repetition on a quite new level of the

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[10] Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, no. 95.

[11] *Cf.* the important observations of Blank, *Krisis*, pp. 120ff.: 'Death is not an opposite power that could stand in a position dialectically over against life' (p. 128). An anthropological dualism of Greek or—still less—gnostic type is 'wholly foreign' to Johannine thought (p. 144).

Old Testament idea that the splendour of Yahweh's power exposes the lowest foundations of the earth, and that the decisive victory of God is accomplished precisely in this disclosure of *tehōm* and *sheōl*. But now the glory lies altogether in the trinitarian love that appears in the *traditio* of the Son.

Since the Word on the Cross is the wholeness of love, and addresses ultimately what is the lack of love, the Word becomes a monologue; and this is the case to a large extent throughout John, both in the case of the disciples and in the case of the non-believing Jews. No word worthy of him is addressed to Jesus: both the replies and the questions addressed to him aim at a mark that misses the Word, which goes on its solitary way in a logic that shatters the apparent dialogue. And yet, with the same break in the logic, beside the statement at 1.11, 'his own people did not receive him', there stands the contradictory statement at 1.12, 'but to all who did receive him . . .'. The fundamental reason for this is not that man is free either to turn to the light or to turn away from it, as he chooses, but that the Logos has received from the Father the faculty 'to have life in himself' (5.26), to lay down this life freely and to take it up again (10.18), and this includes the power to give it to others as eternal life (10.28). The others to whom he gives life are themselves given to him by the Father (10.28), and the Father leads them to him (6.44,65), and the circle of those who are thus given and entrusted remains basically open to the wholeness (17.2). This openness is nowhere called into question; rather, the one who is raised up on the Cross will 'draw all people to himself' (12.32), because it will be seen, from that exalted place, that 'I am he' (8.28). This insight is the same as the insight 'that the Father is in me and I am in the Father' (10.38). In the Fourth Gospel, with this monological character, there is therefore no abandonment of the Son by God in the sense of Mark and Matthew; even if all scatter, each to his own place, and leave him alone, 'I am not alone, for the Father is with me' (16.32). The Son can be a word that is given away, that is dying of thirst, that is poured out utterly: but he still remains an eternal word.[12]

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[12] Even if one understands 8.25b, like the Greek Fathers, as the

This word is the unsurpassable self-utterance and self-giving of God; J. Blank is right to say: 'The ἐγώ εἰμι, which is God's decisive word of revelation in the Old Testament, and in which he expressed his being most clearly, finds its true fulfilment in the ἐγώ εἰμι that Jesus Christ, the Logos become man, speaks . . . But the Father . . . is ἀληθής; he is 'true', 'faithful', 'reliable', so that one can say that what was always meant in the old covenant by the *'emeth* of Yahweh is embodied in the revealer Jesus Christ. It follows that, if one refuses to believe in the revealer, then one refuses to acknowledge God's truth, reality and faithfulness, one refuses completely belief in God' and makes God 'a liar' (1 Jn 5.10b).[13] This conclusion becomes valid when faith comes to see that here—in the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son, as this is disclosed by the obedience and the Cross—lies something ultimate that is uttered by God, something that can never be surpassed in thought or in deed. All other possible ideas about God are simply rendered obsolete by this one self-portrayal by God; they disappear, and the only possibility that is left is the 'world' which is closed in upon itself and now takes on the role of unfaithful Israel as the unfaithful partner of God the creator and redeemer of all. This is the reason for the anticipatory pointers to the Samaritan mission in the fourth chapter (where 'the fields are already white for the harvest', 4.35), for the urgent desire of the Gentiles to see Jesus when the hour of the Passion is imminent (12.20ff.), and for the vista of 'much fruit' that will come when the grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies. The ultimate gesture of the self-giving of the trinitarian love leaves the Jewish, Samaritan and Gentile images of God behind, and becomes for all of them the τέλος: *videbunt in quem transfixerunt*, 'they shall look on the one whom they have pierced'. Henceforward, nothing more of God will be visible: this will be his total disclosure, but also his total

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interruption of innerworldly communication, because everything has been said, 'Why go back to the beginning, τὴν ἀρχὴν, why am I talking to you?', it remains the original word (according to the interpretation of the Latins: *principium qui et loquor vobis*) who is speaking.

[13] *Krisis*, p. 229.

concealment, and will remain so in every post-Christian atheism, in all theologies of 'the death of God'. The sign that is set up in the ultimate hiddenness, the sign in which all the other 'mighty deeds' of God disappear from sight, is so small that there is an ever increasing temptation to despise it (Is 53.3; Jn 8.49) and, in despising the Son, to despise also the Father who sends him and bears witness to him (Lk 10.16).

Nevertheless, along with the failure to receive him, there is the fact of his reception, of which the Prologue already speaks: this belongs to the primordial phenomenon of the revelation. Without a womb to receive him, there is no Incarnation of God, and without a faith to receive it, there is no basin to catch the waters of God's truth as this pours itself out. In all its freedom, this faith is 'the work of God' himself (6.29), and, as such, it makes possible the interior participation in the life of the Trinity: 'but to those who did receive him, he gave the possibility of being made children of God: to all who believed . . .' (1.12). The tiniest 'seed of God' brings about its own milieu in which it can remain alive and can grow (1 Jn 3.9); if this space did not exist, then God would not have gone forth from himself in revelation—for the darkness, as such, does not receive him. The 'faith that is as small as a grain of mustard' (Mt 17.20), which cannot say anything more than *fiat*, is shaped to receive the form of the hiddenness of the self-utterance of God's love. This faith descends with the incarnate Word into ever deeper depths of hiddenness; and it belongs to the Holy Spirit to let as much as he wishes grow up out of this embrace of faith and love, to bear fruit. But even when visible signs, forms and miracles are the outcome of this glorification of Christ and the Church through the Spirit, these all remain only pointers to the inconspicuous character of the love that is rich in its poverty and poor in its riches.

This leads on to the third and final question about the glorification of the divine glory through the creature which receives it and answers it. What is the meaning of δοξάζειν; what is it to give the glory of God, which presents itself thus and not otherwise, the right honour which it itself intends?

III. IN LAUDEM GLORIAE

1. GLORIFICATION AS ASSIMILATION AND RETURN OF THE GIFT

Theological aesthetics began as a 'coming to see' the form in which God's Word comes to us, gives itself to us and loves us. In this act of seeing, there already lies the 'rapture': a breaking out from ourselves in the power of our being called and affected, in the power of the divine love which draws near to us and enables us to receive itself. 'Rapture' therefore does not mean that the finite is alienated from itself, in order to find itself in its genuine nature outside of itself, in what is infinite: it means that we are no longer strangers to the absolute love—for the finite 'I' (or even 'we'), closed in on itself, at first lives mostly as a stranger to love—and it means that we are drawn into the sphere of the glory between the Father and Son, as this glory has appeared in Jesus Christ. It is the grace and the work of the Holy Spirit that gives us this new home: he makes the life of love well up, not in front of us nor above us, but in us, and thereby empowers us to 'glorify' through our life the glory that has been given to us as our own. Thus, this third section will be a book of the Holy Spirit, and will deal with glorification. Since the Spirit himself is the glorification of the love between Father and Son, wherein God's true glory disclosed itself to us, it is likewise only he who can bring about glorification in the world. His work unfolds as a consequence of the bringing about of a 'distance' between the Father and Son in the kenosis and the 'abolition' of this in the return of the Son to the Father, and hence lies out beyond the 'form' which Jesus made visible to us and the subsequent replacement of this by invisibility: but this comes about in such a way that, in the Spirit's act of glorification, we neither let go of the form 'which has existed' nor yet can dispense with its removal, if it is to be truly present for us. This produces a tension that is not to be made sense of with any general law of dialectics, but only through the truth of faith that the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and from the Son, and is sent by the Father (Jn 14.16, 26) through the Son (15.26) into the world in the dispensation of salvation, once the Son has risen and has been united again to the Father. This sending is completely different from that of the Son, who indeed became our brother in order to bear our guilt, but—as our brother—was always the 'other' *vis-à-vis* us. He was the one who did what we were unable to do, who gave God the glory where we, lacking the glory of God, all sought our own (personal or mutual) glory. The fact that this was done on our behalf, 'while we were still sinners', could only leave us in an alienation which would easily change to sadness and desperation: 'it' was done in our absence, 'it' was 'accounted' righteousness for us, and we could not resist it. At best, we were invited to follow, but then we were left behind at the decisive point of the journey; certainly, it was we ourselves who chose to flee, but how could we have gone along with Jesus? We were convicted of our sin: and what else can a sinner do but crucify God? As a sinner, he cannot glorify him. One has done it on our behalf, and he goes back to the Father. 'I go to the one who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' For your heart is so full of sorrow, because I said this to you' (Jn 16.5f.). How was it possible even to ask the question of where he was carrying off this brotherly love that he had shown us on earth? Does it not then belong to us; or were we only the occasion to do something else, something more important? There was no way to know in advance the answer that Jesus gave to the unasked question: 'It is good for you that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go away, I will send him to you' (16.7). The 'Spirit of truth' will 'lead into all truth' those who stand outside: he will bring them within what hitherto seemed to stand apart from them. When they are thus brought inside, they both recognise and grasp from *within* what had apparently taken place *outside* those concerned in it. And when they enter the inner room of the Spirit, they necessarily become participants. It is the Spirit who empowers both these steps. This is a new work that is peculiarly his own, and yet presents itself only as the carrying out of what had been begun by the Son: 'He will take from what is mine, and proclaim it to you' (16.14). Only when the Spirit has led the disciples into the 'whole truth' of the Father and the Son, can it be disclosed how this is possible: it is because the vicarious death of the Son does not alienate his brothers from themselves, but relieves them of what was foreign to them. 'He died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves' (2 Cor 5.15): what seems to these 'living ones' a deprivation is in truth already the fundamental liberation that lets them be themselves, free for love and for the possibility of communicating and giving themselves. This ability to be poor is the human person's deepest wealth: this is revealed by the Christ-event, in which the essence of being became visible for the very first time: as glory. In giving up his Son, God the Father has opened up this possibility for all. But the Spirit of God is sent to change this possibility in us into reality. He shows the world that the poverty of the Son, who sought only the glory of the Father and let himself be robbed of everything in utter obedience, was the most exact expression of the absolute fullness, which does not consist of 'having', but of 'being=giving'. It is in giving that one is and has. This cannot be explained in words—'I have yet many things to say to you, but you could not bear it now'—it can only be done, and be understood in the course of doing it.

a. Trinitarian self-giving

As a whole, the New Testament is just as full of doxologies as is the Old Testament. In this its literary dependence on the latter is clear.[1] But behind the external similarity, which also presupposes a far-reaching preparation of what is distinctively Christian through the praise found in the Old Testament, a deeper difference lies hidden. In the old covenant, God and his partner are related to one another as lord and servant: the servant is given the grace of election, of the unique and yet ever new liberation and favour, and he glorifies the glory of the gracious and powerful Lord which has become visible to him and indeed determines and reshapes his whole existence. He 'blesses' his God, and God's name, for all the blessing that flows from him. In the act of δοξάζειν the servant gives back to his Lord the lordliness and glory that he has received from the fact of his being created, gives back the very basis of his ability to grasp the mighty deeds of God in the creation and in the history of the covenant (Gen 1.27; Sir 17.1–14). We have seen how Israel's praise of God achieved its finest and most characteristic self-understanding when it went out beyond itself in ecstasy to 'dwell' in God's land, temple, territory and possession.[2]

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[1] Art. 'Doxologie', *LThK* 2nd edn. Vol. III, 534f. (Nielen, with bibiliography); A. Stuiber, *RAC* IV, 210–226. *Bibellexikon* (2nd edn. 1968), 344f. (A. van den Born).

When Ignatius demands of the Ephesians that they 'glorify in every way Jesus Christ, who has glorified you' (*Eph* 2.2), we are transferred into another world, because the whole background has changed: the dominant place is held, no longer by the relationship of Lord and servant, but by the trinitarian relationship. The more deeply the New Testament reflects upon its new presuppositions, the more clearly does this trinitarian relationship embrace the relationship of creation (including that of Lord and servant), and thereby determine the ultimate meaning of glorification. In order to make this clear, we pass over the short doxologies formulated in Old Testament terms,[3] leaving aside also two of the greater 'benedictions' (eulogies: 2 Cor 1.3ff.; 1 Pet 1.3ff.),[4] and study in detail the third and most detailed benediction which is the hymnic introduction to the Letter to the Ephesians (Eph 1.3–14).[5] It is the 'blessing' of a God who, as the 'Father of our Lord Jesus Christ', has 'blessed us with every blessing of the Spirit' (1.3) and is therefore the answer corresponding to an act begun and determined by God. This is expressed also by the concluding formula 'to the praise of his glory', which occurs three times like a refrain (1.6,12,14); the first passage speaks explicitly of the 'glory of his grace', and the other two speak of glory by itself (meaning the eschatological and ultimate glory). The entire hymnic introduction speaks, not primarily of something that has happened between word and answer, God and man, but develops one-sidedly the unconditional and irrevocable plan and decision (θέλημα vv. 5, 9, 11; βουλή v. 9) reached by God alone, prior to anything in the world and in man (προ-ορίσας, v. 5; προ-έθετο v. 9; προ-ορισθέντες κατὰ πρό-θεσιν, v. 11), depending on God's free good pleasure (εὐδοκία vv. 5, 9) alone which is, as such, grace through and through (χάρις vv. 6, 7). It could appear that God deals with his creature in a way that goes even further than in the Old Testament, without consulting him at all; it could appear that the relationship of Lord and servant had never been more explicit than here, where the creaturely 'praise of the glory' stands as the goal set in advance for the entire plan, and a goal that has unfailingly been met—but the God who here plans in advance is the 'Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every blessing of the Spirit in the heavens' (1.3), i.e., a trinitarian God who is not himself called 'Lord', but Father of our Lord', who bestows the fullness of his Spirit-blessing on 'us', not in our condition of creatureliness in the world standing over against him, but in a place that transcends the quality of this world (ἐν ἐπουρανίοις, 1.3) and is more precisely defined for us as the place 'of Christ'. V. 4 explains that this God did not desire first to set up a partner whom he might subsequently cover with grace and take back to himself: rather, 'he chose us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, so that we might stand before him holy and spotless', in a grace which is characterised, not as subsequent to the creation of the world (the servant is subsequently freed by grace and rises up to sonship), but as preceeding it: 'He predestined us in love to become sons in Jesus Christ for him (probably: for God the Father) . . . to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he bestowed on us in the Beloved' (vv. 5–6). The double mention of love (ἀγάπη, ἀγαπημένος) here defines, not only the goal, but also the being of grace, and this grace has an object in

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[2] III/2,1, pp. 165ff.

[3] As at Lk 2.14; 19.38; Rom 11.36; 16.27; Eph 3.21; Phil 4.19f.; 1 Tim 1.17; 1 Pet 5.11; 2 Pet 3.18.

[4] With this, one could compare the detailed doxology at the end of the Letter of Jude (vv. 24–25); also Rom 16.25–26 (doubtless a latter addition). The doxologies of Revelation will be spoken of later.

[5] For what follows, see above all H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Epheser* (1957).

God which—as 'the Beloved' *tout court*—stands above the order of creatureliness, since it is '*through* Jesus Christ' that this order as a whole rises up into the status of sonship. But it is not only at a subsequent stage that it rises up—in an ecstatic self-alienation from its former and genuine being—on the contrary, the order of creatureliness is planned, appointed and chosen to come to its true self and find its genuine being in *this* place. In order for this to be possible, and not seem to be an inner contradiction, a further statement must immediately be added: that God 'has blessed us with every blessing of his spirit', by 'pouring out upon us' the riches of his grace 'in all wisdom and understanding' (1.8), has given us, 'the Spirit of wisdom and revelation' (1.17) and 'enlightened the eyes of our heart' (1.18), so that we might recognise, experience and assent to the event from within, as participants in it. At v. 9, this event is called, 'the mystery of his will', which God has 'made known to us': and this 'us' refers at this first stage to all (Christians), for it is only at vv. 11–13 that a distinction is made between the Jewish Christians ('we') and the Gentile Christians ('you'), between Israel who knew beforehand and the Gentiles who have come to knowledge.

The 'mystery' is the decision that God took beforehand in Christ (ἐν αὐτῷ, v. 9) to put the flow of time in the power of his 'Beloved': 'Christ was to "govern" the periods of history, which were drawn by him into the dimension of the fullness of God', so that 'there should be no more empty history sinking down into emptiness'.[6] This means, on the one hand, that all fugacity and multiplicity 'is recapitulated in Christ as the head' (v. 10), but, on the other hand, this process is carried out only by our having in him 'redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins' (v. 7), or, as the Letter goes on to expound in detail, only by the establishment in Christ (1.19–23) and, in the same breath, in us too (1.19; 2.1–10) of the whole extreme tension between powerlessness in the lostness of death and the supremely mighty power of God's Resurrection; a secondary element in this is also the reconciliation and bypassing of the dissension between the

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[6] Schlier, p. 64.

Jews who knew beforehand and the Gentiles who arrived later (2.11–22). It is not as if the timeless anticipation of our election would dissolve the distance between the one who is eternally 'Beloved', the Son, and us who rise up through him to become sons: the distance is kept at its greatest point when it is affirmed that he alone 'descended' (4.9) into our condition below, i.e. into the condition we all shared of 'being dead' through our 'transgressions and sins' (2.1); he alone 'annihilated the enmity on the 'Cross' (2.16), so that we might then be able to rise up in him and through him to the place determined beforehand by the Father, 'out of grace' (2.8). The priority of 'the Beloved' can never be overtaken by those who know him in 'faith' and 'love' (1.15), and so they must continually grow up towards him in hope (1.18; *cf.* 3.16f.; 4.16); and yet they are continually becoming what they already are, the 'fullness' (1.23) of Christ, his body (1.23), his bride (5.25ff.). But for us it is an insoluble paradox that Christ's 'priority' has always embraced in itself and superseded the whole of our distance from him, through the event of Cross and Resurrection, and that we have always already entered, through our election, into such a 'priority' as the place that is truly our own, the place of our origin, by growing into our own 'inner man', that which we truly are, and becoming stronger in this (3.16), we simultaneoulsy grow towards Chirst, the 'perfect man' (4.13), as his bride. The unity of marriage in one flesh is indeed the highest parable for this (5.32), but its truth is disclosed only in the mystery of 'being one spirit' (3.16; 4.4; *cf.* 1 Cor 6.17). In order to assess the significance of what is being said here, one may refer across to the idea of the handing over of the Spirit of God to become the Spirit of believers (Rom 5.5f.; 8.15; Gal 4.6) and to the Johannine idea of birth from God (Jn 1.12; 3.5; 1 Jn 3.9). The meaning of 'birth from God' is illumined by the Father's 'letting go of the Son' (Jn 3.16; Rom 8.32), and likewise by the Son's obedient 'proceeding from the Father' (Jn 16.28), and in this two-sided process, the Spirit of God is clearly seen to be the 'personified handing-over', the 'gift'—but not a gift that remains on the path from the one who gives to the one whom it is given: it arrives completely in the latter, not as something extraneous to him, but as something that is the possession of the giver, handed over together with the possibility of being taken over as a gift into the possession of the one who recieves it, and of being acknowledged and possessed as his own. It is only within the New Testament's trinitarian revelation that it is possible to conceive of such a process precisely as *not* leading to the identification of the giver and the one who receives the gift—as in the mysticisms which lack a trinitarian structure and therefore seek only to overcome the dualism of creator/creature—but rather as establishing itself at a stage *beyond* this identity as the triumph of glory: God the Father chooses and calls us in the Son (in a grace of being born together with him) to be sons and fellow-heirs, by 'sending into our hearts' the Spirit of himself and of his Son (Gal 4.6). Since this is decided upon and aimed at 'before the foundation of the world', and creation is an episode in this event (with the Cross and the exaltation of the Son, and our consequent justification and sanctification, as later episodes), we are not outmanoeuvered and taken by surprise in all this, but have our home from the very outset in the inmost depth of God, of the absolute being that cannot be foreign to anything—although of course this is only so, if we are ready to recognise, in this triune sphere of absolute expropriation and handing over, such a form of being as being's glory of fullness of grace, and to become 'the praise of the glory of his grace' by dwelling in this sphere ourselves.

The text permits us to take a further step. If we, in our creaturely being, are destined beforehand to become sons in the eternal Son, this eternal Son himself—who belongs qualitatively, and in advance of us all, on the side of God—is never seen in Paul other than in relation to his Incarnation, Cross and Resurrection: he is always the one who has displayed God's expression or form (εἰκών) and God's glory (δόξα) in his obedience (Rom 5.19), his becoming sin (2 Cor 5.21), and his vicarious act for all (2 Cor 5.14; Gal 3.13). In the Son, 'we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins' (Eph 1.7). Even if for Paul one cannot say that he *becomes* the Son of God only through his exaltation in power (Rom 1.4), one must still say that the only way in which the eternal Son *is* for us, is his simultaneous act of *becoming* the eternal Son, or, more properly: the fact that he, as the eternal Son, is always ‘designated in advance’ (Rom 1.4) to be ‘the firstborn among many brethren’ (Rom 8.29). When we are ‘transferred’ before the foundation of the world to his position, this always means for us, not only the return to God as to our home, but the return to our own selves (in the perfected *human being* Jesus Christ), since we are ‘designated beforehand’ by God the Father ‘to be conformed to the image “Son of God”’ (Rom 8.29), not in a movement away from our destiny of mortality, but through being shaped into, and indeed growing together with (σύμφυτοι), the archetypal dying (Rom 6.5; Col 1.18: ‘the firstborn from the dead’) and crucifixion (Rom 6.6; Gal 2.19), so that we may arrive at the archetypical act in which all humanity is glorified (Phil 3.11): we are designated beforehand to enter and return home to God as our own dwelling-place, and to our ‘creaturely’ reality, in the Son of God.

New Testament δοξάζειν means therefore, first of all, that we do not praise God only by following his law, which (in the light of his trinitarian gift of himself) can never be *more* than a partial representaion of himself; nor that we praise him only by the ‘sacrifice of the lips’ above all, by acknowledging his greatness in himself and the greatness of his powerful deeds and benefits for ourselves. Rather, we must praise him through our existence, inasmuch as this is an existence that is in him and therefore what it truly ought to be: an existence in the love that hands itself over. This existence entails both an understanding of oneself ἐπίγνωσις, σοφία, φρόνησις, which is given at the outset and must be brought to conscious awareness in a process that can have no end; and life that puts into action what has been recognised (Col 1.10), confirming the insight into the being that is love (and a love that is in principle greater than any insight: Eph 3.19).

Second, it means that the entire horizon of human existence has been disclosed in a way that can never be surpassed (even this horizon is also unattainable); in other words, there is no possibility of any further revelation of the mystery of existence and of God *behind* the 'mystery' of Christ that has already been made known—and this is the mystery of the Trinity of God. The eschatological glory which we shall one day praise (Eph 1.12,14) essentially exists already in the glory of grace which has already now been made known to us in order that we may praise it beforehand; and this glory is inexhaustible in its contents, so that it can always be praised afresh, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, 'unto the ages of ages', in its unlooked-for gloriousness. The numerous doxologies of the New Testament are a proleptic proclamation of this insight, and it is above all Revelation that always accompanies within eternity the entire action of the intratemporal struggle to redeem the world. In these heavenly songs of praise, the biblical expressions for glorification are piled up and mingled with the divine qualities which those who sing praise attribute to God: 'Amen! *Eulogia* and *doxa* and *sophia* and *eucharistia* and honour (τιμή) and *dunamis* and might (ἰσχύς) be to our God for ever and ever, Amen!' (7.12; *cf.* 11.17f.; 12.10; 15.3f.; 19.1f.,5,7f.). The songs demonstrate that the drama of redemption and the succession of time itself have been intergrated beforehand into that fullness under Christ's dominion of which the hymn in Ephesians spoke. The ultimacy of the glory and of the glorification is seen also in Paul's use of πᾶν when he speaks of the gift of grace that has been handed over (πᾶσα εὐλογία), Eph 1.3; πᾶσα σοφία, 1.8; *cf.* 4.2; Col 1.28; Jas 1.2; also Rom 8.32; 1 Cor 3.21f.).[7] The horizon of these statements is essentially universal; the only thing that could not be included is nothingness itself. It would, therefore, be possible to demonstrate a doctrine of the transcendentals of being in various ways within this trinitarian disclosure: the basic elements of a logic, ethics and aesthetics, their mutual compensation, but also their pointing beyond themselves to this ultimate mystery.

Third, it means that New Testament δοξάζειν no longer

[7] *Cf.* also the very numerous texts in which the totality of the world is set under the salvific action of God which embraces, organises and governs all things. *Cf.* Schmoller's *Handkorkondanz*, 12th edn., pp. 388f.

has the δόξα of God as its object, but as its inner principle. Thanks to the glory of God's love, which has become visible in Jesus Christ and in his Cross and Resurrection, we are drawn into this love through his grace and are empowered to give it the response that has been planned and attained by God himself. 'Having been introduced into this mystery (of God's will) by the definition of our being, we experience it in the forgiveness of sins, and it becomes plain to us in *gnōsis*. Thus, because of what we are and of what we experience, we bear this glory upon ourselves, and we praise God with what we are through his blessing' (H. Schlier).[8] Faith, love and hope are the divine life that is lived in us, a life that comes from divine glory and enables us to live the Christian life (δυναμούμενοι κατὰ τὸ κράτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ), Col 1.11) and thereby has as its inmost goal εἰς ἔπαινον καὶ δόξαν καὶ τιμήν, 'the praise and glory and honour' of the divine life (1 Pet 1.7), while God's wisdom has always aimed beforehand at *our* own glorification ἣν προώρισεν ὁ θεός πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων εἰς δόξαν ἡμῶν: 1 Cor 2.7; *cf.* Rom 8.30). If the wife is the δόξα of the husband (1 Cor 11.7) and the Church the bride of Christ, made pure and spotless through his own blood, then she can be ἔνδοξος through him (Eph 5.27), and at the same God can receive ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ for all eternity (Eph 3.21). God's activity in us through Christ promises us all this, and it is on this basis that we can answer him with the Amen that glorifies him (τῷ θεῷ) πρὸς δόξαν: 2 Cor 1.20): here too, the answer of the Church is the inherent and logical end of an act of glorification begun by God himself. Finally, it becomes clear too that the Church's life, above all the mutual love of Christians, is an act of praising God not only in an external way, but with an inherent relationship to the essential glory of God.

b. Appropriation as Expropriation

What is new in the New Testament is the fulfilment of God's promise in the Old Testament that he would write his law (of love) on human hearts, so that they would know God from within (Jer 31.33f.; 2 Cor 3.3). This law (of love) is the Spirit: he himself. It is therefore he himself who puts himself in our heart. But by handing himself over to us in this way, he reveals himself as the one he is: the Father who from the beginning has made the gift of himself to his Son, and who has carried on this handing over of himself up to the place and condition that are ours: to the point of becoming man and of being lost. It is therefore not possible to take God to oneself through an act of appropriating him, because God is personified handing-over, and one 'knows' him and 'possesses' him only when one is oneself expropriated and handed over. It is precisely thus that the creature can be fully affirmed by his creator. The struggle against gnosis, which runs through the whole of the New Testament, is fought here, where the knowledge of God is not willing to be identified with the appropriation of his ultimate intention of expropriation, the intention that has revealed itself in the Incarnation, the Cross and the Resurrection of his Son, through which God 'annulled the wisdom' of the world and 'destroyed' it (1 Cor 1.19f.). The original ζητεῖν, the search for God (Acts 17.27), for Yahweh and his face (Ps 105.4 and frequently), has become a ζήτησις, a philosophical disputation, and the seeker after God has become an expert in the wordly business of philosophy συνζητητής, 1 Cor 1.20),[1] with the result that the object of the search disappeared behind the human battle of words λογομαχίαι, 1 Tim 6.4), which is fond of disputes and is therefore a priori useless and meaningless. The truth that affirms the human person and takes possession of him requires that one be ready to be taken hold of and to give up control over oneself to another (Lk 1.38).

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[8] Schlier, p. 74.

Where is a beloved person loved—in himself or in the one who loves him? The question cannot be answered, for he is loved in the act of the one who loves him, who affirms him as he *is* in himself and, at the same time, as the one who is *constituted* this person through this act—precisely as this particular beloved person who exists in this way. The act with which God loves us and definitively draws near to us, affirming us and at the same time bringing us into being by his own action, is his Son. Everything that God has promised men finds in him the fulfilment that affirms it and assents to it (2 Cor 1.20), for the Son is nothing less than the 'servant . . . of the promises' (Rom 15.8); God loves man in such a way that he let his word of promise to him—which promised him what was the highest of all, God himself and existence with God—become man, beloved: and indeed a beloved just as man is, turned away from love and deprived of glory. Thus we are to take Paul's sentence quite strictly and literally: if God 'did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how could he not give us all things together with him?' (Rom 8.32). For, in the Son, God gives us both the entire expression of himself and also the embodiment of our being, which is affirmed in its own particular nature. In order that love—even the love between God and man—can develop in accordance with its own law, without man being overwhelmed by a power that snatches him away, but in peace and in the joy of affirmation of man as God's partner, without however excluding the power to assure him of absolute love and to make this over to him in fact, there is a presupposition on God's side of the immanent Trinity, and on man's side of the willingness to undergo his share in the expropriation which will bring him into the sphere of expropriated love. This willingness is called *faith*, and in its kernel it means allowing love to have its way: not only in what love does for me, but also in the goal of this act, which is affirmed and accomplished when I am seized by love.

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[1] *TDNT* II 892ff. (Greeven).

The distinction which comes into view here is once more that between justification and sanctification, or between the working of the Son and the working of the Spirit. Both are the original working of the Father: the Father gives us his Son, and likewise gives us his Spirit (1 Thess 4.8; Rom 8.9, 11, 14; 1 Cor 2.11, 14; 3.16, 6.11; 7.40; 12.3; 2 Cor 3.3), who is also the Spirit of his Son (Rom 8.9; 2 Cor 3.17,18; Phil 1.19) since, according to the word of the Son, 'All that is mine is yours, and all that is yours is mine' (Jn 17.10). But when the Word becomes flesh, it becomes for us a fellow human being; and no matter how gifted such a fellow human being might be (as the Word of God) to carry out a valid work of loving vicarious atonement for all his fellows, he is necessarily bound to the limits involved in genuinely being their fellow, if he is to do this work: this limit is the essential freedom of decision which is left to the other, who must say yes and no to this work. It is for this reason that the act of faith must be free, even when the freedom to say neither yes nor no is taken from us through the action of God in Christ: it is not possible to be indifferent in the face of this action, because man cannot adopt a position of indifference *vis-à-vis* his own true being. But in the act of one's fellow man Christ—if this act is affirmed in faith to be what it portrays itself to be—there lies an act of the total self-expropriation of the love of God, the deepest aim of which is to give man the gift of the same love. This is, therefore, an act that has penetrated beforehand into the 'private space' of the sinner who privatises himself (Rom 5.6) and has robbed this space of its private character: 'If one has died for all, then all have died' (2 Cor 5.14). This must be 'considered', 'evaluated', 'held' to be correct, and thus 'ratified' by man (λογίζεσθαι): 'Therefore count yourselves to have died to sin, and as men who live for God in Christ Jesus' (Rom 6.11; *cf.* 8.11; 1 Cor 4.1; Phil 3.10). But is man on his own capable of this correct λογίζεσθαι? Or must not the objective crossing of the boundary, the objective abolition of man's alienation from God, where the boundary is the human nature which Christ shares with him, be completed through a subjective crossing of the boundary that transforms the act of 'being laid hold of' into an act of enthused 'taking up' and 'pursuing' (Phil 3.12–14)? Now it is not possible for this abolition of the boundary to be an extension of the unfinished work of Christ, as if the *Pneuma* had to round the work off by starting at the point where the *Logos* had had to give up; rather, this perfect accomplishment of work undertaken by the Father must at the same time display the accomplishment of the Son's work: in perfect 'relinquishing' (a condition lying out beyond 'authority' and 'poverty'), the Son breathes out his Spirit, the

Spirit of the love that has gone 'to the end', and simultaneously the Father ordains something new and different for the *Pneuma*: now that the Son has breathed forth the Spirit of love in absolute weakness, the Father can demonstrate the absolute power δύναμις[2] and glory δόξα of his Spirit of love, by raising the Son through the *Pneuma* (1 Pet 3.18; *cf.* Rom 8.11; 1 Tim 3.16) to be a 'spiritual body' (1 Cor 15.43f.), i.e., a body that is no longer bound to the earthly demarcations between body and body, between 'I' and 'you', and can therefore, thanks to the *Pneuma* whose Lord he is (and has become) and in whose boundless sphere he rules, draw in our spirits and bodies too. The power of this act of drawing in is the exproportion of our privacy, i.e., in concrete terms, of our sealed-up egoism, of our addiction to the desires (ἐπιθυμίαι) that seek to draw everything to ourselves; it is the liberation that brings us into freedom (Gal 5.1), for 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom' (2 Cor 3.17). This freedom is the opposite of addiction: it is the possibility for those who have been set free 'to live, no longer for themselves, but for him who died and rose for them' (2 Cor 5.15), and therefore, as an act of handing over, it is essentially service—service first of the self-expropriating love of God, and, coming directly from this, service of all those for whose sake God has expropriated himself. We shall say more about this later on.

It is important at this point to see that the dissolution of the boundaries that God imposed upon himself in the Incarnation of his Word who was to bring all things to fulfilment, had to take place from within, in accordance with logic of the Incarnation and the Cross, but in such a way that the taking on of finitude (going as far as the prison of being forsaken by God and of Hell) should not be nullified, but brought to fulfilment in God: not disincarnated, but made spiritual in the Resurrection. Otherwise, we should never have been liberated into our own freedom at all: there would have been no appropriation, but merely robbery. God would not be faithful to his first creation up to the ultimate point, acknowledging it and 'honouring' it (Jn 12.26): he would require from it merely the glorification of himself. And this glory would be no glory, because the love of God would not have been capable of bringing its work of love to completion. As long as the Son is in the flesh, 'the Spirit does not yet exist ' (Jn 7.39), although the Son is obedient to the Spirit of his mission from the Father and 'fulfils all (covenantal) righteousness' (Mt 3.15), and bears the 'Spirit' of the Servant of God who 'brings justice (of God) to full victory' (Mt 12.20) through his vicarious suffering;[3] but, in the power of the Spirit of God (12.28), he lets the weight of the world's guilt be piled on him, and he lives to carry out his task. It is only the carrying out of this task that shows that the power which encompassed his earthly task was the Spirit of the love of God condensed in him. In the 'glorification', his living and dying are displayed for what they always were: living 'for God' the Father (Rom 6.10). Simultaneously, we, for whose sake the task was carried out, are set in the sphere of 'being for God', without our freedom being violated. For we still live in the boundaries of our common humanity, and the message of the victory of the 'Servant of God' comes to us from the sphere of the Church (which is penetrated through and through by the Spirit and formed to become the place of love and of the service of God), so that we may say yes to the deed that God's love has accomplished, and may live for God's righteousness in the *Pneuma* of God who dwells in us (*cf.* Rom 8.10).

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[2] On the relatedness of δύναμις and πνεῦμα, *cf.* I. Hermann, *Kyrios und Pneuma* (1961), pp. 120f.

The *fiat* of faith, which is not reducible to anything other than itself, is nevertheless not the creation of a truth, but the acceptance of the truth which from the start has had the believer in view and was intended for him; and this truth has in principle dealt with his refusal from the very outset. For Christ died for all sins. Another reason why it is not the creation of a truth is that it enters in each case a sphere of answering truth—the Church—and must understand its own *fiat* too as the acknowledgment of this greater and mightier *fiat* which includes it. The believer must still be dispossessed of his own acceptance of love's expropriation, and this takes place in the sacramental event: ***baptism*** introduces the 'yes' of his faith into the 'yes' of the whole Church, which itself speaks its 'yes' only out of the power of the obedient *fiat* of the Crucified (Eph 5.25ff.). When the individual believer is drawn into the whole Church, he is baptised 'into the death' of Christ (Rom 6.3), in order to be led down into a depth and definitiveness of self-surrender that remains unattainable for him as a limited human being but which he makes his aim in the act of faith and which he longs to see carried out, because he wishes to 'appropriate' to himself the total self-giving of God, opening up the whole space for it and giving it the adequate response which it intends. As a believer, he does not remain passive: in his baptism, he is admitted into the sphere of the Spirit of God and of the Church, and he declares himself in agreement with this Spirit and makes him his own. He lets himself be 'led' and 'driven' by the Spirit, but not as by a foreign spirit (a 'spirit of slavery'): this is his own Spirit, the 'Spirit of sonship, who makes us cry out: "Abba, beloved Father!"' (Rom 8.15). And when Paul continues: 'This Spirit confirms to our spirit that we are children of God' (8.16), then this confirmation lies beyond monologue and dialogue: the fact that *we* ourselves cry 'Father!' confirms to us that we are crying out of the Spirit of God and consequently are his children: the dialogue is not between our spirit and the *Pneuma*, but between our spirit, borne by the *Pneuma*, and the Father, a dialogue in which the *Pneuma* cannot be other than the *Pneuma* of the Son, in whom we have come to share in sonship: 'because we now are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, who cries out: "Abba, beloved Father!"' (Gal 4.6). But it is precisely this that demonstrates the *Pneuma* to be the Spirit of the Father, because it is only through him that we can be sons (with the Son), drawn into the event of the eternal generation of the Son (Jn 1.13). But thereby we arrive precisely at the place that was already predestined for us beforehand 'before the foundation of the world' (Eph 1.4f.), so little alienated from ourselves that it is by entering into the absolute love that we first find ourselves.

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[3] Gerhard Barth, 'Das Gesetzesverständnis des Evangelisten Matthäus', in: G. Bornkamm, G. Barth, H. S. Held, *Überlieferung und Auslegung im Mt. Ev.* (1968), p. 132. (ET *Tradition and Interpretation*, p. 141.)

The necessary condition for this is always the Trinity and the Incarnation; otherwise, the human person's coming to be himself is reduced to his directly becoming God (an idea obviously refuted by his finitude) or to a tragic absolutisation of his finitude, which remains separated by a gulf from absolute love. The one thing that could offer the appearance of a mediation would be sex (in the dual sense of intercourse and gender), but even if here for a moment expropriation and the act of finding oneself seem to become one single reality, the price paid for this is a final loss of personality. In the Christian world, the *Eucharist* of the pneumatological bodiliness of the Son takes the place that is indicated here for sex: together with Christ who is incarnate, crucified, buried and raised, we move—in hope proleptically, and definitively at the Resurrection—to the place of perfect sonship, incorporated in the great body of those who are redeemed. This is something more than an anonymous collectivity: it is the body of Christ, given out of all in love as nourishment for eternal life, which becomes the social body of the Church in this act of distribution.[4] It is only when this eucharistic meditation guarantees the enduring bodiliness of the divine love between God and the world (according to the fundamental vision of Teilhard de Chardin) that the historical and sexual existence that includes birth and death can be taken up eschatologically and given a home in the absolute triune love. For it is then that the inchoative creaturely forms of finding oneself find their definitive justification by the creator God through their expropriation, and are given their home in him who made all things so that they should have existence (Wis 1.14), who loves all things and hates nothing of what he has made (Wis 11.24). It follows that becoming a member of the Church through baptism also means that one's own body becomes a member of the body of Christ which has its real existence in the pneumatological dimension: this does not exist solely for the spirit of man, but also 'for the body' (1 Cor 6.13). And the body needs self-expropriation in a special way, since it is inclined to raise itself up to become a god (Phil

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[4] On this, *cf.* Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum*.

3.19), but is designated to become a sacrificial gift to God (Rom 12.1).[5]

Since the appropriation and the expropriation take place simultaneously, 'exchangeable formulae' are found: it can be said both that 'Christ lives in me' or 'in us' (Gal 2.19f.; 4.19; Rom 8.9–11; 2 Cor 4.16; 13.2–5) and that we are, or live, or are found 'in Christ' (Rom 8.1; Gal 3.26; Phil 3.9 and frequently). The immanence of Christ or of the Spirit (in John, also the immanence of God himself: Jn 14.23) negates the idea of a loss of self through the transfer into an alien sphere. But the reciprocity involved remains not only formal, but substantial: the purpose of the indwelling is an existence *for* the other, so that Paul has 'died to the law through the law, in order to live for God. With Christ I have been crucified: I live, and yet it is not I that live, but Christ lives in me'. The statement that follows expresses the full correspondence to the 'life for God' of which he speaks here: 'The life that remains to me in the flesh, I live in faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me' (Gal 2.19–20). Being carried out of oneself—which is faith, and is brought about by the love of Christ—is nothing else than a clearing of space in oneself for this love, a determination of one's own existence, which allows itself to be conformed to the existence of the crucified in such a way 'that our inclusion in the life of Christ does not only give us an outward direction, but penetrates us from within'.[6] The 'life of God' is brought about precisely through the inmost indwelling of Christ in the believer, since Christ always 'lives for God' (Rom 6.10) in the whole of the life devoted to his earthly task, and *a fortiori* in his risen life.[7]

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[5] A. Wikenhauser, *Die Christusmystik des Apostels Paulus* (2nd edn. 1956), pp. 19ff. 37ff. On the Johannine 'formulae of immanence' and their similarity and dissimilarity to Paul, *cf.* R. Schnackenburg, *Die Johannesbriefe* (1953), pp. 91–95.

[6] W. Thüsing, *Per Christum in Deum. Studien zum Verhältnis von Christozentrik und Theozentrik in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen* (1965), p. 111.

[7] W. Thüsing takes pains to show that the life of the risen Christian 'for God' is a fundamental affirmation of Paul (and one neglected by the tradition): Jesus dies as the one on whom God weighs down with sins (in such a way 'that nothing else can be seen in him than the condensed burden

While it is therefore possible to keep three levels of thought separate from one another in the abstract, they remain completely interwoven in each other in the concrete. The first is the *soteriological* level: the Son of God snatches us out of the slavery of sin, of the lack of love, and of egoism, in order to bring us back from this slavery and self-alienation both to God and to our own selves. For Paul, the law becomes here a perpetual reminder of this self-alienation, since it shows us a divine will that we are incapable of carrying out; Christ dissolves (Rom 7.4ff.) this unhappy marriage, since he makes the law, to which we were bound, die through his own death: we are free for him, just as the woman whose husband died is free 'for another' (ἑτέρῳ). But the image is shattered, first because it is we ourselves who have died (with Christ) (v. 6), in order to enter upon a new service in a new Spirit, and second because it is likewise we who are free, like the woman who had remained alive, for a new husband—God himself—for whom we are to 'bear fruit' (v. 4). This shattering shows that the image was not properly applicable, since it is completely impossible for God to be a ἕτερος: he is the unique and true one to whom one must return from every alienation (just as Israel had always to return in the past).—The second level, the least emphasised, is the *creaturely* level: it is the nature and the task of men 'to seek God, to try to touch him and find him: for he is not far from each one of us. For in him we live and move and have our being' (Acts 17.27f.). Man's indwelling gives his bearings, his home; the fact that he seeks shows his incapacity to be with God and (thereby) to be at home with himself; therefore God builds for us in Christ the bridge to both. The second, spiritual Adam comes down from Heaven and perfects the first, physical Adam by raising him up from earth (1 Cor 15.45ff.).—But it is only the third, *trinitarian* level that brings the definitive solution. Since God does not alienate himself

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of sin', pp. 84f.). His death is disadvantageous to sin, in order to open up access to the life for God: as the sinless Son of God, who even in dying lives only in obedience to the Father, he takes this obedience with him into his risen life, in order to reveal and open up to us his trinitarian relationship to the Father (pp. 72f., 89f.).

from himself by becoming incarnate (since the obedient Son of Man is only the illustration of the eternal relatedness and selflessness of the divine Persons), Christ does not alienate man from himself when he raises him from the apparently closed substantiality of his personal being (in which he thinks that he definitively stands over against God) into the open relatedness of the life within the Godhead. Rather, Christ brings him into the genuine truth of his origin; he is a distant image of this (*imago trinitatis*) in the love between human persons.

In concrete terms, all three levels are mutually related and cannot be separated from each other, just as God's original plan, set out in the prologue to Ephesians, began with the third level—participation in the trinitarian sonship—and then included in this both the creation (as 'external basis of the covenant') and the redemption ('through his blood'). It is therefore God himself who from the very start carried out proleptically 'the negation of the negation', by annulling in his first decision the potential 'no' of man—which became actuality to the highest degree, as the reference to the 'blood' of Christ shows—in his resolve to recapitulate everything in Heaven and on earth in Christ as the head. The tendency to understand everything in trinitarian terms is so strong that, according to Rom 8, God could let the whole creation be subjected to 'nothingness' and the 'slavery of corruption', as the consequence of man's sin and self-alienation from God, in order to let the creation sigh, together with man and indeed with the *Pneuma* in man, for the coming of the true reality of man and of creation as a whole, which will be both the 'freedom' of the creature and the 'glory' of the creator, and, even more than this, 'the freedom of the glory of the children of God' (8.21), a freedom in which the children of God will be at home wholly in themselves and wholly in God, a glory that will be wholly theirs and wholly God's. Thus will they be 'the praise of the glory of his grace' (Eph 1.6).

It is possible to check the accuracy of what has been said by a comparison with the New Testament concepts of *parrhesia* (openness to God and to men, candour) and *kauchesis* (consciousness of one's dignity, boasting) to select only two of the most important terms for the behaviour of the Christian, terms that are very closely linked to other words. Both have their roots in Old Testament and Jewish-hellenistic tradition, but take on a particular tone in the New Testament.

Parrhesia[8] appears in its Christian form in a central position at Eph 3.12: 'In Jesus Christ our Lord, we have *parrhesia* and open access in confidence (in God) through faith in him'. Ultimately, it is the attitude of the Son *vis-à-vis* the Father that is given over to us through faith in the Son. The meanings of the three concepts 'parrhesia, access, and confidence' shade off into each other in terms of their substance. They converge to show that the consciousness of the only Son, their Lord, is made over to be the inner possession of believers, and all embarrassment in the presence of the infinite God disappears (although this does not affect reverence and adoration: Eph 3.14). The First Letter of John knows the same openness to God (3.21); it presupposes both faith in Christ (and for John, this always means also the whole compass of his new commandment of love of neighbour) and the presence of the Spirit (3.24): *Parrhesia* occurs where God in the Spirit dwells in those who keep the commandment of Jesus'.[9] It is realised in the mystery of Christian prayer, which, for John, has a special share in the trinitarian prayer of the Son, who prays to the Father in the certainty that he is heard (Jn 11.42) and instructs those who belong to him to pray with the same certainty in his name and in their state of abiding in him (Jn 14.13f.; 15.7): 'This is the *parrhesia* that we have towards him: that he hears us when we pray in accordance with his will; and if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, then we know too that we have already received what we have asked from him' (1 Jn 5.14f.). It is scarcely possible to have a deeper insight into the trinitarian openness of Father and Son for one another in the Spirit—where asking and receiving flow into one another, and the fact of having received does not exclude asking—or indeed a more perfect entry into the trinitarian unity of appropriation and expropriation. Here the oscillation (typical of John, as of Paul) of *parrhesia* between present and future (eschatological *parrhesia* as standing without shame before the judgment seat of God: 1 Jn 2.28; 4.17; Phil 1.19f.; *cf.* Wis 5.1) becomes understandable, since the present *parrhesia* exists on the basis of a hope that, thanks to the down-payment of the Spirit, does not deceive. Paul speaks above all of the *parrhesia* of the apostle *vis-à-vis* his communities (1 Thess 2.2; 2 Cor 3.12; 7.4) or *vis-à-vis* individuals (Philem 8), or *vis-à-vis* man in general in the proclamation of the gospel (Eph 6.20), but he draws this candour out of the situation of the new 'service in the Spirit' and 'his glory' (2 Cor 3.8f.); the inner connection between *parrhesia* and *doxa* can be seen from this text. If Moses' face had to be covered *vis-à-vis* the Israelites after he had seen what was as yet only a transitory glory (and a concealed glory, at that), the face of Paul, who sees 'the glory of the Lord with uncovered face', is uncovered and radiant *vis-à-vis* men, and he can 'proclaim the truth openly (τῇ φανερώσει)' with the whole of his existence and precisely thus give testimony—and indeed a kind of demonstration—'to every human conscience in the sight of God'. Once again—this time in the service of the Apostle—the unity of appropriation and expropriation becomes visible. In his mission, Paul is expropriated: 'For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for the sake of Jesus' (4.5). But the very next verse adds an indication of the appropriation: 'For God . . . has shone in our hearts, to bring to radiance the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Christ' (4.6): God shines in the Apostle's heart, so that the light of the glory of God may come to shine in the hearts of the believers, the same light that shone archetypically on the face of the Son.

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[8] *TDNT* V 871–886 (Schlier; with bibliography).

[9] *Ibid.* 881.

Kauchesis (*kauchema*) could best illustrate the same reciprocity, were it not for the slight unclarity that this concept suffers in Paul as a result of the polemical situation in which he employs it (especially in 2 Corinthians).[10] It lies in the nature of man, since a ray of the *doxa* of God shines upon him, to have a consciousness of his value and to demand that this be acknowledged; but if this consciousness is cut loose from that of the primordial value and the primordial honour that lie in God and must be given back to him by man who is his image, then the human insistence on one's own value and honour becomes 'boasting' and thus a distinguishing mark of the fool (Ps 52.3; 75.5; 94.3). The man of the old covenant had above all to learn anew the original relationship: Yahweh is Israel's honour (Deut 10.21), and Israel's cult is above all also the joyful, exultant, thankful praising of God's salvific deeds (Ps 5.12; 32.11, and frequently). Then there occurs a shift within Judaism: the reference to God becomes an object of reflection for the pious and the wise: 'the fear of the Lord is δόξα and καύχημα (Sir 1.11; 9.16; 10.22). Where there ought to be pure expropriation, the act of expropriation itself is appropriated (as virtue and merit). The teaching of the prophet is in lapidary opposition to this: 'Thus speaks Yahweh: let not the wise man boast of his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man boast of his riches; but let the one who wants to boast, boast of this: that he understands and knows me, for I am Yahweh, who practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness on earth: for in these things I delight' (Jer 9.22f.).

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[10] The clear line is brought out best in the concise article by R. Bultmann, *TDNT* III 645–654; *idem*, *Theologie des NT* (1948) §23, pp. 237f.

Paul translates what the prophet says into a radical New Testament language when he rejects all self-praise, both Gentile and Jewish: 1 Cor 1.25–31. All 'honour' (i.e., every occasion for joyful (self-)affirmation) belongs to God, but now this is 'through our Lord Jesus Christ' (Rom 5.11), in whom God has glorified himself. The Christian 'puts no confidence in the flesh', but 'finds his own value in Christ Jesus' (Phil 3.3); he is to make his boast in nothing other than in our Lord Jesus Christ' (Gal 6.14). Not only does Paul hold

(ET *Theology of the New Testament* 1952–5, pp. 242ff. Almost involuntarily the problematic becomes clear in the minutely detailed studies of K. Prümm, *Diakonia Pneumatos* I (1967), pp. 29ff. (etc.; *cf.* p. 803: 'Ruhm'); II/1 (1960), pp. 88–114; II/2 (1962), pp. 340–355. E. G. Gulin, *Die Freude im NT*, I (1932), pp. 208f., 258f. O. Kuss, *Der Römerbrief* (1957), pp. 219–224.—On the distinction between καύχησις and καύχημα *TDNT* III, 648 n. 35.

that the Christian finds affirmation outside of himself in Christ: this takes place when *Christ* is affirmed in the believer through God's grace. Just as he can understand his suffering for the sake of faith and of the apostolate as an expression of his being 'in Christ', so he can also boast of his sufferings (Rom 5.3; 2 Cor 4.7–11, and especially 11.23–29). But Paul's total self-expropriation outside Damascus, which was imposed upon him 'by constraint' (1 Cor 9.16)—consisting of the pure service of the gospel, with the main point of his existence shifted to his mission—produces the community with its life of faith as the fruit that is called into life by the power of God, by Christ and by the *Pneuma*. Paul would perhaps not have reflected so much on the honour redounding to him from his mission, had not his opponents forced him to do so, by calling into question his apostolic, Christian and human value. Where the opponents force him to overstep the mark, he emphasises that this self-praise occurs 'as if in folly' (2 Cor 11.16f., 21; 12.1, 11), and turns back as quickly as possible to the honourable title of Christian 'weakness' (11.23f.) and of the freely-given charisms (12.2ff.). But his Christian (self-) praise has yet more occasions: first of all, his awareness that he has given his whole existence to his mission, i.e., the 'testimony of our conscience, that we have lived in holiness and purity before God . . . in the power of the grace of God in the world' (2 Cor 1.12); and second, the success of the mission—the faith and love of the community—is his praise, uncertain today (Phil 2.16) but certain on the day of the Lord (1 Thess 2.19f.; joy, crown of praise and δόξα), for indeed the community and the Apostle will then be each other's praise (2 Cor 1.14). For the community must acknowledge Paul as the original instrument of their coming to be Christians and hence as their praise, in order to give honour to the truth (2 Cor 1.11; at 5.12, he gives them 'evidence that you may be proud of us'; *cf.* Phil 1.26).[11] He is careful 'not to praise himself beyond measure', but to keep to the measure that God gives him together with the mission territory when he sends him out (2 Cor 10.12f.),[12] not forgetting in all this that all he does is owed to the power and the grace that are at work through him (2 Cor 4.7; 6.7; 13.4).

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[11] This is the reading of the shorter text; in the longer text, objectionable behaviour of 'measuring oneself by oneself' is attributed to the opponents; *cf.* above, p. 313, n. 14.

Paul's task was particularly difficult:[13] to let the expropriation through Christ be appropriation in a way that would make him behave like Christ himself, who lived in the authority (ἐξουσία) of God as the one who was poor and relinquished control over himself; and also to reflect on this appropriation, on Christ who 'lives in me', in order to make it eloquent in the service of his apostolate, and indeed to give as it were an anatomical demonstration in his own existence of how expropriation and appropriation are mutually related for the Christian. Paul's precarious position *vis-à-vis* the first Apostles and the 'super-apostles' continually forced him to show that his mission was coterminous with his person, and that each was the legitimation of the other. What John does is much easier: although he has reflected more than the others on the tension in Christ between authority and obedience (or poverty, relinquishing of self), and has thereby arrived at the self-definitions of Christ, this reflection does not correspond at any point of the Johannine writings to a reflection on the relationship between task and person in the existence of the Apostle. To the emphatic christological 'I am' there corresponds in the Johannine Christ the rejection of any δόξα received from men (Jn 5.41), which almost seems to contain a polemical point against the Pauline *kauchesis*. Even less has the author of the Letters of John occasion and opportunity to receive from this community any nourishment for the sense of his personal value—indeed, this is apparently denied him:

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[12] *Cf.* also the dialectic at 2 Cor 12.11ff.: it is Paul who ought to be 'recommended' by the community, but Paul feels himself to be its father, and parents must make sacrifices for their children, not *vice versa*. Yet, once again, is he to be loved the less for this (v. 15)?

[13] K. Prümm admits that Paul comes into 'the danger-zone of unhealthy *kauchema*' (II/2, p. 340), but holds that it is 'a humilitating self-exposure' for him to go in for a 'contest in fame' with his enemies (2 Cor 11.21), and that he begins this 'in a mood of bitter irony' (p. 343); he 'moves with amazing sureness along the narrow ledge of a steep mountain that falls away on either side' (II/1, p. 111) and thereby represents a 'true peak of human greatness' (*Ibid.*).

3 Jn 9f.—or to introduce the thought that he himself is the *kauchema* of the community. On the contrary, the 'we' in which he conceals himself at the beginning of the First Letter is so anonymous that he becomes unrecognisable as a person and is nothing more than a link between those who have seen, heard and touched the Word of life in the beginning and those who—through the link—enter fellowship with the original community and are to remain in it. Further, although we find the emphatic idea that the one who walks in the light of life from God 'is righteous' (3.7), and that the one born of God 'cannot sin at all' (3.9), this statement of the complete transparency to God of the one who believes and loves does not lead to reflection about a good conscience (*cf.* 2 Cor 1.12), but quite the contrary: it is presented on an equal footing with the other statement, 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us', for then 'we make God out to be a liar, and his word is not in us' (1 Jn 1.8,10). We should rather let the paradox stand, that God is greater than our heart that accuses us (3.20); this 'greater' quality is his love to us in the atoning deed of Jesus (1.7,9), showing us both that we were sinners (and can always become sinners again: 2.2), and that the emphasis in our self-awareness lies, not in our conscience which accuses us, but in our *parrhesia* to God (3.21). But this so much points us away from ourselves to the commandment of brotherly love that this too prevents us from having the time and the possibility of identifying ourselves in the endeavour 'to give our lives for the brethren' and 'to love in deed and in truth' (3.16,18).

c. Giving back the fruit to God

There is yet more to say about the process of δοξάζειν, for we remain within a merely anthropocentric perspective in considering how man is raised from his status as God's partner in creation on Old Testament terms to become a quite different kind of partner, determined by the inner-trinitarian love, and how he is expropriated in faith in Christ (which entails sharing in him in his dying and rising) in order to come truly to himself in God. The final step is taken when we consider the simple truth that man is a planting of God, that his fruit belongs to God and is claimed, sought and demanded by God, and that man is expropriated a priori as one who stands between the realm of fruitful nature and the grace that is *a fortiori* fruitful in a different way, and that he participates in both these realms.

The idea of fruitfulness is a dominant idea that runs through the whole of the New Testament.[1] Its own evident connection with 'glorification' is explicitly set out in the image of the vine: 'My Father is glorified, when you bear much fruit' (Jn 15.8). The idea is present, though less strongly, in the old covenant (*cf.*, e.g., Amos 6.12; Jer 17.10), but Isaiah has composed the terrible and powerful 'song of the vineyard' (5.1ff.), the theme of which is developed in a line that goes from the Old Testament to the New.[2] But there is a broader basis to Jesus' parables that speak of the seed, of growth, of fruit and of harvest. In order to make the 'secrets of the kingdom of God' (Mk 4.11) comprehensible, creaturely life is drawn upon in what is at once most truly its own and most mysterious, most immanent and most transcendent, and Jesus' touch is absolutely sure in this. Two elements above all (both of which were also present in the Old Testament parable of the vineyard) are available for the comparison: God is the planter and sower, and therefore, also the owner of vine, field and tree; it follows that the produce of the planting belongs to him from the outset and beyond any question. No other source of fruitfulness whatsoever comes into consideration ('Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted', Mt 15.13); nor is there any possibility for the tenant in God's fruitful field to claim the fruits for himself (Mt 21.33ff.); nor is it thinkable that a tree which God has planted as a fruit-tree could have no fruit for him, when he demands fruit from it—and the fruit has to be there when God needs it (Mk 11.12–14, 20f.). The same point is made by the related parables that speak of the talents and pounds which are lent in order to bear fruit: it is an offence against the giver, if one returns his loan without fruit. (Mt 25.14–30 par.). The second element is equally primordial: the produce of the vineyard or field or tree is expected from the plant itself. The circumstances that can and should further the inner fruitfulness—the fence, winepress, tower and workers in the vineyard (Mt 21.33f.), the servants who till the field (Mt 13.27), digging and manuring (Lk 13.8), pruning (Jn 15.2)—are secondary; ultimately, it is the plant itself that must produce the fruit. We see once again in this second element the power of the image at a fundamental level. For if a man is a field, a vineyard or a tree, then it is not through an automatic process of nature that he bears his fruit for God, but freely and responsibly. He can therefore be called to account for the fruit that he bears: he will be rewarded for good fruit, punished and cut down when the fruit is bad or lacking. The point is that the element of freedom in bearing fruit, the element of decision for or against being fruitful for God, for or against delivering the fruit to God, is not in any way weakened or neutralised by the image from nature: rather, it is precisely within this context that it takes on its full seriousness. If nothing can be subtracted from the origin and owner of the fruitfulness, God, nor from its goal, the fruit that is to be delivered, how great is man's responsibility! The theme of reward and punishment is found in all the parables of sowing and growth, of vine-dressers and of talents, and they all point with urgency to the date for delivery, the day of judgment. Nevertheless, all this is included within the logic of the fruitfulness, which is given by God and must be developed with him in view.

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[1] Art. καρπός *TDNT* III 614–616 (Hauck). Also: J. Bommer, *Die Idee der Fruchtbarkeit in den Evangelien* (dissertation at Angelicum, partly published 1950, Blessing, Pfullingen; with bibliography); F. Böckle, *Die Idee der Fruchtbarkeit in den Paulusbriefen* (dissertation at Angelicum, 1953, Paulusdruckerei, Fribourg; with bibliography).

[2] Is 27.2ff.; Jer 2.21; Ezek 15.1–8; 17.3–10; 19.10–14; Hos 10.1; Ps 80.9ff.; Mt 20.1–16; 21.28ff, 33–44; Jn 15.1ff. We can leave the question open here of the extent to which the broader use of the concept of fruit in the New Testament could be due to contact, in the period after the composition of the Old Testament texts, with Iranian concepts (paradise as a garden of fruit, the soul as a plant, good works as fruits, etc.): R. Reitzenstein, *Iranisches Erlösungsmysterium* (1921), pp. 138ff.

Before we consider in greater detail what this initial point implies, it should be pointed out that already in Isaiah's song of the vineyard God feels the unfruitfulness of his people to be ungratefulness: 'What more could I have done for my vineyard? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes?' (Is 5.4). To bring fruit is to give thanks for the fruitfulness that has been received, εὐχαριστία. But this also means that the thanksgiving that we owe God for his work of creation and of grace consists essentially of bringing fruit. It cannot consist solely of an 'attitude' which is not actively lived out, nor in a cult that is not also ethics, nor in an assurance that one loves God ('Lord! Lord!' at Mt 7.21, following the logion about the good tree and the bad tree) without proof of this given in the love of neighbour, nor in the most perfect faith, the highest knowledge, that is not at the same time active love (1 Cor 13.2ff.). If we take the concept of restitution as a whole, it is not thankfulness that God wants, but fruitfulness. The latter automatically includes the former, but thankfulness can prove that it is Christian only by bringing fruit. This is seen at once in Jesus' εὐχαριστεῖν, which brings the Old Testament's *berakah* to an end and becomes the Church's eucharist: Jesus' εὐχαριστεῖν (Lk 22.17,19) is a thanksgiving to the Father that takes the form of self-giving and consecration of self into the redemptive death, and in this thanksgiving he definitively becomes the grain of wheat that falls into the earth, in order to bear much fruit; and the commandment for the cultic repetition includes as its centre the presence of this event, both demanding and bestowing inner participation in it (1 Cor 10.16; 11.26ff.). Christian thanksgiving, giving back to God the gift that he has given, is impossible other than in the Christian bearing of fruit. In the image of fruitfulness, it becomes clear that the gift is a loan (because God remains the Lord of the vineyard, the possessor of the fruitfulness), but a gift that in being lent becomes one's *own*, because what naturally bears fruit bears its fruit itself, out of its own potency. When the image is taken seriously within the biblical context of God's self-communication, it immediately takes us out beyond the alternative of a gift that is lent and one that is one's own possession, of an ability that comes through God and ability that comes through oneself, of producing and bearing fruit that is one's own or that comes from outside oneself. The God-'fearer' with the single talent, who 'knows' (ἔγνων) God to be 'strict', exalted on high and wholly other, and reverently restores to him 'inviolate' what was entrusted to him, is thrust out into the darkness (Mt 25.24–30).

If this is so, then it can seem initially as if the ethics of the Old Testament—with its contrast between the God who gives and the human person who responds—is taken over unchanged when it is subsumed under the New Testament heading of the 'fruitfulness' image. We still find the 'good work' (Mt 5.16), the evaluation of a man's life on the basis of his achievement; we find the eschatological division: reward and punishment, Heaven and Hell. And this theme of personal judgment in accordance with works, derived from the Judaism of the Old Testament, is found not only in the Gospels, but also in Paul (Rom 2.6; 14.10ff.; 1 Cor 3.8; 4.4ff.; 2 Cor 5.10). Nevertheless all this had undergone a double change. First, the gift of God (according to the great prophecy of a new covenant, at Jer 31.33) is really relocated in the human heart: God appears quite simply, as a sower who sows his word—the word of the kingdom, the word which is Jesus himself, the one who speaks it—in the hearts of the hearers (Mt 13.19).[3] The sower somehow separates himself from the principle of fruitfulness, and surrenders this to the field, where it gets to work by itself (according to the parable of the growing seed, Mk 4.26ff). The sower becomes, as it were, contemplative in relationship to what the seed does; 'the earth bears fruit αὐτομάτη', and this is precisely the fruit that was sowed by God in Jesus, the fruit of the kingdom of God. With this inner dimension of the fruitful principle, we have the second New Testament element: it must be Jesus Christ himself, or his Holy Spirit, who is the one that truly bears fruit in the hearts of men; the human person who is required to achieve and to decide will be able to bear his fruit only 'in Christ', out of him and through him, working in union with him—'without me, you can do nothing' (Jn 15.5)—but in such a way that it is precisely through this unity that the human person is empowered to a new fruitfulness of his own, which was previously unknown to him. The law of appropriation and expropriation returns on a new level: man becomes the womb that receives the word that is initially foreign to him. This word is sown in him, and he bears this seed to birth—not for himself, but for God, since it is a divine seed. And he gives back to its possessor the fruit that has reached its term, which belongs to God and yet is also the product of the womb. Man is expropriated a first time, when God lays claim to him as a field for his seed, and a second time, when the fruit that is borne is taken from him so that it may be brought into God's granary (Mt 3.12). But in the midst of all this he is endowed at a deeper level with creative force that is able to respond to the requirement to bear divine fruit; indeed, he is endowed with a divine principle of fruitfulness that is the very word of God that has been sown in him: the seed makes over to the womb the appropriate form of fruitfulness, so that—in the image of the vine—the logic of the relationships is inverted: Christ becomes the womb that bears, the fruitful vine-stock, and the believers become the branches that it produces without in any way being released from the obligation to produce grapes, which is the ultimate concern of the owner of the vineyard. They do this, and prove themselves fruitful—by reason of their 'abiding' in the vine. They bear fruit because they themselves are fruit, and they become one single principle of fruit together with the stock. Nevertheless, the Johannine image preserves the distinction, derived from the Old Testament (and, further back, from creation), with its requirements and its judgment. The vine-dresser, the Father, does not prune or purify the vine, but only the branches: if they remain unfruitful, they are cut off from it and thrown, withered, into the fire; if they are fruitful, they are purified so that they may bear yet more fruit. This purification can take the form of suffering; in any case, it is a deeper expropriation in the spirit of Jesus' fruitfulness because the ultimate fruitfulness belongs to Jesus' perfect poverty which went to the point of relinquishing himself, as is shown by the logion about the grain of wheat, which is spoken anew precisely in the context of glorification: 'The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you: if the grain of wheat does not fall into the earth and die, it remains alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life, loses it . . .' (Jn 12.23ff.). The image of the vine expands this statement by displaying the outcome, the 'much fruit', which consists first of all in the fact that many (the branches) will themselves become fruitful together with Jesus: the principle of fruitfulness, which at the beginning was alone and solitary, grows and multiplies in the world. And this is the essence of the Church. Thus the glorification of the Son by the Father, who permits the fruitfulness of the dying of the Son, is converted into a conclusive glorification of the Father by the Son: 'In this is my Father glorified, that *you* bear much fruit and (thus) show that you are my disciples' (15.8). Through the Father's purification, the disciples learn how to bear ever more fruit, and this brings them nearer to the Son's bearing of fruit in the Cross.

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[3] It is well known that the interpretation of the parable (Mt 13.24ff.) of the weeds sown among the wheat, identifying the sower as the Son of Man, comes from Matthew himself, or from the Church's catechesis, and presupposes a post-Easter reflection on Christ.

The conversion of the fruit to a new principle of fruitfulness is latent in the Synoptic Gospels (in that here too man is fruitful only by reason of the seed that is given him); it is seen by Paul (for whom the believers are the fruit of the gospel and, as such, themselves are to bear fruit), but it is thought through most explicitly in John. Apart from the image of the vine, there are the images of water: first it is Jesus who is the spring from which a thirsty man drinks (7.37); but then the one who drinks is changed into one who gives drink: 'The water that I will give him (to drink) will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life' (4.14). It is then almost irrelevant how one punctuates 7.37b–38, whether it is Jesus himself or the one who believes in him that is the 'belly' (κοιλιά) out of which 'the streams of living water flow'. We have something similar in Jesus' words before the gates of Samaria, when he sees 'the fields white for harvest' and calls the Samaritans to conversion, and then continues: 'Already the reaper receives his wages and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.

For here the saying is true, "One sows and another harvests"' (4.35ff.). The first, the sower, is the Father; the other, the reaper who is already beginning the harvest, is the Son; the Samaritan woman was a first fruit, and now others are drawing near, the people from the city who are looking for Jesus. In the next verse, the situation changes: 'I have sent you out where you have not laboured; others have toiled, and have entered into the enjoyment of their toil'. Here, the branches are grafted into the trinitarian fruitfulness. Presumably, it is the Samaritan mission of the early Church that is spoken of here: some, like the deacon Philip, have begun the work (Acts 8.4), while others, like Peter and John, are sent out from Jerusalem to finish off their work and to communicate the Holy Spirit to the converts (8.14–17).[4] This Johannine reflection reaches its climax in the theology of birth from God: 'to those who received him (the Logos), he gave the capacity (ἐξουσιάν) to become children of God—to those who were born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God' (Jn 1.12–13). This is, and remains, a mystery (3.8), all the more so in that John emphasises the uniqueness of the Only-begotten so strongly (1.18)—it is he alone who has come down from heaven (3.13)—and yet holds a 'birth from above' to be possible and necessary (3.7). The 'possibility' is the gift that he has brought with him: 'The one who is born of God does not sin, because his seed remains alive in him' (1 Jn 3.9). This germ of life is originally the Son himself, the fruit that communicates itself to the one who believes within the Church in rebirth from water and the Spirit (Jn 3.5), as the principle whereby the believer himself can bear fruit, and this ultimately means that he is born of the Father together with the only Son. This goes so far that the Son, who at other times emphasises, vis-à-vis the Church, his unity with the Father, can now emphasise, vis-à-vis the Father, his unity with the Church in the single principle of fruitfulness that is the vine and the branches. The men to whom he was sent have become his 'friends' (if they keep his commandment of love and 'go forth' as those whom he has chosen, and 'bear fruit', 15.14–16), and indeed they have become his 'brothers' with a common Father and God (20.17).

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[4] O. Cullmann, 'Samarien und die Anfänge der christlichen Mission' (1953), quoted from: *Vorträge und Aufsätze 1925–1962*, ed. K. Fröhlich (1966), pp. 232–240; this interpretation is taken over by R. Schnackenburg, *Johannes*, Vol I (1965), p. 487 (ET p. 453).

In *Paul*, we find the idea of the fruit that the believer receives from God and gives back to him expressed in a dynamic that is Paul's own, indicated in the frequent employment of the word group (ὑπερ-)περισσεύειν, περισσεία, (ὑπερ[εκ]-)περισσῶς, and similar forms. The word 'fruit' (καρπός) is less concrete in Paul than in the parables and metaphors of the Gospels; in a more abstract way, it can denote the effect and the produce of human action with or without a divine working-principle[5] thus, he can speak of 'fruit of the light' (Eph 5.9), 'fruit of righteousness' (Phil 1.11), 'fruit of knowledge' (Col 1.9), 'fruit of the Spirit' (Gal 5.22), and, in the comparison of apostolic work with agriculture, of 'fruit' as success (Rom 1.13; *cf.* 1 Cor 3.6; 2 Tim 2.6; Phil 1.22); and, perhaps in an allusion to the parables of growth, the bearing of fruit and growth on the part of the gospel in the whole world can be praised (Col 1.5f.). Some passages (Rom 15.28; Phil 4.17) disclose their meaning only in the context of the more general concept, which is no longer dependent on the analogy from the sphere of organic life, but goes beyond this to lay bare a fundamental quality of being as such: a quality that does not appear in a philosophical, but in a theological and trinitarian frame of reference, and governs the totality of things that exist—Christ, the Church, the Christian.[6]

In Paul's thought, περισσεύειν denotes the act or condition of overflowing, or (in less material terms) abundance. But this is not at all a mere wealth that marks out is possessor (however large and extraordinary this may be), but a fullness that goes forth, bestows itself and lavishes itself, not so much in specific deeds but generally as a distinguishing mark of its being, just as a spring is characterised as such by the manner of its flowing. If one did not know that subterranean streams nourish the spring, one could think that the spring water brought itself into being afresh at every moment precisely in the act of pouring itself out from itself. More is meant in this than in the philosophical adage, ***bonum diffusivum sui***; here we have also the mysterious power to regenerate oneself anew at every instant in the act of giving, or conversely the power to produce incessantly such a fullness in oneself that it can retain its own identity only through giving away the overflow. What has being—and ultimately the triune Being itself, as the source of all—is always more than itself. It is essentially a prodigality in which even the categories of purpose and goal (*causa finalis*), and hence also of plan and execution, became inadequate. 'Purpose' sets a limit from the start on the act that is initiated, and 'goal', by indicating its finishing point, quantifies the process. Both concepts remain theologically useful (*cf.* Jn 13.1; Eph 1.4–10, etc.), because they emphasise the intellectual and spiritual, purposive element of the divine welling-up, but they must remain subordinate to the larger characteristic that is the act of pouring oneself out for its own sake: this can be qualified in terms of purpose and goal only within the context of finitude, and even such qualifications are intended only to communicate proleptically (and, at the end, in a definitive manner) to the finite world the quality of what is infinite and of its inner pouring-forth.

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[5] It is of course true that the bad products, unlike the good products, are often called merely 'works', not 'fruits': Gal 5.19 ('works') and 5.22 ('fruits'); Eph 5.11 ('unfruitful works') as opposed to 5.9 ('fruit of light'). When Paul speaks of the 'fruit' of sin at Rom 6.21, this is only in the form of a question: at 6.22 he speaks affirmatively of the 'fruit' of sanctification. At Rom 7.4–5, however, 'bringing fruit for God' and 'bringing fruit for death' are parallel antitheses.

[6] Apart from F. Böckle (n. 1 above), *cf.* art. περισσεύω etc. in *TDNT* VI 58–63 (Hauck); *ibid.*, art. πλεονάζω etc., 263–268 (Delling).

All this certainly lay hidden in the Gospel logia about fruitfulness, and even more in the being and behaviour of Jesus as these are described in the Gospels. According to John, the disciples recognise his glory for the first time on the occasion of the miracle at Cana, which takes place under the sign of the sudden reversal from poverty ('They have no more wine') to incomprehensible, indeed foolish (Jn 2.10) prodigality. The banquet in the house of the Pharisee (Lk 7.36–50) shows the same reversal, only this time in a spiritual manner; while he has measured out his gestures of honour in small doses, the tears and the ointment of the sinful woman are the uncalculated gushing-out of repentant love, into which the miracle of the boundless forgiveness of sins can gush forth. The 'faith' that helps the sinful woman to carry out her superabundant deed (7.50) is doubtless already the 'work of God' in her (Jn 6.29), in the same way that a spring of water can propel its waters upwards through the pressure of a tank that is above it. The wasteful anointing by Mary of Bethany too—who, unlike Judas, does not calculate love and make use of it for other ends (Jn 12.4ff.)—is brought about through the superabundant contemplation in which she welcomes the Word of God into herself (Lk 10.38ff.). The sign of prodigality likewise stands over the multiplication of bread, which is, explicitly, not governed by the needs of the crowd,[7] as is seen in the twelve or seven baskets that hold what is left over (περίσσευμα, Mk 8.8; τὸ περισσεῦον, Mt 14.20; 15.37; Lk 9.17; Jn 6.12): they are a proleptic sign of the new manna, of the boundless eucharistic self-distribution of the Son of Man for the life of the world (Jn 6.51) which is thereby 'to live for ever' beyond all earthly dying (6.58). In the father's house, every hired worker has 'bread and to spare' (Lk 15.17): it is only the son who did not want to live in the περισσεύειν of the father, but took away his share as a separate private possession for himself, who ends up hungry. The bread of life, which the Father gives to the world, is lavished 'in overflowing' (Jn 10.10). This is why a 'righteousness' that 'far surpasses' the earlier righteousness is also required of the disciples (Mt 5.20).

Thus the foundation is laid for the Pauline 'overflowing', which is first of all the general mark of the dispensation of divine grace, when this is compared with the destructive way in which sin and death spread themselves in Adam's race. Rom 5.15–21 repeatedly abolishes the equilibrium between the two dispensations: 'how much the more did grace abound'

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[7] Like the feeding with manna in the wilderness (Ex 16.4f.) and the miracle of Elisha at 2 Kings 4.43f., where 'they ate, and had some left.' On this, *cf.* A. Heising, *Die Botschaft der Brotvermehrung*, St. Bibl. Stud. 15 (1966), pp. 31ff., 70.

(πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἡ χάρις ἐπερίσσευσεν, 5.15; *cf.* 5.17, 20). In the contest between the powerful springs of sin and of grace, grace wins by a large margin; indeed, Paul describes this contest by saying that the increase of sin (v. 19) provokes an even greater increase of grace (v. 20: ὑπερπερισσεύειν).[8] In God's grace, which reveals its essence, there is disclosed a comparative which will always surpass every superlative that can be definitively attained. This quality of grace is now at work within the dispensation of salvation: this is seen chiefly at the point where God's work seems to be finished, in the Cross and Resurrection of the Son, but 'flows over on to us' out beyond itself 'in all wisdom and insight' (Eph 1.8), i.e. as the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, who draws us into the redemption that has been objectively accomplished, so that we may participate in it from within, understanding it and living it (Col 1.10). It is precisely in this that the New Testament dispensation surpasses the glory of the old, Mosaic dispensation (περισσεύει δόξῃ), namely that the covering laid on the hearts is taken away, and we see the Lord openly and are also existentially changed into the glory of his love (2 Cor 3.16ff.). Just as 'the surprisingly quick growth of the Church (Acts 2.41; 4.4; 6.7; 9.31), which is expressed at 16.5 by ἐπερίσσευον τῷ ἀριθμῷ καθ'ἡμέραν . . . does not only (contain) statistical information', but intends to describe the growth as the working of the exalted Christ in the Holy Spirit,[9] so Paul's primary concern is the inner 'overflowing' of the life of faith as 'mutual love' (1 Thess 3.12) and 'in hope in the power of the Holy Spirit' (Rom 15.13).

But it is only in the Second Letter to the Corinthians, in which the dialectic of poverty and riches, or of suffering in Christ and joy in Christ, controls the use of the theme of superabundance, that this theme takes on its deeply New Testament, i.e. christological and trinitarian, colouring. At the beginnning of the Letter, this dialectic determines the apostolic existence, which however is determined by it only so that it can flow over on to the community and, in turn, determine its life. For God comforts the Apostle in all tribulations, so that he may be able to comfort the afflicted in their tribulation 'with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God'. This immanence of the divine comfort in the one who is afflicted, so that he may give away to others what he himself has received, stands under the law of progressive abundance: 'For as the sufferings of Christ abound for us, so our consolation too abounds through Christ' (2 Cor 1.4–5). Christ's sufferings are first abundant in Christ himself as redemptive sufferings for all sins, but they flow over on to the Apostles with this quality of their own, and the Apostles receive a share, in a way that can be determined neither quantitatively nor qualitatively, in the superabundance of the sufferings of Christ (2 Cor 4.10f.).[10] Because of this sharing, God's grace brings about a corresponding consolation for them 'through Christ': for it is not Christ himself who comforts them, but God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all consolations' (1.3), who controls and distributes the fruits of the sufferings of the Son in the Holy Spirit (as the insistent repetition of παρακαλεῖν seems to hint). But it is only at *2 Cor 8.1–9.15*, with the theology developed on the occasion of the collection for Jerusalem, that the full christological and trinitarian dimensions of the 'overflow' become visible.

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[8] Böckle (p. 49, n. 144) refers from this text to Rom 3.7: through the lie of the Gentiles, i.e. through their worship of idols, God's truthfulness has shown itself to be all the greater (ἐπερίσσευσεν) to his glory.

[9] *TDNT* VI 59.

Two things must be noted in this great text at the outset: the play of analogies in the word χάρις, which denotes both the pure grace of God and its incorporation in the hearts and attitudes of Christians, and finally also the alms which are given out of this attitude, which now appear as the fruits of the grace that has flowed over into their hearts; but these are fruits that must be produced, if the flow of grace is not to be interrupted in its course, and fruits that are utterly essential in this context but are nevertheless not particularly emphasised but occur almost as obviously and naturally as fruits on a tree.[11] It is an aspect of this natural quality that the fruit that is produced appears as the 'overflow of joy' (8.2) in the midst of the effort of growth and ripening: fruit is always the 'sweet product' of the life-process. The alms are likewise termed ἁπλότης (2 Cor 8.2; 9.11,13; Rom 12.8): as the simplicity of giving, the unpretentiousness of the gesture of generous giving that flows from an unreflected extraversion that knows no reserve.[12] These presuppositions make it possible for us to understand the bold statement about the attitude of the Macedonians, which is first presented to the Corinthians as a model of genuine beneficence: after the mention of their afflication, of their 'overflowing joy' in this affliction and their 'utter poverty', Paul says that this poverty 'flowed over into the riches of their generosity' (2 Cor 8.2) to such an extent that they asked to be allowed to share in the service of love for Jerusalem, not only 'in accordance with what they had', but 'of their own accord, even above what they had' (8.3); and in order to let their poverty overflow into riches, 'first' they consecrated 'their person to the Lord', and then to the apostolic work (8.5). This is the introduction to the greatest theme that Paul is able to offer the Corinthians when he goes on to make his request of them: the example of Christ himself.

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[10] This christological burdening of the Apostle becomes clear at 2 Cor 1.8–9, when he says that he was 'burdened down excessively, beyond (human) power' with the result that 'every possibility of continuing to live seemed to be cut off, and we despaired of life itself'. On that occasion, it was only 'the God who raises the dead' that was able to create a way out, so that this period of the Apostle's life became for him a genuine experience of the 'overflowing' of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ. At 2 Cor 4.15, this event is once again interpreted with regard to the apostolate: 'All (this) takes place for your sake, so that grace may be multiplied and may make the thanksgiving overflow through a greater number (of believers) for the glorification of God'. These concise words make the inner connection between 'overflowing', *eucharistia*, and *doxa* clear.

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[11] Χάρις is 'God's grace' at 8.1, but is already 'given and made over to the Church of Macedonia' there. At 8.9 it is 'the grace of Christ', which again is described as made over to the needy, so that the word includes 'the gift of love' in each of these expressions. At 8.4, χάρις becomes 'the favour of giving', and this (as the priority of the giving of oneself to the Lord shows) is the attitude of willingness (*cf.* v. 10f.: τὸ θέλειν, προθυμία: will, readiness). And it is only at 8.6,7 that χάρις becomes the work of love that is actually given as a gift. The conclusion at 9.14–15 brings us back to the beginning: the word once more means the 'exceedingly great grace of God' and the 'thanksgiving' that is owed him for this.

[12] *TDNT* I 386f. (Bauernfeind).

'For you know the gracious act (χάρις) of our Lord Jesus Christ, who became poor for you although he was rich, so that you might be enriched by means of his poverty' (8.9). The paradox that beggars can enrich others, when they give their heart to the Lord—one may think here of the poor widow who out of her utter poverty gave more than all the rich, because 'she made her gift out of her poverty—all that she had, her whole living' (Mk 12.44)—depends ultimately on the greater paradox that Christ, although rich, contrived to become utterly poor—not in appearance only, but in reality, not distributing his riches piece by piece like a rich man but disposing of them as a whole in the kenosis, so that he might then give what he had disposed of (or more precisely, the act of disposing itself) as 'the proceeds to the poor' (Mk 10.21 par.). This is something that only Christ could do, because in him his riches (to which he does not cling as to something robbed) and his act of giving away are one: the riches of selflessness in the triune divine nature, shown forth in the world in the kensois of the Incarnation. Because Jesus displayed the mystery of the divine rich poverty in man's poor poverty in the obedience unto the Cross, the riches of this poverty were set free and became accessible 'for you' in a double way: man enjoys an inner participation in the attitude of divine selflessness, and he is able, like Christ, to give an incarnated form to this attitude in giving away his own goods. Paul has shown the dependence of the second of these two on the first, by relating the well-nigh fabulous deed of the Macedonians, whose material achievement 'over and above their own strength' was determined by the measure of their spiritual attitude of self-giving, just as ultimately in Christ the χάρις (act of love, almsgiving) of his Cross received its own all-enriching value for us from the endless attitude of self-giving of the triune God. It is a divine 'overflowing' (περισσεύειν) that goes from riches into poverty, because God's riches can already be described just as well as 'poverty', and God could not be lord unless he had the freedom to be servant also. Paul bids the Corinthians either into his law of being—it is not a command, but a 'counsel' (8.8,10), since generous love cannot be commanded—but in such a way that he makes it clear how much they are in any case bound to obey this law through the fact that they are Christians and have received the riches of Christ: 'as you abound (περισσεύετε) in everything, in faith, in the Word (of God), in knowledge and in all zeal and in love' (8.7). Indeed, this overflowing of their disposition into action has already begun to show itself since the time in the previous year when the Corinthians declared themselves ready to help with the collection; Paul does no more than take them at their word, catching them in their own snare: 'Bring the deed now to completion, so that the readiness of the will may be matched by your completing it out of what you have', for indeed the willingness itself points to the presence of the necessary means (8.11–12).

The whole thing stands within a 'balance' or 'equality' (ἐξ ἰσότητος) that is to be brought about through exchange in the Church: 'now your superfluity will balance their lack, so that their superfluity may help out your lack' (8.14): Paul is thinking here of a balance between the material goods of Corinth and the spiritual goods of the mother community in Jerusalem. They have received from this community the Word of God and therefore faith: so it is right that they should send back there the fruit (καρπός, Rom 15.27; *cf.* Phil 4.17; 1 Cor 9.11ff.) of material support. This lack of distinction between what is spiritual and what is material as regards the fruitfulness and the establishment of 'equality' is typical of the Christian understanding of poverty and riches, especially when this is considered against the background of the Trinity and the Incarnation. It is possible (as 8.15 may indicate) that Paul thinks also of a material exchange between the communities. In any case, the decisive fruitfulness lies in the inner disposition of generous and joyful giving (εὐλογία, 9.6), which is the opposite of an anxious, miserly calculation (φειδομένως) that keeps its goods to itself. Such calculation does not reckon with God's generosity, 'for God has the power to let every (gift of) grace overflow on to you so that you may have enough in everything in all respects, in order to pour it out for every good work' (9.8). This, in deliberately exaggerated language, is the exhortation of the Sermon on the Mount not to take care for the morrow, but to put one's confidence in the Father in Heaven and seek first the kingdom of God (Mt 6.25–33). Indeed, the imagery used in the parables is taken up anew here: 'But the one who gives seed to the sower and bread for eating, will also make the sowing rich and multiply the 'harvest of your righteousness', enriching you in everything for every generous work which through us brings forth thanksgiving to God' (2 Cor 9.10). This *Eucharist* is the decisive event, after every situation of deprivation has been levelled up: the 'liturgical service' of almsgiving makes 'thanksgiving to God abound' (περισσεύουσα, 9.12) on the part of 'the many' who have received the alms. And thus the 'superabundant grace' (9.14), that went forth from God, enriched the hearts through the poverty of Christ and spread itself aboard among the communities, returns to God as the 'glorification' (9.13) of his 'glory' (8.19,24) and of his 'unutterable gift' (9.15). And if in this whole section δόξα taken on its own, speaks only of doxology and thus suggests little of the original characteristics of the *kabod* of Yahweh, nevertheless this glorification is given a New Testament actualisation and incarnation through the analogies of grace (χάρις) and through the path grace takes to make visible the Cross and then the Church with her living spiritual and material exchange of Christian love: and this actualisation and incarnation has a true glory that goes far beyond the visibility and materiality of the *kabod* in the Old Testament. The miracle of God's glory, which was the goal projected for all things at the beginning, is truly achieved in this restitution of grace, as the Church's love, through the brethren to God: the man who believes and loves has substantially become 'the glorification of the glory of the grace' of God (Eph 1.6).

2. THE BROTHER FOR WHOM CHRIST DIED

The force of the preceding chapter's argument was to suggest the necessity of incorporating the Church, and through her the world, more strongly into the christological and trinitarian disclosure of absolute being. God is the opposite of a strict lord who demands that what he has lent out should be given back to him intact and untouched. He is the sower who scatters what is his own over the field with a great gesture of careless lavishness, and watches to see what will come from the union of the divine vital power in the Word that is scattered abroad and the creaturely power in the world that receives it. The wedding of these two promises a fruit and harvest to which—humanly speaking—God looks forward eagerly. When God throws himself away (as seed and Word), he shows not only the principle of all fecundity and all generosity, but also the essence of his glory. The one who appropriates God's expropriation, by letting himself be expropriated, gives back to God the glory of his love; the one who bears much fruit gives glory to the principle of all fecundity; but one cannot speak here of a closed circuit, as if God must receive back with interest the glory he had given out. One cannot even speak of the attainment of a goal that had been planned in advance, for this is a very human way to speak about God; although Paul can use this expression (Eph 1, Rom 8.29f., etc.) to indicate the direction in which the divine love flows, it is made inadequate by the very flow itself. The final point of the outpouring of God's love is not at all the point furthest from the primordial source (as in Plotinus), so as to necessitate a 'turning round' and 'reverse movement' back to the centre; the final point is no 'end' at all, but is in itself endless and infinite. It is the dawning of the divine love in what is not God and what is opposed to God, the dawning of eternal life (as 'resurrection') in utter death: not the dawning of the divine 'I' in the non-divine 'Thou', but the dawning of the divine I-Thou-We in the worldly, creaturely I-Thou-We of human fellowship. In the preceding section, the incarnation of the divine χάρις (=grace) was described as χάρις (=deed of kindness) in human fellowship, a very realistic giving of a gift. In Christian terms, no further stage lies beyond this incarnation of love. The 'last things' are not and cannot be anything other than the open demonstration of this attainment (or non-attainment) of the endless end. The divine love which is bestowed vertically by God on sinful men is glorified 'horizontally' in the love of human fellowship understood and put into practice in a Christian way. 'In this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit' (Jn 15.8). If men are created 'for the glorification of the glory of his grace' (Eph 1.6), then the fruit that they bear has within itself the qualities of the divine glory; it does not need to be raised up at a subsequent stage into the divine light, in order to become radiant, for it is in itself the 'fruit of the light' (Eph 5.9). The disciples of the one who is the light of the world (Jn 8.12) have 'the light of life' (*ibid.*), and are themselves 'the light of the world' (Mt 5.14). If 'God is light' (1 Jn 1.5), then the one who 'walks in the light' is in God: and this is done by the one who passes on the divine light to his neighbour. 'If anyone says that he is in the light, but hates his brother, he is still walking in the darkness. The one who loves his brother remains in the light' (1 Jn 2.9f.). This 'horizontal' love is marked by the same realism (*cf.* Jas 2.1–17; 1 Jn 3.17) as the 'vertical' incarnation, for it is precisely from the self-expropriation of God and the self-surrender of Christ unto the Cross that the horizontal love receives its Christian stamp. With its seriousness and its inner blessedness, this love answers to an absolute law: it is the ultimate, eschatological love.

This permits and indeed compels us to speak seriously at this point in the discussion of the theme of 'glory' (which at first seemed to be a quality of God's being alone) about love of neighbour, even although few passages in the New Testament explicitly bring both concepts together. This is not fortuitous; it is certainly intentional precisely in the Johannine writings. For in the first place, the whole of the light that has broken into the world as love is always to be referred back to its first and only source. The Church is the 'moon', not herself the 'sun'.[1] She cannot sun herself in her own light; she must give the glory to her sun in all the love through which alone she proves that she is the Church of Christ. Where the Church is at her purest, she is at her most transparent, and does not attribute to herself the smallest radiance of her own (1 Cor 4.7; 2 Cor 3.5). This is confirmed by a second consideration. The brotherly love of Christians has not yet received its final judgment (κρίσις) by love itself; and therefore it cannot cut itself adrift from the faith that points it away from itself upwards, nor from the hope that points it away from itself forwards; it does not carry its own measure within itself, but above itself, even although it is true that the love of God has already 'been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given us' (Rom 5.5). No one can identify himself with this Spirit that has been given to him, even when he pours him out in his turn. The love with which Christians give glory can never measure or calculate how much of God's glory is flowing through it. Were Christian love to seek what was its own (1 Cor 13.5)—even if that were only the measure of its glory—then it would not be permissible to discuss it under the head of 'glory'.

a. Encountering God in one's brother

1. It is difficult to locate exactly the boundary in the Synoptic preaching above love of neighbour between the preaching and example of Jesus on the one hand and the contributions of the post-Easter catechesis on the other: for it is precisely here that the preaching and example of Jesus so strongly incorporate in a proleptic manner 'what belongs to the end-times' (Lk 9.31); God's initial will, passing through the law and the prophets, aims at this in Jesus. Thus his whole proclamation can be only an implicit self-interpretation here: a word that is *en route* to its own fulfilment, a word that meets those who know the prior Old Testament stages on a

[1] Hugo Rahner, 'Das Mysterium des Mondes', in: *Griechische Mythen in christlicher Deutung* (1945), pp. 200–224; with greater detail in: 'Mysterium Lunae', *ZKT* 63 (1939), pp. 311–349, 428–442; 64 (1940), pp. 61–80, 121–131.

path familiar to them, and carries them further along this path, on which the direction is guaranteed for the time being only by Jesus' own step along it and by his own certainty, until God has revealed him as the personal 'way' himself through his Resurrection from the dead.[2]

The chief commandment already existed: to love God with all one's heart. It is emphasised by Jesus, but he presupposes that it is already known. Likewise, there was a limited commandment of love of neighbour. The limit (apart from the fact of taking oneself as its measure) came from love for the God who had chosen Israel: God is 'obliged' and summoned to punish Israel's enemies; he hates the evil-doers, and the Israelite has the right and the duty to join God in this hatred.[3] The harsh formulation of the Sermon on the Mount: 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy"' (Mt 5.43), does not in fact appear literally in Scripture, but it need not be a polemical exaggeration by the evangelist, for the negative formula is found at Qumran.[4] Such a limitation of love corresponds to the perspective of a covenant conceived in a particularistic fashion which made its original dynamic meaning (Gen 12.3; Jer 4.2) hard to keep in view at the same time. Jesus proclaims the lordship of God, the dominance of God's will and act and disposition not only in Heaven but also on earth, God's victorious superiority to all that men contrive in the depths of their hearts. And the starting point had always been God's goodness, disclosed in his unfathomable act of election: all the apparent limitations in Old Testament ethics derived from human deductions from the incomprehensible election of one and not of another. But the law and the prophets are a 'word *en route*' to the perfected word; as such, they are taken up by Jesus, who extracts their positive kernel and thereby exposes their limitation (in the 'antitheses', Mt 5.21ff.), making them transparent to the original total will of God. The direct path from the *proton* to the *eschaton* is laid down. On the journey to this point, it was known that God has mercy on the poor man and that it is God's justice that gives him the shelter of divine right; but the poor had fashioned for themselves out of their poverty a claim on God to receive their right, and thus they had secretly become rich. With the first word of the Sermon on the Mount, this riches is rejected: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit'. It is these alone who are open for what is now coming, what was intended and aimed at from the outset: the superiority of God's love, which lays low the boundaries.

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[2] On the concept of love in the New Testament, *cf.* the great bibliography by C. Spicq, in: *Agape dans le NT*, I (1958), pp. 317–334, as well as Spicq's three-volume work with the same name (Vols. II and III, 1959); also *Agape, Prolégomènes à une Etude de théologie néotestamentaire* (1955). Out of the immense secondary literature, let us mention: W. Lütgert, *Die Liebe im NT* (1905); J. Moffat, *Love in the NT* (1929); V. Warnach, *Agape. Die Liebe als Grundmotiv der ntl. Theologie* (1951); R. Völkl, *Die Selbstliebe in der Hl. Schrift und bei Thomas von Aquin* (1956).

[3] Ps 139.21f.; *cf.* Ps 104.35; Num 25.11–13; 1 Mac 2.24–26; Tob 4.17; Sir 12.6.

[4] 1QS 1.3–4.

Protologically, as creator, God is 'your heavenly Father, who makes the sun rise on good and bad alike, and sends rain on the righteous and on sinners' (Mt 5.45). He is 'merciful' and 'kind' as the creator—not only as the God of the covenant—and this holds true for those who are 'ungrateful and wicked' (Lk 6.35–36). This exalted state is kingly; to imitate it, it is necessary to be exalted above the covenant relationship between two unequal partners—a perfection is required that corresponds to that of your heavenly Father (Mt 5.48), i.e. entry into the relationship of sonship (v. 45) and thereby into the 'kingly law' (Jas 2.8), the 'perfect law of freedom' (Jas 1.25), because the one who loves steps out, beyond the limiting differences, into the free, kingly, exalted state of God. God is present to all with equal immediacy, even if one is righteous and the other unrighteous. This means that the concept of righteousness in the relationship to God is fundamentally superseded—even when Jesus[5] and Paul[6] still use this word—in a sense that has become dialectical. The decisive point now is the transparency of the expropriated heart to the origin: 'simplicity' (Mt 6.22 par.), the new location of the heart with God (6.21), relinquishing of cares to God (6.25–34), letting oneself be expropriated, not hitting back, not refusing a request (5.39f.). It is here that the 'mild' (Mt 11.30) and 'not difficult' (1 Jn 5.3) quality of Jesus' teaching lies; one could find a starting-point for the discussion with Asian religion in this openness to the origin (πραΰτης), but in Christian terms, the meaning of the origin is fully disclosed only when the Word of God goes towards its end. The loving impartiality of God the Father, which had to present itself first in the old covenant as a kingly freedom of election, goes to its end in Jesus' partiality for the sinners, tax collectors and harlots, the lost and the rejected. In the kingly freedom of his love, he *is* the synthesis that makes a choice from the elements of the law and the prophets that were *en route* towards him: he leaves behind him what he wishes, and refers what he wishes back to the origin. The works of love of neighbour must certainly remain (Mt 7.21), but within the framework of the disposition of the Father and the Son: deriving from the heavenly simplicity of the Son's transparency to the Father, which leads to the simplicity of his Cross in which it is made concrete—for it is there that Jesus does not resist the one who is evil, it is there that he lets

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[5] In the sense of the Old Testament or apocalyptic yearning for the righteousness of God which comes into its own eschatologically: Mt 5.6, 10; 6.33; but also in the warning at Mt 5.20 against remaining at the level of Old Testament righteousness (*cf.* 6.1), where Jesus speaks of the περισσεύειν of the new righteousness over 'your' old righteousness, as the condition for entry into God's kingdom.

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[6] The Pauline 'righteousness of God' remains terminologically bound to the Old Testament, where it seeks to express the negation of self-righteousness and righteousness of works on the part of man *vis-à-vis* God. The expression crosses the boundary into the New Testament to the extent that it is God alone who brings about his righteousness, i.e. his love and glory, through the eschatological word that is Jesus' death and Resurrection, in the world and in man. But since the term remains tied to the intellectual world of the Old Testament (while simultaneously cancelling this), it contains an element of conditioning by time, and constantly demands a fresh translation. Ultimately, what P. Stuhlmacher (*Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus* (1960), p. 190) has observed with regard to G. Strecker's interpretation of the righteousness of God in Matthew (*Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit*, 1962) holds true for Paul also: 'The properly theological problem . . . consists . . . in the impossibility of developing a *sola gratia* with the help of a concept of righteousness, in a way that avoids misunderstanding'.

himself be struck on the right cheek, gives even his cloak, goes two miles, and loves his enemies (Mt 5.39ff.). And certainly self-love will remain too, but only 'on the margin' and unaccented,[7] or else as the challenge to cross boundaries that have been set unconsciously and arbitrarily.[8] The limits that belong to pure and to impure creatureliness (which can no longer be neatly separated from each other *in concreto*) are nonchalantly abolished in the divine crossing over to the enemies, and in this an unconditional imitation is demanded. And certainly the human (and Old Testament) expectation of the 'reward' for so superhuman a deed is not simply done away with as something superseded, but the way in which the reward grows with the deed beyond measurement and seems to take on the dimension of infinity (Lk 6.38a), and indeed becomes proportionate to the boundlessness of the deed of love (6.37, 38b), and the limited merits attached to limited love are brushed aside as irrelevant for the Christian (6.32–34), arouses the suspicion that the true reward of endless love can be only such love itself: not my love, but God's love, on the basis of which I dare to cross over the boundary in its company. The unwavering spontaneity with which Jesus goes forward remains the decisive thing in his life; the internal and external boundaries that had been set for love (sabbath ordinances, laws of purification) are very deliberately broken, the solidarity with sinners is provocatively stressed (Mt 9.11; 11.19; 21.31f.), and Jesus goes towards his death without averting his gaze, in order to live out his motto, to serve rather than to be served, to the end and 'to give his life as a ransom for all' (Mk 10.45; Mt 20.28). He wills to bring home the very last of the lost sheep of the Father. Whatever may become of his disciples on this way 'to the end' (Jn 13.1), and however the Church may later describe their role, their understanding or lack of comprehension, their following or abandoning of Jesus, it is certain that *he* has succeeded in pouring out his blood of the new covenant for all (Mk 14.24).

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[7] R. Völkl, op. cit., p. 163.

[8] R. Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft des NT* (2nd edn., 1962), p. 76.

This changes everything, for from now on, one's fellow-man—whether friend or foe—is 'the brother for whom Christ died' (1 Cor 8.11; Rom 14.15), and whoever sins against his brother sins against Christ (1 Cor 8.12). Now the early Christian catechesis can and must complete the equation in explicit terms (putting the words into the mouth of the 'king'): 'Whatever you have done (or not done) to one of the least of my brothers, you have (or have not) done it to me' (Mt 25.40, 45). The protological, apparently impartial love of God has arrived, by way of the Old Testament predilection of the 'chosen', 'beloved' Israel, to its eschatological end: each individual who can be addressed humanly as 'Thou' is raised to the status of a 'Thou' for God, because God's true 'Thou', his 'chosen' and 'beloved' 'only Son' has borne the guilt of this human 'Thou' and has died for him, and therefore can identify himself with every individual at the last judgment. This is impossible within the framework of paganism, because no mythical god or philosophical divine world-substance possesses the kingly freedom of Yahweh to choose a people and also show by means of it that he is God; nor is it possible within the framework of the Old Testament, because Israel remains a collective, and it is only as a member of the people that the individual perseveres in the true disposition *vis-à-vis* God.[9] This can only be Christian, because it presupposes both the 'I-Thou' of the Father and the Son within the Godhead in the unity of the Spirit, and the eschatological extension of this to every human 'Thou'. Israel is the indispensable transition to this eschaton, but in a remarkable manner the original amazement at the reality of the 'I-Thou' is generated and kindled when God first says 'Thou' to a human person, Abraham.

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[9] It is therefore necessary to use the utmost care, if one wishes to project on to the New Testament the category of the mythical and Old Testament collective 'I'—and from a theological point of view, it would be essential to distinguish the mythical and the Old Testament usages. It is not possible even to set one's sights properly on the Church of Christ with this category, let alone to describe it. Use of this category can only lead astray, because it offers no possibility whatever of seeing what is decisively new, the endless personality of the individuals who make up the 'body of Christ'. The 'bibliographical study' by Caroll Stuhlmueller ('The natural law question the Bible never asked', *Cross Currents* 19 (1968/69), pp. 55–67) shows where the absolutisation of the category of the collective 'I' leads: viz, to the dissolution of the entire biblical theology into natural religion.

Here we must at least observe in passing that the passage of Christian thought through Western metaphysics, with its various attempts to express the glory of God in great intellectual structures,[10] remains so strongly marked by Greek thought that little room is left either for the 'Thou' of God or for the 'Thou' of one's fellow-man. Even where Christian sensibility and prayer are found (as in Augustine), the foundation that bears the structure remains a philosophy of the spirit and not of the person; the philosophy of the spirit closes up the final loopholes in Hegel, where all that is objective is dissolved into a construction of thought, thereby absolutely excluding the possibility of an eternally free 'Thou' (hence Hegel's antisemitism). It is only amid the ruins of idealism and of its late offshoot, the philosophy of life and understanding, that man discovers anew that he is alone in his perplexity and alienation, that Feuerbach and Marx ask how man can find himself again,[11] and that Rosenzweig, Ebner and Buber[12] ask more urgently what is the nature of the impassable barrier that lies for the 'I' in the fact that the

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[10] Vols. II, IV and V of this work.

[11] On the fateful consequences of the entanglement of idealism and Christianity, *cf.* K. Löwith, *Von Hegel bis Nietzsche* (1941). Löwith's analyses show how strongly those who deny the world of Goethe and Hegel remain still prisoners of the thought-forms against which they are mounting the campaign. See also H. de Lubac, *Le drame de l'humanisme athée* (1944 ET *The Drama of Atheistic Humanism*, 1949) *idem*, *Proudhon et le Christianisme* (1945).

[12] B. Casper, *Das dialogische Denken. Eine Untersuchung der religionsphilosophischen Bedeutung Franz Rosenzweigs, Ferdinand Ebners und Martin Bubers* (1967, with bibliography). Casper is right to emphasise Rosenzweig's writings (*Der Stern der Erlösung*, 1921; *Kleinere Schriften*, 1937). The first to develop this was K. Löwith, *Das Individuum in der Rolle des Mitmenschen* (1928). Without influence from these writers, Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Sanctorum Communio, Dogmatische Untersuchung zur Soziologie der Kirche* (written when he was twenty-one years old, 1930, 2nd edn. 1954) signalled a new break-through that left behind idealism and the philosophy of life to arrive at a (Protestant Biblical) dialogical thought. *Cf.* Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Metaphysik der Gemeinschaft* (1955), and, developing the ideas, Heribert Mühlen, *Der Heilige Geist als Person, Ich-Du-Wir* (2nd edn. 1966).

'Thou' is 'Thou'. If one does not wish to fall back into idealism (or into collective sociologism), to sink into materialism and hedonism, or to break oneself on the barrier of the 'Thou' (the 'Thou' as Hell: Sartre), then the only path open is the Christian path, which can attribute endless value to the human 'Thou' because God has attributed and truly granted this value to him in the act of election and in the death on the Cross. And this is possible only if the 'I-Thou-We' relationship has itself absolute, divine value: in the triune being of love.

It is not possible to divorce the Christian love of neighbour from this theological presupposition, but one sees what Christianity is only by participating in the divine movement from the 'vertical' to the 'horizontal'. This is shown once again in the synthesis that Jesus effects—as the profoundest self-expression of his existence and his mission—between the chief commandment of the love of God and the commandment of the love of neighbour which is 'equal to it' (Mt 22.39). Although both of its presuppositions already existed, this synthesis is absolutely creative; it is identical with the unique christological synthesis itself, as this is given expression by Chalcedon. This uniqueness prevents the dissolution of the vertical dimension into the horizontal through the dissolution of the love of God into the love of neighbour, which would be the formation of a 'Christian atheism'. Christ is the Word of God which is always throughout its mission in relationship with the Father through prayer, refusing to let the act of adoration in spirit and in truth—the cultic act directed directly to God with the whole of his existence—be dissolved into the equally demanding act of doing the whole will of the Father in the whole of the mission. But this will uniformly and unambiguously consists in bearing the guilt of all his brothers: in this, the whole of the Law is fulfilled and more than fulfilled. No longer does God content himself with intervening from Heaven on the side of the poor man (who in truth is the sinner): now he crosses over to him as a man. And he does not do this in an act of condescension, by distributing alms among the poor: the crossing-over takes place down below, on the level of the poor themselves, when he takes upon himself the burden of all their poverty. This brings about the condensation of the Law, and illustrates what is meant by *mišpat*, *ḥesed*, and walking humbly with God (Mic 6.8; Amos 5.24); *cf.* Mt 23.23); but it also reveals the universal validity of the Law, since the brother for whom Jesus dies is not only the fellow-member of his race (or at most the foreigner who has made his home with this people), but absolutely every individual: 'He was to die, not only for the people, but also to gather into one the children of God who were scattered abroad' (Jn 11.52), and ultimately to 'draw all to himself' (Jn 12.32). God's intention in the suffering of the Servant of Yahweh was already universal (Is 52.15; 53.11,12a,12b),[13] as was Jesus' intention when he distributed his flesh and blood;[14] the universal 'all' resounds in all the strata of the New Testament (Rom 5.12–21; 11.32; Phil 2.11; 1 Cor 10.33; 1 Tim 2.4f.; 4.10; Tit 2.11; 2 Pet 3.9). To reimpose a legalistic and particularistic limitation on this crossing-over from the Law which segregated Israel to 'the poor man, whoever, he may be'—the thought that lies behind all Jewish, predestinationist, and Jansenist theologies—would be to deny that the Incarnation and the Cross are the final word that the creator of all things addresses to his world.

This is forcibly demonstrated in the hymnic passage about cosmic peace which is interpreted in the Letter to the Ephesians as speaking of the Cross of Christ: *Eph 2.14–18*, which H. Schlier has convincingly analysed. Christ's crossing-over 'the fence of separation', in order 'to make one out of the two' (v. 14), in order to 'make peace and change the two into one new man in himself (i.e., in Christ' (v. 15), in order 'to reconcile the two in *one* body to God' (v. 16) and give 'both access in *one* Spirit to the Father' (v. 18), takes place as it were horizontally as the abolition of the Law which divided the Jews from the Gentiles, and vertically (in keeping with apocalyptic and gnostic concepts) as the demolition of the dividing wall between the divine sphere and the cosmic sphere; this wall is set up through the quarrelling of the angels, who are the cosmic world-principles, but also through the old law, the Torah, which was instituted through the mediation of angels (Gal 3.19).[15] In this concept, the vertical and the horizontal walls of division are one and the same. For Paul, as always, it is decisively in the 'flesh' of Christ (v. 14), in his 'Cross' (v. 16) and his 'blood' (v. 13), that there lies the 'creative force' (κτίσῃ, 2.15) that relegates the dualism to the past and makes the unity present and future, the 'peace' (vv. 14, 15) that abolishes the 'enmity' (vv. 14.16), and the bodily (σῶμα, v. 16) unity. No matter how much gnostic cosmological speculation there may be in the conceptual material that Paul adapts here—and it is precisely the cosmological horizon here that must leave open the question of conceptual resources outside Judaism—this is relevant only, and precisely, to the extent to which it enters the synthesis of Jesus Christ: those who are 'far off' (vv. 13,17), 'without God in the cosmos' (v. 12), cannot be brought together with those who are already (through the promise) near, the Jews, in any other way than by the common 'reconciliation to God' of divided humanity 'through the Cross' (v. 16); it is the crucified one who 'puts the enmity to death in himself' by taking it upon himself, carrying it through to the end and suffering it to its ultimate consequence: indeed, he identifies himself with it (2 Cor 5.21). The body in which this takes place is the 'bleeding' 'flesh' of the One who already contains in himself also the bodily unity of the body of mankind: this unity is 'preached' by him (and by those whom he appoints) as 'peace' (Eph 2.17), and is thus certainly the new and vicarious 'access' between man and man, and therein the 'one Spirit' (v. 18) of love of neighbour—but for Paul, this takes place in the common access 'to God' and in the common Spirit 'to the Father'. The horizontality of the open and universal love of neighbour (not limited in any way, e.g. to members of the Church alone) derives from the verticality of its institution (on the Cross) and comes into being in the common eschatological orientation in the same Spirit to the God and Father who has established all love and unity in the institution of the Son and of the Cross. In these verses, the Church for the moment makes no thematic appearance; she is apprehended only as the dynamic unifying of all things, which becomes concrete in every place where enmity is destroyed and the new man is built up creatively, where what was far off becomes near, where the incorporation into peace takes place, and where the dividing wall of legalism's segregation is demolished through Christian love—in the 'flesh', the 'Cross' and the 'blood'—through the act of crossing over to the distant brother.

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[13] *Cf.* Joachim Jeremias, *TDNT* VI 537f.

[14] Joachim Jeremias, *Die Abendmahlsworte Jesu* (4th edn. 1967), pp. 218ff. (ET *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 1955, pp. 204ff.).

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[15] Detailed evidence in H. Schlier, *Epheser*, pp. 122–136.

These verses from Ephesians have been quoted here only to make the fundamental Christian phenomenon clear: when Jesus crosses over to sinners on the Cross, the unity between the love of God and the love of neighbour is established: it is instituted by God himself, who surrenders his 'Beloved' for the world, and this is an institution that remains unthinkable and ineffective in the merely horizontal sphere (e.g. in the concept of 'vicarious representation' by one's fellow-man). This institution of God bestows in Christ on every 'neighbour'—even on the one who is 'furthest away'—the importance of one who is individually loved by God and is brought near to God. This is logically prior to everything that will be called the organised and missionary Church. For no matter what 'far off' people, 'lacking knowledge' and 'without God', Christians will meet in the course of their proclamation, they are always people to whom God has already addressed in Christ the unique 'Thou', and whom he has fundamentally acknowledged as the brethren of his beloved Son. They are always already people who have had a decisive effect on a man's attitude towards God through the very fact of his conduct towards them: 'Whatever you have done to one of the least of my brothers, you have done it to me' (Mt 25.40).

2. In this there lies the ultimate conclusion of the Synoptic and early Christian synthesis of love of God and love of neighbour, and it is *Paul* who comprehensively draws out the

consequences for the Church. The Church is the place where the process of conforming humanity to the person and event of Christ is begun, the place where men dedicate themselves, in a faith that listens and obeys, to this event that is a person, are formed by him (sacramentally) and seek through their existence to make him effective in the world. The sphere of the Church is the model in which the creative crossing-over of the crucified love is recognised and taken over by human persons in the individual 'appropriate', 'analogous' 'measure' (Rom 12.3, 6ff.).

The first point that strikes us here (although it was to be expected, after what has been said) is the invariably 'vertical' grounding of the 'horizontal' Christian and ecclesial love of neighbour. The themes may take on individual nuances[16]—what God has done in Christ;[17] the conduct of Christ as the ontological basis and ethical model;[18] the requirements of the Church's christologically-structured fellowship;[19] the unity of the Spirit that has been bestowed on Christians;[20] the new life that has been given us in Christ and in the Spirit;[21] the Lord who will soon return[22] and judge us in accordance with his law of love—but all of these together form a single fundamental theme: 'Forgive one another, as God has forgiven you in Christ' (Eph 4.32). And this is based, not only on the origin of the divine love, but also on its ultimate goal, which becomes visible in the 'Thou': 'Let each one think more highly of the other than of himself' (Phil 2.3); and this is possible only when one sees in the 'Thou' the fact that God thinks highly of him. But between the beginning and the end lies the action of Christ's self-giving, with its rhythm that the Christian must make his own.[23] If he lets himself be carried along by this rhythm, then he need not reflect consciously on 'the glorification of God' or on his 'love for God' in the process of his expropriation in favour of the 'Thou', for he is thereby already giving glory to God and loving him.[24] This is the closest connection that can be reached between 'religion' and 'morality' without the one being dissolved into the other; such a full dissolution (in either direction) would prevent christology and the doctrine of the Trinity from being the basis and presupposition of the distinction (*semper maior*) between Creator and creature.[25] A maxim such as: 'None of us lives to (or: for) himself, and none of us dies to (or: for) himself; if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord' (Rom 14.7f.), gives a glimpse of the basis of human existence in creation, but takes on its full significance in God's self-expropriation in the death of Christ: this act of self-expropriation simultaneously expropriates us of all personal decision in advance, because we are orientated to the absolute triune love.

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[16] On what follows, *cf.* L. Nieder, 'Die Motive der religiös-sittlichen Paränese in den paulinischen Gemeindebriefen', *Münch.theol.Stud.* I, 12 (1956).

[17] Imitation of God in his pardoning in Christ: Eph 4.32; 5.1; God's will to save us: 1 Thess 5.9; 2 Thess 2.13f.; God's presence in our working: Phil 2.13; and (the same thing as this) our holiness as the outcome of his sanctifying presence in us: 1 Cor 6.11; Col 3.12.

[18] Eph 5.2; Col 3.13; Gal 5.24; Christ's act for us: 1 Thess 5.9 and frequently.

[19] Rom 12.4f.; 1 Cor 1.10ff.; 6.1–4; Gal 6.1–10; Eph 4.3–7; 4.25; 5.21; Phil 1.27–30; 2.1–8; Col 3.9f.

[20] 1 Thess 4.8 (*cf.* Ezek 36.27; 37.14); Gal 5.25; 1 Cor 6.19.

[21] Gal 5.25; Col 3.1–4.

[22] Phil 4.5; 1 Thess 4.6; 1 Cor 7.34 (*cf.* v. 29).

This 'place' for which the redeemed are chosen, and into which they are also brought in the obedience of faith, is Jesus Christ himself; in him they are 'one person' (Gal 3.28), and the unity of the Church is nothing other than the acknowledgment and putting into practice of this unity which is given in advance in Christ. The unity of the 'body' is derived from the unity of the Head which forms the limbs out of itself and brings them back to itself (Eph 4.10–16); the 'Spirit' too, who is the soul of the body, is given to it in advance as the Spirit of the Head, and points beyond the present unity to an eschatological unity that is seen only 'in hope' (Eph 4.4). The Church—as a unity that is present, that has been instituted beforehand, and that reaches out to the future—is not a unity that she herself possesses and controls: she exists only by looking upwards to a unity that is superior to herself. When Christians are told to be zealous in 'preserving the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace' i.e., in concrete terms, 'to live in a manner worthy (ἀξίως) of their calling, in all humility and meekness, in forbearance, putting up with one another in love' (Eph 4.1–2), or 'having the same mind, in the same love, being in full accord and thinking the same thoughts' (Phil 2.2), or 'to clothe themselves in heartfelt mercy, goodness, humility, meekness and patience', and 'to bear with one another and forgive, if anyone has something against another' (Col 3.12), then this is not written against a background of merely interpersonal relationships and motivations for conduct, but against the background of a unity that lies above the persons, overlapping and embracing them all. This unity 'bears with' them all together and 'puts up with' them, to make it possible for them to enter the sphere of such a sentiment of unity. They administer and realise a love that is certainly their own, but which in every case has been destined for them in advance and has been given to them as a gift.

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[23] Rom 15.5, 7; Phil 2.13f.; Eph 4.32–5.2; Col 3.5ff.

[24] On the lack of a motivation through 'love for God' and 'glorification of God' (found only at 1 Cor 10.31; at Rom 15.7, Paul is speaking of what Christ has done), *cf.* L. Nieder, op. cit., pp. 115f.

[25] R. Schnackenburg, 'Die Bedeutung des Hauptgebotes für Religion und Sittlichkeit', in: *Die sittliche Botschaft des NT*, op. cit., pp. 78–81 (ET *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, 1965, pp. 105–109). On the one hand, there can no longer exist 'an isolated cultic piety', and on the other side 'it is only the love for God that guarantees that selflessness which is lacking in almost all human love' and makes possible 'that overcoming of self, out of which proceed the quietest and strongest deeds of love'. The same is shown to hold good of John: *ibid.*, p. 252.

This love that they are permitted to put into practice shows itself to be christologically formed above all when it bears the other precisely as *other*. This is necessary in the first place when a brother lets himself 'be so carried away as to commit an offence': 'As bearers of the Spirit, deal with such a person in mildness, and look to yourself lest you too be led astray. Bear one another's burdens, and thus you will fulfil the law of Christ' (Gal 6.1f.). There is, therefore, a sharing in Christ's carrying of the burden, but with the caution that is doubly necessary because everything would be destroyed if one were to confuse Christ's act of carrying with one's own; for, unlike Christ, 'each one will have to carry his own burden' (6.5). It is not only the sinfulness common to all that makes it difficult to bear with the other; another factor is the diversity of the gifts of grace that have been bestowed on the members of the Church. These gifts complement one another, but they can contradict one another (1 Cor 12; Rom 12; Eph 4). The administration of these wholly positive and wholly personal gifts may be carried out only in the Spirit of the one faith of the Church which is common to all (in the *analogia fidei*: Rom 12.6), in consideration of the unity which is superior to the Church seen as a social body.[26] The Church is to grow into this unity through the exercise of the charisms in love and through an ever deeper endowment with the Spirit of insight and prudence (Eph 1.8; 3.4; Col 1.9, etc.), but the insight that is attainable into 'the breadth and length, height and depth of the love of Christ' is given only 'together with all the saints' (Eph 3.18) when one goes out beyond one's own individual stand-point—even if this happens to be a charismatically-determined stand-point.

Against the absolutisation of gnostic-philosophical knowledge, the New Testament proposes as the highest value a knowledge that is nothing other than love itself. If one follows the shorter text at *1 Cor 8.2f.*,[27] 'The one who thinks that he has knowledge, does not yet know how one ought to know; but the one who loves has the true knowledge', then knowledge is transposed out of itself into love. The text is speaking of love within the Church, and more specifically of the relationship between the 'strong' and the 'weak' as this affects the boundaries of Christian freedom. Paul begins by locating himself together with the community in the position of the 'strong': 'We know that we all possess knowledge', but he at once continues: 'Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up'. The abrupt transition crosses over from the position of the Church as a whole to the individual position. This however posits love as the boundary for knowledge (even if this should be a charism of knowledge); this knowledge is not only relativised, but exposed as dangerous, unless it goes beyond every individual insight and lets itself be integrated into the Church's love. In the longer text, this integration becomes nothing short of repentance and self-abandonment: 'The one who thinks that he has knowledge, does not yet know how one ought to know; but the one who loves God is known by him'. This reversal is genuinely Pauline (1 Cor 13.12; 2 Cor 5.11; Gal 4.9; Phil 3.12); it is not based on hellenistic pantheism, but on the priority in the Old Testament of being known and chosen by the living God.[28] Both forms of the text understand love as the authority that governs every individual insight. Even the truth of the gospel can and may be uttered and thought of only within the sphere of love.[29] If knowledge is understood in a particularistic way, and employed accordingly in praxis, it can become lethal: it 'destroys the one who is weak' (ἀπόλλυται γὰρ ὁ ἀσθενῶν), and this weak person is the 'brother for whom Christ died' (1 Cor 8.11). Here the question arises of the relationship between conscience and the Church. Paul had begun by putting himself with the whole community on the side of those who have knowledge, to whom 'everything is permitted' (1 Cor 6.12), and who 'know' that one may eat flesh sacrificed to the idols, because the 'idols are nothing'. While it is true, however, that one gains nothing in God's eyes from eating and loses nothing through refraining from eating (8.8), very much indeed is lost if a brother who lacks gnosis sees others eating in the temple and is led astray—Paul says, in irony, 'edified'—to join them in eating, against what his own conscience says. If then the weak person, for whom Christ died, is destroyed through the knowledge of the strong, these latter have 'sinned against Christ' (8.12). The brother is not merely one member of a society among other members; for it was for him—precisely for him—that Jesus undertook the whole mission of Cross and Hell, representing him vicariously before God; he is our brother, not simply on a horizontal plane, but because of his vertical connection with the Head. This is why the 'strong' person has a direct encounter with the Head in the 'weak' person (and in the Head, he meets the whole body): 'Whatever you have done to one of the least of these brothers of mine . . .' When the unity of the faith and the edification of the ecclesial body of Christ are at stake, neither the charismatic maturity of the conscience of the strong persons, nor the objectively correct insight and the greater vision of the truth which justifies this maturity, can be ultimately decisive for one's conduct.

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[26] On this, *cf.* my 'Christologie und Gehorsam', in: *Geist und Leben* (1969).

[27] C. Spicq, *Agape*, I, pp. 222f., decides in favour of this reading.

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[28] Lietzmann and Kümmel, *Korintherbriefe* (4th edn. 1949), ad loc.

[29] Eph 4.15, ἀληθεύειν ἐν ἀγάπῃ. According to H. Schlier (ad loc.), this refers to 'speaking the truth of the gospel', and this 'speaking' is not only 'joined to love, but is indeed transposed into love' (op. cit., p. 205). Otherwise it would not 'build up' the body of Christ (4.16), because, according to the above text, it is only love that builds up. And this building-up is the highest guideline: 1 Cor 14.26; *cf.* 14.5,12.

The same teaching, carried to its final consequences, is found again at *Rom 14.1–15.3*, the conclusion and in a certain sense the highpoint of the Christian and ecclesial instruction of Paul's greatest Letter. Once again, we have a group of the 'strong' (in which Paul again fundamentally includes himself: 15.1), and a group of the 'weak' who eat only vegetables and presumably (since the conclusion goes on to speak of the contrast between Jewish and Gentile Christians) consist of Judaeo-Christian ascetics.[30] The situation is more dramatic than at Corinth, because the ascetical group is characterised to a degree by constraints that come from pre-Christian Judaism, though not so strongly as with the group at Colossae, where Paul will have to intervene much more energetically. The situation in Rome points in the same direction, as is seen in the (astrological?) preference for certain days (14.5f.). In order to demonstrate that the misgivings of the 'weak' have no objective foundation, Paul refers back explicitly to the authority of Jesus: nothing is in itself impure (Mk 7.15; Mt 15.11): Rom 14.14. And yet this is not the final word about the relationship between New Testament freedom and Old Testament constraint. The three stages of the argument (14.1–12; 14.13–23; 15.1–13) rise in intensity towards the christological argument of the third section, which itself can be broken down into two sub-sections (15.1–6; 15.7–13): first, Christ's freedom meant, not that he judged 'arbitrarily' (or: 'to please himself'), but that he, as the Servant of God, let 'the reproaches of those who reproached you (God)' (Ps 69.10) fall on himself; second, in this way Christ 'welcomed' (προσλαμβάνειν, 15.7) both Jews and Gentiles 'for the glorification of God', by becoming a 'servant of circumcision' in order to demonstrate God's truthfulness in his promises (15.8). He himself was circumcised, although he was 'strong' and 'the one who brings to fulfilment', and did not need this; and he did not simply disregard the other Jewish feasts and customs. Paul has put himself as a 'strong' person on the side of Jesus at 14.14 and—partly in opposition to the abstract Paulinism that would press with too rigorous consistency the theme that the law is superseded—he must remain with Jesus (1 Cor 9.20) when he identifies himself with the weak, not out of weakness, but out of obedience to the promises of the Father (Rom 15.8). The 'ancient scriptures' are explicitly included here: they are both a burden (since they require 'patience' with those who are weak) and 'consolation' and 'hope', since they always train one to make the transition into the unity of the 'kingdom of God'. The unity of the Church, which consists of righteousness (*sedek*), peace (*shalōm*) and joy in the Holy Spirit, already permits one to see this kingdom as eschatologically present (14.17).

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[30] On the question whether this group of ascetics is Gentile Christian or Jewish Christian—for there were similar trends among the Gentiles from much earlier periods (Orphism and Pythagoraeism), just as in later Judaism (Essenes and Philo's Therapeutae)—*cf.* the excursus in Lagrange, *Epître aux Romains* (6th edn. 1950), pp. 335–340.

The tension within the Church could not be more extreme, yet it must at all costs be endured and transcended—in the love of the 'harmony in accordance with the measure of Christ Jesus' (15.5). The tension arises because the 'strong' person is objectively right in his judgment, but is not authorised to extend this judgment to the position of his brother; both have an immediate relationship to the Christ who died for both of them; even the weak person 'stands and falls for his own master; but he will remain standing, for the Lord has the power to keep him upright' (14.4). Both sit at the same table (14.6,15)—for this is the matter at issue!—and neither may offend the other; the contradictory convictions of both are based on the criterion of faith in Christ and must be based on this, to avoid being sinful (14.23). The correct conviction of the strong has its limit in the (horizontal) fellowship of table and Church, which demands social consideration of the others (14.20f.; 15.2,5), but this horizontal regulation has a double vertical reference to the transcendental unity of Christ: first, each one of the 'brothers' (14.10) belongs to the Lord who died and rose for him, so that no one lives and dies for himself (14.7–9); since each one will have to give an account of himself before the judgment seat of God (14.10–12), he has absolutely no right to judge (κρίνειν) his brother (14.13). The second vertical reference comes from the fact that, as one redeemed, he has been borne as a burden and endured by the Lord, and therefore receives from the Lord the commission to 'bear the infirmities of the weak' like a cross (βαστάζειν, 15.1), making the same gesture of welcome as the Lord (προσλαμβάνειν, 14.1, 3; 15.7). 'The act of welcome should take place without discussions and investigations of the thoughts of the "weak" . . . Paul wishes to achieve the welcome of the "weak" without an official condemnation of their point of view and an absolutisation of the point of view of the "strong" in the community, because this absolutisation would endanger the *agape*.'[31] It seems that what is demanded here is impossible: it is only love that makes it possible for one who knows that he judges correctly—more correctly than the other who is weaker—not to stop at this judgment, but to open up his own judgment to God's judgment: 'Blessed is the one who does not judge himself in what he takes (with good reason) to be right' (14.22), the one who 'does not please himself' in what is 'obvious' to him with his superior knowledge (15.1,2,3).[32] Christian faith is in no sense primarily a self-understanding of Christians, or even of the Church as a fellowship; it is rather obedience, acknowledgment that one is expropriated by being made over to Christ who has expropriated himself for all in his dying and rising. Thanks to this obedience, which roots the being of the Christian outside of himself, in Christ, love—which descends vertically and spreads itself horizontally—is made superior to all knowledge, even the most absolute. The brother for whom Christ died is the boundary of this knowledge.[33]

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[31] O. Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer* (4th edn. 1966), p. 336.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 354, n. 4: 'The verb (ἀρέσκειν) therefore describes not only one individual act in the life, but also a certain fundamental orientation of thinking and acting in the Spirit. What is at stake here is truly a "self-understanding" that is mistaken'.

Paul demands more of the strong person than of the weak; and since he counts himself among the strong, he must bring the proof that he is able to achieve the sheerly impossible transcendence of self, the transition of *gnosis* to *agape*. This proof is brought in *Acts 21*, in a scene carefully prepared by Luke through a long, dramatic build-up (19.21–21.16). Here Paul demonstrates a 'bearing' of the 'weak' by the 'strong' that conforms him definitively to his Lord, since he too is handed over by the Christians to the Jews, and by the Jews to the Gentiles. When he comes to Jerusalem with the gifts of the Gentile communities, he is submitted by James to the yoke of the Jewish customs which were still observed by the Judaeo-Christians, so that 'all may see that there is nothing in the rumours that are going round about you, but rather that you faithfully observe the Law' (21.24). The 'rumours' concerned Paul's decisions that converted Jews from the diaspora need no longer circumcise their children, and that they themselves need no longer live in accordance with Jewish customs. It is obvious that Paul believed himself to be in the right with this ruling, which is derived directly from his central Pauline gospel; but it is precisely the Letters to the Romans, Galatians, and 1 Corinthians ('my gospel', Rom 2.16) that contain, beside the teaching on justification and as its fruit, teaching about the Church, in which *agape* is superior to *gnosis*. It is for this reason that he does not betray his gospel when he 'becomes a Jew for the Jews': he is only bearing with the weak brother, and seeks indeed to be like his Lord by 'destroying in himself the enmity' between Jew and Gentile (*cf.* Eph 2.16). The welcome of the person who is always experienced as other took place in Christ 'for the glorification of God' (Rom 15.7), as did the suffering of the Apostle (2 Cor 4.15); there is no other way for those who are strangers to each other, the Jews and the Gentiles, to become together 'the praise of glory' (Eph 1.12, 14).

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[33] 'It is decisive that obedience, in contradiction of one's own conviction, becomes necessary for the condition of salvation, and that an offence against this obedience, in a false accommodation to the other, becomes sin (v. 23). A genuine accommodation to the brother occurs only when it is carried out through love and remains itself the expression of one's own freedom. Obedience, in contradiction of one's own conviction, has its boundary in the existence of the brother who puts this obedience into practice in another way, indeed in a contradictory way. Paul therefore teaches the community to bear with divergences in the convictions that are held' (*ibid.*, p. 346). One should however note that all the theologically contradictory convictions are held together by the single dogmatic proposition (as this is formulated at 14.7–9) which is the justification of Christianity as such. This proposition is ineluctable and cannot be dissolved into any subjective 'conviction'.

3. Let us now glance at the *Johannine writings*. As in the Synoptic evangelists and Paul, in John the 'new commandment' (Jn 13.34) of love of neighbour is based solely on the event of Jesus Christ. The existence of a purely horizontal philanthropy (Mt 5.46f.; Lk 14.12) has even less relevance here than in the Synoptic Gospels. Although in John the 'law' is orientated towards 'grace', Jesus is not portrayed as the creative summariser of the commandments of love of God and of neighbour, nor does John develop the teaching that all the commandments of the law are fulfilled in the commandment of love of neighbour (Rom 13.8ff.; 1 Tim 1.5); rather, Jesus is the love that flows from God the Father to men; it is precisely this love that is life, but life is light and truth. This love encompasses both the theory and the praxis of God: 'God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son . . .' (Jn 3.16). John does not speak from the position of the human person who is required to give himself because he has been loved beforehand by God in Christ (Gal 2.20); he speaks from the position of God himself, who is love that flows out to men in his Son: man is required to fit himself into the rhythm of this movement. John does indeed speak, more strongly than Paul, of a 'commandment' and even of commandments, but only as the echo of the commandment (ἐντολή) that Jesus has received from his Father (Jn 10.18;

12.49,50). While the sovereign freedom of the Son is emphasised (10.17f.), the content of this commandment is the pouring-out of his life for 'my sheep'. The commandment of the Father is identical with the life that flows forth in eternity (12.50). In John, everything is unified and simplified by reduction to this movement in which God shows himself to be love (1 Jn 4.16); and this is certainly no philosophical definition of the essence of the absolute, but a theological affirmation that is read out of God's gift of himself to the world (1 Jn 3.16) in such a way that for John, the inmost depth of God appears 'interpreted' (Jn 1.18) in his relinquishing of himself. It is not only some little part of the God who is mysterious in himself and who remains in darkness, that love reveals: the love is one with his pure light (1 Jn 1.5), and all the more so in that God as it were gives his love for the world precedence over his love for his Son (Jn 3.16) and thereby 'gives away' to the world the secret of the mystery of the love within the Godhead. The primacy of God's love for the world is so dazzling that it completely outshines the old 'chief commandment' with its anthropocentric formulation, as we see in the sentence which begins, then breaks off and reverses itself: 'In this is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation of our sins' (1 Jn 4.10).

The first and most important thing to which the Johannine testimony bears witness is that this love of God for the world has encountered us in bodily form in Jesus Christ. Jesus 'demonstrates' his love to the brothers (e.g., in the washing of the feet, which introduces his pouring out of himself in the Eucharist and the Passion) and can also capture in words what he has demonstrated in his deed: 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you . . . No one has a greater love than the one who lays down his life for his friends' (Jn 15.9,13). It is not an individual deed that is meant here, but the whole movement εἰς τέλος (13.1), i.e. 'completely, utterly'.[34] The 'friends' become such in the creative event of this love. The dialectic of the love that pours forth to the ultimate point means that even the Johannine dualism of light/darkness, truth/lie, freedom/slavery, life/death has only a penultimate character. This dualism is irreconcilable, in the world and in the Church; the light of love falls ever anew into the noose of darkness and hatred 'without any reason', because it itself is 'without any reason' (15.25). But again and again, those who are 'his own' (i.e., 'friends') but did not receive him, become people who receive him (1.11f.). It is pointless to outmanoeuvre, through theological knowledge, this space that sets up boundaries through hate and denial to halt the love of God as it pours forth, and to say that this space is filled with unconscious or unadmitted love. The only meaningful step is to join the movement of divine love and then to experience that it is a life and light that pours forth and pushes forwards: 'The darkness is disappearing' (1 Jn 2.8). The Spirit leads ever more deeply into the truth of the love of Christ (Jn 16.13ff.), and the prayer of Christ embraces also the 'world' that is to come into the light through the faith of the disciples: 'that the world may believe' (17.21). One cannot therefore say that John restricts the specifically Christian transcendence of love of enemies (as in the Synoptics), of love for the other in his otherness (as in Paul), narrowing it down to an esoterically closed circle of disciples of Jesus. The extent of Christian love is determined by the extent of Christ's love; the name of brother cannot be withheld from any human person (1 Jn 4.20).[35]

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[34] Bultmann ad loc., following Blass and Debrunner, *Grammatik des ntl. Griechisch*, §207, 3.

A double answer is given to the question how a man can enter the absolute movement of God's love for men: through faith that Jesus is the Son of God, and through being born from God. Faith always appears as *the* presupposition for love, even if then love is the necessary consequence of faith. 'This is his (God's) commandment: we are to believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and to love one another, as he (Christ) has commanded us' (1 Jn 3.23). The leap out from one's own centre, which John demands, is no less radical than the lead which Paul requires. There is no smooth passage from the sphere of philanthropy into the circulation of the triune love which extends itself to the brothers. The leap of faith shows its breadth when it is described as a new breaking-forth from the origin, as a new or a second birth. 'The one who believes that Jesus is the Messiah, is born of God' (1 Jn 5.1): the Son of God gives him this possibility (Jn 1.12f.) and leads him thus into the kingdom of God (3.5). But for John, just as for Paul, faith is not separated from love; faith is the initial response to the recognition of God's love in Christ, and is therefore itself already love. Even if John speaks primarily of the love for the brothers, in which God loves the world through us, there is no lack of affirmations that the believer loves God the Father, just as he loves Christ. We love the Son: 14.15, 21, 23, 24, 28; 21.15; 1 Jn 2.15; 4.20; 5.1f.; *cf.* Jn 8.42. But as children of God, we love the Father too, so that on the basis of loving him we may love all those begotten by him, as our brothers: 1 Jn 5.1.[36] And the one who is born from the origin of love—the Father—in his faith and love for Jesus, is confirmed in his awareness of being loved by the Father (Jn 14.23), and he would not at all be able to love the beloved children of the Father, without at the same time loving the loving primordial source. If one looks at the Johannine prayer dialogue between the Son and the Father, it is impossible to assert that the 'love for God' (1 Jn 5.2) 'lacks an object' or is merely the transcendental presupposition for love for one's brother. In being born, the child discovers that it is not the father; the love, which is given to him so that he may pour it out further, comes from a deeper origin than the child itself (1 Jn 3.1); and the child loves this primordial source of the love that bestows its gifts precisely at the point where this source 'makes its dwelling in him' (Jn 14.23) and it has in itself the testimony of the origin (1 Jn 5.10).

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[35] R. Schnackenburg, *Die sittliche Botschaft*, op. cit., p. 265 (ET p. 328); *idem*, *Joh. Briefe*, p. 105f. Similarly J. Huby, *Mystiques paulinienne et johannique* (1946), pp. 183ff. On the controversy, *cf.* O. Prunet, *La morale chrétienne d'après les écrits johanniques* (1957), pp. 107–115.

Naturally, the law of love that belongs to the origin then becomes in him the law that controls everything: faith (Jn 14.1–14) necessarily becomes love (14.15–24), which makes its demands of him with the same unconcerned sovereignty as was the case in Jesus himself: Jn 12.25f. (*cf.* 21.18); 15.18ff.; 16.1ff.; if he laid down his life for us, 'then we too must lay down our lives for the brothers' (1 Jn 3.16), and this is not to be just 'in word and in speech, but in deed and in truth' (v. 17). Jesus' farewell prayer sets the love of the brothers under the trinitarian law of an archetypical I and Thou (Jn 17.11,21): definitive distinction of the Persons in God as among men, in a definitive fellowship that is instituted by God and through Christ unites men both to the Trinity and to one another. In John, the brother is the one for whose sake the Father handed over the Son. Behind him there stands—indeed, in him there dwells—the same momentum of the eternal love that Paul saw in his fellow man. In the realisation of brotherly love, we are as it were making sure of the truth of our faith (which is also our love for the invisible God: 1 Jn 4.20), because the fact that the child keeps the commandment of love is a sign that it loves the Father (1 Jn 5.2–3), its bad conscience at not having kept the commandment in the proper way is quietened by the thought of Jesus the atoner, mediator and intercessor with the Father (1 Jn 2.1f.; *cf.* 3.20f.), the one who has kept the commandment to the full.

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[36] Lütgert emphasises clearly that the love for God is not dissolved into love for the brother, but becomes a theme on its own (op. cit., p. 242). *Cf.* also C. Spicq, *Agape*, III, pp. 303–308.

b. Solidarity

As has just been shown, the encounter with the Lord in one's brother takes place, not in an isolated I–Thou relationship, but in the embrace of both by the global reality of the Lord: this is both the sphere within which the Lord glorifies himself and the sphere in which he is glorified by us. We are therefore not abandoning our main theme in giving special consideration again to this identity of 'self-glorification' and 'being glorified'—under the heading 'communion of the saints'—although this study will only bring to light aspects that lay hidden implicitly in what went before, and which will now become explicit in the confrontation with particular results of our investigation. We have already seen in the section 'Appropriation as Expropriation' the principle (still primarily vertical, in the relationship between the human 'I' and the triune God) that to come to be oneself is possible only if one is willing to be set free by the God who expropriates himself and brings one into his own self-expropriation. This fundamental law was revealed on a deeper level when we reflected on 'fruitfulness': here the most precious and most personal thing of all was seen to be precisely what the individual achieves, as it were beyond himself, in self-abandonment, letting it grow to maturity out of himself in such a way (through the divine energy in him) that he can divest himself of it and hand it over for God to enjoy. But in order to correspond to the movement whereby God becomes man, both must be applied to the relationships between human persons, without abandoning the conceptual sphere of δοξάζειν in this. And since, for the New Testament, God's glory reveals itself now in Jesus Christ in the revelation of the gift of self made by the triune love—and not only when he 'returns in glory'—and Jesus Christ in his gift of self establishes the reality of the Church as the place in which this glory of his comes into being, it follows that the life by which the Church is brought into existence is in full truth a proleptic 'self-glorification (of the Lord) in his saints' (2 Thess 1.10)[1] and a 'glorification of the name of our Lord Jesus' precisely through these saints (2 Thess 1.12). It is true that the definitive glory of the believers will shine out only when the Lord returns (1 Cor 15.43; Phil 3.21; Col 3.4), but it is equally true, in accordance with the analogy of the concept of *doxa*, that this glorification has already begun in the conformation of the suffering and loving 'body' to its 'Head' (Rom 8.30, with aorist tense), 'from glory to glory, as through the working of the Lord' and of his Spirit, to the extent that the Christians look away from themselves and see the glory of the Lord (2 Cor 3.18), viz. the self-giving of the triune love which has appeared in him.

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[1] It is true that the primary reference at 2 Thess 1.10 (in its combination of Ps 89.8 and 68.36 LXX) is to the parousia and the angels; but the connection with v. 12, where it is the present Church that is meant, as well as the second clause in v. 10 which speaks of 'believers', shows that Paul already terms the Christians 'holy ones' (no longer using this term for the angels).

As is well known, the term '*communion of the saints*'[2] made its way into the creed late on,[3] and has never, historically speaking, been an important definition of the essence of the Church. But both 'communion' (*communio*, κοινωνία) and the term 'saints' for Christians are biblical words, as is the idea of the fellowship of life and goods which the pairing of these words expresses. While the Eastern Church understands τὰ ἅγια (neuter) above all as a reference to the sacramental goods which the believers alone share, the Western Church (with Augustine, but based on Origen) mostly sees the ἅγιοι as those who share in the fellowship of life.[4] Both these great fathers are doing nothing more than radicalising the biblical foundations, by taking seriously the indwelling of the believing persons in a common life-principle, which deprivatises them through and through, but without depersonalising them, since the life-principle itself—the life of the Trinity—is personal. The κοινωνία or *communio* is realised either in Christ (1 Cor 1.9), or in his Eucharist (1 Cor 10.16), or in the Holy Spirit (Phil 2.1; *cf.* 2 Cor 13.13); this removes the limitations of the concept of the 'holy people' that grows numerically through the addition of personal individuals, and of the concept of the 'body' (of Christ) in which the biological image does not directly portray the interpersonal communication: both these images are brought together in a deeper mid-point. The individual persons are rooted in a common life-principle which in itself is personal, but at the same time universal—since it is divine and incarnate in the God-man—and which has the effect of opening out beyond itself every personal element that comes to development in it, so that this is not endangered, but is brought into the sphere of universal solidarity. At 1 Cor 10.16, the 'fellowship' with Christ through the eucharistic table becomes almost incidentally also the mutual fellowship of those who share in the meal: 'Because there is *one* bread, we are one body, we who are many, all of us who share in the one bread' (v. 17). The requirement that individuals should decide to enter the spirit—properly speaking, the decidedness—of the agent of their unity, shows the personal reality of the agent with whom the believers share. In order to make this clear, Paul builds a series of five synonyms: 'Do not join in pulling the foreign yoke of the unbelievers (as ox and ass ought not to be yoked together): for what participation (μετοχή) could righteousness have in unrighteousness? What fellowship (κοινωνία) is there between light and darkness? What harmony (συμφώνησις) between Christ and Belial? What could the faithful share with the unbelievers? What agreement can there be between the temple of God and idols?' (2 Cor 6.14ff.). The parenthesis (6.14–7.1) which starts with these words is only an insertion into a section that is concerned with the most intimate fellowship of the Church, of the Apostle and the community.[5] The fellowship is personal: thus God sends sufferings and consolations to the Apostle, so that he in turn may be able to exhort and console; but it is not this personal act that creates the fellowship in suffering and consolation—rather, it always presupposes a 'partnership in the sufferings and also in the consolation' (2 Cor 1.7). For both the Apostle and the community are rooted together in the reality of the death and Resurrection of Christ, and 'suffering means that forces of grace are unloosed' (*cf.* 2 Cor 4.12).[6] When he suffers, Paul has the community 'in his heart': 'you are all sharers of my grace (of suffering) in my fetters and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel' (Phil 1.7). But this fellowship is not given one-sidedly by the Apostle to the community: the community already (1.5) have a κοινωνιά 'with the gospel'. While Paul is the personified bearer of the gospel, it represents at the same time the total reality of the divine actualisation of salvation, into which the community as such is really incorporated. The personal share of the community in this reality of salvation is expressed precisely as their share in what happens to Paul, a share that can take the active form of material help (4.14); but while Paul is grateful for this help, he wishes to have it understood as the expression of the deeper *communio*, and indeed as a mutual giving and taking too (4.15). The same hierarchical and yet unified relationship exists between the one who is taught and the one who teaches (Gal 6.6), and on the large scale, in the collection taken up among the Gentile Christians for the support of the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem, about which we have spoken earlier: the fact that this is an exchange of material goods for spiritual goods is quite irrelevant in the presence of the κοινωνία between the two integral parts of the Church, a κοινωνία established in Christ (Eph 2.11ff.) and sealed by Paul's giving his hand to the earlier Apostles (Gal 2.9).[7]

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[2] J. P. Kirsch, *Die Lehre von der Gemeinschaft der Heiligen im christlichen Altertum* (1900); P. Bernard, 'Communion des Saints', *DTC* III (1911), 429–434; D. Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio* (2nd edn. 1954); A. Piolanti, *Il mistero della comunione dei Santi nella rivelazione e nella teologia* (1957); *idem*, art. 'Gemeinschaft der Heiligen', *LThK* IV (1960), 651f.

[3] First in Nicetas of Remesiana (PL 52.871), then in Faustus of Riez and Caesarius of Arles.

[4] Texts in Bernard, op. cit., pp. 432f. *Cf.* also V.-M. Breton, *La communion des Saints. Histoire, dogme, piété* (1934), pp. 33–65. The fundamental intuition of Origen (translated, with some alteration, into the Augustinian vision of the *civitas Dei* from the first righteous man, Abel, to the last of the righteous) is the universal fellowship of all the redeemed in Heaven and on earth: angels, the righteous of the old covenant and the believers of the new covenant. All the righteous form one single fellowship, in which the same life circulates and the same disposition and the same interest hold sway. Origen speaks very frequently of the participation of the heavenly Church (to which both the angels and the departed belong) in the celebrations, the struggles and the sufferings of the earthly Church.

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[5] The *communio* with everything that is opposed to the Spirit of Christ must be avoided, as an open contradiction of the *communio* with him: Eph 5.11; Rev 18.4; the quotations at 2 Cor 6.16–18; 1 Tim 5.22; 2 Jn 11. This is the reason for the dividing line that is drawn in the Eucharist: 1 Cor 16.22.

The concept of *communio* receives final clarity in the First Letter of John: the purpose of this Letter's entire proclamation is to invite people into the already existing *communio* of the Church (1 Jn 1.3). This *communio* does not generate itself, but is generated by '*communio* with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ' (*ibid.*), and the only one to share in it is the one who accommodates himself to the personal light that is the being of the triune God, and puts this accommodation into practice even in the decision and conduct of his life (1.6,7).

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[6] J. Gnilka, *Der Philipperbrief* (1968), p. 49.

[7] *Cf.* art. *koinos* etc., *TDNT* III 789–809 (Hauck).

The essence of such a fellowship is illustrated in the image of the vine: the 'physical' element in this, the bearing of fruit because of being united to the principle of fruitfulness that belongs to the vine, is raised to the personal sphere, without reducing its significance: thus, the branches are 'pure' through the power of the word that Jesus has spoken (Jn 15.3), and their 'remaining' in him is the same thing as the 'remaining' of his words in the disciples (v. 7). It is the personal Jesus—his word, his love and his self-giving, his prayer—that dwells in the 'branches' and thereby generates the fellowship of life: and the indwelling of this in all the 'branches' gives them the personal character that becomes the *communio* that goes directly from the vertical to the horizontal.

Paul explains this directness when he makes the transition from the Christian's participation in the Cross and glorification of Christ (whereby he is constituted and defined as a Christian) to the participation of the members of the 'body' of Christ in one another's sharing in the lot of Christ: 'If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is glorified (δοξάζεται), all the members rejoice with it' (1 Cor 12.26). This is the κοινωνία πνεύματος (Phil 2.1), which consists indistinguishably of the one Spirit which 'has been given to all to drink' (1 Cor 12.13) and of the 'fellowship that fights together in harmony of mind' (μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθλοῦντες, Phil 1.27). Likewise, in the great passage in the Letter to the Ephesians that describes the growth of the body through the mutually overlapping services that the members carry out (4.11–16), it is of central importance that the unity of the body which is aimed at in the reciprocal interlocking of the personal services should at the same time already exist (4.3f.), if it is to be possible to speak of members and of services at all.

The form of thought which is found repeatedly in the New Testament—which cannot be adequately traced back to Old Testament categories or to those common in Antiquity (such as the 'collective I')—makes it impossible to understand the radical fellowship of life and goods shared by Christians as a secondary social function of persons who are primarily individuals on their own with a 'direct relationship to God' (this is the unspoken presupposition of most of the scholastic speculations about 'supernatural merit for others').[8] The very concept of 'merit' sets individualistic limitations on the concept of fruitfulness, as we explained it above, creating an unnecessary problem: how to cross over from the personal sphere to the 'Thou' and to the community. Consequences have been drawn here from the immediacy of the responsibility of each person to God (e.g., Rom 14.4), from the images of judgment that portray an eschatological separation of 'goats' and 'sheep', and from a doctrine of double predestination inherited from the Judaism of late Antiquity and then radicalised within Christianity—but also from the awareness of the infinite distance that lies between the grace of Christ and our imperfect and shoddy activity[9]—that reduce the biblical idea of solidarity in its original form and in its subsequent effects to such an extent that it is only rarely that the complicated speculations take the primarily social character of Christian living and action as their starting-point.[10] The image of the vine sets us on different ground, since it both forbids the 'branches' to claim for themselves the unique fruitfulness that belongs to the vine, *and* allows the fruitfulness of the branches to be of the same kind as that of the vine out of which they grow, and thus directly lays upon them the bearing of fruit for others.

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[8] J. Czerny, *Das übernatürliche Verdienst für andere. Eine Untersuchung über die Entwicklung dieser Lehre von der Frühscholastik an bis zur Theologie der Gegenwart* (Studia Friburgensia, new ser. 15, 1957).

[9] This last theme is decisive for Thomas Aquinas; the emphasis in his teaching, which remains substantially the same despite a variety in the formulation, is on the qualitative difference between the merit of Christ—the 'man for others' (K. Barth)—and our small merits, since we are only 'men with others': *2Sent.* d 27, a 6; *3Sent.* d 19, a 1, q 1; *De ver.* 29, 7; *S.Th.* I–II 114, 6: *unusquisque nostrum movetur a Deo per donum gratiae ut ipse ad vitam aeternam perveniat, et ideo meritum condigni ultra hanc motionem non se extendit. Sed anima Christi mota est a Deo per gratiam non solum ut ipse perveniret ad gloriam vitae aeternae, sed etiam ut alios in eam adduceret, inquantum est caput Ecclesiae. Cf. S.Th.* III 19, 4c. Of course, what is at issue here is always a *meritum de condigno*, while Thomas admits that one who receives grace can obtain *de congruo* even the first grace of conversion for a sinner. The entire scholastic discussion rests on the basis of this distinction, which requires a critical scrutiny.

[10] Initial steps are taken by Giles of Rome, who makes the connection between 'social merit' and the social structure of the Church and all personal charisms (Czerny, p. 45), and by Suarez, the theologian who dealt in the greatest detail with the question of merit on behalf of others, likewise indicates the *corpus mysticum* as the foundation: the 'one who merits' and the 'one on whose behalf he merits' are not one physical person, but they

This delimits the meaning and the limit of what can be called coredemption. The distance between the 'Head' and the 'body' must be maintained under all circumstances, so that Christ as the Head is the sole redeemer of all, even of his 'proleptically redeemed' mother; but at the same time, the one Redeemer takes up the 'body' of the Church into his redemptive activity, and this becomes yet more fruitful the more a member conforms itself to the selflessness that is Christ's disposition, and the less he exercises reserve in putting his existence at the service of universal redemption.[11] The salvific principle seen already in the Old Testament whereby God bestows his grace on the people of Israel because of the faith of the patriarchs, because of the intercession of Moses, of Samuel and of the prophets, and ultimately because of the suffering of the Servant of Yahweh, and forgives Job's friends because of his righteousness, is clearly brought to its fulfilment in the new covenant.[12] The Corinthian practice of being

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do form a mystical person *et sunt invicem membra ratione unius fidei et caritatis, per quas in Christo uniuntur; ergo . . . dum unus alteri meretur, sibi quodammodo meretur* (*Opp.* X 2240a). Suarez, unlike earlier theologians, does not require that the one who merits should have a particular intention that his merit should be applied to another rather than to himself; rather, he can leave this in a quite general way up to the application that God's providence will make: *Protest autem intelligi, quod unus iustus mereatur aliis de congruo divinum favorem et beneficientiam absolute et generatim, determinationem eius divinae sapientiae et providentiae committendo* (*ibid.*, 24lb, with examples adduced from scripture). H. Schnell speaks of the 'stimulating effect' of good works 'for one's neighbour's life of grace', pointing out that all the members of the mystical body operate always in co-operation with the other members, from whom they have received help and who sustain them—and never solely out of their own power (*Kath. Dogmatik* III, Book 6, §3, n. 10 (1892), pp. 337, 354).

[11] On this point, *cf.* C. Journet, *L'Eglise du Verbe Incarné*, II (1951), pp. 406, 418ff.

[12] A thorny question all of its own is mentioned here only in passing: that of the co-operation of the old covenant in the bringing-about of the Incarnation. For details, *cf.* G. Kokša, *Die Lehre der Scholastiker des XVI. und*

baptised on behalf of the dead shows how strong the awareness that one could act on behalf of one another was in the life of the Christian community too (1 Cor 15.29).[13] This presupposes the idea that not even baptism is a private event that affects the clearly delimited subject, but is a grace into which one can draw others: this is an exceptional application of the early community's 'having all things in common', such that its members were 'one heart and one soul', with none of them 'considering what belonged to him as something private (ἴδιον)' (Acts 4.32). One can see from the special mention of the acts of Barnabas, as of Ananias and his wife, that the words in Acts 4 do not imply a universal fellowship of goods;[14] but in this way they give expression to a particular disposition, which is also repeatedly inculcated in the Letters of the Apostles through the recommendation of hospitality (Rom 12.13; 1 Tim 3.2; Tit 1.8; Heb 13.2; 1 Pet 4.9), of earning money in order to be able to give alms (Eph 4.28), and of 'sharing in the needs of the saints' (Rom 12.13), with ceaseless transition from the fellowship in material matters to the fellowship in spiritual matters: 'Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep' (Rom 12.15). The external hospitality that welcomes others into one's own room is echoed in the inner self-expropriation that does not resist others when they force their entry (Mt 5.39): 'Why not rather let yourselves be set at a disadvantage?' (1 Cor 6.7); 'do not avenge yourselves' (Rom 12.19). This establishes the innermost disposition of the Lord on the Cross as the heart of the Church's disposition; the only one who was able to be 'a man for others' with full efficacy now introduces his followers into the same ability: 'Bear with one another, and forgive, if one has any complaint against another. As the Lord has forgiven you, you also should forgive . . . Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, for you were called to this (peace) in one body' (Col 3.13, 15).

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[13] M. Rissi, *Die Taufe für die Toten. Ein Beitrag zur paulinischen Tauflehre* (1962). Further bibliography: Bauer, *WbNT*, 262 (ET 131).

[14] Haenchen, *Apostelgeschichte* (5th edn., 1965), pp. 188f. (ET *The Acts of the Apostles*, 1971, pp. 186f.

The command actively to encourage one another—which always proceeds from Christ (as God's mercy) and is orientated towards Christ[15]—shows that this act of making way for the other is not passivity, but the offering to him of the disposition of the Lord. And mutual intercession, repeatedly required of the Christian, takes place (like all New Testament praying) in a sphere where Christ is present (Mt 18.19f.), where his living word dwells among us (Col 3.16); not only does the Apostle pray 'unceasingly' for his community (Rom 1.9; 1 Thess 1.2; 2.13), but he counts on their prayer in order to carry out his task (Rom 15.30ff.; 2 Cor 1.11; Phil 1.19; Col 4.3, 18; 1 Thess 5.25; Philem 22). Thus 'the Church' too prays 'unceasingly to God' for Peter when he is in prison (Acts 12.5,12). As the prayer of the Church, it has its root in the new unity instituted by Jesus, his own unity with the Father which he has opened up to his disciples and to those who believe in him, in the high-priestly prayer (Jn 17.20–23). The Church, with all that goes to make up its social context, is the disclosure and the exposition of Christ, and thereby of the social life within the Godhead. And since Jesus prays the Father to permit those who belong to him to dwell where he is and to see his glory (Jn 17.24), and the Church is already the place where he is, the personal and social life of the Church permits one to see into the glory of Christ and of the triune love.

The concept of the social character of the Church is given a final confirmation in Paul's antithesis between *Adam and Christ*. It is well known that this antithesis, which is worked out twice (at Rom 5.12–21 and 1 Cor 15.45–50), should be interpreted in each case in its particular literary context and not be isolated and generalised.[16] But it is in any case clear

[15] H. Schlier, 'Die Eigenart der christlichen Mahnung nach dem Apostel Paulus', in: *Besinnung auf das NT* (1964), pp. 340–357.

[16] R. Bultmann, 'Adam und Christus nach Rm 5', *ZNW* 50 (1959), pp. 145–165 (criticism of K. Barth, 'Christus und Adam nach Röm 5. Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach dem Menschen und der Menschheit', *Theol. Studien* 35 [1952]). E. Brandenburger, *Adam und Christus. Exeget.-religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu Röm 5, 12–21 (1 Kor 15)*, WMANT 7 (1962); P. Lengsfeld, 'Adam und Christus. Die Adam-Christus-Typologie im NT und ihre dogmatische Verwendung bei M. J. Scheeben und K. Barth', in: *Koinonia* 9 (1965).

from Rom 5 that 'Adam', as the head of fallen humanity, is a deficient antitype to Christ as the head of redeemed humanity, and that this antitype has two characteristics: he has opened the door to the reality of sin which dominates all men, and he is the first sinner in a line of personal sinners that includes all men. These two characteristics must be maintained in juxtaposition: 'it is only the statement of the unity of inexorable addiction to sin *and* of personal responsibility' on the part of all individual sinners that is 'truly biblical'.[17] Thus we have a negative statement of the simultaneity of the social element and the personal element; Paul's intention in adducing this negative is ultimately only to display the positive model of the same simultaneity of both aspects in Christ and in the new community which he has instituted. The 'foreshadowing of the one who was to come' is infinitely surpassed by him when he comes, for the grace of Christ 'flows over on to all men far more richly' than Adam's trespass. But although the equilibrium between Adam and Christ is completely abolished in terms of its substance, the relationship between the superior law of being and the law of free choosing and decision remains constant, as the indivisibility of what the Christian is and what the Christian ought to do in the following section, Rom 6.1–23, makes clear. And while the precise details of the relationship between Adam and his descendants is not discussed in Paul—the only thing that matters in this area is the dual unity of destiny and responsibility[18]—this relationship on the side of Christ and the

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[17] K. H. Schelkle, 'Schuld als Erbteil?', *Theol. Med.* 20 (1968), p. 25.

[18] Accordingly, it is necessary to formulate anew the teaching about the sin beforehand (misleadingly called 'original sin') and the individual's personal sin. On this, *cf.* H. Rondet, *Le péché originel dans la tradition patristique et théologique* (1966). According to Rondet, the *peccatum originatum* in us can have as its presupposition a *peccatum originans* that consists of the sin of all men of all periods (p. 321), without its being necessary to assume a mythical original Adam or (with Augustine) an antecedent existence of all souls in the first man: rather, the unity of all men is to be derived from their antecedent orientation towards Christ, the true Adam. 'Cette hypothèse se rattache évidemment à une espèce de platonisme personnaliste' ('this hypothesis is obviously linked to a kind of personalist Platonism', p. 322). But this apparent Platonism is not the result of a prior philosophical decision, but merely the expression for the prior election of all men

Church becomes significant, since Christ himself (in antithesis to the ἁμαρτιά that holds sway) is the personal all-inclusive law of life for all the redeemed, who have chosen in responsible freedom to be incorporated into him. 'Sin' as such is not a person, even if it dominates men with a collective, super-personal power; in its ultimate being, it is the powerlessness of mankind to will and to aim for the 'supernatural' goal that God has set for it, viz. its true unity 'in the Beloved' (Eph 1.6), and therefore it is for all men 'the loss of the glory of God' (Rom 3.23), whereas, now that we have been reconciled to God through Christ, we have won back access to the glory of love and 'boast in hope of the glory of God' (Rom 5.2). Adam is the problematic solidarity in an existence without glory: Christ is the genuine solidarity in the recovered 'open access to grace' (*ibid.*) which intends for us the glory of the eternal love of God, as this 'has been poured out into our hearts' beforehand and has made us dwell in its own domain. But since a solidarity in what is not love is a contradiction in terms, the one who is 'enticed' by sinful desire (ἐπιθυμία) is driven out of the community towards isolation and death (Jas 1.14), so that it is only the Church in the love of Christ and of God that remains as the surpassing model of solidarity, in which the one who is other—as our brother—displays to us both that the divine love transcended itself by entering what was other than itself in order to bring us back home, and that it yet did not abandon its own being in doing so, since it always embraced in itself otherness, as triune love. It is only thus that the presentiment of the divine shining, which plays on man's face because of his origin (Ps

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in Christ, as this is described at Eph 1.3–10 and as it has been analysed by us above. The additional perspective at 1 Cor 15.45 is fully justified by the fact that the original plan of God (in which Christ would have to be described, supratemporally, as the first Adam) was to unroll in a temporal dispensation of salvation, in which finally Christ would take up into himself all that was imperfect and bring back what had strayed (*cf.* here the whole theology of Irenaeus): it is not (as the Corinthian gnostics supposed) a heavenly, transfigured, mythical Adam who stands at the beginning of history, but the 'earthy' Adam, who however is the antecedent image of the one who is to come (Rom 5.14).*Cf.* Lengsfeld, op. cit., pp. 51ff.

8.6) and which is presented to Adam, as he looks yearningly for a partner (Gen 2.20ff.), in the form and face of Eve, as the mirror of his own being in the image of God, is brought to fulfilment. But the fulfilment takes place, not in the glory of paradise, but in the crucifying encounter of the crucified Lord in the sin-distorted face of one's fellow-man.[19] And it is in terms of this encounter that we shall be judged.[20]

c. Nuptiality

When we began to set out what is contained in the New Testament's 'glory', the key expression seemed to us to be 'face' (πρόσωπον),[1] meaning the presence of the entire person for other persons, spiritual presence in a total embodiment, which includes in itself also the 'word' (λόγος)[2] when it gives expression to itself, and goes beyond the 'image' (εἰκών), offering itself without concealment in the radiance of its immediate appearance. The one who prays in the Old Testament 'seeks' God's face and asks that it may not be withdrawn from him (Ps 27.8). And yet the *kabōd* in this face is so strong that its naked appearance kills. But now 'God's glory' has dawned 'upon the face of Christ' (2 Cor 4.6): 'The one who sees me, sees the Father' (Jn 14.9). And if we do not yet see him at present 'as he is' (1 Jn 3.2), this is not because the human face of Christ would be a concealment of the divine, but because *our* eye is as yet capable of perceiving only 'in a fragmentary fashion', and is not yet mature enough to be looked at by God (1 Cor

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[19] *Cf.* R. Schulte, *Theologie und Heilsgeschehen, Zur Aufgabe heutiger Dogmatik* (1968), pp. 48ff.

[20] The Son of Man who is to come 'in his glory' to the judgment (Mt 25) is Christ in fulfilment of the Danielic Son of Man, who is interpreted collectively at Dan 7.13 as the 'people of the saints'. Thus the personal meaning and the collective meaning can both come into play in the New Testament judgment scene. *Cf.* O. Cullmann, *Heil als Geschichte* (1965), p. 180 (ET *Salvation in History*, p. 201).

[1] Bibliograpy in *TDNT* VI 768ff., art. πρόσωπον (Lohse).

[2] In the understanding of 'face' in the ancient period, both in the Old Testament and in the hellenistic milieu, 'face' as the expression of the person is not set against the power of speech (as in modern physiognomy).

13.12). Nevertheless, in principle there is no longer any veil between our face and the glorious face of God. Paul explains this at *2 Cor 3.6–4.6* by means of the antithesis between the glory of the old covenant and the glory of the new, or more precisely, between the glory of the law of Moses, which remains letter, and the glory of the gospel, which is spirit. The letter is 'written on stone' (albeit by God's hand), and both the letter and the stone are an image that mediates the living will of God: but they are not God himself. As he comes down from the mountain, Moses' face reflects something of the glory of God's face as it shines; but, precisely for this reason, he must cover his face with a cloth in the presence of the Israelites,[3] both because they cannot bear the splendour (3.7) and so that 'they might not see the end of what was transitory' (3.12). What was 'transitory' was the mediation of the living, eternal face through letter and stone: the letter 'kills' (3.6), and the law is insufficient to overcome death and 'condemnation' (3.9), and thus the whole former dispensation was intrinsically and essentially finite, and thereby also unable to catch any glimpse at all beyond its own finitude (τέλος, 3.13) of its transcendental goal (τέλος νόμου Χριστός, Rom 10.4).[4] The veil on the face of Moses is therefore the same veil that lies on the whole of the 'reading of the Old Testament' (the Jews pray with their heads covered); God's face remains concealed in the mediation by stone and letter, just as man's face or 'heart' remains concealed (3.15), and it is not possible for them to see one another. The heart remains 'stony', 'hardened' (3.14); where God cannot lay bare his heart—which is his glory—man's personal face too remains veiled. 'The veil is taken away' when one 'turns to the Lord: but the Lord is Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom' (3.16f.). The mediation disappears where the Father appears in the Son,[5] and thereby the Spirit of God shines directly upon the hearts. Full incarnation—so that the glory of God shines upon the face of Christ—is simultaneous with immediate participation in the Spirit of God, who gives us all the 'freedom' to look away from our embarrassed self-concealment, 'with uncovered face', and to lift our eyes to the face of eternal love and thus see 'the glory of the Lord' (3.18). The ultimate stage of 'face to face' has already been attained in principle in the human face of God, shown and seen in the Spirit of God, even if for the time being this directly shining medium of communication, which does not separate, but binds together, still bears the name 'light of the gospel of the glory of Christ' (2 Cor 4.4). Faith, hope and love, the three that remain in eternity (1 Cor 13.13), are already the spiritual way to see into the Spirit of God, into his love, and to share in this.[6] The 'light of the gospel of the glory of Christ', which contains and bestows the Spirit, freedom, and thereby 'great *parrhesia*' (2 Cor 3.12)—and not a mere 'quality of being a fellow-man'—permits the miracle whereby divine love and human love not only look upon one another, but sink into one another: nuptiality.

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[3] Art. κάλυμμα: TDNT III 558ff. (Oepke).

[4] Prümm, *Diakonia Pneumatos* I, pp. 137ff., correctly describes the double reason for the concealment: not being able to see and not wishing to see. The point at 2 Cor 3.13 is not that the Israelites were not to see how the splendour on Moses' face gradually disappeared, but rather that they do not see the inherent transience of this splendour (and hence its transcendence).

The new covenant is the fulfilment of the nuptiality between God and humanity which was foreshadowed in the old covenant but could only escape from its confinement to the sphere of images when bodiliness was involved on *both* sides of the relationship. Otherwise, no matter how much the oriental, Egyptian and hellenistic mystery cults spoke of the sacred marriage (ἱερός γάμος), the union of bodies on earth remained at best a (Platonic) reproduction of a spiritual wedding (syzygy) in Heaven, and the concept of a wedding between a heavenly partner and an earthly partner was caught in the model of the relationship between spirit and body. In neither form did the sexual element of relationships between human persons play a serious role. But when Jesus, as the incarnate Son, takes possession of the Old Testament images, he automatically raises them to a new level, just as Paul follows the model of gnostic thought forms in order to underline the importance of the Incarnation, but likewise transposes them completely, so that despite their apparent relationship to gnosis, they are made to express the opposite of what they say.[7] It required precisely the unique and exclusively Christian interweaving of christology, Trinity and Church, in order to raise the basic form of human togetherness, the relationship of man and woman, from the merely biological sphere to the personal sphere, and indeed to let it become a genuine 'sacrament' (Eph 5.32) of the human relationship. The levels and orders interlock here with the highest degree of subtlety and are inseparable from one another, without however being confused with each other. We see how closely this theme is connected to that of 'glory' from Paul's two statements that, within the human sphere, the woman is 'the glory' of the man (1 Cor 11.7), and that Christ 'has presented to himself a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle' (Eph 5.27). When both these statements are brought together, the Song of Songs receives for the first time a position and a definitive justification within Holy Scripture.[8]

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[5] It is not first at v. 18, but already at v. 16 that the κύριος is Christ, even if Old Testament words are used. *Pneuma* denotes the distinctive being of God as spirit, which for the Old Testament cannot make a direct gift of itself because of the 'covering', and in the New Testament is written on hearts as the 'Spirit of the living God'.

[6] See my 'Fides Christi', in: *Sponsa Verbi* (1960), pp. 45–79.

It must remain doubtful whether the Synoptic Jesus took over the metaphor of the nuptiality between God and Israel[9] and applied it to himself. Although the Judaism of late Antiquity does know the image of the wedding feast as a metaphor for the eschatological sealing of the covenant,[10] the equation of the Messiah with the bridegroom is not attested, or is very late.[11] One could therefore attribute the references to wedding feasts (Mt 25.1–13; 22.1–10; Lk 14.15–24; also Mk 2.19 par.) to Jesus himself, while explaining the equation of the bridegroom (who becomes 'the king's son' in Matthew) with Jesus himself as the reflection of the community (likewise with Mk 2.20 par.). The neatness of this distinction is, however, massively called into question by the link between the words of institution of the Eucharist and the perspective of the eschatological meal (Mk 14.25; *cf.* Lk 22.30): these two stand in a hidden continuity, so that the formulations of the community are to be seen only as the clarification of what came to expression silently in Jesus' being and his deeds. Are not the meals that he holds with the 'sinners' an explicit anticipation of the eschatological, messianic meal? And just as he put himself into his own parables as the embodiment of the coming kingdom, employing mysterious words to do this, so it is also possible that the metaphor at Mk 2.19a is a hidden pointer to himself.

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[7] On this, *cf.* the excursus on *hieros gamos* in H. Schlier, *Epheserbrief*, pp. 264–276, and on the whole subject *cf.* art. γαμέω etc., *TDNT* I 648–657 (Stauffer).

[8] *Cf.* III/2,1, pp. 120–125.

[9] Hos 2.19; Is 54.4ff.; 61.10; 62.4; Ezek 16.7ff. In Hosea, where the image first occurs, it is a response to pagan cultic practices: *cf.* III/2,1, pp. 222f.

[10] Stauffer, op. cit., 653f.; C. Wiener and J. Colson, 'Un roi fit des noces à son fils', in: *Thèmes Bibliques* (Bruges 1962).

On the other hand, the union of man and woman, both sexual and nuptial, takes on new accents in Jesus, who frees it from legal casuistry and exposes it as the original work of God the creator (Mk 10.6ff.). The inner unity in which one flesh comes into being out of two, is directly the deed of God; let not man divide here! But this unity in the flesh denotes also a similarly thorough-going unity in the loving spirit: to look with lust on the wife of another is already to break this unity, for '*copulatio* without *communio* is harlotry'.[12] Nevertheless, in the case of a conflict of duties, the requirements of the kingdom of God have the precedence even over those of the marriage bond.[13] Besides, marriage belongs to the 'old era' and does not enter the kingdom of Heaven (Mk 12.25 par.). But Jesus is no enemy of marriage; he has married disciples, he loves children, he accepts invitations to weddings. He did not lift marriage out of its

[11] Joachim Jeremias, art. νύμφη, νυμφίος, *TDNT* IV 1099ff.; *cf.* J. Gnilka, '"Bräutigam"—spätjüdisches Messiasprädikat?', *Tr. theol. Zft.* 69 (1960), pp. 289–301.

[12] Stauffer, op. cit., 650.

[13] Lk 14.20 par.; Mt 19.12.

creaturely order, but gave it a new significance within that order. But he made the deepest basis of marriage the new love, ἀγάπη. The Letters of the Apostles make it clear that this was his intention (Eph 5.21ff.; Col 3.18ff.; 1 Pet 2.18ff.) and that he introduced something that was to come to its conclusion in the speculations of the Letter to the Ephesians.

It is not clear what the fourth evangelist's views about Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom were. If M. E. Boismard were correct to suppose that Jn 3.22–30 is a first redaction of the narrative of the relationship between the Baptist and Jesus, which was displaced to its present position by the later redactions, then the metaphor of the Baptist—'He who has the bride is the bridegroom; the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears his voice, rejoices greatly at the voice of the bridegroom' (3.29)—would cast a quite different light on the symbolism of the wedding scene at Cana, which would appear as the first dawning of the glory of the eschatological meal.[14] It must have been clear to the evangelist and to the community which heard him that the 'bride' of which the Baptist speaks is the Church.[15] In the powerful closing chords of the New Testament, the Apocalypse of John develops the image: the continual duality of Yahweh's bride, Jerusalem the virgin and harlot, is here definitively separated into the pure bride 'clothed in shining white linen' (19.8) and her opposite image, the great harlot of Babylon; it is no longer God who is the husband, but the Lamb (19.7; 21.9). Prophetic, apocalyptic and hellenistic images come together at the point where 'the holy city Jerusalem' descends to earth 'out of heaven from God in the splendour of the glory of God' (21.10) for the ἱερὸς γάμος that eliminates the distance between Heaven and earth and definitively incarnates what was predestined and indeed pre-existent in the presence of God (*cf.* Gal 4.26ff.; Heb 12.22ff.), while on earth the bride who dwells in the wilderness (Rev 12.14) still looks yearningly with the Spirit for this wedding: 'Come!' (22.17). As in the Gospel, the individual believers are invited to this wedding as guests (19.9). The images of Revelation stand without any definitive interconnection, yet there is a subliminal inter-relation. The one hundred and forty-four thousand who follow the Lamb are 'virgins' and have been 'purchased for the Lamb' (14.4). The ark of the covenant appears in the open temple of Heaven (11.19), followed immediately by the pregnant woman clothed in the sun (12.1): how could it be possible that these two images should bear no relationship to those of 'bride' and 'wife'? And if such a relationship exists, does it not cast a light backwards upon the 'woman' who brought about the first dawning of Jesus' glory in Cana? The wedding and the glory stand at the very beginning and at the uttermost end. And is not the request of the woman for the miracle at the feast like a first 'Come!'? Is there not an encounter here—in the concealment and the rejection of the request—for the first time between the two faces that will unveil themselves fully at the nuptials of the Lamb?[16]

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[14] *Du Baptême à Cana*, Lect. Divina 18 (1956); *idem*, 'Les traditions johanniques concernant le Baptiste', *RB* 70 (1963), p. 32. *Cf.* Claude Chavasse, *The Bride of Christ. An Enquiry into the Nuptial Element in Early Christianity* (London 1940).

[15] R. Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium* I, p. 454 (ET p. 417).

The concept of nuptiality occurs in many ways in Paul, before it is given its great development in the Letter to the Ephesians. *2 Cor 11.2*, alluding to the Old Testament metaphor, identifies the Corinthian community as engaged to Christ (no longer to God); and as the bridegroom has become incarnate, so also has 'God's husbandly jealousy' (ζῆλος θεοῦ) become incarnate in Paul, who has once for all, as betrother or bride's father, 'betrothed' the community to its 'single husband' and prepared her to be 'presented' (παραστῆσαι) to him as a 'spotless bride'. The lapse of time has not altered the danger to the relationship; like Jerusalem in the past, Corinth today is near to being seduced 'away from simple loyalty (ἁπλότης) to Christ', as Eve was seduced by the serpent. Thus we have here, through the bodiliness of the spouses, a relationship that goes behind the old covenant to the first pair in Paradise and links this to the 'sacred marriage'; but while in Ephesians the reference goes from the first pair to the final pair, 2 Corinthians, fearing the worst, goes from the second pair back to the first.

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[16] It can be seen from the Church's title at 2 Jn 1,5,13 that, for John, she is in her hiddenness now already 'bride' and 'spouse': she is the 'lady' (*kuria*) chosen by God, who has her 'children'—doubtless from John or from the Lord—like her 'chosen sister', the other community, whose 'children' make their greetings in the Letter.

Nevertheless, in *Rom 7.1–6* the definitive step forwards is taken: the Old Testament bond of marriage with the 'law' is dissolved through the death and settlement of the law in Christ, so that the wife is set free for a new bond.[17] 'If she gives herself to another husband, she will not be an adulteress. Thus, my brothers, as far as the law is concerned you have been put to death through the body of Christ, so that you may be given over to another, to the one who was raised from the dead so that we might bear fruit for God' (Rom 7.3–4). The marriage to the abstract law is dissolved through the concrete body of Christ on the Cross: in that he dies vicariously for all, all have died. This death is an event of life, because it is an event of love; it is dying into the Resurrection, but the abstract law is unable to follow it here. Thereby—and not through a dying *of* the law, but through a dying *to* the law—is the new marriage covenant sealed, with a fruitfulness directed towards God.

One might well assume on the basis of this text that the concept of the Church as the 'body of Christ' in which the believers are 'each members' (1 Cor 12.27), already contains a certain nuptial element; this becomes a certainty at 1 Cor 6.13–20. Paul is speaking about fornication, which takes on a wholly new accent in the new covenant through the fact that God has become flesh and that we are incorporated into this flesh. This is the only reason for the soundness of the argument that 'every other sin that a person commits remains outside his body; but the one who commits fornication sins against his own body' (6.18; *cf.* Sir 23.17ff.). For Paul goes on to describe this 'body of one's own' as an expropriated body that is not one's own: 'Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who dwells within you and whom you have from God, and that you no longer belong to yourselves at all? You were bought at a high price!' (6.19f.). But the expropriation did not take place because of an external act of representation in which one body is only given in exchange for another body: rather, one body is handed over to the other body, eucharistically. 'The body does not exist for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body' (6.13); therefore it is absolutely forbidden to take a member of Christ and make it 'one body' with a prostitute in accordance with the principle in Genesis, for in the Holy Spirit, both bodies—that of the believer and that of Christ—are already one flesh in nuptial union.[18]

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[17] On the nuptial meaning of Rom 6, *cf.* W. Thüsing, *Per Christum in Deum*, NtAbh new series 1 (1965), pp. 97f., *cf.* n. 106.—The quotation from Hosea at Rom 9.25 is another point of contact with the bridal theology of the Old Testament.

Elements of a theology of the first pair in Paradise are found at *1 Cor 11.2–16*; the practical context—Paul wishes to introduce at Corinth the oriental Jewish custom that the women cover their heads in worship—clashes harshly, in the search for a theological justification, with the statement at 2 Cor 3.18 that we 'all see (or: reflect) the glory of the Lord with uncovered face', a statement that certainly includes women no less than men. But over and above this cultic regulation, which has no special interest for us, a theology of man and woman is developed that is significant for the definitive statement in Eph 5: man is 'the image and glory of God' and has 'Christ as his Head', while woman is 'the glory of man' and has the man as her 'head' (1 Cor 11.7,3). A hierarchy based in nature (with a reference to Gen 2.20ff.) is established, while at the same time Paul emphasises the immediate personal relationship to God and the mutual independence of the sexes from each other (11.11f.). The veiling of the woman (through a covering on her head, or with her hair: vv. 5f,15) belongs to the order of nature

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[18] The nuptial theme lies clearly also in the double κολλᾶσθαι, which is used first for 'cleaving' to the prostitute and then for 'cleaving' to Christ. Since Paul is forced by his quotation to alter σῶμα to σάρξ (v. 16), in the first case he speaks of 'becoming one flesh', and in the second case of 'becoming one πνεῦμα (not 'one body'); πνεῦμα is the opposite of *sarx*, but not of σῶμα. Objectively speaking, Paul could also have said σῶμα instead of πνεῦμα, as E. Percy observes ad loc.

(φύσις αὐτή, v. 14) as this bears on the serious interplay of the sexes: the 'capturing' and 'unveiling' of the woman by the man, who awakens her in love for himself and thereby makes her also his 'helper' without whom he can do nothing with his maleness. Since he is obliged to capture, and rules as the 'head', his powerlessness is revealed; since the woman is 'below the man' (ὕπανδρος, Rom 7.2) in the (Christian) position of service, she becomes the 'glory of the man', who however does not reveal his own glorious potency in this, but shows that he is the 'image and glory of God', 'from whom all fatherhood derives' (Eph 3.15). It has been suggested that *doxa* here means 'clearly what is secondary as opposed to what is original ... the radiance as opposed to the light',[19] but this meaning is not securely attested;[20] it is rather the 'exterior manifestation of dignity, of what is sovereign' that is meant, just as the man 'Adam' was God's vicar in the creation.[21] The immediacy (of the εἰκών) in both sexes, with a gradation of the *doxa*, establishes in the order of a creation the basis for the mysterious interplay of sexual fruitfulness in the opposition of personal partners with equal rights.[22]

[19] Lietzmann, ad loc.; *cf.* J. Jervell, *Imago Dei* (1960), pp. 100f., 139f.

[20] H. Kittel, *Herrlichkeit Gottes*, op. cit., pp. 224f.

[21] W. Hillmann, *Das Wort, die Kirche und der Mensch* (1964), p. 57: 'Adam is created "as God's portrait and image", in that God makes him the creaturely embodiment of his sovereignty . . ., Eve, the woman, is not set beside him as a second, different being, but (is) . . . the visible development of his being (δόξα ἀνδρός).' *Cf.* P. Bachmann (in Zahn's Commentary, VII, 2nd edn. 1910, p. 355): the passage is one of those 'in which δόξα is predicated of a person, in order to express what another person possesses in it: 1 Thess 2.20; 2 Cor 8.23; *cf.* also Eph 3.15, viz. glory, because the second person has, in the existence of the first person, a test that proves the value of his work and a fulfilling of his will that gives glory to his work'. The immediacy of being God's image is not denied in the case of the woman, but this has its particular character because the relationship of glory is a mediated relationship. For the translation 'representation', *cf.* Bousset and Gressmann, *Religion des Judentums* (3rd edn. 1926), p. 346. *Cf.* F. W. Eltester, *Eikon im NT* (1958), p. 155.

[22] We do not need to follow up here all the implications of this text, out of which it is not possible to arrive at total clarity. Above all, in the first hierarchy at 11.3 a position is attributed to Christ (as Head of the man, but with God as his own Head) which is not repeated at 11.7f. At any rate, one

It is only at this point that both orders, that of the creation (on the basis of Gen 2) and that of the covenantal nuptiality (on the basis of the prophets) can be bound together into a New Testament synthesis: *Eph* 5. The sign that we have more here than a mere collection of previously existing elements, that we have a creative unification of these, is the introduction of the soteriological theme, and this not in a vague form that could find a place if need be even in a gnostic drama of redemption, but—as always in Paul—in the specifically New Testament, staurological form. 'The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the Head of the Church'—this is the first time that he speaks of the Church as a whole, and no longer of a particular community—'he who is the saviour (σωτήρ) of his body. As the Church submits to Christ, so should wives submit to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her, so that he might sanctify her, having washed her with the bath of water in the word, so that he might present the Church to himself glorious, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and blameless' (5.23–27). It is clear that Paul begins here by projecting his thought in advance from the creaturely, sexual sphere (which is the subject of his exhortation) to the soteriological sphere: he offers the husband a boundless image of the bodily gift of self, which he can look at, but not truly imitate. For this Church, which Christ has loved to the point of giving himself for her, is indeed 'someone', a reality that is pre-existent in God's election of her—and yet, as the holy and spotless bride, she is only the outcome of his pouring-out of himself: she is in fact not his partner, but his fruit. From both perspectives, the relationship between Christ and the Church (even when it is presented as a model to marriage partners) goes far beyond the natural relationship of the sexes, which experiences itself as subsumed by the former relationship and given a point of reference utterly superior to itself. Thus Paul can conclude by affirming: 'This mystery (of man and

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cannot argue from this that there is any lack of immediacy in the relationship between Christ and the woman; but it is best to leave open everything that is unsaid. *Cf.* Thüsing, *Per Christum*, op. cit., pp. 25–29.

woman, who become one flesh) is great, and I say this because of its relationship to Christ and the Church' (v. 32). But Paul, who up to this point has interpreted the order of creation with reference to the order of redemption, goes on to look back from the latter order to the former: 'Thus husbands are obliged to love their wives like their own bodies. The man who loves his wife, loves himself, for no one has ever hated his own flesh: rather, he nourishes and cares for it, as Christ does for the Church. For we are members of his body, "therefore the man will leave his father and his mother and will cleave to his wife, and the two will become *one* flesh"' (5.28–31). The instruction to the husbands now looks back to the situation in Paradise: Eve comes from the rib of Adam, and therefore he loves his own flesh in her—and the soteriological love of Christ for the Church, which is his flesh (for we are his members), likewise appears here as the fulfilment of this original situation. What previously seemed excessive and inimitable—*Ecclesia ex latere Christi*—now has a basis in the reality of creation. The agape which seemed to hover unattainably above eros (baptism and Word—the event in which the Church is born—have their roots in the bloody gift of self Christ made on the Cross) brings to its fulfilment a mystery of a lower order, in which the erotic love of the husband actually seemed to be self-love, almost a condition of being in love with his own body. Should such self-love on the lowest rung of the ladder, the stage of the individual personal love of man and woman, point up, through the relationship between Christ and the Church, to a self-love on the highest rung, where the individual personal love between the Father and the Son in the Spirit is synthesised once again in the self-love of the selfless eternal love? And would the love with which Christ cherishes and cares for the Church as his own flesh, be then a reflection of this eternal love which loves itself and gives glory to itself in all things? This at least is how Augustine saw it.[23]

In order to understand correctly what is said here, one must look back at the prologue to Ephesians, which was expounded above.[24] There, Paul spoke of the election by God before the creation of the world, so that we might be 'holy and blameless' (the same words that are used at 5.27) before him, and that we might be the praise of the glory of his grace; but this is 'in his Beloved', who is always the one in whom we have 'the redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins' (1.7), the one who—like 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world' (Rev 13.8)—is always, from the very outset, the one who was bloodily crucified for his Church. This at any rate excludes the gnostic concept that may be lurking in the background of Paul's affirmations—though only so that it may be refuted and excluded—viz., the idea that before time, or at the end of time, an eternal 'marriage of the gods' takes place in Heaven between two powers, one of which is called 'redeemer' (σωτήρ) and the other 'Church' (ἐκκλησία),[25] and that this marriage must be reproduced on the lower level of the human sexes. Paul nails this myth to the Cross and thereby demythologises it. And it is remarkable that even in the case of Valentinus, for whom the myth becomes a soteriological drama in which the redeemer goes down from Heaven to a degraded Sophia-Ecclesia in order to bring her back home, the myth stops short at the Christian Cross, which it separates into a 'true', unbloody Cross above and an irrelevant bloody Cross that is at best a hint and a metaphor of the spiritual Cross. It is in the true, bloody Cross, which presupposes a true Incarnation and thus true human sexuality, that we have the touchstone of what is Christian. And the insoluble puzzle of the gnostic dualism (between the heavenly syzygy and its earthly sexual imitation) is solved only when the genuine creaturely sexuality of man and woman is thought of as fundamentally related over and above itself to an eternal, holy and spotless standing before God, in the love of the incarnate Christ for his bride, which is the Church that consists of human persons. It is not said that this love, as agape, is merely eschatologically sublimated eros; for, as God predetermined things, agape is the first (Eph 1.4) and must impress itself as a form on eros (5.25,28,29,33); and yet what was predetermined does not become a real Church until the *Agapētos*, the beloved Son, has shed his blood as a human being and as a man for his bride—which is undeniably a human, feminine bride—in order to give her from himself the form that is to be hers for ever. Since human sexuality serves this mystery, it is sanctified sacramentally; but at the same time, it is as a whole transposed above itself. It lends to the nuptiality between God and the world the red hue of life—the colour of sex and of flowing blood—but only to pass away, in itself, and to enter the greater sphere of which it is the 'mystery'.

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[23] Texts in my selection from Augustine, *Das Antlitz der Kirche* (2nd edn. 1955), pp. 118–127.

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[24] See above, pp. 392ff.

[25] Examples from gnostic and Jewish- and Christian-gnostic texts in H. Schlier's excursus on the *hieros gamos* mentioned above (op. cit., p. 206, n. 2 and 3, with further bibliography).

After Christ, it is too late for a sexuality that would suffice for itself as a mystery, and would round itself off and be closed in on itself (1 Cor 7.6ff.,29). For the New Testament, it is time to cross over with Paul from the order of marriage into virginity, i.e. into the eschatological nuptiality. Where it is possible to live directly out of the universal truth of the incarnate love between Christ and the Church, there is no further need for the detour *via* the individual symbol of this truth. This truth is the transformation of the whole life of the Redeemer into generative fruitfulness—his existence as Eucharist—and the transformation of the whole existence of the redeemed human person into the obedient *fiat* that the Church speaks to God, the perfect ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἐν παντί, 'submission in everything' (Eph 5.24). Nevertheless, the completed image of God in the world picks up once more the creaturely image, the duality of the two persons of man and woman in the one human nature. The image and the natural theology that are to be found in human togetherness are inchoative, just as the natural theology of Acts 17.27, 'to seek God, if perhaps they could feel after him and find him', is an inchoative image. Neither the reference to one's fellow human being nor the natural reference to God come to their fulfilment outside the relationship between Christ and the Church. Both belong to the presuppositions established by God, which he required in order to reveal 'the glory of his grace'; and this glory does not wish to see God glorified above man, but in man. Not only is the eros between human beings the basis that permits God to impress his own agape on the human person; the encounter face to face between man and woman is also the basis that permits the possibility of such a face to face encounter between God and humanity. In the Church, humanity is given a face for God. She is the body that is given its form by the Spirit and the blood of God and of Christ, only because at the same time she is his bride and his spouse. Although the Church stands 'in a kind of personality of her own *vis-à-vis*' Christ,[26] this is different from the relationships between human personalities in that Christ does not find the Church already in existence, but brings her into existence out of himself, and for himself, by virtue of his own gift of himself. The Baptist (Jn 3.29) and Paul (2 Cor 11.2) are only subordinate 'fathers of the bride': the one who truly 'leads' the bride 'to himself, and before his own face, into the power and the splendour of his look',[27] is Christ himself. Once again, of course, it is not into a relationship closed in on itself that he leads her: at the last, he wishes 'to make over the kingdom to God the Father' and to 'submit' (ὑποτάσσεσθαι) to the Father just as the bride has 'submitted' to the bridegroom, 'so that God may be all in all' (1 Cor 15.28). Even the act whereby the Son brings the bride into existence for himself is ultimately a work of the Father, 'who has put everything into subjection to him' (15.27): there exists no heavenly 'syzygy', but, if everything has been created '*through* the one Lord Jesus Christ' and has been led to the Father, then 'for us there is only one God, the Father, *from* whom all things come and *for* whom we have been created' (1 Cor 8.6). The trinitarian love is the only ultimate form of all love—both the love between God and men, and that between human persons.

[26] H. Schlier, *Epheserbrief*, p. 279.

[27] *Ibid.*

3. SETTING OUT TOWARDS GOD

In treating the glory of Christ, we had to consider the tension between the radiance of the highest light that comes from God, *Vidimus gloriam eius* and the deepest concealment of this same light so that it becomes unrecognisable. We find the same tension when we speak of the glorification of the divine glory, which must take place in the openness of truth and of *parrhesia*, and yet must hold out in naked faith and in the poverty of hope, until the breaking-in of the kingdom. What has become for us a certainty beyond all doubt, something to be heard, seen and touched, still lets us walk only 'in faith, not in sight' (2 Cor 5.7); 'hope that is seen is not hope' (Rom 8.24). It is from this contradiction that there derives the immense movement that came into the world through Christ, the movement between the presence of the *eschaton* and its future, and this movement *is* the Church, which essentially is an institution that never rests for a single moment, but must always be breaking off and setting out. But she would not possess such a potential for the future, unless she had the urgency of the maturing seed as a present reality within herself. Col 1.27 uses the language of glory to express this contradiction, which is constitutive of the Church and is to be the object of our reflections in this final chapter: 'At this time, the mystery that was hidden from earlier times and generations has been revealed to his holy ones, to those to whom God wished to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the peoples of the world, which is "Christ-in-you", the hope of glory'. The contents of the glory *is* known, and can be named: 'Christ-in-you'. This concerns the peoples of the world, whether they know it or not—the Church appears only as the 'consecrated one', who is privileged to know and obliged to proclaim it—and yet, this content remains a hope. The tension that constitutes the essence of Christian existence (but ultimately concerns the peoples of the world) is even greater and more paradoxical than the tension in the life of the earthly Jesus; for the

Christian lives on the basis of the unity of the Cross and Resurrection of Christ (i.e., on the basis of the unity of what is not yet, and what is already), in order to hold out for the glory which is still to come. This tension is so great that it seems to consume Christian existence to the point of existential self-contradiction: *muero porque no muero*.

We shall argue in three stages. First, eschatological existence is the transition (in Christ) from every state of being closed in to what is universal: the Church has a form only so that she may transcend herself ever afresh and give the world transcendent form. Second, eschatological existence means bringing into the future what has always been future: setting out towards God's future together with the world, and indeed with the pledge of the 'sighing Spirit' in it. Finally, eschatological existence is therefore existence in a love that makes an undivided flame out of cross and blessedness.

a. The transition

The gospel of the grace of God in Christ is first of all the transition from a national religion (which sees itself as such even in the images that express its eschatological hope) to a message for the whole of humanity. 'We proclaim Christ, by speaking to the conscience of everyone and instruct everyone in all wisdom, in order to present everyone in perfection in Christ' (Col 1.28). The 'people of God' in the old covenant was a closed people: its religious duties included the demarcation against other peoples and their religions. It is true that Israel had been chosen from the peoples as 'Yahweh's inheritance' (Deut 32.9), and therefore had a destiny which transcended its existence as a particular people; nevertheless it was, in order to make visible the concreteness and uniqueness of God and of his action, a concrete and unique people: 'Israel according to the flesh' (1 Cor 10.18). No matter how far God transcends this basis, at which the term 'people of God' is to be taken at its full literal value (Rom 11.1f.; 15.10), he will never withdraw from it (Rom 11.29), for it is the 'root' (Rom 11.18) in which 'the promises' are based (Rom 3.2; 9.4). And as long as Jesus is carrying out his earthly mission in the flesh, he can present himself only as the fulfilment of this promise, while of course claiming to embody the immediate and ultimate fulfilment of all that God had included in the promise to Abraham and in the instruction of the law, of wisdom and of the prophets. This is the reason for his kingly freedom, for his rejection of every secret act of taking possession of God through pious achievements, for the rejection also of all ready-made concepts of fulfilment (in the titles that could be applied to him), and for the claim he makes on the whole of Israel, as this is expressed in the choice of the 'Twelve' (as 'judges of the tribes', Mt 19.28).[1] 'Salvation comes from the Jews' (Jn 4.22); and Jesus' mission is directed to the Jews (Mt 10.5f.). The breakthrough comes only with the rejection of the 'Messiah' on the part of the Jews, and with Jesus' handing over of his earthly work to the Holy Spirit at the Resurrection. E. Peterson locates this breakthrough at the moment when the 'Twelve' no longer feel bound to Jerusalem, but dare to make the transition to the mission and become the 'twelve Apostles'; Luke has synthesised this moment proleptically and prophetically in his theology of the feast of Pentecost.[2] Just as 'Christ according to the flesh' (2 Cor 5.16) has become something of the past, so has the whole of 'Israel according to the flesh' (1 Cor 10.18); indeed, the dividing line between the rejection of the 'Messiah' and his raising-up by God is identical with the dividing line between the 'wrath' of God, which patiently endures the vessels that are ripe for destruction, and the 'mercy' of God for the vessels that 'he designated beforehand for glory, in order to make known the riches of his glory' (Rom 9.22f.). The ancient *kabōd* (Rom 9.4) likewise declines;

[1] N. A. Dahl, 'Jesus and Israel', in: *Das Volk Gottes. Eine Untersuchung zum Kirchenbewusstsein des Urchristentums* (2nd edn., 1963), pp. 144–167.

[2] 'Die Kirche' (1929), also in: *Theologische Traktate* (1951), pp. 411–429. '"The Twelve" belong to the messianic kingdom . . . but "the twelve apostles" exist only when the bodiliness of the "Lord" is transfigured, in virtue of a call by the Holy Spirit . . . The problem of the Church consists in this decisive fact, that "the Twelve" are identical with the "twelve apostles"' (p. 418). *Cf.* M. Simon, *Verus Israel* (1948); H. Schlier, 'Die Entscheidung für die Heidenmission in der Urchristenheit', in: *Die Zeit der Kirche* (1956), pp. 90–107, where Peterson's theses are nuanced.

the future is shown us only by the one who was intended from the outset in the 'root' of Abraham, in pure faith in the God who raises the dead: the blessing for all peoples (Gen 12.3). There was therefore always this dialectic between the fleshly (Ishmael) and the spiritual (Isaac) in the ancient people, a dialectic in which only the will of the one who calls shows the true direction (in the case of Rebecca's twins, he chooses Jacob, not Esau); God's plan suffers no deviation at any point (Rom 9.6–13). Yet even the spiritual Isaac is also a man of flesh, just like the great, unique 'heir' (Gal 3.16), in union with whom alone all the others can become fellow-heirs (Gal 3.29; Rom 8.17).

This shows the profound problematic of the Church after Easter. She is essentially the transcending 'remnant' of Israel (Rom 9.27, 29; 11.5), which is leaving behind the protection offered by its restriction to one people and is opening itself without protection to the universality of the peoples of the world. It is only in a quite improper and paradoxical sense that the terms 'people of God' and 'Israel of God' (Gal 6.16)[3] can be applied to this remnant, a sense that transcends the proper meaning of these terms. This remnant must have a certain earthly visibility, in order to be able to bear the essential eschatological message out beyond its own confines (Rom 10.14ff.), but it has 'no law' (Gal 5.23) any more, other than the 'higher law' of the divine love which has given itself for all, the 'law of Christ' (Gal 6.2; 1 Cor 9.21); it has no rites now, other than 'dying and rising together with Christ' (Rom 6.3ff.) and the breaking of the bread in which both of these are proclaimed and made present (1 Cor 11.23ff.): what a paradox for mortal men! It has no right, other than the right to use 'spiritual weapons' to bring into the redemptive total obedience of Christ those who are willing to believe (1 Cor 10.4–6); no strength other than the weakness of the Cross, in which God's power is perfected (2 Cor 12.10, 9), no 'letter of recommendation' other than believing and loving hearts (2 Cor 3.1ff.). The whole is a provisional arrangement that lasts for all ages,[4] and all the more so because the 'root that bears you' (Rom 11.18) has become inaccessible through Israel's falling behind, and the definitive fulfilment of the promise to Israel, the 'mystery' of the final end-time (Rom 11.25f.), has still not come. In all its exiles and scatterings abroad, Israel, as an earthly people, was always centripetal: Jerusalem is always presented as the ultimate point of assembly (Third Isaiah); the New Testament community is much more radically a 'wandering people of God' (Heb 3–4), more explicitly expropriated into what lies 'outside' (Heb 13.11ff.), 'for here we have no abiding *polis*, but we wander in search of the *polis* to come' (13.14). According to Paul, the opening of the once closed 'people' to the universality of the peoples—made possible only by the Cross and Resurrection of Christ—is the central contents of the 'mystery' (Eph 1.13f.; 2.11ff.; 3.6). The Church is the service that continues the service of Christ, revealing to the world the 'gospel', viz. the message that is the reality of God's reconciliation of the world in Christ: through the word, and through the attestation of a life that is borne by the cultic act of Christ and itself becomes a cultic act within the aim of making the peoples of the world a 'cultic offering' (Rom 15.15f.). Thus it is possible for the Old Testament titles, especially that of the 'priestly people', to be taken up afresh with new contents (1 Pet 2.9; Rev 1.6; 5.9f.; 7.13ff.). But the collective element is essentially personalised, because of Christ: the representatives of the new 'people' are those who have been explicitly expropriated by him and sent by him for this eschatological service of the world, people who incarnate the reality of the 'gospel' for the world in the public 'liturgy' of the word and of the gift they make of their lives (Phil 2.17; 2 Tim 4.6): 'a trinitarian ministry of sacrifice',[5] because they portray and offer the redemption of the Father in the form of the Cross and Resurrection of the Son in the power of the Spirit who creates anew (2 Cor 5.17–21). They are not only signs for the world, but the form (τύπος) that is stamped upon the 'Church' (Phil 3.17; 2 Thess 3.9; 1 Tim 4.12; Tit 2.7; 1 Pet 5.2f.). The existential self-consecration (λογικὴ λατρειά, Rom 12.1) of all the believers corresponds to the sacrifice of those who 'form' them, for the consecration of the world to God; but they conform the world to themselves, not themselves to the world (12.2). Paul's existence, as this is described at length, has no characteristics that are not found in the existence of every Christian, but in his case they are more visible and almost, as it were placarded, so that it is possible to see in Paul the whole paradoxical indefinability of the position of Christians—in worldly terms, their lack of a place (utopia). The only point of reference in the present—between the historical 'past' of the events of Christ and the historical (?) future of the christological parousia is the gospel, in which (as we have already seen)[6] the entire 'glory' of the Christian existence as service is concentrated.

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[3] The paradoxical and also polemical meaning of this phrase is clear from the entire context of the Letter to the Galatians.

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[4] 'The one who has not understood that the Church is something provisional, has not understood what the Church is at all': Dahl, op. cit., p. 218.

[5] H. Schlier, 'Grundelemente des priesterlichen Amtes im NT', in: *Theologie und Philosophie* 44 (1969), p. 165.

The three sections of argumentation in *2 Corinthians—3.1–4.6; 4.7–5.8 (or 10); 5.9 (or 11)–6.10*—for all their christological and ecclesiological riches, have only *one* central theme: the glory of the gospel of the apostolic ministry as service of the gospel. If we wish to take up once more our earlier question,[7] whether the Christian Church has a *form*—and we must conclude here by asking this question—then the best way to answer is to examine these three concentrated pieces of argumentation. It is quite true that the form they show is being pulled apart in an almost unbearable tension, and in innerworldly terms this can be only a form cut to pieces, unrecognisable, impossible to reproduce, and ultimately falling apart into sheer contradictions (6.8ff.). The Church, as a whole, has no other form. She may drape herself in ever new garments—those of a static institution with official hierarchies, books of law, regulations for cult and sacraments, theologies closed firmly in on themselves, etc.—but all of these attempts to give herself a form are unable to do away with this incomprehensible oscillation that belongs to her existence in the world: her glory lies not in her, but in the gospel—she serves, and the gospel has glory to the extent that it is the inexplicable 'presentation' of one who (as past and future) is absent; but the presence is the work and the self-attestation of the *Pneuma*.

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[6] See above.

[7] *Cf.* Vol. I, pp. 556ff.

The first section (3.1–4.6) has as its centre the opposition between *gramma* and *Pneuma*, old covenant and new, but in relation, not to the Christ-event, but to the apostolic existence from which the form of the Church may be read off. This existence has no 'letter of recommendation', no self-evident character, and cannot even show itself openly (unlike the Torah and the circumcision which the Judaists can display). Paul's authentication is not something he carries around in his pocket: it is within, in his heart, through his community. There he is 'easy to understand and readable for everyone' (3.2), just as he also 'openly proclaims the truth for everyone capable of bearing responsibility for himself, before the face of God' (4.2),[8] although for the 'unbelievers', what is disclosed remains concealed, since 'the God of this world has darkened their understanding, to keep them from seeing the splendour of the gospel of the glory of Christ' (4.4). The Apostle has no worldly power with which to combat this worldly blindness: his whole 'power comes from God', not from the letter but from the 'Spirit', and it is good that this is so, because the one who uses the letter as his weapon kills, while the one who achieves something through the Spirit 'makes alive' (3.6). It is indeed true that the letter written on stone was 'glorious' (3.7)—not only Solomon's Temple and the whole fascinating ritual which the heart of the Jews longingly yearned to see (Ps 84; Sir 50), but also the sacred institution with its minutest gradings (1 Chron 23–29), its tradition (2 Chron 13), reform (ch. 14) and administration (ch. 17), including the prophetic element (ch. 18) and the propaganda for it (ch. 19), and even the bloody wars carried out for its sake in 'the Holy Spirit' and in 'faith in Yahweh' (20.14, 20) and the repeated restorations (chs. 24; 29; 34). But this whole glory was, ultimately, a 'service of condemnation' (2 Cor 3.9) and met with a corresponding end (2 Chron 36).

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[8] On συνείδησις: *TDNT* VII 914ff. (Maurer).

Therefore, already in the logia of Jesus, what is present in him is quite simply an intensification that surpasses what existed before.[9] It is possible to draw conclusions from the glory of old, which was visible on earth, about the new glory: 'if what is transitory passes through glory, how much more does what endures remain in glory' (2 Cor 3.11); but the transitory, the temporal and the earthly—including the glory that seems to be visible—is precisely something concealed. This is true both of the face of Moses, and of the law, and of the Jews: all remain veiled (3.12–15), so that one must turn from what is visible but concealed, in a U-turn (ἐπιστρεφειν) to the Lord, in order to 'catch sight of' what is revealed and glorious, and thereby also to 'reflect' it.[10] And the more one sees the splendour of the Lord without concealment, the more does the one who sees take on precisely this paradoxical form of glory: 'we are being transformed into the same image, from one glory to another, in the manner that (this splendour) shines out from the pneumatic Lord' (3.18). But what is this new splendour which shines forth upon the servant of the gospel through the Lord in the power of the Spirit?

The answer is given in the second section, 4.7–5.8 (or 10). There is a 'mighty superabundance' of God in 'earthen vessels', so that it may not be counted to the credit of the vessels, but of God. But the Apostle's weakness is not a human weakness, but the weakness of Christ: the paradox of the relationship between human failure and God's power is ultimately not an anthropological paradox, but a christological paradox. This can take various forms: the Apostle can give existential embodiment, vicariously, to the side of death, in order that the side of life may come to the benefit of the community (4.12), but he can and must also display both sides in his own existence (4.10–11), for otherwise he would not be displaying in a credible manner the gospel of death *and* Resurrection. But how is this possible? The Resurrection of Jesus, which lies beyond his death, surely cannot be displayed within time together with his death—and this, not in Jesus himself, but in the earthen vessels of other men! No, answers Paul, this is possible, through the '*Pneuma* of faith' which indeed forces him to speak of the gospel (which is death and Resurrection in one): 'I believe, and therefore I speak' (4.13 = Ps 116.10 or 115.1 LXX), and, as in the psalm, this occurs under the pressure of the experience of death and in the presence of the listening community. And if, already, the psalmist can sing of his hope in the God who saves, out of the experience of death, how much more the Apostle, whose word contains from the start the synthesis of the death and Resurrection of Christ and who therefore 'knows' (4.14) that he will be raised together with the community, for whose sake all this is taking place. This 'knowledge' will generate 'overflowing thanksgiving to the glory of God' in the community (v. 15), and is itself justified by the fact that the gospel is not the neat union of two equal parts—Cross and Resurrection—but is rather the dynamic transition whereby the former makes way for the latter: in E. Stauffer's phrase, the gospel is a 'formula expressing a breakthrough'.[11] This formula does not remain in a static dialectic, but also gives a prevalent forwards momentum to Christian existence: 'Therefore we do not give up, for even when our outer man is destroyed, our inner man is renewed from day to day. The light tribulation, which never lasts for more than today, brings about for us an eternal weight of glory that takes its measure in a superabundance that leads on to ever greater superabundance' (v. 17). This presupposes that our eye of faith is directed, not to the 'visible', but to the 'invisible', for the risen glory of Christ is indeed essentially a hidden glory. What is visible causes us to 'sigh', but since we have 'the down-payment of the Spirit', we are 'cheerful' even while we sigh in yearning (5.1–8). 'Absence' and 'presence' are only relative values, and as such are irrelevant compared to the confidence of the 'pilgrim' that he is doing the will of the Lord and is pleasing to him (v. 9).

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[9] 'More than Jonah, more than Solomon' (Mt 12.41f.), more than the Baptist (Lk 7.28f.), more than David (*cf.* Mk 12.35ff. par.), 'more than the Temple' (Mt 12.5f.); Jesus is the 'wisdom' that speaks (Lk 11.49ff.: wisdom speaks = Mt 23.34ff.: Jesus speaks), and he is above the Law and Moses (Mt 5.22ff.).

[10] On both possible meanings of κατοπτρίζεσθαι at 3.18, *cf.* the next chapter.

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[11] 'Vom λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ und seiner Logik': *Theol. Stud. u. Kritik* 103 (1931), pp. 179–188.

In the third section, the official and thus the ecclesial existence definitively becomes the service of the trinitarian-christological event: it *is* the awareness, transparent in the presence of God (5.11), of having been definitively uprooted from what was one's own through the love of Christ, who died and rose from all, and of having become bound in obligation to the Lord (5.14–15): but Christ's gift of self is the Father's work of reconciling the world, a work which took place in the abolition of the 'old' (v. 17) and of the 'flesh' (v. 16) and in the 'new creation' of the Spirit, and which is continually represented in its contemporaneity to the world in the 'embassy' and 'exhortation' of the Apostle (v. 20). The one who is an 'ambassador' can also call himself God's 'fellow worker' (συνεργοῦντες, 6.1). He is an instrument that is put to use in a work that is carried out by God for the sake of the world at each particular moment in the Church's ministry. In this work, the Apostle is a 'deacon, a servant of God' (6.4). The closing hymnic section shows how great an existential claim this service makes, and how completely the instrument is exploited (in the sense of the paradox of the gospel). The passage speaks first of the whole range of exterior tribulations (vv. 4–5), then of the interior dispositions that are required (vv. 6–7), and finally of the paradoxes—impossible to resolve in a tidy fashion—of a radically Christian existence in the face of the Church and of the world (vv. 8–10). This is precisely what is to be expected from the union of Cross and Resurrection in the kerygma, and it is precisely this union which fills the human vessel: 'acknowledged and jeered at, spoken of badly and well, accused of deceit and yet true, unknown and yet well known, dying yet behold, we live, stricken yet not dead, seemingly sorrowful yet always cheerful, seemingly beggars yet enriching many, men who have nothing yet possess everything'. Although the word 'glory' no longer occurs in this section, it is here that it takes on its greatest fullness, indeed has a triumphant ring, since the paradoxes become increasingly 'formulae expressing a breakthrough' into the light, so that the first side has now only the effect of a 'quasi' that gives way to the 'mighty predominance' of the second side.

All of this is understood here as the transcendence of the new and eschatological existence over the national and institutional religion that was closed in upon itself. Just as the Old Testament partnership of a God in Heaven with a people on earth is superseded by the trinitarian event whereby God reconciles in Christ and in the Spirit—since Christ and those who are his are 'one person' (Gal 3.28)—so too the existence of the Apostle and the community can no longer be located in a position lying between God and the world. The Apostle, as the one who embodies the gospel, comes to the community and to the world from within the sphere of the divine activity, without in the least separating himself from solidarity with the community and the world, since he goes towards God together with the community and the world in the same tribulation and the same courage born of faith (2 Cor 6.7); and it is clear from the whole of the New Testament that the Church of Christ, his body and his bride, comes to the world from the activity of God, making proclamation, giving example and proferring invitation—in a position over against the world that is absolutely required, in order for her to be able to address the world—without for a moment abandoning solidarity with that aim of her mission, viz. the world she is addressing. On the contrary, the 'glory of the gospel' affects the world as a whole just as directly as it does the Church; its message is cosmic, and it is this which gives it an absolutely new quality when compared with all previous and contemporary images of the world, philosophies, mysteries and political religions.[12] The 'light of the gospel of the glory of Christ' (2 Cor 4.4) enters a sphere of freedom hitherto unknown, since God 'snatched us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son of his love' (Col 1.13). In relation to this light, 'darkness' defines all the innerworldly 'systems of law' which kept man a prisoner, whether the Old Testament 'law' or the Graeco-Roman-hellenistic 'law' (νόμος) of the *polis*, whether the cosmic *mega-polis* of the Stoa or the half-cosmic, half-political *polis* of the great kings from Alexander to Augustus. The Christians' experience of freedom makes both these forms of a sacral world system of law, which had reduced man to a slave, melt into one; just as the Gentile peoples were ruled and tyrannised by 'cosmic powers', so ultimately the law of Yahweh is not Yahweh himself, but (as Judaism and early Christianity saw) something mediated by 'angels', i.e. by intermediary powers (Acts 7.30; Gal 3.19; Heb 2.2).

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[12] K. Prümm, *Christentum als Neuheitserlebnis. Durchblick durch die christlich-antike Begegnung* (1939).

Naturally, both the Jewish and the Gentile forms of Hellenism sketched many concepts in which the narrowness of the national dimension would be opened out on to an *oikoumenē* that embraced all mankind and indeed the whole of the cosmos. This created a certain preliminary understanding, and made available the categories for future development.

On the Jewish side, Philo and Josephus outdid each other in liberal sketches of how the old religion of Yahweh could be extended to take on a significance for all mankind. The law of Moses is coterminous with the natural law;[13] the Jewish fidelity to 'what has been handed on' ('what comes from the fathers') is the same as the fidelity of other peoples; it is precisely the Jews who distinguish themselves by their love of (divine-cosmic) Wisdom and are thus the most philosophical people. But is its God not one who transcends the world? Here Jewish propaganda makes common cause with the Stoa and Platonism, for both of which the 'wise man' transcends the boundaries of the *polis* and of the nation and is a free man and a 'foreigner' in relation to them,[14] with his home either in the *megalopolis* of the cosmos as a whole (according to the Stoa) or in the spiritual world of ideas or the divine world of the stars (according to Platonism). The exodus from Egypt, the exile in Babylon, and the existence as resident aliens on the margin of the Roman empire can be dissolved philosophically in this way, and so given a justification. But where do these philosophical ideas lead? The Stoic concepts could not get beyond the point of a free submission of the human individual to the law of the all-embracing cosmic logos which governed both animals and plants and human beings, a *nomos* which finally remained only the extension to world dimensions of the *nomos* of the individual *polis*. And when the attempt was made later to give an innerworldly political expression to this universal *nomos*, it was necessary to fall back on the idea of a divine kingdom: a mortal and fallible man becomes the representative of the divine *nomos*, in order to be a head with absolute authority for the human *oikoumenē* which is the gathering of all the individual peoples into one 'kingdom'. The Platonic concept, if carried through to its conclusion in a radical manner, has no interest in the political events which are mere shadows; it disincarnates man and turns its interest to a Jesus who is purely spiritual or else attainable through mystical experience. He belongs to the kind of 'invisible Church' that Philo praised,[15] just as the written law is only the concretisation (for those who need this) of the unwritten law of God,[16] and the Temple cult is only the symbol of the cult in the great temple that is the world.[17] Here, once again, we stand before the 'bridge that cannot be made to span the gap':[18] it is possible for the human person to attain transcendence either by submitting to a cosmic 'law' (in which case, he is not free), or by separating his spirit from his bodiliness (in which case, he has ceased to be a human being). Even if Philo and other hellenistic Jews still somewhere retained their messianic hope, 'they could always fall back on the assurance, "We have no other king than Caesar" (Jn 19.15), if the Messiah failed to arrive'.[19]—We may say, in schematic terms, that four paths lay open to the ancient world. First, the path from the closed *polis* or nation to a cosmological cosmopolitanism; but, to use Paul's expression, this remained subject to the 'elements of the world' (Gal 4.3,9; Col 2.8,20). Second, the path to a purely human cosmopolitanism, which of its very nature includes an 'orientation towards atheism (even if often only on the level of emotions)'.[20] Third, the path to the attempt at a synthesis of both, which leads to the emperor cult. Finally, the path to an escape from the cosmos, the path that flees from the existence of the world and of man.

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[13] Philo, *Spec. leg.* II 129f.; III 137; IV 131; *Vita Mos.* II 48.51f., etc.

[14] On the theme of 'foreignness' within Judaism, borrowing from Greek metaphysics, *cf.* Dahl, op. cit., pp. 93, 111, 116, 196.

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[15] *Spec. leg.* I 324–326; *Virt*, 108.

[16] E. R. Goodenough, *The Politics of Philo Judaeus* (1938), pp. 72f.

[17] *Vita Mos.* II 71–108, and often.

[18] *Cf.* Vol. IV of this work, pp. 214ff.

[19] A. A. T. Ehrhardt, *Politische Metaphysik von Solon bis Augustin*, 2 vols. (1959), quotation from Vol. II, p. 34.

It is only if we have these desperate alternatives before us, that we understand how open was the space into which the Christian message led people forth. This space is opened, and indeed created, by the victory over death of the one who was crucified: it is the space which is identical with the *man* Jesus, who 'was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father' (Rom 6.4) and now 'dies no more', but 'lives for God' (6.9f.). It is, therefore, essentially an anthropological space, and this is expressed in New Testament terms when it is said that this man was exalted 'above all the heavens' (Eph 4.10), i.e. above all the cosmic powers or angels or dire controllers of history or servants of God (Heb 1.1–3.6). The era that begins with the Resurrection is truly the era of man, but of 'the man Jesus Christ, who gave himself as a ransom for all. This is the message of salvation' (1 Tim 2.5f.). Even if the Christian Church attempts to express herself by using the categories of all the conceptual sketches that have been mentioned above, she either totally eliminates these or else unites what they could not unite in themselves. What belongs to the 'cosmic *polis*' is no longer subject to the *nomos* of the world-*phusis*; both the Gentile *nomos* and the Jewish *nomos* have fallen away, so that one now lives only 'within the *nomos* of Christ' (ἔννομος Χριστοῦ, 1 Cor 9.21): and this is nothing other than the law of his free gift of self to his fellow men. Therefore this Christ must also take the place of the emperor as the sacral representative of the world-law, but in such a way that his law of love is superior to all sacral-political authorities. Christ himself distinguished between God and Caesar by means of the coin for the tax (Mt 22.15ff.) and declared that the 'sons', unlike the 'subjects', were free, even though they paid the tax (Mt 17.25ff.); and although the early Church acknowledged an authority belonging to the state (Jn 18.28–19.16; Rom 13), this authority was stripped of its numinous quality to such an extent that the Church 'attacked the religious basis of the ancient state' and, 'in this sense, was "revolutionary"',[21] long before all the difficulties which inevitably followed such a teaching, both those of a new union of Church and empire (in the case of Constantine and the East) and those of an increasing secularisation of the state leading to an exceedingly dangerous dualism (in the case of the West). The disclosure of the eschatological space called 'Jesus Christ' leads into this problematic. As we shall consider later, the present reality of this space is heavy with promise for the future: this is neither Jewish nor futurist messianism, nor a Platonic timeless present, because the history of the world has its goal in the 'day of Christ', the breakthrough of the glory which he has already begun to possess. It is also true that the anthropological age that has begun with Christ is liberation from the powers and laws of the world only because he has carried out God the Father's plan for the world in the free obedience of love and brought it to the decisive turning-point: this plan for the world is and remains divine and is therefore prior to the world which it embraces totally. But this is the opposite of a chain of events governed by destiny, as the Stoics conceived of this, for the obedience of the Son leads into the freedom of the Fatherly and triune love. The anthropological age has indeed demythologised the cosmos, but not robbed it of its divine element. The freedom which Christ opens up is at one and the same time, and indivisibily, the freedom of God and of man. Man must make his decision for this indivisible unity; escape (in Platonic terms) into what lies outside the cosmos has been made impossible by the Resurrection, and to remain stubbornly in the old age hands over the individual anew to the 'lordship, power and strength' (1 Cor 15.24) of the collective, and to the 'last enemy', death (v. 26). The gospel is a herald that cries out to summon man to make this decision.

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[20] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 161.

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[21] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 3.

In order to understand the full significance of this decision, we must think back to the predestination 'before the foundation of the world' and, in accordance with this, to what was said about 'appropriation through expropriation'. The living God is the life of the creature, but also its freedom: when he calls the creature to himself, and the creature chooses him instead of itself, it finds in this expropriation both its freedom and its home. And this is not independent of the Cross and Resurrection of the Son, who, as the second Adam, brings the first Adam into his own genuine nature: not into a Platonist, individualistic bodilessness, but into the eschatological bodiliness that belongs to the nuptial partner of God. Thus there is no absurdity in speaking of an eschatological 'citizenship' with God (πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς, Phil 3.20), or of a 'place made ready' by Christ with God (Jn 14.2f.), or of a real '*polis* with firm foundations, designed and built by God' (Heb 11.10), for indeed God could truly call himself the God of those who believe in him only 'after he had made ready such a *polis* for them' (Heb 11.16): 'the *polis* of the living God' (Heb 12.22), which, as a sign of its eschatological transcendence, is called in the Bible the 'new, holy, higher, heavenly Jerusalem' (Gal 4.26; Heb 12.22; Rev 3.12; 21.2,10). We see how real and powerful the presence of the 'glory' (Rev 21.11) of Jerusalem is, even in its temporary hiddenness (Col 3.3), in the reality of the freedom that the Christian wins *vis-à-vis* all forms of cosmic order. His experience is that he 'has been set free for freedom through Christ' (Gal 5.1), that he is therefore 'truly free' (Jn 8.36), that he 'was freed from the law of sin and of death through the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus' (Rom 8.2), and that he is no longer subject to the pressure of any innerworldly *nomos*, but is subject to 'the perfect law of freedom' (Jas 1.25), which is identical to the king's own law and therefore deserves to be called 'the royal law' (Jas 2.8). This freedom is then nothing other 'than the glory of the existence that has been given a home anew in its original essence'.[22]

Now the heralds's cry that proclaims the gospel the call to decision, is clear: it demands that a choice be made between two freedoms—a freedom, which may take a personal or a collective form, of innerworldly self-determination (αὐτάρκεια), and a freedom of self-giving in faith's obedience to the free love of God. The one who chooses self-determination will remain in the 'servitude' of the world and will be alienated from God, while the one who chooses self-giving has his home with God and is a 'pilgrim and stranger' (1 Pet 1.1; 2.11; Heb 11.13) and a 'resident alien' (1 Pet 1.17; *cf.* Heb 11.9) in this world. Nevertheless, even this world—by contrast with systems of dualistic gnosis—in its decadent turning-away from God, is already set under the lordship both of the Creator and of the Redeemer today. The New Testament's teaching about the state shows that the Creator maintains his dominion over this world; the New Testament shows that he shares this dominion with the risen man Jesus Christ by speaking of his exaltation 'to the right hand of God' (Rom 8.34, and frequently), 'at the right hand of the majesty on high' (Heb 1.3), and of the gift to him of 'all power in Heaven and on earth' (Mt 28.18), a 'power to subdue all things to himself' (Phil 3.21). Since they are aware of this omnipotence of Christ, the 'strangers' who have been made over to him can even now be aware that 'all is yours . . . life and death, present and future' (1 Cor 3.21f.).[23]

The reason why God and his Christ have not given up their dominion over the world in the old aeon is that even the man who is alienated from God has not ceased to be God's creature and, in principle, the redeemed brother of Christ, although he must make the decision to cross over into the 'new creation' (Gal 6.15; 2 Cor 5.17). For the one who rejects it, the law remains in force—as the Jewish Torah, or as the Gentile *nomos* written on the heart—as God's call to

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[22] H. Schlier, 'Das vollkommene Gesetz der Freiheit', in: *Die Zeit der Kirche* (1956), pp. 199.

[23] The difference from similar Stoic formulations (*cf.* Lietzmann ad loc., as well as Ehrhardt, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 9, n. 5) is precisely that the Christians are not 'citizens of the world-city', but have their home outside the cosmos.

him; and the authority of the state, which bears the sword and maintains the order of the world, is precisely not the reflection of human *autarkeia* (whatever form the regime may take, democratic, monarchical, etc.), but remains—like the law, which in itself is 'holy and just and good' (Rom 7.12) 'ordained by God', 'a helper given by God to carry out what is good', which one must obey 'for the sake of conscience' (Rom 13.1ff.; *cf.* 1 Pet 2.13). It is, however, fundamentally important to note that nowhere in the New Testament does the slightest ray of the divine glory fall upon the structures of the state, as happened in the case of the Old Testament theocracy, and as seemed inseparable from all the forms of the ancient *polis*. There is nowhere even the faintest suggestion that the state should take on the form of an earthly reflection, a reproduction or representation of the heavenly Jerusalem and its eschatological glory. The structures of the order of what Augustine will call the *civitas terrena* are nowhere 'transfigured'. No matter how powerful the yearning for such an earthly copy of Heaven on earth will become in the history of the Church—from the early political theology which comes to a close under Constantine, *via* the eastern and western concept in the middle ages, to the modern attempts at a political theology—this is discredited by the New Testament: 'In principle, a rupture has been brought about which rules out every "political theology" that the Christian proclamation misuses to justify a political situation. Only within Judaism or paganism is it possible to have something like a "political theology"'.[24] The only thing possible for the Christian is to fill the structures of the state with Christian spirit and life, and thus to blunt them a little (the sword becomes superfluous, Rom 13.3; and even the courts can become obsolete, when Christians suffer injustice: 1 Cor 6.1–7). But since these systems embrace neutrally both the citizens of Heaven and the citizens of earth, and cannot be affected by the all-important decision between the two forms of freedom, they can only be 'honoured' by Christians (Rom 13.7; 1 Pet 2.17), not 'loved'. This does not alter the obligation to pray for those who have authority, just as one must pray for all men (1 Tim 2.1). But the authority of the state, with its sword, does not exist primarily for the righteous, but for the 'wicked . . . and irreverent', for 'this is the teaching of the gospel of the glory of the blessed God' (1 Tim 1.9,11). But it is certainly possible that even this authority is exercised by the wicked, as the situation of Revelation shows: the kings of the earth commit fornication with 'great Babylon, the mother of harlots and of all abominations on earth', and the 'merchants get rich through her unheard-of opulence' (Rev 17.5; 18.3). The false god and the false glory establish themselves in politics and economics: 'Their god is the belly, their glory is in their shame' (Phil 3.19). While this authority was neutral, it could be recognised as coming from God, but it has become unrecognisable through the utter opposition to God that is the attitude of those who have power. This is the hour of the martyrdom of Christians; they bear witness with their blood to their inviolable freedom. In Revelation, we are given a description of 'the ultimate possibilities of the world, the depth of things, which begins to disclose itself since the coming of Christ'; here, 'the state, making its appearance as the beast, occupies the final place. It is revealed as the most extreme possibility of the authoritarian world'. [25] As the 'beast', it is the embodiment of the subhuman collective and the utter perversion of the divine-human heavenly Church whose personal 'Head' stamps his own imprint personally on the whole body.

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[24] E. Peterson, 'Der Monotheismus als politisches Problem' (1935), in: *Theologische Traktate* (1951), p. 105.

It is not possible to say the same about the 'structures of the Church' (if such a manner of speaking were at all tolerable in New Testament terms), as is clear from the fact that the Church is the place where the thanksgiving of δοξάζειν takes place; and it has been shown that this is a response intimately linked to the δόξα of God, which was revealed in the crucified and risen Lord. The Church is the place where God's mystery has dawned 'now for his holy ones, to whom

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[25] H. Schlier, 'Die Beurteilung des States im NT', in: *Die Zeit der Kirche* (1956), p. 15.

God wishes to make it clear' as the 'riches of glory' (Col 1.26f.), whether these 'holy ones' are the Apostles or the community as a whole.[26] The Church knows about the eschatological mystery of God—the rescuing of the entire world through its incorporation into Christ—even if this knowledge is for the time being only 'hope of glory'. We have been taken up proleptically by Christ 'into the glory of God', and this gesture of opening the door, is to be continued in the mutual relations of the members of Christ, so that the Church can come into being (Rom 15.7). To the extent that it is possible to speak of 'structures' in the Church—ministry, sacrament, gathering and organisation of the community—these are completely different from the structures of the state, since they belong to the rule of life of those who have made the decision of faith and have thereby set themselves under the single law of the Cross and Resurrection of Christ, the law of the grace of God and of his freedom. Since they continue to exist in the old aeon, it will constantly be necessary to 'admonish' them (παρακαλεῖν), and the apostolic-ecclesiastical admonishment will have to adopt even strict forms of judicial decisions (1 Cor 5), in keeping with the degree of their slackness or sinfulness which brings them into a situation of open contradiction of their fundamental decision.[27] But the apostolic and ecclesiastical admonishment always has the character of speech that proceeds from within the mercy of God (which is Christ), cooperating in bringing about his love and the love of the Spirit; indeed, it is speech 'in the place of Christ, so that it is God who admonishes through us' (2 Cor 5.20).[28] Therefore παρακαλεῖν always means 'to console, to ask, to adjure (by the love of God)'; it makes present the original salvific Word of God himself, which judges only in order to raise up anew. But by making this Word present, it has in itself something of the absoluteness of the Word of salvation: 'He who hears you, hears me' (Lk 10.16). *Paraklesis* comes from the immediate mission of Christ: together with him, it establishes the Church and builds her up, and it is not to be dismembered from the charisms within the Church. It is of course never possible in New Testament terms to neutralise this anticipatory character of the apostolic ministry and the structural character which this gives it, by separating it from the existential representation of the grace of God in the self-giving of Christ; in his existence, Paul always seeks to make his commission and his life (as τύπος for the community) coincide with each other; he is enough of a realist to know that the best that can be hoped for is an approximation (Phil 3.13), that many do not correspond to the requirement inherent in the ministry, and that those who have received the commission are themselves in constant need of a particular *paraklesis* (the Pastoral Letters). They must continually be kept fast in the sphere for which they have made the decision of faith, and they must be brought back into this sphere: but this is the sphere in which God has his glory, just as he has his glory in Jesus Christ (Eph 3.16). His glory has appeared in the one who was crucified and is risen, and he possesses the totality of glory (κύριος τῆς δόξης, 1 Cor 2.8), but his truth has been set within the Word of the gospel, so that the glory of God shines out in this Word (2 Cor 4.4), visible to the believers but concealed from those who do not believe (2 Cor 3.18; 4.3f.); and in this, the cruciform existence of the preacher is an aspect of the 'visibility' (2 Cor 4.10). All of this has already been set out earlier. Believers are brought into the sphere which God opens through the proclamation of the good news, in order that they may share in the same reality. And just as the Word of God has its own effective divine power (δύναμις), so also the sphere of the Church has its own effective power in the sacraments, which confer the Church's own form: baptism *is* a conforming to

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[26] 'Those to whom the Spirit of Christ has also given the necessary organ of sight, *cf.* 1 Cor 2.6–16': Staab, *Regensburger NT*, Vol. VII (3rd edn. 1959), p. 87. Lohmeyer's opinion that these holy ones can 'only be the angels' (*Kolosserbrief*, 1950, p. 82) seems unlikely, especially as Eph 3.9f. explicitly says that the angels learn of the mystery only through the Church.

[27] Delicate questions arise about the boundary to be drawn between membership of the community and exclusion from it: *cf.* Mt 18.15–17; Rom 14.1ff.; 1 Cor 5.4f.; Heb 10.24f.; 2 Thess 3.14f.; 1 Tim 1.20; Tit 3.10f.; 1 Jn 2.19; 5.16f.; 2 Jn 10f.; Jude 22f.

[28] Rom 12.1; 15.30; 1 Cor 1.10; 2 Cor 10.1. On the whole topic, *cf.* the

fine article by H. Schlier, 'Vom Wesen der apostolischen Ermahnung', in: *Die Zeit der Kirche* (1956), pp. 74–89.

the death and Resurrection of Christ (Rom 6.3ff.) and is therefore the entry to 'the riches of the glory of the mystery' (Col 1.27). The Eucharist *is* the expropriation of the individual into the fellowship in Christ of the one bread and the sacrificed body (1 Cor 10.16f.), and creates the reality which must then also be reproduced and brought about on the existential level: 'to offer one's own bodily existence as a living, consecrated sacrifice that pleases God' (Rom 12.1). Marriage in the sphere of the Church *is* always related in principle, and must then also be related existentially, to the marriage of blood between Christ and the Church (Eph 5.21ff.). Finally, in the mutual service of all the members of the Church, the Church *is* the sacrament of the presence of Christ in her, although the full realisation of this presence is always only something that is the aim of her struggles (Eph 4.15f.). In all δοξάζειν, the δόξα is both the presupposition of present existence and the goal which is aimed at; but the Church never becomes a sphere for this δόξα by 'appropriating' this in her structure or her existence, but only by handing over herself in consecration to the glorification of God. 'Faith . . . lays hold of δόξα as its basis; but the only way in which this occurs is for the believer to "give" God the δόξα, by acknowledging it and yielding himself to it in his confession.'[29]

This act of handing over is never definitively accomplished; it remains until the end of the world an event that leaves the Church no time to reflect upon herself. Looking up to the glory of the Lord, she can reflect something of this, without reckoning up for herself what and how much she is reflecting. She 'reflects' the glory of Christ for the world only when she looks away from herself to Christ, without reflecting upon herself (2 Cor 3.18). 'For it is not ourselves that we proclaim, but Christ Jesus, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake' (4.5). The ideas that the Apostle will find his glory in the community, and that Apostle and community will glorify themselves in one another (1 Thess 2.20; 2 Cor 1.14), are laid up in store for the last day, when every self-centred reflection will be for ever excluded. Should one therefore say that, as long as the world lasts, the Church is always *en route* to her own self? Such an affirmation misses the essential point, which can be seen from two perspectives: first, the Church is not *en route* to herself, but to 'the perfect, definitive man' (Eph 4.13), her bridegroom Christ; and second, in this continuous self-transcendence, the Church's goal is something that is no longer herself, because this goal will be without the word of preaching, without the sacraments, and without the innerworldly structure, so that the distinction between 'Church' and 'world' will no longer be tenable. The goal of the Church is to make herself superfluous and thereby to fulfil her service in the aeon that is passing away. In a hidden manner, she has already been 'left behind' by the hidden glory of the heavenly Jerusalem, without which she would not be in any way the Church of Christ. And something of the structural geometry of the Church of the old and the new covenants will be maintained in the forms and measurements of the eternal city (Rev 21.12–17). It is, however, quite impossible for the pilgrim Church to draw nearer to this geometry by looking backwards to the old covenant in order to set up a theocratic *polis* in accordance with a supposed knowledge of heavenly standards of measurement (Ex 25.9, 40), for that would produce only a 'shadow image' (Heb 8.5); the result would be 'merely a shadow of what was to come, for the substance of these belongs to Christ' (Col 2.17). The Church must look forwards, in keeping with the event in which she has her being: this event leads through from the Cross to the Resurrection of Christ, and is therein the appearing of the glory of the selfless triune love.

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[29] H. Schlier, 'Doxa bei Paulus als heilsgeschichtlicher Begriff', op. cit., p. 52.

b. The hope of glory

'We boast in our hope of the glory of God' (Rom 5.2). 'Christ in you: the hope of glory' (Col 1.27). 'The blessed hope and the appearing of the glory' (Tit 2.13). Everything that has been said thus far points, inevitably and irresistibly beyond itself to hope and the future; for the movement which the Church makes into the public sphere of the world is no longer a departure merely from Egypt to Canaan, and the situation at the end of the new covenant—when the glory that appeared in Christ withdrew itself one last time, after many concealments—is in no way comparable to the close of the old covenant. It opens not on to 'empty time', but on to a fulfilment so explosive that it generates from itself a deeper hope and a more certain comprehensiveness that goes absolutely beyond any geographical universality and indeed beyond any hope that could reside in such a universality: this comprehensive hope can be satisfied only by the in-breaking of the world as a whole into the glory of God which has been proleptically attained, opened up and made certain by the one who has risen from the dead. Through the fact of Christianity—which is now to be proclaimed to all the world—an entelechy has been definitively set into the foundations of the world, an entelechy that cannot be superseded by any wider horizon, but that has a forward momentum stronger than any utopian horizon which could be sketched with the world as its starting point, because through the Resurrection of the dead, this horizon proleptically surpasses the world with even its most extreme utopias. Granted a universe in dynamic evolution, as yet unknown to the Bible, and granted all the self-transcendence of forms of life and culture, the question remains: what worldly utopia can offer us the *past*—death, and the myriads of deaths that lie behind us, and even more horribly, the atrocious sufferings that do not understand themselves and are meaningless in worldly terms—as the *future* and the 'blessed hope of glory'? For in the apocalyptically-formulated utopia at 1 Thess 4.13ff., it is in a remarkable way precisely those who belong to the past—the dead—who are the first to rise, while those who belong to the future—the last generation of the world's history—will 'have no advantage over those who have fallen asleep'. When history's vanguard penetrates into the kingdom, this does not involve forgetting what it has been, as if this were 'building materials' now lost to sight. The solidarity that no form of socialism can know, and which is likewise forgotten or undervalued by an existential and a merely historical interpretation of Scripture, hopes first for those who belong hopelessly to the past, and only then for itself.

And this most utopian of hopes, which finds not the smallest space within history, is really anchored in the hearts of the believers through the proleptic Resurrection of Jesus, who is not just any old dead person, but the one who 'was made sin' by God (2 Cor 5.21)—and death is the fruit of sin (Rom 5.12; Jas 1.15)—and the one whose 'reign' therefore has as its goal the destruction of 'the last enemy, death' (1 Cor 15.26). For the Christian hope, that which causes the greatest pain through the waiting for its arrival, and delays for the longest time, is the contents of the surest promise, because it is already a present reality in the Lord (v. 23). This gives the Christian faith an explosive power which cannot be compared with any form of evolutionism, for what is born of evolutionism is at best the child of creation's own womb; for the world could not seriously entertain the idea of giving birth to a god, unless possibly the one who has already created it, and this could only mean the Church's Marian cooperation so that the Alpha may also be the Omega. Any other god to whom the world gave birth would only be an atheistic god, the god 'man'. What is born of the Christian hope, deeper than all the pangs of the cosmos, is God himself: not the God of the ancient *kabōd*, which in his Heaven he cannot give up, but the God whose love for the world has made him 'strip' himself of the form of his heavenly glory, so that he may find it once more with us: naturally, this glory will never again be the inalienable *kabōd* of old, but the glory of the triune love that has appeared in him, the love that has revealed its true omnipotence in the powerlessness of the Cross and that will never go back to a lesser, cheaper form of glory. When the Son has reigned in the world's history until he has 'subdued all sovereignty, power and might', subjecting it to the form of his own power, then 'comes the fulfilment, when he makes over the kingdom to God the *Father* (not: to Yahweh)', and thereby, as Son, he will be 'subject to the one who has submitted all things to him, so that God may be all in all' (1 Cor 15.24,28). This can only be the expression of the order and subordination within the Godhead, when the ultimate original generative source of love occupies the totality of the world which 'the Beloved' has prepared to be the definitive womb. One cannot object to the conclusive character claimed for this interpretation, by saying that the New Testament also projects the Old Testament *kabōd*-scenario of the 'day of the Lord' into the eschatological future, since the Christ who returns appears with the attributes of Yahweh's glory and divides sheep and goats with a sharpness that goes beyond even the Old Testament and apocalyptic, and (like Yahweh) '"kills"' the antichrist '"with the breath of his mouth" and destroys him with the appearance of his presence' (2 Thess 2.8: Is 11.4; 2 Esd 13.10f.); for all of this remains metaphor drawn from ancient resources in order to describe the process of subjection and forming anew—and this process is not conceivable without judgment and division on the part of a love that is now 'exalted' and 'ruling'. If this slain Lamb were not on the throne, then it would not be *this* Lamb that won the victory (on the Cross) as the 'lion from Judah' and is able to open the seven seals of the book of the world's history (Rev 5.5f.). *Because* it was slain and has won for itself all nations through its blood, it had the power to make ready 'for our God a kingdom and priests' (5.9): this is no other power than that of love, but truly of the *love* that lets the Lamb have its place on the throne of the Father, because both are one in love. It is not possible to break through the closed circle of New Testament teaching, which understands the love of the Son as the revelation of the love of the Father. 'I and the Father are one' (Jn 10.30). Thus it is impossible that the Old Testament *kabōd*-attributes of a mere 'Lord God' could emerge behind the 'kingdom of the Son', when this is laid at the feet of the Father, in order to make at the last moment a gnostic disavowal of God's history with his world.[1] The justification for employing the ancient world of metaphors to speak of the eschatological parousia lies in the kernel which they had concealed from the very start, but which now shines through the veils: God's sovereignty and free personal vitality, the basis and fullness of which are disclosed in the trinitarian love. The Apocalypse of John and all the related statements of Scripture show what bloody pains it costs this love to get its own way in the world whose nature it is to resist this love and negate itself; nothing can tone down the paradox that 'the lion, who *has* won the victory' (Rev 5.5) at the same time rides out into the battle 'with his garment soaked in blood', 'rules with iron sceptre', 'judges and makes war' (πολεμεῖ, Rev 19.11), and that it is even possible to speak of 'the wrath of the Lamb' (Rev 6.16). These abysses must be revealed in the struggle between both forms of freedom which are offered to us by the gospel for our decision: for otherwise the good news would not be the proclamation of the flame of the divine truth, but would be outmanoeuvred and blurred by a cosmological evolutionism.

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[1] This is why Ernst Bloch's 'Atheism in Christianity' (1968) is possible only by pressing into service the whole gnostic arsenal (Ophites, Marcion, Valentinus) against the Bible's indissoluble trinitarian union of the old covenant and the new. The new attempt shows once again that gnosis and atheism go together, and that they are in fact *the* alternative to Christian trinitarian theology. If one throws Yahweh on to the scrap-heap for the sake of a 'principle of hope' and a 'theology of the future', there will never

The paradox that the 'victor' still 'fights' is the theological presupposition for the Christian *form of hope*: the certainty of the believer that the *victor* is fighting, gives this hope its tremendous utopian elasticity, which criticises and moves on from everything that has been attained, or can be attained, on this earth: 'the kingdom' is never immanent until the last enemy, death (and the past), has been included in it. And the fact that the victor *is fighting*, gives 'those who are called and chosen and faithful, those who are loyal to him (the Lamb)' (Rev 17.14) the certainty that their Christian 'patience' is no mere waiting until the process of time matures by itself and reaches its end; it is a certainty that, in 'the hard times that lie ahead' (2 Tim 3.1), 'the good fight of the faith' must be 'fought through to its conclusion' (1 Tim 6.11), and, like Paul, must be fought with the whole of one's existence: 'Already I am being poured out . . . I have come through the good fight' (2 Tim 4.6). After what has been said in the previous section about the transcendence and the transitional character of the Church *vis-à-vis* the world, it will be impossible to accuse

be any possibility of making the transcendence with Jesus to a God who is still 'a God to come'.

this paradoxical, eschatological Christian hope, which fights along with Christ, of being egotistically concerned with the individual's salvation. The 'ambassador' of Christ does indeed bear 'God's message of reconciliation' in himself, but this word is addressed to the world (2 Cor 5.19f.). Paul's eschatological 'glory' lies, not in himself, but in the part of the world that has accepted his sacrificial service of the gospel and has taken on a share in this (1 Thess 2.19f.; Phil 4.1; 2 Cor 1.14). The theme of the solidarity between the Christian and the world, of his fighting alongside the victor who fights for the sake of the world, can take on the most various and contradictory forms in the course of Church history—all of which are true and necessary[2]—but this is not in the least something that has to be projected into the gospel from a changed understanding of the world (such as today's understanding); rather, as a glance at Rom 8 confirms, this is present in the gospel from the beginning.

In *Rom 8.18–30*, the comprehensiveness of the Christian's hope locates him in a tension between an 'expectation' (ἀποκαραδοκία, v. 19) and a 'hope' (ἐλπίς, v. 20) of 'the whole creation', which is in solidarity with man and even more closely with Christian man (on the one hand), and something like a hope within God (on the other hand), since the divine *Pneuma* sighs together with the unsure and powerless 'sighing' for what is definitive, and gives this 'sighing' depth and accuracy: it is precisely the 'wordless sighing' of the spirit (v. 26) that is the adequate word of prayer to God that can be understood and will be answered (v. 27)—just as the inarticulate dying cry of the crucified Logos became the definitive human word that broke through the whole realm of darkness to pierce God's heart. What do the world, man and the Spirit sigh for? For 'the glory that is to come' (μέλλουσαν δόξην, v. 18). Here for one last time, everything in the Old and New Testaments that bore this name is cancelled out: everything from Sinai to Christ and to the gospel. All of this did exist, and was glorious—but it had precisely the right amount of glory in order to kindle in us an unquenchable hope for the future, for something that has absolute superiority (v. 18, *cf.* 2 Cor 4.17) to everything past and present, yet remains fully indeterminable in its superabundant contents. The superiority of this glory is guaranteed by the entire direction of the christological event, into which we are caught up: 'provided (of course) that we suffer together with him, in order that we may be glorified with him' (v. 17). The quick motion of the current shows us, however, from the outset the backwater in which our whole bodily existence in this world holds us back. Hope becomes the fundamental condition that discloses to us at one and the same time the transcendent tipping of the scales in favour of the final state of things, which we still await, *and* our inability to escape from the condition of vanity, of futility, of mere appearance, of what is useless (ματαιότης, v. 20), of temptation, decadence and perishing (φθορά, v. 21). It is through no fault of its own that the creation, which man ought to have brought to God, has been forced into this condition, but through the fault of man—and man, who cannot separate himself from the fate of the world, thanks to his bodiliness, lives a life orientated towards death, because of sin (8.10). The fateful relationship between the cosmos and man can be undone neither by cosmic developments, nor by human endeavours to make the world more habitable; but the current of hope transcends this relationship and enters on something that cannot be conceived, something that is indicated by the expressions: 'the revelation of glory in us' (v. 18), 'the freedom of the glory of the children of God' (v. 21), 'the redemption of our body' (v. 23). The first formulation brings down to us what is distinctively divine—for this remains δόξα to the last— and draws us into its own definition. The second posits 'freedom' as the basic term for our departure from the decay and alienation of the cosmos. The third expresses what is decisively Christian: it is precisely the body (and with it, the world) that counts, for it is only together with the body that we are saved. This is possible neither for a soul mysticism that dispenses with the world, nor for a merely innerworldly culture and technology that do not eliminate the law of death.

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[2] C. Bauer, 'Bild der Kirche—Abbild der Gesellschaft' (1965), now in: Bauer, *Deutscher Katholizismus* (1966), pp. 9–27. *Cf.* H. Maier, 'Politische Theologie?', *Stimmen der Zeit* (1969), pp. 82f.

Nothing is more utopian than this hope, which has staked everything on what is still awaited and is still essentially unattainable because of the decay of the present time. There is no possibility here of speaking of 'a gradual realisation of the eschaton';[3] there are no gradual phases of transition between death and Resurrection. No matter what the achievement demanded of man may be, it is not a requirement that the Christian hope be gradually, through one's own efforts, changed into a capacity, a vision, a possession. 'Hope that sees is no longer hope; for how can one still hope for what he sees?' (v. 24). It would be a misrepresentation of Paul's thought, were we to suppose that one could discover in advance the form of the awaited glory on the basis of the form of the *lack* of this glory (which would be a kind of 'wrapping paper' around it), for that would mean forgetting the incomparable superabundance and superiority of the divine gift (*cf.* Rom 5.15ff.).

But now we are told that creation and man do not only suffer 'the pains of this present time' (v. 18) in a 'common sighing' (v. 22), but are also 'in the pangs of birth' for the coming time: here we certainly have the beginnings of the idea of a future fruit, indicated also in the 'hope' (v. 20) that dwells within creation for the sake of which creation was unwillingly subjected to decay. It is said of Christians too that they 'were saved for hope' (v. 24). It is uncertain whether Paul is thinking of the Jewish 'Messianic woes' (*cf.* Mk 13.8; Mt 24.8; 1 Thess 5.3), since he is speaking here, not of a limited condition of the world at the end of time, but of a fundamental condition that has existed since Adam. And so these 'pangs' too are subject to the same dialectic that is characteristic of the whole of the old aeon, which must bring forth something to which it does not have the strength to give birth. Everything in these pains strains towards 'liberation' (v. 21), hope intensifies in proportion to the measure of the pains, the child has long had the 'predominance'—and yet it remains a hidden glory that is present only in sighing pain and in powerless hope. At this point in the Christian existence, one no longer speaks of 'word' or 'sacrament' or 'Church' or anything else that has form; it is the 'wordless' (v. 26) that is dominant, and instead of any action, there is 'patience', 'holding on' (v. 25), 'sighing' (v. 23), 'weakness' (v. 26). In the midst of all this, we have the expression 'prayer' (v. 26), but this of course is a wordless prayer that cannot be formulated, 'for we do not know what we should pray, if we are to pray appropriately'. The world looks with longing to man, so that he may find the word that redeems it; but man looks to God, and does not find the word that redeems both himself and the world with him.

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[3] As E. Schillebeeckx holds: 'Gott, die Zukunft des Menschen' (1969), p. 46.

Here, in the ultimate perplexity about the resolution of the contradiction in creation, everything is taken up into the trinitarian dimension. 'The Spirit comes to our help and takes on our weakness along with us' (v. 26). This does not mean that he shapes our sighing into a word, for what we are concerned with here is not word and concept and clever action—these things lie behind us in the eschatological sufferings, just as they lie behind Christ in his dying cry. Rather, the Spirit 'intercedes for us with wordless sighs': this is how far God has gone in making the pains of his creation his own. Not only has he 'not spared his own Son, but rather given him up for us all' (v. 32), he has also 'poured out' (5.5) his own (8.11) and his Son's (v. 9) Spirit, so that we might be able 'to make our boast in the hope of the glory of God' (5.2), and win—in this Spirit which has been poured out—patience in tribulation, a proof of our worth in patience, and hope in this proof, the 'hope that cannot be put to shame' (5.3–5). God's Spirit sighs in the depths of our perplexed 'hearts', at the place where they no longer know themselves but are transparent only to 'the one who searches the heart' and 'knows the yearning of the Spirit' (8.27) who intercedes with God on behalf of our yearning and answers it without speaking. The sighing of the Spirit is no mere appearance, just as the Cross and the cry of the Son were no appearance; the spirit does not only give a justification of the hopelessness that lies within the existence of the world and of the Christian, but also experiences it together with us and gives it a place—*as such*—within the dialogue of prayer in the Trinity, 'in wordless sighs'. This does not take place on a level completely above us, for the Spirit dwells intimately within Christians and, through them, in the world: 'the Spirit bears witness to our spirit that we are the children of God, and if we are children, then we are heirs . . . fellow heirs with Christ' (8.16f.); he is 'the Spirit of adoption as children, in whom we cry out: Abba, beloved Father!' (v. 15). This is, accordingly, not something that occurs on a level higher than our hearts: it proceeds from the depths of our Christian hearts, in a fellowship that displays the intimate depths of the brotherliness of Christ, our fellow-man. In the Spirit who sighs, and thereby truly prays, the last shadow of a 'Lord God' has disappeared; such a God looked on his servant Job from an unapproachable height, in order finally to crush him with the arguments that belong to power. We have been introduced proleptically—in a hope that does not see—into the inner depths of a God whose whole glory (for which we hope) consists of the pure gift of self, accompanying us, 'existing for the other' (8.31), understanding and granting the request that is not put into words, in an exchange of 'love' (5.5; 8.35ff.). The mutual gifts of the Trinity are the creature's place and home: in God's 'foreknowledge', the creature is 'predestined' to be there (v. 29).

Rom 8.29f., therefore, presents us once again with the idea of appropriation as expropriation which we developed in treating the Prologue to Ephesians. Here too, the election made beforehand by God's foreknowledge has as its goal 'to conform us to the image (i.e., the essential form) of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers'; between the predetermination and the attainment of this goal lies the progress through the history of the world, which is summarised here only from God's perspective, and then in giant strides: 'those whom he predetermined, he also called; those whom he called, he also justified; those whom he justified, he also glorified' (v. 30). The Cross of the Son and the sighing of the Spirit are set between the alpha of the predetermination and the omega of the glorification. Time, together with its pangs and its hopes, is real, and involved in a process, but this process has a meaning only between the alpha and the omega which God joins together into an identity. In the same way, at Eph 1.4, man was always predestined from the outset to stand before God 'holy and spotless in love', and this predetermination always took account of 'the forgiveness in the blood' of Christ (Eph 1.4, 7). The 'creation of the world' was mentioned only indirectly in that passage (v.4), because the alpha point, which proleptically contained the omega point in itself, preceded this creation. At Rom 8.29–30, the history of the world is compressed into a few great stages, in order to show the infallibility of the triune plan for the world; but this does not happen without the prior description in detail of the whole distress of the world—its godlessness (Rom 1.18–3.20) and its problematic and dialectic between law and grace even after the Christ-event (Rom 7), as well as its fatal decadence and its hope of life. In the final perspective, it is only the ultimate point that is relevant, where the triune love, which determines all things, comes into contact with the destiny of the world. 'We are fellow heirs with Christ. But we must suffer with him, in order to be glorified with him also' (8.17). This is the point of intersection of the triune life and the life of creatures: the same one is the 'own Son' of the Father (8.32) and the firstborn 'among many brothers'. He is the 'Thou' of God and a 'Thou' among men. God is consubstantial with him, and we are his blood relations. But in each of these relationships of equality, he is 'the other', both for God and for us. In brotherly love, the created world is permitted to enter the divine world. And this point of contact between God and the world in Christ is the eschatological turning-point of the ages. The Cross is the final point within the old aeon, and the Resurrection is the beginning of the new aeon. It is for this reason that the Cross is not merely the image of the principle inherent within the created world—as if this were but a vale of tears with suffering as its embodiment. Rather, the Cross lifts up on itself the whole inadequacy of the world, in order to bear the sin to Hell and to set man free for God. This raises the question of the meaning of human *existence at the turning-point of the ages.*

Once having spoken of the commission given to man at creation 'to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth and subdue it' (Gen 1.28), the Bible is silent on the theme: the commission is inscribed on man's being, and there is no need to write anything more about it. If one joins the four verbs together, one cannot be surprised that they show the world and humanity to be essentially in a condition of evolution. The original creation includes race and kin, culture and technology, the development of powers that lie ready to hand in man and in the soil, the enrichment and transmission of what has been found and invented, the hominisation of nature and the evolution of mankind. A reflected radiance of the divine glory lies on this sovereignty of the man 'like Elohim' (Ps 8.6), who is given 'powers like those of God' (Sir 17.3) and has the Promethean light from the beginning (*ibid.*, vv. 7–8). How could God forget his 'evolutionary' creation when he plans to make ready for it a definitive place in his triune love! But just as the powers in creation made available to man were not regimented by revelation and forced by God into a synthesis that would predetermine their use, so in Christ and after Christ the same holds good. It is especially clear in the sphere of sexuality that what belongs to the creation takes on a new light in the Christ-event: without being confused in a gnostic manner with the divine love, the relationship between man and woman and its fruitfulness have received a new significance and a new orientation in the relationship between Christ and the Church. The same is true by analogy of the world of human work. Jesus of Nazereth worked with his hands until he was thirty years old; during the longest period of his life, he made his contribution to the world's work without drawing attention to himself, as a matter of course and without words, in solidarity with all. And the proclamation of the kingdom in the years of his public ministry was an earthly toil (Jn 4.6); the 'struggles and hardships . . . in rich measure' (2 Cor 11.27,23) of the Apostles will be no less of a burden. But why should one speak of this—unless in order to raise it into the light of the turning-point of the ages? Just as all the acts of sexual intercourse in the world do not suffice to bring about the relationship between Christ and the Church, all the evolution and work of the world will not suffice to bring in the kingdom of God.

Quite the contrary: the innerworldly forms become fruitful when the grace of God breaks into the cosmos and when the faith that hopes and loves looks to this grace to resolve the concerns of the world. Once again, it is the case here that no innerworldly hope has a power for transcendence like that of the Christian hope, which has the 'down-payment' of the new aeon in the midst of the old aeon, to which it gives an orientation that carries it up beyond itself in all its dimensions. Marriage, whether or not blessed with children, receives a new dimension of fruitfulness 'in relation to Christ and the Church'. The entire futility and decay of earthly existence can, as such, be transformed into fruitfulness, if it understands itself as the 'pangs' of the new aeon and as a sharing in Christ's sufferings. It follows that everything that human endeavour achieves in respect of the commission given at creation—the struggle against injustice, hunger, sickness, need and depravity, and the struggle for better conditions of life, education, wages, etc.—acquires a positive significance in view of what God has done in Christ and of the help of the Holy Spirit, and that nothing of this will be lost ultimately. God assumes that his creature will be at work, even when he reserves to his own sovereign synthesis to determine how the contributions of his creature are applied. The convergence of human achievement and the coming of God as the omega is absolutely incalculable, whether in a millennarian or in an evolutionary sense; but this does not make it any less certain. The old aeon does not make a continuous transition into the glory of the new: it is the death and the Resurrection of the 'firstfruits' that lead from the one to the other.

But God's Son has become man in order to prove to the Father the goodness of his creation—of the body, of sex, of fellowship, of work. He brings all of this goodness into the ultimate freedom in the presence of God. In faith, the Christian knows about the definitiveness of this proof, which lies in the bodily Resurrection of Christ, in the 'body of his glory' (Phil 3.21), which gives us the hope of a 'spiritual body' 'in glory', 'in power', 'in corruption' (1 Cor 15.42ff.). This hope looks 'without concealment' to 'the glory of the Lord' (2 Cor 3.18), and yet what is seen in hope is 'concealed': 'your life is hidden with Christ in God; when Christ, our life, appears, you too will appear with him in glory' (Col 3.3f.). This tension in the gaze of Christian hope—which is open, on the basis of the Resurrection, for a liberated, open existence, as yet inconceivable, within the Trinity of God—takes on definitive character for the condition of the whole of world history. The Christian eschaton, glimpsed in anticipation, sheds such a light of decision on to history that from now on one can only say 'yes' or 'no' to it.

This points us once again to the pericope about the veil in *2 Cor 3*, and requires us to give an interpretation of 3.18, 'We all, κατοπτριζόμενοι the glory of the Lord with uncovered face, are being changed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Spirit of the Lord'. It is difficult to decide whether κατοπτριζόμενοι should be translated 'reflect' (catching in our mirror and making it shine out) or 'contemplating' (what is looked at in the mirror).[4] The context refers back to Moses' vision of God when he saw God's glory uncovered on the mountain and then reflected it so powerfully among the people that he had to cover his face. Thus both elements are present in the Old Testament model, that of vision and that of reflection. And since the Greek word in question contains the word for 'mirror' in itself, this should be decisive, no matter how much the mirroring reflection on the part of Moses presupposes a vision of the glory of Yahweh and, correspondingly, the mirroring reflection on the part of Christians presupposes a vision of the glory of the Lord who now has become Christ. It is clear from the context that Paul does not mean an open vision face to face; the Christian lack of concealment is subsequently explained as the 'light of the gospel' and its 'open proclamation before the face of God' (4.4,3). It follows that

[4] Detailed discussion with bibliography in: K. Prümm, *Diakonia Pneumatos*, I, pp. 166–202, and the excursus, *ibid.*, pp. 420–424. Apart from the commentaries, *cf.* especially J. Dupont, 'Le chrétien miroir de la gloire divine d'après 2 Cor 3.18', *RB* (1949), pp. 392–411.

the concept of a mirror here has nothing to do with the antithesis at 1 Cor 13.12 between 'seeing in a mirror and in a riddle' and seeing 'from face to face'.[5] Between the image of Moses and the Christian antitype, there has come at 3.13–15 the statement about the veil, which moved unnoticed from the face of Moses to the hearts of the Jews and now transmits the idea that 'we all with uncovered face reflect the glory of the Lord'—not only Paul and the Apostles alone,[6] as could be suggested by the logic of the type (Moses) and also by what follows (4.5), but truly 'we all': Paul together with all believing Christians who have 'turned to the Lord' and have thereby disposed of the veil over their hearts. In this turning to the radiant gospel, they see—naturally with the eyes of faith—the glory of the Lord, and since this act of seeing is the work of the *Pneuma* that shines out from the Lord, but which is essentially the form of the Lord's existence ('the Lord is the Spirit', 3.17) and which 'proceeds' from the Lord (3.18) and draws the believers in the intimacy of their being into the sphere of the *Pneuma*, the reflection that follows is not purely mechanical, but is a 'metamorphosis into the same image (of being)'. The believers are assimilated to Christ, not in a mystical vision fascinated by what lies beyond this world, but in their existence as persons who are sent, an existence that transmits the eschatological splendour to the world and to its history. They are a mirror in their pure transparency, which is an anticipatory assurance of the new aeon in the old, ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν, 'from glory to glory', which must mean from the hidden glory of Christ, which they see proleptically in faith and reflect, to an open glory which manifests itself in the kerygmatic and existential public character of the gospel in the world. Once again, in this text εἰκών and δόξα come very close to each other, just as the risen one both is 'the image of God' (4.4) and has the 'glory of God' on his face (4.6); thus the Christian who is turned to the Lord can transmit an 'image' of the being of Christ for the world only to the extent that he reflects Christ and does not spread abroad the radiance of his own self. Otherwise, this would not be an event that takes place in the Holy Spirit.

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[5] J. Dupont, *Gnosis* (1949), pp. 119ff.

[6] Against H. Windisch (1924), ad loc.

This statement in 2 Cor 3 is in tension with Rom 8, but does not contradict it: it makes clear the anticipation of the new aeon in the Christian's existence in faith in the *Pneuma*, while Rom 8 emphasises in the same *Pneuma* the painful gap between the aeons. In the former text, something of the eternal light and the eternal freedom ('where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom', 2 Cor 3.17) shines proleptically into our mortality and kindles the flame of hope; in the latter text, the Spirit sighs together with those who hope for the definitive freedom. The more that the light of glory streams in from above,[7] the more painful does the experience of having to wait for what is definitive become: this is why Christians ought to stand as burning torches in all the gardens and along all the military roads of world history. Their hope is so unsurpassable that only they—not the adherents of any other religion—can light up *in advance* all humanity's endeavours to form itself and the world in accordance with its commission in creation. No freedom attainable in earthly terms is able to surpass the freedom to which the Christian looks forward in justified hope, although every attempt to establish freedom, peace and brotherhood on earth must go in the *direction* which the Christian hope indicates. The earthly attempt, which corresponds to the genuine commission given by God, would collapse, were the categories of 'futility' and 'decay' to form the ultimate horizon of earthly existence. They *are* indeed a horizon that cannot be crossed in this aeon; but this horizon exists only because creation has been subjected to it against its own will and 'with a view to hope'. This is why the principle of hope has the last theological word to say about the constitution of the world, and precisely as a principle that is wholly utopian for the old aeon, since this is unable to awaken its dead to life. In order for the utopia to be truly the object of a hope that is constitutive of everything, christology, and thus the Trinity of God, is the only adequate presupposition: it is possible for the world and humanity to give birth to a God who as such is the apotheosis of humanity, only if this God is truly a human being and humanity finds its brotherhood in the unity of body and spirit with this God-man. Were humanity to generate a god who lay wholly in the future, such a god would never be able to justify his pre-history—humanity's path to cross and death. A redeemer who does not justify the creator has not truly redeemed anything; above all, he has not taken seriously the human 'Thou' who suffers, 'the least of my brothers'. If glory is the love that is eternal, but has always given its light to the world in a perceptible manner, then the Christian faith is necessary in order for the world to rise up into eternal glory.[8]

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[7] On the possibility of taking 'from *doxa* to *doxa*' as a 'formula of departure', op. cit., pp. 193f.' W. Thüsing, *Per Christum in Deum* (1965), p. 127.

In conclusion we must ask: do we know that for which we hope? This is a tricky question. For if we knew about the essence of glory, then we should already stand—with the Corinthians—in the new aeon, having resolved (with Hegel)

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[8] Because Christ, as the crucified and risen one, is a 'brother' like no other, who experiences in himself all that is done to the brothers, there is complete appropriateness in the patristic concept that the heavenly Christ continues to suffer in his earthly Church which is his body (Augustine), and indeed that it is only together with all of his perfected and risen members that he will enter the definitive state of blessedness (Origen, *Lev.* 7.1–2; Baehrens 6.370–380). Accordingly, he has won the victory for himself but not yet for us, and in Revelation and 1 Cor 15.25f. he continues to fight. When he is exalted by the Father as ruler over the cosmos, it is as though he were given only the raw material of the definitive kingdom; the possibilities in this material must first develop in the world—possibilities entrusted to man's administration on the basis of creation—and what has been developed through man until the end of the world becomes once again material, on a higher plane, that is to be given its shape by the forming powers of the kingdom of God. Thus the 'future of Christ' depends on the future of humanity, but the future of humanity is in a provisional state that is orientated towards the future of Christ. But it is meaningless to wish to separate the fact that man has a future with regard to the world and to God from the fact that this future is given to him by a God who is always present. The gift of God makes it meaningful to take on oneself the burden of the brothers and of the world, and the hope lies, not in the empty thought that it will be better in the world tomorrow than it is today, thanks to our effort, but in the fact that we have been promised that to bear the burden of the world in genuine solidarity with one's brothers is—on the second level, requiring the second courage of Christians—a meaningful contribution for the kingdom of Christ and of God.

God's promise into an absolute knowledge. But if we do not know it, our hope is directed to a vacuum, and a gap yawns between faith and knowledge that must remain unbridgeable if it is so now. *1 Cor 2.6–16* gives an answer to this question: although it is poised on a knife's edge, it confirms the fundamental thesis of this book in a way surpassed by perhaps no other passage of the New Testament.

'We' (the Apostle and his fellows) 'proclaim wisdom among those who are perfect', and this is 'God's wisdom in the mystery, a hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to be for our glorification' (2.6f.). The proclamation of the gospel is the proclamation of wisdom: but it proclaims, 'not the wisdom of this age', but a wisdom from the depths of God, which 'no one knows but the Spirit of God' (v. 11), and the centre of which is the redemption of the world through the Cross of Christ, 'who has become for us wisdom from God' (1.30). The ultimate goal of this wisdom of God, planned before the world was created, is 'our glory' (2.7). Here, the eschaton is no longer God's own glory which holds sway in the world and has become manifest, nor even our glorification of this divine glory, but explicitly 'our glory'. God goes with us to the extent of clothing us in the mantle of his divinity which is reserved to himself alone, and we are permitted to penetrate into God to such an extent that we become wholly radiant in divine light. But this extreme statement is immediately made to undergo an extreme distinction.

The wisdom of God, which as such is orientated towards glory,[9] is a wisdom that comes from the 'depth' of God's personal freedom, and requires a free revelation through God's Spirit who is within him, just as much as a human 'Thou' can disclose what is within himself only in freedom (vv. 10f.). No 'transcendence' from man to God, from the 'I' to the 'Thou', can anticipate this free self-disclosure. Now comes the central statement: 'But we have received the Spirit

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[9] H. Schlier has insistently pointed out the connection between wisdom and glory: 'Doxa bei Paulus', op. cit., pp. 48, 49, 52; *cf. idem*, 'Die Erkenntnis Gottes nach den Briefen des hl. Paulus' (1964), now in: *Besinnung auf das NT* (1964), pp. 319ff.

. . . who is from God, so that we may understand what has been given us by God (χαρισθέντα)' (v. 12). Not only does God speak—as happened in the Incarnation and crucifixion of his Logos—but he hands over his Spirit (who is also 'the mind of Christ', v. 16) to our spirit, which provides the medium in which what is divine can be humanly understood and even translated into human speech (λαλοῦμεν: 2.6,7, 13; 3.1). It is, however, understood and uttered only as something 'given in grace', i.e. in no sense as something snatched from God's gesture of giving into man's own possession and autonomous administration, into 'absolute knowledge'. The proof of this is that the mysterious wisdom of God remains 'folly' for the one who does not have the Spirit; the whole of the first chapter had developed this idea, and now the second chapter takes it up in a double way. If the 'rulers of the world' had recognised the wisdom of God in Christ, they would not have nailed him to the Cross (v. 8); they ought at least to have pounced on him in order to snatch his wisdom from him and appropriate it to themselves as absolute knowledge, but they were not capable of doing this: 'the one who does not have the Spirit does not understand what belongs to the Spirit of God, for it is folly to him; he cannot recognise it, because it is discerned only in the Spirit' (v. 14). This is why Paul insists with hammer-blows on the unique Cross, when he writes to the Corinthians (2.2), and makes himself weak and cruciform in his own existence and in his proclamation (2.3f.), in order to prevent any confusion between the human and worldly spirit and the Spirit of God, and in order to yield the full power of conviction to the self-evidence of the Spirit of God (2.4). The 'quotation from Scripture' at v. 9 sets at the close the keyword (doubtless inserted first by Paul): 'love'. No eye has seen, no ear has heard the glory that awaits man, the glory that God has prepared for him, and it has not risen up through transcendence into the heart of any man: it is a pure 'gift' to those who 'love him', and all the understanding that weaves its way to and fro in anticipation between man's love and God's gift remains within a circuit that is closed for those who belong to the mind, the flesh and the world: these despise what it contains as 'folly'. The one who thinks within the circuit between the love and the gift cannot be 'judged' by any outsider, whereas he is very well able to judge all that lies outside (v. 15). But the circuit which seems closed is the broadest and most open of circuits, and the wisdom made known within it is the highest wisdom, because it reflects itself at its focal points with an intensification and enrichment that can never be brought to an end, 'since we interpret by comparing spiritual with spiritual' (v. 13). Because the Spirit of God is given to the spirit of the man who loves, he is truly involved as an agent in understanding and in speaking, but the gift of God never becomes something autonomous, nor does the miracle and mystery of the divine love ever become something commonplace and customary.[10] From this perspective, the believer looks in hope to the fulfilment of the paths of God, the glorification of man in God. And, as one who loves, he does not ask at all how much of what is to come he perceives in advance, thanks to love, and how much he does not perceive. He allows himself to be surprised again and again by the divine love in such a way that, since he knows how God delights in surprising, he is ready to be surprised again in a definitive way and as it were for the very first time. 'Beloved, now we are the children of God. It is not yet revealed what we shall be one day. But we know that, when it is revealed, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is' (1 Jn 3.2).

c. The possible impossibility

As we have just seen, the heart of Christianity ultimately stands face to face with what belongs to utopia. Each knows that, in order for man to be able to be what he is, the impossible must be made possible. It is pointless to equate the impossible and the possible in such a way that both disappear into the empty freedom which man possesses, to be both God and the devil. This synthesis breaks down when confronted with the charge of caring for one's fellow man: man is the guardian of his brother. But my brother is quite as much an 'impossible' person as I myself am; thus it is only together that we can struggle, in an endeavour borne up by utopian hope, towards the point at which the impossible turns around and becomes possible, real and necessary. The utopia has the glory in its vanguard, and is driven by the impulsive force of today's impossibility. Death has no more right to exist—no suffering, no lament, no pain—and every tear must be wiped away; what existed earlier must have passed away (Rev 21.4). Something in the world and in man justifies us in such a hope: the knowledge that we are 'unfree' (Rom 8.20), slaves under an alien domination (Rom 5.14), and that a vertical intervention straight through the horizontal 'futility' of our time is overdue and *must* come, if the present time is to be able to exist at all in its impossibility.

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[10] 'As with the joy of one who observes great things, Paul as it were takes up a position here alongside the life of his own spirit and discloses its inmost structure. The Spirit turns his gaze to Christ; but when he raises his spirit to reflect on the share in his own insight into the mystery of Christ—which is the mystery of the wisdom of God—he receives knowledge which he reckons, not as his own achievement, but as a gift of the Spirit through which he is carried up beyond the natural limitation and perversity of his knowledge. He is borne—and yet he moves his own wings ... And everything finds its place in the world. But when he leaves his original home, he does not yet alienate himself from his own nature ...': P. Bachmann, *2 Kor.* (2nd edn. 1910), p. 135.

But those who advocate utopia presume that they can become fathers of the future without having been children of the past. They want to create without having received—and that would mean being God himself. The fact that they lay claim on their own behalf (with a view to the absolute future) to the very paternalism against which they are revolting, speaks against them, as does the fact that they appropriate to themselves the absolute power to bring about transformation, while their present impossibility is evidence that they do not possess this power. The kingdom which they would like to create bears the name of 'righteousness', an Old Testament name; but the secret intention is the New Testament element hidden in this name, love, which is the inevitable goal, if not indeed itself the means by which righteousness is to be established on earth. But how can one who has not received such a love generate it himself? Only the one who encounters it, knows it; only the one who is—incomprehensibly—

addressed by it is able to reply to it (out of the grace and power that are love's own). This is why Jesus points the mature persons who wish to enter the kingdom, back into the unquestioning readiness to receive that belongs to the children who live in the condition of love's gift.

For Christians, the vertical intervention of the kingdom of God has already been accomplished, in Jesus Christ, breaking right through the course of world history. The lightning-flash of God's glory has struck the earth: eternal time has made its impact felt in the time of men, eternal love has poured out all its blood in the death of a human being, has rested in the irrevocability of Hell, and has 'prepared a place beside the Father' (Jn 14.2) for those doomed to futility. The kingdom is reality. God has established his covenant with such power that man can no longer dissolve it, even in union with the powers of the apocalyptic beasts. Because the kingdom was, it will be. But *is* it—now, for us, on earth? Everything in the world contradicts it, and who could point to it even as only something in the process of coming into being? 'All day long, I hear the question: where is your God?' (Ps 42.4). What can Christians make publicly known? That which became an event in Christ is so hidden for the world, so vulnerable—and so ineffective! Or was it only to be a beginning, so that now it is up to the Christians to give shape to its continuation and to accomplish the 'greater works' that Jesus promised (Jn 5.20; 14.12)? But what could they accomplish at the best of times, assuming that one were to forgive them all that they left undone and all that they have done utterly wrongly? Here we see for the first time the burning question that is posed to the only possible alternative, utopia as the primal act of generation *ex nihilo*: is it possible to live as a Christian in a human manner, within world history? Is it possible to live out of faith in a definitive eschatological event which has taken place, hoping for the break-through of this event in the whole of world history, and with a love for God and for men which gives evidential character to existence on the basis of such a faith and hope? What a difficulty!

We encountered this difficulty earlier, when we considered the imitation of Christ—the invitation to accompany Jesus on a way, the final point of which, in this world, had to be betrayal (for the One was to bear all the others); and, on the other side of this gulf (indeed, as a fruit born of this gulf), the mission to bear witness to the good news through word and life. It must work. It cannot work. It works nevertheless. And it is this third stage that makes the first ('It *must* work') an inexorable obligation, even when the pain of the second stage becomes all the sharper as one goes on. Finally, it is the third stage that is decisive: 'it works nevertheless', because we Christians are the interpretation of Christ's condition as one who has made the gift of himself. This condition was the centre of his existence, at a deeper level than both his claim to authority and his powerlessness, since he handed himself over to the Father, to the Spirit and to the Church to be used and shaped. His self-giving and his Eucharist are the guarantee that, at the point where the strength of our creative commission and the witness of our suffering break down, something continues to bear even what belongs to us towards the kingdom. This cannot be neatly calculated in worldly terms. Psychologically and sociologically, Christian existence is always doomed to draw the shorter straw, because there is no earthly scale of measurement which can be applied to its contents. Such a scale of measurement cannot and must not exist, if faith is to remain itself. Such a scale of measurement exists neither for the non-Christian nor for the Christian himself, who can only hang in faith, not stand in faith[1] The possibility in which his impossibility is embedded has a universal consistency which can be demonstrated by means of three cross-sections: power-powerlessness-presence; joy-suffering of the cross-burning bliss; form-splintering-superior form.

1. The power of Christ's victory gives the disciples authority for the kingdom: authority to bring the message, to heal sickness and decay, and to offer all the signs of the presence of divine love. This ability is always based in what has been given as a gift: the word of the message bears in itself the

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[1] Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 33, II 9.

power to show that it is 'not the word of men, but what it truly is, the Word of God' (1 Thess 2.13), and the sacramental powers, which have the same structure as the word which works of itself, make Christians co-operative instruments of Christ the chief worker; the more they make their existence an instrument in faith, the more suitable does this existence become to transmit the power which is intended. The instrument is suitable when it offers no resistance to the one who works. Here the apparent double dialectic of Christian existence begins. Permitting God to act through oneself is the opposite of lazy passivity; where God's love for the world burns in zeal, the Christian must point to this quality of God's love through his own burning zeal. He must seek to realise in himself and around himself, in activity and in passion, the kingdom that God wills. This is why the images of those Christians who are called 'holy' in a particular sense are portrayed and displayed: when one sees them, it is at once obvious what such a commitment is in its active transmission. This is not a dialectic, since their attitude is a unity: their will is one, united to the will of God. But it is an utopia (if one wishes to use this word), since each of them has thrown himself against the immobile sluggishness of the world and has scattered a few (at most) sparks from his own fire and kindled a few hearts; then the whole thing ends on some *via dolorosa*, at the stake, or is smothered; outwardly, perhaps only a statue remains. 'Like sheep among wolves.' The power of the sheep cannot be organised; a more rational employment of the 'saints' (and of those who resemble them from a greater or lesser distance) will not hasten the coming of the kingdom. For here, the second dialectical element comes into play: the power, on the basis of which they are sent out and work, is and remains the power of the one who was crucified and exalted. His power retains the smell and taste of the Cross in this age of the world. Where this is not felt—for example, in programmes of Christian revolution—both Christians and non-Christians would have occasion for misgivings. This is why the diagnosis of St Paul—'not many wise people in the worldly sense, not many powerful, not many of superior standing' (1 Cor 1.26)—continues to hold true for the whole people. Only a tiny portion of a people consists of men who are capable of fighting: most are women, children and the aged, to say nothing of the sick, the crippled and the mad. The people of God has the same structure as this, both sociologically and christologically; it would be a lack of faith, and a fantasy, to wish for anything else. And in order for those capable of fighting, the 'elite', to be strong, they are set nearer to the powerlessness of the Cross: 'it is in weakness that power is made perfect'. And in order to exclude the possibility of confusing God's power with his own ability, Paul is given the angel of Satan, who rains blows down on him, and all his requests to be spared are refused: 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor 12.10, 7–9). Thus both the wretchedness of the Church as a people and the special deprivation of power which the saints experience have a functional relationship to the power of the risen Lord in the world. This fundamental law cannot be outmanoeuvred by any 'aggiornamento' of obsolete forms of the thought, proclamation and life of Christians, nor by any 'Catholic Action' or 'political theology', no matter how necessary these may be. It would be good if those involved in these endeavours were to keep this constantly in mind. This is why no statistics can encompass what the saints do: their action in pure prayer, in the night of the cross, and in hidden suffering can be much more fruitful than all that takes places visibly and can be assessed up to a certain extent. 'For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God' (Col 3.3) With the life, power too is hidden; as Christian power, its only way to affect the world is *via* the conversion of hearts through the contagious example of humility and selflessness. This is true both for the man who is engaged in political and economic life and in the business of culture and technology, and for the housewife, the child and the old man. One may have a wider reach than the other, but the way in which they are effective is the same. 'The kingdom does not come in a way that can be pinned down' (Lk 17.20). An aspect of the powerlessness of Christians is their inability to locate, promote and establish in the world the eschatological event which they proclaim. They have 'seen his glory' (Jn 1.14), but what can they demonstrate of this? They proclaim and indeed promise the greatest thing of all; thus they seem ridiculous, contemptible, deserving hatred. They must resist the temptation to transmute their 'spiritual weapons', which alone are 'truly powerful' (2 Cor 10.4), into worldly weapons; they must be content to prescind from power and powerlessness and to bear witness to the presence of what is ultimate: i.e., the love of God in Christ. It goes without saying that this requires active brotherly love as the expression of their grateful love of God. This love builds the kingdom, and is a secret anticipation of it; but it is not we who build the kingdom, but the one who is present in us and through us. The endless obstinate struggle of the world to declare his presence a past that is long since finished with, to change his event into a rumour, and to tear up the indissoluble form of the gospel into archaeological strips, to exhaust the Christians emotionally and undermine them intellectually (better than nourishing their vitality through prison and torture)—this struggle, with its ever-increasing intensity, proves the power of his presence.

2. The Christian message is joy. The event begins with the Incarnation, which is proclaimed as 'great joy' (Lk 2.10), because now God makes all his promises of salvation come true. It ends in the great, astonished joy of the Resurrection (Lk 24.41) and the return to the Father (Lk 24.52). But how is it possible that this joyful event embraces 'sorrow even unto death' (Mt 26.38) as its mid-point? Are joy and sorrow ephemeral moods that alternate like clear weather and clouds in a landscape? Is there something lying peacefully behind both, something that is neither: the calmness of other-worldly mystical religion? Or are these moods socially determined for the Christian in keeping with the situation presented to him: 'Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep' (Rom 12.15)? But would it not then be necessary for the Christian, as he reflected on the state of the world and the Church as a whole, to be perpetually laughing and weeping at once—and more weeping than laughing? But does he not owe it to the joyless world that he should communicate joy

out of the joy of his faith? Paul knows that both his 'superabundant sufferings in Christ' and the 'superabundant consolations through Christ' which are likewise given to him can be communicated to the community, and are indeed imposed upon him and given to him so that he can communicate them (2 Cor 1.3–7): therefore, 'I am filled with consolation, indeed more than filled with joy, in all our tribulation' (2 Cor 7.4). For it means that the tribulation which makes him weary of life itself (2 Cor 1.8), the tribulation which goes to the point of abandonment by God (Mk 15.34) and of losing every meaning in existence, remains objectively meaningful for the world, and thereby contains a spark of eternal joy which is no longer accessible to its own self. Thus the Christian dialectic of joy and Cross points to a mystery in the heart of God himself, where there reigns 'greater joy' in pardoning a sin that has caused pain (Lk 15.7), and where a feast must be held to celebrate the return of the one who had run off and been lost (Lk 15.23,32) and had caused the father so much suffering: indeed, more than this, where the Father causes the pain to himself by abandoning his much-loved only Son to the darkness, in order to have the joy that 'whoever believes in him should not perish, but should have eternal life' (Jn 3.16). Can the divine joy be so strong and deep that it can bear to embrace in itself the cry of the Son when he is abandoned by God, without thereby clouding over—but also without brushing this cry aside as an alien event and as it were putting it in an antechamber, a place that does not truly belong to God, or a temporal instant that would be irrelevant for eternity, but on the contrary, enduring it to the full in the midst of what we call God's 'eternal bliss'? Does not this mean that we posit a contradiction in God: in the joy the face is turned to the other and in the cry it is turned away, in the former the 'Thou' is won and in the latter the 'Thou' is lost, in the former is all meaning and in the latter meaninglessness yawns? Can one say that in God, in whom all is in the present tense, the Cross is only a moment that passes away? Is the only way out of this dilemma, overcoming the contradiction, perhaps to look up to the ever greater love of God, to his innermost glory in which the cry of loss and the pain of the face that is turned away take their place in the drama of love as a moment not to be missed? A moment that is itself light, thanks to love? For in God 'there is no darkness at all' (1 Jn 1.5).

This final point, scarcely visible to human eyes, is the goal of the many paradoxes of human and Christian living, in an increasing mutual integration of joy and suffering, indeed of joy and the Cross. When Jesus proclaims that the poor, the mourners, the hungry and the thirsty are blessed, this is not in view of a future that is still to come and that will console and fill them, but because even now they are open, in their shortage, in the attitude of receptivity which the happy, the rich and the filled do not know, or have forgotten. It is the 'poor in spirit' who are meant, not those who put up with their poverty against their will and shelter in their hearts the same greed and covetousness as the rich. The beatitudes thus embrace something that holds true for all human persons: there is no inner freedom without renunciation, and without rising above impulse and inclination, nor any deeper joy without yielding up a superficial happiness, not only in the individual sphere but also in the social sphere: the individual can sacrifice himself in joy for the common good, and this is the basis of Hegel's requirement that every limited individual aspect must be submerged and make itself available in the unavoidable pain of the dialectical process but in the joy of the greater freedom which results. The harshness of Marxist dialectic demands even more explicitly that this joy of self-transcendence should involve self-renunciation in favour of the future happiness of others, and the enduring paradox of this teaching is that the joy of renunciation, the joy that affirms and drives the whole process, can be greater than the expected eschatological happiness: the unremovable barrier of death forbids one to see how the two are mutually related. The person is sacrificed, and should sacrifice itself in joy, and not only without the ulterior motive of a reward, but—and this is decisive—without the awareness of being loved and eternally affirmed as a person.

For the Christian too, temporality is a process which includes the alienations that must be endured for the sake of coming together in unity: in part, these are the natural unpleasing events of educative chastisement, without which no one comes to maturity; in part, the measures taken by grace to bring back the alienated sinner to the love of God; finally, there are the salvific states of compassion with the crucified Lord which are imposed on some persons for the redemption of the world. It is possible at every point here to kindle a light of understanding, and thus of joy; and at every point here, this light proceeds explicitly from the good news of the resurrection of the dead, so that the Hegelian-Marxist paradox is avoided; yet the light of understanding must constantly transcend itself to enter the incomprehensible Christian truth that the Cross has its place in the heart of the bliss of God, and that the Lamb who was slain stands on the throne of the Father. The Old Testament already knows that God, as Father, chastises the children whom he loves (Deut 8.5f.; Prov 3.11f.), and the New Testament picks this up (Heb 12.5–13); chastisement becomes the sign that one is respected by the eschatological love of God (1 Cor 11.32; 1 Pet 4.17; Rev 3.19). The *paraklēsis* of the Church is required, in order for the chastised child to keep in view the standpoint of the Father. Thus the 'appearance' of the Father's alienation is shattered and gives way to the truth: 'Every chastisement does indeed appear for the moment to bring, not joy, but suffering; but afterwards it brings forth to those who have been trained by it the peaceful fruit of righteousness' (Heb 12.11). This appearance (δοκεῖν) is repeated in the chastisement of the community by the Apostle: the appearance has 'distressed' the community, 'even if only for a short time', and its sadness was the correct sadness 'that is pleasing to God' and *as such* became joy for the Apostle (2 Cor 7.8f.); but now the community must understand the Apostle's joy and come to share it, rising above its sadness: 'I have confidence in you all, that my joy will be the joy of you all' (2 Cor 2.3)—although the Apostle's joy (which makes concrete the joy of God) can be attained along no other path than that of the process of rebuke and hence of sadness: 'For if I make you sad, who can give me joy other than precisely the one to whom I caused the sorrow?' (2.2). In this dialectic, which is a considerable advance on the dialectic of the Old Testament, the relationship between the Apostle and the community reflects the whole relationship between God and the world: the pain which has been caused is necessary for the joyful God for the sake of the world, yet now God needs joy to come back to him from the world which he has raised up out of its alienation into the light of love and hence of understanding.

The *paraklēsis* must draw attention to the fact that suffering is not entry into alienation, but an exit from it. On a deeper level, suffering is a participation in the suffering of the one who leads us out of alienation. Here too, the New Testament picks up insights of the Old. 'Beloved, do not be surprised at the ordeal that you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Rather, rejoice that you share in the suffering of Christ' (1 Pet 4.12f.). 'Count it pure joy, my brothers, when you fall into many tribulations' (Jas 1.2). Subjective severe suffering is disclosed as objective 'pure joy', and this suffering can be endured in life only when those who suffer 'entrust their souls to the faithful creator and thereby do what is good' (1 Pet 4.19); then they can 'boast' with Paul of their tribulations (Rom 5.3) in the transcendence that comes from faith's insight that the process derives its meaning only from the eschatological integration; it is there that the emphasis lies, so weighty that it overthrows what seems to be heavy in the present time. 'The slight sadness' (1 Pet 1.6), 'the momentary, light tribulation' (2 Cor 4.17), can be lived through proleptically in an 'unutterable and glorified joy' (1 Pet 1.6–8), because it is objectively transparent and is indeed a guarantee of the incomparably weightier glory (2 Cor 4.17; Rom 8.18). All of these texts remain—correctly—in a perspective that is ultimately the perspective of Easter. It is from Easter that Christ's life and suffering receive their justification, and the Church's mission to proclaim this universal justification of God in the world in the Easter event remains a mission of joy. In faith and hope, this mission is empowered to set the brackets of a *quasi* around the utterly real suffering of the contemporary world and Church: *Quasi tristes, semper autem gaudentes* (2 Cor 6.10; cf. Heb 12.11: *videtur non esse gaudii*). This is all the more true in that at least the Christian—even in the subjective dark night—is permitted to retain the knowledge that his suffering, and with God's grace all suffering, is fruitful and is given in order that it may be handed on in its turn. The suffering of the Apostle takes place 'for the body of Christ, the Church' (Col 1.24), and through the Church and its upbuilding, even if in an extremely invisible manner, 'the universe' (τὰ πάντα) is brought towards its perfecting in Christ.[2] In this (post-Easter) view of things, the 'yes' to suffering and to the night receives its ultimate justification from christology, from a 'yes' of the Son to the will of the Father which can be spoken only in joy, not with a sigh. For this reason, one cannot dismiss the idea of A. Frank-Duquesne that an element of joy dwells in the lowest depths of the abandonment by God, and that it is this joy which makes the abandonment possible.[3]

[2] H. Schlier, *Epheserbrief*, pp. 205ff.

[3] 'Despite being rejected, despite the incomprehensible, hellish abandonment in his last hour on the Cross, there is no heart that overflowed with truer joy than the heart of Jesus . . . A hidden exultation makes him tremble through and through. It is as if the 'Hell' of darkened love—beyond all enjoyment and every possible reflection back upon himself—were precisely the true, naked and exposed reality of love and thus of joy . . . of the tremendously bottomless, divinely free and spontaneous joy, the joy in obeying, the joy that one may love to the point of giving oneself up, the joy that one may pour oneself out, a joy that is entirely 'located' in God . . . joy is then no longer psychological and something experienced (hence also something that somehow happens, something contingent and accidental), but becomes 'ontological', essential, giving a foundation to being itself, transcendent and divinising': 'Joie de Jésus-Christ', *Etudes Carmélitaines* (1947), pp. 23–27. On the dialectic between joy and suffering, *cf.* also: P. T. Dehau, *Joie et Tristesse* (1946); J. Massin, 'Le rire et la croix', *Et. Carm.* (1947), pp. 88–116; M. Carrez, 'Souffrance et gloire dans les épîtres pauliniennes', *R. Th. Ph.* 31 (1951), pp. 353–353; A. Brunner, 'Das Geheimnis der christlichen Freude', *Geist und Leben* 26 (1953), pp. 414–422; W. Nauck, 'Freude im Leiden', *ZNW* 46 (1955), pp. 68–80; H. U. von Balthasar, 'Die Freude und das Kreuz', *Concilium* 4 (1968), pp. 683–688.

On the theme of joy in the New Testament, basic are: E. G. Gulin, *Die Freude im NT*, part I (*Jesus, Urgemeinde, Paulus*) (Helsinki 1932), part II (*Johannes*) (*ibid.* 1936); Bo Reicke, *Diakonie, Festfreude und Zelos* (Uppsala 1951); J. Brosche, *Jesus und die Freude* (1946); *LThK*, 4th edn., IV, 361f. (E. Schick, A. Auer). D. Bonhoeffer's letters from prison return again and again to this theme in biblical meditations: *Widerstand und Ergebung* (1951), e.g. pp. 150f., 253f. (ET *Letters and Papers from Prison*, 1967, pp. 73f., 126f.):

Nevertheless, this theme is not exhausted by this Pauline view, which can no longer be called into question (even by 'taking the Cross seriously'); for christology does not have absolutely the last word as the justification for an existential doctrine of Church and man. Behind the Son stands the Father; behind the *fiat* of the Son to the will of the Father stands the heart of the Father who allows the Son to go into the total abandonment of Hell. Paul discovers the Cross and reflects on it from the starting-point of the Resurrection; but John accompanies the beloved Master to the Cross and understands that he too, like the Father, must accept beforehand, as one who loves, the suffering of the beloved. Here it is no longer a question of bearing the suffering, but of letting it be borne, of imposing suffering, and here a quite different shadow of 'alienation' falls upon the problem of suffering. The farewell discourses are the words of one who is 'agitated' (Jn 13.21; *cf.* 11.33; 12.27) to those who are somehow 'agitated' together with him (14.1). Even now, consolation is given and the gap of death is bridged over as 'a little while' (16.16ff.). But, incredibly, the loving disciples are required for their part to agree to the hiatus: 'if you loved me, you would rejoice that I go to the Father' (14.28), on the only road that leads thither: the way of the Cross. 'If you loved me': and so it is not the sinner who rejoices that one other than himself takes away from him his burden and his damnation—for that would not be love. It is the lover who rejoices that the beloved suffers: not because suffering would be a joy, but because suffering is an expression of his love, which could not have expressed its ultimacy in any other way

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one must not make the Cross a principle (as Kierkegaard did), 'in any case, even in the Old Testament the one who was blessed has to suffer much . . ., but nowhere does this lead to the positioning of an exclusive antithesis between happiness and suffering, or between blessing and Cross (nor is this done in the New Testament)'. And then, reflecting on the human ethical element: 'Not only action, but also suffering is a way to freedom. The liberation lies in the suffering, in that one is allowed to give one's cause out of one's own hands and lay it in the hands of God. In this sense, death is the crowning of human freedom. Whether the human act is a matter of faith or not, depends on whether or not man understands his suffering as a continuation of his action, as a perfection of freedom'.

(15.13). The beloved rejoices that he is permitted to do this, and therefore the lover too should rejoice in this. If one reflects on this more deeply, one ceases to be surprised that Christian joy, even in its pure childlikeness, retains something that burns in a strange way in this world. The loving Church assuredly lives, with Paul, on the basis of Easter and has the right to rejoice at the redemption that has been given to the world; but the loving Church, with the Marian-Johannine *fiat*, is always on the path that leads to the Cross, which we never leave behind us as a 'fact' of the past, but which is the eschaton to which the whole course of the world's history is directed (Mt 24.30): *videbunt in quem transfixerunt* (Rev 1.7). John's eye is held by this vision (Jn 19.37). But the Apostle of the Gentiles too is caught up by the devouring flame of this love, which has 'encompassed him' (2 Cor 5.14) and, since the beloved has died for him and for all, has drawn him and all men down into the same death. Does this mean that a Christian may no longer enjoy in a carefree manner the earthly joy which God gives him, but must have a bad conscience in the midst of the joy? This would run contrary to the entire Pauline good news: 'Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I say: rejoice!' (Phil 4.4). It is true that joy—even Christian joy—has various levels, and that the deepest levels do not need to be always explicitly present to the consciousness; but as Christians we cannot deliberately look away from the depth and explicitly exclude it from our joy, turning our backs on the demand it makes of us. And the more we, like the 'saints', make room for the divine truth in us, the less can we do this. This means that the Christian leaves the world's rhythm, in which joy and suffering alternate, and enters a sphere that is mysterious for all men, and for himself, into a possibility of affirming suffering in joy, with God and in God, while nevertheless not depriving suffering of its depths of abandonment by God. God does this likewise, and in him this is a mystery of his love. The Jews refused to look on God's glory, because this was said to bring death. The Christians look on it in faith, and say 'yes' to the death that the glory has at its heart. Anxiety in the presence of the God who is a consuming fire (Deut 4.24) is changed into reverent service of the grace of the love of God: '*because* our God is a consuming fire' (Heb 12.28f.).

3. Our wish would be that all this—existentially so difficult, and so questionable and dialectical for us sinners—should be presented within a framework that would take away something of the sense of exposure and give us instead an earthly feeling of security. In reality, the Church does exist. She is more than the sum of her parts and members: she is the body of Christ, his bride, our mother. She has promises of an ultimate infallibility (to the extent that she is without stain at an innermost point: Eph 5.27); and because she has a human form and is visible, something of this sheltering eschatological security is communicated to the forms of her life. Her symbols have the power to make present the grace which they signify and contain: bread and wine do not conceal the flesh and blood of Christ, but rather reveal precisely in what an essential manner Christ wills to be nourishment for us, how deeply he incorporates himself in us in order to take us up into himself; in the same way, the water of baptism reveals how deeply he buries us with him into his own death, how fundamentally he washes us, and how much his 'poured out' Spirit 'saturates' us individually and together. There are the keys that bind and loose both on earth and in Heaven. There is the Word that lasts longer than Heaven and earth and is entrusted to the proclamation of the Church: embodied in an intact form (as Scripture) that gives the guidelines for every new opening-up of the kerygma for new times. There is the promise that the form of the shepherd who gives his life for the sheep does not die out with the 'chief shepherd' (1 Pet 5.4): the servant who follows him may also follow to the point of dying for the flock (Jn 21.19). And even if rapacious wolves will break in again (Acts 20.29) and there will always be the cowardly 'hirelings', the 'strangers', and the 'thieves and robbers', still the flock knows the voice of the shepherd; the Church has the anointing in herself (1 Jn 2.20ff.) which teaches her which precept and which 'manner of life' of those who 'preside over her' (Heb 13.7) she must follow.

The development of the symbolism of 'the barque of Peter' was therefore almost automatic. It is true that the two pairs of disciples were called away from their boats and nets, in order to carry out a different calling, that of fishers of men;[4] but the movement away from the fisherman's boat is slowed down through Jesus' use of the boat for his preaching (Lk 5.1ff.) and for his crossings of the sea (Mk 4.35–41 par.), with the boat in Matthew already a clear anticipatory reference to the form of the Church (in the storms of the world). In the appended chapter in John, there is indeed a 'sacramental' identity posited between the boat of Peter, which makes the catch of all the fish of the world ('not far from the shore') at the Lord's command, and the Church; but the closing scene then takes place on the shore, and Peter is commissioned as shepherd, not as fisher. The outline of the ship remains behind, faded. For how could a little fishing boat be comparable to the great sacred vessels of salvation, with the ark in the flood, for example, or with Solomon's Temple? From now on, it is no longer the ship that gives shelter, not the institution, but the God who has disclosed the intimacy of his heart in Jesus. It is this glory that we have seen, and no other institutional and sacred glory. The transparency of the Christian symbols must therefore also be able to survive the transition from a 'sacred' form of thinking and feeling to a 'profane' form, without harm.

The institution, the mission and the sending out of the Church have their basis in Easter. But she retains Good Friday and Holy Saturday in her centre, where the human form and the visibility of God are swept away, extinguished and buried. With this mystery within herself, the Church can only be the 'tent' of a wandering people, a tent that is continually folded up anew, in order that it can be erected anew somewhere else.[5] 'The one who dwells in the mystery in the highest house has also a tent on earth, the Church . . . I admire many things in this tent: God's earthly tent is the men who believe. And while one marvels at the obedient submissiveness of the members, one comes thereby to the house of God, following thereby a certain sweetness, an indescribable, hidden inner delight, as if an organ sounded forth sweetly from the house of God . . . chords of an eternal feast, where there is the face of the God who is present, where there is joy without end. This feast had no beginning, and no end is ordained for it. From this feast, something sweet sounds forth to the ears of the soul, if the world does not drown it out . . . and it draws the hind to the springs of water'.[6] It is not the structures that make the sounds of music, for they can scarcely be called the keys of the instrument from which arises the melody that awakens yearning; but they have an interior dimension, and the modest festal gatherings of the Church point to a quite different feast: the scanty meal with bread and wine points to an intoxicating banquet—new in my Father's kingdom. It is therefore possible for the structure of the temporal institutions to become weaker at times; these truly belong to time, and time works on them, so that much rusts, corrodes and must be replaced; what seemed firmly joined together, becomes separated and lets light or also darkness through.

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[4] On this logion, *cf.* M. Hengel, *Nachfolge und Charisma* (1968), pp. 85f. (ET *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers*, 1981, pp. 76ff.

[5] *Cf.* the symbolism of the wandering through the desert in Origen's homilies on Exodus.

The Acts of the Apostles ends with a broad and almost cosy description of a shipwreck: the ship is Paul's. Luke is very well aware of the symbolism of his narrative.[7] The ship is caught by the sea-wind, and since 'it could not withstand the onslaught, we gave it up and let ourselves be carried along' (Acts 27.15). The ship is undergirded, then the cargo is cast overboard, and finally the sailors 'cast out with their own hands the tackle of the ship' (vv. 17ff.). 'All hope of being rescued was gone.' Paul receives in a dream an instruction which he passes on: 'There will be no loss of human life, but only of the ship'. This then is broken to pieces, when its bow bores into a sandbank and the rear deck splinters under the assault of the waves. Those who know how to swim jump overboard, and the others save themselves on planks of the ship or on the backs of the swimmers (vv. 41–44). This is the eschatological situation: the structure, as the outer form, bursts, and one can save oneself and get to shore on the débris. 'The camp of the saints and the beloved city' are 'surrounded' in the final battle (Rev 20.9), and according to human reckoning they must fall. If the earthly Jerusalem were to be constructed in such a way that it made a direct transition to the heavenly Jerusalem, it would be the tower of Babel. The disciples in Peter's boat likewise called out, 'Lord, save us, we are perishing!' (Mt 8.25). The prudent man who built his house on the rock—'the rain streamed down in torrents, floods came, storms raged and beat against the house' (Mt 7.24f.)—is the man who has set his confidence in the rock who is Christ. He will find the plank that brings him safely to shore, and this plank is perhaps the back of someone who can swim.

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[6] Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 41, 9 (PL 36.470).

[7] It is not necessary to discuss here how he blends Old Testament tradition (above all Testament of Naphtali; *cf.* Ps 107.23ff.), an already-existing narrative of the voyage, and some additions that glorify Paul, and makes a unity of these elements.

The Church herself, as the body of Christ, will not escape in her visibility and her institutional character from the law which was given by her Head. The risen Lord too is once more a visible form, but one that has passed through the gulf of the abyss. And it is precisely from the risen Lord that the earthly visibility of the Church has her soul and her spirit, so that she has as it were a form that is already alien to the world that is passing away, a form that has its home elsewhere; this form will not be affected by worldly shipwrecks or by the splintering of its own intratemporal form. And the Church, as body and bride, is never the mid-point of the form to which we have wished to point here. She is the moon, not the sun: the reflection, not the glory itself. Put more precisely, she is the response of glorification, and to this extent she is drawn into the glorious Word to which she responds, and into the splendour of the light without which she would not shine. What she reflects back in the night is the light of hope for the world.

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